



European Regional Development Fund

2007 - 2013

Objective 3 :
European Territorial Cooperation

INTERREG IVA
Cross-border cooperation
France-England-Flanders-Netherlands

2 SEAS OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME

EN



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Programme summary

The 2 Seas cross-border cooperation (CBC) programme enables cooperation between regional and local actors from different territories in 4 Member States. This takes the form of projects in which these authorities are invited to develop the competitiveness and sustainable growth potential of the programme area's maritime and non maritime assets through building and advancing partnerships of cross border cooperation.

In line with the Community Strategic Guidelines for Cohesion Policy 2007-2013, the programme aims to contribute to the Union's strategy for growth and jobs.

The programme is structured around three thematic priorities plus one common priority with the Channel France-England OP :

Priority 1 aims at **supporting an economically competitive, attractive and accessible area**, focusing mainly on the sub-themes common economic activities, including the maritime economy, innovation and research, sustainable tourism, entrepreneurship, employment and human capital and accessibility.

Priority 2 aims at **promoting and enhancing a safe and healthy environment**, focusing mainly on integrated coastal zone management, maritime resource management and the management of estuaries, natural, technological and human risks, energy efficiency and renewable energies, nature and landscape, including natural heritage, water management, waste management and sustainable use of resources.

Priority 3 aims at **improving quality of life**, focusing mainly on social inclusion and well-being of different groups in society, services to the population, including mobility and health care facilities, education, training and lifelong learning, the common heritage and cultural assets, as well as active recreation.

Priority 4 aims at **promoting joints actions with the actors eligible in the Channel France-England OP**, focusing mainly on issues of common interest notably related to the maritime dimension from a cross-border perspective, the exchange of good practice and networking activities between projects implemented under both OPs.

This Operational Programme supports three different types of cooperation projects in order to address the different needs and challenges of the target groups in the programme area:

Firstly, it supports **regular Cross-border cooperation projects** that bring together actors from different countries in the programme zone, working together to develop or solve a shared cross-border issue (bottom-up approach).

Secondly, it supports a specific form of cooperation called **Framework projects**. In such projects a partnership develops a joint framework for cross-border cooperation, to be implemented through several sub-projects, such as 'micro-projects'. These sub-projects should normally be small-scale activities, to be developed by the relevant (local) actors.

Finally, it supports **Strategic cross-border cooperation projects** identified by the programme bodies, such as the programme Monitoring Committee and the national and regional level actors represented in the programme bodies may also choose to take an active role in the development of these projects. These should be projects that are essential for achieving the programmes objectives.

The programme is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). It has a total available ERDF budget of € 167 million for the 2007-2013 period. The programme area covers a wide territory from 4 Member States (France, UK, Netherlands and Flanders). The programme co-finances the participation of public authorities and public equivalent bodies and, to a limited extent and within the current regulations, the operators of the competitive private sector from these countries. Participation of actors from outside this area is possible under certain conditions.

Chapter 1. Programme context

1.1 Introduction

This Operational Programme (OP) describes the context and priorities for cooperation between France, England, Flanders and the Netherlands for 2007-2013. This cross-border programme enables regional and local authorities and organizations from different countries to exchange knowledge and experiences and to develop and implement joint policies and projects. The programme will be part-funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

The European territorial cooperation objective 2007-2013 is the successor of the Interreg III Community Initiative. One of the changes compared to Interreg III is the introduction of cross-border cooperation between countries with a maritime border of up to 150 KM wide. The present Programme is such a new cooperation using the possibility to work together more intensively on territorial cooperation.

The partners will use the positive experiences and lessons from the three cross-border cooperation programmes within the programme area that were running under Interreg III: UK-France, France-Flanders-Walloon and Flanders-Netherlands. These programmes funded many projects addressing a wide range of topics, leading to more economic and social cohesion. Continuation of European territorial cooperation, with the addition of maritime cross-border programme areas and new policy accents, will guarantee preservation of the results and forms a good basis for a broader and more structural cooperation.

1.2 European Policy context

1.2.1 ERDF and General Regulations

The General Structural Fund Regulation (EG 1083/2006) contains the provisions for the implementation of the ERDF, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund. More details on the ERDF programmes are provided in Regulation (EG) 1080/2006. The European Commission requires that these programmes have to contribute to the Lisbon and Gothenburg strategies. Priority themes are strengthening competitiveness and innovation, more and better jobs and sustainable development.

Article 6 of the ERDF-regulation sets out the priorities for European Territorial Cooperation. The funds have to be concentrated on economic and social activities adding to sustainable territorial development. Relevant themes for the cross-border strand of cooperation are:

- entrepreneurship, in particular the development of SMEs, tourism, culture, and cross-border trade;
- joint protection and management of natural and cultural resources, as well as the prevention of natural and technological risks;
- supporting links between urban and rural areas;
- reducing isolation through improved access to transport, information and communication networks and services, and cross-border water, waste and energy systems and facilities;
- developing collaboration, capacity and joint use of infrastructures, in particular in sectors such as health, culture, tourism and education.

In addition, the ERDF may contribute to promoting legal and administrative cooperation, the integration of cross-border labour markets, local employment initiatives, gender equality and equal opportunities, training and social inclusion, and sharing of human resources and facilities for R&TD.

1.2.2 Lisbon and Gothenburg strategies

In the last decade, the EU has decided to renew the basis of its competitiveness, increase its growth potential and productivity, and strengthen social cohesion. Several steps mark out this constructive process.

In March 2000 in Lisbon, EU heads of state and government agreed on an ambitious goal : making the EU "the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion". In particular, it was agreed that to achieve this goal, an overall strategy should be applied, aiming at:

- preparing the transition to a knowledge-based economy and society by improving policies for the information society and research development (R&D), as well as by stepping up the process of structural reform for competitiveness and innovation, and by completing the internal market;
- modernising the European social model, investing in people and combating social exclusion;
- sustaining the healthy economic outlook and favourable growth prospects by applying an appropriate macro-economic policy mix.

In June 2001, the EU agreed in Gothenburg a strategy for sustainable development which completes the Union's political commitment to economic and social renewal by adding an environmental dimension to the Lisbon strategy.

However, due to the little progress that was made a few years later in achieving the main goals of Lisbon strategy, the Commission proposed a new Partnership for Growth and Jobs to the European Council of March 2005. The Council confirmed the policy objectives set out by the Commission and underlined the need to re-launch the Lisbon Strategy. This renewed effort required that "*the Union must mobilise all appropriate national and Community resources, including cohesion policy.*" The EC recommended in its first Annual Progress Report (2006) on the Lisbon strategy that Member States ensure Community cohesion and rural development investment is targeted towards supporting the Lisbon Strategy in general and that the new generation of cohesion policy programmes address the following four priority actions: 1) investing more in knowledge and innovation; 2) unlocking business potential; particularly of SMEs; 3) responding to globalisation and ageing; and 4) moving towards an efficient and integrated EU energy policy.

1.2.3 Community Strategic Guidelines

The cohesion policy has to make a significant contribution to the renewed Lisbon strategy. This is the basic idea that underpins the new legislative framework for the reform of cohesion policy for the period 2007-2013 called Community Strategic Guidelines on Cohesion adopted in July 2006.

According to these Community Strategic Guidelines, programmes co-financed through cohesion policy should seek to target resources on the following three priorities :

- *improving the attractiveness of Member States, regions and cities by improving accessibility, ensuring adequate quality and level of services, and preserving the environment;*
- *encouraging innovation, entrepreneurship and the growth of the knowledge economy by research and innovation capacities, including new information and communication technologies;*
- *creating more and better jobs by attracting more people into employment or entrepreneurial activity, improving adaptability of workers and enterprises and increasing investment in human capital.*

The new strategic framework is articulated around three objectives, namely convergence, regional competitiveness and employment, and European territorial cooperation. The latter one aims at promoting stronger integration of the territory of the Union in all its dimensions, including through cross-border cooperation. This type of cooperation intends to reduce the 'barrier-effects' caused by borders.

With the adoption of these Guidelines, programming sets a more strategic focus on the main EU-policy Objectives of Lisbon and Gothenburg, and the cross-border Operational Programme becomes a more strategic document than that of its predecessors under Interreg III. The new programme is also tied much more closely to the activities undertaken under objectives "Convergence" and "Regional competitiveness and employment". This is because the core thematic priorities are the same, and one of the main target groups is clearly made up of the regional and local decision-makers of the regional programmes co-financed under these two last objectives. One main ambition for this programme is to involve these authorities closely because it is clear that in an open, globalised economy, tackling the growth and jobs agenda must be anchored in regional and even local development strategies. This is the level where most business networks are formed, where links are established with centres of learning and technology, and where local knowledge and expertise can best be mobilised.

1.2.4 Horizontal issues

For the European Commission the horizontal principles of partnership, equality between men and women and non-discrimination and sustainable development are very important. These principles form integral parts of the General Regulation. The partners of this territorial cooperation programme actively support the three horizontal priorities. The priorities will be assessment criteria for all activities that will be implemented under this programme.

Partnership

In the preparation and implementation phases of the OP, relevant partners at national, regional and local level are actively involved. These are authorities, social and economic partners, bodies representing civil society and non-governmental organisations operating in the policy context of the programme.

Non-discrimination

All projects that apply for funding under this programme have to prove that they respect the non-discrimination principle. In addition projects that clearly contribute to the equality of chances, by for example stimulating social integration and strengthening of the position of particular groups like young people, disabled people, immigrants and the elderly will be supported. Improvement of the position of women will be a key issue too.

Sustainable development

According to the EU Strategy on Sustainable Development (SDO, May 2006), sustainable development means that the needs of the current generation will be met without endangering the possibility of fulfilling the needs of next generations. The SDO aims to have a continuous improvement of the quality of life and the welfare for current and next generations. For that purpose it stimulates a dynamic economy, full employment, social and territorial cohesion, protection of the environment and respect for cultural diversity. All projects funded under this programme will contribute to sustainable development. An other aspect of sustainability – specifically valid for European programmes – is the continuation of the project after the European funding. Projects have to lead to permanent cooperation and robust results that clearly contribute to the development of the region.

1.2 National Strategic Reference Frameworks

The community strategic guidelines oblige each member state of the European Union to write a National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF). In the NSRF the countries indicate how they will apply the European Funds 2007-2013. The four NSRF's that are relevant for this OP form an important basis for the contents of the programme.

1.3.1 United Kingdom

From the UK perspective all Structural Fund Programmes should give particular attention to three overarching themes:

1. Enterprise and Innovation, by promoting research, knowledge transfer and commercialisation, encouraging entrepreneurship and supporting a thriving SME sector;
2. Skills and Employment, building a skilled and adaptable workforce, tackling disadvantage in the workplace and supporting employment opportunities for all; and
3. Environmental and Community Sustainability, encouraging innovation to support sustainability, ensuring sustainable development, production and consumption and promoting social and economic cohesion in local economies, including in urban and rural areas.

There will be four main priorities for ERDF spending under England's Competitiveness and Employment Programmes: first, to promote innovation and knowledge transfer; secondly, to stimulate enterprise; thirdly, to ensure sustainable development, production and consumption; and fourthly to build sustainable communities.

The Framework does not set out the priorities for the Cooperation Objective, these will be developed in close consultation with the other Member States.

1.3.2 France

In France the ERDF-funds will be concentrated on five priorities :

- Stimulating innovation and the knowledge economy
- ICT-development for the economy and the knowledge society
- Assistance to businesses as part of the territorial development
- Protection of the environment, risk prevention and adaptation of energetic uses in order to ensure a sustainable development
- Development of alternative transport to the road for people and economic activities

Regarding territorial cooperation efforts on the three strands should be integrated to have more impact and European added value. Larger cross-border cooperation programmes, especially the maritime programmes, have to work in close cooperation with the transnational programmes because their problems are on a higher scale than the traditional neighbourhood-projects. This particularly applies for prevention of natural and technical risks and R&D networks.

France is participating in various cross-border networks that all have their own characteristics. The geographical position and potential determine the priorities for cooperation. For this programme the following terms from the NSRF could apply: transport by sea and harbours, metropolitan networks and cross-border conglomerates. General priorities for all cross-border cooperation programmes are economy (innovation, SMEs, labour markets), accessibility, education, artistic and cultural exchange, valorisation of natural and cultural resources in close link with the tourist economy. All actions should have a sustainable character and effects.

1.3.3 Flanders

The main aim for the Structural Funds 2007-2013 Programming period is to strengthen competitiveness and attractiveness of the Flemish economy by further development of Flanders as knowledge and entrepreneurial region with attention for sustainable and balanced development of urban and rural areas.

The strategy of the Flemish NSRF regarding the ERDF has been organised around 4 main priorities. Sustainable and balanced development of rural areas is integrated in the three first priorities.

- Promote and stimulate knowledge economy and innovation
- Stimulate entrepreneurship
- Optimize external spatial-economic factors
- Improve urban development

Three horizontal themes are integrated throughout the 4 priorities: territorial dimension, sustainable development and environment, interregional cooperation.

Reference is made to the importance of closer cooperation between European regions in order to enhance competitiveness and economic growth. Great importance is attached to the further support of the dynamic/momentum created by Interreg III programmes.

1.3.4 The Netherlands

The Netherlands has formulated some general principles for the cross-border cooperation programmes. Based on the themes mentioned in the Community Strategic Guidelines, priorities for territorial cooperation are chosen.

The content of the cooperation programmes has to fit in the national policy agenda and the regional programmes implemented under the Competitiveness Objective. The focus lies on innovation and knowledge economy. Under the attractive regions and cities priority, the Netherlands put its efforts on common planning and development of logistic and sustainable infrastructure, environmental investments, development of nature and an attractive cultural climate. Cooperation between companies, knowledge institutes and government on key sectors, support of SME's, development of ICT-services and sustainable energy are priorities for innovation, entrepreneurship and knowledge economy. Related to the aim of more and better jobs the accent lies on cross-border labour, internships and education for youth and unemployed and development of a common approach on integration and naturalization.

1.4 General developments and trends

This OP aims to contribute to territorial cohesion and sustainable development of the programme area. The priority themes are deduced from the European policy context and the National Strategic Reference Frameworks and are addressing the main shared challenges of the area. The focus and impact of the programme is however also influenced by external factors like general developments and trends in Europe. These developments are of strategic importance for all EU policies for the coming years. Most notably they have impacted the EU's Lisbon and Gothenburg Strategy, which in turn has shaped the strategy for EU Cohesion policy for the 2007-2013 period. The following main challenges are specifically relevant because of their territorial impacts.

Climate change and growing awareness of environmental issues

It is now widely admitted that the increase of greenhouse gas emissions is one of the main factors responsible for rising average temperatures and for the related natural hazards. The impacts of climate change are huge, varying from drought to rise of the sea level. Due to the maritime location of the programme area, many of its parts are especially vulnerable to these developments. Because for this development even long term policies have small effects, prevention or adaptation measures are now implemented. These are costly measures but good prevention can significantly reduce damages caused by natural hazards, thereby influencing the economy in a positive way.

In addition to the issue of climate change, there is a general trend to pay more attention to the environment. Over the last years, sustainable development replaces unrestrained economic growth.

Governments and people are more aware of the green and blue environment in which they live and work and they feel responsible for it. This trend is also reflected in the policy of businesses.

Globalisation

Over the last decade the globalisation process has strongly accelerated in particular due to the strong development of emerging countries such as China, India and Brazil. Increase of the scale and size of businesses is one of the impacts of globalisation. The fragmentation of the European economy is a significant handicap in this context. It is quite likely that competition – and the necessary economic adjustments – will in the future not be only based on differences in wage levels, but more and more on technological productivity (combining technological outputs and prices). External competition will therefore increase in a number of sectors for which Europe, and more specifically the eligible area of this programme, had, up to now, comparative advantages.

Demographic developments in Europe

The decline in fertility rates in Europe, which started several decades ago, has resulted in a situation where the median age of the population is starting to grow significantly and the continuation of this evolution over the next decades is unavoidable. This trend is also visible in most parts of the programme area. The negative impacts on regional labour markets may call in a few years for the need to allow substantial immigration of qualified people into Europe. Issues generated by the demographic evolution in the coming decades will call for ambitious, but differentiated policy solutions, according to the individual regional contexts. As demographic factors interfere with many other issues, more integrated policy approaches will be necessary.

