

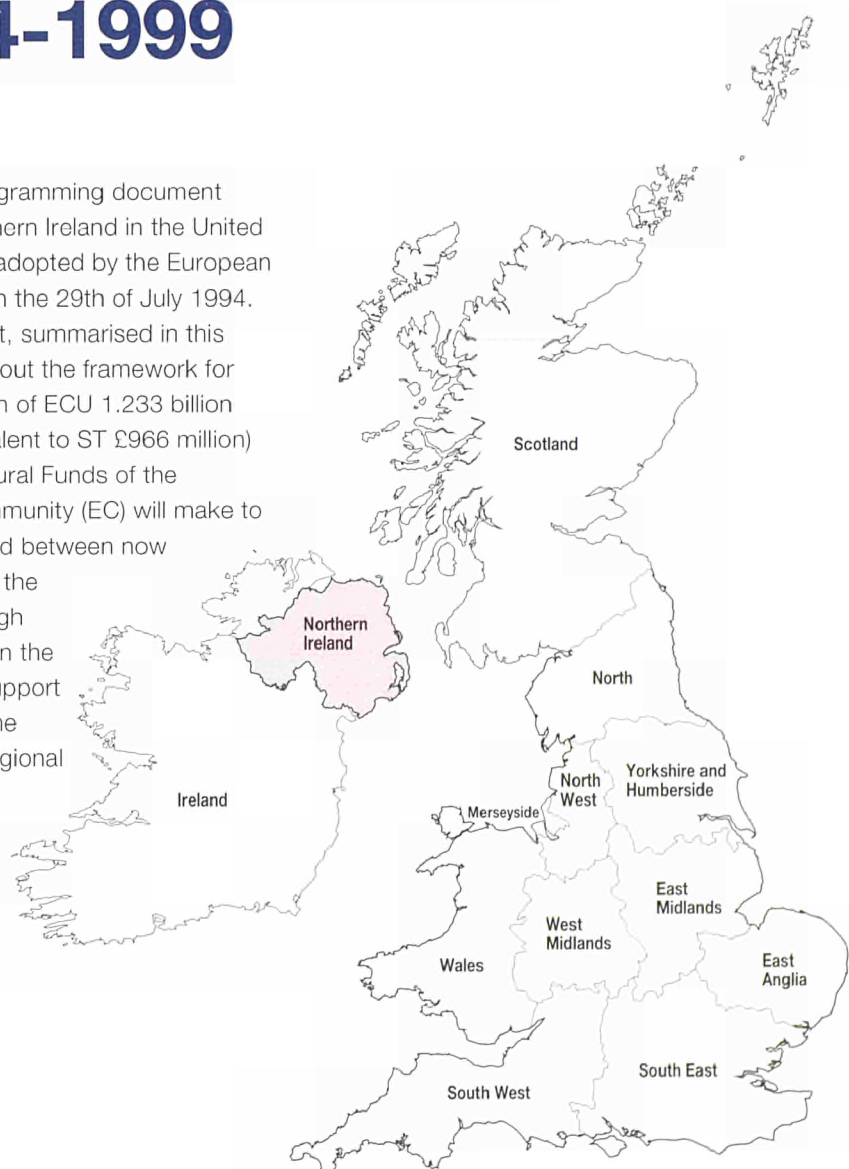
November 1994 - EN

Summary of the SPD for Northern Ireland (Objective 1)

The EC Structural Funds and the development of Northern Ireland, 1994-1999

info regio

The Single programming document (SPD) for Northern Ireland in the United Kingdom was adopted by the European Commission on the 29th of July 1994. This agreement, summarised in this brochure, lays out the framework for the contribution of ECU 1.233 billion (roughly equivalent to ST £966 million) that the Structural Funds of the European Community (EC) will make to Northern Ireland between now and the end of the century. Through this contribution the EC seeks to support the efforts of the national and regional authorities in encouraging the region to accelerate its economic development.



Northern Ireland and Europe

Northern Ireland faces particularly difficult challenges to its economic development. With a small and relatively dispersed population of 1.6 million inhabitants the region is geographically isolated from the main markets of the Community. In addition, the high birth rate results in a relatively young age structure with 25% of the population being under 15 years of age against 18% across the Community. Although the region has tended to perform quite well over recent years the GDP per head of population is declining relative to the Community average, standing in 1991 at 74.3%.

