



Invest 
Northern
Ireland

Building Locally
Competing Globally

Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) on the Accelerating Entrepreneurship Strategy

July 2005

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998

INVEST NI

Accelerating Entrepreneurship Strategy

Encouraging New Business

Equality Impact Assessment

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PREFACE

Further to the statutory duties contained within Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, Invest Northern Ireland is committed to carrying out an equality impact assessment (EQIA) on each policy or group of co-joined policies where screening had indicated that there may be significant implications in relation to one or more of the nine equality dimensions.

This draft report has been made available as part of the formal consultation stage of the EQIA relating to the Accelerating Entrepreneurship Strategy (AES). We would welcome any comments you may have about this EQIA and our preliminary recommendations with regard to measures to mitigate adverse impact and alternative policies.

Further copies of this EQIA report are available on Invest NI's website at www.investni.com/equality/eqias

If you have any queries about this document, or to find out if it is available in alternative formats (including Braille, disk and audio cassette, and in minority languages to meet the needs of those whose first language is not English) then please contact:

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Deadline for comments will be: **31 October 2005**

INTRODUCING INVEST NORTHERN IRELAND

Invest Northern Ireland was established as a corporate body under the Industrial Development Act 2002, to work in partnership with the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (DETI) in order to stimulate and encourage economic development in Northern Ireland¹.

As Northern Ireland's economic development agency, Invest NI has brought together the activities formerly undertaken by the Industrial Development Board (IDB), the Local Enterprise Development Unit (LEDU), the Industrial Research and Technology Unit (IRTU), the Business Support Division of the Department of Enterprise Trade and Investment and the business support functions of the NI Tourist Board¹.

OUR MISSION

- To accelerate economic development in Northern Ireland, applying expertise and resources to encourage innovation and achieve business success, increasing opportunity for all within a renewed culture of enterprise.

OUR OBJECTIVES

- To promote innovation in all its aspects, stimulate higher levels of research and development & design and to improve knowledge transfer
- To achieve higher levels of growth by indigenous and externally-owned businesses
- To promote a more enterprising culture in Northern Ireland so as to raise the overall level and quality of business starts
- To attract high quality, knowledge-based investment from outside Northern Ireland

OUR VISION

- To be recognised as the leading economic development agency in the British Isles in delivering economic growth
- To be forward-looking champions of innovation, entrepreneurship and internationalisation, both with our customers and internally

¹ Further details of founding legislation, roles, powers and responsibilities can be found in Invest NI's Management Statement and Financial Memorandum, issued by DETI (April, 2002) and available on request from the Equality Unit

OUR STRUCTURE

The organisation is structured into three main groups to achieve its vision and to deliver its aims and objectives. The Invest NI values guide how we work together and demand that we are customer focused, professional and that we operate in a way that facilitates teamwork, creativity, integrity, respect and enthusiasm. The three groups are:

- Innovation and Capability Development Group
- Clients' Group
- Corporate Services Group

Currently Invest NI operates from the following locations in Northern Ireland:

Headquarters²

- 44-58 May Street Belfast BT1 4NN
- Upper Galwally, Belfast BT8 6TB
- 17 Antrim Road, Lisburn BT28 3AL

Local Offices

- **North eastern:** Clarence House, 86 Mill Street, Ballymena BT43 5AF
- **North western:** Unit 1, Ulster Science & Technology Park, Buncrana Road, Londonderry BT48 0JB; Science Innovation Centre, Cromore Road, Coleraine BT52 1ST
- **Southern:** Drumalane Mill, The Quays, Newry BT35 8QF; Oracle Conference Centre, Upper Bann Institute, 36 Lurgan Road, Portadown BT63 5BL
- **Western:** 47 Kevlin Avenue, Omagh BT78 1ER; INTEC Centre, 36 East Bridge Street, Enniskillen BT74 7BT
- **Eastern:** 44–58 May Street, Belfast BT1 4NN

International Operations

Invest NI also has offices spread across three global regions:

- *Europe* – London; Dublin; Brussels; Dusseldorf
- *North America* – Boston; New York; Washington DC; Atlanta; San Jose
- *Asia Pacific* – Seoul; Tokyo; Taipei

² At the present time, plans are advanced for a single-site Belfast headquarters to replace the three existing HQ locations.

INVEST NI and SECTION 75

Section 75 (1) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires that Invest NI shall, “in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland, have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity” between the following nine Section 75 dimensions:

- Persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
- Men and women generally;
- Persons with a disability and persons without; and
- Persons with dependents and persons without.

In addition and without prejudice to these obligations, in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland, Invest NI is also committed to have due regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

Invest NI’s Equality Scheme was approved by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland on 19 November 2003. This scheme sets out arrangements as to how Invest NI proposes to fulfil the obligatory duties determined through Section 75 legislation and its implementation. The Equality Scheme also acknowledges the commitment to carrying out equality impact assessments and policy reviews on existing policies and to develop new policies as required.

Invest NI has conducted Equality Screening Consultations as a method of screening all policies, written and unwritten, to assess which policies may potentially impact on equality of opportunity and/or good relations obligations. Each policy was considered using the following criteria during the initial screening process:

- (a) Is there any evidence of higher or lower participation or uptake of different groups?
- (b) Is there any evidence that different groups have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to the particular policy?
- (c) Have consultations with relevant groups, organisations or individuals indicated that particular policies create problems, which are specific to them?
- (d) Is there an opportunity to better promote equality of opportunity or better community relations by altering the policy or working with others in government departments, education or in the larger community?

THE ACCELERATING ENTREPRENEURSHIP STRATEGY

It is acknowledged that traditionally Northern Ireland has been characterised by relatively low levels of entrepreneurial activity. To address this issue in particular, and also in pursuance of its general mission, Invest NI, in partnership with DETI, has taken the lead in developing the AES for the period 2003–2006.

In its latest Corporate Plan 2005–2008, Invest NI's economic development efforts focus on three key economic drivers namely: being entrepreneurial; being innovative and being international. Following from this, the vision for the AES is:

“to make Northern Ireland an exemplar location for starting and growing a successful business.”

Priorities associated with AES are to:

1. change attitudes and perceptions about entrepreneurship throughout Northern Ireland society;
2. encourage more people from all backgrounds to take the first step and think positively about establishing a business venture;
3. place a clear emphasis on building a strong team, capable of guiding the business to success;
4. provide a flexible and innovative system of support for people from all backgrounds who have the ideas and the potential to become entrepreneurs and create wealth;
5. develop an infrastructure that enables new business ventures to progress and grow rapidly, particularly global trading, knowledge based projects;
6. use electronic media to disseminate information, advice and best practice and to ensure effective tracking of business proposals as part of an enhanced speed of response for entrepreneurs seeking support.

While the stated **aims** of AES are to:

1. create a culture and an environment through education and promotional campaigns that supports and encourages entrepreneurs;
2. segment businesses into three categories (global; export; local) based on the markets in which they will operate and the value added to the Northern Ireland economy;
3. develop clear support structures for each market segment and ensure that businesses can seamlessly progress from one segment to another;
4. use electronic media, to provide accessible world-class levels of support for entrepreneurs;
5. ensure support is provided in an integrated and effective way through a partnership of public, private and voluntary sectors.

The funding of AES is provided through Invest NI but derives from a number of sources, including EU support. The total spend between 1 April 2003 and 31 March 2004 on AES programmes (but excluding the Go for It campaign) was £8,344,377.

Further information on AES is set out in the strategy document, available from Invest NI. This includes specific reference to the need to achieve a successful economy that will provide equal opportunities for all. 'In line with New Targeting Social Need (NTSN) and equality policies, entrepreneurship will be proactively promoted to those from under-represented groups such as women, young people, older people, disabled people, ethnic minorities and those in disadvantaged and rural areas.'

AES is deliberately wide ranging in scope, encompassing diverse activities designed to encourage individuals and groups into business and to support individuals who are already in business. These activities include the following:

- Advice
- Mentoring schemes
- Training programmes
- Financial aid (grants)
- Financial aid (loans)
- Support packages
- Award schemes

Services and facilities under AES are provided in various ways and in numerous locations across Northern Ireland including Invest NI's local offices, 32 Enterprise NI centres, Invest NI headquarters and the Department of Education and Learning's job centres. These locations form the hub of the enterprise network (see Points of Presence map on page 49 at Appendix 1, derived from enterpriseni.com).

Whilst AES deals with both new and established businesses, for the purposes of this EQIA it is proposed to focus attention on the services and facilities that are provided under AES in terms of assistance offered for new or potential enterprises.

Reflecting on the aims and priorities of AES as a whole, it is important to recognise a fundamental difference in the philosophy underpinning activities associated with either encouraging potential businesses or supporting established enterprises.

For the former (new businesses) it would be broadly intended that the point of entry to AES activities should be as wide as possible, that entry criteria are fair and inclusive, and that attempts are made to remove any obstacles that may impede progress through the system. Positive actions should also be encouraged to facilitate those groups that are currently disadvantaged or under-represented in the business community. Whilst resources are made available for businesses with both local and export potential, priority is afforded to the latter as these are classified as wealth generating for the

Northern Ireland economy (see Industrial Development Act 1971 for terms of reference).

For the latter (established businesses), whilst the selection criteria that are applied to accessing AES activities should also be fair and equitable, the principles that drive selectivity are more likely to reflect upon wider economic concerns, for example, targeting resources towards particular sectors of the economy. Hence access is likely to be more restricted.

This EQIA will deal with those aspects of AES relating to encouraging new businesses. Furthermore, it is important to bear in mind that an EQIA is designed to consider potential adverse effects of a policy in relation to the nine Section 75 dimensions. For this reason, an evaluation of the broader economic or business ramifications of AES may fall outside the scope of this assessment where there is no impact on equality of opportunity.

Whilst the strategy continues to develop and evolve, for the purposes of the EQIA the following programmes and campaigns will be considered:

- **Start a Business Programme**
- **Community Business Start Up Programme**
- **Investing in Women Initiative**
- **Prince's Trust Business Programme**
- **LiveWIRE Programme**
- **Export Start Scheme**
- **Global Start**
- **Go for It Campaign**

Entrepreneurial Activity in Northern Ireland: Section 75 Considerations

Reflecting a range of economic, social and historical factors, the profile of entrepreneurial activity in Northern Ireland is often presented as quite unique within the UK and Europe. Invest NI's most recent *Quarterly Economic Report* (Autumn 2004) outlines a mixed picture of the Northern Ireland economy.

On the positive side, the local labour market remains strong with employment at a record high and unemployment at an historic low. Overall economic activity has strengthened with Northern Ireland economic growth forecast to rise by 3% in 2004 and 2005.

On the negative side, while employment has been increasing overall, the manufacturing and services sectors have declined. The continued growth in public sector employment is also seen as problematic with almost 22,000 jobs created over the last five years and 92% of this employment growth attributed to females. This could partly explain relatively poor levels of female entrepreneurship – almost 40% of female employees in Northern Ireland are in the public sector as opposed to 24% of male employees.

To try to develop a deeper understanding of entrepreneurship, Invest NI commissioned the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) to undertake a benchmarking assignment of entrepreneurship within Northern Ireland compared with the rest of the UK for the years 2002, 2003 and 2004.

The 2004 GEM Report (see http://www.investni.com/gem_report_2004.pdf) suggests a number of factors that may help explain this idiosyncratic profile including political instability and the dominant role of the public sector in the Northern Ireland economy. More specifically, with regard to social trends that may have either direct or indirect implications for this EQIA, the GEM report draws attention to the following issues:

General

- The level of entrepreneurial activity has increased markedly in Northern Ireland since 2002 while in many other countries it has declined, including the Republic of Ireland.
- There has been an increase in the level of entrepreneurial activity in Northern Ireland since 2002, in line with the UK average.
- The relative position of Northern Ireland in the UK has marginally improved and the gap has narrowed with the Republic of Ireland.
- Generally attitudes towards entrepreneurship have shown signs of improvement as many in the population of Northern Ireland perceive entrepreneurial activity to be of high status and a good career choice.
- Aspects of the regional culture remain unchanged such as a lack of confidence in having the requisite skills to set up their own business and the 'fear the stigma and consequences of failure'.

