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Special EU Schemes Board

Investment Area 2.3 Programme Area Skills Development

PEACEPLUS Programme

PEACEPLUS Programme

Investment Area 2.3 – Programme Area Skills Development

- **Introduction & Housekeeping** – Mark Huddleston, SEUPB
- **Welcome & Overview of PEACEPLUS Programme** – Mark Huddleston, Interim Director of Joint Secretariat PEACEPLUS
- **Overview of Policy Interests from Ireland** – Ian McKenna, Dept. of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science
- **Overview of Policy Interests from Northern Ireland** – Graeme Wilkinson, Dept. for the Economy
- **Overview of Investment Area 2.3, Pre-Application Support & the Concept Note** – Myriam Fearon
- **Questions and Answers**





PEACEPLUS Programme

**Mark Huddleston, SEUPB
Interim Director Joint
Secretariat PEACEPLUS**



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PEACEPLUS Context: How did we get here?

- Support of the NI Executive, the Government of Ireland, the UK Government and the European Union.
- Building upon previous PEACE & INTERREG programmes.
- Renewed focus on peace and reconciliation.
- Ensuring all projects contribute to cross-border and economic and territorial development.



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How was PEACEPLUS Developed?

Intensive review, research and public engagement

- Stakeholder engagement
- Public events – including specific events with young people
- Survey submissions
- Public consultation (2021)
- Bi-laterals with government north-south (ongoing)



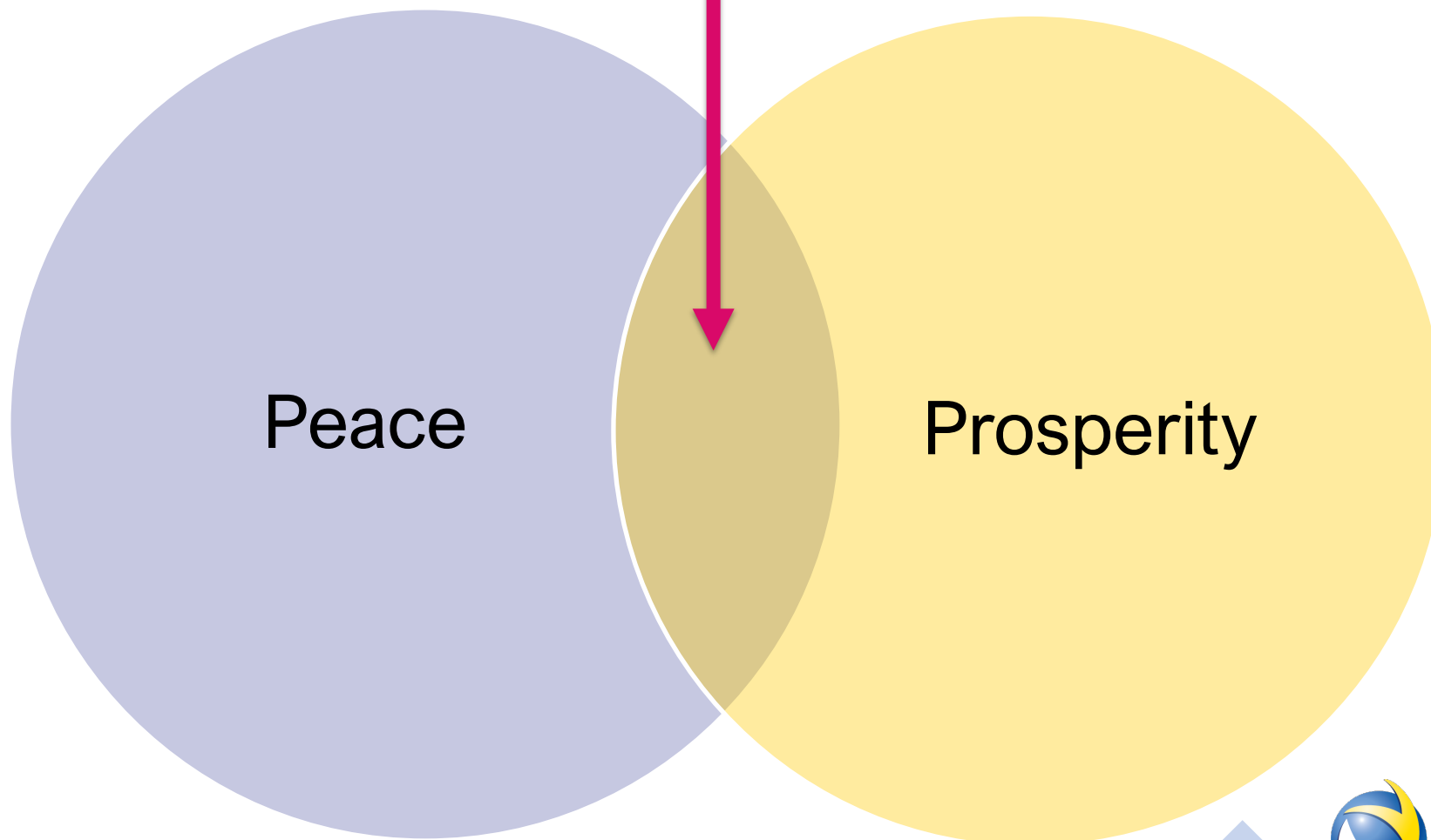
PEACEPLUS (2021-2027)



