

UK announces majority contribution to PEACE PLUS funding

The UK has confirmed that it will be investing more than £730 million* into the new PEACE PLUS programme to support economic stability, peace and reconciliation in Northern Ireland. This represents almost 75% of the total budget and delivers in full on the UK's commitments to the programme.

Today's announcement includes match funding contributions from the Northern Ireland Executive and ensures a total budget of almost £1 billion – the biggest PEACE programme to date.

The funding will support vital ongoing work to promote peace and reconciliation and contribute to the cross-border economic and territorial development of Northern Ireland and the border region of Ireland.

The PEACE programmes have provided opportunities for participation and dialogue, and have brought decision-making and responsibility for community development closer to the people who are directly affected. It has funded a wide range of projects, including projects to support victims and survivors, young people and SMEs, infrastructure and urban regeneration projects, and projects in support of immigrants and of celebrating the ethnic diversity of society as a whole.

The PEACE PLUS Programme is the successor to previous PEACE programmes which have funded targeted initiatives such as the Peace Bridge over the River Foyle and the regeneration of the Girdwood Barracks site in north Belfast as a shared safe community space where people from different backgrounds can meet, relax and learn from each other.

*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.

Northern Ireland Secretary, Brandon Lewis, said:

“Today's announcement of more than £730 million to the PEACE PLUS programme is a concrete example of the UK Government's commitment to helping Northern Ireland reach its full potential as a prosperous and stable part of the United Kingdom.

“As the majority investor in this programme we are determined that the PEACE PLUS projects and activities will promote stability and foster cohesion while also contributing to the economy; building prosperity and supporting the levelling up of Northern Ireland's economy with the rest of the UK.

“The UK Government remains deeply committed to our obligations as set out in the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement and the institutions it created. This is why we continue to support the work of the Special EU Programmes Body which

oversees the PEACE PLUS programme.”

Note to Editors:

- The UK will provide over £730m (based on the exchange rate as of 31st August 2021 of £1:€1.16448) in funding to the PEACE PLUS programme between now and 2027.
- Some of the best-known projects supported by the PEACE programmes include the Peace Bridge over the River Foyle and the regeneration of the Girdwood Barracks site in north Belfast.
- PEACE PLUS is the new programme focused on supporting social, economic and regional stability, in particular by promoting cohesion between communities. It is the successor programme to the current Peace Programme. The programme will contribute towards a more prosperous and stable society in Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland. It will fund activities that promote peace and reconciliation and contribute to the cross-border economic and territorial development of the region. This will be the fifth PEACE programme implemented by the Special EU Programmes Body.