1.5 Description of the programme area

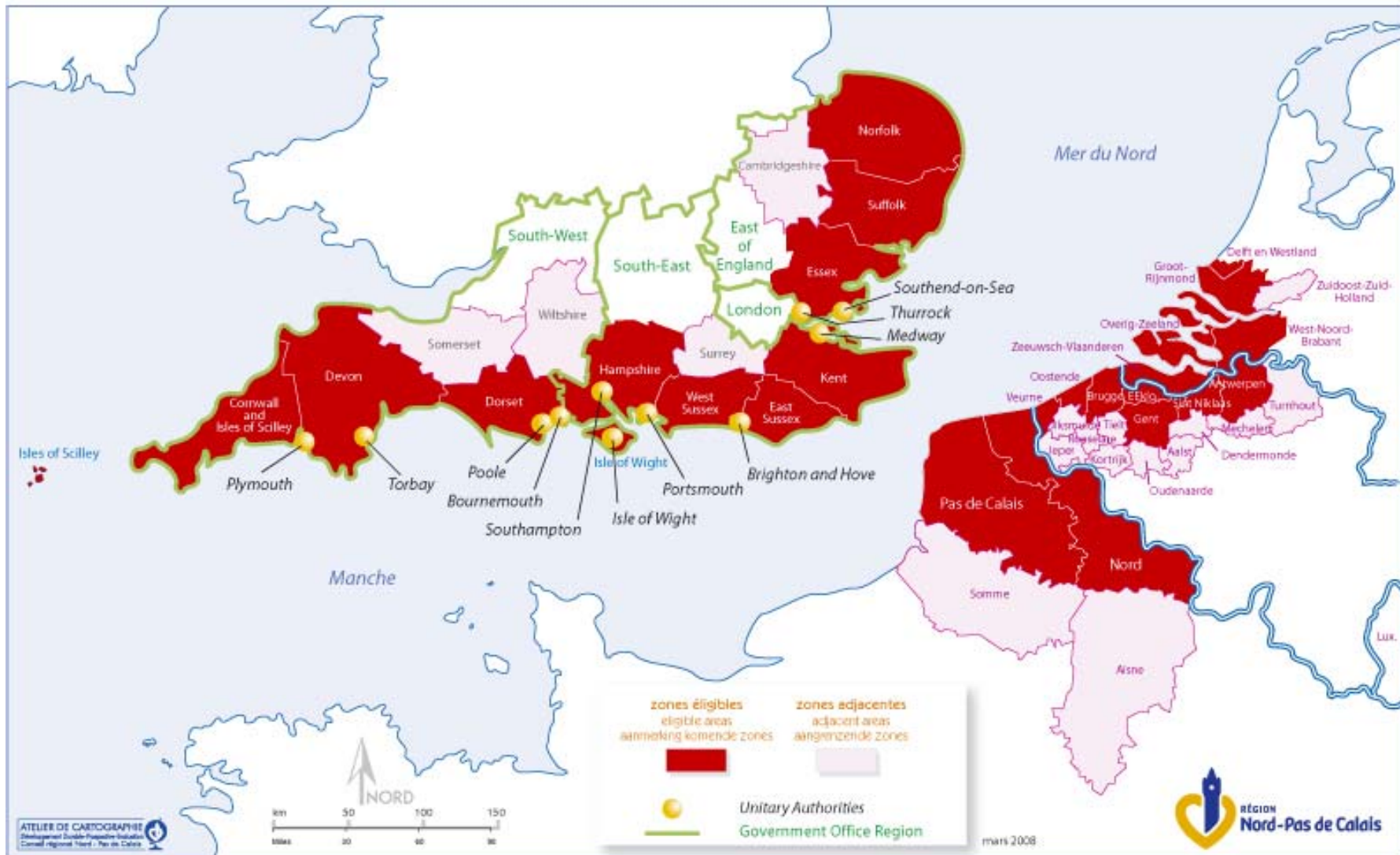
In this cross-border cooperation programme regions along the Southern North Sea and the Channel will work together on joint development and implementation of policies and projects. The programme area consists of parts of South-West, South-East and East-England, the region Nord-Pas de Calais in France, the West of Flanders and the South-West of the Netherlands. The eligible areas are indicated in red in the following map. The adjacent areas appear in pink colour. The added value of their participation will be judged at project level on a case by case basis. The list of all NUTS III eligible and adjacent territories is in Annex A, as well as a short description of the argumentation for selecting these adjacent areas.

The programme has been prepared and implemented in close cooperation with the neighbouring maritime cross-border programme between the UK and France called “France (Channel) - England Programme”, which is shown in blue in the map. In UK the eligible areas for both programmes overlap.

Programme transfrontalier des 2 Mers 2007 - 2013

2 Seas cross-border programme 2007 - 2013

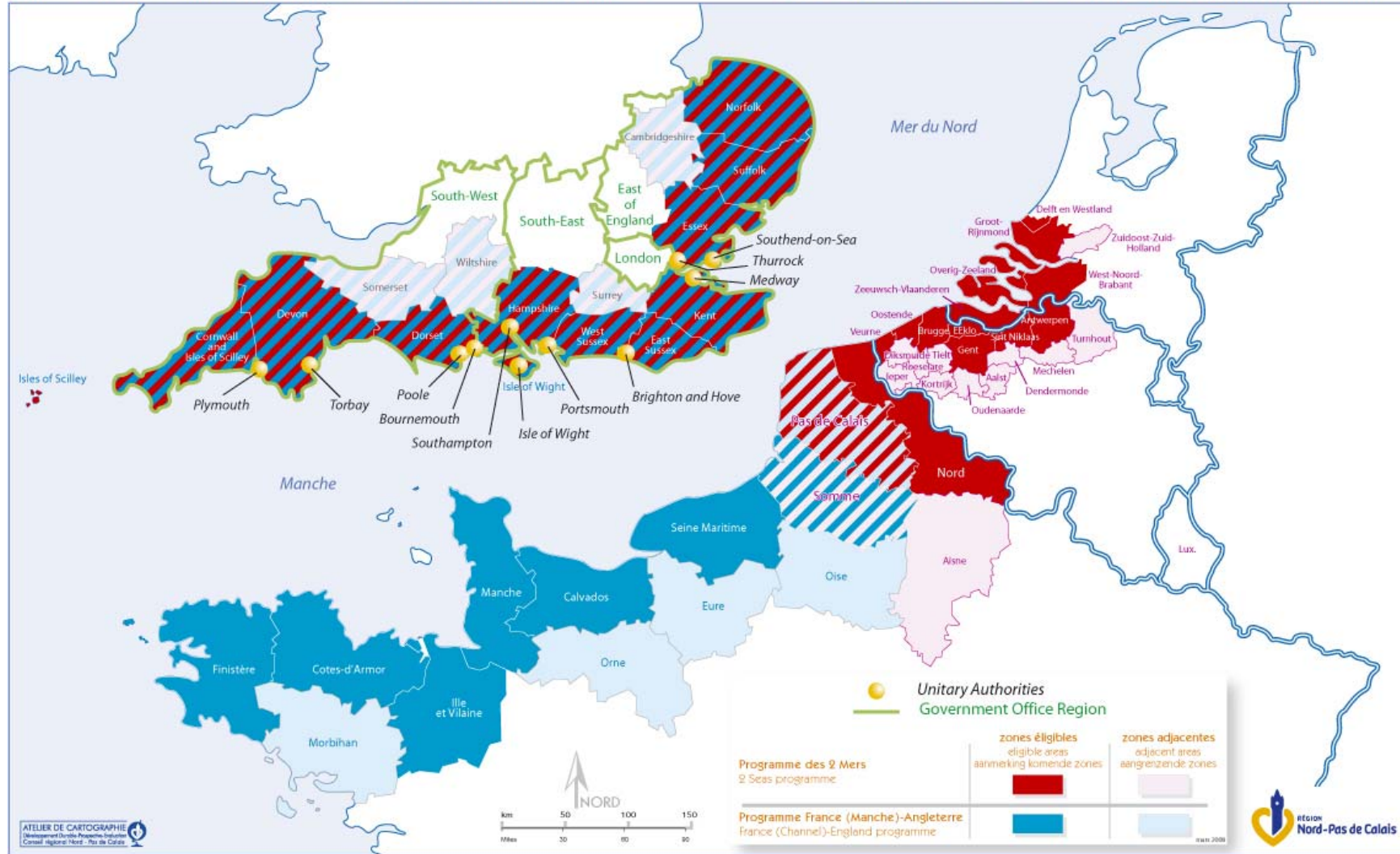
2 Zeeën grensoverschrijdende programma 2007 - 2013



Programme transfrontalier des 2 Mers Zones éligibles à la priorité commune avec le programme France (Manche) - Angleterre

2 Seas cross-border programme
Eligible areas of the common priority with France (Channel) - England programme

2 Zeeën grensoverschrijdende programma aanmerking komende zones
voor de gemeenschappelijke prioriteit met het Frans - Engels Kanaal programma



1.6 Description of the programming process

1.6.1. Description of the involved bodies

* Working Group

Objectives:

- To prepare the decisions of the Steering Group
- To prepare a joint strategy and a project of Operational Program
- To prepare the process of implementation, management and animation of the program
- To provide comments on the draft programme texts produced by the external expert;
- To support the work of the external experts responsible for drafting the Operational Programme and ex-ante evaluation;

Composition:

Chaired and animated by the Managing Authority, and under its responsibility, the working group is composed of the following authorities and institutions:

France	England
Conseil Régional Nord-Pas-de-Calais – Managing Authority Département du Nord Département du Pas-de-Calais SGAR Nord-Pas-de-Calais Syndicat Mixte de la Côte d’Opale	Department of Communities and Local Government East of England Development Agency East of England Regional Assembly Government Office of the East of England Kent County Council
Flanders	South East Development Agency
Agentschap Economie - Flemish government Provincie West-Vlaanderen, representing three provinces	South East England Regional Assembly Government Office for the South East Government Office for the South West
Netherlands	South West of England Regional Development Agency
Ministerie Van Economische Zaken Provincie de Zeeland, representing three provinces	Cornwall County Council

Meetings:

A number of 9 meetings of the Working Group took place from April 2007 till November 2007.

* Steering Group

Objectives:

- To validate the decisions of the North Working group, notably to approve the programme structure, draft versions and final version of the programme
- To control the drafting of the Operational Programme entrusted to the external experts
- To ensure the coordination between the two programmes

Composition:

Chaired and animated by the Managing Authority, and under its responsibility, the Steering group is composed of the following authorities and institutions:

France	England
Conseil Régional Nord-Pas-de-Calais, Managing Authority Autorité Nationale France	Department of Communities and Local Government
DIACT ou représentant de la Préfecture du Nord-Pas-de-Calais	Netherlands
Flanders	Ministerie Van Economische Zaken
Agentschap Economie - Flemish Government Provincie West-Vlaanderen, representing three provinces	Provincie de Zeeland, representing three provinces
	European Commission / DG Regio

Meetings:

A number of 9 meetings of the Steering Group took place from April 2007 till November 2007, prior to the meetings of the Working Group.

*** Ex-ante evaluation Steering Group**

Objectives:

- *To monitor the work of the ex-ante evaluation consultant*

Composition:

Chaired and animated by the Managing Authority Haute-Normandie Regional Council, and under its responsibility, the Evaluation Steering group is composed of the following authorities and institutions:

France	Flanders
Conseil Régional de Haute-Normandie, Managing Authority of France-England OP	Agentschap Economie- - Flemish Government
Conseil Régional Nord-Pas-de-Calais, Managing Authority of 2 seasOP	Provincie West-Vlaanderen, representing three provinces
DIACT or representants from Prefectures (Nord-Pas-de-Calais and Haute-Normandie)	Netherlands
	Ministerie Van Economische Zaken
England	Province de Zeeland, representing three provinces
Department of Communities and Local Government	European Commission / DG Regio

The ex ante evaluation covers the whole eligible area of both OPs.

Meetings:

A total of 5 meetings of the Evaluation Steering Group took place from April 2007 till November 2007.

*** External experts responsible for drafting the Operational Programme and for ex-ante evaluation**

- **Programming process**

The consortium that was awarded the contract to support the drafting of the Operational Programme is made up three consultancies, **CPC (France), Haute Europe (Netherlands) and ExDRA (England)**.

- **Ex-ante evaluation**

The company which was awarded the contract for the ex-ante evaluation as well as the strategic environmental analysis (SEA) is **Deloitte (France)**

1.6.2. Consultation process

During the preparation of this programme the key actors in the programme area were actively encouraged to give their opinion about the content and approach. This interaction was organised via a process of consultation consisting of three rounds :

1. The first round of the consultation process was conducted in the form of (individual or group) interviews with a limited number of representatives at the regional level in each of the 4 countries. These sessions took place in early may 2007 and the results were incorporated in the first (analysis) and second drafts (analysis and strategy) of the Operational programme document.
2. Round 2 consisted of seminars/sessions in each of the countries for a larger audience of regional authorities and potential end users of the programme (mid to late june 2007). The results from these sessions were important inputs for the third draft of the OP, focussing on strategy and priorities.

3. The third and final round of the consultation process consisted of the formal public consultation of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) concerning this programme. From August to 2nd November 2007 the draft SEA report together with the 3bis draft of this OP were available to interested stakeholders. Comments and views regarding the SEA could be sent in written form.

A list of all stakeholders that were involved in the various consultation rounds is presented in Annex C.

1.6.3. Desk research

The socio economic analysis was developed based on desk research and additionally several interviews (see 'consultation process' above). As a first step relevant qualitative information and statistics were collected and studied for the issues covered by the analysis. Initially these data were mainly collected for (the regions of) the 4 countries of the programme area, since this is the level at which most information is available. Where additional sources at a relevant supra-national level are available these were also included. The sources used for this desk research are listed in annex B.

The resulting information was combined and aggregated to give an adequate picture of the situation at the level of the whole programme area, rather than of its various constituting parts. This is important since after all the analysis must form the basis for a strategy and a set of priorities for the programme area as a whole.

As a consequence of the diverse, international nature of the programme area the availability of detailed and comparable figures and statistics for the whole area is fragmented. As a result the aggregated analysis consists of qualitative descriptive information of the socio-economic situation and developments combined with qualitative statistical information giving detailed insights in some key figures of the entire programme area by its constituting regions.

Chapter 2. Analysis of the programme area and lessons from previous experiences

2.1 Introduction

In order to delineate fields where cross-border cooperation can clearly contribute to the achievement of the Lisbon strategy and the creation of an integrated area, it is essential to have a global picture of the situation and trends in the programme area and an overview of the main lessons which can be learnt from the period 2000-2006. The findings of this double analysis have been grouped in a SWOT analysis that forms together with the identification of major challenges for the future the basis for the strategic positioning of this OP.

2.2 Socio-economic diagnosis

This chapter describes the different socio economic aspects of the programme area in detail. The overview table on the following page (table 1) presents a set of overall statistics covering the whole cross-border cooperation area (at NUTS III level). The parameters and figures presented will be dealt with in more detail further in this chapter.

2.2.1 Demography, migration and territorial structure

Demography

The size of the programme area is 62,731 km². In the area live 19.2 million people (data in 2004), of which 54% live in England, 21% in France, 13% in the Netherlands and 12% in Flanders. This number has been growing in the last 10 years and this tendency is expected to continue over the coming 15 years. Around 55% of the people live in urban areas, although this level is much higher on the French side (95% in 2005). In the cities the population density is high. Some rural parts, however, have the lowest population density of their region or even of their country. This applies for instance for Zeeuwsch-Vlaanderen in The Netherlands.

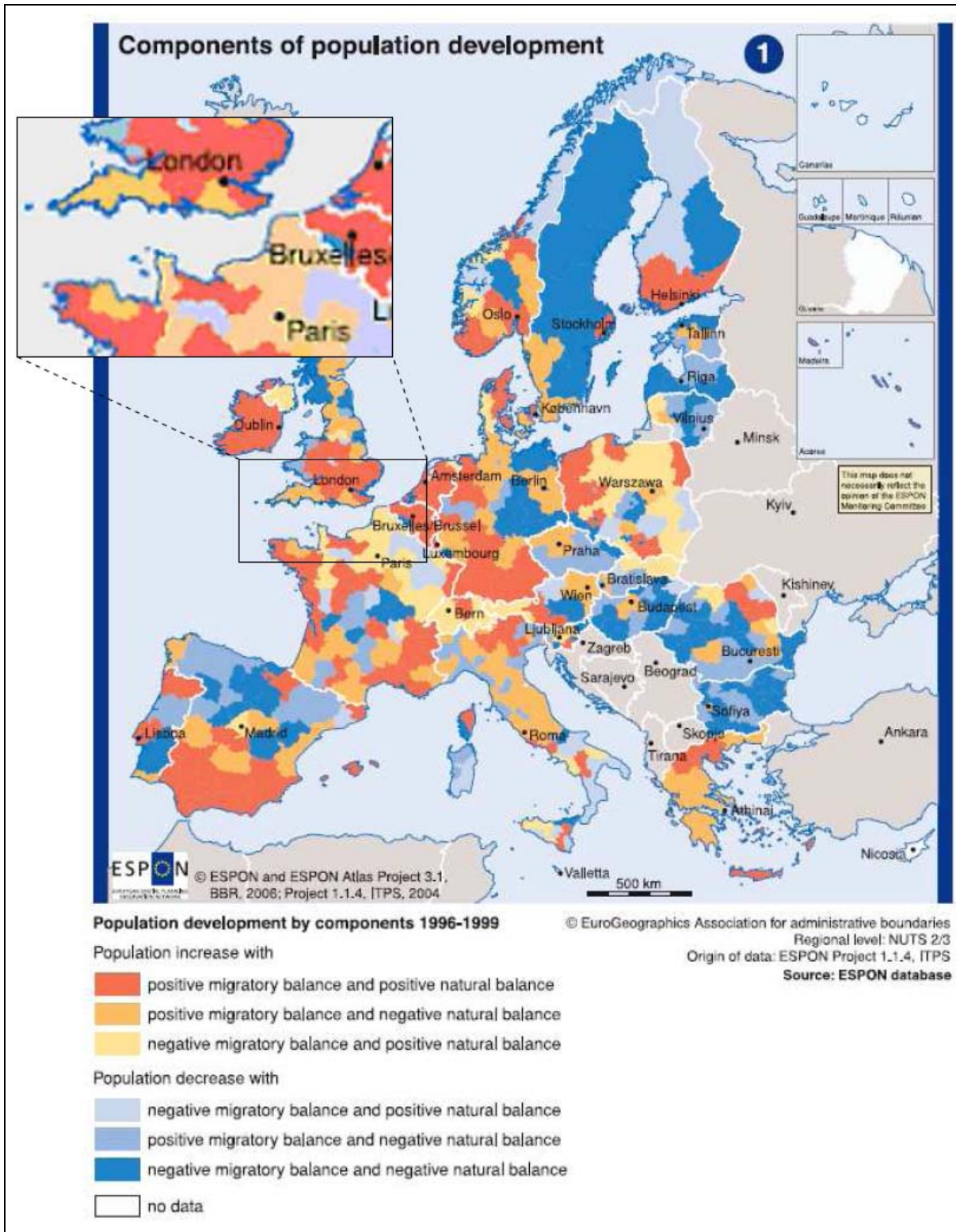
As indicated above, the population is expected to grow in the coming years. This is the result of immigration, national economic growth policy and the fact that people live longer. Map 1 below illustrates this tendency of population growth. It also indicates that the nature of the growth differs within the area. Netherlands, Flanders and parts of the UK experience both positive natural and migration balances. Whereas in the French part of the area a negative migration balance is overcome by a natural growth of the population. In South-Western and Southern parts of the UK the reverse situation is found.

