

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities (NICEM) is an umbrella body of ethnic minorities which represents the Chinese, Travellers, Indian, Pakistani, Muslim, African-Caribbean and Filipino communities in Northern Ireland. NICEM represents the interests of ethnic minorities and is a forum to promote participation. In pursuit of justice, equality and dignity, NICEM works for social change in relation to race relations and in particular to the elimination of racial discrimination.
- 1.2 NICEM welcomes the consultation to the preparation of the future European Structural Funds programmes. As a matter of good practice, any future European Structural Funds programmes must be PAFT proof in order to put equality of opportunity into practice. In order to achieve greater equality of opportunity, positive action programmes must be in place in order to tackle social exclusion.

## **2. OVERALL COMMENTS OF THE SINGLE PROGRAMME 1994-99**

- 2.1 Ethnic minority communities in Northern Ireland are not benefit much from the entire programmes simply because their needs are not being recognised. As a result, ethnic minority groups are excluded for funding at all level. Up to date, ethnic minorities are still excluded socially and economically. There is no mainstreaming of ethnic minorities into all government policy, in particular funding.
- 2.2 Apart from the Bryson House (establishment of a multi-cultural resource centre) which is not an ethnic minority communities, what are the total amount to date spent on PSEP that allocated to ethnic minority communities ?
- 2.3 As the second generation of ethnic minorities are growing in Northern Ireland and the fact that a high illiteracy rate within the Travelling community, what are the total amount spent to date that allocated to ethnic minorities under Investment in Development of People Sub-programme ?
- 2.4 A high proportion of ethnic minorities in Northern Ireland engage in small business, what kind of supporting programmes that have been developed to date to targeting ethnic minority business ?

## **3. AIMS AND PRIORITIES OF FUTURE EUROPEAN STRUCUTURAL FUND PROGRAMMES**

- 3.1 The three board aims of the 1994-99 Northern Ireland Single Programme of promoting internal cohesion, external cohesion and economic growth, should change to **"promoting social cohesion, external cohesion and economic**

**cohesion".** The reason why we shift from "internal cohesion" to "social cohesion" is that firstly it reflects the needs to have radical and innovative interpretation for "internal cohesion". Secondly, promotion of economic and social cohesion are the main objective of the EU Structural Fund. As a result, future programmes must be integrative, rather than fragmented according to the three heading. In particular, all economic and industrial developments must have impact assessment test on the local communities and environment.

3.2 Future EU programmes for Northern Ireland should include specific programmes for ethnic minorities. This follows the publication of the European Commission's Action Plan Against Racism (Com(1998) 183 final) in March this year. The Action Plan emphasises mainstreaming the fight against racism, including mainstreaming all EU policies and funding which includes Employment strategy, Structural Funds, Education, training and youth, etc. The Action Plan stated that "Measure under Objectives 1, 2 and 3 of the Structural Funds, in particular, can contribute to preventing racism by promoting the development of deprived areas and the integration of excluded groups....., the Integra strand of the Employment Community Initiative, and the Urban Community Initiative, contribute to the fight against racism and the promotion of inclusion by addressing the specific needs of immigrants and ethnic minority groups through empowerment measures designed to facilitate their integration into the labour market, and measures to support community development and thus lower social tensions in inner-city neighbourhoods. (para 2.3.2 The Structural Funds)

3.3 Future EU programmes for Northern Ireland should carry on the themes contained in the Peace & Reconciliation programme and build upon the work of that programmes.

3.4 The above programmes must be PAFT proof in order to put equality of opportunity into practice.

3.5 The above programmes should include specific programmes on Capacity Building in order to address social exclusion and marginalisation thereby contributing to the promotion of social cohesion necessary to build a sustainable economic cohesion.

3.6 The design of future Sub-Programmes and Measures and their allocations should address particular groups of people and geographical areas in most need. Up-to-date criteria must be used to assess disadvantage and need, and scope must be given during the life of programmes to update evidence of need.

#### **4. FUNDING DELIVERY STRUCUTRES AND MECHANISMS**

4.1 The future programmes should make substantial use of the existing Peace and Reconciliation delivery system, in particular non-governmental intermediary funding bodies with particular expertise in reaching and working with relevant target groups.

- 4.2 There should be clear and consistent guidelines to all funding bodies and mechanism. There is a need for strong co-ordination and strategic planning, and avoidance of duplication and excessive bureaucracy. There must be clarity about the respective roles and strategic focus of future local partnerships and regional/thematic intermediary funding bodies.

## **5. PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT, CONSULTATIVE, AND DECISION-MAKING STRUCUTRES**

- 5.1 Future programme management structures must be open, accountable, representative of a wide and balanced range of different interests across Northern Ireland, and their membership and actions should be widely known and publicised.
- 5.2 Future Monitoring Committees and overall management bodies for the next EU programmes, must include formal representation of the voluntary and community sector, alongside other sectors.

**For further information about this submission please contact :**

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Mr. Pat Carvill  
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Dear Mr. Carvill

**Re : Consultation on Future EU Structural Fund**

Thank you for your letter of 14 August 1998 on the above matter. I enclose a copy of our submission to the Department of Finance & Personnel. Should you request any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me for details.

Yours sincerely

Patrick Yu  
Executive Director

**NORTHERN IRELAND COUNCIL**  
**FOR ETHNIC MINORITIES**

**Submission to the Department of  
Finance & Personnel on Future EU  
Structural Fund**

**14 October 1998**