- There are significant differences in attitudes towards entrepreneurship between the UK regions.

Whilst there are clear signs of widening access, it is generally recognised that there is considerable room for improvement, and the business case for continuing to promote entrepreneurship among those groups that are currently under-represented (including women and older people) remains powerful. With this in mind the following specific findings from the GEM 2004 report are presented below:

- In 2004, 5% of the adult population (aged 18–64) in Northern Ireland were engaged in entrepreneurial activity. This compares to 6.3% for the UK. In terms of total entrepreneurial activity (TEA), Northern Ireland retains its rank position of ninth out of the 12 UK regions in 2004.
- Most of the gap in entrepreneurial activity between the UK and Northern Ireland is due to fewer individuals identifying or taking advantage of opportunities to start-up in business rather than a difference in the proportion going into business out of necessity.
- As with the UK, the 2004 level of entrepreneurial activity in Northern Ireland is unchanged over the previous 12 months and consolidates the increase since 2002.
- Entrepreneurial activity in Northern Ireland is higher than countries such as Germany and Italy and on a par with the Netherlands, Spain and Denmark. However, the Northern Ireland TEA is less than half of the United States figure.
- Females are less than a third as likely to be entrepreneurs as males in Northern Ireland. The female TEA has fallen from 3.5% in 2003 to 2.3% in 2004 whereas that of males has increased. As a result the gap between male and female entrepreneurship in Northern Ireland has widened in 2004, whereas in the UK it has narrowed. This is because the UK TEA for males has fallen (8.9% to 8.5%) while for females it is largely unchanged (3.8% to 3.9%).
- TEA varies significantly for different age groups. Entrepreneurial activity in Northern Ireland is highest for those aged 35–44. Around 7% of the population in this age group are involved in start-up activity.
- Entrepreneurial activity in Northern Ireland is lower than the UK across all age groups. The differences, however, are most pronounced in terms of those in the older age groups but particularly those aged between 45 and 54 where the level of entrepreneurial activity is just over half of that of the UK.
- Rates of entrepreneurial activity differ across educational groups. Graduates are more likely to be entrepreneurs than any other qualifications group in Northern Ireland. Entrepreneurial activity in

Northern Ireland ranges from 3.4% for those with no formal qualifications to 6.5% for graduates.

- In Northern Ireland, as in the UK, entrepreneurial activity increases as levels of income increase. The level of TEA in the UK relative to Northern Ireland is higher in both the middle and upper income groups and similar in the lowest income group.
- In terms of employment status those who are coming from a position of employment are much more likely to be engaged in entrepreneurial activity than any other category.

Start a Business Programme

What?

The Start A Business Programme (SABP) offers a range of services for those who are contemplating establishing a new business. In particular, the following are made available:

- access to an accredited business adviser;
- an into-business course, focusing on issues to assist in the preparation of starting a new business³;
- assistance with putting together a business plan;
- specific assistance in determining the minimum capital required to start the business and exploring the potential sources of finance that may be available.

Where need is determined, SABP may also offer direct grant assistance and/or special business loans.

Why?

To stimulate enterprise by encouraging and supporting individuals to establish a new business in Northern Ireland.

Who?

The services provided by SABP are free to all participants and are open to anyone who is thinking of starting a new business, provided the person is prepared to take an active role in the business whether, for example, as a sole trader, a partner, or a limited company, and whether full-time or part-time. The overwhelming majority of businesses supported through SABP are full-time (92% between April 2003 and February 2004).

SABP has been extremely popular since its launch in September 2001. Between 1 September 2001 and 29 February 2004, Invest NI fielded a total of 22,382 enquiries relating to SABP, leading to 16,072 interviews (72%), and 8,115 completed training courses (50% of those initially interviewed). Of those who completed training, 5,243 (65%) produced business plans, leading to 5,078 (97%) business start offers and in turn the creation of 8,379 jobs for the Northern Ireland economy.

The following tables compare programme entrants and business start offers by gender across the three phases of the programme to date.

³ The course covers marketing (four modules) finance (four modules) and the use of information technology and is provided on a flexible basis to suit individual circumstances.

ENTRANTS	1/9/01 – 31/3/02	1/4/02 – 31/3/03	1/4/03 – 29/2/04
Male	2049 (68%)	4024 (63%)	4145 (62%)
Female	979 (32%)	2334 (37%)	2529 (38%)

SABP OFFERS	1/9/01 – 31/3/02	1/4/02 – 31/3/03	1/4/03 – 29/2/04
Male	449 (66%)	1274 (64%)	1555 (64%)
Female	228 (34%)	709 (36%)	871 (36%)

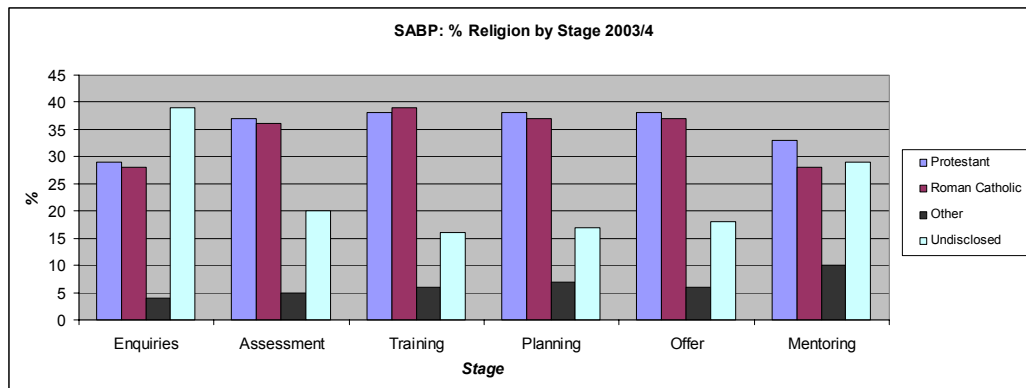
Over time it is noteworthy that female participation has risen both at the initial point of enquiry and in terms of offers of support.

The following table indicates the gender breakdown by district council of participants at the stage of initial assessment (1 April 2003 – 31 March 2004).

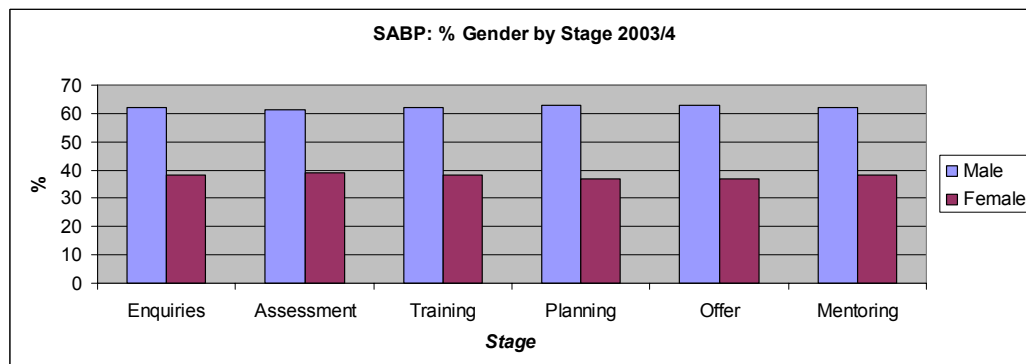
District Council Area	Female	Male	% Female	% Male
Antrim	58	94	38%	62%
Ards	139	225	38%	62%
Armagh	107	118	48%	52%
Ballymena	91	168	35%	65%
Ballymoney	45	88	34%	66%
Banbridge	90	132	41%	59%
Belfast	471	879	35%	65%
Carrickfergus	80	110	42%	58%
Castlereagh	43	52	45%	55%
Coleraine	99	126	44%	56%
Cookstown	53	99	35%	65%
Craigavon	187	286	40%	60%
Derry	224	418	35%	65%
Down	155	262	37%	63%
Dungannon	107	185	37%	63%
Fermanagh	151	199	43%	57%
Larne	64	97	40%	60%
Limavady	51	94	35%	65%
Lisburn	170	273	38%	62%
Magherafelt	124	140	47%	53%
Moyle	19	24	44%	56%
Newry & Mourne	130	196	40%	60%
Newtownabbey	128	248	34%	66%
North Down	103	194	35%	65%
Omagh	95	151	39%	61%
Strabane	55	122	31%	69%
Total	3,039	4,980	38%	62%
<i>Figures above indicate where the client made the initial assessment not where the business will be located.</i>				

The following tables and accompanying graphs indicate the relative proportion of participants at each stage of SABP during 2003–4⁴.

Perceived Religion	Enquiries	Assessment	Training	Planning	Offer	Mentoring
Protestant	29	37	38	38	38	33
Roman Catholic	28	36	39	37	37	28
Other	4	5	6	7	6	10
Undisclosed	39	20	16	17	18	29

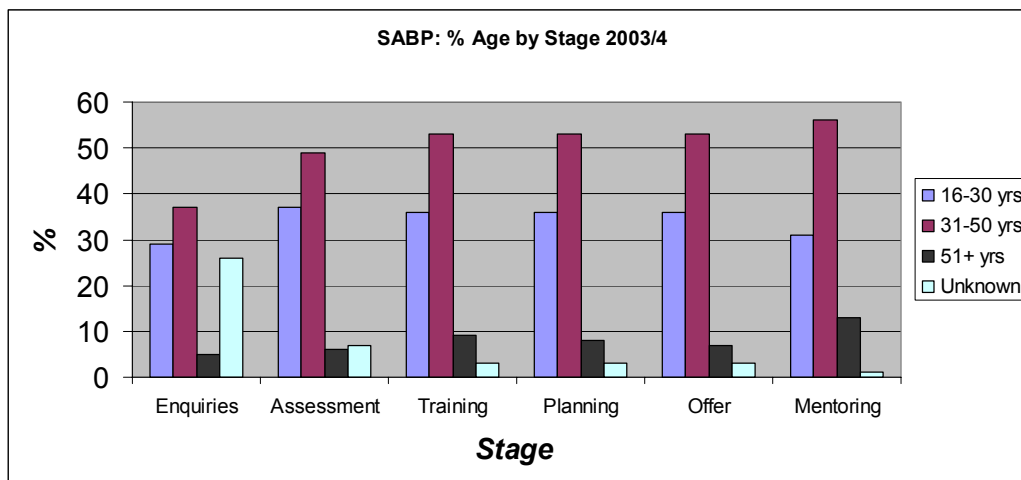


Gender	Enquiries	Assessment	Training	Planning	Offer	Mentoring
Male	62	61	62	63	63	62
Female	38	39	38	37	37	38



Age	Enquiries	Assessment	Training	Planning	Offer	Mentoring
16–30 yrs	29	37	36	36	36	31
31–50 yrs	37	49	53	53	53	56
51+ yrs	5	6	9	8	7	13
Unknown	26	7	3	3	3	1

⁴ Monitoring information is captured for each participant at initial enquiry. While figures reflect on one year's cycle, numbers indicated at certain stages may include those from previous year's intake.



Involvement in SABP by religion across the three phases of the programme to date is shown below (monitored at stage of enquiry):

Participation	Phase 1: 1/9/01-31/3/02	Phase 2: 1/4/02-31/3/02	Phase 3: 1/4/03-29/2/04	Overall
Protestant	637 (21%)	2101 (33%)	2577 (39%)	5115 (31%)
Catholic	809 (27%)	2099 (33%)	2537 (38%)	5445 (32%)
Other	634 (21%)	304 (5%)	434 (6%)	1372 (11%)
Undisclosed	945 (31%)	1853 (29%)	1126 (17%)	3934 (26%)

In terms of the gender of those making enquiries regarding SABP between 1 April 2002 and 31 March 2004, a total of 6,982 (33%) enquiries were from women and 11,736 (67%) were from men.