Internal migration within the UK is contributing to this development in the South West of England. Many people from other parts of England move to this region. Some areas are dedicated by the national government as a growth area and will be equipped to host new inhabitants and companies, like Ashford and the Thames Gateway in England.

	Population	Density population	GDP	GDP/capita	Unemployment rate
Years	2004	2004	2004	2004	2005
Arr. Antwerpen	946,9	992,5	33 043	34 896	9,1%
Arr. Eeklo	79,6	239,7	1 469	18 451	6,5%
Arr. Gent	503,9	539,5	16 181	32 111	7,5%
Arr. Sint-Niklaas	227,4	496,4	5 548	24 396	6,1%
Arr. Brugge	273,3	417,9	7 224	26 433	5,6%
Arr. Oostende	146,1	503,8	3 118	21 341	8,2%
Arr. Veurne	58,4	213,2	1 486	25 437	6,6%
Nord	2 574,8	448,3	58 453	22 702	13,4%
Pas-de-Calais	1 454,8	218,1	26 366	18 123	13,0%
Delft en Westland	210,1	1395,1	7 241	34 465	5,3%
Groot-Rijnmond	1 362,0	1146,4	43 111	31 653	8,4%
Zeeuwsch-Vlaanderen	107,9	147,1	3 917	36 301	6,9%
Overig Zeeland	271,6	257,5	6 519	24 001	4,6%
West-Noord-Brabant	605,7	495,9	20 144	33 258	5,7%
Norfolk	817,0	152,1	19 020	23 280	4,2%
Suffolk	684,4	180,1	17 274	25 240	5,0%
Southend-on-Sea	159,7	3801,5	3 714	23 255	5,5%
Thurrock	145,8	894,4	3 744	25 680	4,7%
Essex	1 331,2	384,2	32 743	24 596	3,6%
Brighton and Hove	252,6	3043,3	6 966	27 578	6,6%
East Sussex	496,8	290,7	10 308	20 748	4,8%
West Sussex	761,7	382,6	21 615	28 378	4,4%
Portsmouth	188,8	4720,2	5 913	31 317	5,7%
Southampton	221,4	4427,4	7 019	31 701	6,7%
Hampshire	1 254,3	340,9	34 954	27 867	3,2%
Isle of Wight	138,3	363,8	2 330	16 847	4,6%
Medway Towns	251,1	1307,8	4 620	18 399	5,4%
Kent	1 359,3	383,6	32 995	24 273	5,0%
Bournemouth and Poole	300,7	2709,3	7 967	26 493	4,1%
Dorset	399,8	157,3	8 369	20 932	2,0%
Cornwall and Isles of Scilly	516,9	145,1	9 635	18 639	3,9%
Plymouth	244,1	3051,4	5 990	24 540	6,1%
Torbay	132,3	2099,9	2 507	18 946	5,3%
Devon	723,9	110,3	16 625	22 966	2,7%
Total or Average	19 202,60	306,1	488 123	25 420	

Parameter	Description	Sources
<i>Population:</i>	Annual average population (* 1.000)	Eurostat database (2004)
<i>Population density:</i>	People / square kilometre	Eurostat database (2004)
<i>GDP:</i>	Gross domestic product (GDP) (€ million)	Eurostat database (2004)
<i>GDP per capita:</i>	GDP per head of population (in €)	Eurostat database (2004)
<i>Unemployment rate:</i>	Available and looking for work as share of labour force (one year average)	Flanders: Arvastat (2005) France: INSEE (2005) Netherlands: CBS (2005) United Kingdom: Nomisweb (2005/2006)

Table 1 : General statistics of the cross-border cooperation area



Map 1 : Population development – Source ESPON Atlas – www.espon.eu

The main challenge for the coming years is the ageing population. Most parts of the programme area have more people aged over 65 than average, with the exception of the French side where the population is rather young (28,2% of total population is under 20 in 2005). The ageing of the population will lead to a decrease of supply to the labour market and an increase in demands for social and medical services. Especially in the rural parts of the programme area the trend for ageing is apparent. These regions attract relatively more older people because of their nature and quietness. Young people move away to the urban

areas because of the number of jobs available. This has two results: commuters travel and risk of deprivation. Most of the employees work in the urban areas, but a substantial part of them live in the rural areas. This means that a lot of commuters travel everyday, which calls for a good infrastructure. The decline of number of jobs in the agriculture and industry causes lack of opportunities for young people. They move away to the urban centres, causing decline of the population in small towns and villages. Facilities in these areas close because of this trend. Local entrepreneurs (bakery, supermarket, etc.) have to close their shops as well as some public services (such as the post office) which stop. Especially for elderly people who are not able to travel far, this is an undesired development.

The enlargement of the EU in 2004 triggered intra-EU migration flows, bringing migrant workers from the new EU member states to the 'old' member states, mostly on a temporary basis. This development generally made a positive contribution to the labour market composition, as the migrants from the new member states are mainly employed in sectors with skills shortages or in low-paid sectors not favoured by the domestic population.

The area also sees migration flows from countries outside the EU. This includes a segment of illegal immigrants, trying to enter the EU via ports and other gateways, of which many are located in the EU.

Territorial features

The programme area is located at the core of the North West Europe. It takes advantages from the proximity to 4 core European metropolitan areas: London, Paris, Randstad and the Flemish Diamond.

The region can be characterised by a combination of some densely populated urban areas and widespread rural areas. The largest cities in the area are Lille Metropolitan Area (1 million inhabitants), Rotterdam (600.000 inhabitants), Antwerp (470.000) and Medway (251.000). Most of the eligible regions do not have a dominant urban centre but comprise a network of smaller and medium sized towns. In general there are relatively many rural areas, next to mixed urban-rural areas where boundaries between cities and rural areas faded because of suburbanisation.

Near the North Sea and the English Channel, the landscape has a typical maritime/river delta character with various waterways that are linked to the Sea. The varied coastal landscape and cultural historic aspects are attractive to tourists and visitors and residents alike. More inland the territory gets an agricultural environment. In some parts 75% of the total land is used for agriculture. Both types of landscapes comprise unique large nature areas.

The programme area is divided into typical border regions and central economic centres. Some regions in the Netherlands, the UK and to some extent in Nord-pas-de-Calais have a typically border-region character; a relatively peripheral position in relation to the national economic centres of the Randstad, London and Paris, and the centre of their countries. This is reflected e.g. in the low number of transport possibilities, higher unemployment rate and a lower level of higher education. The East and South-East of England, the Flemish region and Groot-Rijnmond form part of economic core regions with multiple transport networks, large companies and industry. The peripheral regions have additional functions to the centres (leisure, nature, ..) and could also profit from the economic centres, to avoid depopulation. Costs for ground and housing are lower and therefore they can function as an attractive living place for commuters or as a services provider (logistics, culture, etc).

The steadily growing population and the continuing need for economic growth ask for a suitable supply of houses, business sites and relating infrastructure. Especially in the urban areas that are already densely populated this is a challenge because of the lack of space. But also the development of the sub-urban and rural areas will ask for integral plans where economic activities are combined with a high quality living environment and space for nature.

Social developments

The ageing population requires a good level and density of health services. Especially in rural areas with small villages and a limited road infrastructure, this already causes problems. It takes a long time for first aid services to reach all people and hospitals are relatively far away.

Earlier in this paragraph it was mentioned that the urban areas attract younger people that leave the countryside because of lack of job opportunities. Some regions are compensated by the immigration of

people from other regions in their country who prefer to live in a more green and quiet environment. However, large parts of rural areas are in danger of depopulation.

Many pockets of deprivation and social exclusion are based within rural and coastal areas, and medium to large urban areas including larger coastal towns. These areas experience similar problems faced by remote rural communities including a lack of affordable and social housing, (due to the high number of second homes) difficulty in access to services and training provision, an increasingly ageing population, a narrow economic base with a high proportion of seasonal employment and dominance of low skills employment. In addition coastal areas suffer from having a limited hinterland. Low aspirations and low achievement as well as lack of basic skills are issues in such areas. Economic opportunities need to be presented to 14-19 year olds in schools.

Many towns on the coast have undergone large changes in the last decades because of the changing character of the ports, the changing character of the fisheries sectors and the changing character of the tourism sector. The coastal economy has changed. As a result the population is ageing and deprivation of the towns is growing. Also the houses are poorly managed and the coastal erosion and flooding risk influences the environment, mostly in a negative way. The coast towns are physically isolated and have high levels of transience. This is also the consequence of the lack of affordable housing because of the high number of second homes.

Conclusion

In all aspects the programme area is varied. There are however some common features. In the coming years the population will continue to grow. This is mainly the result of the fact that people are getting older. The population is ageing fast. This especially applies for the rural areas that are abandoned by the youth because of lack of jobs. The persistence of good facilities in rural areas is important to avoid deprivation. The relatively peripheral regions can take advantage of the economic growth of urban areas. These areas don't have enough space to build new houses and business sites whereas in the suburban or rural areas land costs are lower and space is available. The growth of the population and the economy threatens the living quality in large towns and the environment in rural areas. National and regional authorities must be actively involved in supporting large towns and towns in coastal areas to develop and maintain high quality living standards and to counter deprivation.

2.2.2 Economy, employment, education, research and technology development

The programme area belongs to the North West Europe area which is in socio-economic terms one of the most prosperous parts of Europe and accommodates some of the regions with the highest GDP per capita. Most of the eligible territories benefit in many ways from this favourable geographical positioning. However, even if this programme area is generally a strong region economically, there are huge differences in the economic performance across it.

Structure of economic sectors (agriculture, industry and services)

Table 2 presents a statistical overview of the structure of economic sectors in the different parts of the programme area. In the global competition, the dynamic core of the economy is represented by territories specialised in financial and other high-level business services. Such territories can be found in South East England which makes a major contribution to the UK economy. They can be categorised as being advanced, high cost, high income, broadly based and service oriented. However, the general picture in the English area disguises considerable variation within the regions. For instance, indices of deprivation in 2004 show that areas of Kent and the South Coast fare particularly poorly, with Brighton and Hove, Southampton and Medway having pockets of deprivation that feature amongst the most deprived areas in England.

On the other hand, The South West has one of the smaller economies of the English regions, with huge cross-sector disparities. Tourism is a key industry in the whole region, which accounts for around 20% of England's domestic tourist trips and 8% of overseas visits to England in 2004.. Agriculture and related industries remain important for many rural areas such as Cornwall, despite making a relatively modest contribution to regional growth. Tourism is also a highly important economic sector in the East of England, worth over £5 billion, around 6% of its GDP.

The French side is characterized by an industry share still high (around 25% of employed people) while the agricultural sector amounts to 2 to 3%, which gives it an intermediate position in comparison with the whole

eligible area. There is a strong specialization in the farm-produce industry, car industry, railway, and mail-order selling. The region is also the 1st pole in Europe for the treating of fish resources. Moreover, the labelling of 6 competitiveness poles (clusters grouping companies, education and research institutes in a specific economic area) gives an indication of the dynamism of regional stakeholders. One of them, named I-Trans, dedicated to intelligent transports, has a global vocation.

Services are notably concentrated in the administrations and much less in the private sector. Overall, employment in high level services is rather low. At NUTS III level, the Pas-de-Calais department has not a too strong tertiary sector with around 70% of employed people).

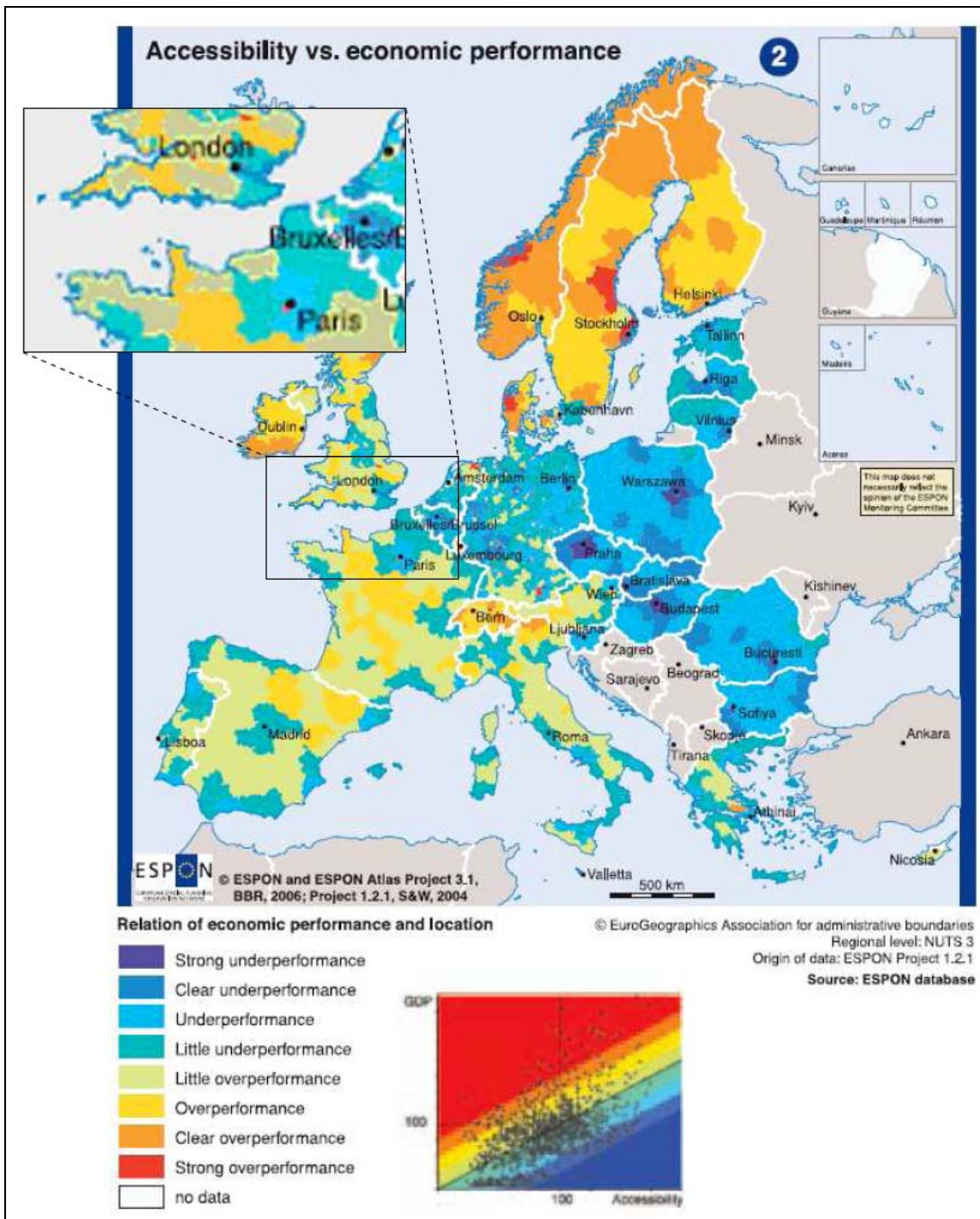
It's worth mentioning that beyond these figures there are strong sub-regional disparities between Lille metropolitan area, the coastal area, the ex-mining area and more rural areas.

