

Ireland

The Development Challenge: Tremendous changes have taken place since the 1998 approval of the Good Friday Agreement (GFA) by an overwhelming majority of the populations in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. After general acceptance of the GFA and various ceasefires by paramilitary organizations, Northern Ireland has experienced economic renewal. Nonetheless, political stability is still not fully realized and remains a key objective of U.S. policy towards Northern Ireland. Sectarian confrontation within Northern Ireland, or more commonly, isolation or voluntary segregation between the unionist and nationalist communities, remains a challenge to building a diverse society founded on tolerance, equal rights, and a commitment to nonviolent political means.

Support for cross-community reconciliation has long been the focus of U. S. assistance to Northern Ireland and the six border counties of the Republic of Ireland: Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim, Cavan, Monaghan, and Louth. The U.S. Government makes significant contributions to the peace process through the International Fund for Ireland and the Walsh Visa Program as described below and in the Program Data Sheets.

The USAID Program: International Fund for Ireland: As the major donor to the International Fund for Ireland (IFI), the United States provides assistance for economic redevelopment and cross-community reconciliation throughout Northern Ireland and the border counties.

The objectives of the IFI are to promote economic and social advancement, and encourage contact, dialogue, and reconciliation between nationalist and unionist communities. The IFI has been instrumental in providing new investment that creates jobs and reconstructs disadvantaged areas. Reconciliation projects have fostered various cross-community exchanges involving youth and community leaders. Fund policy requires that all projects benefit both nationalist and unionist communities, and that the implementing organization include members of the two communities. Through this policy, the IFI has been successful in encouraging communities to take ownership of projects. The jobs and social stability that have resulted from the U.S. contribution to IFI are tangible expressions of U.S. policy in Northern Ireland.

The Irish Peace Process Cultural and Training Program Act of 1998, also known as the Walsh Visa Program, provides employment and job training for young people who are residents of Northern Ireland or one of the six border counties of the Republic of Ireland. The Walsh Visa Program supports economic regeneration as well as peace and reconciliation in these areas. After the participants complete a training program, they are hired by a Walsh employer in the United States for up to 36 months. The last round of participants will arrive in the United States in 2003; the program sunsets in 2006 when these final Walsh participants depart.

Other Program Elements: None.

Other Donors: IFI activities are financed through international contributions from the United States, European Union, Canada, New Zealand, and Australia. Each of the donors sends a non-voting observer to IFI Board meetings. In 2002, the United States was the largest donor to the fund, providing approximately 50 percent of total donor funding for the year.

**Ireland
PROGRAM SUMMARY**

(in thousands of dollars)

Accounts	FY 2001 Actual	FY 2002 Actual	FY 2003 Prior Request	FY 2004 Request
Economic Support Fund	29,934	30,000	29,000	12,500
Total Program Funds	29,934	30,000	29,000	12,500

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE SUMMARY

190-0410 Int. Fund for Ireland and Walsh Visa Program				
ESF	29,934	30,000	29,000	12,500

Note: The Ireland funds include the Walsh Visa Program at the following levels: FY 2001 - \$4,989; FY 2002 - \$5,000; FY 2003 - \$4,000; and FY 2004 - \$4,000.

Data Sheet

USAID Mission:	Ireland
Program Title:	Int. Fund for Ireland and Walsh Visa Program
Pillar:	Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance
Strategic Objective:	190-0410
Status:	Continuing
Proposed FY 2003 Obligation:	\$29,000,000 ESF
Prior Year Unobligated:	\$25,000,000 ESF
Proposed FY 2004 Obligation:	\$12,500,000 ESF
Year of Initial Obligation:	FY 1986
Estimated Completion Date:	FY 2006

Summary: Through the International Fund for Ireland, the United States provides assistance for economic redevelopment and cross-community reconciliation throughout Northern Ireland and the six border counties of the Republic of Ireland. The Walsh Visa Program provides employment, job training, and conflict resolution skills for young people from the same areas.

