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NORTHERN

IRELAND

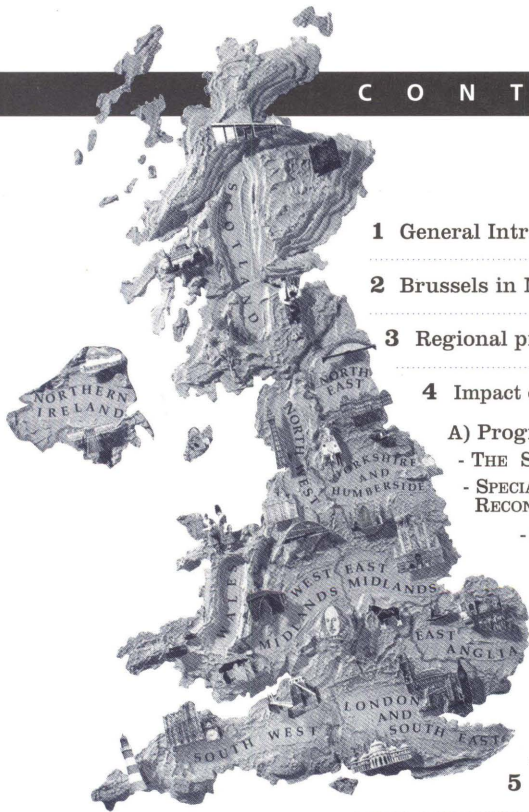
A REGION
OF THE
EUROPEAN
UNION

Antrim, Armagh, Down,
Fermanagh, Londonderry, Tyrone

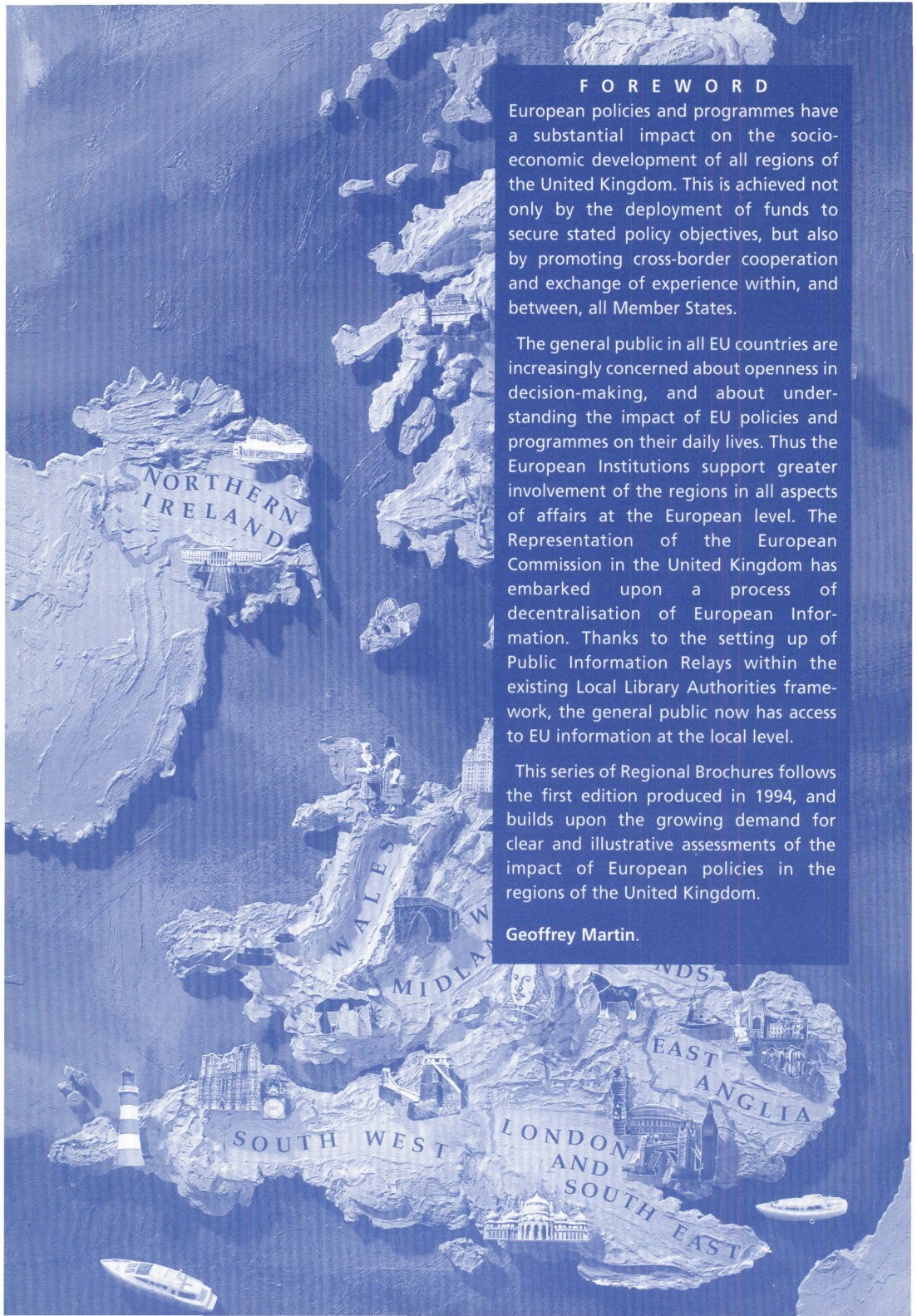
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FOREWORD

European policies and programmes have a substantial impact on the socio-economic development of all regions of the United Kingdom. This is achieved not only by the deployment of funds to secure stated policy objectives, but also by promoting cross-border cooperation and exchange of experience within, and between, all Member States.

The general public in all EU countries are increasingly concerned about openness in decision-making, and about understanding the impact of EU policies and programmes on their daily lives. Thus the European Institutions support greater involvement of the regions in all aspects of affairs at the European level. The Representation of the European Commission in the United Kingdom has embarked upon a process of decentralisation of European Information. Thanks to the setting up of Public Information Relays within the existing Local Library Authorities framework, the general public now has access to EU information at the local level.

This series of Regional Brochures follows the first edition produced in 1994, and builds upon the growing demand for clear and illustrative assessments of the impact of European policies in the regions of the United Kingdom.

Geoffrey Martin.

NORTHERN IRELAND has its own special characteristics which are distinctive within the European Union. No other region of the EU has endured such a long period of instability and politically motivated violence. Ceasefires have been in place since the autumn of 1994 and now a much more optimistic assessment can be made of future developments. The EU has demonstrated its willingness, in many ways, to contribute to the enhancement of the progress which can be made.

1 INTRODUCTION: A NEW BEGINNING

The special EU initiative to offer 300 mecu to finance a programme to support Peace and Reconciliation over the next three years is striking evidence of the willingness in the EU to go beyond the already large commitments to economic and social development in Northern Ireland from the Structural Funds. All of these are summarised in later pages.

This pamphlet describes some of the main contributions which the European Union, through the Commission, hopes to make in the next six years which will help to reduce unemployment, raise living standards, improve social conditions and enhance the physical environment.

Almost every aspect of EU policy impacts in some way on the people of Northern Ireland. Only those with a more direct impact can be identified in this short presentation. Nevertheless, even this constrained review shows how extensive the relationships have become in the past two decades.

Whilst Northern Ireland is unique in its history, politics, economic problems and social framework, part of the value of its membership of the EU is the understanding which comes from the accommodation of so many diverse nations and regions within the EU.

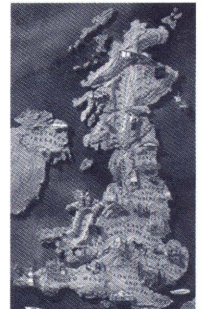
The European Union has the objective of ensuring that the less prosperous regions of the EU close the gaps with the more prosperous. It also offers the benefits of a sharing of ideas and expertise. Some aspects of Northern Ireland's development needs can benefit from the lessons of other regions and vice versa.

Northern Ireland stands to gain both from the strengthening and growth of the whole European Union and also from the specific contribution of the EU to meet local needs either with financial support or with carefully adapted policies.

The challenge is that the resources and the relationships between the people of Northern Ireland, its businesses and public authorities, Government, the European Commission and the institutions of the wider European Union, should be used constructively to enhance the well being of all the citizens of the region.



Jane Morrice
Head of Office, European Commission Northern Ireland



2 BRUSSELS IN NORTHERN IRELAND

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION has close contact with events in Northern Ireland, partly through the 'eyes and ears' of the Commission Representative based in the EC Office in Windsor House, Belfast.

The European Commission Office in Northern Ireland is an office of representation, acting on behalf of the European Commission in Brussels and representing its interests. The Head of Office, Jane Morrice, represents the Commission in Northern Ireland where she fulfils a variety of roles. The EC Office is often the first point of contact for people wishing to know more about the European Union, and an extensive library is available to the public.