- Programme area: Northern Ireland & the border counties of Ireland
- Programme value: **€1.144 billion**
- Six themes, 22 investment areas
- Participation from partners outside the area



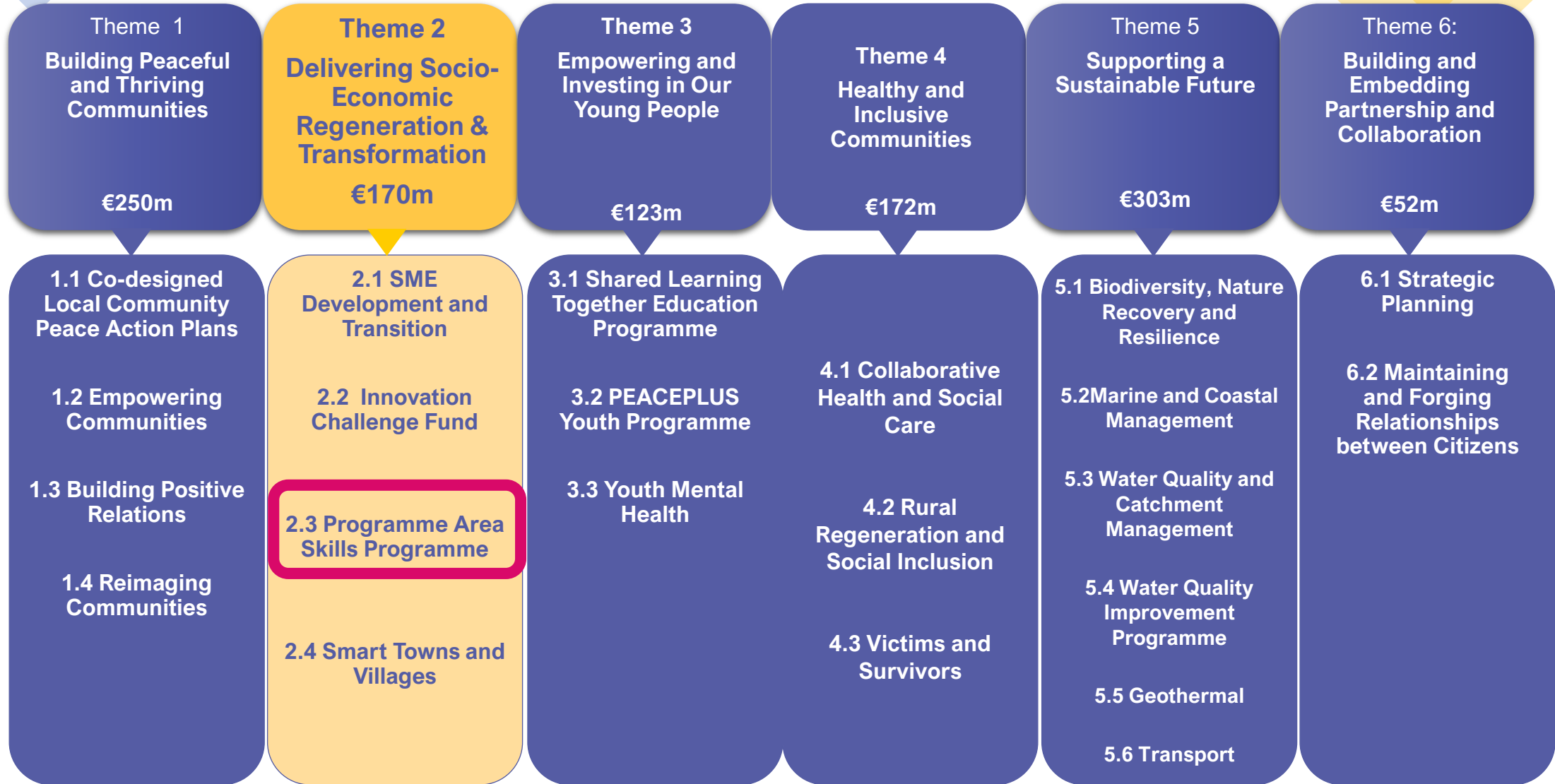
PEACEPLUS



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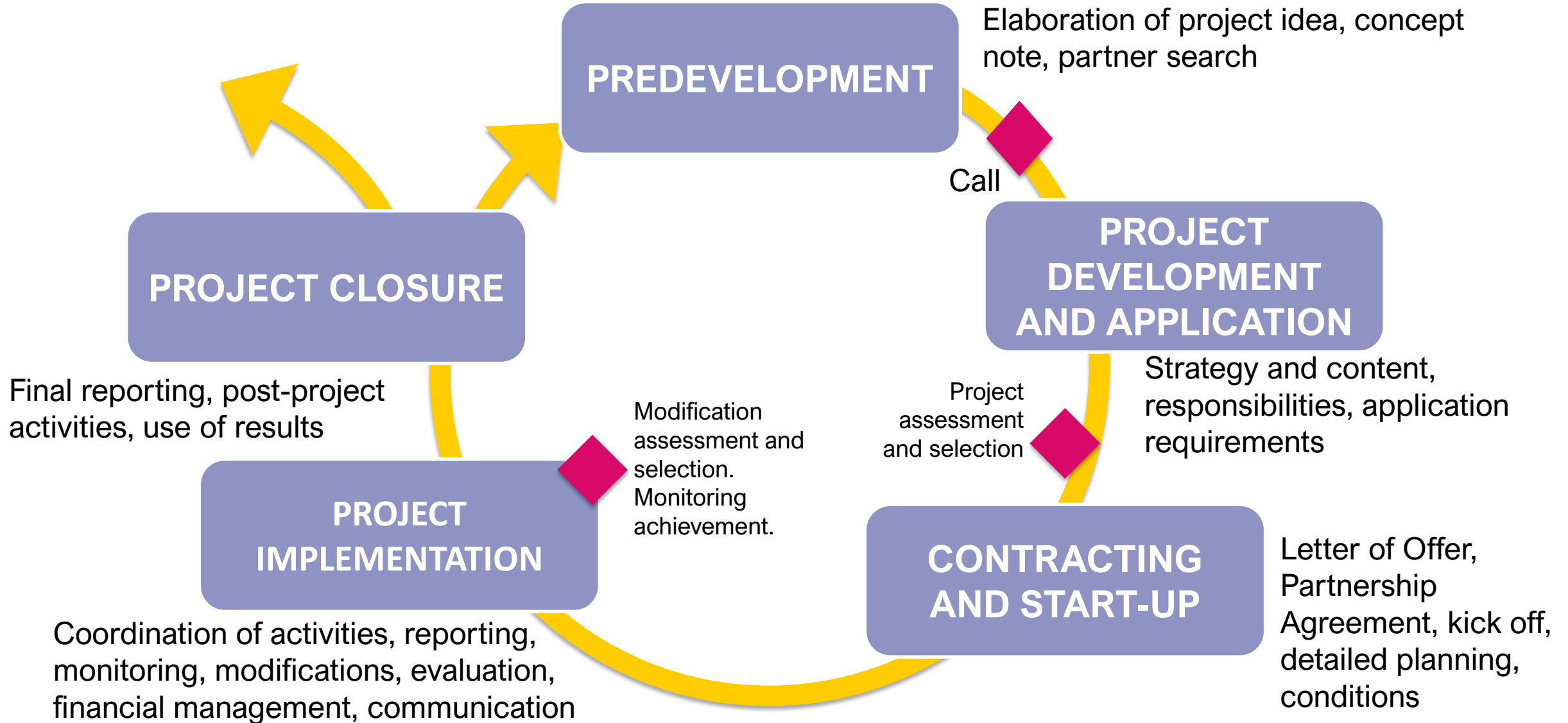
Programme Overview: Where does Programme Area Skills Development fit in?

