

Secretary of State welcomes EU's adoption of new peace and reconciliation programme for Northern Ireland and Ireland

Press release

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Shailesh Vara MP, has today welcomed the EU Commission's decision to adopt the PEACE PLUS programme which will support peace and reconciliation in Northern Ireland and the border region of Ireland.



The new programme, which is the biggest PEACE programme to date, is funded by the UK Government and the EU with match funding from the Northern Ireland Executive and Irish Government.

The UK is proud to be investing more than £730 million* into the programme – almost 75% of the total budget. As the majority investor, the UK Government is committed to ensuring that PEACE PLUS projects and activities support the levelling up of Northern Ireland's economy with the rest of the UK, as well as fostering cross-border collaboration.

The programme will create opportunities for participation and dialogue between local partners and communities, bringing decision-making and responsibility for community development closer to the people who will directly benefit. Previous funding targeted initiatives such as the Peace Bridge over the River Foyle, as well as the regeneration of the Girdwood Barracks site in north Belfast into a shared community space where people from all communities can meet, relax and learn from each other.

Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Shailesh Vara MP said:

"I am delighted that progress has been made between the UK Government and the EU to fund important projects that will deliver directly for the people of Northern Ireland.

“This collaboration will support peace, reconciliation and cross-border co-operation, build thriving communities and empower future generations.

“The £1 billion of programme funding will drive ambitious local regeneration projects. I look forward to seeing the ways in which it will help individuals, communities and businesses to reach their potential.”

Notes to editors:

- The PEACE PLUS Programme is the successor to previous PEACE programmes. PEACE PLUS is implemented by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) – a North-South body – and replaces a series of long-running peace funding packages that have operated in the region since 1995.

*This figure has been calculated from the total figure in Euros, using an exchange rate of £1:€1.16448, noting this will change over the Programme period.

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