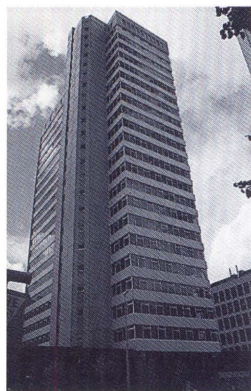
There is a continuing and demanding audience who have an interest and, often, a requirement for up to date accurate information on European issues. The office of the Commission is a significant element in supplying this service. Of course, this is a two-way process. Information on local circumstances is also passed from Northern Ireland to the central offices of the Commission.

The existence of the local office of the Commission is a recognition by the EC of the need to ensure that 'Brussels' is not seen as a symbol of remoteness, lack of understanding, or ill informed decision making.

As well as responding to enquiries, the office runs its own information programme, including special events for schools, and seminars for journalists, civil servants and others. It organises exhibitions on the work of the Commission, publishes a monthly magazine, and has produced special publications on the impact of EU policies on Northern Ireland. It has also produced videos on Northern Ireland and the European Union.

While the office supplies information on grants available from the main EU funds, staff have no direct function in the handling of applications for grants, or in their allocation.

The next stage in the evolution of the Commission Office in Belfast will be the opening, in 1996, of a specialised information unit open to the public during office hours. Making this information service more accessible to the general public will mark a major development in public contact with the European Commission.



*Windsor House
- Belfast*



3 REGIONAL PROFILE

INFORMATION ABOUT NORTHERN IRELAND

Population	(1993)	1,632,000
Birth rate	(1993)	15.3: 1000
EU average	(1990)	11.8: 1000
Employment	(1994)	633,000
of which		
Self employed		82,000
(Farming self employed)		22,000)
Employed		551,000
Unemployed	(mid-1995)	88,000
Unemployment rate (UK measure)		11.7%
Employment in agriculture	(1991)	4.5%: EU average 6.4%
Employment in industry		28.0%: EU average 33.2%
Employment in services		66.4%: EU average 60.2%
GDP per person		75% of EU av. 1989-91
GDP per person employed		82% of EU av. 1989-91
Dependency rate	(1990)	1.3
(ratio of people not economically active to those who are)		
UK average	(1990)	1.0
EU average	(1990)	1.2

The image of Northern Ireland, held by people who have no first hand experience of the region, is usually a mixture of high unemployment, damage as a result of years of violence, urban decay in areas of Victorian housing and small low income rural farms.

On a more structured level, this image might be attributed to the processes of agricultural and industrial change which have dramatically affected many regions of Europe but have been especially severe in Northern Ireland. The characteristics and causes of these changes are, of course, important considerations in designing a response to local needs.

The need to understand the factors influencing economic and social change, and to be able to assess the changes in a Union-wide framework, means that the European Commission must give priority to the preparation of an analytical framework which allows these questions to be examined, both comparatively across the Union and over a period of time, to demonstrate the emerging trends.

In the most recent survey of the regions, the best overall indicator of economic performance was a comparison of **Gross Domestic Product** per head of the population in Northern Ireland and other Objective One regions over the period from 1986 to 1991 (the latest available date). This is measured in terms of the purchasing power of local incomes rather than simply by using currency exchange rates.

In 1986, average GDP per head in Northern Ireland was 79% of the EU average. This fell to 76% in 1990 and then to 72% in 1991. Although official EU figures are not yet available for later years, local estimates point to an improvement in this comparison in the years to 1994. The critical comparison is that Northern Ireland has a low GDP per head by the standards of the rest of the EU and, in terms of official support, now falls at, or below, 75% of the EU average which is the point which determines eligibility for **Objective One status**.

As the figures confirm, Northern Ireland might have been adjudged not to be eligible for Objective One status in 1986-7. It was, however, given this status because of the particular combination of problems faced in the region.

Over the same period, GDP per head in **Greece** remained at about 50% of the EU average; in **Portugal** it increased from 52% to 59%; in **Spain** it increased from 71% to 78%; and in the **Republic of Ireland** improved from 60% to over 70%.

Of the 179 regions in the EU (of 12 states), in 1989-91, 43 are recorded as having lower average GDP per head than Northern Ireland. Reciprocally, 135 had higher figures.

The poorest regions of the EU, in east Germany, had GDP figures less than half of those in Northern Ireland. The most affluent regions, in Hamburg and Bremen in west Germany, Paris, and Greater London, all had GDP figures which were more than double those recorded in Northern Ireland.

Just over 21% of the population of the EU live in the poorer regions: 78% of the population live in more affluent regions.

One of the contrasts of the past decade has been the different degrees of success in the Objective One regions in closing the gap in living standards with the others. Although overall averages can be misleading, if different trends are masked in deriving the picture, the Republic of Ireland, Portugal and Spain have made significant progress whilst Greece, some Italian regions and Northern Ireland have slipped slightly.



The explanation in Northern Ireland is linked to the slow growth of the British economy and the damage to local development caused by continuing political instability. Both of these factors have been reversed in 1994 and 1995 so that the recent experience should reflect a recovery in the comparison.

When **unemployment levels** are compared on an EU-wide basis, Northern Ireland's figures are even less favourable than the GDP comparison. Over the three years, 1991-93, only 21 regions had a higher recorded figure (on the labour force survey method of measurement).

The comparison between GDP and unemployment suggests that, whilst average earnings in employment are lower in Northern Ireland than in many other areas, earnings of people at work may not differ as much as is suggested by the crude GDP figures but, in contrast, more people are unemployed which confirms that the problem of generating more jobs is a serious issue.

Not only does the evidence confirm that Northern Ireland has the related problems of low average incomes and too few jobs, but the dynamics of the labour market point to a larger adjustment process in future years than in many other regions.

Although the **birth rate** is falling in Northern Ireland, as in most other EU regions, Northern Ireland now has the highest birth rate in the Union. In 1990, the figure was 40% above the EU average. Even with net emigration at the levels of the last decade, the potential increase in the number of job seekers is proportionately higher than other EU regions. If, as is possible, net emigration falls in the new political framework, then the scale of the increase in the number people likely to be looking for employment will be larger.

In summary, Northern Ireland looks to the EU for assistance in increasing employment, facilitating the restructuring of industry and farming to improve competitiveness, encouraging higher levels of productive investment and generating higher incomes. The 'gap' which needs to be reduced is unacceptably wide, whether measured in the UK context or in comparison with other EU regions.

4 IMPACT OF EU POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES

THE CONVERGENCE of social and economic standards for all the citizens of the European Union is an important objective of EU policy.

The creation and expansion of the European Union was, in a significant way, a means of raising the living standards and has been enhanced by the completion of the Single Market. In the last two decades, the original Member States have experienced substantial economic progress compared with earlier decades of this century.

One of the fears in some places was that a successful European Union might not be able to avoid a position where peripheral regions lagged further behind the more affluent. Another concern was that the older industrial areas would be disadvantaged, compared to some regions in the centre, as industry restructured to meet the competitive needs of the latter years of this century.

One of the achievements of the past two decades is that, in general, the position of the peripheral regions and older industrialised areas has not worsened relative to the EU in total. However, the degree of 'catch-up' has been modest. Some regions have done better than others.

In response, the EU has devised, at many different levels, adjustments which have recognised the needs of regions like Northern Ireland. The underlying aim of EU actions is to encourage the development of a more competitive structure so that the local economy can more effectively increase production and employment in businesses which become self-sustaining against other competitors. Measures to protect and retain enterprises and employment with continuing long-term subsidies are, almost by definition, discouraged.

The most conspicuous response was the creation of the **EU Structural Funds** which make money available for agreed programmes of development. Whilst these are critically important, so also are many of the other policy developments.

A major policy influence from the EU comes in the form of a rationalisation and limitation on the payment by Governments of aid to industrial development. More prosperous regions must limit any industrial incentives (or State Aids) within the set maxima so that they do not make the attraction of investment more difficult in regions such as Northern Ireland. Similarly, policies on indirect taxation are changing to reduce cross-border distortions. Policies for textiles and shipbuilding reflect a balance between avoiding aids to invest in excess capacity and planned restructuring for longer term survival.



