



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Research and Information Service Briefing Note

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Follow up Questions to Quarter 1 Commission Work Programme Briefing

1 Introduction

The following paper provides a response to a number of questions raised by the Committee for Employment and Learning following a RaISe briefing on the European Commission Work Programme 2013 for the 1st Quarter of 2013.

2 Support for Horizon 2020 Applicants

Committee Members raised concerns regarding the support available for those applying for Horizon 2020 (H2020) funding, especially SME's.

The Department for Enterprise, Trade and Investment published an Action Plan for the H2020 programme on the 14 February 2013.

It details a number of actions to be taken in order to:¹

¹Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, Horizon 2020 Northern Ireland Action Plan 2013
http://www.detini.gov.uk/horizon_2020_action_plan_2013_branded_v7.pdf

...ensure that NI researchers across academia, industry and the public sector have the necessary levels of support to be successful in Horizon 2020.

The Key Actions to be undertaken are:

- **Action 1:** Creation of an NI Horizon 2020 Contact Point (NICP) network;
- **Action 2:** Development of a Horizon 2020 communications strategy;
- **Action 3:** Development of an NI Horizon 2020 website;
- **Action 4:** Development of an NI specific guide to Horizon 2020;
- **Action 5:** Appointment of an NICP with specific responsibility for SMEs;
- **Action 6:** Organise at least 10 Horizon 2020 workshops;
- **Action 7:** Increase the number of Horizon 2020 evaluators from NI;
- **Action 8:** Examine the feasibility of establishing an alternative funding mechanism(s) for organisations not currently eligible for application support;
- **Action 9:** Increase NI representation on EU groups/committees;
- **Action 10:** Development of strategies to increase European Research Council (ERC) and Marie Curie funding; and
- **Action 11:** Production of a report on FP7 performance to date.

Most of note of these to the Committee query is Action 5. It states in the Departmental guidance:

In light of the increased SME focus within Horizon 2020 and related budget commitments, an NICP [NI Horizon 2020 Contact Point] for SMEs role will be established. Invest NI will assume this role and will be charged with ensuring that NI companies, with a specific focus on SMEs, are kept informed of opportunities in their area and supported in developing applications. This will include SME activity across Horizon 2020, such as Leadership in Enabling and Industrial Technologies (LEIT), innovation in SMEs, as well as working closely with the NICP network across all the key research themes.

It is intended that this post will be filled by Quarter 2 of 2013.

A copy of the paper can be found [here](#).

3 Impact of EU Budget Agreement on Horizon 2020

The budget for Horizon 2020 was initially set at €80 Billion. However, following cuts to the EU Budget announced on 8 February (as a result of extensive negotiations carried out by Member State leaders) this figure is expected to be reduced.

Whilst no official figures have been announced, Times Higher Education is reporting (citing 'EU sources') that the budget is now expected to be €70.9 Billion, a reduction of almost €9 Billion.²

The budget has yet to be agreed by the European Parliament.

4 Information on the Lifelong Learning Programme

The European Commission operates the €7 Billion Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP).

The programme funds a range of actions including exchanges, study visits and networking activities. Projects are intended not only for individual students and learners, but also for teachers, trainers and all others involved in education and training.

There are six sub-programmes which fund projects at different levels of education and training:

4.1 Comenius for schools

Aims to help young people and educational staff better understand the range of European cultures, languages and values. They also help young people acquire the basic life skills and competences necessary for personal development, future employment and active citizenship.³

Table 1: UK Schools applications to Comenius⁴

	2012 Applications Received	2012 Awards Made	No of NI schools involved	2011 Applications Received	2011 Awards Made	No of NI Schools
Comenius School Partnerships	847	470	45	941	438	25
Comenius Regio Partnerships	26	18	0	29	24	1
Comenius In-Service Training	1346	1154	8	999	859	73
Comenius Assistant Host Schools	214	166	107	200	161	12

²Times Higher Education, 11 February 2013 EU research budget proposals welcomed <http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/story.asp?storycode=422650>

³ British Council, Comenius, <http://www.britishcouncil.org/comenius.htm>

⁴ British Council, Comenius results, <http://www.britishcouncil.org/comenius-results.htm>

4.2 Erasmus for higher education

Erasmus offers the opportunity for students and university staff to study or work abroad. The programme started in 1987, with close to 3 million students having participated. In addition over 300,000 higher education teachers and other staff have participated since 1997.⁵

These opportunities include:

- **For students:** offers university-level students the chance to go to another European country to study and do work placements (traineeships). Periods abroad can last from three to 12 months each, for a combined total of 24 months.
- **For staff:** enables higher education teaching staff and people employed in private businesses to go abroad to teach in a higher education institution for up to six weeks. Likewise, any academic and non-academic higher education staff may receive training abroad in an enterprise or another institution.

