

Northern Ireland: Parliament wants to secure post-Brexit regional funding

- EU programmes paramount to upholding the peace process
- Funding still vital for cross-community and cross-border social hubs and shared services
- Northern Ireland students should continue to benefit from Erasmus+

Continuing the PEACE and Interreg programmes after Brexit, as the EU Commission intends, is crucial to peaceful development in Northern Ireland, MEPs say.

EU regional funding should be maintained at an adequate level post-2020, says a resolution which was approved by 565 votes in favour, 51 against and 65 abstentions. EU programmes like [PEACE](#) are indispensable for the successful peace-building work to continue, they outline.

“Since the Good Friday Agreement in 1998, Northern Ireland has been on a path of peace and we should remember that along that path they have been helped by the European Union. Northern Ireland has benefited from various cohesion policy programmes: ERDF, ESF, the rural development plan, and also fisheries funding. Unfortunately, these are likely to go, post-2020. But there are also Interreg, and the PEACE Programme and these can – and should – remain, whatever happens post-2020, said EP rapporteur Derek Vaughan (S&D, UK) during the debate.

“EU funds are seen as neutral (...) and are accepted by all communities and put to good use because they don’t come from the UK, they don’t come from the Irish Government, they come from the European Union”, he added.

Furthermore, MEPs want the EU to allow young people from Northern Ireland to benefit from Erasmus+ programmes even after Brexit, to enable them to study abroad.

MEPs support the Commission’s intention to propose continuing the PEACE and [Interreg VA programmes](#) in its draft long-term EU budget 2021-2027.

A model for other post-war areas

The good practices established through EU cohesion funding and the PEACE programme should serve as an EU model and promoted in order to overcome mistrust among communities

in conflict and to achieve lasting peace in other parts of Europe such as the Balkans, they suggest.

Background

Northern Ireland has benefited in particular from special cross-border and inter- and cross-community programmes, such as the PEACE Programme. Since 1995, more than €1.5 billion has been spent with the dual aim of promoting cohesion between communities involved in the conflict in Northern Ireland and the border counties of Ireland, as well as economic and social stability, especially in disadvantaged, rural and border areas.

Procedure: non-legislative resolution

Further information

[The adopted text will be available here \(click on 11.09.2018\)](#)

[Video recording of the debate \(10.09.2018\)](#)

[Projects funded by Interreg VA programme](#)

[Projects funded by PEACE programme](#)

[EP Research briefing: The European Union and Northern Ireland
Press Release: fact-finding mission to Northern Ireland by the EP Regional Development Committee \(March 2018\)
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Committee on Regional Development](#)

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