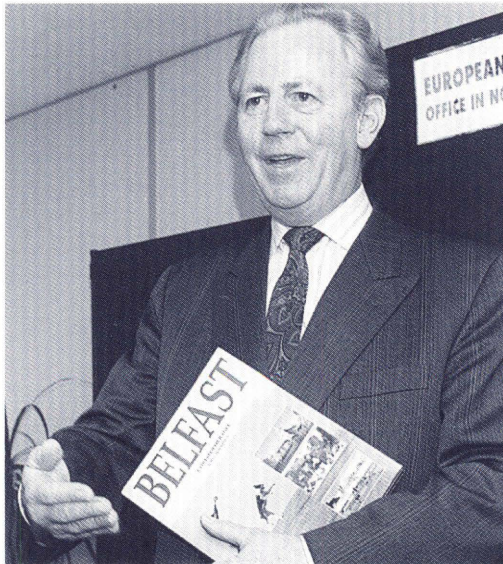
Within the policy framework set by Government and the EU, Northern Ireland has access to major financial support. Funding reaches Northern Ireland from the Structural Funds: the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Social Fund (ESF), the Agricultural Guidance Funds (FEOGA), and, more recently, the Fisheries Guidance Fund (FIFG). These were used together in the former Community Support Framework (CSF) which covered the years 1989-93, now overtaken by the 1994-99 Single Programming Document (SPD) which is summarised in later pages.

This mainstream funding is supplemented by a number of Community Initiatives, including **INTERREG** (linked to cross-border activities), **LEADER** (linked to rural development), **URBAN** (for urban regeneration) and **PESCA** (for towns dependent on the fishing industry). For further details see page 20.

In addition, the **Common Agricultural Policy** (CAP) has led to a considerable flow of funds to the farming sector, now well in excess of £100m pa., over and above the funds provided by the Structural Funds.

More recently, a special 300 mecu **Peace and Reconciliation Programme** has been approved, 80% of which will be spent in Northern Ireland over the next three years.

In total, but excluding payments linked to farm guarantees, Northern Ireland is receiving well over £200m. pa. from the European Union.



*European Commission
President - Jacques
Santer during a visit
to Northern Ireland
in April 1995*

A The Single Programming Document, 1994-99

Scale, timing and content: a summary

As an Objective One region of the European Union, Northern Ireland receives high priority for EU funding. This funding is channelled through a series of programmes agreed between the Government and the European Commission. The first of these Programmes was the **Community Support Framework** which contained a number of measures which operated in Northern Ireland from 1989 to 1993 and brought just under 1,000 mecu to the region.

More recently a new EU funding programme, for the six year period 1994-1999, has been approved and published in what is known as the **Single Programming Document** or **SDP**.

The contribution of the EU to the funding for the SPD totals 1233 mecu. It is intended to stimulate growth in the regional economy, help to close the gap with the more affluent regions within the EU and meet some of the social and community development needs. Following consultations with the different sectors of society in Northern Ireland, funding has been earmarked for five priority areas.

These are detailed in the table below and on the following pages.

ALLOCATION OF FUNDS FROM THE SPD, 1994-99

Expenditure Priorities	Million ECU	%
1. Promoting economic development and competitiveness	315	25
2.1 Improvement of the physical and social environment	122	10
2.2 Investment in the development of people	193	16
3. Reducing the effects of peripherality	321	26
4. Development of agriculture and the rural economy	215	17
5. Protection and enhancement of the environment	64	5
Total	1,233	100

Most elements of the SPD will be supplemented by 'matching funds' from Government departments, local authorities or the private sector. The total expenditure, including these 'matching funds' is expected to reach 2,660 mecu over the six year period.

PRIORITY 1. PROMOTING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND COMPETITIVENESS

Northern Ireland has, traditionally, relied on its farming, textiles and heavy engineering sectors as the main sources of employment. Each of these sectors has undergone, and is undergoing, radical changes in employment, technology and product development. However, as these changes continue, they must be accompanied by the development of new industries so that the region can achieve sustainable success through diversification, enhanced competitiveness, innovation and enterprise expansion.

Following consultations with the business community and other sectors, the EU has allocated 315 mecu to this area. When these funds are combined with contributions from Government and the private sector, expenditure may exceed 682 mecu.

This priority, or sub-programme, is wide-reaching in its scope and offers support to the Northern Ireland economy in ways that can enhance the potential for growth.

Particular attention is paid to **small and medium sized businesses (SMEs)**, - enterprises with less than 500 employees. Financial assistance of 37 mecu is offered through the sub-programme to help them compete on an international scale. SMEs account for more than half of Northern Ireland's industrial output. Much of the funding will be administered through the Industrial Development Board (IDB) and the Local Enterprise Development Unit (LEDU). A new feature is the creation of a **Seed and Development Capital Fund** to provide risk capital.

In addition, **Local Economic Development** schemes have an allocation of 26 mecu.

The SPD has also recognised the potential benefits of more effective training and the development of skills within the workforce. In an effort to improve the competitiveness of Northern Ireland industries, the SPD includes three measures in the economic development sub-programme to finance **vocational education and training**. From the European Social Fund, 66 mecu is earmarked for management and entrepreneurial workforce training, 8 mecu for training linked to local economic development and 25 mecu for training in new technologies.

The need for sustained **research and technological development** within industry has also been highlighted in this sub-programme. Nearly 68 mecu has been allocated to support the local technical infrastructure and to encourage direct R&D activities between enterprises and with the Universities and other sources of expertise.

Since the announcement of the ceasefires in 1994, tourism has enjoyed unprecedented expansion, with an influx of tourists particularly





Lagan Weir - Belfast

from continental Europe and the United States. The SPD had targeted Northern Ireland's tourism industry in policy measures which pre-dated the ceasefires. The tourism measures have received 75 mecu for the period 1994 - 1999. Growth in tourism is now one of the best prospects for extra employment in the immediate future.

PRIORITY 2.1 IMPROVEMENT OF THE PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Northern Ireland suffers from a variety of socio-economic problems but, unlike other EU regions, has additionally suffered from twenty-five years of civil strife, with significant loss of life and physical damage. To address the many problems that exist in the region, a unique, wide-ranging **Physical and Social Environment Programme** (PSEP) was set up as a sub-programme with an allocation of 122 mecu.

The programme has a broad remit; it seeks to establish a stable and tolerant society in which resources can be devoted to generating wealth and improving social conditions. By improving the physical and social environment within the region, the whole community should be in a better position to benefit from economic progress.

The programme includes funding earmarked for the improvement of **community relations, urban regeneration, targeting social need and building up community infrastructure.**

Financial assistance will be given to the Northern Ireland Community Relations Council whose main aim is to increase understanding and co-operation between political, cultural and religious communities in Northern Ireland.

Urban regeneration projects will be supported in the main urban areas, including the Inner City Trust in Londonderry which has already received funding under PSEP to help bring about the regeneration of The city centre. The funds may be used to assist infrastructure schemes in 'neutral' areas to encourage private sector investment and generate employment.

Two of the other main areas of funding are designed to target social need and community infrastructure. The aim is to alleviate deprivation in disadvantaged areas, allowing hands-on involvement by interested parties contributing to overcoming social exclusion.

An example of this is the **Local Initiatives for Needy Communities** (LINC) in North Belfast, which was formed with the aid of European funding, to facilitate the re-integration of ex-prisoners into the community, providing them with skills and job training.

The programme can envelop a broad range of other areas, including, for example, the renovation of historical buildings and the planting of forestry.

PSEP is a unique programme responding to specific circumstances. If Northern Ireland is to have parity with the other EU regions, economic and social stability is a logical prerequisite.

PRIORITY 2.2 HUMAN RESOURCES - INVESTMENT IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF PEOPLE

The basic aim of the human resources strategy outlined in the SPD is to ensure a highly skilled and flexible work-force. Northern Ireland, in comparison with other European Union regions, has in the past had too many people with relatively low level qualifications in the labour market and, critically, amongst the young people leaving the education system.

An important priority is to **reduce unemployment**, particularly amongst young people and the long-term unemployed. It is therefore imperative that training remains a priority so as to equip more people to (re-)enter the labour market with skills which are in demand and which offer better employment prospects.

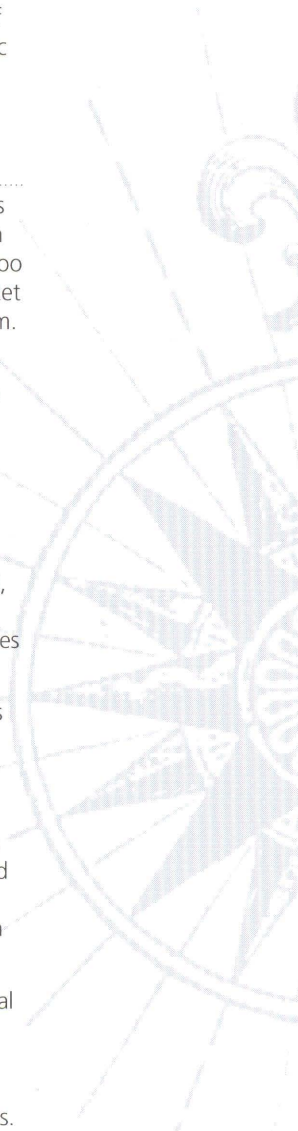
In order to achieve maximum additional impact in Northern Ireland, this sub-programme will concentrate on two well defined objectives: first, investing in a more efficient approach to continuing training and, second, investing in young people, the long-term unemployed and those facing exclusion from the labour market by concentrating resources to make sure that there are sufficient good-quality schemes available.