The following tables detail outgoing mobility for students and staff on the Erasmus Programme by year and visit type.⁶

Table 2: Outgoing mobility 2007-2011 – Students

	NI Study	UK Study	NI Work	UK Work	NI Total	UK Total
2007/08	159	7,525	132	2,726	291	10,251
2008/09	167	7,428	188	3,399	355	10,287
2009/10	171	8,053	165	3,670	336	11,723
2010/11	215	8,577	146	4,256	361	12,833
2011/12	228	9,095	205	4,568	433	13,663

Table 3: Outgoing mobility 2007-2011 – Staff

	NI Teach	UK Teach	NI Train	UK Train	NI Total	UK Total
2007/08	28	1,469	0	111	28	1,580
2008/09	28	1,506	6	217	34	1,723
2009/10	24	1,487	2	291	26	1,778
2010/11	37	1,672	2	385	39	2,057
2011/12	33	1,677	3	493	36	2,175

Table 4 following provides information on the Erasmus grant awards received by NI Higher Education Institutions (HEI) for 2011/12.

⁵ British Council, Erasmus, <http://www.britishcouncil.org/erasmus.htm>

⁶ British Council, Erasmus Statistics, <http://www.britishcouncil.org/erasmus-facts-and-figures.htm>

Table 4: Erasmus grants received by NI HEI's for 2011/12

Higher Education Institution	Student mobility grant amount - Study	Student mobility grant amount - Work placement	Staff mobility grant amount - Teaching	Staff mobility grant amount - Training	Organisational mobility final amount	Total Erasmus Funding
Queen's University Belfast	244,270.00	485,891.00	8,254.07	0.00	44,300.00	782,715.07
Stanmillis University College	48,713.00	0.00	4,882.87	0.00	6,700.00	60,295.87
St. Mary's University College	56,652.00	0.00	4,494.40	1,232.25	8,410.00	70,788.65
University of Ulster	161,488.00	266,589.00	12,544.87	0.00	28,850.00	469,471.87
North West Regional College	0.00	0.00	1,480.00	2,391.81	69.00	4,561.81
Northern Ireland Total	511,123.00	752,480.00	31,656.21	3,624.06	88,329.00	1,387,833.27
UK Total	23,729,969.52	12,697,544.89	1,766,406.16	567,362.91	2,903,790.00	41,751,606.65

4.3 Leonardo da Vinci for vocational education and training

The Leonardo da Vinci (Leonardo) programme funds practical projects in the field of vocational education and training. Initiatives range from those giving individuals work-related training abroad to large-scale co-operation efforts.⁷

The Leonardo programme funds four types of activity:

- **Mobility projects:** Mobility Projects provide staff, students, job seekers and apprentices with a unique opportunity to enhance their skills on a work placement in another European country.

The Figure following shows the number of UK projects funded under the Leonardo Mobility programme.