Of these 18,720 enquiries, 5054 (27%) did not disclose race or ethnic origin while of the remaining 13,666 (73%), 170 (1.2%) were from members of ethnic minorities and including 20 Black African, 32 Chinese, 21 Indian and 2 Irish Travellers.

With regard to the religion of those making enquiries during this time, of the 59% who disclosed their religion 5,126 (51%) were Protestant and 5,037 (50%) were Catholic.

By age, the majority (53%) of those who disclosed their age (73% of enquirers) were under the age of 40, with 11% between 18 and 25 years, 17% between 25 and 30 years, 25% between 31 and 40 years, 13% between 41 and 50 years, and 5% between 51 and 60 years.

Invest NI monitors all participants on the programme at each of the six stages of involvement by each of the 26 district council areas. While in general the profile of participants in each area reflects the regional profile, it is noteworthy that certain districts are exceptional in terms of Section 75 dimensions.

For example, the proportion of enquiries from women in Strabane (111/273; 41%), Armagh (295/679; 43%), Coleraine (229/530; 43%), Down (302/761; 40%), Dungannon (246/597; 41%), Fermanagh (306/712; 43%), Magherafelt (283/640; 44%) and Moyle (59/147; 40%) would all appear to be high compared to the regional average (37%). In terms of enquiries from those with a disability, only Down (16/761; 2%), Belfast (15/3134; 0.4%) and Lisburn (10/1123; 1%) had received 10 or more. Numbers of enquiries from members of ethnic minorities was low, with the exception of Belfast (71/3134), Dungannon (11/597), Derry (11/1621), Lisburn (8/1123), Newtownabbey (7/1012) and North Down (9/606), districts where a higher proportion of those from ethnic minorities tend to reside⁵.

In the Invest NI/District Council Independent Validation of SABP (September 2002) the following comments were made relating to the programme at that time:

‘An analysis of the gender of participants indicated that there is a dominance of male participation to date (65%) which is significantly higher than the proportion of males in the working age population at large (49%). However, it is relevant to note that the gender make-up is more akin to that of the employment market (where 65% employees are male) and related to the fact that there is a high proportion of employed individuals coming forward to the programme. Although subject to a considerable non-response the religious balance would appear to be relatively mixed with under 5% more Catholics than Protestants, both at or beyond Lead in Assessment stage and post-start Mentoring (when the business is actually trading). A significant proportion of participants (almost a quarter) live in a NTSN area and a third of those reaching offer approved stage to date live in a NTSN area.’

Where?

Initial contact with the programme is made via a number of sources including Invest NI programmes, local enterprise agencies, district councils, banks, accountants, television advertisements, press advertisements, friends, other Invest NI clients and the Invest NI website.

The programme itself is run through the 32 centres, distributed across the 26 district council areas and shown in Appendix 2. There is at least one centre located in each of the district council areas but there are seven in Belfast.

⁵ Proportions of ethnic minority members are so low (under 0.2%) that percentage figures are not presented.

How?

The delivery of SABP can be considered in terms of six stages:

1. **Enquiry** – where the applicant first makes contact with the programme, either face-to-face or via telephone and where the programme is outlined, other programmes signposted and an information pack dispatched.
2. **Lead in Assessment** – a flexible input of up to one hour involving initial assessment of the client to determine needs and ideas.
3. **Training** – programme training, incorporating the key elements of marketing, finance and planning and ICT in a 30 hour syllabus, comprising 8 three hour modules (four marketing; four finance, with ICT included throughout).
4. **Planning** – flexible input of up to nine hours, one-to-one advice and business planning.
5. **Offer of Support** – provision of start-up grants where available and/or negotiation of alternatives, for example, loans.
6. **Mentoring** - ongoing mentoring assignment (up to 12 hours total commitment) from the inception of the idea through to the end of the first year of trading. Areas covered include performance against projections; constraints and actions; signposting; further training needs.

Stage 1 is provided by a delivery agent (front line staff).

Stages 2, 4, 5 and 6 are delivered by a designated business adviser.

Stage 3 is delivered by a trainer.

Community Business Start-Up Programme⁶

What?

The Community Business Start Up Programme (CBSUP) provides community groups, who are interested in establishing a business, with a package of training, advice and support. In the first year financial assistance is also made available for salaries for the new business. It is expected that the groups will become self-sustaining in future years.

Grants are available for:

- research
- formation
- key workers
- employment
- capital (manufacturing only)
- post start assistance

Originally, funding for 80 new businesses was provided under the European Union's Peace 1 programme. From April 2002 funding has continued under Peace 2 Measure 1.4, Promoting Entrepreneurship, from the European Union and the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL).

Applications to CBSUP are assessed on standardised scoring and assessment sheets, based on Peace 2 criteria. Copies of the application forms are available from the programme delivery agents on request. The following criteria are applied to all applications:

- The business idea must be easily identifiable or relate to a specific community base in terms of ownership and benefits.
- The business idea should demonstrate viability and sustainability after funding ceases.
- It must be a new business which is not currently trading.
- The business must not displace existing businesses in the area.
- The business should be able to commence trading within 6 months (extendable to 12 months).
- The business must have a tradable product or service that can generate income.
- The new business must create jobs.
- There must be growth potential.
- The business will reinvest its entire trading surplus either into the business or to benefit the community.

Why?

To help the community and voluntary sector set up profit-making, not profit-taking businesses, in particular promoting economic development in designated NTSN areas.

⁶ Funding for CBSUP ended in November 2004, to be replaced by the Social Entrepreneurship Programme. This new programme will be reviewed under Section 75 at this time.

Who?

Business activities must be consistent with NTSN criteria, that is:

- be located in designated disadvantaged areas;
- provide a service which directly benefits residents of a designated disadvantaged area; or
- employ residents from a designated disadvantaged area or under-represented group.

Only new or established bona fide groups representative of the community can apply.

To date a target of 100 groups has been exceeded (131), with 55 businesses approved for funding. Very few applications are rejected, instead there tends to be a process of natural drop-out within the programme. Characteristics of the groups themselves by Section 75 dimensions are not monitored.

Where?

The programme is delivered through five main agents across Northern Ireland who successfully tendered for the work with Invest NI. These agents are:

- **Ledcom**, Ledcom Industrial Estate, Bank Road, Larne, Co Antrim BT40 3AW
- **Newry & Mourne Co-operative and Enterprise Agency**, WIN Business Park, Canal Quay, Newry, Co Down BT35 6PH
- **Omagh Enterprise Company Ltd.**, Gortrush Ind. Estate, Great Northern Road, Omagh, Co. Tyrone BT78 5LU
- **Work West**, 301 Glen Road, Belfast BT11 8BU
- **Workspace**, The Business Centre, Draperstown, Co Londonderry BT45 7AG

Subcontract arrangements also exist in:

Roe Valley Enterprises Ltd	East Belfast Enterprise Park
Cookstown Enterprise Centre Ltd	North West Marketing
Fermanagh Enterprise Ltd	

The contact network for the programme also includes those other Invest NI contact points as shown at Appendix 2. Once initial contact has been established with the group then subsequent meetings are held on site at the premises of the group in question.

How?

A comprehensive operating manual describes the four stages in the implementation of CBSUP:

1. initial discussion and application;
2. working up the business idea (training sessions, research grant);
3. starting up the business (financial package; salaries and formation grant); and
4. running the business and future planning (post start assistance).

INVESTING IN WOMEN INITIATIVE⁷

What?

The initiative included the following elements:

- Business networks and network development;
- Access Point initiative;
- Stakeholder forum;
- Building Business Visions (Seeing the Possibilities; Seeing the Next Steps; Seeing No Limits);
- Gender Lens for Business Support – 5 workshops, 80+ participants
- Enterprising Rural Women;
- Sustained role model promotion – Business Journeys video;
- Female entrepreneurship conference support.

Why?

To increase, through a range of pathway initiatives, the number of women who start up in business in Northern Ireland and the number who are able to grow their business performance over the next five years.

There are a number of well-researched and evidenced reasons for focusing on female entrepreneurship as a way of increasing economic development in Northern Ireland.

Global Entrepreneurship Monitor – Northern Ireland 2004

In 2004, Invest NI assisted over 3,400 new business starts and continued to promote entrepreneurship through a series of targeted initiatives to young people, females and areas of economic disadvantage. During the first phase of the Go for It campaign and Start a Business shows more than 10,000 people have registered an interest in taking forward new business ventures.

The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) NI 2004 reported the following in respect of female entrepreneurship:

- Females are less than a third as likely to be entrepreneurs as males in Northern Ireland. The level of female entrepreneurship in Northern Ireland is the lowest of all UK regions and the gap between male and female entrepreneurship is one of the widest.
- The proportion of men and women in Northern Ireland involved in entrepreneurship as a result of perceived opportunities is lower than in the UK. Necessity entrepreneurship is, however, higher in Northern Ireland for both.

⁷ A strategic review of the initiative took place from July – September 2004, with a view to mainstreaming best practice approaches into the various programmes that Invest NI delivers.

- Graduates are more likely to be entrepreneurs than any other qualifications group in Northern Ireland. However, female graduates record one of the lowest entrepreneurial rates of all UK regions.
- Fear of debt emerges as the single most important barrier for men and women in Northern Ireland to setting up their own business or moving into self-employment.
- The average (median) costs of start-up in Northern Ireland are £14,000 compared to £15,000 for the UK. Average start-up costs in Northern Ireland are around 25% higher for men than women.
- Almost two-thirds of individuals in Northern Ireland state that a lack of external finance would prevent them from setting up in business, one of the highest of all UK regions. Women are more likely to perceive finance as a deterrent than men.
- There are clear sub-regional variations in entrepreneurial activity by gender. The highest levels of female entrepreneurial activity are to be found in the eastern outer sub-region with a rate of 3.2%. The lowest level is in the north-west (1.1%).
- The gap between male and female entrepreneurship within the sub-regions of Northern Ireland also varies markedly. Even in the Western sub-region, which exhibits the highest level of overall entrepreneurial activity in Northern Ireland, women are only 16% as likely as men to be engaged in running their own business. The gap is smallest in the Eastern outer sub-region and the Belfast City Council area: 47% and 40% respectively.

The Household Entrepreneurship Study (May 2002) concerning women and enterprise showed the following.

- Just one in every four entrepreneurs in Northern Ireland were women. In total, 6.3% of women surveyed were self-employed or owned a business compared to 20% of males.
- Women in England were almost twice as likely to be entrepreneurs (11% of the total).
- Women are more likely than males to be involved in entrepreneurship on a part-time basis: for example, own a business as a sideline, have a secondary income from self-employment or be a partner in a business. They are much less likely to be in full-time self-employment.
- Some 37% of women in Northern Ireland are involved in self-employment or business ownership on a part-time basis compared to 26% of women in England.
- Of those thinking of setting up in business, just one third are women.
- Women would-be entrepreneurs are likely to be older (35–44 years) when compared to males (19–24 years).

- Just 6% of women were thinking about setting up in business. This compares to 9% of women in England.

Reflecting on the under-representation of women in business ownership and entrepreneurial activity in Northern Ireland, the initiative also endeavours to:

- change existing social and cultural perceptions of a woman's role;
- increase access to information and knowledge at the right time;
- increase the inter-connectedness and quality of the enterprise support system.

Who?

The potential target for this initiative includes all women in Northern Ireland, whether in paid or unpaid work, who may wish to engage in entrepreneurial activities. Two key indicators for Invest NI in terms of female attitudes and action are GEM and the proportion of females taking business ideas forward within the SABP.

Start a Business Programme

The numbers of men and women who have either undertaken training or started trading under SABP is as shown previously (see pages 14 and 15 above). In summary, the data indicates that there has been an increase in both the number of women and the relative proportion of women to men in the programme from 2002 to 2004.

Where?

The core team that manages the Investing in Women initiative is based centrally in Invest NI, however, activities have taken place through a wide range of venues across Northern Ireland including the enterprise agency network and local women's networks.

How?

