



Department of

**Finance**

An Roinn

**Airgeadais**

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**Máirtín Ó Muilleoir MLA, Minister**  
Clare House, 303 Airport Road West,  
Belfast, BT3 9ED

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**Mr Patsy McGlone MLA**  
**Northern Ireland Assembly**  
**Parliament Buildings**  
**Stormont**

**28 October 2016**

**AQW 5731/16-21**

**Mr McGlone has asked:**

To ask the Minister of Finance whether he has written to the EU Regional Policy Commissioner regarding the potential implications of Brexit on the PEACE and INTERREG Programmes; and will he place on public record any response received.

**ANSWER**

Following the Referendum result on EU membership, I wrote to Corina Cretu, the European Commissioner for Regional Policy, with my counterpart in the South, outlining our continued commitment to the successful implementation of the PEACE IV and INTERREG VA programmes and requesting a meeting to clarify the basis on which we could proceed.

I received a response stating Commission officials would not engage in any discussions until a notification of Article 50 has taken place.

I have now placed this response in the Assembly library.

Máirtín Ó Muilleoir

**Máirtín Ó Muilleoir MLA**



**Corina CREȚU**

Member of the European Commission  
B-1049 Brussels

Brussels, 09/09/2016

Ares(2016) 5126796

Dear Ministers

Thank you for your letter of 20 July in which you highlight your joint commitment to the successful implementation of the INTERREG and PEACE programmes in the wake of the UK referendum.

I fully share your views that EU cohesion policy programmes in the border regions of Ireland and Northern Ireland have contributed to economic growth and stability and have delivered tangible results since their inception in the early 1990s.

Until the Treaties cease to apply to a Member State that has notified, in accordance with Article 50 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU), the European Council of its intention to withdraw from the Union, that State remains a member of the Union with all the rights and obligations of a Member State. This also applies to the implementation of the adopted INTERREG and PEACE programmes. The Commission services continue to work with counterparts and stakeholders on the implementation of the European Structural and Investment Funds programmes with a view to providing tangible benefits to citizens on the ground.

However, as concerns any new arrangements referred to in your letter, the Commission cannot anticipate the potential effects of the withdrawal process on the United Kingdom's future relationship with the European Union or on the provisions of the EU budget and the current Multiannual Financial Framework.

In line with the Statement of 29 June 2016 of the Heads of State or Government of 27 Member States, as well as the Presidents of the European Council and the European Commission, there can be no negotiations before a notification under Article 50 TEU has taken place. Accordingly, at this stage, Commission officials will not engage in discussions on questions relating to the consequences of UK withdrawal.

Paschal Donohoe TD  
Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform  
Government Buildings  
Upper Merrion Street  
Dublin 2, D02 R58

Máirtín Ó Muilleoir MLA  
Minister of Finance  
Private Office, Clare House  
303 Airport Rd West  
Belfast BT3 9ED

Whilst I appreciate your concerns, I trust that you will also understand the constraints which apply to the Commission.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Crete', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Corina CREȚU