

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE & PERSONNEL



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*cc list  
issued 3/9*

cc Mr Semple  
Mr Quinn  
Mr Shaw  
Mr Burnett  
Ms Lawlor

PS/MR MURPHY (DFP, B & L) [Content 2/9 - PM]

EU SPECIAL SUPPORT PROGRAMME FOR PEACE AND RECONCILIATION -  
KEY FACTS

1. As requested at the meeting with MEPs on Friday 29 August, I attach a short brief relating to commitments, expenditure and impact of the Peace Programme.
2. If the Minister is content, this should be faxed to Ms Anne-Marie Lawlor in UK Rep, who will arrange for dissemination to all relevant parties.

*Jack Layberry*  
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# EU SPECIAL SUPPORT PROGRAMME FOR PEACE AND RECONCILIATION

## PROGRESS ON IMPLEMENTATION TO 30 JUNE 1997

### Commitments

- Commitments (viz the value of grants approved to projects) at 30 June 1997 have risen to over £217 million North and South. In addition, a further £18 million approximately is about to be committed under Urban and Rural Regeneration. This gives a total commitment figure of £235 million out of the £270 million available under the Programme.
- Project applications received in Northern Ireland total almost 14,000 with over 7,000 projects approved. The table below shows progress:-

<u>Year</u>	<u>Applications Received</u>	<u>Projects Approved</u>
1995	25	17
1996	7,193	3,001
1997 (to 30 June 1997)	6,467	4,226
TOTAL	13,913	7,244

### Payments

- Expenditure has been slower than anticipated, due to the time required to establish the innovative delivery mechanisms which are an integral part of the Programme and the need to engage and assist marginalised groups which have not previously been involved in European funding.
- Payments to projects are now accelerating rapidly and funding bodies are aiming for full spend by the end of 1999. In the first 6 months of 1997, the total payments figure has already exceeded that for the whole of 1996 by a considerable margin. Total spend is now over £53 million.

### Impact

- The selection criteria for funding reflect the Programme's strategic objectives of promoting community reconciliation, social inclusion and exploiting the economic opportunities presented by peace. Within these areas, the external evaluators appointed to assess the impact of the Programme concluded that the Programme had been particularly successful in promoting partnership and the bottom-up approach, and that good structures had been put in place.

In addition, they highlighted the considerable progress made in a number of key areas.

- a. **stimulating interest and awareness** - over 8,000 applications received in the first 18 months
- b. **establishing innovative funding mechanisms responsive to local need** - the work of funding Departments is now supplemented by that of :
- 6 Intermediate funding bodies
  - 5 Sectoral partners
  - 26 District Partnerships
  - 6 County Council Task Forces
- c. **employment impact** - over 1,000 jobs have been funded directly by the Programme. In addition, the Productive Investment/Industrial Development Sub-programme has brought investment forward creating some 33 new businesses and safeguarding an estimated 700 jobs.
- d. **involving local people in the process** - over 60% of project managers surveyed felt that beneficiaries had been successfully involved in project development and implementation.