The first objective will be delivered through specific training schemes tailored to sectoral developments as part of business development packages which will be financed from the funds available under the economic development sub-programme (Priority 1, see page 11).

The second objective, drawing on the 194 mecu available under this sub-programme, will support guidance and training measures targeted at those who are least qualified and living in the most disadvantaged areas of the region by preparing them for formal vocational education and training.

Pathways to Employment is the descriptive title to the largest financial allocation of 78 mecu which will concentrate on advice, counselling and training leading to qualifications at NVQ level-2 and above. The second largest allocation, 53 mecu is focused specifically on skills development particularly for young people to fill skills gaps and shortages.

Other measures identify possible support for training for equal opportunities, the long-term unemployed and people with disabilities.



A further measure is available to assist the creation and development of a **Training infrastructure**, which can encourage community self-help initiatives and in particular recognises that, often, local communities do not have the basic amenities and skills to make a competent contribution to programmes aimed at surmounting social exclusion. Funding will be available for projects which provide training for locally based voluntary and community groups in community leadership, management and business planning skills, and skills for contribution to policy formulation.

PRIORITY 3. REDUCING THE EFFECTS OF PERIPHERALITY

As a region on the edge of the European Union, Northern Ireland has continually to compete to offset some of the economic effects of peripherality. An allocation of 321 mecu from the SPD has been earmarked under this sub-programme.

For many industries, Northern Ireland is at a competitive disadvantage compared to those in regions which lie closer to the centre of the European market place. There are limited direct air or sea links between Northern Ireland and mainland Europe, therefore most goods and passengers are conveyed through Great Britain or the Republic of Ireland. This may lead to disadvantages in the comparative costs of production and delivery to customers. It may also affect the time taken to make deliveries.

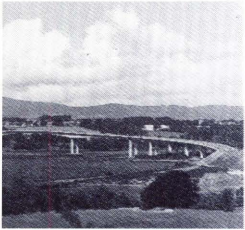
The EU has recognised the importance of improving Northern Ireland's internal and external transport links. Consequently, 139 mecu has been allocated for investment in **transport infrastructure**. The strategic objective is to improve access to the external gateways to the region.

Funding for the Belfast cross-harbour rail link and the Belfast - Dublin rail upgrade are examples of Europe's recent commitment to the region's transport needs. These projects are consistent with the aim to reduce average journey times on the main travel routes. The rail link between Dublin and Belfast, and continued to Larne and Londonderry, has been accepted as part of one of the Trans-European network routes which will be given priority by the Union.

Four major road routes have been identified as **Trans-European network roads**: Larne-Belfast-Dublin; Belfast-Londonderry; Belfast-Enniskillen-Sligo; and Londonderry-Strabane-Monaghan. Road and rail projects will spend just over 100 mecu of the 139 mecu earmarked for transport.

External sea and air links will also gain investment support and have been allocated over 21 mecu. Passenger and freight throughput is expected to increase and EU funds will be used to enhance capacity at Larne, Belfast, Londonderry and Warrenpoint harbours and at the three airports.

The **Energy sub-programme** has been allocated 182 mecu which



*Foyle Bridge
Londonderry*



will also partly offset the effects of peripherality. In Northern Ireland there are no substantial renewable energy sources which can be developed commercially. Consequently the cost of imported fuels is a critical factor in final energy costs.

To reduce the isolation of the Northern Ireland energy market, electricity and natural gas links with Scotland are being proposed, giving the region access to the grid networks in Great Britain, and in theory, further afield. These measures should, in the longer term, lower energy costs, especially for local industries, which will have a positive impact on business competitiveness. The interconnections also increase the security of energy supplies. Both interconnections have been promised financial support within the SPD, using 176 mecu of the amount earmarked for this measure.

For both transport and energy programmes, environmental concerns are one of the main priorities that the SPD will address. Natural gas will bring environmental benefits, while the transport strategy will, as far as possible, aim to be environmentally friendly, and at the same time, be compatible with the concept of sustainable development.

PRIORITY 4. DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Traditionally, the local economy has been very dependent on agriculture. Today, fewer families make their living from the land, but the agri-food industry in Northern Ireland still plays a vital role in the economy. Approximately 57,000 people are actively engaged in work on farms and primary agricultural production, excluding food processing, and account for 4% of GDP (the EU average is 2.4%). The food-processing sector, Northern Ireland's largest manufacturing industry, accounts for some 18% of total manufacturing output, equivalent to about 3% of GDP.

In addition to the economic pressures for change in farming, there is an increasing concern to develop a strategy for sensitive countryside management, encompassing rural development, which involves the active and coordinated participation of the private sector, central and local government as well as local communities.

Agriculture consists mainly of family-owned farms with a very heavy dependence on a grass-based beef and dairy industry. However, employment in farming has been declining for several decades and many holdings are so small that they cannot generate sufficient income to provide a reasonable standard of living. This means that many small farmers need to seek off-farm employment although alternative employment opportunities are usually difficult to find.

Following consultation with the farming sector organisations, an

agriculture, fisheries and rural development package was agreed within the SPD. Measures relating to them are brought together in a sub-programme which earmarks 215 mecu of EU support for 1994-99.

There are six main objectives in the area of **agriculture and rural development**: improving the efficiency of production ; promoting farming in harmony with the environment ; diversifying on-farm production; improving processing and marketing of agriculture produce; developing the non-farm rural sectors ; maintaining incomes in the less-favoured farming areas.

The sub-programme in the SPD complements and is additional to existing related funding, through the Common Agricultural Policy, and is designed to meet the particular challenges that local farming is currently experiencing.

The importance of the **fishing industry** has also been recognised through the inclusion of five separate measures affecting sea and fresh water fishing activities. An allocation of 15 mecu has been made for these measures.

The restructuring and further investment in the sea going fleet is to be encouraged. Also the need to enhance processing and marketing facilities in the fisheries sector is recognised, along with the new challenges and trends in technology and legislation. One of the objectives is to increase production from fish farms by 50% over the next five years.

PRIORITY 5. PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE NATURAL AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The main aim of the environmental services sub-programme is to enhance and protect Northern Ireland's natural environment, thereby contributing to its attractiveness to tourists and also to potential investors, as well as creating an environment which adds to the quality of life for people who live here. In the SPD, 64 mecu of EU funding is allocated to this sub-programme.

Because Northern Ireland has a small (relatively) sparsely distributed population, there are extra costs in providing the necessary standards in water and sewerage infrastructure. This increases the costs of the steps required to ensure a balance between safeguarding the natural environment and encouraging economic development with the expansion of industry.

The environmental measures in the SPD 1994-99 support actions which complement the other development priorities. For example, economic development is encouraged through the support for an environmentally attractive location for inward investors. Similarly, the measures to support agricultural and rural development are complemented by the measures for environmental protection.



Three types of action have been identified:

The first is in support of **waste water treatment services** and seeks to reduce pollution in both coastal and inland waters. Priority is to be given to the construction and improvement of sewage works which will reduce the risk of pollution and improve the quality of effluent discharges. A new sewage works at Duncrue Industrial Estate in Belfast, serving 250,000 people, is currently under construction with funding from this programme.

The second measure will provide support for projects which improve and increase the supply of **wholesome fresh water**.

The third measure is directed to encourage **environmental protection** through the development and implementation of strategies for waste management, including innovative waste collection, disposal and recycling schemes. Some of the funds will also be available for the remedial treatment of contaminated sites where past actions have left an environmental problem.

County Down



SPECIAL SUPPORT PROGRAMME FOR PEACE AND RECONCILIATION

In July 1995, after a period of intense consultation, negotiation and imaginative thinking, the European Commission approved the operational programme for special support for the achievement of peace and reconciliation in Northern Ireland and the border counties of Ireland. The programme is initially financed for three years, 1995-97. Proposals may be developed to extend the programme for a further period.

The programme has committed 300 mecu from the EU's Structural Funds which will be supplemented by about 95 mecu from the British and Irish Governments and about 21 mecu from other sources, making a total of 416 mecu. Approximately 80% of the allocations will be spent in Northern Ireland.

Following the paramilitary ceasefires announced in the autumn of 1994, the initiative for the special programme was taken by the (then) President of the Commission, Jacques Delors, and endorsed by the European Council meeting in December 1994, at the Essen Summit. Subsequently, the details were endorsed by the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions.

The Peace and Reconciliation Programme is additional to, and complementary to, the other forms of EU support, such as the SPD or any of the Community Initiatives. The priorities targeted have been chosen to reflect the particular consequences of, and opportunities created by, an end to violence.