During the pilot period from 1 June 2002 to 31 May 2004 the Investing in Women initiative has been funded by the European Social Fund through DEL with match funding from Invest NI.

The initiative includes the following five elements.

Business Networks

The networks provide opportunities to raise awareness of female entrepreneurship, to source local role models and highlight key initiatives within mainstream business support. In addition, the networks provide networking opportunities for business women, a framework to develop peer-mentoring relationships and capture the interest and enthusiasm from business women to support others in business or thinking about starting a business.

There are five business women's networks in Northern Ireland:

- Women in Business : Eastern region

- Women in Enterprise : North-west
- Enterprising Women : Southern region
- Women on the Move : North eastern region
- New Enterprising Women : Western region

Each network organises monthly events, seminars and publishes newsletters for members. For example, some 3,059 women benefited from network activities for the one year period from 1 June 2003 to 31 May 2004 (year 2 of European Social Fund funding). The networks also come together to organise joint events. For example, a major event took place during Enterprise Week in November 2004. One hundred and thirteen business women attended the Networking the Networks conference at which the Northern Ireland Business Women's Networks: Forum for Female Entrepreneurs was launched.

In addition, the Training for Women Network (TWN) provides ongoing training for women in business and works closely with the other networks, for example, the Empowering Today's Women for Tomorrow's World conference in April 2004 at which Anita Roddick was the keynote speaker. Some 214 women attended the event.

Access Point Initiative

Invest NI launched a number of Access Points in 2003 for women across Northern Ireland, providing a dedicated resource to deal with enquiries and information for women at any stage of business start-up or growth. In addition, the Access Points provide a regular follow up service for all women who have been signposted to various organisations and initiatives, to establish their level of satisfaction with the support provided.

One of the six strategic objectives of the Investing in Women strategy in 2002 was:

“To increase the interconnectedness and collaboration between the agencies and groups involved directly or indirectly in assisting women to ‘step-in’ to enterprise or to ‘step up’ their business’ growth, recognising that women are a diverse group needing access to diverse support mechanisms. At local level, it will be important to facilitate/enable access and progression routes within the ‘whole system’”.

The Access Points initiative was delivered by five regional co-ordinators across Northern Ireland with the aim of providing at a local level:

- a single, identifiable and accessible point of contact that will signpost women to relevant advice and information about the business support system;
- a point of contact that will specifically target potential and current female entrepreneurs;
- the opportunity to ‘wrap around’ as appropriate, existing providers with the goal of increasing uptake, throughput and business growth;
- a mechanism to serve women at all stages of enterprise progression.

The five area Access Point co-ordinators⁸ currently are:

Where	Who
East (Castlereagh)	Lydia Gamble
North East (Ballymena)	Melanie Christie
North West (Limavady)	Martin Devlin
West (Omagh)	Helen McGuigan / Mary McCrory
South (Banbridge)	Yvonne Clydesdale

Current statistics (1 September 2004) taken from the Investing in Women database give activity figures for the initiative as follows:

Activity	Numbers
Number of women registered	2,358
Number of women with interactions	2,096
Number of interactions taken place*	3,427
Number of role models	118
Number of women recorded with extended details	2,124
Number of women referred from SABP/ loan fund	1,056

* A woman may have more than one interaction

Stakeholders Forum

The forum has been established to allow business women and the business support network the opportunity to meet with the key government departments to input into policy making in terms of female entrepreneurship. The forum meets on a quarterly basis and is an effective means of information exchange and dialogue.

Building Business Visions

This programme started in November 2003 (completed in May 2004) on a pilot basis and encompassed three elements:

- *Seeing the Possibilities* is a workshop for women who are thinking about becoming their own boss. Its aim is to help them think about the implications of running a business across all areas of life, and where they can get further help and support.

⁸ Access points are to be incorporated into Points of Presence

Overall the picture in Northern Ireland is improving and the gap between the number of women in Northern Ireland and the number of women in the UK expecting to start up in business has almost halved.

- *Seeing the Next Steps* is a workshop for women who have been running a business for a while. Its aim is to help them take stock, look back over what they've achieved, review how well the business is going and make plans for the future which are right for them and right for the business.
- *Seeing No Limits* is a development programme for women in businesses which are growing in external markets. The programme will give them the opportunity to focus on where they have got to with their business and develop plans for the future with the help of role models, a support network and experience of best practice in other organisations.

One hundred and eighty-three women participated in the pilot programme. Pending the results of the strategic review, the programme may be reshaped and repeated.

Enterprising Rural Women

Enterprising Rural Women was launched in September 2003. The key objectives of Enterprising Rural Women are to encourage, develop and support rural women as they explore and take their first steps towards entrepreneurship. The programme targets the following areas:

- women in general in rural areas of Northern Ireland primarily those in small towns and villages with a population below 2,300 people or in open countryside;
- rural areas with lower level of business start up, a strong dependence on agriculture, and a high percentage of small or very small family farms.

The following issues which have been identified as barriers to rural women beginning a new enterprise are being addressed in the programme:

- distance
- isolation
- marginalisation
- cultural barriers
- low exposure to market trends

The pilot Enterprising Rural Women programme is now complete and has been evaluated. Its effectiveness will be considered via a strategic review which will mainstream best practice approaches into the appropriate Invest NI programmes.

Prince's Trust Business Programme

What?

The programme sets out to enable disadvantaged young people between the ages of 18 and 30 overcome historical barriers to becoming self-employed. The programme is specifically targeted at the most disadvantaged in society, particularly those in NTSN groups and areas, and marginalised Section 75 groups. The Trust is the only exclusive provider with a distinctive focus on supporting and encouraging self-employment among this target group in Northern Ireland.

The programme, through the establishment of new businesses, fosters social inclusion among disadvantaged young people by promoting self-employment as a realistic option to address barriers to development. One of the major barriers amongst this target group is gaining access to the labour market. The Prince's Trust Northern Ireland (PTNI) is committed to developing long term support for young people as they move towards economic independence. In practical terms this involves the assessment of young people following initial contact to determine the most appropriate programme and level of support. For increasing numbers of young people additional support and participation on a further Trust programme is required. The outcome of young people undertaking a progression route through Trust programmes will be the achievement of economic independence and employment.

Why?

To encourage young people to view starting a business as a viable and realistic career option

The continued high level of youth unemployment in Northern Ireland (estimated at 9.2% within the 16–30 age bracket in 2003) provides the core rationale for Invest NI's focus on young people through this and associated programmes, for example Shell LiveWIRE. The strategic rationale for intervention is provided by the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor 2002 for Northern Ireland, which found a 'strong cultural resistance to entrepreneurial activity in Northern Ireland'. Furthermore, the business birth rates objective in the Invest Northern Ireland Corporate Plan 2002–2005 makes a commitment to promoting, supporting and celebrating entrepreneurship, objectives which are clearly being met through both the Enterprise in the Community Programme and the Young Entrepreneur of the Year Awards. This evidence for intervention is further supported by the start-up figures provided by the Northern Ireland Business Start Programme database, which demonstrated that for the 17 month period, covering 1 September 2001 to 29 January 2002, 36.36% of the grant offers approved for start-ups were under 30 years of age. These figures demonstrate that intervention in the Young Enterprise Sector appears to be having a positive effect.

Who?

The Prince’s Trust’s focus is on those young people who are:

- unemployed, particularly those out of work for six months or more;
- educational underachievers (including young people with low basic skills, those truanting and those excluded from school);
- offenders or ex-offenders (including serving prisoners);
- in or leaving care.

Under the programme, all applicants for start-up grants and loans should:

- be aged 18–30;
- be unemployed, under employed or of limited means;
- be able to clearly demonstrate that they are unable to raise all the necessary finance from banks, families or other sources. In other words the Prince’s Trust is the last resort funder;
- have completed an appropriate business training course, for example, SABP.

Of the 160 young people who were engaged with start-up activity during 2002–3, 48 (30%) were female and 112 (70%) were male, while during 2003–4, the proportion of young women had increased to 31% (46 of 149) (see table below).

Period	Number	Male	Female	Belfast and East	North West	West	South	Urban	Rural
2002–3	160	112 (70%)	48 (30%)	43 (27%)	28 (18%)	43 (27%)	46 (29%)	84 (53%)	76 (48%)
2003–4	149	103 (69%)	46 (31%)	41 (28%)	29 (19%)	37 (25%)	42 (28%)	90 (60%)	59 (40%)
6 mths to Sept 04	86	59 (69%)	27 (31%)	22 (26%)	13 (15%)	18 (21%)	33 (38%)	58 (67%)	28 (33%)
Total	395 (100%)	274 (69%)	121 (31%)	106 (27%)	70 (18%)	98 (25%)	121 (31%)	232 (59%)	163 (41%)

During 2002–3, of those who were sent letters of offer, 19 (13%) stated that they had a disability, 86 (60%) were educational underachievers, 2 (1%) were from ethnic minorities and 13 (9%) were lone parents.

The Trust currently does not monitor by religion.

Where?

The point of contact for recruitment of young people for the target groups is through partnerships with key organisations as follows:

- local enterprise agencies and Enterprise Northern Ireland
- LiveWIRE

- probation service
- social services social worker teams
- ethnic minority organisations
- disability groups
- homeless organisations, and so on

In pursuit of its objectives of reaching the most marginalised and excluded, the PTNI recognised that elements of its provision were not as accessible to young people in rurally isolated communities as in urban areas, and hence put in place a rural outreach programme⁹. This saw the creation of outreach offices, closer working with organisations in rural areas and the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development.

The Trust has established awareness raising, outreach, delivery and support services throughout Northern Ireland, supported by regional committees, staff recruitment and training strategies and local partnerships to address the rural imbalance.

How?

Initially young people are made aware of the programme through Prince's Trust Awareness Raising Officers. They have developed a network of contacts with referral organisations to raise awareness of support available for young people (18–30) who fit within the Trust's priority groupings. Prince's Trust staff also present at SAB programmes throughout Northern Ireland on a monthly basis to raise awareness to young people of the potential support available to them.

As a not for profit organisation the Trust does not invest in advertising.

However, the following gives a brief overview of some forms of promotion that the Trust engages in that involves no direct cost.

- The Prince's Trust website – www.princes-trust.org.uk;
- The Prince's Trust Wired-Up Programme website – www.wiredup.net;
- Literature including posters, fliers and leaflets (circulated throughout referral organisations, local enterprise agencies, Invest NI local offices, public venues such as libraries, Citizen Advice Bureaux and so on).
- Local papers. Regular press releases are sent to the local papers detailing the support offered by the business programme, features on young people who started in business and features on local mentors who voluntarily support the work of the Trust.
- National papers. Press releases are featured in the national papers usually covering events, exhibitions and award ceremonies that the Trust has held.

⁹ The rural outreach programme is no longer a stand alone project but has been mainstreamed into Prince's Trust Business Programme core delivery.

- Local radio advertises and promotes the business programme and facilitates discussions on self-employment and career options for young people.
- Roadshows. For example, the Trust undertook, along with the Department of Agriculture for NI, a roadshow series. This series involved approximately eight shows which took place mainly in the southern regional area.
- The Prince's Trust newsletter which is circulated to stakeholders.

Contact with potential clients is then made in a number of ways:

- building on current Prince's Trust database of contacts;
- establishing new contacts, for example cold calling, setting up meetings and presentations, writing to prospective organisations.

Business Programme staff dealing directly with clients at the start-up stage do so in an advisory capacity. All new staff are inducted internally and this includes the 10 stages of programme delivery. All staff are members of the Northern Ireland Institute of Business Advisors (IBA). One member of staff sits on the NI Committee for the IBA and also has six years' experience of working with start-up businesses through her previous employment in a local enterprise agency and one year in Shell LiveWIRE. A number of the Wired-Up staff have completed the IBA Developing Business Counselling Training Course and it is anticipated that the Business Programme staff will also complete this training in the future.

The programme itself comprises three main elements as follows.