Unemployment in Northern Ireland stands at over twice the Community average, with particularly high rates of long-term unemployment. Alongside this there is a pattern of low levels of educational attainment, a dependency on public sector employment and limited natural resources.

The Single programming document

The Single programming document (SPD) is an agreement drawn up between the European Commission and the national and regional authorities responsible for the Structural Funds.

The SPD includes the general development strategy and the financing programme which become immediately operational. Project managers wishing to benefit from this programme must contact the authority responsible for the implementation of the SPD:

Industrial Development Board for Northern Ireland

IDB House
64 Chichester Street
Belfast BT1 45X
United Kingdom
Tel: +44 232 233 233
Fax: +44 232 231 328

On 3 November 1993, the government of the United Kingdom submitted to the Commission a proposal for the SPD. Based on this, the Commission adopted in July 1994 its single decision on Structural Fund intervention in Northern Ireland.

The resulting Single programming document includes five development priorities or sectoral programmes for Northern Ireland, under which there is a series of sub-measures. Alongside this there is an allocation set aside for technical assistance.

The Single programming document is a new approach to administering the Structural Funds. The more familiar system requires a Community support framework (CSF) which is an initial agreement on the development objectives for the particular region. Specific programmes are then adopted in a second stage.

The economy of Northern Ireland

The peripherality of the island of Ireland imposes elevated costs on the local economy especially in view of the strong dependence on imported raw materials and energy sources.

The Northern Irish economy is characterised by an unbalanced industrial structure, dependent on traditional, declining productive activities. The competitiveness of local industry is inhibited by a number of further factors, in particular, low productivity and low levels of innovation and diffusion of technology. The agricultural sector, although relatively important, supports a preponderance of small farms on poor land.

Although dependence on public sector employment is decreasing, it is still disproportionately high. Likewise, there are persistently high levels of long-term unemployment linked to high growth in labour supply, limited new job opportunities and low levels of educational attainment.

The community conflict in Northern Ireland has also distorted the economic structure of the region especially through the loss of potential inward investment.

Priorities

The Northern Ireland Single programming document fixes five development priority areas for the region. Each priority may consist of one or more sub-programmes.

1 Promoting economic development and competitiveness

This sub-programme covers aid to industry, local economic development, research and development and technology transfers, technological infrastructure, environment, quality and innovation, and training measures, in particular to improve managerial skills, the adaptation of the workforce to new challenges, and for the support of local economic development initiatives. Assistance to the tourism industry - a new sub-programme - will cover marketing, the provision of amenities and accommodation, conservation of the natural and built environment and training for the tourism industry.

2 Investment in communities and people

Measures aimed at improving the physical and social environment will tackle the community divisions in the region where socio-economic differentials cause the greatest need. This will include a series of measures for community relations, urban regeneration, targeting social need and community infrastructure.

A further set of measures will provide for training from school leavers through to

meeting skills needs in identified growth sectors, as well as targeting special needs and promoting equal opportunities.

3 Reducing the effects of peripherality

Community assistance will develop the transport infrastructure in Northern Ireland, mainly through rail and road Trans-European Networks and other transport infrastructures contributing to the Access to Gateways theme. Energy supply will be improved with the gas pipeline and electricity inter-connector with Scotland whilst further measures will improve energy efficiency.

4 The development of agriculture, fisheries and the rural economy

A series of measures will seek to improve the rural environment and regenerate the rural economy, with particular attention being paid to the agri-food industry. Assistance will be provided for the adjustment of the fishing effort, the development of the fleet, marketing and processing, aquaculture and improving port facilities.

5 The protection and enhancement of the natural and built environment

Community assistance will improve the water supply, and assist in waste water treatment and environmental protection measures.