These are set out in twin strategic objectives:

- to promote the social inclusion of people who are at the margins of social and economic life
- to exploit the opportunities, and address the needs, arising from the peace process in order to boost economic growth and advance social and economic regeneration

The objectives are converted into action through five priority areas:

- employment
- urban and rural development
- cross-border development
- social inclusion
- productive investment



These priority areas sub-divide into some 23 specific measures in Northern Ireland.

A unique element of the programme is the agreement to delegate some of the funding decision making to groups which are involved in community actions. In contrast to the SPD, the Peace and Reconciliation Programme envisages earmarking global grants which, for agreed purposes, will be administered through **Intermediary Funding Bodies**, such as the Northern Ireland Voluntary Trust and Co-operation North.

A parallel development is the further agreement that some of the funds should be administered by **local area partnerships**, bringing together representatives of the local authorities, community groups, trade union representatives and other local interests.

The third funding channel will be the Government, distributing just under 50% of the funds through the relevant Government Departments.

Where EU funds are allocated, matching funds, of at least 25% of the total in a project, should be available. However, provision is made that the EU proportion may exceed 75% where the local partners have difficulty in raising their share. Alternatively, allowance can be made for contributions 'in kind' such as the use of volunteers or premises.

In Northern Ireland, 240 mecu of EU funds, supplemented by about 90 mecu from Government or other sources, will be available. The initial allocation of EU funds is set out in the table.

Expenditure priority	Community allocation mecu	Percentage of total %
1. Employment	37.4	16
2a Urban regeneration	18.9	8
2b Rural regeneration	18.9	8
3. Cross border development	22.5	9
4. Social inclusion	57.3	24
5. Productive Invest.	36.7	15
6. Partnerships	44.2	18
7. Technical assistance	3.8	2
Total	240.0	100



Some of the priorities do, of course, re-emphasise those already established in the Single Programme Document (SPD). However, the intention is that the Peace and Reconciliation Programme will focus on the opportunities arising from the changed political circumstances. At the same time there is a commitment to **refocus** the SPD to take account of the new situation.

For example, the measures related to urban regeneration identify the needs of areas of deprivation affected by the 'troubles' particularly the segregated areas of Belfast and Londonderry. Whilst there are aspects of the social and physical environment which can be improved in many areas, the areas directly affected by violence, including those adjacent to 'peace lines', are identified as specifically in need.

Similarly, the priorities under social inclusion note that people affected by the years of violence should be supported. This opens up the prospect of special contributions for combinations of such needs as early child-care, integrated education, health, housing and cross-community co-operation. The aim is to promote pathways to reconciliation by encouraging grass-roots co-operation especially in the most deprived areas. A particular possibility lies in the support for schemes to encourage the inclusion of more women in community development activities.

The measure to encourage productive investment includes proposals for the **European Investment Bank**, in co-operation with local banks, to make available an interest rate subsidy of 4% on loans for qualifying new investment.

COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

Whilst the larger part of financial assistance to Northern Ireland from the EU comes from the Structural Funds in the form either of the SPD or the Special Support Programme for Peace and Reconciliation, another important source of support comes from a series of 'Community Initiatives'.

These Initiatives are targeted on a range of objectives, usually affecting a number of Members States or specific regions. Many of the Initiatives are established in a manner which allows Northern Ireland agencies to apply for support. These Initiatives are expected to provide about 9% of the total financial assistance from the Structural Funds received in Northern Ireland.

Community Initiatives, as the title implies, are different from the mainstream programmes in that they have been created as a result of proposals made by the Commission and endorsed by the Council of Ministers. Each has a separate Budget allocation.



The Community Initiatives, in the period 1994-9, will be grouped around seven major priorities.

Northern Ireland has a particular interest in initiatives in the following areas:

a. Cross-border, trans-national and inter-regional co-operation

The funds in this priority are administered through the INTERREG II programme which now continues the work originally defined under INTERREG I and REGEN. All of Northern Ireland, except the Belfast area, is eligible under this Initiative.

b. Rural development

LEADER II is the instrument used to allocate significant funds for the development of the rural economy by stimulating local action groups.

c. Development of crisis-hit urban areas

The URBAN programme is specifically targeted to assist the revitalisation of some of the urban areas in greatest need, including special schemes in Belfast and Londonderry.

d. Restructuring of the fishing industry

Under the PESCA programme, special aid has been approved for the four main fishing ports in County Down.

e. Employment

A series of three measures each targetting particular training needs have been set up: NOW to enhance equal opportunities, HORIZON to help groups who might be described as socially excluded from other schemes, and YOUTHSTART to integrate young people in to the labour market (for more detail see page 24).

f. The management of industrial change

The ADAPT, KONVER, RETEX and SME programmes all provide for particular support for this area. SME provides support to small and medium sized enterprises; RETEX encourages diversification in areas highly dependent on the textile and clothing industries; KONVER offers assistance to regions where defence sector spending may be reducing; and ADAPT is focused on training and retraining schemes.

In total, this series of Community Initiatives provides a broad range of support for a number of specific problems many of which are found in Northern Ireland. Reference is made to some of these schemes in other sections of this pamphlet.



B Policies: a summary

Much of the impact of the European Union on economic and social progress in regions such as Northern Ireland lies outside the direct influence of measures to offer financial support (as summarised in the previous pages).

Commerce and industry functions in the Single Market, with an absence of customs duties, customs barriers and improved access to other markets within the EU. The completion of the Single Market in 1993 represented an important stage in the evolution of the EU.

The **free movement of goods, services, people and capital** were aspirations of the original Treaties establishing the Community and, in large part, they have been fulfilled. Perhaps the most conspicuous feature on the island of Ireland is the disappearance of border checks on the movement of goods between North and South.

Long before the customs checks were removed, the movement of people within the United Kingdom and Ireland had been facilitated by the operation of an inter-Government agreement on the monitoring of arrivals from 'third' countries: a smaller version of the Schengen agreement now operating for a group of other EU countries.

Northern Ireland is the only region of the United Kingdom with a land frontier with another Member State. This has been the focus of attention in the cross-border priority of the Peace and Reconciliation Programme and in the operation of the Community Initiative, INTERREG. However, it has had, and continues to have, a potential to influence economic activity.

Cross-border differences in excise duties (on products such as cigarettes, spirits, and petrol) and differences in VAT rates, can generate cross-border trade which is motivated only by incentives to buy goods more cheaply on one side of the border. Any changes which narrow these fiscally determined differences will reduce any artificial trade, and vice versa. Also, the present interim arrangements for the exclusion of exports from VAT in the country of origin create paperwork which is inconsistent with a genuine single market.

The most important debate to take place over the next few years which would have major implications for Northern Ireland, concerns the merits and methods of introducing **Economic and Monetary Union** (EMU). If some Member States, including Ireland, convert their currency into a Single European Currency, and the United Kingdom does not, then the possibility of a more volatile north-south exchange rate will, de facto, damage the prospects for the emerging 'single market' on the island. There are divided views within the political arena about the merits of a single currency for the EU. If the only issue was a

debate about the merits of encouraging trade in goods and services within the EU, then the logic of a single currency would be clear. All the transaction costs of crossing a border and buying and selling in different currencies would be eliminated. So also would the number of exchange rate transactions on which the banks need to make charges to cover costs.

The debate about EMU and a single currency is, of course, wider. In terms of economic policy, there are questions concerning the conditions which would make the changes possible and sustainable. There are also questions about the implications for fiscal and monetary policy in each Member State. For Northern Ireland, all of these issues are important. They are further enhanced by the implications for cross-border economic activity.

Whilst, therefore, the progress towards an open competitive single market has been dramatic, there are a number of areas where further progress would assist the expansion of competitive industries. These include:

- easier, speedier and cheaper cross-border financial transactions
- a harmonised VAT regime
- more effective cross-border opening of public procurement contracts
- opening up of cross-border purchasing and supply in public utilities
- greater progress in the harmonisation of technical standards
- EU agreements on Community patents and intellectual property
- agreement on EU-wide consumer law, particularly on cross-border purchasing

In terms of infrastructure, some of the steps which are most relevant to encouraging economic development relate to the transport and energy networks. These are detailed on other pages but, to compete in a wider Community, Northern Ireland must seek means of offsetting, or reducing, the costs of peripherality in terms of transport services and energy prices.

INCREASING EMPLOYMENT

Unemployment is a problem that has affected Northern Ireland for many decades. In recent years, unemployment has become, and remains, possibly the major economic and social problem confronting the whole of the European Union.

Throughout the Union over 18 million people are currently unemployed, which (using the methods which are standard across the EU) represents over 10% of the workforce ; in some areas the percentage figure is much higher. The last periodic report on the regions showed that unemployment in 1993 in Northern Ireland, at 15%, was over 50% higher than the EU average.