Table 2 : Employment by economic sector. Sources: for France, Flanders and The Netherlands: Eurostat database (2004); for the United Kingdom: Annual Business Inquiry (NOMIS, 2005).

In the East of the coast in Zeeland and West-Brabant, there is an area with a clay soil fruitful for farming. In the Delft/Westland area the greenhouse farming is a main sector. The programme area is strategically situated nearby the sea and the waterways that connect the area with the hinterland, so that it has many harbour-related and logistic processes (axis Gent-Goes and axis Rotterdam-Antwerp). The main ports Rotterdam and Antwerp have many capital-intensive plants and technologic companies. Due to their position between the two large harbours, West-Brabant and Zeeland are also attractive for international logistic services providers. In West-Brabant aircraft construction and maintenance is a growth sector because of the presence of the military airport. The process industry, agribusiness and logistic sectors are very strong represented. New developments are the production and refining of bio-fuels. Rotterdam and Delft are developing the knowledge corridor/Technopolis business park for high tech companies; On a similar note, a high-tech research and development corridor has been developed between Ipswich and Cambridge in the UK.

In Flanders, despite the low percentage of the primary sector (around 1%), agro food and agro business are still important sectors to the area. Despite the large part of the secondary sector, this sector has decreased from 31% in 1998 to 27,2% in 2003. The presence of Flanders is important in the chemical, pharmaceutical and automobile sector. Around Oostend a cluster of airport related industry is arising.

The tertiary sector is divided into commercial and non-commercial services. Logistic and tourism are an important part of the commercial services. The share of non-commercial services is expected to rise as a result of the ageing population. Globally, Flanders has a weak presence in the knowledge intensive sectors. However, the emergence of a maritime cluster in Oostende and a 'Biotech Valley' in Gent are promising developments in this respect.



Map 2 : Accessibility vs. economic performance – Source ESPON Atlas – www.espon.eu

GDP per capita

The economic success of a territory is often measured by the Gross domestic product (GDP) per capita. On average for the programme area, it amounted to 25 420€ in 2004 as presented in table 1. The highest values can be generally found in urban territories/agglomerations. However, although with a rather high population density, the GDP/capita in Nord-Pas-de-Calais is only 20 300€, well below the EU average.

Overall, there are clear territorial disparities in each of the four countries.

On the Dutch side, the GDP/capita varies from 24 000€ in Zeeland to 36 300€ in Zeeuwsch-Vlaanderen (2004).

In Flanders, the areas of Gent and Antwerp have a high GDP/capita (above 32 000€), while the districts of Veurne, Saint-Niklaas, Oostende and Eeklo (between 18 000€ - 25 000€) have a much lower GDP/capita.

Large differences can also be observed in the English territories, with rather high GDP/capita values in the South-East and values below the EU average in most of the South-West eligible territories. The lowest per capita GDP of the programme area is found in Cornwall and Isle of Scilly (18.639€)

Map 2 above provides an interesting illustration of the economic performance of the area in relation to its location, by linking the actual GDP of a region to the level of its accessibility. Seen in this perspective the southwestern and northern parts of the eligible area in the UK performs better than could be expected based on their relatively poor accessibility. The contrary is the case in the high-accessibility regions of South-east England and on the mainland side of the area.

Employment and unemployment rates

The labour market is an important foundation of any economy. It reflects, but also significantly defines, the degree of competitiveness. There are strong territorial disparities in the levels of employment and unemployment, with territories in France and Flanders being in general more negatively affected than other parts of the programme area.

The target of an employment rate of 70%, one of the key targets identified by the Lisbon Strategy, is achieved only in territories in England, with rates in general above 75% of the working age population, although there is significant variation in employment rates within the counties and unitary authorities of the regions. There are also sub-regional constraints on employment growth as a result of its already high employment rates (notably in South-East of England).

On the contrary, this rate is around 58% in Nord-Pas-de-Calais and in Zeeland. For the Netherlands as a whole it is 76,3%. The employment rate for women is lower, around 10% less than for men in most territories even if we can observe a rising labour force participation of women.

The picture is similar concerning the unemployment rate, with considerable territorial differences within the four sides of the area (see table 1 for an overview). In 2005, it amounted globally to less than 6% in most Dutch, Flemish and English territories, with the notable exceptions of Groot-Rijnmond, Antwerpen, Oostende and Gent (7 and 9%) and several English, Flemish and Dutch NUTS 3 regions having slightly higher rates (between 6 and 7%). Unemployment rates around 13% are found in Nord-Pas-de-Calais, although it has slightly decreased over the last years.

Two aspects of unemployment are particularly important indicators of the endogenous potential of a territory. Youth unemployment gives clues as to whether the labour market is on the path to regeneration. Long term unemployment indicates how deep the problems are. For both indicators, Nord-Pas-de-Calais underperforms especially with a high unemployment rate among young people. The territory of Antwerp is also seriously affected by long-term unemployment. On the contrary, the English territories perform well notably with a very low long term unemployment rate.

In most parts of the area, especially the urban areas, unemployment amongst the non-EU migrant population is relatively high. This is caused by factors, including social exclusion, relatively lower education levels and sometimes prejudice. These rates of unemployment seem to be rising. In the Netherlands for instance the unemployment amongst the immigrant population rose from 9% in 2001 to 16% in 2005.

Education level of population

The human capital can be measured by the proportion of population with tertiary education which represents an important group in a knowledge economy. Globally, the eligible territories have rather high potentials of well educated people compared to the EU average, especially in Flemish territories and in South East England.

In the territories of the South East, the workforce is generally well educated, with nearly 88% of the working age population holding some form of qualification. In the South West of the UK the vocational educational attainment is lower than the national norm. In East of England, we can observe a lower number of trade apprenticeships, and a higher than average proportion of economically active people with no qualifications.

The percentage having higher education lies in the South Netherlands is below the national average. Availability of sufficiently trained (technical) staff is often a problem for this territory.

In Western Netherlands, connected to the technical university of Delft and the University of Rotterdam, operate knowledge institutes, e.g. in the field of "delta technology" (i.e. tech related to water management, civil engineering etc).

On the other hand, Nord-Pas-de-Calais underperforms. Even if universities and polytechnics attract more than 150 000 students, it is mainly for technical studies and with not enough diplomas for postgraduates. Besides, the level of illiteracy is rather high (15% of population compared to 9% at the French level).

Entrepreneurship

People in the South West of the Netherlands have relatively little interest for entrepreneurship, in particular in Zeeland. Similarly, entrepreneurship on the French side and in the Flemish part of the area are poorly developed.

On the other hand, the entrepreneurial activity is higher in the English territories, especially in the East and South-East of England. However, there are substantial variations across the sub-regions with regard to business density, and rates and patterns of new business formation and survival. For instance, Norfolk has a high level of business density, while Thurrock and Southend-on-Sea are well below the UK average.

The following table presents the Total Entrepreneurial Activity (share of the population between 18-64 involved in early business activities) for the countries of this programme area. It demonstrates that these rates are relatively low in comparison to non-EU reference countries

Country	Total Entrepreneurial Activity
Flanders	2,7 %
- Flanders	3,0 %
France	4,4 %
Netherlands	5,4 %
United Kingdom	5.8 %
United States	10,0 %
Australia	12.0 %

Table 3 : Total Entrepreneurial Activity. Source: Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (2006)

R&D expenditure

Expenditure on R&D as a percentage of GDP is one of the key indicators to measure the innovative strength of the economy. The internal discrepancies within the eligible area are even more marked when considering this indicator.

On the one hand, the French side is characterized by a real weakness of R&D expenditure (0,7% of GDP in 2002), with both public (mainly in universities) and private expenditure (in some industrial sectors and much less in high-technology sectors) at a low level. This territory has the lowest density of people dedicated to research in France. However, this region is endowed with important resources which can incentive R&D activities on its territory, notably an important and diversified training supply in high education.

On the other hand, the eligible territories in England, especially those located in the East and South East, have a strong research presence, from both public and private sector establishments. These territories are among the most prosperous ones behind London with high product innovation. However, even though these areas are strong in terms of research, they are weaker in seizing development and innovation opportunities that result from this. Also, a lot of product innovation tends to be concentrated in larger businesses, often internationally owned. Promising companies are often bought out by foreign investors. Also, there is a complicated intra-regional geography with both opportunities and areas of concern.

Overall, the English territories can be regarded as relatively strong performers when considered in an international context, particularly with regard to the knowledge economy, but there is room for improvement in terms of capitalising on this knowledge.

In the Flemish territories, the R&D expenditures are largely due to the business sector (10 times higher than the government sector). The R&D expenditures are mainly the result of the Vlaamse Ruit (Brussels, Gent and Antwerp). The rural areas still have a growth potential.

In Netherlands, the level of R&D expenditure is also contrasted, rather low in Zeeland and higher in West North Brabant, Rijnmond and Delft territories.

Finally, concerning the patent applications to the European Patent Office per million inhabitants, the picture follows the results depicted for the previous indicator with a very low level for the French side.

Economic tendencies

The eligible areas have to continue to adapt themselves and be proactive to be able to compete in an increasingly global economy. This means looking to attract new businesses in economic sectors that may be new to the area, making sure that existing businesses in sectors such as agriculture, tourism and traditional industrial sectors become more competitive, and continue to skill the workforce for the 21st century.

The number of people older than the working age is likely to go up in the area. At the same time young people are leaving certain parts of the area, but on the other hand immigrants have come in. Therefore it is difficult to predict what will happen to the employment and unemployment rates, although it is probably more likely that the employment rate will go up and the unemployment rate will go down because of the demographic trends. These demographic trends will also have an impact on the level of service provision in the area, such as higher demand for local shops and public transport in rural areas.

Education levels are likely to go up over the next years, but there is a risk of widening gaps between different areas in the programme area and between different groups in society. The availability of education, training, lifelong learning opportunities and apprenticeships for all groups in society is therefore vital to economic development and social inclusion.

Entrepreneurship is key to the Lisbon agenda and to compete in the global economy. A lot needs to be done everywhere in the programme area in the next few years to raise people's interest to develop their own business, to give them the skills and confidence to do this, and to ensure that they have the support from financial and governmental institutions.

It will be hard to influence expenditure on R&D in the area, as it tends to be concentrated in areas close to universities and in large businesses that are often internationally owned. Setting up new universities in areas that have traditionally not had a university will help, and this is a development that we are already seeing in some parts of the area. Partnerships between universities may also be a way forward, but this can be hard to achieve as they are competing at the same time. However, stronger involvement of universities in the programme is key if outputs and indicators on R&D expenditure and dissemination are to be achieved. The same can be said for the involvement of large businesses.

Conclusions

In socio-economic terms the programme area is one of the most prosperous parts of Europe and accommodates some of the regions with the highest GDP per capita. Most of the eligible territories benefit in many ways from this favourable geographical positioning. However, even though it can be said that this programme area is on the whole a strong region economically, there are significant differences in the economic performance across different areas, certain geographical and social pockets of deprivation continue to exist, especially in coastal, urban and rural areas, and there is room for improvement.

Generally, most of the English eligible territories are performing well as regards employment/unemployment rates, business density, level of highly educated population, staff in the Research and Development (R&D) and patent applications. On the contrary, the French side underperforms in almost all the analysed indicators. The Flemish and Dutch territories are in an intermediate position.

The overall picture indicates that some areas are clearly oriented towards a strong knowledge-based economy while other areas, often characterised by their industrial past, their rural dimension or isolated position, have difficulties modernising themselves.

2.2.3 Environment, energy, risk prevention

Environment

The programme area has a diverse natural and built environment. It has coastal areas, rural areas and urban areas. It enjoys a wealth of natural heritage and protected areas. Long stretches of the East of England's coast have been designated 'Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty' and 'Heritage Coasts'. The Norfolk Broads have national park status and most of its coastline is internationally designated for nature conservation interests, and it has nearly 600 Sites of Special Scientific Interest. In South East England 6,500 km² of the region are designated as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and the New Forest and the South Downs have been proposed for National Park Status. Some 40% of the region's area is the subject of some form of protective designation, such as AONB, Green Belt or Sites of Specific Scientific Interest. The South West of England has over 60% of England's heritage coast. Almost a third of the region is within an 'Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty' and the two National Parks of Dartmoor and Exmoor make up 7% of the land area. The South West is also home to four UNESCO World Heritage Sites: Stonehenge and Avebury (Wiltshire); the City of Bath; the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape; and the Natural World Heritage Site of the Dorset and East Devon Jurassic Coast.

The French side has a large variety of natural resources, mainly located at its extremities, which is characterized by 321 protected areas (ZNIEFF), from which more than two thirds are along the coast. The ZICO are less important and cover only 4% of the region. A total of 39 Natura 2000 areas exist in this region, from which 24 are located in Pas-de-Calais and 15 in the Nord department.

West and East Flanders and Antwerp together have 17723 hectares of nature reserves. Flanders has 38 habitat areas and 23 bird directive areas. The marine nature of the coast is of great value. In the south west of the Netherlands, mainly coastal and wetlands areas have protected status. This includes 33 Natura 2000 areas (23 of these are in Zeeland), 10 wetland areas (Wetlands convention RAMSAR; partly overlapping with Natura 2000), and 41 areas with national protected status (Natuurmonumenten).

Overall, this wealth of natural heritage creates a high quality of living in many parts of the area. However, landscape fragmentation, urbanisation and the loss of biodiversity pose considerable problems. The most extreme landscape fragmentation can be found in the coastal regions bordering the English Channel and south of the North Sea (i.e. south England, northern France, northern Flanders and the Netherlands). Future development has the potential to put green belt and character landscapes under further increased pressure. It is becoming increasingly difficult to preserve space for nature. Biodiversity suffers from high population density and overcrowding of the natural areas. Progress can perhaps be made in combining nature preservation with social, economical or cultural activities.

Due to climate change the area is prone to drought. Water resources are under considerable pressure in many areas. South East England, for example, is one of the driest and most densely populated parts of the UK, with per capita rainfall lower than that in Oman. Despite this, it consumes more water per head of the population than most other regions in the country. One of the main contributors to climate change are carbon emissions. While 3 of the 4 countries have reduced their emissions over the last 10 years, Flanders has experienced a small rise. However, there are variations in how successful the different regions have been in reducing carbon emissions (for example, Flanders has not been successful in reducing them).

The pollution of air and water respects no maritime boundaries and is therefore an important cross-border issue. Levels of air pollution are highest where the greatest concentrations of industrial and urban development exist. For example, a clear pattern can be identified in Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) levels with the highest values in major industrial and metropolitan areas such as the Thames Gateway, Antwerp, East and West Flanders, and Groot-Rijnmond. "Fine dust" is a problem in the southwest of the Netherlands, especially in densely populated areas (cities).

In areas of high industrial and urban development there is also pressure on the quality of water resources due to the high number of polluted areas or areas potentially at risk of pollution, and the high number of industrial fallow lands. In Flanders, the mineral balance in water and rivers is disturbed due to a surplus of nitrogen oxide and phosphate. Across the programme area though the quality of bathing waters has significantly improved over the last few years. In France, 44% of them were of very high quality in 2002. The quality of the soil is another concern. Due to agriculture the soil is prone to acidification, over fertilization and scorching.

The management of waste is another important area of great environmental impact, and it is a concern shared by all regions in the programme area. The volume of municipal waste generated has steadily increased over the last years in all countries. Over the same period, the volume of municipal waste to landfill sites has decreased, while the volume of waste incinerated and recycled increased.

Energy

The UK and the Netherlands have oil reserves in the North Sea, but apart from this energy resource the countries depend to a high degree on imported energy. Generally, energy consumption continues to be mainly based on non-renewable sources. The consumption of renewable energy sources remains low, although it is increasing. The share of renewables in the consumption of energy is almost 3 times higher in France compared with the other 3 countries. This is mainly due to the amounts of energy generated from biomass and hydro energy. There is a strong potential to increase the generation of renewable energy in the area, in particular in the fields of wind energy and biomass.

Natural and technological hazards

Climate change can affect both the frequency and intensity of natural hazards. Changes in precipitation patterns are likely to lead to increased incidences of floods, drought, and coastal erosion. The Dutch regions are at high risk of storm surges. In the French part, being a fairly flat region, there is a risk of flooding for a significant part.