Quantified objectives

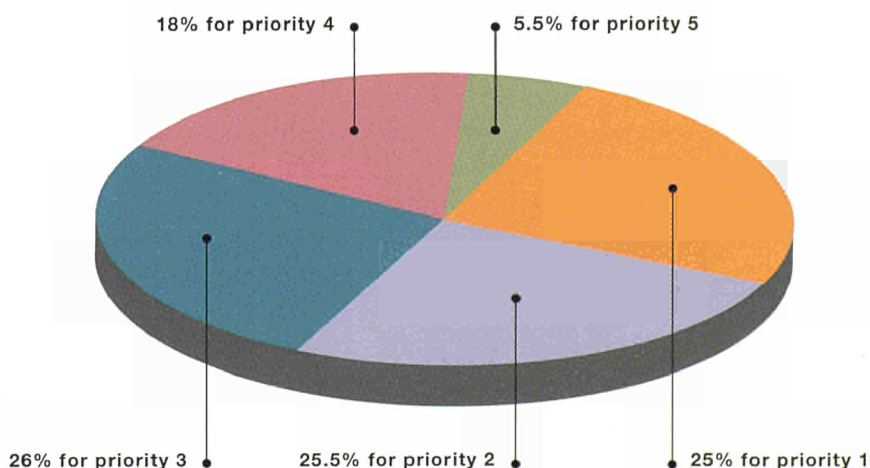
The priorities within the Single programming document sets a series of clear targets, many of them quantitative, allowing a precise programme impact evaluation in the future.

An exact quantification of results achieved through Objective 1 structural actions across the whole eligible area may be difficult to forecast. Not least because these actions are complementary to a wide range of other development actions that are already being undertaken in the region. Therefore, the Single programming document lists targets to be aimed for in all the various areas of activity.

For example, the SPD aims to increase total civil employment from 618,200 in 1993 to 630,000 in 1999.

Likewise the percentage of business expenditure on RTD is to double to reach the levels experienced elsewhere in the United Kingdom.

The division of Structural Fund resources by priority area



Financing the investment

(million ECU)

Priorities	Total Struct. Funds 1=2+3+4+5	Structural Funds				EIB/ECSC Loans 6	National/ public funding 7	Private funding 8	Total cost 9 = 1+7+8
		ERDF 2	ESF 3	EAGGF 4	FIFG 5				
1 Competitiveness	315.00	199.20	115.80				121.88	245.12	682.09
Economic development	239.81	141.01	98.80				91.90	185.08	516.79
Tourism	75.28	58.28	17.00				29.98	60.04	165.30
2 Human resources	315.82	90.82	225.20				146.63	12.90	475.35
Physical and social environment	122.22	80.62	41.60				47.78	2.90	172.90
Investment in the development of people	193.60	10.00	183.60				98.85	10.00	302.45
3 Peripherality	321.18	321.18					65.59	343.11	729.88
Transportation	139.00	139.00					65.20	4.60	208.80
Energy	182.18	182.18					0.39	338.51	521.08
4 Agriculture/ fisheries	215.00		13.00	186.88	15.12		145.87	313.46	674.33
Agriculture and rural development	199.88		13.00	186.88			140.87	302.26	643.01
Fisheries	15.12				15.12		5.00	11.20	31.32
5 The natural environment	64.11	64.11					30.35		94.46
Environmental services and protection	64.11	64.11					30.35		94.46
Technical assistance	1.62	1.62					0.60		2.22
Total	1232.82	676.82	354.00	186.88	15.12	250.00	510.92	914.59	2658.33

Measures

The five development priorities for Northern Ireland are divided into nine sub-programmes. Under these sub-programmes the eligible measures are given, along with the available Structural Fund assistance, the target groups and the beneficiaries of the intervention.

1 Promoting economic development and competitiveness

Sub-programme:

Economic development

- aids to industry including selective financial assistance; technical appraisal, marketing and exports; seed and development capital; and sectoral studies. (ECU 37.11 million - the manufacturing and tradeable services sectors)
- local economic development including: common support services; marketing and information; measures to adapt to the demands of wider markets; diversification. (ECU 26.01 million - local enterprise agencies, District Councils, local communities and industry)
- research and development and technology transfer covering: the COMPLETE Programme, Science and Technology Programme, technology transfer, networking, graduate placement, and strengthening research. (ECU 31.87 million - industry and Higher Education Institutes)
- technological infrastructure covering: research facilities; physical infrastructure; demonstration projects; collaboration; calibration, testing and standardisation; measurement and evaluation. (ECU 25.69 million - industry and Higher Education Institutes)
- the environment, quality and innovation covering: awareness raising; the Environmental Audit Programme; environmentally friendly products and services; advisory service to industry; R&D; quality systems; licensing. (ECU 19.01 million - industry)
- management, entrepreneurial and workforce training for new and existing firms including: courses for managers and entrepreneurs; in company training systems; and courses for individuals. (ECU 66 million - providers of training, Further and Higher Education Institutes, companies)
- training in support of local economic development initiatives covering: courses for managers; and support for animateurs and transfer of best practice. (ECU 7.8 million)

