

€UROFLASH



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INTERREG CONSULTATION

Northern Ireland, the border counties of Ireland and parts of Western Scotland are set to benefit from a new INTERREG Programme between 2007-2013.

The new INTERREG Programme is supported under the European Territorial Co-operation Objective. It will run from 2007-2013 and will benefit from €256 million (£170 million), made up of €192 million from the European Union and €64 million from the two national governments.

The overall theme of the INTERREG Programme is to strengthen and deepen cross-border co-operation with an emphasis on supporting strategic plans and projects which will maximise the impact of the funds throughout the eligible area. More specifically, the Programme aims to support strategic cross-border co-operation for a more prosperous region and improve access to services so as to enhance the quality of life for those living in the eligible area.

The Programme will focus on two strategic objectives outlined as follows:

- Priority 1: Co-operation for a more prosperous cross-border region: This priority aims to diversify and develop the economy of the eligible region by encouraging innovation and competitiveness in enterprise and business development and promoting tourism;
- Priority 2: Co-operation for a sustainable cross-border region: This priority aims to support activities that promote cross-border cooperation in policy development and improve access to services so as to improve the quality of life for those living in the eligible area.

There are four cross cutting themes which will act as strategic guidelines for those engaged in the implementation of the Programme and include:

- Equality;
- Sustainable development;
- Partnership;
- Impact on poverty.

The Special EU Programmes Body has published the proposed INTERREG Operational Programme for public consultation and this document contains the rationale for the new programme, the priorities and the areas of intervention along with the proposed implementation provisions.

The consultation will run until 30 April 2007. For more details, please visit: http://www.seupb.org/consultation_interreg.htm.

FUTURE OF LIFE+ PROGRAMME

The first calls for proposals should be launched before the end of 2007, probably in the autumn.

The Life Programme was the EU's main fund for supporting environmental projects. The LIFE+ Programme (2007-2013) will be the successor to this. There are three principal contents of LIFE+.

- nature and biodiversity;
- environmental policy and governance;
- information and communication.

Progress to date

- The European Commission brought the LIFE+ proposal forward in October 2004.
- The Draft Regulation was considered by the European Parliament (EP) and an amended version of the Commission proposal passed its first reading in the summer of 2005.
- The Commission's draft proposal was also considered by member states in the Council of the European Union. They reached a 'partial political agreement' on the text in December 2005.
- Once the budget for the programme had been agreed, the Council reached a common position in June 2006.
- It went to the EP for a second reading on 24 October 2006. The position adopted by Parliament emerged from the Environment Committee and has significant differences to the position adopted in Council. Essentially, it was unhappy that 80% of programme funding was to be delegated to member states and feared this would weaken the European added value of the programme. The position Parliament adopted had strong cross-party support.

Current position

The issue will now be decided through a conciliation procedure. Resolution through this procedure is unlikely before late spring 2007. The outcomes for the UK of the delay in implementation of LIFE+ are:

- There will be a significant delay in setting up the structures needed in the UK to support the programme.
- There is uncertainty over whether the programme will be run by national agencies or centrally by the Commission.

- The Regulation, which will cover the period 2007-2013, is expected to be adopted by September 2007.

The first call for proposals should be launched before the end of 2007, probably in the autumn. Until the conciliation procedure is concluded, the details of these calls are uncertain.

Conciliation

This is the final stage of the co-decision procedure. To enter into law the agreement of both the Council and European Parliament is essential. A joint committee meets to reconcile the positions. If it reaches agreement and the joint text is adopted by the Council and the Parliament, the Regulation will be adopted. If a joint text cannot be agreed, or the Council and/or Parliament reject the joint text, it is deemed not adopted and will be lost.

More details will be made available as soon as possible. In the meantime, potential applicants are advised to begin preparing their proposals.

For further information please visit the European Commission website: <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/news/futureoflife.htm#autumncalls>.

EUROPE FOR CITIZENS 2007-2013

This programme supports a wide range of activities and organisations promoting "active European citizenship", especially the involvement of citizens and civil society organisations in the process of European integration, including town twinning.

The aim of this programme is to bring Europe closer to its citizens and to enable them to participate fully in the European construction. Through this programme, citizens have the opportunity to be involved in transnational exchanges and cooperation activities, contributing to developing a sense of belonging to common European ideals and encouraging the process of European integration.

General objectives

The general objectives of the Europe for citizens programme are to contribute to:

- giving citizens the opportunity to interact and participate in constructing an ever closer Europe, which is democratic and world-oriented, united in and enriched through its cultural diversity, thus developing citizenship of the European Union;

- developing a sense of European identity, based on common values, history and culture;
- fostering a sense of ownership of the European Union among its citizens;
- enhancing tolerance and mutual understanding between European citizens respecting and promoting cultural and linguistic diversity, while contributing to intercultural dialogue.