The exposure to technological hazards in the area varies per region, as is illustrated by map 3 below. In the English regions, the exposure in the South East is moderately above average, in parts of the South West it is above average, and in the rest of the South West and the East of England it is average. In France, the technological risks are high (50 sites classified as Seveso,). There is a strong density of industrial sites in

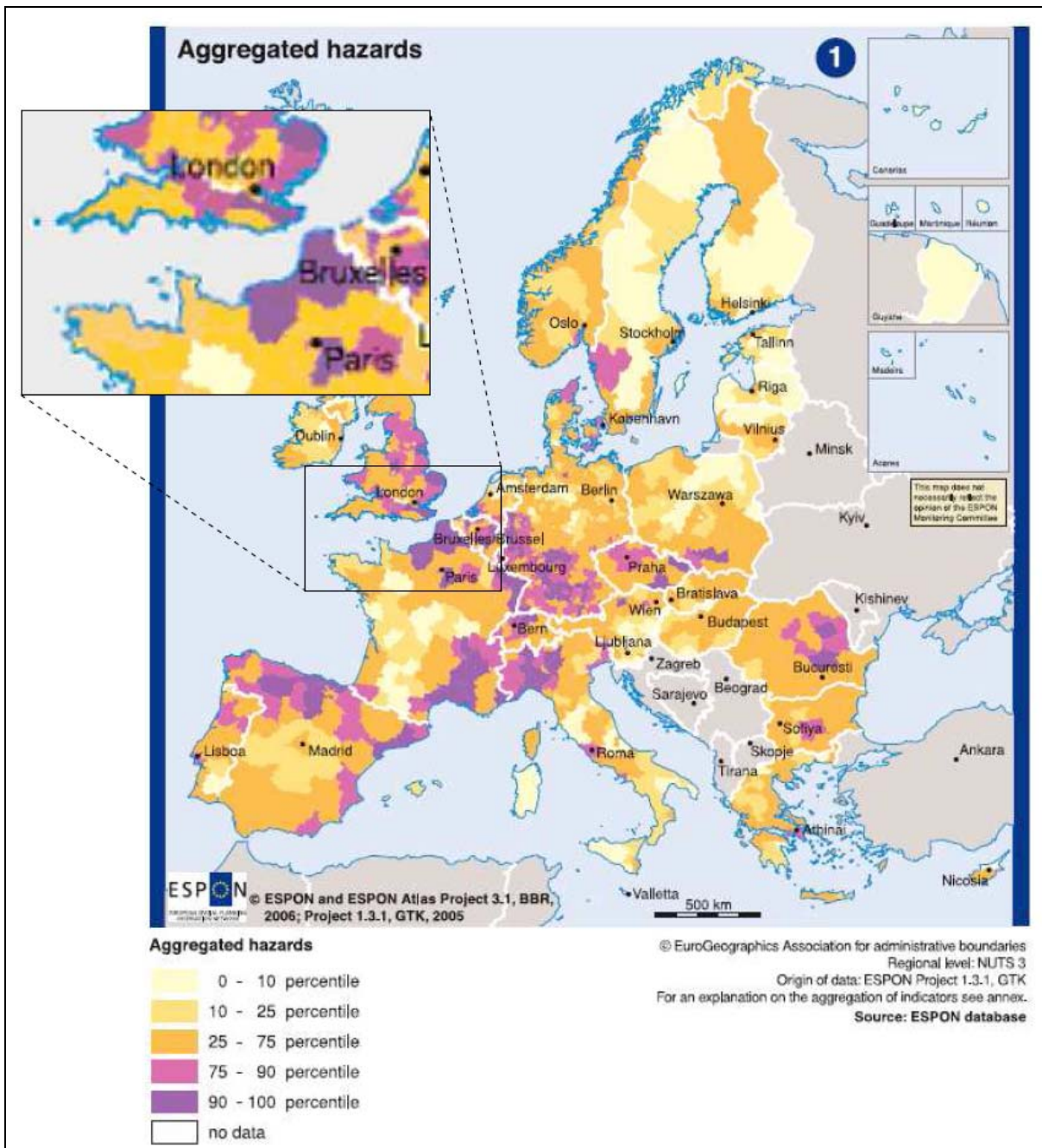
urban areas with potential risks for the population and the environment. In Flanders the risk is moderately below average. The Groot-Rijnmond region in the Netherlands scores high in the chemical plants hazards potential and the oil-sum values. West-Brabant and Zeeland score average regarding the oil-sum values. Overall, Groot-Rijnmond and Zeeland score high on hazards.

All the countries in the programme area have a sea coast. Many ferry lines connect the continent with England. In addition some of the largest ports of the world are located in the area generating large volumes of marine cargo traffic.

In recent years maritime safety has become an increasingly important issue in coastal countries. For example ferry disasters with the Estonia and the Herald of Free Enterprise have contributed to this awareness. In the programme area large amounts of cargo and passengers are transported over sea. This poses high risks of accidents and subsequent human casualties and environmental or economic damage. The well known oil pollutions are an example of environmental disasters. Economic disasters can occur in the fisheries when an environmental disaster has taken place. In addition modern ships are constantly increasing in size which increases the risk of more serious disasters if an accident would occur. The whole programme area is prone to these risks.

Conclusion

Overall, the programme area has a diverse natural environment. It enjoys a wealth of natural heritage, which creates a high quality of living in many parts of the area. However, this natural heritage is under threat from landscape fragmentation, urbanisation and the loss of biodiversity. The area suffers from the effects of climate change, including drought, increased incidences of flooding, and coastal erosion. The regions have experienced varying levels of success in trying to curb their emissions of greenhouse gases. The industrial parts of the area suffer from a high degree of air and water pollution, but the quality of bathing water has significantly improved in most areas. The production and consumption of renewables remains relatively low (although higher in France), so there lies an opportunity to increase this, in particular the use of wind and biomass energy. In the industrial areas there is an increased risk of technological hazards. The maritime and coastal parts of the programme area are prone to maritime disasters. This risk is even increasing since both maritime traffic volumes and the size of modern ships are constantly increasing.



Map 3 :Aggregated hazards – Source ESPON Atlas – www.espon.eu
(The aggregated hazard typology is based on 15 hazard indicators. Every indicator gives the value from 1 to 5 depending on the magnitude of the hazard in NUTS 3 area).

2.2.4 Transport and communication

Transport infrastructure

The extensive infrastructure that characterises the programme area is one of its assets. Most places in the area are well connected to each other and to the major European cities. Within the region there are various north-south and east-west road corridors that function well. However, a number of cross-border connections are not yet satisfactory, for example between Zeeuwsch-Vlaanderen and Flanders. The intra-regional and cross-border traffic has increased and is likely to grow further in the coming years. Also the area suffers from pressure on infrastructure due to traffic passing through to reach the capitals in the programme area. All of the issues cause congestion, which is already a growing problem around the large urban areas. New investments in road infrastructure are necessary as well as new plans for transport of people and goods.

For most of the rural parts of the area a different picture exists. Some of these areas are badly connected to the urban centres and to other parts of the programme area. People living there tend to use their car to travel to work and use public transport much less. This is because of the low quantity of public transport connections. In the last decade, however, the number of rail journeys has increased significantly. The congestion caused by the growing numbers of cars and the closure of public transport lines lead to access deprivation in the rural areas. Because of this and with an ageing population, especially in the rural areas, it is important to keep a good network of secondary roads and bus routes and presence of railway stations in villages. This is also relevant for the many people that are living in the rural areas and commute to their work in the urban areas.

The railway network connects the region with London, Paris, Randstad and Brussels. South East England and the North-West part of France have very good connections with these large cities. Since 1994 the connection between the United Kingdom and Continent has improved significantly because of the Channel Tunnel. The other parts of the region have an intercity network that is more regionally or nationally oriented. There is only one railway connection between the Netherlands and Flanders. Within a few years the HST connecting Rotterdam, Antwerp and Brussels and running to Lille and Paris will be operating at full speed and capacity. The Iron Rhine railway will connect Antwerp with the Ruhr Area in Germany and will serve as a goods transport west-east corridor. This will strengthen the position of the Harbour of Antwerp and also relieves the busy road connection.

Air travel is growing fast, especially the regional air travel. This applies both to passenger and to freight flights. Stansted airport is in the programme area and it provides regional passenger flights within the programme area. The big international airports Gatwick and Heathrow are close to the programme area. The regional airports of Rotterdam and Antwerp have connections with London but are mainly used for charter flights to southern Europe and Antwerp also for business flights. The UK Airports in Bristol, Bournemouth, Exeter, Norwich, and Southend Airport have connections with Amsterdam, Brussels and Paris, whereas Newquay Airport offers mainly UK domestic flights. The airport of Ostend is mainly used for freight flights. The airport of Lille-Lesquin serves both domestic and international destinations, including many Mediterranean and North-African destinations operated by low cost carriers. .

Various ferry lines connect the Continent with England. Fast ferries operate between Harwich and Hoek van Holland, and from Boulogne, Dunkirk and Calais to Dover and from Caen and Cherbourg to Portsmouth and Cherbourg to Poole. Between Europoort and Zeebrugge and Hull and between Oostende and Ramsgate cruise ferry lines are operating. In addition some of the largest ports of the world are located in the area: Rotterdam, Antwerp, and Harwich and Felixstowe. The Port of Rotterdam is the largest port of Europe, handling 377 million tons of goods in 2006, with volumes still growing steadily every year. A cause for concern in relation to this development is the decreasing availability of commercial land to accommodate growing demands.

Also the ports of Vlissingen, Terneuzen, Calais, Dunkerque, Ghent, Zeebrugge, Oostende, King's Lynn, Lowestoft, Great Yarmouth, Ipswich, Tilbury, Dover, Southampton, Plymouth, Falmouth and Portsmouth are playing a significant role in the international trade. A major challenge for the cross-border area is the management of the expansion of certain ports, the provision of the necessary transport infrastructure, and the sustainability of smaller ports. The border region Vlaanderen-Nederland has a vast infrastructure for waterborne transport. For cargo transport the Westerschelde is an important connection, as it is the access for sea ships to the port of Antwerp. A point of interest is increasing the depth of the Westerschelde, so that the port of Antwerp remains accessible for sea ships that becoming larger. Falmouth harbour also requires deepening for similar reasons. All ports have an important distribution function to the hinterland. Important

connections for the inland navigation are the Scheldt (B), Leie (B) and the Rhine (NL). The inland ports in Flanders and the Netherlands take on cargo relieving the large container seaports in the border region. In conclusion, the optimisation of the existing port and airport infrastructures, as well as the mutualisation of the available cross-border capacities, should be given priority in order to deal with the increasing traffic and transported volumes.

ICT

In the last years the broadband penetration rate has been growing fast. The share of Flemish people using the internet evolved from 34% in 2001 to 61% in 2005. In 2006 66% of the Dutch households had an broadband internet connection (the European average in 2006 was 30%). Also Flanders (48) , UK (44) and France (30) score on or above the average. More than 75% of the businesses are connected to the internet, of which French companies score best (86%) . This is an unexpected number regarding the relatively low number of households using broadband in France.

Despite this high connection rate, many SMEs, especially small enterprises, still are not making optimal use of the possibilities of information and communication technologies to improve the efficiency of their work processes and maximise their revenues. A study in the Netherlands (AME.nl, 2004) demonstrated that Dutch SMEs are losing up to 6.6 billion € caused by not using ICTs or working with sub-optimal systems.

ICT infrastructure are a major link in connections with other regions. Cities like Antwerp and Delft play a leading role because high tech infrastructure is first realised in cities because of cost efficiency and the presence of research institutions and international firms.

Although overall the countries involved scores high on ICT use and ICT technologies, there are regional differences. This also applies for the programme area. Especially in the rural areas the number of ICT and broadband connections is considerably lower than in the urban regions.

	% of households connected to broadband (2006)	% businesses connected to broadband (2006)
Netherlands	66	82
Flanders	48	84
France	30	86
United Kingdom	44	77
EU 27	30	73

Table 4 : Broadband coverage. Source: EUROSTAT

Conclusions

The programme area has an extensive road, rail, port and inland water transport infrastructure. Especially the larger cities are well connected. The number of cross-border connections by road and by rail is however relatively limited. The growth of traffic causes congestion in urban areas whereas in most rural areas, except on the French side, the quality of road and public transport infrastructure is of concern. Some large infrastructural projects like the HST-connection between Amsterdam and Paris and the IJzeren Rijn will have positive impact on the eligible area. New waterways such as the Seine-Escaut waterway will emerge over the coming years. The harbours of Antwerp and Rotterdam continue expanding, causing lack of commercial land in their direct surroundings and a necessity to keep the inward waterways at high quality. Compared to the rest of Europe, the programme area has a relatively high ICT-density. In the last years the number of broadband connections has grown steadily. The rural areas however keep a backward position.

2.2.5 Heritage, culture and tourism

The regions in the programme area have an extensive history of working together in the field of heritage and culture, both within and outside the framework of European funding programmes. Many activities have taken place under the previous INTERREG programme periods. Cultural and educational exchanges took place under the INTERREG IIIA Franco-British programme. A high number of projects in the field of culture, cultural tourism and cultural heritage with partners from the eligible area were successfully delivered under the NWE and North Sea INTERREG IIIB programmes. Generally, it can be said that there exists a high demand across both sides of the sea for this type of project, to such an extent that these measures usually tend to be the first to be committed. Organisations involved in cultural (heritage) project are also increasingly making the link with the Lisbon and Gothenburg agendas by introducing information society

technologies, creating jobs, and making sure their activities are environmentally sustainable, which by their very nature they often already are. This sector has a lot of potential for the EU economy in the next 7 years as an important contributor to growth and jobs.

Tourism in the programme area can be divided into three main sectors: coastal and maritime tourism, city tourism and cultural tourism. The whole programme area is situated alongside the coast of the North Sea and the English Channel which plays an important part for many coastal towns and areas. Coastal tourism provides the biggest share in the number of nights in the area. Next to the coastal areas, the cities in the programme area also attract a lot of tourists. These visitors do not always stay overnight and the precise number of nights this group of tourists comprises are not counted. Nevertheless they are a big part of the number of tourists.

Cultural tourism also plays an important role in the tourist sector. The coastal areas all have an interesting cultural history and the cities are also attractive to cultural tourists because of their cultural heritage. For example South West and South East England have cultural festivals, large museum collections, so-called heritage coasts and UNESCO World Heritage Sites. Lille (France) attracts a lot of tourists after being the European Cultural Capital in 2004.. There has been a rise in the number of tourists along the coast, notably the "Côte d'Opale", as well as in other towns located either close to the coast (Boulogne, Le Touquet...) or in the hinterland (Arras, Saint-Omer...). The share of foreign tourists amounted to 35% in 2005, among them two thirds were English. In Flanders almost 30% of the nights are in 'art cities' (2005). In the Dutch part of the programme area the city Rotterdam attracts a lot of tourists because of its cultural programme and architecture, in Flanders it is Antwerp that attracts a lot of cultural architectural tourists.

The importance of tourism in the programme area can be shown by different figures. The first indicator is the number of overnight stays . The French region Nord-Pas-de-Calais had almost 8 million overnight stays per year in 2004 and 2005, the Flemish coast had more than 11 million nights in 2005 and the city of Rotterdam had 887.000 overnights in 2005. Tourism in the South West of England accounts for around 20% of England's domestic tourist trips and 8% of overseas visits to England, with the number of overnight stays in Cornwall alone exceeding 25 million per annum (2005). These figures are just examples but they nevertheless show that a lot of tourists visit the programme area each year and that these tourists not only visit the coastal areas but that they visit the cities as well.

Another figure that shows the importance of tourism in the programme area is how much employment tourism provides. The tourist sector in the Dutch province Zeeland is an important source of income since it comprises 9% of the employment. In Flanders the tourist sector comprises 3,8 % of the employment. But most of the tourism in Flanders is coastal tourism which means that in the coastal areas this figure will be higher. In Nord-Pas-de-Calais, employment in the tourist sector accounts for 1.4% of total employment in the private and semi-public sector (data 2001), concentrated along the coast and in Lille metropolitan area and much less in the rural areas.

The last characteristic that shows the importance of tourism in the programme area is the amount of cultural heritage. All different regions in the programme area have a lot of cultural heritage objects and sites. The importance of these sites is illustrated by the fact that the programme area has a lot of UNESCO World Heritage Sites, as indicated previously in paragraph 2.3.3. On the UK side these include Stonehenge and Avebury (Wiltshire), the City of Bath, the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape, the Natural World Heritage Site of the Dorset and East Devon Jurassic Coast, and the Canterbury World heritage Site in the UK. In Nord-Pas-de-Calais, it's worth mentioning that as an example 17 Bell Towers are classified by the UNESCO. In the Flemish programme area there are also several sites including Bell Towers and the Plantin-Moretus Complex in Antwerp and the historical city centre of Bruges. In the Dutch part of the area, the windmills of Kinderdijk have a UNESCO listing. In addition to these World Heritage Sites South West England has over 60% of England's heritage coast.

In sum one can say the area in general has a well developed and varied tourism infrastructure in terms of assets and attractions for visitors and tourist facilities.

Despite the great importance of the tourism sector and the opportunities it offers, it also faces some weaknesses and threats. In some of the regions, for instance in the UK, (coastal) resorts are in need of modernisation. The availability and quality of accommodations needs to be improved as do certain attractions and cultural assets in order to stay attractive to visitors. Structural weaknesses in the sector throughout the area include seasonality of labour and difficulty to find sufficient and good quality staff in peak season

High numbers of visitors put pressure on the regions concerning pollution (waste) and traffic congestions on the so-called peak days. For the same reasons high numbers of visitors, can also be a threat for cultural and natural heritage. Other threats are more external. The coastal regions have to compete with cheap holiday destinations abroad, operated by low-cost airlines.