- training in new technologies supporting: courses; industrial placements; and exchanges. (ECU 25 million)
- technical assistance covering: the development of training; analysis and evaluation of change; efficiency of small firms; evaluation of interventions in small business; innovative initiatives. (ECU 1.32 million - department of Economic Development, other public bodies and private sector interests)

Sub-programme:

Tourism

- marketing and promotion of Northern Ireland including: awareness raising of tourism infrastructure; assistance for organising international events and conferences; encouraging approved tour operators to participate in promotions outside the region; marketing assistance. (ECU 18.35 million - private, public and voluntary sector tourism businesses; representative bodies; local authority/private sector partnerships, Northern Ireland Tourist Board)
- the development and enhancement of tourist activities covering: land acquisition; feasibility studies; infrastructure; conference centres; language schools; transport; waterways; development of rivers; access to the countryside; information. (ECU 19.54 million - District Councils, voluntary/charitable/community-based bodies, private sector)
- provision of tourist accommodation including: land acquisition, development of new hotels, self catering facilities and guesthouses; enlarging and upgrading facilities; amenities and accessibility. (ECU 12.28 million - private sector, voluntary/charitable/community based groups, District Councils)
- conservation of the natural and built environment including: the provision of an interpretative centre, small access schemes; improvement of listed buildings and historic monuments. (ECU 8.11 million - District Councils, conservation organisations, owners of listed buildings, Department of the Environment)
- training for the tourism industry (ECU 17 million - providers of training, Further and Higher Education, local authorities, voluntary and community bodies)

Monitoring Committee

A Monitoring Committee will be responsible for the Objective 1 programme. The responsibilities of the Committee include overseeing the programme management, setting the strategic framework for implementation of the measures and monitoring the impact of the projects undertaken.

The Monitoring Committee will comprise representatives of principal regional partners including:

- Training and Education Councils
- statutory bodies
- the private and voluntary sectors
- local and national government
- the European Commission

2 Investing in communities and people

Sub-programme:

Physical and social environment

- community relations covering: reconciliation; exploration of the cultural heritage; community facilities; community relations; employment opportunities in arts, culture, leisure and sport. (ECU 20.43 million - District Councils, community and voluntary organisations, Northern Ireland Community Relations Council, education, Youth Service, the Research Community, cultural and heritage groups, Irish language groups)
- urban regeneration covering environmental and infrastructure projects. (ECU 25.54 million - District/City Councils, Regeneration Agencies, Department of the Environment)
- targeting social need (ERDF), covering: infrastructure for small business; refurbishment of buildings; environmental improvement; local regeneration activities; childcare and health facilities. (ECU 23.60 million - voluntary and community groups, local enterprise initiative groups, government and agencies working with disadvantaged groups)
- targeting social need (ESF), covering: literacy and numeracy; training; guidance and counselling. (ECU 38.60 million - voluntary and community groups, education, government and agencies providing training in disadvantaged areas)
- community infrastructure (ERDF), covering community partnerships; advice; employment of community workers; new groups and networking; research. (ECU 11.05 million - voluntary and community organisations, community agencies)
- community infrastructure (ESF), covering training for community groups. (ECU 3 million - voluntary and community organisations, community agencies)

Sub-programme:

Investment in the development of people

- pathways to employment covering: courses leading to qualifications; guidance; jobsearch assistance. (ECU 77.80 million - public, private and voluntary sector training organisations, providers of education)
- skills development covering training courses. (ECU 53 million - public and private sector training organisations, Further and Higher Education)
- training for equal opportunities covering courses; guidance; information campaigns;

and care services. (ECU 13 million - public, private and voluntary sector trainers, Further and Higher Education)