Inputs, Outputs, Activities:

FY 2003 Program:

International Fund for Ireland (\$25,000,000 ESF). The U.S. Government's contribution to the International Fund for Ireland (IFI), administered by USAID, is used in the following initiatives:

- 1) Disadvantaged Areas Initiative. This initiative targets funding at the areas of greatest need. Projects under this initiative focus on economic regeneration and community improvement with special emphasis on employment and business creation.
- 2) Economic Development Initiative. Projects are designed to strengthen the economic base by stimulating local enterprise and self-employment, encouraging the growth of small and medium sized companies, encouraging tourism, and providing support for the regeneration of derelict properties in towns and villages for commercial purposes.
- 3) Communities Initiative. This initiative provides people, particularly those in the most disadvantaged areas, with the skills, resources and self-confidence to undertake the social and economic regeneration of their communities. It also helps to improve the employability of disadvantaged young people by providing training, work experience and personal development. Special emphasis in the Communities Initiative is on leadership potential, reconciliation and conflict resolution.

Since 1990, U.S. contributions to the IFI have been made on a biannual basis. The next contribution will be made in FY 2003. The implementer is the International Fund for Ireland.

Irish Peace Process Cultural and Training Program Act of 1998 (Walsh Visa Program) (\$4,000,000 ESF). In FY 2003, it is expected that 220 young people will participate in the central part of the program; approximately 100 others will participate in employer-to-employer and internship opportunities offered through the Walsh program. The components of the program include:

- 1) Targeting the long-term (three months or more) unemployed and those who have been made redundant or received redundancy notices.
- 2) Admission to the program of a small number of employed persons who have been nominated by their employers.

3) Equality of opportunity in relation to community background, ethnic origin, gender and disability throughout all phases of the Program.

The State Department has partnered with the Department of Education and Labor of Northern Ireland and the Training and Employment Authority of the Republic of Ireland to provide oversight of the program. The implementers are Northrop-Grumman Information Technology (prime), the Ireland Institute of Pittsburgh, PA (sub), the Irish Immigration Center of Boston, MA (sub), and the Metropolitan Development Agency of Syracuse, NY (sub).

FY 2004 Program:

International Fund for Ireland (\$8,500,000 ESF). It is expected that funds will continue to be used in projects designed to promote reconciliation and cross-community understanding. The implementer is the International Fund for Ireland.

Irish Peace Process Cultural and Training Program Act of 1998 (Walsh Visa Program) (\$4,000,000 ESF). While FY 2003 is the last year in which new participants will arrive to work in the United States, funds will be needed in FY 2004, FY 2005, and FY 2006 to provide social services and monitoring for participants until their return home. The implementers are expected to continue to be Northrop-Grumman Information Technology (prime), the Ireland Institute of Pittsburgh, PA (sub), the Irish Immigration Center of Boston, MA (sub), and the Metropolitan Development Agency of Syracuse, NY (sub).

Performance and Results: International Fund for Ireland. As a measure of the Fund's success, between 1987 and September 2000, about 4,600 Fund projects created approximately 38,000 jobs. Over 750 organizations have been assisted to promote social and economic development, involving more than 9,000 community leaders. For every U.S. dollar invested by the Fund, over two dollars are raised from private, British and Irish sources, bringing total investment in the last 14 years in Northern Ireland and the six border counties of the Republic of Ireland to approximately \$1.974 billion. Continued U.S. support underpins U.S. efforts to create an enduring, sustainable peace in Northern Ireland.

Irish Peace Process Cultural and Training Program Act of 1998 (Walsh Visa Program). Program participants gain job and social skills, including conflict resolution experience, enabling them to make meaningful contributions to their home counties upon their return. Beginning with the first group of participants in March-April 2000, some 850 young people have participated in the program.

US Financing in Thousands of Dollars

Ireland

	DA	ESF
190-0410 Int. Fund for Ireland and Walsh Visa Program		
Through September 30, 2001		
Obligations	19,600	361,647
Expenditures	19,600	356,377
Unliquidated	0	5,270
Fiscal Year 2002		
Obligations	0	0
Expenditures	0	5,260
Through September 30, 2002		
Obligations	19,600	361,647
Expenditures	19,600	361,637
Unliquidated	0	10
Prior Year Unobligated Funds		
Obligations	0	25,000
Planned Fiscal Year 2003 NOA		
Obligations	0	29,000
Total Planned Fiscal Year 2003		
Obligations	0	54,000
Proposed Fiscal Year 2004 NOA		
Obligations	0	12,500
Future Obligations	0	0
Est. Total Cost	19,600	428,147