Finally, the common identity of the area also rests on sport and creative activities, as well as joint initiatives between the regional and local media (TVs, radio, newspapers, etc.). They are rather underdeveloped in this new eligible area at this stage and need to be supported.

Conclusions

A lot of experience exists in the area in working together in the field of heritage, culture, and educational exchanges. Culture, cultural heritage, and cultural tourism are very important to the area's economy. A strong interest exists to continue developing initiatives in these sectors, and this offers a high potential for economic growth and contributing to the Lisbon and Gothenburg agenda.

Tourism is also a very important economic sector for the coast and the cities in the area. Visitors and tourists generate substantial income and employment. The larger cities like Bruges, Lille and Rotterdam are attractive because of their cultural heritage, architecture and supply of cultural activities. The unique landscapes, sometimes part of UNESCO World Heritage Sites, are also attractive for visitors and tourists.

Some of the main challenges the region has to face are related to the need for modernisation of tourist facilities and of the products and services of the tourism sector, and to deal with structural issues like increasing pressure on its heritage, external competition and availability and quality of staff.

2.3 Lessons from previous experiences

The analysis has also to take into account the main lessons learnt from the previous programming period 2000-2006, based on available results (from evaluation studies). These should allow for the identification of the main achievements, best practices and successful interventions which should be taken on board in the new programming period.

In this respect, two programmes are considered in priority, on the one hand the Interreg IIIA France-England Programme and on the other hand the Interreg IIIA Flanders-Netherlands Programme. There is also an overlap with the programme area of Interreg IIIA France-Wallonie-Flanders. Although being relatively narrow, it seems relevant to take it into account.

It results that, within this new programme area, the existing partnerships involved in cross-border issues over 2000-2006 were strictly bilateral (with some exceptions like the Historic Fortifications Network which included French, British and Belgian regions but nevertheless was based on two bilateral programmes). It's worth mentioning that in these respective areas regional and local authorities have been establishing framework projects or signing partnership agreements since the 1990s. There is a core group of actors already familiarized with the classic themes of cross-border cooperation which aim at reducing the frontier effect.

The new geography of this programme also offers the possibility to develop new types of bilateral partnerships as well as multilateral partnerships, with potentially long distances between the partners. In this respect, this programme area forms a part of larger co-operation networks and a large number of actors are already participating in international and inter-regional projects and activities within the North Western Europe and the North Sea cooperation areas. That's why it seems also appropriate to consider some key lessons drawn from these two INTERREG IIIB programmes and from some major individual projects implemented over 2000-2006 as part of transnational cooperation programmes and the INTERACT programme considering the size of the programme area.

2.3.1 Interreg IIIA France-England

This programme built on the experience of two Programmes under Interreg IIA : on the one hand the Rives-Manche programme which linked the departments of Seine-Maritime and Somme in France and East Sussex

in the UK (programme "Rive-Manche") and on the other hand the Transmanche programme which linked the departments of Nord and Pas de Calais and Kent and Medway.

Considering the territorial characteristics and the geography of the Interreg IIIA programme area (Nord, Pas-de-Calais, Somme and Seine-Maritime in France, East Sussex, Kent, Medway, Brighton&Hove in England), the main objective aimed at developing a wider maritime region, as well as its urban and rural areas through the promotion of real cooperation projects.

In total, the programme area had around 8 million inhabitants, and the total ERDF budget allocated to the programme was EUR 108 million.

Key results and lessons from the programming period 2000-2006

Around 220 projects were co-financed. The average cost was relatively high (1,3 M€ on average), which had a direct impact on the project leader's typology. There were two main categories of beneficiaries (universities/research centres and public authorities) which accounted for around 2/3 of lead partners. The cooperation was predominantly developed between partners from Nord-Pas-de-Calais in France and Kent in England.

The OP strongly favoured a "bottom-up" approach so that the projects could emerge locally. However, few of them came from companies and small associations. The procedure of micro-projects was developed during the programming period in order to facilitate the involvement of very small entities.

From the thematic point of view, one can observe a great success for projects dealing with training, tourism and culture, some satisfactory results for local authorities concerning the citizenship and the mutual understanding, but a more ambivalent assessment for the social cohesion and security.

Also, a significant effort was made to promote a balanced territorial development.

There was a weak attraction in the economic development field with a real difficulty to mobilize SMEs into projects. This might have been caused by the fairly low rate of financing the programme provided. On the other hand, research was a cooperation field in development.

A partial adjustment of the measure about transport should be noted. The projects carried out turned to "soft" means of transport and often moved away from the initial objective: "promote the integration of "external doors"", even if two projects dealt with maritime ports.

Despite the satisfactory running of the Programme, achievements remained below the expected objectives and illustrate their weaknesses: very few private companies took part in the OP, consideration of the social integration development of relationships between research organisations and companies. The improvement of the cross-Channel transport conditions also remained lower than the objectives.

On the institutional level, differences are also notable in many fields targeted by this programme of co-operation such as transports, education, health and culture.

Some more qualitative results considering the geographical specificity of the area are:

- the maritime border which creates a physical barrier between the partners has not led to an ICT use beyond the "basic" tools
- the achievement of the European citizenship concept thanks to proximity projects
- a better mutual understanding, unanimously emphasized
- an obligatory linguistic effort - even if it is still a real barrier

Main effects of the OP

Referring to the strategic objectives of the Programme, the key lessons are:

1. The development of the « maritime dimension » of the territory was limited. Some projects were specifically about the coastal and marine environment (environmental or port projects for instance) and several cultural projects took into account the maritime patrimony. This maritime dimension was not seen as a federal theme for the OP;
2. The leaders showed a greater sense of belonging to a common cross-border area meaning that a common identity started developing.
3. A better consideration of the citizens and their needs by focusing on the everyday life of population through all its elements: education, training, citizenship, social cohesion, etc.

In short, this Programme was above all a « generic » Interreg, whose strong point is the incentive to new partnership practices, but not very focused on the initial strategic objectives.

This Programme was potentially innovative in several fields but from the general point of view, it is in partnership that innovation is the most important. Many beneficiaries highlighted that it is in duration that

permanent partnership set in and it is often said that three projects are necessary to get it. This partnership permanence is a crucial issue which should be considered in priority when defining the future OP.

2.3.2 Interreg IIIA Netherlands-Flanders

During the INTERREG I and II periods, two separate programmes were implemented in the Belgian-Dutch border area:

- INTERREG I and IIA Euregio Scheldemond
- INTERREG I and IIA Euregio Benelux Central Area

At the request of the European Commission and the relevant Member States, the two former programmes were merged into one single INTERREG IIIA OP. However, this programme was split into two sub-programmes corresponding to the former INTERREG IIA programmes

The programme linked three provinces in the southern part of the Netherlands and five provinces in the Flemish Community of Flanders:

Province of Zeeland, Province of North-Brabant , Province of Dutch Limburg (NL)

Province of East-Flanders, Province of West-Flanders (except for the counties of Veurne and Ieper), Province of Antwerp, Belgian Province of Limburg, Part of the province of Flemish Brabant (county of Leuven) BE

In total, the programme area had 9 million inhabitants, and the total ERDF budget allocated to the programme was EUR 84.2 million.

Main findings concerning the programme's implementation:

- Existence of difficulties in generating projects regarding knowledge and innovation.
- The co-financing of projects related to the labour market is complex because it depends hugely on national regulations that cannot be influenced by the programme.
- The private sector was too less involved in the programme. There is a need to involve them more actively, to inform them and to provide the services to help with the administration of European projects.
- The programme suffered from the fact that the working procedures were not ready before the programme implementation started.

The development of the successive generations of the programme (from Interreg I through Interreg III) demonstrated an evolution in the intensity and types of cooperation and projects supported.

Starting by bringing the actors on both sides of the border together, building contacts and getting to know each. As cooperation intensified projects started developing studies and action plans addressing shared cross border issues. After this stage there is a growing focus on projects concretely implementing activities, pilot actions and activities of more strategic importance for the border area.

2.3.3 Interreg IIIA France-Walloon-Flanders

The INTERREG III A France-Walloon-Flanders programme covered NUT III territories from five regions: Nord-Pas-de-Calais, Picardie and Champagne-Ardenne on the French side, the province of Western Flanders and a large part of the Walloons Region. The overlapping zone is made up of the French NUTS III territory "Nord" and part of Western Flanders.

The total ERDF budget allocated to the programme was EUR 86.5 million.

The OP aimed at supporting actions related to two priority axes:

1. bringing together the populations and developing cross-border services
2. enhancing the sustainable development and the valorisation of cross-border territories.

It was articulated around three sub-programmes, among them one for the French-Flemish side.

This programme, along with the two previous generations of INTERREG programmes, which aimed at reducing the negative effects along this internal border have produced concrete results for both the populations and the territories.

One lesson that is particularly relevant for this programme is the fact that within the France-Walloon Flanders programme the actions concerning the economic development were underdeveloped. Several obstacles such as the lack of culture in innovation management, fiscal and administrative disparities and the underdevelopment of clustering global strategies were identified. The economic actors see themselves rather like competitors than potential partners. In short, the development of economic and innovative actions at a supra-regional level remains a real challenge.

2.3.4. Lessons from INTERREG IIIB North Sea Region and IIIB North West Europe

In the previous budget period (2000-2006) the area of this operational programme was part of the INTERREG IIIB North Sea Region programme (NSR) and the INTERREG IIIB North West Europe programme (NWE). From these programmes also some lessons can be learnt.

A valuable lesson to be drawn from the NSR programme is that in order to achieve greater impact and lasting value, it is vital to encourage both projects with a top-down and with a bottom-up approach involving national authorities and agencies as well as regional authorities. It also turned out that it is wise to work actively with project promoters in order to build capacity and to raise the quality of the project applications. Another important lesson from the NSR programme was that in order to guarantee the achievement of the objectives of the programme, a pro-active approach to project development, applying a variety of tools and techniques, is necessary. Leaving project development to take place on an ad-hoc basis was not entirely satisfactory.

The lessons learnt from the NWE demonstrate that exchanges between regions that are at different stages of technical and administrative know-how can contribute significantly to more economically efficient investments by the public sector. It also became clear that despite regional differences across North West Europe, several regions were faced with similar dilemmas. The opportunity for these regions to join forces and examine such cases from a multi-sectoral and multi-governance level gave considerable added-value to many transnational cooperation partnerships.

A final lesson learnt are that differences in governmental and legal structures across administrative boundaries remain to be a factor delaying or hindering cooperation..

2.3.5 Lessons from some major individual projects

Two major projects aimed to identify possibilities and themes for maritime cooperation between the regions on both sides of the Channel and southern North Sea for the 2007-2013 period. They constitute a good source of inspiration for the identification of examples of cross-border cooperation activities which can be supported under this programme.

The Time2C project

The Time2C project (2005-2007, co-financed by the INTERACT programme) involved 8 NUTS II and NUTS III territories from England, France, Flanders and Netherlands bordering the Southern North Sea which have many historical, cultural and economic links. The situation in regions separated by seas is very particular and many aspects of the cooperation between the regions can be improved if the awareness of the opportunities improves.

The Southern North Sea borders the metropolitan heart of Western Europe and can be seen as the backyard of this metropolitan region. This creates very specific development opportunities but also specific economic, environmental and social problems, which influence the daily living environment of its inhabitants. Many problems are shared and tailor made solutions are necessary and important from a synergy and efficiency point of view. The project aimed at promoting and facilitating the exchange of know-how and best practice of maritime cross border issues, to give good governance and added value to maritime cross-border cooperation and encourage wider participation in INTERREG IV.

Time2C interprets the term *maritime* in its broadest sense, to include all activities in the marine and coastal regions which are directly or indirectly connected to the sea and on which the closeness of the sea has substantial economic, social, cultural and environmental impacts. Looking at the 2007-2013 period the Time2C project identified the following themes issues and themes for maritime cooperation in the region:

- *Coastal Development, Water Management and Environment*
- *Maritime Economy*
- *Maritime Transport and Infrastructure*

The EMDI project

The «Espace Manche Development Initiative» (EMDI) project brought together 22 French, British and Flemish partners, covered a period of three years (2004-2007) and was supported by the INTERREG IIIB North West Europe programme.

The overall ambition of the project was to increase and strengthen cross-Channel co-operation and was based on the belief that the Channel is the right geographical scale to address a set of common strategic issues.

It aimed to:

- establish a strategic vision of the Channel area paving the way for future European co-operation programmes after 2006,
- initiate pilot programmes for co-operation on five themes: tourism, fishing resources, integrated coastal zone management, maritime safety and intermodality of transport, higher education, R&D and transfer of technology,
- develop an information platform suited to the requirements of transnational cooperation and accessible via the Internet (regional data tool).

The project has led to the development of tools to get better knowledge of the Channel area, a shared strategic vision between the stakeholders and tested a number of avenues of co-operation. It was considered that EMDI could represent a genuine 'springboard' for setting up structured projects for the period 2007-2013.

2.3.6 Conclusions

The past experiences show that the obstacles to the cooperation do exist and that the results are up to now relatively modest considering the central objective of strengthening the territorial integration. This process is on track but has to be strongly supported in order to increase the cross-border added value and to make a qualitative leap in the projects impact.

Many difficulties lie in the differences of administrative and legal systems (for education, employment, health, etc.) as well as the language barrier.

There is also a clear need to involve citizens, the voluntary sector and SMEs more closely in the future in order to increase the impact at local level.

The lessons learnt from the period 2000-2006 and the new geography of the programme area argue for the following orientations:

- to deepen the existing partnerships while enlarging them and developing new ones;
- to implement specific procedures in order to inform and involve the potential beneficiaries from NUTS III territories without any prior experience in cross-border issues.

Finally, it's worth noting that the geography of the different Interreg IIIA programmes over 2000-2006 should allow the development of tripartite projects based on the exchange of experiences between actors coming from two different OPs (France-England and France-Walloon-Flanders) and living in close proximity. This could be particularly helpful at the launch of the period 2007-2013 when it may be difficult to set up partnerships involving actors from more than two countries on cross-border issues.

2.4 SWOT analysis

Based on the description of the socio-economic situation in the previous paragraphs, we can analyse the main strengths and weaknesses of the programme area and identify the opportunities and threats for the coming years. These elements will form an important thematic foundation for determining the strategy of the programme.

Demography, migration and territorial structure

<i>STRENGTHS</i>	<i>WEAKNESSES</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Location within the European metropolitan core area: London, Paris, Randstad and Flemish diamond ▪ Mix of urban, peri-urban and rural areas ▪ A great variation of coastal landscapes, and cultural historic aspects are attractive to both residents and visitors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Population shift in rural parts of the area; older people move in because of nature and quietness. Young people move away to the urban areas because of the higher number of jobs available, ▪ Parts of the area have a peripheral position in relation to the national economic centres ▪ Presence of pockets of deprivation with labour shortages and decline of facilities. ▪ Social problems often with a territorial dimension, for instance in urban areas ▪ Share of population aged over 65 above EU and national averages, except on the French side. ▪ The balance of the migration is negative in some regions (e.g. in Nord-pas-de-Calais)
<i>OPPORTUNITIES</i>	<i>THREATS</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ageing population brings opportunities, e.g. targeted tourism products, replacement of outmigrating rural population, ... ▪ Opportunities to increase the skills levels of older people through lifelong learning and by integrating them and people with disabilities into the workforce. ▪ Opportunities and incentives are needed to encourage young people to stay in coastal and rural areas. ▪ Diversification as an opportunity in coastal and rural areas in decline areas. ▪ immigration and migrant workers provide opportunities in terms of labour and skills . ▪ Development of the care economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ageing population leads to shortage on labour market, and pressure on social and medical services...). ▪ Loss of facilities and services in rural areas caused by trend of population decline ▪ Availability and quality of health services under pressure from ageing population, especially in more peripheral and sparsely populated parts ▪ Growing population and economic growth pressure availability of space and living quality in urban areas as well as the sub-urban and rural areas. ▪ Risk of marginalisation of minorities. ▪ Risk of insecurity and rising criminality ▪ Strong impact of illegal immigration, especially in maritime gateways, putting pressure on the services ▪ The decline of the green areas, as well as the growth of the ageing population, is putting pressure on the quality of life.