Awards Programme

The Awards Programme offers financial assistance in the form of loans and grants to disadvantaged young people to assist them to set up in business. If the young person needs support to carry out research, they can apply for a test marketing grant. If they have already completed their research then they can apply for full support.

The loans are up to £5,000 for each business with repayment terms of up to three years and incur a 3% per annum interest charge. In the first six months of trading the young business pays only £20 per month in repayments. The grants of up to £1,500 (£3,000 where there are two or more partners) are available to young people facing multiple levels of deprivation and are seen as 'a gift to alleviate poverty through the medium of self-employment'. The average spend per recipient is £3,000.

Mentor Programme

One of the key elements of the Trust's support is the allocation of a voluntary business mentor to each assisted business. A mentor is allocated for a period of up to three years and meets with the young person at least once a month to assess not only the business development but also the young person.

The role of the mentor is to provide support and guidance with the aim of improving the personal development of the young person and the sustainability of the business.

The success of the Mentor Programme is dependent upon the recruitment, retention and support of voluntary business mentors. To this end the Trust, in the latter part of 1999, embarked upon an intensive mentor recruitment and support programme, incorporating the provision of a local volunteer mentor support group. Since November 1999 the Trust has increased the number of voluntary business mentors from 75 to 250 representing a growth of 333%. On average each mentor contributes two hours mentoring every month. The value of this resource is worth in excess of £240,000 each year and without the Prince's Trust it would not be available.

The objective of the mentor training programme is to transform a volunteer into a business mentor. Even though the business mentors are competent and experienced in their own field, to many, business mentoring is a new concept. For this reason, it is planned to train the mentor co-ordinators and key staff to enable them to provide workshops for volunteers to develop an awareness and understanding of the key skills that Prince's Trust mentors require in providing the best support to clients. The aim of the workshops is to provide the mentor with the ability to understand the role of the mentor-client relationship, to develop the skills of effective mentoring and to apply what has been learned to the mentor-client relationship.

PTNI's pool of mentors in February 2004 was 600, with 250 of these typically serving 450 clients at any time. Eleven local volunteer mentor support groups oversee the operation of nine mentor co-ordinators.

Wired Up Programme

The Wired Up programme was developed on the assumption that disadvantaged young people entering the self-employment sector would be even more marginalised by the then emerging digital divide, that is new technology. The Trust needed to ensure that young, socially excluded entrepreneurs could embrace the benefits of ICT and marketing techniques. Micro-businesses did not have the capacity to train and tool up in the basics of ICT; neither did they have the capacity to access funding programmes to assist in this process.

The suite of support services provided are as follows:

- test marketing advice;
- business audit, to assess level of support required and take design brief;
- ICT audit, to assess the level of ICT training and support required;
- ICT training, one to one training at young person's business;
- marketing support (incorporating marketing and Internet strategy);
- corporate stationery pack;
- website hosting;
- presence on virtual business park at www.wiredup.net

Below are listed the 10 stages in the delivery of the Business Programme.

- Stage 1** Client worker visits young person at home
- Stage 2** Action plan developed for way ahead
- Stage 3** Young person given opportunity to access test marketing grant to research business idea
- Stage 4** Young person referred to SABP
- Stage 5** Young person supported to develop viable business plan
- Stage 6** Client worker presents business plan to Prince's Trust Regional Committee for approval of funding
- Stage 7** Young person, if approved, receives letter of offer from Prince's Trust. If turned down the young person is signposted to other Prince's Trust programmes and other support agencies.
- Stage 8** The young person is referred on to the Prince's Trust Wired Up programme.
- Stage 9** Young person receives loan and/or grant monies.
- Stage 10** Young person linked to mentor and commences trading.

PTNI offers discretionary financial assistance in the form of loans and grants to clients to assist them in establishing or growing their enterprise. Awards are provided on a 'funder-of-last-resort' basis, providing finance to clients who have been unable to generate sufficient funds from mainstream sources such as banks, the SABP or personal savings.

Start-up loans of up to £5,000 for each business can be made available at an annual interest rate of 3%, and these can be up to 100% of the eligible cost with variable repayment terms depending on the size of loan.

Grants of up to £1,500 (or £3,000, where there are multiple partners) are available for applicants who are long-term unemployed and exhibit two other deprivation criteria – lone parent status; educational disadvantage; leaving prison; or long term care. These grants are issued during the start-up phase of the enterprise, often alongside start-up loans, and are described as 'a gift to alleviate poverty through the medium of self-employment'. The Trust strives to maintain an 80:20 loan to grant ratio, making the loan fund the primary source of funding.

Shell LiveWIRE Programme

What?

Shell LiveWIRE Northern Ireland was first established in 1989 as part of a UK-wide initiative at that time. LiveWIRE comprises three core programmes:

- Enterprise in Education
- Enterprise in the Community
- annual Young Entrepreneur of the Year Awards

LiveWIRE NI has been the most active region in the UK over recent years and operates as part of the LiveWIRE International Group. Its funding is derived from Invest NI (69%) and Shell (31%).

An independent evaluation conducted for Invest NI into Shell LiveWIRE NI in February and March 2003 illustrated the continued rationale for intervening in the youth enterprise sector because of continued high levels of youth unemployment in the 16–30 age bracket (9.2%). The programme was also seen to align with the following government policy objectives:

- the Business Birth Rates objective of the Invest Northern Ireland Corporate Plan 2002–2005;
- the priorities of the consultation document Accelerating Entrepreneurship;
- Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment Corporate Plan 2002–2005;
- Community Support Framework;
- Programme for Government.

The evaluation also demonstrated that intervention in the youth enterprise sector generally was making an impact, with 36.36% of business start-ups for the period 1 September 2002 to 9 January 2003 coming from the 18–30 age bracket.

Why?

To raise awareness of youth enterprise in Northern Ireland and to assist young people in the 16–30 age group to explore the option of starting a business through the provision of research, advice, support and guidance.

More specifically, the operating plan for 2003 developed by LiveWIRE NI set out the aims of the organisation as follows:

- to encourage young people to view starting a business as a viable and realistic career option;
- to provide those that respond to this message with tailored products and services through a standardised, quality-assured co-ordinated process;
- to make best use of LiveWIRE's current ICT capability by allowing NI enterprise partners shared access to the company's interactive client database;
- to design and implement a targeted marketing campaign taking into consideration the objectives of NTSN.

Who?

The operating plan for 2003 called for 1,260 referrals to SABP and 2,800 registrations each year, (that is respondents' full details and dispatch of Personal Enterprise Resource, LiveWIRE Direct) from the economically active base of 229,000 and subsequent pool of some 20,500 (9%) 'thinkers'.

Between 1 April 2003 and 30 September 2003, Shell LiveWIRE estimated that it made initial contact with 4,457 potential young entrepreneurs between the ages of 16 and 30 years through its exhibitions at 10 events across Northern Ireland. Two thousand nine hundred and twenty-eight young people subsequently registered with the programme and received an essential business kit and were referred to SABP. One thousand and thirty-eight took part in the SABP and of these 172 were offered grant aid towards starting a business.

Of 3,273 registered clients between 1 April 2003 and 31 March 2004,

- 141 were aged under 16 (4.3%)¹⁰
- 193 were aged 16 (5.9%)
- 343 were aged 17–20 (10.5%)
- 277 were aged 21–24 (8.4%)
- 2021 were aged 25 (61.8%)¹¹
- 253 were aged 26–30 (7.8%)
- 45 were aged over 30 (1.3%)

The client information management system records details of clients by gender, age, race and disability, although the dataset is far from complete. Of the 2,771 recorded registrations between September 2002 and March 2003, 1,701 were from young men (61.3%) and 1,070 were from young women (38.6%), with the modal age of young men being 17 and young women, 23.

The number of people who had registered their personal details with LiveWIRE NI for the period 1999–2003 is as follows:

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003*
5,166	7,436	5,825	6,020	950

* For the period January 2003 to March 2003.

In September 2002 LiveWIRE introduced a client information management system (CIMS). Data for the period September 2002 to March 2003, broken down by gender and age, is shown overleaf.

¹⁰ Whilst the target group is aged 16–30, those aged under 16 who ask for information on the programme are not denied this material and will be registered at that time.

¹¹ Those with no date of birth were allocated 25 as mean age for monitoring purposes.

Age and Gender Distribution				
Age	Male	Female	Total	%
16 yrs	30	17	47	1.70
17 yrs	134	65	199	7.18
18 yrs	118	62	180	6.50
19 yrs	48	57	105	3.79
20 yrs	28	30	58	2.09
21 yrs	47	46	93	3.36
22 yrs	68	59	127	4.58
23 yrs	84	74	158	5.70
24 yrs	61	43	104	3.75
25 yrs	42	30	72	2.60
26 yrs	21	24	45	1.62
27 yrs	26	14	40	1.44
28 yrs	29	18	47	1.70
29 yrs	17	24	41	1.48
30 yrs	16	24	40	1.44
Unknown	895	456	1351	48.75
> 30			64	2.31
Total	1664	1043	2771	100.00

Where?

Activities associated with the LiveWIRE programme are held in a wide range of locations. For example, between April and September 2003 exhibitions were staged at:

- UCAS exhibition (King’s Hall, Belfast)
- Larne roadshow
- Carrickfergus roadshow
- Newtownabbey roadshow
- BIFHE seminar
- Job Scene fair
- St Pat’s seminar (Armagh)
- Lagan College seminar
- NE Antrim Institute seminar
- STEP students

How?

LiveWIRE Northern Ireland has undertaken its core activities of outreach, link-up and enquiry through three core programmes:

- the Enterprise in Education Programme;
- the Enterprise in the Community Programme;
- the annual LiveWIRE Young Entrepreneur of the Year awards.

Enterprise in Education Programme

Through the Enterprise in Education programme LiveWIRE has engaged in various activities directly linked to education. These include:

- developing the UK's first GCSE module in self-employment, training teachers on its delivery and piloting the module in eighteen schools in Northern Ireland;
- sponsoring key skills packs for every 16-year-old in education in Northern Ireland;
- providing 120 schools with a Northern Ireland based Enterprise Resource Bank, which includes state-of-the-art business planning and business research tools;
- delivering enterprise presentations and workshops in schools, colleges and universities across Northern Ireland.

To date the Enterprise in Education Programme has been funded by Invest NI, DEL, Council for the Curriculum Examination and Assessment (CCEA) and Shell LiveWIRE.

Enterprise in the Community

As part of the Enterprise in the Community Programme, LiveWIRE conducts community outreach by:

- establishing fixed distribution sites to market and promote LiveWIRE materials throughout Northern Ireland;
- producing the Northern Ireland enterprise network's interactive enterprise awareness CD Rom;
- introducing the LiveWIRE Direct service, which offers free business information and research facilities via phone or e-mail;
- delivering workshops and careers fairs to promote understanding of enterprise and to present self-employment as a career option;
- delivering enterprise awareness presentations to community groups throughout Northern Ireland;
- developing links within the Northern Ireland enterprise support network through introducing formal systems for referral of clients to and from SABP;
- promoting entrepreneurship through role models by organising press and media coverage.

The Enterprise in the Community programme is funded by some of the local district councils in Northern Ireland although not all councils have funded the programme, resulting in a lack of geographical equity in terms of provision of the services offered through the Enterprise in the Community project while creating uncertainty for LiveWIRE Northern Ireland in delivering these services.

The LiveWIRE Young Entrepreneur of the Year

LiveWIRE Northern Ireland runs an annual competition to celebrate entrepreneurship in the 16–30 age bracket. The aim of the competition is to identify the most promising young entrepreneur. The award provides the winner with a vehicle for one year plus £2,000 in cash. In addition, Shell provides the winner of the award with petrol for one year. All Northern Ireland finalists receive a Toyota 'day out', a Hilton leisure break, a sustainable development audit carried out by Arena Network and a LiveWIRE owner manager pack.

The Young Business Awards provide an award for each of the 26 district council areas, culminating in an overall winner.