- training for special target groups covering courses for people at risk from exclusion from the labour market. (ECU 36 million - public, private and voluntary training organisations, education)
- research, evaluation and publicity covering: information and assistance for project promoters; evaluation; dissemination of results. (ECU 3.80 million - trainers and research organisations)
- training infrastructure including construction and adaptation of buildings; purchase of equipment. (ECU 10 million - District Councils and community providers of training)

3 Reducing the effects of peripherality

Sub-programme:

Transportation

- roads, including work on five priority routes. (ECU 40.8 million - Department of the Environment)
- railways, including the upgrading of selected lines and services. (ECU 61.80 million - Northern Ireland Railways)
- public transport: bus, including improved services, dedicated bus lanes and facilities. (ECU 5.4 million - Ulsterbus Ltd.)
- ports and harbours, including actions: to improve efficiency; upgrade facilities; and upgrade services. (ECU 17 million - Belfast Port and Harbour Commissioners, Londonderry Port and Harbour Commissioners, Warrenpoint Harbour Authority, Larne Harbour Ltd.)
- airports, including actions to encourage the introduction of new routes or services. (ECU 4.2 million - Belfast International Airport, Belfast City Airport, City of Derry Airport)
- new technology and technical assistance covering: studies; surveys; training and study visits. (ECU 9.8 million)

Sub-programme:

Energy

- natural gas project connecting Scotland and Northern Ireland. (ECU 90.70 million - Ballyumford Power Ltd, Premier Transco Ltd.)
- electricity inter-connectors between Scotland and Northern Ireland, and Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. (ECU 86.48 million - NIE Ltd.)
- energy efficiency measures especially in SMEs. (ECU 5 million - industry and non-domestic consumers)

4 The development of agriculture, fisheries and the rural economy

Sub-programme:

Agriculture and rural development

- agriculture: measures to maintain a viable agricultural community and to support producer organisations. (ECU 69.08 million - farm businesses and producer organisations)
- marketing and processing conditions for agricultural products covering grant aid on investments. (ECU 38.88 million - companies engaged in marketing or processing of primary agricultural produce)
- training for the food sector covering courses and qualifications. (ECU 13 million - providers of training, education, and companies)
- improved competitiveness, quality, marketing and cost management covering: capital grants; IT systems; assistance for farm accounts; guidance; information services to farmers (ECU 33.07 million - farms and agri-food business)
- research and development and human resources development including: studies and research; product development; technology transfer; and training. (ECU 7.14 million - farm and agri-food businesses)
- safeguarding and enhancing the rural environment covering: capital grants for new ways of dealing with waste; studies; advice. (ECU 15.92 million - farm businesses and the public)
- farm diversification covering: creating collectives for afforestation; business support services; studies; and demonstration projects. (ECU 4.04 million - farm businesses)
- capacity building covering: training; technical assistance; studies; and equipment. (ECU 3.75 million - community groups in disadvantaged areas)
- strategic area plans and community regeneration projects covering: audits; infrastructure; service provision; technical assistance; and training. (ECU 15 million - community groups in disadvantaged areas)

Sub-programme:

Fisheries

- adjustment of fishing effort: permanent withdrawal through decommissioning of vessels. (ECU 3.51 million - vessel owners)
- renewal and modernisation of the fishing fleet: fishing vessel improvement with special reference to safety work. (ECU 4 million - vessel owners and workers on board ships)

- consolidation, rationalisation and diversification of aquaculture and improvement of quality and hygiene. Development of enclosed seawater areas. (ECU 0.9 million - producers and processors; business)
- improving port facilities especially with regard to quality, hygiene and safety. (ECU 3.71 million - harbour authorities, fishermen and processors)
- encourage more added value of fisheries products through better processing and marketing. Generic promotion of fisheries products. (ECU 3 million - businesses processing and marketing fish, marketing and trade organisations)

5 The protection and enhancement of the natural environment

Sub-programme:

Environmental services and protection

- waste water treatment, improving the sewage treatment system. (ECU 29.97 million - Department of the Environment)
- water supply covering improved treatment and distribution systems. (ECU 29.97 million - Department of the Environment)
- environmental protection including: studies and research; site reclamation; and recycling of waste. (ECU 4.17 million - research institutes, universities, District Councils, environmental organisations and the Department of the Environment)

In brief

The socio-economic impact of the Single programming document is to be measured using, where appropriate, clearly defined performance indicators. The evaluation of the development effort is designed to ensure that resources are used efficiently and effectively.