Specific objectives

The programme has the following specific objectives, which shall be implemented on a transnational basis:

- bringing together people from local communities across Europe to share and exchange experiences, opinions and values, to learn from history and to build for the future;
- fostering action, debate and reflection related to European citizenship and democracy, shared values, common history and culture through cooperation within civil society organisations at European level;
- bringing Europe closer to its citizens by promoting Europe's values and achievements, while preserving the memory of its past;
- encouraging interaction between citizens and civil society organisations from all participating countries, contributing to intercultural dialogue and bringing to the fore both Europe's diversity and unity, with particular attention to activities aimed at developing closer ties between citizens from member states of the European Union as constituted on 30 April 2004 and those from member states which have acceded since that date.

The programme 'Europe for citizens' with a total budget of €215 million started on 1 January 2007 and will end on 31 December 2013.

Please note that all procedures for the adaptation of the programme are finalised and the text of the guide is applicable.

Which types of actions does the programme support?

It supports four main types of actions:

- Action 1 — Active Citizens for Europe: involving citizens either through activities linked to town twinning or through other kinds of citizens' projects.

- Action 2 — Active civil society in Europe: targeted to civil society organisations either through structural support on the basis of their European level work programme or through support to projects.
- Action 3 — Together for Europe: including high visibility events, studies and information tools.
- Action 4 — Active European Remembrance: support to projects aiming at preserving the sites and archives associated with deportations as well as the commemorating of victims of Nazism and Stalinism.

Direct beneficiaries of grants

The programme is open to all stakeholders promoting active European citizenship. For example:

- local authorities and organisations
- European public policy research organisations (think tanks)
- citizens' groups
- civil society organisations
- non-governmental organisations
- trade unions
- educational institutions
- organisations active in the field of voluntary work
- organisations active in the field of amateur sport.

Some actions of the programme are however targeting a more limited range of organisations. The eligibility of applicant organisations is therefore defined in this guide specifically for each measure/submeasure.

Target group

The programme is targeting European citizens, which includes for the purpose of this programme citizens of EU member states and citizens of other participating countries as well as legal residents in the participating countries.

If you want to know more about possibilities for funding within 'Citizenship', please have a closer look at the Citizenship Programme Guide: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/citizenship/guide/index_en.htm.

EACEA— Education, Audiovisual and Culture, Executive Agency, Unit P7 — Citizenship, BOUR 00/13, Avenue du Bourget 1, BE-1140 Brussels. Tel: +32 (0)2 299 11 11. Hot Line Town Twinning: +32 (0)2 295 26 85 (between 9.30-12.30 from Tuesday to Thursday). Fax: +32 (0)2 296 23 89. Email: eacea-p7@ec.europa.eu

YOUTH IN ACTION PROGRAMME 2007-2013

Youth in Action is the new EU Programme in the field of youth, which will be implemented from 1 January 2007 until 31 December 2013 with a total budget of €885 million. It is the successor to the YOUTH Programme (2000-2006). It encourages the involvement of young people with fewer opportunities and addresses young people aged 13-30.

Its general objectives are to:

- Promote young people's active citizenship in general and their European citizenship in particular;
- Develop solidarity and promote tolerance among young people, in particular in order to foster social cohesion in the European Union;
- Foster mutual understanding between young people in different countries;
- Contribute to developing the quality of support systems for youth activities and the capabilities of civil society organisations in the youth field;
- Promote European cooperation in the youth field.

These general objectives shall be implemented at project level taking into consideration the following permanent priorities.

- European citizenship
- Participation of young people
- Cultural Diversity
- Inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities

Budget and Duration

The Programme has an overall budget of €885 million for the period 2007-2013. The annual budget is subject to decision of the budgetary authorities.

Who is eligible?

Young people between the ages of 13 and 30 are encouraged to get involved (main target group: 15 to 28 years), subject to the requirements of specific projects, and special attention is given to individuals with fewer opportunities. The Programme is open to all young people independently of their level of education or social and cultural background.

Structure of the Youth in Action Programme

In order to achieve its objectives, the Youth in Action Programme foresees five operational Actions.

- Action 1 — Youth for Europe;
- Action 2 — European Voluntary Service;
- Action 3 — Youth in the World;
- Action 4 — Youth Support Systems;
- Action 5 — European Cooperation in the youth field.

Deadlines

For projects starting between: 1 July and 30 November, deadline is 1 February; 1 November and 30 March, deadline is 1 June; 1 January and 31 July, deadline is 1 September.

Contact details:

Postal address: Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, Youth Department, BOUR 01/01, Avenue de Bourget 1, B-1140 Brussels.
Tel: +32 2 29 97824. Fax: +32 2 29 21330.

Websites: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/static/en/youth/index_en.htm

Email address: youth@ec.europa.eu

ONLINE INFORMATION:



For all the events affecting the voluntary and community sector within Northern Ireland visit: www.nicva.org and www.communityni.org



Grant Tracker has been designed by NICVA as a one-stop funding resource for voluntary and community groups in Northern Ireland. It functions as a searchable website and is supported by the staff from NICVA's Funding Advice Service. Visit: www.grant-tracker.org



European Information Network

This site provides a definitive list of EU information providers in Northern Ireland, as well as giving links to a whole host of related European, regional and national websites. Visit: <http://www.europe.org.uk>

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