The Northern Ireland winner automatically receives a place in the UK final, which provides the possibility of winning a further £10,000 plus a range of small prizes and extensive publicity for the business.

Export Start Scheme

What?

The Export Start Scheme (ESS) was first introduced in June 1992 as LEDU's primary scheme for assisting new export-orientated companies which have growth potential. On 1 April 2002, Invest NI's Growth Start scheme was introduced, developing from the amalgamated Export Start and Accelerated Start-Up schemes (former LEDU schemes). In 2004 the name of the scheme reverted to the Export Start Scheme to align with categories in the AES.

In the late 1990s and early 2000 ESS was one of four major schemes which LEDU targeted at start-up businesses. Between June 1992 and March 2001 ESS provided a total of £14.4 million assistance to companies during their initial two-year start-up period.

The criteria for assistance under the existing ESS are that the business must have the potential to sell to markets outside Northern Ireland within three years, or be involved in import substitution. The support offered to businesses is both financial and advisory.

The support offered by Invest NI to those businesses which participate on ESS includes:

- access to experienced staff who help people to develop business ideas and deal with the practicalities of setting up a business;
- financial support such as grants, loans and equity from Invest NI or from other financial sources;
- non-financial support across key business areas including: market research, productivity, financial controls, competitor information, guidance on legal issues or ICT advice;
- advice about management skills and practical assistance on exploiting new market opportunities;
- access to the full range of Invest NI's business improvement programmes to maximise the possibility of success.

Why?

The scheme seeks to generate new businesses, with the potential, within three years to start selling products outside NI or substitute products currently imported from outside NI.

The scheme therefore is aimed at businesses with export potential, and encourages them to exploit near-market opportunities such as Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland. Entering markets further afield is also encouraged and supported.

The specific objectives of ESS are:

- to focus resources more clearly on opportunities which have the potential to contribute to the Northern Ireland economy;
- to encourage the development of well designed, quality and competitive products either selling outside of Northern Ireland or substituting for imports;
- to promote higher levels of economic growth.

Who?

In total, 302 offers were made to businesses between 1998 and 2000.

Year	Offers	%
1998	115	38
1999	93	31
2000	94	31
Total	302	100

The value of the assistance offered under ESS during this period totalled £8,447,698, or an average of £27,973 for each business. The amount offered ranged from £140 to £268,000. Fifty-seven per cent of businesses were offered support of between £10,000 and £30,000, with 9% offered support of over £50,000 and 7% less than £10,000.

Of the total assistance provided by ESS, 67% was provided as revenue grants. Employment grants accounted for 11%, with marketing accounting for a further 9%. The remainder, for example, consultancy, capital, equity, and working capital, each accounted for less than 5% of the total assistance given.

As of December 2003, the number of staff employed by ESS clients was 1,829, with an average turnover per client of £469,474.

Where?

Support is offered through Invest NI's local office network. Offices are located as follows:

- Eastern Local Office: Belfast
- North Eastern Local Office: Ballymena
- North Western Local Offices: Londonderry & Coleraine
- Western Local Offices: Omagh & Enniskillen
- Southern Local Offices: Newry & Craigavon

A breakdown of offers made by local offices between 1998 and 2000 is shown below.

Office	No. of offers	%
Eastern	91	30
North Eastern	41	14
North Western	51	17
Western	65	22
Southern	54	18
Total	302	100

How?

Invest NI client executives at the local offices manage the process of undertaking initial enquiries, application form submission and an appraisal of the business plan submitted by the applicant for ESS assistance. This assessment normally considers:

- commercial viability;
- export potential;
- value of the business to the local economy;
- adequacy of project funding;
- conditions which should be attached to Invest NI support.

Subject to the outcome of the appraisal, Invest NI negotiates the form and amount of support to be offered to the applicant. The exact level of financial assistance is determined by an appraisal of the business proposal. Normally, assistance from the scheme comprises:

- up to £40,000 employment-related grant, based on a maximum level of £4,000 per job created;
- up to £35,000 development incentive assistance, including marketing and product or process grants;
- up to £24,000 management salary grant.

Invest NI will not normally provide more than 40% of the overall cost of the project. Promoters are expected to secure the maximum available funding from other sources and normally to provide a minimum of 20% of the project costs themselves.

ESS clients progress through nine steps from application through to assistance and monitoring. The nine steps are:

- Step 1:** Is the project viable?
- Step 2:** Is financial assistance required for pre-start activities?
- Step 3:** Project appraisal including import substitution and export, additionality, viability, promoter sustainability
- Step 4:** Assessment and negotiation of level and type of assistance required
- Step 5:** Submission to delegated authority for consideration and approval
- Step 6:** Letter of Offer issued
- Step 7:** Assessment of performance against conditions of offer
- Step 8:** If conditions achieved then assistance paid to client
- Step 9:** Monitoring of client's performance including three visits per year, submission of quarterly or half-yearly accounts and grant inspections

A recent evaluation of ESS, carried out by Deloitte MCS Ltd, included a telephone survey of 30 clients to obtain their views on ESS. In summary, the survey found that while there were a number of specific concerns with aspects of the application process, overall satisfaction with ESS was high.

Global Start

What?

Global Starts originated from the AES launched in June 2003. The Global Start Team was established in February 2004, as part of the Creative and Design Sector Division of Invest NI.

A Global Start company is outlined in the AES strategy as follows:

'A Global Start is a business that has the potential to trade on the world market from its earliest days, often seeking to exploit an innovative concept or fill an identified niche market opportunity.'

Such businesses are based on the knowledge and intellectual capacity of the founders and aim to develop leading edge technologies. Some result from the commercialisation of research undertaken in universities while others develop from the ideas of employees.

The Global Start Team has a sales and prospecting role to locate companies with an entrepreneurial outlook that are ready to penetrate a global market.

Why?

The Global Start Team has been established to:

- accelerate the growth of global starts in Northern Ireland;
- provide access to global networks and contacts;
- introduce companies to sources of venture capital and other business capital;
- support client executives who wish to accelerate the path of Invest NI clients into global markets;
- attract new entrepreneurial clients to Northern Ireland.

Who?

Global Start companies may be start-up companies trading globally from the inception or existing companies who are trading globally for the first time, with a base in Northern Ireland. Global Starts may come from overseas or be based in Northern Ireland.

It is intended that these companies will be primarily knowledge-based or information technology based and will have strong financial and management systems already in place.

A Global Start is defined as:

- a business with significant international market opportunity;
- having intellectual property or unique technology;
- with 5 to 10 employees;
- having a £1 million turnover target within 3 years, 30% overseas;
- having a product and identified customer pipeline;
- having a management team with a strong track record; and
- open to securing external funding.

Where?

Global Start businesses are identified through the following mechanisms:

- direct contact with Global Start Team, via the Invest NI website, or through introductions at networking events;
- referral from Invest NI local offices;
- referral from Invest NI sector teams;
- referral from Invest NI's Innovation, Capability and Development Group;
- referral from Invest NI's overseas offices;
- referral from overseas agencies;
- referral from venture capital funds;
- referral from business leaders;
- referral from universities;
- referral from other external organisations such as banks and solicitors.

How?

Following referral to the Global Start Team, the business development executive spends a half-day scoping the business proposal. If deemed eligible, the company must complete the standard Invest NI proposal form before consideration is given as to how Invest NI may best be able to offer support.

Financial and advisory support is provided through the Global Start Team, who work alongside these entrepreneurs who have the potential to establish world-class competitive companies.

Specifically, this support includes:

- grants, loans and equity;
- introductions to sources of venture capital and other finance providers;
- providing access to global networks and contacts; and
- access to expert knowledge and skills.

It is envisaged that the team will provide flexible support that may include grant aid, technical assistance, advice and help with sourcing match funding.

Furthermore, the Global Start Team can access the full range of Invest NI business development solutions.

Go for It Campaign

What?

The Go for It campaign aims to provide a single brand for entrepreneurship and will act as a gateway for potential entrepreneurs to access the enterprise support network in Northern Ireland.

The Go for It campaign was run on a pilot basis for five months, between October 2003 and February 2004.

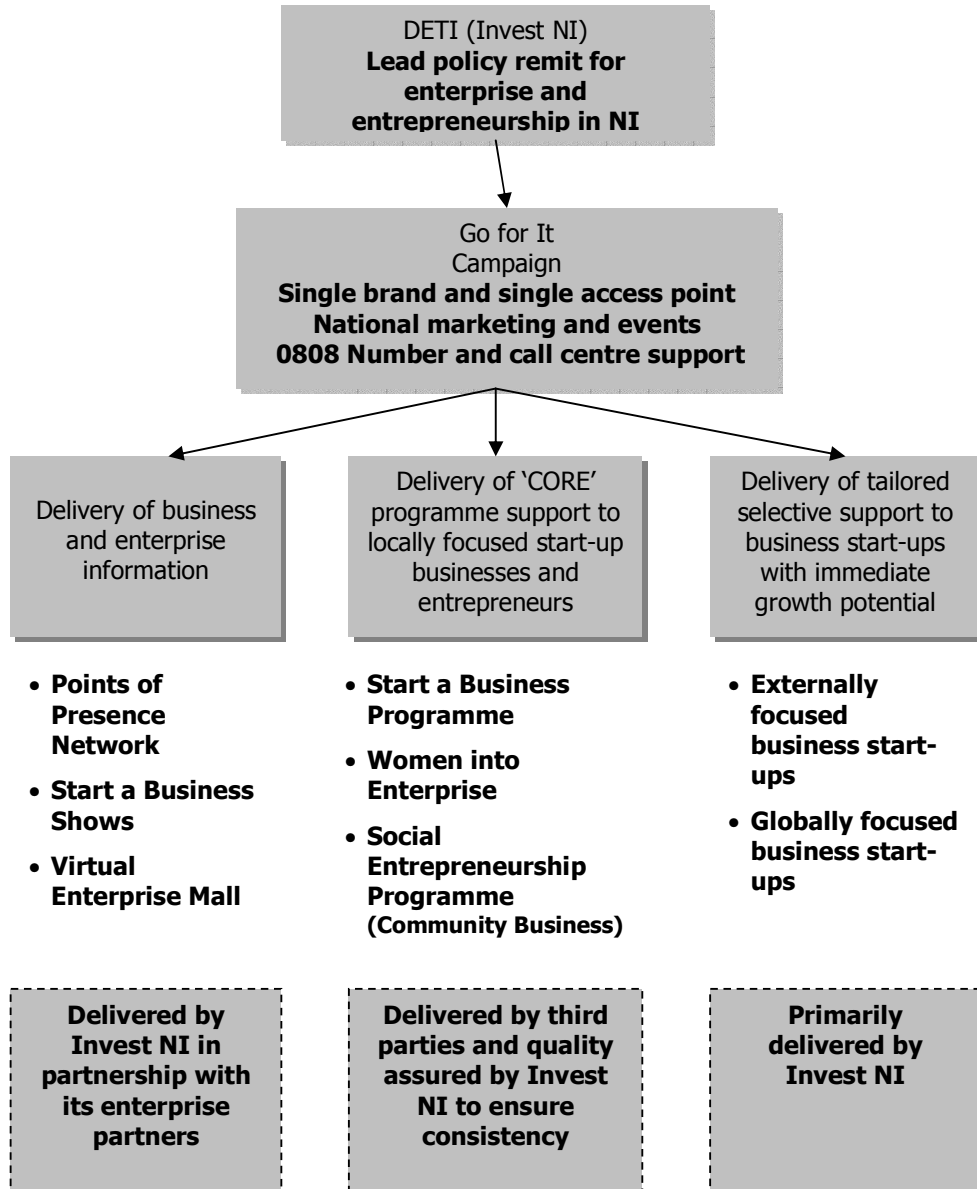
The aim of the pilot phase was about raising awareness, capturing the public's attention and building a positive perception about entrepreneurship. It was a 'call to action' to the entire population of Northern Ireland.

The pilot phase was successful in its basic aim of establishing the brand identity of Go for It and in generating demand for enterprise support.