The method of measuring unemployment used by the Commission is not based on calculating the number of people claiming unemployment, or related, benefits. Instead, people answer questions about their economic activity, unrelated to benefit entitlement. As a result, the overall figures are higher than those used by the United Kingdom. By local definitions, unemployment in Northern Ireland was, in the autumn of 1995, just over 11%.

The EU accepts that reducing unemployment will only happen if there is sound expansion of the economies of Member States. The Commission continues to seek for measures that can help to redress the problem. In 1994 the European Commission launched a White Paper entitled "Growth, Competitiveness and Employment", outlining the difficulties to be faced and putting forward some proposals. This Paper put a major emphasis on quality training and education as part of the way forward.

As a result of the White Paper, a new Community Initiative, '**Employment and Development of Human Resources**', was set up to meet the challenge of unemployment. The Initiative consists of three inter-related strands: Employment - NOW, Employment - HORIZON (both previously separate Initiatives) and a new strand entitled Employment - YOUTHSTART.

- NOW has been set up primarily to promote equal opportunities for both men and women in the labour market.
- HORIZON is aimed at providing training and opportunities for people previously excluded from employment, such as the disabled, single parents, the homeless and prisoners.
- YOUTHSTART is designed to act as a catalyst for youth schemes across the EU to provide employment and training for young people.

These Community Initiatives are, for Northern Ireland, in addition to the measures in the SPD to enhance human resource development in this region. They are further supplemented by an allocation of 3 mecu from the ADAPT Community Initiative. This is designed to ease the problems of redundancy and change where industry is restructuring and employees seek alternative employment.

The EU has also sought to protect the employment rights of those who are in jobs. The basis of European Social Policy is the improvement of living and working conditions, ensuring freedom of association and collective bargaining, equal treatment of men and women and protection of health and safety at work.

In addition to existing Treaty provisions on social affairs, the Charter of Fundamental Social Rights for Workers (Social Charter) was adopted in 1989 by all EU Member States except the United Kingdom. The Charter is not, therefore, legally binding on the UK.



FARMING AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

In an earlier section, outlining the proposals in the SPD for the development of agriculture, fisheries and the rural economy (page 15), the problems facing local farming were briefly summarised. The SPD contains nine separate measures which address 'horizontal' aspects of farming, which means that the measures apply across the spectrum of all farms and are addressed to common problems or developments.

The EU already influences farming and rural activities extensively mainly through the implementation of the Common Agricultural Policy (the CAP).

For many years, farm incomes have been protected, and sometimes enhanced, by the operation of the price determining systems for most of the main crops or products from farms. There was, for a period, a reliance on the setting of intervention prices, linked to threshold levies, to ensure that farms received guaranteed minimum prices. This, in turn, was reinforced by subsidies on the export of surplus supplies.

These policies proved expensive for the Union and often lead to the production of large surpluses. To restrain the expenditure, limits were introduced in different forms. Milk quotas restrained milk production; schemes to limit the amount of beef taken into intervention, and restrictions on the eligible periods, were used to contain stocks. The abolition of the Milk Marketing Board as a statutory monopoly was also a requirement of EU policy.

In more recent years, as a result of the reform of the CAP, and linked with the conclusion of the Uruguay trade talks and the setting up of the World Trade Organisation, there is a move to bring EU prices into line with world prices and remove any export subsidies. Measures of price support are being reduced and direct income supports have been increased. The scale of direct income support has increased dramatically. Headage payments, based mainly on less favoured areas, and acreage payments for 'set aside' have become significant.

To supplement the price and income support mechanisms, the EU now helps to fund measures to encourage rural diversification and modernisation. Evidence of the success of one of these schemes came in mid-1995 when the Northern Ireland Department of Agriculture had to close off the SPARD (Special projects to assist rural development) applications before the expected date.

An important supplement to the CAP and the SPD, comes from the application of the LEADER Community Initiative to rural areas of Northern Ireland. The LEADER II measure has released 11 mecu for local schemes to encourage rural development. The EU funds will be matched by another 20 mecu from local sources, including Government.



THE ENVIRONMENT

Many of the EU policies now take explicit account of the effects of economic and social changes on the physical environment. For policies affecting the use of resources, account is taken of the sustainability of the actions taken. For policies affecting the atmosphere, land and water, questions about maintaining and improving quality of the resources are introduced.

Many projects, which are financed under the EU Structural Funds, are required to have 'environmental impact assessments' carried out to ensure that they will not have a detrimental effect on the surrounding areas. Also, under the new SPD for Northern Ireland, a sub-programme on Environmental Services and Protection has been introduced for the first time. An EU programme, entitled LIFE, provides additional finance for projects in this area.

Northern Ireland makes its contribution through a number of actions. These include:

- emissions controls from large combustion plants, including power stations
- measurement of air quality in urban areas
- quality controls on drinking and bathing water
- quality controls on liquid waste discharges into rivers and the sea
- quarrying and waste infill policies
- standards for the disposal of sewage, at sea and internally

There is also an agreement that disposal of sewage at sea will be ended. This will contribute to the improvement of the quality of sea water round the coasts of the EU.

Steps to control emissions from electricity generating plants are already a factor in the cost structure of the electricity industry. As a temporary relief, until Ballylumford is ready to burn natural gas, instead of oil, Northern Ireland has been allowed to use part of the unused emissions quota from the industry in England. However, this is only temporary since, as the permitted levels of emissions come down, generators in England will face the same problems affecting Northern Ireland.

Details of the plans, already under way, for a gas pipeline to Northern Ireland from Scotland are part of the energy proposals outlined in the section dealing with the SPD (page 14).

Although there is, as yet, no formally agreed policy, there is an expectation that measures will be introduced to impose requirements on the recycling of waste materials.



FREEDOM TO WORK, OR LIVE, IN THE EUROPEAN UNION.

One of the fundamental principles of the European Union is the freedom of its citizens to work and live anywhere within the Union without restrictions. Indeed, this freedom of movement is recognised as an essential precondition for success of the EU.

Individuals or companies, resident in Northern Ireland, can choose to seek work, set up business and provide services in any EU Member State. It is now possible to look for a job without requiring a work permit, though a **residence permit** may still be a requisite, as long as you do not rely on another country's public funds. Individuals will be employed in any EU country on the same terms as local workers and should not be discriminated in respect of employment, pay or working conditions.

To obtain details on vacancies, or for general advice on working within other countries of the European Union, a useful point of contact is the European Employment Services, called EURES. This is based within the Training & Employment Agency at Gloucester House, Belfast ; a member of staff can contact the national vacancy bank, known as NATVACS, to check for any suitable vacancies overseas.

The right of residence is also extended to people not in employment. Students can apply to educational institutions in any EU country and will have the same rights as "home students". For those wishing to spend only part of their student-life in another country there is a measure available within the SOCRATES programme, through which students can spend a year at a university within another Member State.

The general right of nationals of one Member State to reside in another is now enshrined in the Maastricht Treaty on European Union. These rights, subject to certain conditions set out in the Treaty and in EU legislation, also include the right to vote and stand as a candidate in local or European elections in one's country of residence under the same conditions as nationals of that country.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Investment in education and vocational training is one of the essential requirements for growth and competitiveness within the European Union (Maastricht Treaty: 126 and 127). The White Paper on European Social Policy states that "A qualified and well-motivated workforce is a corner-stone of a competitive economy". The EU has therefore established programmes to improve the quality of education and training systems to meet the challenge of long-term competitiveness, and to provide the supply of a highly-skilled workforce.



Learning about Europe

The Structural Funds, including many of the Community Initiatives, contain an element of training and dissemination of knowledge or expertise. Over the past few years a range of programmes has been run specifically to develop and disseminate training to meet skill shortages, respond to the challenges of new technology and to encourage mobility and shared experience between Member States.

The main area of EC support for vocational training and job creation measures is the **European Social Fund** (ESF), which has a budget of some 40 billion ecu for 1994-1999. Established in 1960, its main priorities are combatting long-term unemployment and assisting young people into work. Government Departments, in conjunction with competent authorities at national, regional and local level receive this funding for operational programmes. Many training projects, community development programmes and selected University Postgraduate courses here in Northern Ireland have funding from this source.

The SPD and the Peace and Reconciliation Programme will draw significantly on the funds available from the ESF.

In 1995 two new programmes were launched, including elements of previous programmes and widening the brief to include all levels of education as well as vocational training. These are LEONARDO DA VINCI and SOCRATES.

LEONARDO DA VINCI will provide funding for vocational training within all Member States which will, among other things, assist the adaption to industrial change, encourage mobility of instructors and trainees within the Union, and support exchanges of information and experience. It will also provide training for young people, helping them to develop new skills with which they can enter the labour market.