Thematic Areas



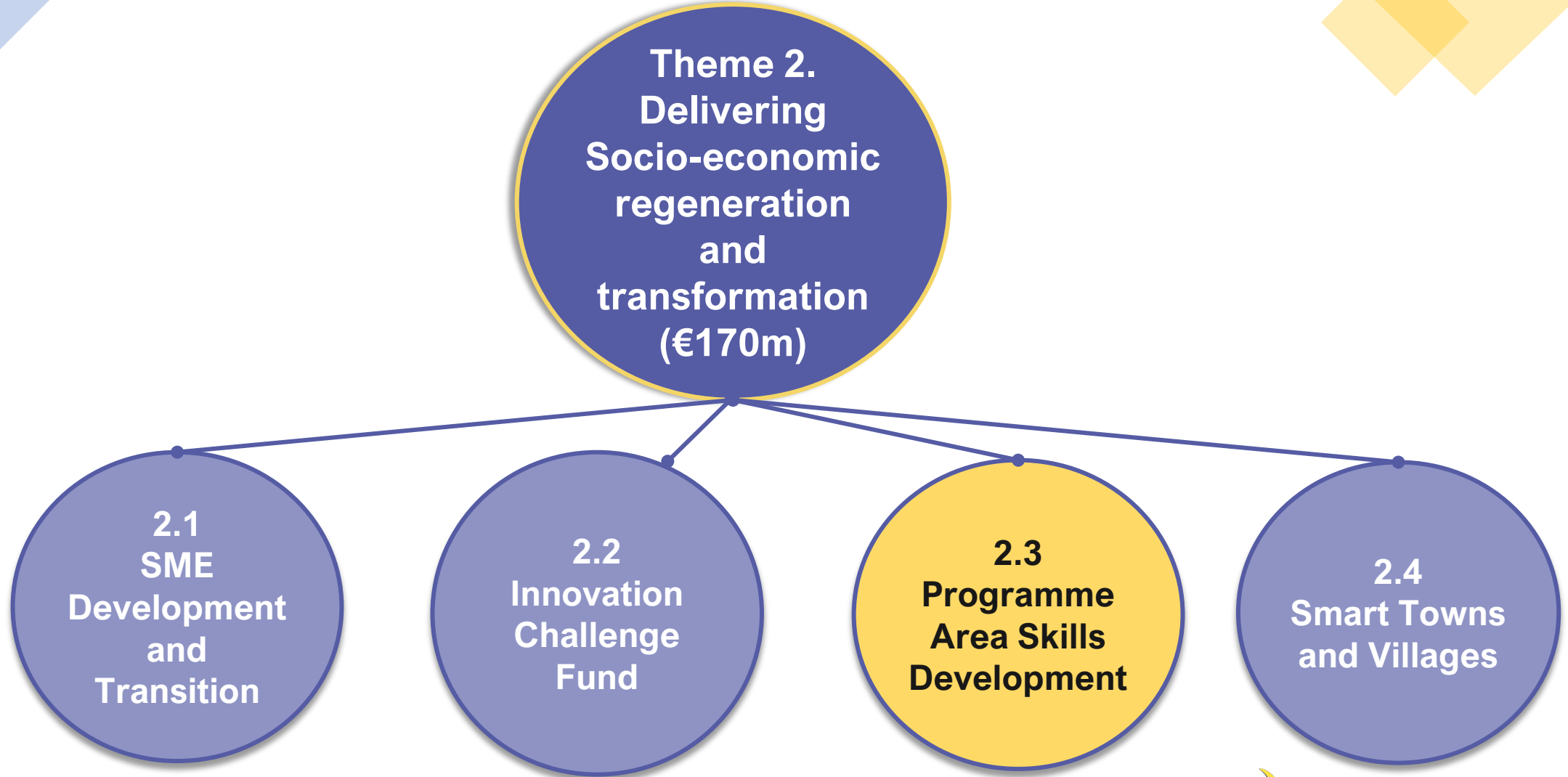
Investment Areas

Project Lifecycle



PEACEPLUS

Programme Area Skills Development



PEACEPLUS

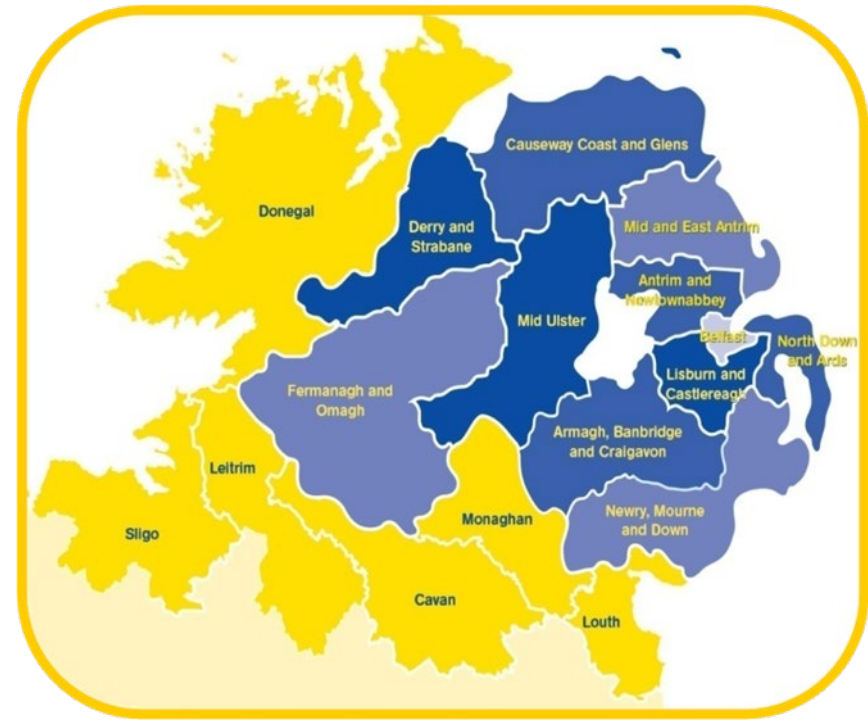
Pre-Application Workshop

Ian McKenna

Principal Officer

Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science
(DFHERIS)

Geographical Context



INVESTMENT AREA 2.3 - SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

- This objective will address existing and emerging skills gaps, leading to equal access to inclusive and quality services and increasing cross-border labour mobility.
- It will result in the development of a flourishing Programme area workforce, with skills better aligned to existing and future growth sectors and in line with public policy.

INVESTMENT AREA 2.3 - SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

- OECD Skills Strategy Ireland (May 2023)

“The Skills and Labour Market Research Unit (SLMRU) finds that over 370,000 people in Ireland work in occupations at high risk of automation and further 600,000 are in jobs considered at medium risk of automation. Technological change can help drive productivity and overcome skills shortages. However, it also means that many people will need to develop skills for new jobs or upgrade their skills for existing ones.”

INVESTMENT AREA 2.3 - SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

- OECD Skills Strategy Ireland (May 2023)

“.. while Ireland performs above the EU average in terms of digital skills – scoring fifth overall in the Digital Economy and Society Index 2022, with strong growth in recent years – only 30% of adults have less than basic digital skills (including information and data literacy, digital content creation and more). In addition, it is particularly worrying that adults with comparatively weak socio-economic profiles (e.g. lower social classes, low education levels) self-report that their digital skills are below average.”

INVESTMENT AREA 2.3 - SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

- OECD Skills Strategy Ireland (May 2023)

“Skills imbalances are evident in the Irish economy. These imbalances concern not only skills shortages and surpluses but also skills mismatches, which occur when a worker’s skills exceed or fall short of those required for the job under current market conditions.

Irish employers express great concern about labour and skills shortages.”

“Strong leadership and management capabilities are important drivers of organisational change, helping to optimise the use of skills in workplaces and drive innovation, productivity and firm performance. Previous studies have highlighted a need to improve management capability in Ireland, particularly among small and medium-sized enterprises.”