Economy, employment, education, research, R&D

<i>STRENGTHS</i>	<i>WEAKNESSES</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Overall the area has an GDP/capita well above EU average ▪ Critical mass in terms of high density of population and economic activities (e.g. human resources, proximity to large consumer markets) ▪ Parts of the area are clearly oriented towards a strong knowledge-based economy ▪ Economic sectors with a strong presence in the area include: logistical services, port related industries, tourism, agro business, automotive industry and chemical clusters ▪ Several pockets with strong presence of universities and knowledge institutes and R&D activities ▪ Share of the population with tertiary education above EU average. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Huge differences in economic performance across the region, demonstrated by strong variations in GDP/capita ▪ Parts of the area face difficulties to modernize economically from an industrial or agricultural past ▪ Strong variations in employment rates, with most parts of the area below Lisbon target of 70% ▪ High unemployment in several parts of the continental side of the area ▪ High number of economically inactive people, especially among particular groups (youth, immigrants) ▪ Entrepreneurial spirit not strongly developed in many parts of the area, ▪ Knowledge-valorisation within SME's and spin-offs from the research sector are not well developed in many parts of the area.
<i>OPPORTUNITIES</i>	<i>THREATS</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Combination of knowledge-based regions and regions with more traditional economies offers potential for cross border cooperation towards catching up and economic modernisation ▪ Economic opportunities presented by the presence of international gateways ▪ Further development in knowledge intensive services ▪ Development of links between similar clustering activities in the whole area ▪ Potential for development of R&D activity in wider parts of the programme area ▪ Opportunities to promote smart growth through developing low carbon economies and by providing the conditions to create new jobs in energy efficiency, renewable energy, eco-innovation and green tourism. ▪ Development of care-sector and innovation in the care-services ▪ Development of the maritime knowledge economy, related to marine resources ▪ Increase labour mobility between countries in the area of workers, researchers, teachers etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Availability of skilled workforce is often a problem ▪ Industrial relocation ▪ Rising dependency ratios as a result of demographic change ▪ The scale of economic growth in the area could a threat to the attractive cultural and natural environment.

Environment, energy, risk prevention

<i>STRENGTHS</i>	<i>WEAKNESSES</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Diversity and wealth of natural heritage and protected areas: Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, National and regional Parks, Sites of Specific Scientific Interest, UNESCO World Heritage Sites, ZNIEFF, Habitat areas, Bird Directive areas, Natura 2000, Wetlands Convention RAMSAR, Natuurmonumenten ▪ High quality of living ▪ Quality of (bathing) waters is improving (even if it does not meet the Water Framework Directive requirements everywhere yet) ▪ Volume of waste recycled has increased. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Loss of biodiversity because of high population density and overcrowding of the natural areas ▪ Green belt and character landscapes are under pressure ▪ Lack of spatial planning and management of landscapes ▪ Moderate to serious drought and floods in some parts of the area (notably near coastal areas) ▪ High levels of carbon emissions, high levels of air pollution in industrial areas, e.g. high Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) levels, disturbed mineral balances in water and rivers ▪ High dependence on imported energy (apart from the oil reserves in the North Sea) ▪ Energy consumption still for a large part based on non-renewable sources ▪ High maritime traffic volumes cause elevated risks related to maritime pollution and maritime safety
<i>OPPORTUNITIES</i>	<i>THREATS</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Combining nature preservation with social, economic or cultural activities ▪ Further potential to reduce greenhouse gas emissions ▪ There is a strong potential to increase the generation of renewable energies in the area (in particular in the fields of wind energy, water power, biomass, tidal power, wood fuel, marine resources,...). ▪ Strong potential for development of eco-innovations e.g. in construction, waste recycling, (public) transport etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Landscape fragmentation ▪ Increased urbanisation and economic activities ▪ The growth in mobility and traffic congestion threaten the environment of the eligible area ▪ Effects of climate change such as rising sea water levels, increased incidences of floods (river, coastal and low lying), drought, and coastal erosion, high risk of storm surges, etc. ▪ Exposure to technological hazards above average in industrial areas ▪ Natural habitat degradation in the face of growth pressures. ▪ High carbon dependency threatens environmental quality and economic prosperity

Transport and communication

<i>STRENGTHS</i>	<i>WEAKNESSES</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Extensive infrastructure network at the level of the overall programme area, internal connections available by road, rail, air and water. ▪ Good external connections to main centres of London, Paris, Randstad and Brussels (including Eurostar and other highspeed train links) ▪ Presence of several major ports and logistic centres in the area making the region and important node in international trade ▪ The share of businesses and households connected to broadband internet is generally well above the EU average throughout the whole area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Most rural and more remote parts of the area are badly connected to the urban centres and infrastructural nodes ▪ Cross-border infrastructures (rail and road connections) and public transport are thinly spread and limited in capacity in some parts of the area; ▪ Variable quality of inland waterways in the area. ▪ Intensive use of road-network and high levels of congestion ▪ Poor broadband connection in the more remote areas. ▪ Insufficient utilization of ICT within SMEs
<i>OPPORTUNITIES</i>	<i>THREATS</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Further expansion of high speed train network within the programme area will improve the long range accessibility during the programming period ▪ Growing importance of regional airport for passenger and cargo traffic ▪ Inland waterways offering congestion free alternatives for cargo transport to the European hinterland and internally ▪ Different passenger transportation required due to demographic ageing, especially in rural areas ▪ Potential for increased use of sustainable travel if necessary infrastructure can be provided ▪ Improving local and strategic transport networks to facilitate economic development and improve social inclusion ▪ Development of multimodality ▪ Potential to share energy and communications infrastructure in the area and promote digital connectivity and home working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increasing congestion threatens accessibility of the cities and ports in many parts of the region ▪ High maritime traffic could have dangerous side-effects on populations and the environment on the coasts ▪ Increasing shortages of land and skills for port related activities ▪ Risk of increased marginalisation of some ports specialized in passengers transportation ▪ Accessibility of ports and the port-related industrial areas ▪ Increasing pollution particularly in urban areas threatens public health and quality of life ▪ In some local areas poor infrastructure network acts as a barrier to further economic development and leads to social exclusion ▪ Expanding HST network threatens the frequency of regular local and regional train services.

Heritage, culture and tourism

<i>STRENGTHS</i>	<i>WEAKNESSES</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A common maritime history and shared roots with a strong joint heritage (cultural, industrial, natural farming, ...) ▪ Wide range of features and attractions of interest for tourism, including the coastal areas, historic and modern cities, cultural heritage and festivals ▪ Tourism is a major industry in terms of value and employment and there are some experienced players and clusters of creative and cultural industry. ▪ Existence of good tourist infrastructure and networks, ▪ Density of cultural infrastructure ▪ High quality of heritage both in the coastal areas as in the hinterland 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tourism products in some coastal resorts are not up to date (e.g. scarce and poor standard accommodation) ▪ Structural weaknesses in the tourism industry include seasonality, poor transport infrastructure lack of well-trained staff, low quality of services.... ▪ Failure to recognise and promote cultural assets and some of them are redundant with no contemporary use in some parts of the area. ▪ Few joint initiatives between regional and local media in the area
<i>OPPORTUNITIES</i>	<i>THREATS</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Development of joint new tourism products related to the sea, the cultural heritage and natural areas ▪ Promotion of links between the development of recreational infrastructure and the development of tourist potentials ▪ Tourism clusters, rural diversification, eco-tourism and other niche markets (e.g. wellness tourism, for the ageing population, harbour tourism...) provide new opportunities for the coastal areas. ▪ Development of seasonal spreading of bookings and holidays, daytime-attractions, well trained employees, quality development, etc. ▪ tourism, sport , culture and heritage as economic drivers and tools for regeneration. ▪ Modernising and upgrading tourism facilities across the area ▪ New opportunities for ' regular' and digital media and IT applications for the development and marketing of the area's cultural heritage and identity. ▪ Promoting the accessibility to natural and cultural monuments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Growing numbers of visitors lead to increasing pressure on natural heritage and tourist facilities and assets in the area ▪ Inadequate resort infrastructure, poor access, second homes, low wages and development pressures are threatening the tourism industry on the coast. ▪ Climate change is a particular threat to the environment and economy of the coastal areas. ▪ A reduction in public funding for the development of cultural assets is a threat.

Cooperation experiences

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There are groups of actors/partnerships already familiar with cross-border cooperation in areas covered by (previous) cross border programmes. ▪ Throughout the area major actors are familiar with territorial cooperation through transnational programmes ▪ Proximity projects can contribute to the achievement of the European citizenship concept 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Involvement of companies and small associations in cross border cooperation is weak ▪ Development of the « maritime dimension » of the territory was limited in France-England IIIA programme ▪ Some territories/categories of actors have no experience at all in cross-border issues
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The enlarged territory of this programme offers the possibility to develop new bilateral and multilateral partnerships and to build on and share past experience in wider more strategic partnerships. Use a combination of different tools at programme level to achieve maximum impact of the programme, including top-down <u>and</u> bottom-up generation of projects and strong facilitation to project promoters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Differences in governmental and legal structures across administrative boundaries can hinder cooperation. ▪ Procedural and language barriers will hamper involvement of groups of actors with lower institutional capacities (e.g. of the voluntary sector) ▪ lack of co-ordination between between the two CBC programmes and transnational programmes at programme and project level

2.5 Perspectives and challenges of the programme area

In addition to the SWOT analysis a few general considerations can be formulated that seem relevant for shaping the strategy and content of this operational programme.

2.5.1 Frontier effect analysis

This cross-border area is characterized by several major obstacles which prevent the existence of a well integrated area from the economic, social and territorial point of views.

For geographical, historical and cultural reasons, the cross-border area suffers at various degrees from the three main following obstacles:

- The **geographical barrier of the Channel and North Sea**: the opening of the Channel tunnel in the mid 1990's had very positive effects notably in terms of increased European integration. However, it affected seriously some ports which saw a sharp decrease in the passengers demand with the reduction of ferry-boats lines or their frequency. Besides the crossing still remains rather expensive which probably dissuades some categories of citizens from travelling more often (especially young people and households with low income).
- Due to the lack of a deeper integration of the internal market at the European scale, **institutional and administrative differences** have a tendency to limit the existence of real natural *areas of life* at cross-border scale. .
- The **language problem** goes on being a major concern, especially between the English and French sides.

In this context, there is a real and persisting frontier effect in this part of Europe which generates several negative effects, among them:

- It prevents the economic development to its full potential, notably due to the existence of competition imbalances in terms of employment and economic activity;
- It limits the continuity of some public services (in terms of energy, education, health, the labour market , maritime security, etc.)

The challenge is to exploit the complementarities and not to suffer from the negative effects of the competition, notably as regards the economic development of the area

Within the programme area, some public authorities have already signed agreements for reinforcing their cooperation and easing the development of projects (agreement between Kent and Pas-de-Calais Region; Medway/North Kent and Greater Dunkirk; Euregio Scheldemond; etc.) by using the existing national and European laws.

Nevertheless, the juridical structuring of public authorities from the different countries involved is globally much less developed than in other European internal cross-border areas.

This reality justifies the implementation of a specific programme aiming at an increased development of cooperation between authorities and civil society actors, based on the potentialities that need to be strengthened.

2.5.2 Major challenges for the programming period

The SWOT analysis has demonstrated the differences existing within the region on such issues as demography, unemployment levels, activity sectors, R&D, etc..

There is also a clear need to exploit the complementarities that exist between the four countries (such as potential partnerships between business, research institutions and technology centres, the maritime dimension shared by all the territories, environmental protection, common aspects of heritage, etc.)

In this respect, the major challenges corresponding to a shared ambition for the programme area in terms of development where potentialities exist can be identified as follows:

- the creation of an integrated area in the context of the European Union;
- the assertion of a wide maritime region with the Channel and the North Sea as the focus of cross-border relations;
- the enhancement of the value of local characteristics and complementarity in fields such as economic development, culture, tourism and research;
- the preservation and promotion of the environmental quality of the area
- the reinforcement of a mutual understanding ;
- the establishment of deep links between the territories and the populations;

Finally, joint working as such is challenging within a new programme area involving actors from four Member States.

2.5.3 Principles for the definition of a joint strategy

The joint strategy for this programme has to respond to the identified opportunities and threats of the cooperation area by setting out an overarching aim and by defining priority axes for the programming period 2007-2013. The programme priorities have to take into consideration the Community Strategic Guidelines as well as the National Strategic Reference Framework of the four Member States involved in the programme. Finally, in the light of past experience, the programme needs to be focused on clear objectives where impacts will be maximised. A few guiding principles can be formulated for this process.

First of all, within this new and relatively large and complex cross border cooperation programme one can expect to find a variation in the cross border cooperation experience of potential actors. For many parts of the programme area this is the first opportunity to be involved in cross border cooperation, whereas experienced actors and long running partnerships can be found in parts of the territory already covered by previous Interreg A programmes. On the other hand, partners can be found throughout the programme area with experience in various other Structural funds programmes, including transnational cooperation and Objective 1 and 2 programmes.

This generally means that the programme will have to support a mix of purposes and ambitions of cooperation. There will be a need to support the development of new partnerships where a clear cross-border added value is evident and helping stakeholders across the territory to get acquainted and to accommodate cooperation projects from existing partnerships (perhaps expanded with new partners), including implementation actions, pilots and investments.

Even if general development trends at the level of the whole region can be seen, on many of the parameters analysed strong variations at the sub regional level are found. This regards issues as varied as the intensity of R&D activities, accessibility, (un-)employment figures, composition of economic sectors and stages of economic development.

In this context two approaches to cooperation can be imagined for certain themes. One is by bringing together the "best performers" in a certain field with the programme area (pooling of excellence). The other is by matching regions with a strong record on a certain theme with those in need of improvement/development in that issue (catching up). One approach does not exclude the other, however they imply different cooperation philosophies, by respectively focussing on developing regional strengths, or focussing on the reduction of internal weaknesses.

To determine a strategy for cooperation in this 2 Seas cross-border cooperation programme it is essential to identify from the issues and challenges that the region faces, the ones that are shared and typical for the combined partners of the programme. At the same time it is important to define a strategy that is differentiated as much as possible from the other territorial cooperation programmes in the same area. One feature that characterises the region is its location on both sides of the Channel and North-Sea. This maritime character strongly impacts the socio-economic situation of the region, bringing with it specific challenges and possibilities, as can be seen in the SWOT analysis presented earlier. It seems logical to design a distinctive strategy for this 2 Seas cross-border cooperation programme in which its maritime characteristics play a prominent role.

Chapter 3. Programme strategy

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the strategic framework for the implementation of the 2 seas cross-border cooperation programme. This strategic framework is based on the findings of the socio-economic diagnosis and SWOT analysis of the area and the lessons from previous experiences (Chapter 2) and is tuned to the requirements laid down in the structural funds regulations and national and community strategic guidelines (Chapter 1).

The following paragraphs first outline the vision on the development of the programme area, forming the basis for the strategic orientation of the programme. This strategic orientation is then translated into the programme objectives and priority axes.

3.2 Development vision for the programme area

The 2 seas IV A programme 2007-2013 brings together old and new partners in a large geographical area on two sides of a maritime border. Although several parts of the programme area have many years of experience in cross border cooperation, the current programme is essentially a new programme given its geography and scale. In this context the partners of this programme have defined the following vision for the development of the programme area through cross-border cooperation:

The vision for the programme is to develop the cross-border cooperation area by reducing the barrier effect of national borders and bringing together actors from all parts of the region. This cross border area should be able to play a coordinated role at the European scale in achieving the aims of the Lisbon and Gothenburg strategies.

3.3 Strategic orientation of the programme

To realise this development vision the programme will follow the strategic orientations presented below:

3.3.1 Thematic focus

For the desired development of the cross-border cooperation area it is essential to support its balanced socio-economic development. Therefore the strategy of this programme will have a thematic scope taking into account the needs of the development needs and opportunities, as identified in the SWOT analysis. The programme will therefore support cooperation activities on all three dimensions of the "business – geography – people" triangle. In operational terms this implies support in the fields of strengthening the economic structure of the programme area, sustaining and developing the environment and enhancing the conditions for optimising the quality of life in the area. Since these aspects are closely interrelated, it is essential that they are addressed in an integrated way in the programmes priorities and projects.

The analysis has demonstrated that beneath the general development trends at the level of the whole region, there are strong variations at the sub regional level are found. This regards issues as varied as the intensity of R&D activities, accessibility, (un-) employment figures, composition of economic sectors and stages of economic development.

The programme will take this reality into account by focussing on two types of cooperation. On the one hand cooperation between "best performers" in a certain field within the programme area will be supported to enhance regional strengths (pooling of excellence). On the other hand regions with a strong record on a certain theme will be matched with those in need of improvement in that issue, aiming to reduce internal weaknesses and disparities. Both approaches can contribute significantly to the overall integration of the programme area.

The programme bodies will inform the potential applicants about the criteria used to assess each type of cooperation. Further information will be provided in the Programme Manual.

3.3.2 Levels and outputs of cooperation

Taking into account the different levels of cross border cooperation experience existing in the area at the start of this programme, various levels of cooperation will be accommodated. On the one hand activities will be supported setting up new partnerships and helping stakeholders across the territory to get acquainted. But on the other hand more advanced cooperation projects from existing partnerships will be supported, preferably expanded with new partners.

For all activities supported by the programme, it is essential to consider their impact on the development of the programme area. This is not only essential to create an integrated programme area, but also to demonstrate the added value of cross border cooperation in this area. The challenge for this cross border cooperation programme is explicit: to produce visible and tangible results that underline the relevance of cross border cooperation in the context of this new, enlarged maritime setting.