SOCRATES has three main priority areas - promoting the European dimension in higher education and financing mobility grants for students; co-operation between schools; and promoting language skills in the EU. These measures will help prepare a more educated and skilled workforce throughout the Union, and improve its position as a competitive force on the world market.



5 MAKING DECISIONS IN THE UNION

THE 15 MEMBER STATES of the European Union are managed by common institutions, the most notable being the Council of Ministers, the European Parliament and the European Commission. These institutions have been established to initiate and defend legislation that affects the daily lives of the EU's 370 million inhabitants.

The **European Parliament** is democratically elected and comprises 626 members (the number of MEPs increases when new states join the EU). The United Kingdom has 87 members, three of which are from Northern Ireland: the Rev. Ian Paisley, Democratic Unionist. John Hume, Social Democratic and Labour Party; and Jim Nicholson, Ulster Unionist.

The Parliament normally sits in Strasbourg where its main role is as a political driving force, debating proposed EU legislation and generating its own initiatives for the development of EU policies. Parliament also monitors the day-to-day management of European policies by putting oral and written questions to the Commission and Council.

The **Council of Ministers** brings together Ministers from each of the fifteen Member States for Council meetings. The Council is the main legislative arm of the Union. Meetings are attended by different Ministers according to the agenda: for instance, Agriculture Ministers discuss farm prices, and employment matters are considered by Labour and Social Affairs Ministers. Northern Ireland Office Ministers sometimes attend with their counterparts from Whitehall.

The **European Commission** has three main roles. It makes policy proposals, it manages EU policies, for example, administering funds for regional development and the Common Agricultural Policy and it acts as guardian of the Treaties by ensuring the functioning of the European Union and the enforcement of EU legislation.

There are two committees which act in an advisory capacity to the Commission and the Parliament, the **Committee of the Regions** and the **Economic and Social Committee**, both of which contain representatives from Northern Ireland. Reg Empey, Ulster Unionist, and Denis Haughey, SDLP are full members of the Committee of the Regions and, as alternates, Sean Neeson, Alliance, and Simpson Gibson, Democratic Unionist. John Freeman, ATGWU, and John Simpson sit on the Economic and Social Committee.

6 TOWARDS 2000

IN 1996, the representatives of the 15 Member States will launch an Inter-Governmental Conference (IGC) to consider the further development of the European Union.

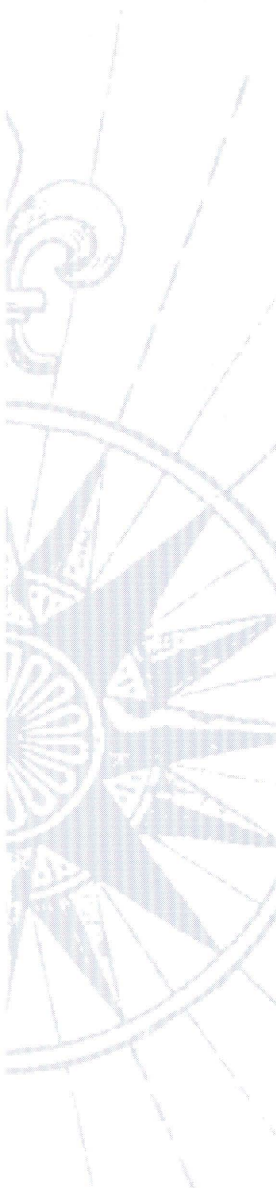
The main aim of the IGC will be to review the functioning of the EU, in particular the work of the Institutions. The size, powers and working methods of these may be reviewed as will the methods used to reach decisions in the Council of Ministers. What is the scope for making more decisions by qualified majority voting? Is there any logic in revisiting the concept of subsidiarity and extending the delegation of actions to authorities away from the centre into Member States, or local administrations?

The scope of the EU may also be reviewed with particular reference to certain aspects of the Maastricht Treaty which have not yet been fully developed. How far should the EU seek to develop further questions of security, foreign policy or defence? Some observers believe that there may be good reason to review the judicial powers of the European Court.

Other issues to be considered in parallel with the IGC include the evolution of Economic and Monetary Union. What steps need to be taken to further consolidate the Single Market? What arrangements should be made to accommodate other countries, mainly in Eastern Europe, who have ambitions to become members of the EU?

Even more important than the formal agenda of the IGC is the need, in the late 1990's, to consider the way in which public opinion is reacting to the EU. If the logic of recent developments is reinforced by the prospects of improved living conditions, why has the public perception of the benefits of the EU become more critical? Being aware of its responsibility to its citizens, the EU wants to ensure, above all, that it is working for the benefit of the people of Europe.

All of these issues affect Northern Ireland. Whilst the benefits of financial support and favourable policy treatment are now promised until 1999, the future of the EU can have a critical bearing on the prosperity of Northern Ireland well into the 21st century.



7 THE INVOLVEMENT OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL BODIES AND INDIVIDUALS

EUROPEAN COMMISSION
OFFICE IN NORTHERN IRELAND
Windsor House, 9-15 Bedford
Street, BELFAST BT2 7EG
Tel: 01232 240 708
Fax: 01232 248 241

EUROPEAN DOCUMENTATION CENTRES (EDCs)

help universities promote and develop studies in the field of European integration. Some of them receive the complete range of EU documentation, others receive selective documentation. Both enjoy privileged access to EU databases. EDCs also allow access for European information to the public and to students. The EDC network is supported by the European Commission.

The Main Library
Queen's University, University Road
BELFAST BT7 1LS
Contact: Alan McMillan
Tel: 01232 245 133 x 3605
Fax: 01232 323 340

University of Ulster
The Library, Cromore Road
COLERAINE BT52 1SA
Contact: Pamela Compton
Tel: 01265 324028
Fax: 01265 324928

PUBLIC INFORMATION RELAYS (PIRS)

exist in public libraries who have set up, in partnership with the European Commission, a network to provide the general public with access to information on the established policies and programmes of the EU at a local level. They receive some of the information and materials published by EU Institutions and other relevant bodies in printed, and possibly in electronic form.

Southern Education
and Library Board

Library HQ, 1 Markethill Road
ARMAGH BT60 1NR
Contact: Sandra Young,
Assistant Librarian
Tel: 01762 335 247
Fax: 01861 526 879

North Eastern Education
and Library Board
Area Library, 25-31 Demesne
Avenue, **BALLYMENA**
County Antrim BT43 7BG
Contact: Mrs P Valentine,
Chief Librarian
Tel: 0126 641 531
Fax: 0126 646 680

South Eastern Education
and Library Board
Library HQ, **BALLYNAHINCH**
Co. Down BT24 8DH
Contact: M Buchanan,
Principal Librarian
Tel: 01238 562 639
Fax: 01238 565 072

Belfast Public Libraries
Central Library, Royal Avenue
BELFAST BT1 1EA
Contact: L Parker,
Assistant Chief Librarian
Tel: 01232 243 233
Fax: 01232 332 819

Western Education
and Library Board
Library HQ, 1 Spillars Place
OMAGH, County Tyrone BT78 1HL
Contact: Leo Crossey,
Assistant Chief Librarian
Tel: 01662 244 821
Fax: 01662 246 716

LOCAL AUTHORITY EUROPEAN LIAISON OFFICERS

are responsible for the coordination of EU general awareness raising activities and/or dissemination of general EU information within the local authority. They may also coordinate their authority's applications for European Union funding.

Armagh City & District Council
ARMAGH
Contact: Mr D McCammick,
Director of Corporate Services
Tel: 01861 529 600

Moyle District Council
BALLYCASTLE, County Antrim
Contact: Esther Mulholland,
Development Officer
Tel: 01265 762 225

Newtownabbey Borough Council
BALLYCLARE, County Antrim
Contact: John Campbell, Town
Clerk & Chief Executive
Tel: 01960 352 681

Ballymena Borough Council
BALLYMENA, County Antrim
Contact: Mr W M Young,
Corporate Services Manager
Tel: 0126 644 111

Banbridge District Council
BANBRIDGE
Contact: Gerry McGivern,
Development Manager
Tel: 01820 662 991

North Down Borough Council
BANGOR, County Down
Contact: Karl Leatham, Strategy
Development Officer
Tel: 01247 270 371

Castlereagh Borough Council
BELFAST
Contact: James White, Town
Clerk & Chief Executive
Tel: 01232 799 021

Coleraine Borough Council
COLERAINE
Contact: Nicholas Lestas,
Economic Development Officer
Tel: 0126 552 181

Craigavon Borough Council
CRAIGAVON
Contact: Mr C M Graham,
Deputy Chief Executive
Tel: 01762 341 199

Derry City Council

LONDONDERRY

Contact: Gerry Henry,
Director City Marketing
Tel: 01504 365 151

Down District Council

DOWNPATRICK,

County Down

Contact: Bryan Coburn,
Director of Economic
Development or Paul Kelly,
Economic Development Officer
Tel: 01396 6120 800