A positive economic appraisal was carried out leading to the approval of an extended campaign period. This appraisal demonstrated the need for a simplification of the enterprise support infrastructure in Northern Ireland, with the future Go for It campaign positioned as the single gateway and access point for customers. In effect, Go for It will remain key to generating the demand for enterprise support in Northern Ireland.

The future phase of the campaign will aim to address the cultural change dimension of promoting entrepreneurship as a valued career option. The campaign will be positioned to alleviate deeply rooted cultural and social norms in Northern Ireland that currently act as a major constraint to addressing the risk averse culture that prevails on a widespread basis in Northern Ireland.

The figure overleaf illustrates the proposed infrastructure and services that will be linked to the Go for It campaign over the medium term.



The indicative cost associated with the project over the proposed campaign duration is up to £7.5 million over five years.

The proposed media campaign for the year 2005–2006 is as follows:

Television: 4,840 TV ratings up – £587,000

Radio: 454 advertisement spots – £10,000

The year one plan anticipates the use of only TV and radio options. However, in subsequent years the media mix may be altered to include other media opportunities focussed on exploiting demographic and social target groups.

Why?

The basic aim of the Go for It campaign is:

'To encourage more people, from a wider range of backgrounds, to start a business.'

The AES communication strategy and marketing plan states that the core goal of the Go for It campaign is 'to realise and bring to life the vision of the AES, namely: to make Northern Ireland an exemplar location for starting and growing a successful business'.

In line with the overall aim of AES, the three associated campaign objectives are:

- to mount a sustained campaign that will be noticed by the public in general and by potential entrepreneurs and support bodies in particular, and be easily recognised as being about promoting starting a business;
- to develop, from the outset, an appreciation that the campaign represents the start of a collective effort that involves a large number of bodies working together – it is not just another government initiative;
and
- to present the campaign as an inclusive dynamic and evolving movement that needs to be sustained over the long term and welcomes, indeed needs, the input of a wide range of people.

It is intended that the Go for It campaign will reach, inform and engage a broad spectrum of people across Northern Ireland. It must also deliver specific messages that reach distinct target groups. In the short term, the key external audiences to be targeted are the general public, active entrepreneurs, the press and other key influencers.

Who?

In terms of campaign tracking and monitoring with respect to the pilot phase of the campaign, there are essentially three mechanisms for measuring performance:

- activity levels at the call centre, that is, the number of enquiries generated;
- awareness of the Go for It identity and associated advertising;
- numbers attending the Start a Business shows.

The incoming enquiries to the Go for It telephone number (0808 127 0000) are handled by the AMA call centre in Bangor (IDS, Newry from July 2005). The call centre essentially acts as a referral service, capturing key details from callers and referring the information on to either the local enterprise agency or local Invest NI office as appropriate (and linked to whether the business idea is categorised as a local, external or global start-up). During the period of the pilot campaign, over 3,200 enquiries were handled as summarised overleaf.

Description	Enquiries	Percentage
Referral – new business, NI only	2388	74%
Referral – new business, outside NI	269	8%
Referral – existing business	165	5%
Second call – no contact from LEA	106	3%
Second call – no contact from local office	34	1%
Company assessment	8	<1%
Dealt with at Helpdesk	244	8%
Total	3214	100%

Of the first time calls handled by the call centre, an overwhelming majority (93%) were from callers thinking of setting up a new business. Most were focused on the local market, however, 14% perceived that their business would be operating in export markets during the first two years.

Perhaps surprisingly, only 25% of calls received were from females.

In addition to the enquiries received at the call centre, the first Start a Business show at the Odyssey Arena in Belfast generated approximately 6,000 enquiries (4,168 attending plus a further 1,800 who registered but did not attend) against an expected turnout of 2,200 to 2,500.

Data on the awareness and penetration of the campaign to date are available from the Millward Brown Ulster Omnibus survey, involving 1,000 interviews with a representative sample of the adult (over 16) population. This survey was performed in October 2003 to provide a baseline study and then repeated in February 2004.

In both of these Omnibus surveys of October 2003 and February 2004, respondents were asked if they had seen or heard any advertising about starting a new business over the past six months. In October 2003, just over 4 in 10 (43%) could recall seeing or hearing some advertising; by February 2004 this had increased to almost 62%. Those who had claimed to have seen or heard advertising for starting a new business were then asked where they had seen or heard the advertising. In both surveys, close to 90% had been aware of the television advertising – despite this format representing less than 20% of the total spend. Additionally, television was quoted by almost 50% of callers to the call centre, reinforcing the importance of this medium to both raising awareness of the campaign and generating enquiries.

There was a significant increase in awareness of the poster campaign over the pilot period, with posters also generating a significant proportion of enquiries to the call centre. Indeed, the television and poster advertising appears to be responsible for almost 7 out of every 10 enquiries received at the call centre.

Awareness of the newspaper advertising was relatively high, although it appeared to be less productive in terms of generating enquiries. At the other end of the scale, the awareness of and enquiry generation derived from magazine and cinema advertising was poor, suggesting that these media should be utilised more selectively in future to defined, niche audiences.

In the October 2003 survey, when shown picture stills of the Go for It campaign, only 25% of those interviewed claimed to have seen it. In February 2004, prompted awareness had increased dramatically to 68%, a clear indication that awareness of the campaign has increased significantly across the period of the pilot. The increase in prompted awareness was greatest for the television and poster advertising, with changes across other media being relatively minor.

Where?

Related to the Go for It campaign, and within the scope of this appraisal, is the **Points of Presence network**. The Points of Presence network aims to provide an integrated support infrastructure that will offer physical access and support for entrepreneurs throughout Northern Ireland. The network will advise entrepreneurs at all stages in the lifecycle of their business and will be focused on businesses with a local, export and global market orientation.

Initially the Points of Presence network will be operated throughout Northern Ireland by the Invest NI local office network and the Enterprise Northern Ireland network of local enterprise agencies.

Linkages will also be built with DEL Job Centres and DARD regional offices. Each of the nominated Points of Presence will develop linkages with organisations based in its local community and engage in outreach activities to achieve greater inclusivity.

The Points of Presence Network



Currently it is proposed that the Points of Presence network will continue to be operated largely through the network of 32 local enterprise agencies, as members of Enterprise NI. These will provide local access points for entrepreneurs to gain information and be signposted to appropriate support within specified quality standards set within the bounds of a service level agreement between Invest NI and Enterprise NI.

How?

The initial focus of the pilot phase of the Go for It campaign was on launching the identity and establishing the brand. Future phases of the campaign aim to address the cultural change dimension of promoting entrepreneurship, in particular addressing risk aversion, fear of failure and entrepreneurship as a valued career option.

Although an integrated, multi-channel approach will continue, future phases of the campaign will concentrate on three primary platforms (TV, radio and posters) all of which performed strongly in the pilot phase. Additionally mini posters, magazines and some ambient media will be used to target mentoring groups and educational outlets and schools. The basic premise in terms of the frequency of 'message exposure' will continue, with the view that every individual in Northern Ireland will be exposed to the message at least 100 times. This is necessary to maintain the broad call-to-action for entrepreneurship alongside the focus on educational audiences, that is schools, 16 to 24-year-olds and parents.

Subsequent phases of the campaign will take cognisance of feedback from the call centre, and particularly the relatively poor response from females. This will be addressed by altering the media used to reach the target audiences, by altering the presentation or content of the message, or by a combination of both. Further research, beyond the Omnibus survey, may be required to probe and explore attitudes to entrepreneurship among 'problem' audiences.

Invest NI has a proposed budget for the campaign of approximately £14.5 million over its duration. However, as previously detailed it is important to acknowledge that the Go for It campaign is much more than a TV advertising campaign. It is a brand concept leading to a more fundamental restructuring of enterprise support services in Northern Ireland, and therefore will encompass expenditure on items beyond core TV advertising. Furthermore, the proposed Go for It campaign will be a sustained campaign with 'drip' activity across the full year compared to previous campaigns, which involved 'burst' activity with periods of inactivity in between. Therefore the Go for It campaign is broader in scope and scale than its predecessors.

Of the proposed budget, over half will be spent on direct advertising with the balance allocated to a range of other support measures including literature, conference sponsorship, exhibitions, events and web marketing.

The Go for It budget includes a provision for events (over and above the Start a Business shows which are funded separately). Typical events are listed below.

- Belfast City Council Business Week – January (entrepreneurship event in Belfast City Hall)
- Spirit of Enterprise Awards – May (sponsorship in association with the Ulster Society of Chartered Accountants)
- Entrepreneurial breakfasts – February and June (series of six in association with the Institute of Business Advisors and USCA)
- Bedroom Britain (an initiative focused on teenagers generating business ideas from their bedroom)
- Edward de Bono events – Londonderry, June (a series of five events concentrating on stimulating creativity and innovation);
- National Enterprise Week (UK in November 2004)

- ANIC Conference – June (stimulating entrepreneurial education links through colleges of further education)
- Entrepreneurial conference – September or October (Invest NI sponsorship in association with the CIM & USCA); *and*
- North West Go for It Week (June 2004) – the model to be rolled out to other district council areas.

In the longer term, the link with enterprise training in schools and colleges will become increasingly important and the Go for It campaign will engage with this. This is essentially about embedding some of the work already underway in terms of the youth elements of AES through promotional activity with parents, influencers of school children, and school children themselves.

CONSIDERATION OF AVAILABLE DATA AND RESEARCH

In summary, in order to carry out this Equality Impact Assessment, the following sources of information have been considered and are reported on in the preceding sections.

General Information

- Accelerating Entrepreneurship Strategy Document 2003
- Entrepreneurship Development Team Monthly Report January 2004
- Entrepreneurship Development Team Operating Plan 2003 - 04
- Operating Plan: Report on Achievements During 2002 - 03
- Operating Plan: Targets for 2003 - 04
- Letters of Offer
- LEDU Revised Business Start Programme EQIA 2001
- Global Entrepreneurship Monitor Northern Ireland 2004

Start a Business Programme

- Programme manager's reports
- Marketing manager's report January 2004
- Invest NI monitoring data
- Start A Business Programme (SABP) Operating Manual November 2003 version 2.6
- Independent Validation of the Business Start Programme September 2002
- External Evaluation of NI Business Start Programme: October 2002
- External Evaluation of NI Business Start Programme: June 2003
- LEDU Business Start Programme II Economic Appraisal

Community Business Start Up Programme

- PWC Partners for Change report
- Invest NI Social Entrepreneurship Programme Business Plan/Scoping Paper May 2004
- Community Business Start-Up Programme Operations Manual, version II, September 2003
- Application scoring and assessment sheets

Women's Initiative

- Investing in Women report on strategy development and implementation
- Household Entrepreneurship Study – NI Summary Report 2002

Prince's Trust Business Programme

- Evaluation of the Prince's Trust Business Programme May 2004
- Evaluation of the Prince's Trust Business Programme February 2004

LiveWIRE Programme

- Monitoring data on participants
- Shell/LiveWIRE Evaluation Report March 2003

Export Start Scheme

- Proposal form
- Letters of Offer

Global Start Programme

- Proposal form
- Letters of Offer

Go for It Campaign

- Omnibus Survey Report October 2003
- Omnibus Survey Report February 2004
- Economic Appraisal 2004

CONSIDERATION OF ADVERSE IMPACT

Each of the elements that make up the AES was examined in the light of information obtained to assess whether or not there was an adverse impact on any of the nine equality categories and to ascertain if action could be taken to promote good relations.

Start a Business Programme

A review of the existing data indicates a lower uptake by women compared to men, however, the female participation rate has risen over time. Participation rates remain almost constant throughout the process at approximately 38% female and 62% male. Participation rates by members of the Protestant and Roman Catholic communities appear to have remained relatively consistent, being approximately 38% Protestant and 37% Catholic, apart from during the enquiry stage. However, the figures for those who have not disclosed community background is relatively high therefore the monitoring information may not be an accurate reflection of actual participation rates by religion. Of those making enquiries 1.2% were members of ethnic minorities, however, there is no further information on participation. Participation is primarily in the age group 31 to 50 years with the younger age group also being well represented. The low participation rate of those aged over 51 is significant.