⁷ Leonardo, <http://www.leonardo.org.uk/>

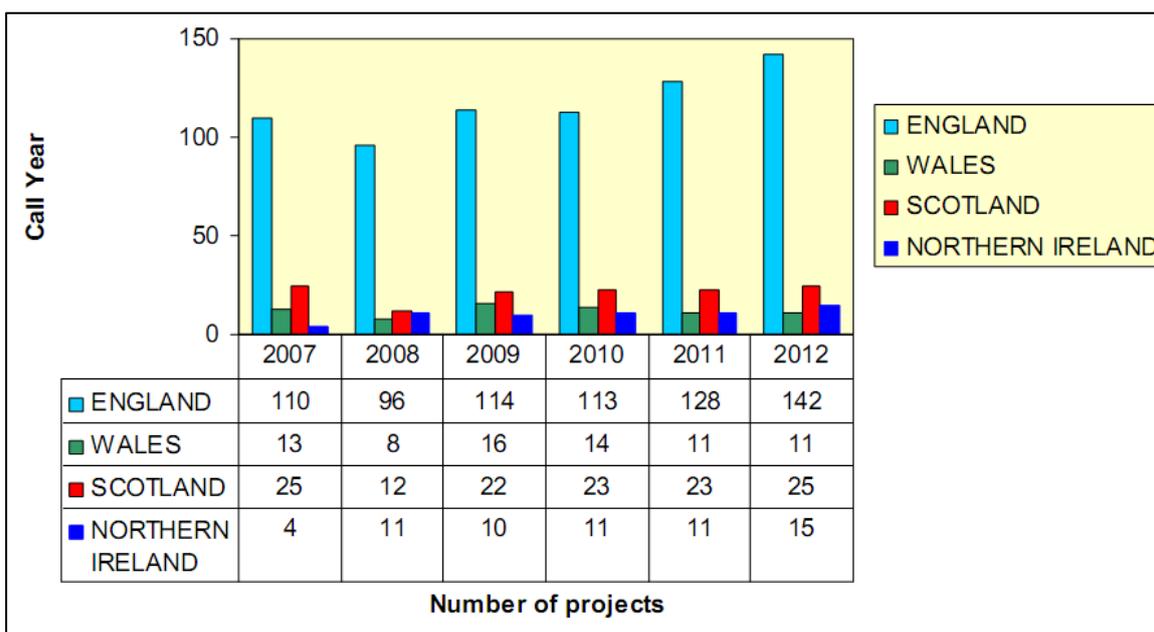


Figure 1: Number of funded Leonardo mobility projects by UK Country and call year

- **Transfer of Innovation projects:** Transfer of Innovation allows UK organisations to work with European partners to transfer and adapt innovative vocational education and training materials and methods.

In 2012 there were 90 UK applications to this fund with 28 projects approved. Of these five were based in Northern Ireland.⁸

The total funding for 2012 was €7,474,651.31. The five NI projects received €1,378,997.64.

- **Partnership projects:** Partnerships allow UK organisations to work with your European counterparts on issues of mutual interest, to share ideas and discuss common problems.

In 2012 there were 310 UK applications to this fund with 100 projects approved. Of these seven were based in Northern Ireland.⁹

The total funding for 2012 was €2,085,000.00. The seven NI projects received €145,000.00

- **Preparatory visits:**

In 2012 there were 161 UK applications to this fund with 112 projects approved. Of these four were based in Northern Ireland.¹⁰

⁸ Ecorys. List of approved Leonardo Transfer of Innovation Applications (2012) <http://www.leonardo.org.uk/page.asp?section=00010001005800050001§ionTitle=Project+Directories>

⁹ Ecorys. List of approved Leonardo Partnership Applications (2012) <http://www.leonardo.org.uk/page.asp?section=00010001005800050001§ionTitle=Project+Directories>

The total funding for 2012 was €103,255.45. The four NI projects received €3,661.00.

Examples of funded projects include¹¹:

- **North West Academy:** Tourism students from the North West Academy in Derry received Leonardo Mobility funding for 3 month work placements in Spain;
- **STAMPPP:** The Simple Steps support package is a multimedia training and support DVD for parents of children with autism. It was developed by Parents' Education as Autism Therapists (PEAT), a charity in Northern Ireland, along with experts from the University of Ulster; and
- **Cooperation in Vocational Training:** Lecturers from the North East Institute spent two weeks in Spain teaching engineering lessons in English as part of a Leonardo Mobility project. This helped the Spanish college meet government education policy requirements.

4.4 Grundtvig for adult education

Grundtvig aims to provide adults with more ways to improve their knowledge and skills, facilitate their personal development and boost their employment prospects. It also helps to tackle problems associated with Europe's ageing population.¹²

Grundtvig provides six types of project funding. Partnerships and Senior Volunteering projects allow groups to work together with other European organisations on a shared theme. They provide opportunities to exchange best practice, share ideas and explore solutions.

In-Service Training, Visits & Exchanges and Assistantships allow individuals working in adult education to develop their knowledge and skills through European training activities.