INVESTMENT AREA 2.3 - SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Ambition

- *Change the lives of minimum of 8,000 persons, North and South*
- *Exploit the Skills toolkits, North and South, to:*
 - *Share and learn best practice from existing skills infrastructure;*
 - *Support existing strengths within sub-regions to deliver on skills acquisition (re-/ up-skilling)*
 - *Build sustainable networks and connections on cross-border/ cross-community basis to maintain momentum built during PEACE PLUS;*
- *Recognise the mobility of the North-South workforce to pursue their professional ambition on the island of Ireland, based on their capacity to use their skills;*



Department for the
Economy
www.economy-ni.gov.uk

Northern Ireland Skills Policy Context

Graeme Wilkinson

Director of Skills, Department for the Economy

8th June 2023



Creating a globally competitive economy that works for everyone



- Programme for Government



- 10x Economy

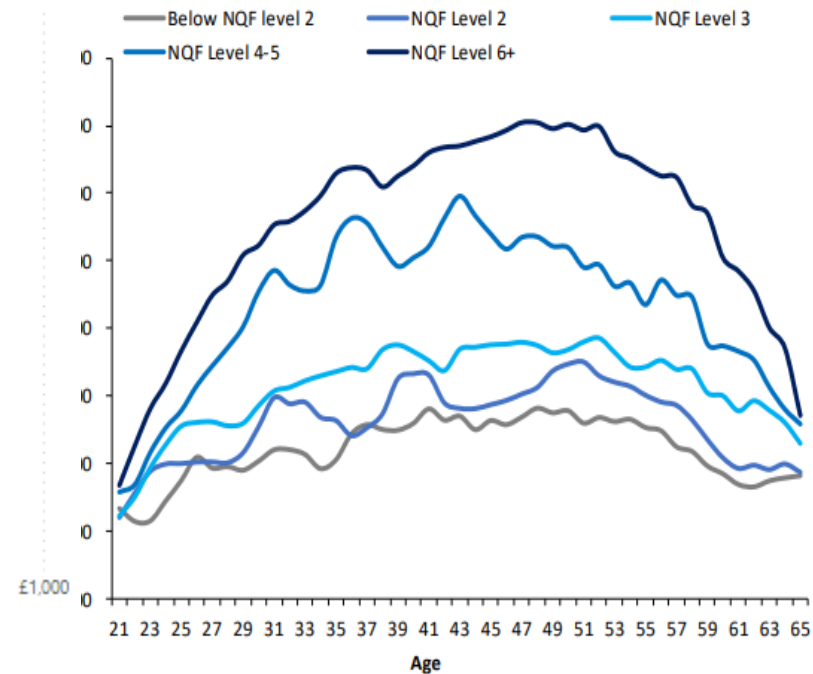


Creating a globally competitive economy that works for everyone

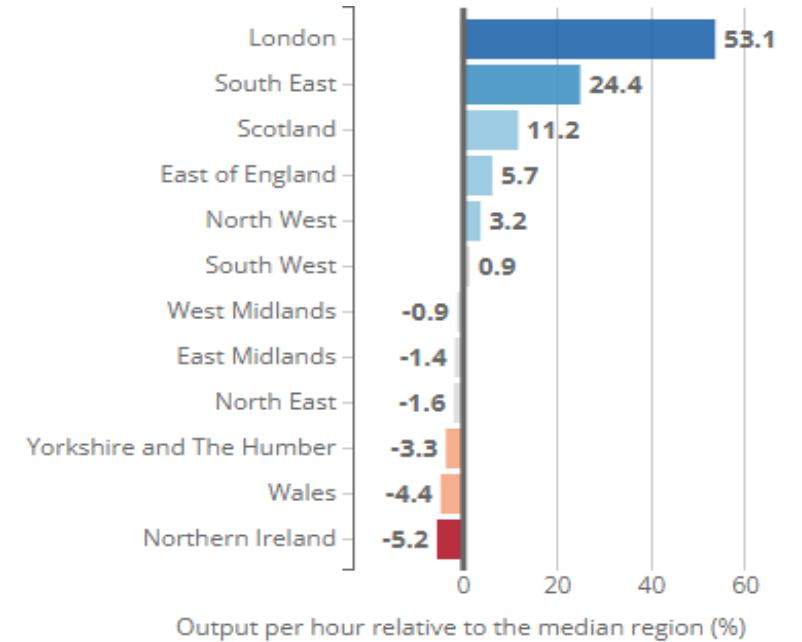
Pay



Progression



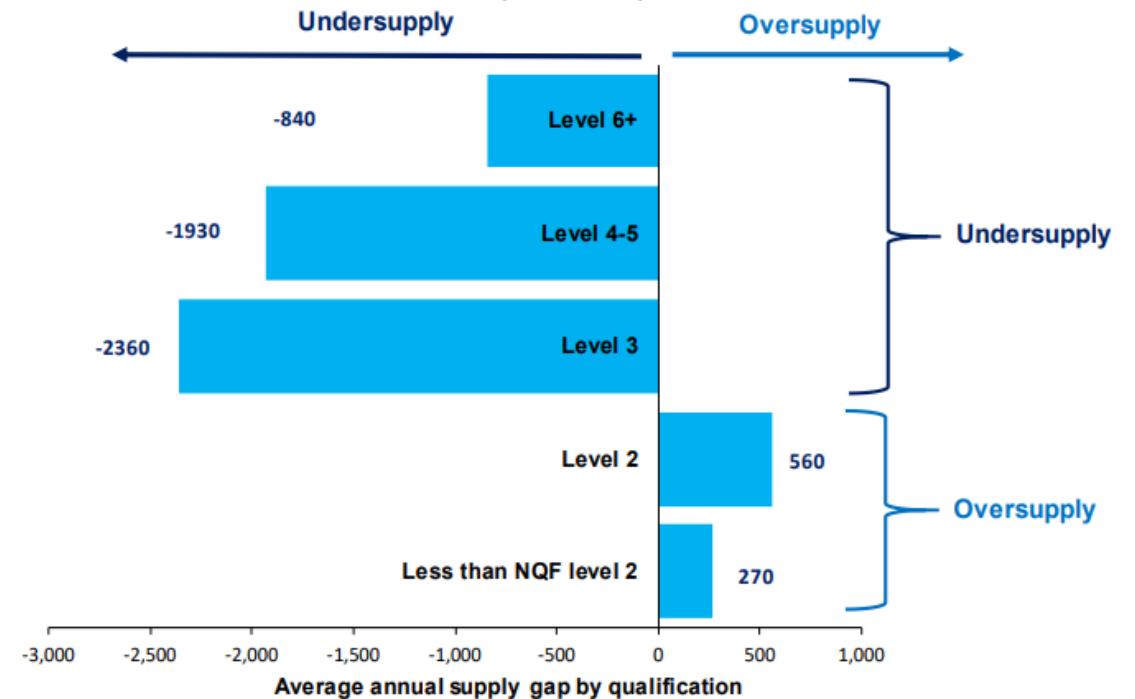
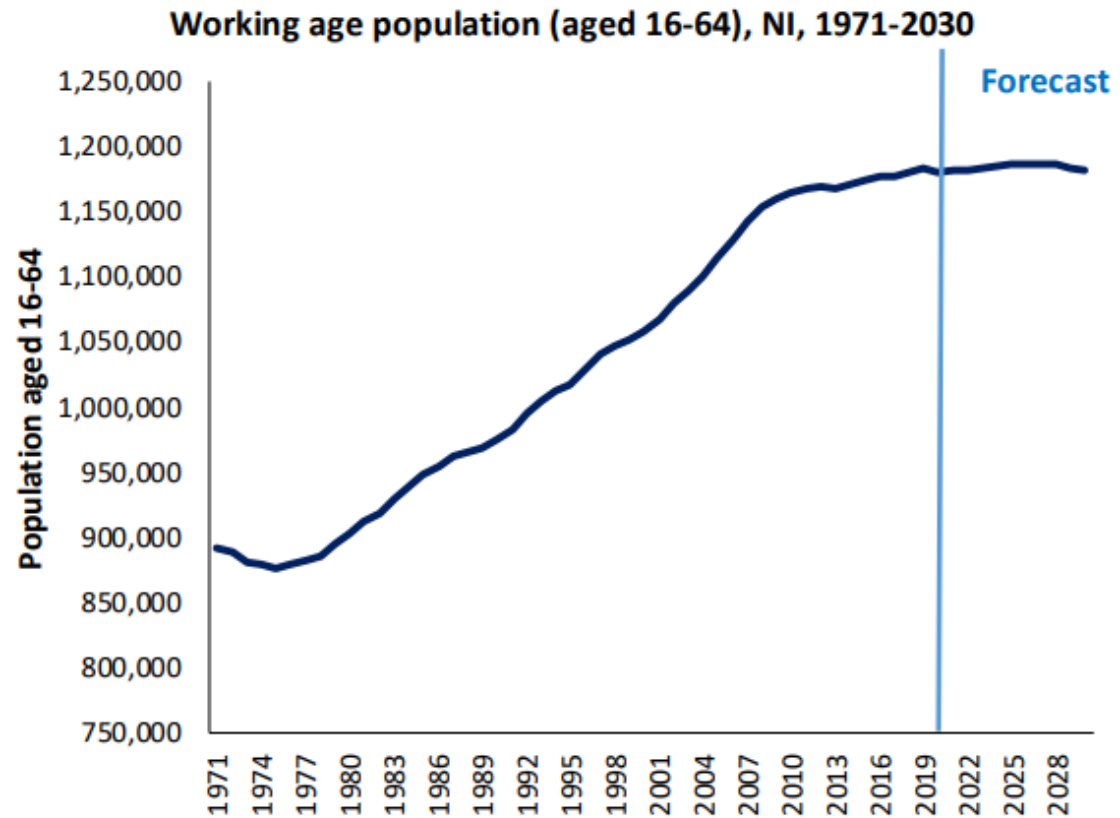
Productivity