Dungannon District Council

DUNGANNON, County Tyrone

Contact: Vincent Beggs,
Economic Development Officer
Tel: 01868 725 311

Fermanagh District Council

ENNISKILLEN, County

Fermanagh

Contact: Aileen McGinley,
Chief Executive
Tel: 01365 325 050

Lisburn Borough Council

HILLSBOROUGH, County Down

Contact: Brendan Smith,
Economic Development Officer
Tel: 01846 682 477

Newry and Mourne District Council

NEWRY

Contact: Edwin Curtis,
Enterprise Development Officer
Tel: 0169 367 226

Ards Borough Council

NEWTOWNARDS

Contact: Mr S Donaghy,
European Liaison Officer
Tel: 01247 812 215

Omagh District Council

OMAGH, County Tyrone

Contact: Vincent Brogan,
Head of Development
Tel: 01662 245 321

UK MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT (MEPs)

There are now 87 MEPs for the UK, who have been elected by universal suffrage for a five year term (1994-1999). Their role is to represent their constituency in the European Parliament, which monitors proposals made by the European Commission and decisions made by the Council of Ministers and can suggest amendments. It also has important powers over the EC budget. MEPs may enquire about any Community legislation by submitting oral and written questions. Finally the Maastricht Treaty gave MEPs new powers of co-decision with the Council of Ministers in certain policy areas.

Reverend Ian Paisley (DUP)

256 Ravenhill Road
BELFAST BT6 8GJ
Tel: 01232 454 255 / 458 900
Fax: 01232 457 783

James Nicholson (UUP)

European Office
3 Glengall Street
BELFAST BT12 5AE
Tel: 01232 439 431
Fax: 01232 246 738

John Hume (SDLP)

5 Bayview Terrace
DERRY BT48 7EE
Tel: 01504 265 340
Fax: 01504 363 423

UK MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS RESIDENT IN NORTHERN IRELAND

There are 24 UK Members of the Committee of the Regions who are appointed on a political and geographical basis to represent all types of UK local government for a period of four years. Acting as an advisory

body, it must be consulted on subjects such as education, youth, culture, public health, transport, etc. It may also take the initiative to give its opinion in other areas of interest to the regions, including agriculture, environmental protection, etc.

Councillor Rey Empey (UUP)

Belfast City Council
City Hall, Belfast BT1 5GS
Tel: 01232 320 202
Fax: 01232 438 075

Councillor Dennis Haughey (SDLP)

Cookstown District Council
66 Fairhill Road, Cookstown
Co. Tyrone BT80 8DE
Tel: 01648 763 349

EUROPEAN INFORMATION CENTRES (EICs)

provide information on European Union issues to SMEs. EICs receive a continuous flow of information on Europe and have access to EU databases, including Tender Electronic Daily (TED) which carries details of invitations to tender for public works, supply and service contracts. Some EICs also assist companies looking for business partners in the EU through the Business Cooperation Network (BC-Net) - see description below - and advise businesses on their participation in EU activities. The EIC network is supported by the European Commission.

European Business
Information Centre
Local Enterprise Development
Unit House, Upper Galwally
BELFAST BT8 4TB
Contact: Eleanor Butterwick
Tel: 01232 491 031
Fax: 01232 691 432

**BUSINESS COOPERATION
CENTRES NETWORK (BC-NET)**

was established by the European Commission to give companies a framework within which to expand into the EU market and the practical means, through specialist support, to develop commercial, financial and technical co-operation at a European level. Its primary task is to help identify, through a European network of business advisers, other businesses with which they can work. It operates through a network of 600 business advisers, who endeavour to find a partner for any type of business activity, eg mergers, joint ventures, franchises etc. The cost for such a service varies quite considerably. In general, there is an administrative charge and a consultancy fee.

Workspace (Draperstown) Ltd
5-7 Tobermore Road,
DRAPERSTOWN BT45 7AG
Contact: Chris McCarney
Tel: 0164 828 113
Fax: 0164 828 975

Innovation Centre Noribic
Ulster Science and Technology Park
Buncrana Road,
DERRY BT48 0NB
Contact: Mr G Mc Guckian
Tel: 01504 264 242
Fax: 01504 269 025

**INFORMATION CENTRES FOR
RURAL AREAS (CARREFOURS)**

the network is an EU initiative designed to provide information on Community policies and measures affecting rural society, promote awareness of rural development and encourage dialogue, partnership and cooperation between members of rural society and regions on common problems

Clogher Valley Rural Centre
47 Main Street, Clogher
Co Tyrone BT76 0AA
Contact: Sean Kelly, Director
Tel: 016625 48872
Fax: 016625 48203

**Other sources
of EU
information**

**NORTHERN IRELAND
COUNCIL FOR VOLUNTARY
ACTION (NICVA)**
127 Ormeau Road,
Belfast BT7 1SH
Contact: Geoff Nuttall, Head
of European Unit
Tel: 01232 321 224
Fax: 01232 438 350

**NORTHERN IRELAND
CENTRE IN EUROPE**
Chamber of Commerce House
22 Great Victoria Street,
Belfast BT2 7LX
Contact: John Kennedy,
Deputy Director
Tel: 01232 312 323
Fax: 01232 328 642

**NORTHERN IRELAND
UNIVERSITY TRAINING
PARTNERSHIP (NIUETP)**
Unit 7, Edgewater Office Park
Edgewater Road, Belfast BT3 9JQ
Contact: Pat Donnelly, Director
Tel: 01232 371 023
Fax: 01232 371 024

EURES
Training and Employment
Agency,
Gloucester House,
Chichester Street,
Belfast BT1 4RA
Contact: Oonagh Mc Donnell,
Euro Adviser
Tel: 01232 252 270
Fax: 01232 252 288

**CENTRAL BUREAU FOR
EDUCATIONAL VISITS AND
EXCHANGES**

1 Chlorine Gardens,
Belfast BT9 5DJ
Contact: Paul Burrows
Tel: 01232 664 418
Fax: 01232 661 275

**EUROPEAN BUREAU
YOUTH COUNCIL FOR
NORTHERN IRELAND**
Lamont House, Purdy's Lane,
Belfast BT8 4TA
Contact: Arthur Dempster
Tel: 01232 643 882
Fax: 01232 643 874

INNOVATION RELAY CENTRES

promote the EC's research and technological development policy by offering specialist advice to local industry in the identification of partners through the Community Research and Development Information Service (CORDIS), of opportunities for participation in R&D programmes and for the submission of proposals. They provide a range of services to contractors involved in R&D to help them protect, exploit and disseminate the results of their work.

**Innovation Relay Centre
Local Enterprise
Development Unit (LEDU)**
LEDU House, Upper Galwally,
BELFAST BT8 4TB
Contact: Geoffrey Collins
Tel: 01232 491 031
Fax: 01232 691 432

IRTU
Netherleigh, Massey Avenue,
BELFAST BT4 2JP
Contact: Dermot Mc Lean
Tel: 01232 529 399
Fax: 01232 529 548



INTEGRATED REGIONAL GOVERNMENT OFFICES

bring together the regional offices of the Departments of Employment, Environment, Trade and Industry and Transport, pooling their expertise. The role of Government Offices is to work in partnership with the local community to maximise the competitiveness, prosperity and quality of life in the region. They also represent the UK Government in regions. Their European branches provide a secretariat for organisations and individuals on various European programmes including the European Regional Development Fund and the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund, etc. The **Scottish Office, Welsh Office and in Northern Ireland Government Departments** perform similar functions within their area.

Government Departments

Department of Finance and Personnel
The Arches Centre
11-13 Bloomfield Avenue
BELFAST BT5 5HD
Contact: Mr Jack Layberry
Tel: 01232 526 955
Fax: 01232 526 932

Department of Agriculture
Co-ordination Division
Room 145, Dundonald House
Upper Newtonards Road
Belfast BT4 3SB
Contact: Wesley Shannon
Tel: 01232 524 331
Fax: 01232 524 884



8 REFERENCES

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Eurolink, News sheet of the Northern Ireland Centre in Europe, issue 27, August 1994, for a special review of the SPD; published by N.I.C.E (1994)

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Author: John V. Simpson, with research and assistance from Sean Rainey.
This publication does not necessarily reflect the views of the European Commission.

Note: 1 ecu = £0.84
mecu = 1 million ecu

NORTHERN
IRELAND

A Region of The
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The Regional Brochures have been organised on the basis of the Government's existing standard regions for England. These are the areas covered by the English Regional Associations which, inter alia, are responsible for advising the Secretary of State for the Environment on regional planning guidance. Some of the Regions have been sub-divided to reflect their population and/or geographic size. Cumbria has been included in the North West brochure as its European Structural Funds are handled from Manchester, as part of the North West programme.

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NORTHERN

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