

Subhead A.4 - Structural Funds Technical Assistance and other Costs

€,000	2015	2016	2017
Subhead Description	Spend	Estimate	Estimate
Structural Funds Technical Assistance and other Costs	953	1,808	2,268

This subhead provides for technical assistance costs in connection with the preparatory, management, monitoring, evaluation, and information and control activities of Ireland's EU Structural Funds programmes. The costs relate to:

- the National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF) Monitoring Committee (under the 2007-2013 programming period) and the Partnership Agreement Monitoring Committee (under the 2014-2020 programming period)
- the Internal and EU Audit Unit – this unit which operates with the direct authority of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform is the audit authority for the ERDF programmes in Ireland
- the Certifying Authority for the 2007-2013 and 2014-2020 programmes.

Spend in 2015 of €0.953m compared to a budget of €1.41m. The underspend occurred because a project on electronic data exchange did not proceed as quickly as anticipated. The 2016 and 2017 Estimates provide for this ongoing project. It is expected to conclude in 2017.

Subhead A.5 - Technical Assistance Costs of Regional Assemblies

€,000	2015	2016	2017
Subhead Description	Spend	Estimate	Estimate
Technical Assistance Costs of Regional Assemblies (Grant-in-Aid)	843	650	650

This Subhead provides the funding for the Regional Assemblies established under the Local Government Reform Act 2014, in respect of their Technical Assistance costs.

These costs cover areas such as management, monitoring and the information and publicity requirements of the Operational Programmes which are managed by the assemblies. The average co-financing rate was 45% under the 2007-2013 Programme.

Actual outturn of €0.843m compared with budget on €0.880m.

The decrease in 2016 & 2017 reflects the end of the additional costs associated with the crossover of programmes, as one funding period (2007-2013) terminated and a new period (2014-2020) commenced.

Subhead A6 – Peace Programme/Northern Ireland INTERREG

€,000	2015	2016	2017
Subhead Description	Spend	Estimate	Estimate
Peace Programme/Northern Ireland INTERREG	1,873	1,000	1,100

There are two constituent parts to this subhead - the PEACE Programme and the Interreg Programme. The programmes are administered by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB).

- **PEACE Programme**

The PEACE Programme encompasses Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland (namely Louth, Monaghan, Cavan, Sligo, Leitrim and Donegal). Its aim is to promote reconciliation and to help to build a more peaceful and stable society in Northern Ireland and the border region of Ireland. The PEACE III programme operates from 2007-2013. The PEACE IV Programme (2014-2020) was adopted by the European Commission on 30 November 2015.

- **Interreg Programme**

The Northern Ireland/Ireland Interreg Programme is a cross-border EU Programme between Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland (counties as above). The Programme aims to address the economic and social disadvantage that can result from the existence of a border. The Interreg IVA programme operates from 2007-2013 and also includes Western Scotland. The European Commission formally adopted the 2014-2020 INTERREG Cooperation Programme for the Border Region of Ireland, Northern Ireland and Western Scotland on 13 February 2015. The Programme was opened for funding calls in August 2015.

The expenditure is substantially reimbursed by the EU Commission (75% for Interreg and 54% for PEACE). Expenditure under this subhead is dependent on anticipated levels of (i) project approvals and (ii) project expenditure. The year on year change is due to anticipated level of project activity.

In 2015, €1.87m of an allocation of €2.5m was spent. This variance represents expenditure below target across a range of projects. As the 2007-2013 programmes reached their conclusion, this was reflected in further decrease in forecast spend for the years 2015 to 2017. The 2016 allocation was reduced as it marked the beginning of the 2014-2020 programmes which in turn, are expected to incur less expenditure than previously.

Subhead A.7 - Special EU Programmes Body

€,000	2015	2016	2017
Subhead Description	Spend	Estimate	Estimate
Special EU Programmes Body	1,249	1,350	1,350

Expenditure under this Subhead is associated with the Public Expenditure & Sectoral Policy Programme. The provision relates to the running costs (pay and non-pay) of the Special European Union Programmes Body (SEUPB).

The SEUPB is one of six North-South Implementation Bodies set up under the Good Friday Agreement. The SEUPB is the Managing and Paying Authority of the PEACE and INTERREG EU programmes.

The outturn of €1.249m exceeded the 2015 budget of €1.164m. The increase in 2016 reflected the weakening of the euro relative to sterling. The costs of the SEUPB are largely unchanged but as they are paid in sterling this has led to a greater cost to the Department to reimburse the same amount.

Subhead A.8 – Ireland/Wales and Transnational INTERREG

€,000	2015	2016	2017
Subhead Description	Spend	Estimate	Estimate
Ireland/Wales and Transnational INTERREG	767	750	251

This subhead provides for contributions to the running costs (technical assistance) of Interreg Programmes in which Ireland participates. Interreg Programmes are ERDF funded European Community Initiatives to promote cross border and transnational cooperation between Member States, or regions of a Member State of the European Union. This involves funding joint projects in two or more of the Member States participating in each Interreg Programme.

The 2015 outturn was on profile (€0.767m vs €0.769m). The decrease in the 2017 estimate reflects the fact that a higher portion of the costs fall on the Government of Wales towards the end of the programme. Ireland had borne a higher portion at the beginning of the current programme.

Subhead C – Appropriations-in-aid

€,000	2015	2016	2017
Subhead Description	Receipts	Estimate	Estimate
Appropriations-In-Aid	4,309	2,165	2,946

This subhead records certain receipts arising in the normal course of the Departments business which are, or may be, retained to meet expenditure instead of being paid directly to the Exchequer. These receipts are known as Appropriations-in-Aid.

The estimate for Appropriations-in-Aid for 2015 was €3.88m. The variance of €0.429m arose largely due to recoupments from the EU in relation to the Peace/Interreg programmes and is a direct result of the requirement for funding on that subhead (timing of funding demands will have a knock-on effect to recoupments).

Pension cashflow surpluses from the ESRI and the IPA ceased in 2015 leading to lower income than forecast.

A reduction in the 2015 figure reflects that less money will be received in respect of the EU Programmes as the 2007-2013 Programmes. This continues into further reductions in money received from EU Programmes and is reflected in the large reduction to the 2016 allocation.