Further considerations that are taken into account in the implementation of development measures include an evaluation of the environmental impact of projects and coherence with Community policies in related areas such as transport, equal opportunities, and the Common Agricultural Policy.

Technical assistance

In addition to these measures, ECU 1.62 million has been set aside for technical assistance evaluation, awareness raising, and research work related to the Single programming document provisions.

The full text of the SPD
can be obtained from:

HMSO Books
(Agency section)
HMSO Publications Centre
51 Nine Elms Lane
UK-London SW8 5DR
Tel: +44 171 873 9090
Fax: +44 171 873 8463

For more information

In order to promote overall harmonious development, the Community has adopted a policy focusing on economic and social cohesion with concentration on non-repayable financial assistance and on five priority objectives.

Objective 1

Structural adjustment of regions whose development is lagging behind

Objective 2

Economic conversion of areas seriously affected by industrial decline

Objective 3

Combating long-term unemployment and facilitating the integration into working life of young people and those threatened with exclusion from the labour market

Objective 4

Preventive measures to combat unemployment associated with industrial change

Objective 5a

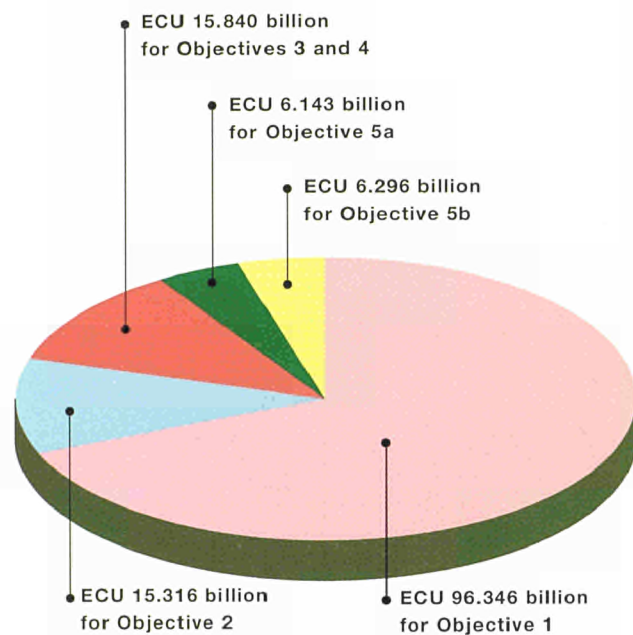
Structural adaptation of agriculture and fisheries

Objective 5b

Economic diversification of vulnerable rural areas

Objectives 1, 2 and 5b are regionally targeted and give rise to measures part-financed by the Structural Funds in certain regions, or parts of regions, recognized as eligible. For Objectives 1 and 5b the lists of eligible regions and areas are fixed for 1994-1999. For Objective 2 the list is fixed for 1994-1996. Measures part-financed by the Structural Funds under Objectives 3, 4 and 5a may be implemented throughout the Community.

During the period 1994-1999, the Structural Funds - European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), European Social Fund (ESF), Guidance Section of the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) and the Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (FIFG) - will have at their disposal a total appropriation of ECU 141.471 billion.



«Part-financing» is the operative term because, in most cases, the Structural Funds can meet only part of the total cost of projects:

- up to 85% in the remotest regions and certain Greek islands
- up to 80% in the Objective 1 regions of Spain, Greece, Ireland and Portugal
- up to 75% in the other Objective 1 regions
- up to 50% for Objectives 2, 3, 4 and 5b.

Other Community sources of financing are available, such as grants from the Cohesion Fund and the EFTA countries for the four eligible countries (GR, ES, IRL and PT), and EIB and ECSC loans.

Complementary national financing may be of private or public origin (national, regional or local).



European Commission
Directorate-General for Regional Policies

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