Labour Market Context: The Supply Gap

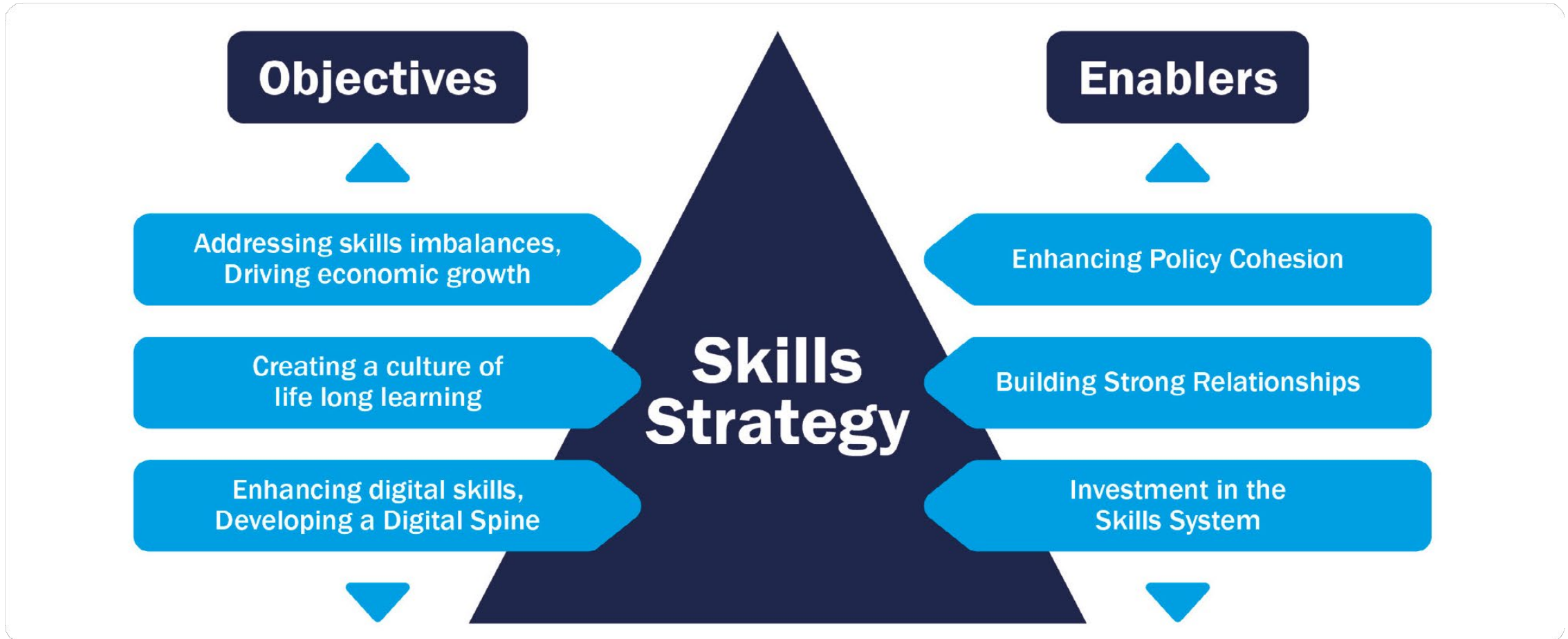


Department for the
Economy
www.economy-ni.gov.uk



Source: NISRA

Creating a globally competitive economy that works for everyone



Creating a globally competitive economy that works for everyone



Lifelong
Learning

Enhancing
Digital
Skills

Inclusion

Skills Programme

Overview of Area 2.3

Myriam Fearon



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Specific Objective

“Improving equal access to inclusive and quality services in education, training and lifelong learning through developing accessible infrastructure, including by fostering resilience for distance and on-line education and training”

The Objective Will Address:

“existing and emerging skills gaps, leading to equal access to inclusive and quality services and increasing cross-border labour mobility”

Resulting in:

“the development of a flourishing Programme Area workforce, with skills better aligned to existing and future growth sectors and in line with public policy”



What does Skills Programme seek to achieve?

The investment area will support ***area-based approaches, designed to address evidenced skills gaps***, as detailed in Government ***national and sub-regional skills strategies***.

These objectives should support the goals of ***increased productivity and employment and higher levels of cross border labour mobility***.

The PEACEPLUS Programme will build on ***best practice area-based models of skills development***.



How will this be achieved?

The Programme will enable ***cross community and cross border collaboration between education and training providers*** which reduce duplication and maximise the capacity of the Programme area ***to address existing and emerging skills gaps, and opportunities for re-skilling.***



Who Is Eligible to Apply?

- a) National, regional and local authorities;
- b) Regional and local development agencies, chambers of commerce;
- c) Universities, further education colleges, higher education, research institutions;
- d) Non-governmental organisations (NGOs);
- e) Sectoral agencies and business support organisations;
- f) Voluntary sector organisations;
- g) Other relevant public-like organisations contributing to the development of the programme area;
- h) Private sector – specifically micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs¹) and large companies.

Please note the above is not an exhaustive list, other bodies may be considered eligible



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Budget and Grant Rate

Total Budget available for Investment Area 2.3 is €50 million

(Inclusive of €40 million ERDF and €10 million governmental match funding).

100% of eligible project costs can be sought

Further information around this is contained within the call document



Investment Focus

- Support the provision of **strategic cross border skills partnerships** in further education / higher education institutions (including joint programmes) **in key disciplines** such as ICT and digital, STEM, the green economy, entrepreneurship and leadership and management.
- Promote the **uptake of apprenticeships** in key areas e.g., ICT etc.;
- Support the establishment of cross border structures modelled on **best practice**; and
- Support the delivery of cross border schemes in **re-engagement with employment / upskilling** to reduce the percentage of economically inactive and those in employment sectors at risk of automation changes.



Scope and Range

It is anticipated the Programme will fund the following types of actions

- **Area based skills strategies:** Development of cross community and cross border strategies, aimed at risk reduction to employment sectors, subject to job displacement through technological development, including the development of innovation and entrepreneurship in the Programme area.
- **Clusters for sub-area skill gaps:** Schemes which enable area based cross community and cross border clusters to respond to the sub-area skill gaps and requirements (including re skilling and upskilling).