The latest statistics available on these programmes is listed below:¹³

- **Partnerships:** In 2012 there were 405 UK applications to this fund with 147 projects approved. Of these ten were based in Northern Ireland. The total funding for 2012 was €2,950,000. The four NI projects received €200,000.
- **Senior volunteering:** In 2012 there were 45 UK applications to this fund with 17 projects approved. Of these none were based in Northern Ireland. The total funding for 2012 was €358,272;

¹⁰ Ecorys. List of approved Leonardo Preparatory Visits Applications (2012)

<http://www.leonardo.org.uk/page.asp?section=00010001005800050001§ionTitle=Project+Directories>

¹¹ Leonardo, Projects around the UK,

<http://www.leonardo.org.uk/casestudy.asp?section=000100010038§ionTitle=Projects+Around+the+UK&view=map&projecttype=&location=&theme=&x=15&y=8>

¹² Grundtvig, <http://www.grundtvig.org.uk/>

¹³ Grundtvig, Project Directories,

<http://www.grundtvig.org.uk/page.asp?section=00010001006400050001§ionTitle=Project+Directories>

- **In-service training:** In 2011 there 99 UK projects approved. Of these seven were based in Northern Ireland. The total funding for 2011 was €176,885.40.¹⁴ The seven NI projects received €14,219.29;
- **Visits and Exchanges:** In 2011 there 86 UK projects approved. Of these three were based in Northern Ireland. The total funding for 2011 was €103,845.60.¹⁵ The seven NI projects received €4,178;
- **Assistantships:** In 2012 there six UK projects approved. Of these one was based in Northern Ireland. The total funding for 2012 was €49,834.50 The NI project received €8,339;
- **Learner Workshop grants:** In 2012 there 21 UK projects approved. Of these none were based in Northern Ireland. The total funding for 2012 was €656,582.20; and
- **Preparatory visits:** In 2011 there were 77 applications to the fund, with 52 UK projects approved. Of these none were based in Northern Ireland. The total funding for 2011 was €52,200.92.

4.5 Transversal programme

The Transversal programme supports professionals, who are working in education and training, to exchange expertise and share best practice across Europe. The programme funds a range of short, intensive Study Visits at education and training organisations across Europe.¹⁶

Participants can either go on a study visit or host one.

- **Participants in study visits:** For Round 1 of the programme in 2012 there were 97 UK study visits with 6,523 individuals taking part. Of these, Northern Ireland had 8 study visits with 516 participants;
- **UK Hosts for Study Visits:** The UK hosted 20 study visits. None of these were based in Northern Ireland.

4.6 The Jean Monnet Programme – understanding European integration

The Jean Monnet Programme was created to generate an ongoing debate with the academic world to reflect on political issues of European integration, including the EU's role in the dialogue between peoples and cultures. It has three key activities:

- **The Jean Monnet Action** stimulates teaching, research and reflection on European integration in higher education institutions worldwide. It includes the creation of Jean Monnet Chairs, Centres of Excellence, Modules, information and research activities as well as support for academic associations of professors and researchers in European integration;

¹⁴ Please note, this figure was calculated based on the funding for each project.

¹⁵ Please note, this figure was calculated based on the funding for each project.

¹⁶ Transversal, Projects around the UK,

<http://www.transversal.org.uk/page.asp?section=0001000100340001§ionTitle=Project+Directories>

- **Support for six specific academic institutions:** the College of Europe (with campuses in Bruges [BE] and Natolin [PL]), the European University Institute, the European Institute of Public Administration, the Academy of European Law, the International Centre for European Training, and the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education; and
- Support for European-wide associations active in education and training and/or European integration and present in several EU Member States. There is a specific annual call for proposals for the selection of these associations.

In 1998 the European Commission designated Queen's University Belfast as one of the first twenty-five Jean Monnet European Centres of Excellence in the whole of the European Union. The Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence currently hosts a Jean Monnet Chair on European Foreign and Security Policy, held by Dr David Phinnemore.

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¹⁷ Queen's University of Belfast, Centre for European Studies, <http://www.qub.ac.uk/research-centres/CentreforEuropeanStudies/JeanMonnetCentreofExcellence/>