

# CCBS – LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

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19 October 2018 – 26 October 2018



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

The Northern Ireland Assembly was dissolved at 00:01 on Thursday 26 January 2017.



Tuesday 23 October 2018

Department for Health

Michaél Martin asked the Minister for Health the status of the progress being made on the North-South agreement on children's cardiac surgery being carried out in Dublin in order to prevent children from Northern Ireland travelling to Birmingham and-or Manchester; if persons have been treated to date; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

**Simon Coveney:** In June 2016, I gave my approval for the establishment and funding of an All-Island Congenital Heart Disease Network, centred on Our Lady's Children's Hospital Crumlin (OLCHC) and serving as an all-island centralised hub for paediatric cardiothoracic surgery and interventional cardiology. As part of the Network, OLCHC provides cardiothoracic surgery and paediatric cardiac catheterisation for patients from Northern Ireland. The phased implementation of the Network commenced in late 2015, with OLCHC providing surgery and cardiac catheterisation for emergency cases from Northern Ireland. Treatment of urgent cases commenced in March 2017.

I am pleased to advise the Deputy that the transfer of elective cases from Northern Ireland, the next step in the phased implementation of the Network, began in April this year. Plans for an extension to the Paediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) in OLCHC to accommodate all elective patients from Northern

Ireland are also at an advanced stage. This is an example of the benefits for patients of North South cooperation in healthcare, with the two Departments of Health and services North and South working together in the interests of patients.

**Source** <https://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2018-10-23a.822&s=cross+border+2018-10-19..2018-10-26>

**Wednesday 24 October 2018**

**Department for Public Expenditure and Reform**

Brendan Smith asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform the outcome of recent discussions he or his Department have had with the authorities in Northern Ireland in relation to ensuring that there is a maximum drawdown of EU funding for cross-Border projects that come within the remit of his Department; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

**Paschal Donohoe:** Ireland and Northern Ireland are partners in two EU-funded cross-border Cooperation Programmes, PEACE and INTERREG, with a total value of just over €550 million over the period 2014-2020. The PEACE IV Programme has a total value of €270 million and aims to promote peace and reconciliation in Northern Ireland and the border counties of Ireland. The INTERREG VA Programme, which also includes Western Scotland, has a total value of €282 million and aims to promote economic, social and territorial cohesion.

The two programmes are 85% funded by the EU through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) under the European Union's Cohesion Policy. They are managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB), one of the North South Implementation Bodies established under the Good Friday Agreement.

My Department and the Department of Finance in Northern Ireland are the joint Sponsor Departments for the Body and the programmes, and there are ongoing contacts between my officials and their Northern Ireland counterparts to ensure that the programmes are implemented successfully and that the drawdown of funds is maximised.

In accordance with EU requirements, management of the programmes is overseen by Programme Monitoring Committees which are chaired by the SEUPB. Membership includes officials from my Department, the Northern Ireland Department of Finance and the European Commission, as well as local representatives, business, trade union and environmental groups, and the community and voluntary sector.

Quarterly tripartite meetings involving the two sponsor Departments and the SEUPB are also held to oversee the work of the Body and the programmes.

In addition to these structured engagements there are ongoing discussions between Irish and Northern Irish Departments on programme implementation.

I am pleased, therefore, to say that both programmes are progressing well, with the bulk of funding now allocated to successful applicants. To date a total €191 million has been allocated to projects under PEACE, while a total of €217 million has been allocated to projects under INTERREG. The remaining funding under both programmes will be allocated to projects over the coming months.

Source: <https://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2018-10-24a.187&s=cross+border+2018-10-19..2018-10-26#g188.q>