Scope and Range

The above actions will be complemented by a range of activities as outlined below:

- Schemes which maximise the delivery of ***cross border partnerships*** by further and higher education providers ***to minimise duplication of resources.***
- Development and delivery of ***joint educational programmes administered by cross border partnerships*** where possible, to minimise the duplication of education provision and ***ensure alignment with evidence-based education, which will address recognised skills gaps and requirements.***
- ***Supports which address the barriers to participation in skills development programmes, particularly by marginalised and disadvantaged groups.*** Programmes should be designed to improve the working conditions and employment prospects of minority groups.

Indicators Adopted for 2.3 Skills Programme

Output Indicators

- **5** strategies and action plans jointly developed
- **10,000** participations in joint training schemes

Result Indicators

- **5** joint strategies and action taken up by organisations
- **8,000** completions of joint training schemes

Delivering Impact Objectives

- Enabling and growing participation in ***lifelong learning and continuous skills enhancement*** to support those in work and those seeking to return to work;
- ***Enhancing basic digital and high-tech skills acquisition*** in order to reduce skills deficits as a result of emerging new skills needs;
- ***Support inclusive practices in skill programmes design and delivery***, e.g., Universal Design Principles, by empowering marginalised and under-represented groups to participate in such programmes.



PRE-APPLICATION SUPPORT & CONCEPT NOTE



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Prepare and Plan in Advance



2.3 Skills Programme Concept Note (CN)

From today, any organisation interested in Area 2.3 may complete and submit a Concept Note for comment, advice, and support.

The Concept Note:

- covers some (but not all) of the questions that will be in the application-proper;
- will help you put in place the foundations of your project so you are better prepared when the call opens;
- **is not a formal application;**
- **is not scored**



2.3 Programme Area Skills Development

HOW TO BUILD A STRONG PROPOSAL



Concept Note Outline

- The uncompleted form is short, 3 pages, with 4 page guidance.
- Provide high level project details and answer 6 questions, each between 300-500 words.
- Advice is available pre- and post-completion.
- Please complete and return it **no later than 3rd August 2023** to:
myriam.fearon@seupb.eu



Concept Note: Question 1

About Your Project

1. How has **need been identified** for your project?
2. How does **your project align** with what PEACEPLUS, and in particular Area 2.3, is trying to achieve?

Actions:

- Area based skills strategies – cross-community / cross-border strategies
- Clusters for area based skills gaps – including re-skilling and up-skilling

To note, supported projects should:

- Maximise cross-border partnerships by FE / HE providers to minimise duplication
- Development and delivery of joint education programmes

Concept Note: Question 2

Outputs and Results

- 5 area based skills strategies AND
- 10000 participants in jointly developed schemes

Note: Joint project solutions are defined as organisations from at least two countries using the principles of: joint development, joint implementation, joint staffing and joint financing

- 1. How many participants will benefit?**
- 2. How many strategies and actions plans will be developed?**



Concept Note: Question 3

Cross Community and Cross Border

- 1. What geographical area/s will your project cover?**
- 2. How your project is cross-border on the basis of:**
 - Using staff from both sides of the border;
 - Being open to users on either side of the border;
 - Using a shared approach / design on both sides of the border.



Concept Note: Question 4

No project will result in duplication or displacement of existing provision

- Have the issues of duplication and displacement been considered for your project?
- Is your project likely to impact upon and/or complement similar existing or planned provision?
- How will these issues be avoided or mitigated?



Concept Note: Question 5

Proposed team, partnership and implementing arrangements

- About the team that will manage the project.
- Suitably qualifications and experience
- Necessary organisational capacity to manage a multi-annual, large-scale EU project with multiple stakeholders?
- Have the main project partners worked together in partnership on similar projects in the past?
- Will you need to secure technical support to enable the projects delivery?
- Have you considered the risks that may impact on the ability of your project to deliver its outputs or achieve its full impact?

Concept Note: Question 6

Value for Money

1. How staff positions advertised at the appropriate grade, competitive tendering processes applied etc; and
2. Use this section to provide detail on the budget requested, the assumptions applied and how it demonstrates economical use of public resources.
3. How will you ensure the long-term impact of the funded project and what is your exit strategy?



Lead Partner Role

- Coordination
- Financial management
- Reporting
- Communication
- Training
- Policies & Procedures

In short, accepts overall responsibility for ensuring implementation of entire project



Other things to bear in mind

- Take this time to build your partnership and delivery plan:
 - be clear on who is doing what
 - build a framework for project management, communications and monitoring & evaluation.
- Don't bite off more than you can chew: can you really deliver on this scale?
- Think about finance: can you manage the cash flows?
- Have clarity of purpose: your project must always consider its focus on building peace and prosperity for the region.



What next?

Pre-Development Support

Now available for Area 2.3 of the PEACEPLUS Programme.

Concept Note

Downloadable from website – complete and return as soon as you can (3rd August 2023).

Feedback

Aim to provide feedback within 15 working days.

Further support

Further support will depend upon both the fit and quality of what is outlined in the concept note.

● **Any Questions -**
myriam.fearon@seupb.eu

In Due Course.....

In due course, the following documents will be made available and should be consulted before completing the formal application form:

- **PEACEPLUS Cooperation Programme**
- **The Programme Manual**
- **Guide for Applicants**
- **Call for Applications to Area 2.3**

The Programme Overview is available



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QUESTIONS ???



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