Very little information exists in relation to disability. No monitoring information is collected in relation to political opinion, marital status, sexual orientation or dependants.

Community Business Start-Up Programme

There is little known of the characteristics of the groups who have availed of this programme. As the programme ended in November 2004 it would be of no assistance to commence monitoring of these groups in order to make any determination of adverse impact. While it is noted that the locations at which the five main agents and subcontract arrangements are in predominantly Catholic areas, the contract network for the programme also includes other

Invest NI contact points. The location of those delivery points is being considered by Invest NI in relation to separate points of presence policy.

Investing in Women Initiative

This initiative is targeted specifically at women. Preferential treatment for women in the area of training is permissible under the Sex Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 1976. The initiative is time limited and Invest NI believes that it is a proportionate response to the continued under-representation of women in entrepreneurship. Whilst there is a differential impact of this policy on grounds of gender, that impact is not adverse.

There is no monitoring information on the participation rates of women in this initiative by any of the other eight equality dimensions.

Prince's Trust Business Programme

This programme is targeted specifically at young people. Preferential treatment of young people is currently lawful and may be required in order to promote equality of opportunity. Invest NI believes that while there is a differential impact of this policy on grounds of age, that impact is not adverse, and is in response to a well defined business need, coupled with local factors associated with young people's lack of engagement with entrepreneurship.

The participation rate of those from ethnic minorities is 1% and 13% of participants were lone parents. It is not considered that these rates constitute adverse impact.

The gender breakdown indicates that a higher proportion of young men engage with the programme than young women, although the extent to which this imbalance reflects on wider social trends or the programme itself remains to be determined.

The lack of monitoring information on grounds of religion makes it difficult to draw any conclusions regarding adverse impact at this time.

The level of participation of those who had a disability (13%) is lower than the overall working population but this may be understandable in view of the age profile of those being targeted.

Shell LiveWIRE Programme

This programme is targeted specifically at young people. Preferential treatment of young people is currently lawful and may be required in order to promote equality of opportunity. Invest NI believes that while there is a differential impact of this policy on grounds of age that impact is not adverse. There is low participation by females on this programme.

Almost 27% (26.9%) of participants had a disability and whilst this may be slightly greater than the general proportions amongst young people preferential treatment for those who have a disability is currently lawful under equality law and it is not considered that this constitutes an adverse impact.

The percentage uptake from those with ethnic minorities was 2.7% and this is not considered to constitute adverse impact.

Export Start Scheme

None of the criteria used would appear to indicate adverse impact and while the lack of specific monitoring data should be rectified the existing data do not suggest that the policy has been a cause for concern or may lead to adverse impact.

Global Start

As this programme commenced in February 2004 there is little available data in relation to uptake. A review of the criteria for obtaining support does not indicate any areas of concern in relation to adverse impact.

Go for It Campaign

A review of the existing data does not suggest that the Go for It campaign raises any adverse impact issues.

MEASURES TO MITIGATE AND ALTERNATIVE POLICIES (Preliminary Recommendations)

Having considered available data and research and considered any adverse impact which might arise out of existing policies, it is proposed that Invest NI takes the following action in respect of its AES programmes.

1. A systematic monitoring strategy and associated procedures will be put in place to encompass all programmes operating under AES. The strategy will need to look at realistic and appropriate methods for gathering Section 75 data from those companies seeking assistance under AES. Ultimately the intention will be to capture information relating to all nine Section 75 dimensions in line with the Equality Commission's emerging best practice recommendations.
2. The selection criteria used for each programme should be clearly defined and set out; any potential adverse impacts associated with these criteria must be considered.
3. Where any AES programme deliberately targets certain groups then the rationale for this targeting must be made transparent.
4. Available statistics on current uptake and economic activity would suggest that positive action measures in relation to training of women and those aged over 50, in particular, may be appropriate at this time.

5. The network of AES Points of Presence across Northern Ireland must be constantly reviewed to ensure an even distribution. At present the distribution seems imbalanced.
6. Community Business Start Up Programme (when relaunched as Social Entrepreneurship Programme) should ensure that the distribution of delivery agents across Northern Ireland affords reasonable access for all communities.
7. Community Business Start Up Programme (when relaunched as Social Entrepreneurship Programme) should ensure that the criteria relating to designated disadvantaged NTSN areas do not discriminate on grounds of race or religion.
8. The Prince's Trust and LiveWIRE programmes should continue to monitor and reflect on the age ranges that they cater for and provide a sound rationale for their targeting procedures.
9. The Prince's Trust and LiveWIRE programmes should consider any affirmative action and outreach measures that may be appropriate to ensure equality of opportunity for under-represented groups.
10. SABP should ensure that the process of auditing each new Point of Presence is formalised to identify any 'chill factors' associated with the building or its location and to ensure that all venues enjoy equal access for those with special needs.
11. Each programme must ensure that all materials can be made available in alternative formats on request, and consider the marketing of these programmes (through Go for It) using alternatives to the written word.
12. All AES application forms must use a format with clear fonts, layout, colours and so on, that are accessible to those with special needs.¹²

These measures, when implemented, should further equality of opportunity generally, in compliance with Invest NI's obligations under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

As previously stated in our Equality Scheme, the amended policies will be regularly monitored to ensure that no adverse impact occurs.

¹² These issues will also be addressed through Invest NI's Making Information Accessible Guidelines.

FORMAL CONSULTATION

Invest NI wishes to consult as widely as possible on the findings included in this EQIA, together with the preliminary recommendations offered above. The following actions are proposed:

- This report will be issued to all consultees listed in our Equality Scheme and to any members of the public on request.
- Prominent advertisements will be placed in the *Belfast Telegraph*, *Irish News* and *Newletter* newspapers, inviting the public to comment on this matter in accordance with normal practice.
- A copy will be posted on Invest NI's website and on the intranet.
- Individual consultation meetings will be arranged with staff on request and with representatives of particular interest groups if required.
- Invest NI will put in place systems to ensure that the scheme is available in accessible formats, and in a timely fashion.

The arrangements for consultation are being co-ordinated by the Equality Unit to which all enquiries should be made.

The closing date for responses is **31 October 2005**.

DECISION BY THE PUBLIC AUTHORITY

Following the formal consultation period and consideration of the findings from the consultation, Invest NI will reach a decision in terms of the EQIA process and will ensure that such decisions are implemented through the AES.

PUBLICATION OF RESULTS OF EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The outcomes of this EQIA will be published in the press and will also be posted on Invest NI's website. It will be made available in different formats on request where appropriate.

MONITORING FOR ADVERSE IMPACT IN THE FUTURE AND PUBLICATION OF THE RESULTS OF SUCH MONITORING

Invest NI will establish a system to monitor annually the impact of the policy in the future on relevant groups. This will be reviewed on an annual basis. The results of the monitoring will be widely and openly revised. If this monitoring and evaluation shows that the revised policy results in greater adverse impact than predicted, or if opportunities arise which would allow for greater equality of opportunity to be promoted, Invest NI will ensure the policy is revised.

APPENDIX 1: Examples of Section 75 Groups by Dimension

'Age'

For most purposes, the main categories are: those under 18; people aged between 18 and 65; and people over 65. However, the definition of age groups will need to be sensitive to the policy under consideration. For example, (1) in relation to employment policies the middle aged are often a vulnerable group, pensionable age is different for men and women and legal ages for working and voting vary; (2) in relation to policies concerning young people then narrower age bands are likely to be more appropriate.

'Marital status'

Married people; unmarried people; divorced or separated people; widowed people.

'Men and women generally'

Men (including boys); women (including girls); transgender people; transsexual people.

'Persons with a disability'

Persons with a disability as defined in Sections 1 and 2 and Schedules 1 and 2 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

'Persons with dependants'

Persons with primary responsibility for the care of a child; persons with personal responsibility for the care of a person with a disability; persons with primary responsibility for the care of a dependant elderly person.

'Political opinion'

Unionists generally; Nationalists generally; members and supporters of any political party; other.

'Racial group'

Chinese; Irish Traveller; Indian; Pakistani; Bangladeshi; Black African; Black Caribbean; White; Mixed Ethnic Group; any other ethnic group; nationality.

'Religious belief'

Protestant; Catholic; Hindu; Jewish; Muslim; Sikh; Buddhist; other religion; people of no religious belief.

'Sexual orientation'

Gay; lesbian; bisexual; heterosexual.

(This list may be amended or added to as appropriate.)

APPENDIX 2: Start a Business Programme Centres

Acorn the Business Centre 2 Riada Avenue Garryduff Road Ballymoney BT53 7LH	Antrim Enterprise Agency Ltd 58 Greystone Road Antrim BT41 1JZ
Ards Business Centre Ltd Jubilee Road Newtownards BT23 4YH	Armagh Business Centre Ltd 2 Loughgall Road Armagh BT61 7NJ
Ballymena Business Devt Centre Ltd Galgorm Industrial Estate 62 Fenaghy Road Ballymena BT42 1FL	Banbridge District Enterprises Ltd Scarva Road Industrial Estate Scarva Road Banbridge BT32 3BQ
Belfast First Stop Shop 14 Wellington Place Belfast BT1 6GE	Carrickfergus Enterprise Agency Ltd 8 Meadowbank Road Carrickfergus BT38 8YF
Castlereagh Enterprises Ltd Dundonald Enterprise Park Enterprise Drive, Carrowreagh Road Dundonald BT16 0QT	Coleraine Enterprise Agency Loughanhill Industrial Estate Coleraine BT52 2NR
Cookstown Enterprise Centre Ltd Derryloran Industrial Estate Sandholes Road Cookstown BT80 9LU	Craigavon Industrial Development Organisation Ltd Carn Drive, Carn Industrial Area Portadown, Craigavon BT63 5RH
Down Business Centre 46 Belfast Road Downpatrick BT30 9UP	Dungannon Enterprise Centre Ltd 2 Coalisland Road Dungannon BT71 6JT
East Belfast Enterprise 308 Albertbridge Road Belfast BT5 4GX	Enterprise North West 16c Queen Street Londonderry BT48 7EQ
Fermanagh Enterprise Ltd Enniskillen Business Centre Lackaghboy Industrial Estate Tempo Road, Enniskillen BT74 4RL	Glenwood Enterprises Ltd Glenwood Business Centre Springbank Industrial Estate Poleglass, Belfast BT17 0QL
Larne Enterprise Development Co Ltd LEDCOM Industrial Estate Bank Road Larne BT40 3AW	Lisburn Enterprise Organisation Ltd Enterprise Crescent Ballinderry Road Lisburn BT28 2BP
Mallusk Enterprise Park Ltd Mallusk Drive Newtownabbey BT36 4GN	Moyle Enterprise Company Ltd 61 Leyland Road Ballycastle BT54 6EZ
Newry and Mourne Enterprise Agency Enterprise House WIN Business Park Canal Quay, Newry	North City Business Centre Ltd 2 Duncairn Gardens Belfast BT15 2GG
North Down Development Organisation Ltd Enterprise House, Balloo Avenue Balloo Industrial Estate Bangor BT19 7QT	Omagh Enterprise Company Ltd Great Northern Road Omagh BT78 5LU
Ormeau Enterprises Ltd Ormeau Business Park 8 Cromac Avenue BELFAST BT7 1EL	ORTUS Twin Spires Centre 155 Northumberland Street Belfast BT13 2JF
Roe Valley Enterprises Ltd Aghanloo Industrial Estate Aghanloo Road Limavady BT49 0HE	Strabane Enterprise Agency Orchard Road Industrial Estate Orchard Road Strabane BT82 9FR
Townsend Enterprise Park 28 Townsend Street Belfast BT13 2ES	Work West Enterprise Agency 301 Glen Road Belfast BT11 8BU
Workspace (Draperstown) Ltd 7 Tobermore Road Draperstown BT45 7AG	



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