In line with the Regions for Economic Change initiative of the European Commission, the programme also aims to transfer its results and outputs to the main stream structural funds programmes (Convergence and Competitiveness) in the area. For this the Managing Authority will make the necessary arrangements (see also chapter 5.1)

3.3.3 The cross-border maritime dimension

The geography of the programme is dominated by the sea. All participating regions are located along the coast of the North Sea and Channel and this maritime basin can be seen as the border at which this cross-border cooperation programme is targeted. This maritime location impacts many sectors of society in the programme area, ranging from economic activity and transport, nature and environment to its heritage. The maritime dimension of the programme area will therefore be reflected in the partnerships of cross-border cooperation projects and as part of the thematic focus of the programme.

Cross border cooperation partnerships

The Channel and North Sea maritime basin forms the border around which this cross-border cooperation programme is structured. This means that all cross-border cooperation projects requesting support from this programme must bring together partners from the two sides of this maritime border. In practical terms this means that each project should have at least one partner from the UK side and at least one partner from one of the three countries on the mainland side of the programme area.

Maritime activities

At the level of the themes and activities supported the maritime dimension of the area is included as a transversal element in the programme. This means that within each of the priority axes of the programme projects addressing maritime issues will be supported. Themes or activities that may be supported include for example: port development, coastal tourism, integrated coastal zone management, off shore wind energy production, maritime safety, hinterland connections, training of maritime professionals, added value logistics around ports etc.

This identification of the programme's maritime dimension and the definition of maritime activities does not mean that projects addressing other – non-maritime – issues are excluded from the programme. Such projects without a maritime dimension will also be supported within the scope of the programmes priorities.

3.3.4 Cross-border added value and relation to transnational programmes

The Programme will address issues that need intervention at a cross-border level. Cross-border added value is created when the programme makes it possible to seize opportunities or produce benefits when a solely national approach would not allow this.

It excludes actions which could be carried out independently on each side of the border with the same result. Cross-border added value also exists when the Programme contributes to minimising the distortions that the border introduces between the actors. In this respect both the land borders and the maritime borders are considered.

The programme area (partly) overlaps with the Interreg IV B programmes North West Europe and North Sea Region and Atlantic Area (transnational cooperation) and it is therefore important to differentiate this cross-border programme from these.

Given the thematic framework of the ERDF regulation for both cross-border and transnational cooperation, there is inevitably a substantial thematic overlap between the programmes, although each programme will of course place different accents.

Differentiation will mainly be achieved via operational aspects of the programme, like requirements for composition of partnership, eligibility of activities and of actors. These operational aspects will be elaborated in more detail in a later part of this operational programme. Finally it is important to streamline communications between the managing bodies of the different programmes, to ensure mutual added value in a pragmatic and flexible way.

3.4 Objectives

Based on the development vision and strategic orientations, the following overall objective can be defined for the programme:

Overall objective

To develop the competitiveness and sustainable growth potential of the programme area's maritime and non maritime assets through building and advancing partnerships of cross border cooperation.

The overall objective can be further developed into a number of specific objectives for this Operational Programme. These objectives specify more precisely the themes the programme will target and the way it aims to influence the partnerships in the whole area.

Specific objectives

- 1. To develop a competitive area in terms of sustainable economic activities, innovation and human capital and to strengthen its accessibility by enhancing the complementarities and developing the potential of the area.*
- 2. To promote and enhance the sustainable development of a safe and healthy environment.*
- 3. To improve the quality of life of the area's inhabitants and to encourage their sense of community.*
- 4. To embrace the diversity of the cross-border area characterised by coastal, urban and rural territories whilst emphasising the maritime dimension as the key unifying element of this area.*
- 5. To further build on the existing experiences and best practices of cross border cooperation and to support the building of new partnerships across the whole programme area.*

3.5 Identification of programme priorities

In order to reach these objectives, the Programme will work with three priorities focusing on competitiveness, environment and good living conditions, as follows:

- **Supporting an economically competitive, attractive and accessible area;**
- **Promoting and enhancing a safe and healthy environment;**
- **Improving the of quality of life.**

The choice of these priorities derives from the thematic orientation defined for cross-border cooperation in the ERDF Regulation (article 6.3.a), the Community Strategic Guidelines and the SWOT analysis. They are also in line with the chosen strategic vision.

In order to fully take advantage of this Programme, the priorities address topics where the common interest is greatest, expected outputs is highest and where the chance of reaching the strategic vision is most likely.

The cross-border maritime aspect is taken into account by targeting an indicative percentage of the budget of each priority axis to projects focusing on maritime issues.

This maritime dimension is further elaborated through concrete examples of cooperation activities that can be supported under each priority in Chapter 4.

The monitoring system of the programme will enable the programme bodies to achieve these targets over the whole programming period. If needed interventions can be initiated by the programme bodies, for instance by making use of specific/targeted calls for proposals in order to generate projects dealing with (certain) cross-border maritime issues, when progress towards the targets is lacking.

The thematic priorities of this programme will be further addressed in the next chapter, where the Technical Assistance Priority is also described.

The following table presents the ERDF financial allocation to the respective Priority axes.

Priority	Budget share
<i>Priority 1 : Supporting an economically competitive, attractive and accessible area</i>	<i>35,33%</i>
<i>Priority 2 : Promoting and enhancing a safe and healthy environment</i>	<i>24,43%</i>
<i>Priority 3: Improving quality of life</i>	<i>26,83%</i>
<i>Priority 4 : Common priority with France (Channel) - England programme</i>	<i>7,56%</i>
<i>Priority 5 : Technical Assistance</i>	<i>5,85%</i>
<i>Total</i>	<i>100%</i>

The financial allocation transferred from the France (Channel) – England OP to the current OP has been taken on board when calculating the budget share at priority level. This is justified by the fact that the financing and management of the projects selected under this common priority fall to the programme bodies of this OP.

3.6 Types of cooperation projects

In order to achieve the objectives of this programme, different forms of cooperation projects will be supported. This will provide the necessary flexibility to address the different needs and challenges of the target groups in the programme area. It's worth reminding that whatever the type of projects, the basic requirement to have necessarily at least one partner from the UK and one partner from one of the three countries of the continental eligible area applies (as specified in paragraph 3.3.3). First of all, regular *Cross-border cooperation projects* will be supported that bring together actors from different countries in the programme zone, working together to develop or solve a shared cross-border issue in line with the objectives of the programme priorities described in the next chapter. These projects shall be initiated by the

involved actors themselves (bottom-up approach). A minimum of two partners coming from two countries is required for such projects.

A specific form of cooperation that will be supported is the development of *Framework projects*. In such projects a partnership develops a joint framework for cross-border cooperation, to be implemented through several sub-projects. These sub-projects should normally be small-scale activities, to be developed by the relevant (local) actors. A Framework project could for instance be used to support the implementation of 'micro-projects' by actors like associations, small businesses and other (local) entities who don't have the institutional capacities for managing a "regular" cross-border cooperation project.

In addition to this, *Strategic cross-border cooperation projects* can be identified by the programme bodies. These should be projects that are essential for achieving the programmes objectives and be relevant for the programme area as a whole. Such projects could be developed in different ways. The programme Monitoring Committee may identify themes for these projects, and invite partnerships to come forward in open calls for proposals. The national and regional level actors represented in the programme bodies may also choose to take an active role in the development of these projects or invite selected actors to participate in such projects.

The exact specifications of these types of projects (e.g. regarding budget, partnership, application process and other requirements) will be determined in the programme manual and can evolve during the programme period. For all projects the basic requirement applies to have at least one partner from the UK and one partner from the European main land side (as specified in paragraph 3.3.3).

The programme bodies will inform the potential applicants about the criteria used to assess each of three types of cooperation projects. Further information will be provided in the Programme Manual, notably concerning the prerequisite for applying as a Lead partner in the Framework projects.

3.7 Findings of the ex-ante evaluation

The development of this Operational Programme has been subject to ongoing evaluation by an ex-ante evaluation team. The evaluators have assisted the programming process by formulating content-related recommendations and suggesting specific text modifications in the context of the elaboration and revision of the successive draft versions of the OP.

The interaction process between the programme elaboration and the ex-ante evaluation has been fruitful. Most of the recommendations and text modifications formulated by the ex-ante evaluators have been considered in the OP. A summary of the main findings of the ex-ante evaluators is included in **Annex E** of this programme document.

3.7.1 Integration of SEA results in the programme strategy

The Strategic Environmental Analysis (SEA) is designed to ensure that the '*likely significant effects on the environment of implementing this INTERREG IV A Programme, and of reasonable alternatives, are identified, described, evaluated and taken into account before the programme is adopted.*' The SEA Directive also requires that '*Member States shall monitor the significant environmental effects of the implement of the plans and programmes, in order, inter alia, to identify at an early stage unforeseen adverse effects....*'

The key conclusions drawn by the authors of this report are:

- The operational programme takes an integrated approach to the environment
- To judge the real environmental impact of the programme, more needs to be known about the actual implementation. The planned activities are however mostly immaterial and therefore should have limited environmental effects
- The key environmental challenges for the programme area are all taken on board in the programme priorities (especially priority 2). These actions are expected to deliver a positive environmental effect.
- It is advised to take the environmental aspect into account when designing selection criteria for projects

A full summary of the main findings of the SEA is included in **Annex E**.

The authority responsible for the programme will take the conclusions into account, notably during the selection process of cross-border projects and at the Monitoring Committee's meetings where the programme's issues and strategic orientations are debated, as well as within the framework of the current evaluation tool implemented for the whole programming period.

Chapter 4. Priority Axes

4.1 Introduction

As indicated in the previous chapter, this cross-border cooperation programme follows three thematic priority axes, selected for their specific contribution to the achievement of the EU's main policy objectives, notably the Lisbon and Gothenburg objectives, and considering the threats and opportunities identified for the area. In addition the programme supports a common priority that is shared with the France (Channel) - England Cross-Border Cooperation Programme. Next to these thematic priorities a final priority, technical assistance (T.A.), is dedicated to the management and implementation of the programme.

This chapter describes each priority in more detail, presenting the purpose, operational objectives and target groups. It also provides for each priority an indicative list of cooperation activities that can be supported so as to give a clear guidance to project promoters.

4.2 General issues

Before providing more detail on the individual priorities, a few general principles are described, that apply to the programme as a whole.

4.2.1 Integrated approach

The three thematic priorities provide a basic framework grouping the main themes and issues that will be supported by this programme. It is important to note that they are not intended as restrictive categories, in the sense that a project in one priority can not address issues grouped under another priority. On the contrary, the priorities are closely interrelated, and projects are likely to address issues covered by different priorities. The programme will encourage projects and activities of an integrated nature that are beneficial in terms of economic, environmental and social aspects (the business-geography-people triangle as mentioned earlier).

4.2.2 Cross-cutting principles

All projects supported by this programme have to be in line with the cross-cutting principles of sustainable development and equal opportunities.

The principle of sustainable development is defined in the EU Strategy for Sustainable Development (see also section 1.2.4). All activities supported by this programme will have to demonstrate they do not influence in a negative way the opportunities of future generations to address their needs. The issues of sustainable development, social and territorial cohesion, environmental protection and cultural diversity are interrelated and constitute the important elements of the sustainable development of the programme area. Projects are expected to incorporate this notion when planning and implementing their activities.

The project selection mechanism will ensure that any negative environmental impacts are prevented, or, if there is no alternative, that they are reduced or compensated. In particular, the quality of the air, water, soil, nature and biodiversity will not be damaged by the implementation of this Programme. CO₂ neutrality will be a criterion in the project analysis. Furthermore, the project selection mechanisms, monitoring, evaluation and diagnostics will examine the real environmental impacts of the Programme.

The principle of *equal opportunities* is another cross-cutting issue for the programme. Projects will have to demonstrate that they act in line with the principle of non discrimination. Activities should be implemented that strengthen or at least maintain the position of particular groups with a weaker position in society.

In operational terms this means that all applications for funding will be subject to an evaluation of their contribution to sustainable development and to the promotion of equal opportunities. These elements will be actively followed as part of the monitoring activities at both programme and project level.

4.2.3 Beneficiaries

The final beneficiaries eligible for funding from this operational programme can be either public bodies, public equivalent bodies or private sector actors relevant for the priority axis of the programme. The specific target groups vary per priority and are listed in the following paragraphs describing the different priority axes.

Regarding the involvement of private sector actors the Managing Authority, assisted by the Joint Technical Secretariat, will take the necessary actions to guarantee that their participation is in line with the rules regarding state aid and other relevant legislation. This means the adherence to these rules will be closely monitored during the application and implementation stages of projects.

4.3 Priority 1: Creating an economically competitive, attractive and accessible area

4.3.1 General purpose

This priority focuses on enhancing the overall economic development and competitiveness of the programme area. It will do this by giving support to cooperation in relation to economic activities enhancing the competitiveness of the programme area and to improve economic development across different parts of the programme area. This includes cooperation dealing with aspects of the maritime economy, like port development, cooperation in logistical services etc.

Throughout the programme area the need is identified to strengthen the entrepreneurial spirit, as an important contribution to improve economic performance. The programme will support this while promoting business development initiatives at the cross border level that contributes to the economic performance of the area. An equally important element of the regions economy is the capacity to bring forward innovation and support infrastructures for research and cooperation between universities, knowledge institutes and enterprises. These aspects of the regional economy are important building-blocks for the development of the knowledge economy in the area and they will benefit significantly from cross-border cooperation.

A sector of the economy that has particular importance for the programme area is tourism. The programme will support cross-border activities aimed to strengthen this sector by identifying new opportunities to attract and retain visitors and improve products and services while guaranteeing the sustainability of tourism. The coastal and maritime locations of many parts of the area are an asset of particular importance to be capitalised through cross-border cooperation.

The level of education and skills is a cornerstone of the structural economic development of the region. This relates to skills and knowledge both in higher knowledge segments and in the professions, where often a mismatch between available and required skills is noted. Many people are looking for employment, while at the same time many employers are looking for staff. This programme aims to address these issues by supporting development of employment and human capital in the cross-border context.

Finally this priority focuses on the issues related to the accessibility of the programme area. The area faces challenges in terms of congestion, transport related pressure on infrastructure, environment and communities on the one hand and poor connections to the main infrastructure in parts of the area on the other hand. With the (maritime) logistical sector being an important sector of the regions economy, it is even more urgent to tackle these issues.

4.3.2 Operational objectives

Based on the findings of the analysis (Chapter 2) and the strategic objectives of this programme (Chapter 3), the following set of operational objectives can be defined for the implementation of this priority.

This priority will support cross-border cooperation projects that contribute to:

1. *Support the development of joint economic activities, including the maritime economy*

2. *Promote and encourage entrepreneurship and the development of new cross-border commercial initiatives*
3. *Support innovation, research and cooperation between universities, knowledge institutes and businesses*
4. *Support the tourism and promote sustainable tourism*
5. *Promote entrepreneurship and facilitate the development of employment and human capital*
6. *Improve the accessibility of the programme area by optimising the use and mutualisation of existing infrastructures as a priority.*

4.3.3 Beneficiaries and target groups

The following list presents an indication of the target groups that are encouraged to be involved in cross-border cooperation projects in this priority:

- National, regional and local public authorities
- Ports and authorities responsible for port development
- Universities, knowledge and research institutes and education institutes
- Regional development agencies
- Business support actors, incubation facilities, innovation centres
- Organisations representing the business community, especially related to SMEs
- Operators and authorities responsible for gateways, transport hubs and logistical systems
- Other actors relevant to the sustainable economic development of the area

4.3.4 Indication of supported activities/ topics

Based on the analysis and the operational objectives defined above, the following overview provides an insight into some **possible examples** of cross-border cooperation, grouped by the operational objectives of this priority.

The examples are meant to illustrate what kind of activities the programme will support. This is not an exclusive list, nor does a reference on the list imply immediate approval of an application covering a listed activity.

Priority 1: Examples of cooperation activities that can be supported

Support the development of joint economic activities, including the maritime economy

- *Cooperation in support of the economic diversification of economic sectors in decline (industry, agriculture, fisheries...).*
- *Organising cross-border trade fairs focussing on economic sectors of mutual interest*
- *Joint development of sustainable management tools for business parks*
- *Cross-border co-operation between ports, harbours and logistic centres, for instance to improve management of transport flows or to facilitate inter modal transport*
- *Improve resource efficiency of businesses*
- *Joint development of facilities linked to port infrastructures, including the ex-ante evaluation of the environmental effects and of the possible alternatives*

Support innovation, research and cooperation between universities, knowledge institutes and businesses

- *Development of cross-border business networks and platforms involving enterprises, education and training centres*
- *Cross-border co-operation in innovation systems, cluster development and cluster networking*
- *Cross-border cooperation to support the development of eco-innovations.*
- *Cooperation between poles of excellence and expertise in the cross-border area*
- *Support to bringing research ideas to market*

- *Pilot projects testing eco-innovations*
- *Support to cross-border research cooperation, making use of complementary expertise*
- *Promote innovation and technology transfer in a cross-border context*

Support the tourism and promote sustainable tourism

- *Joint development of tourism products and promotion of cultural and historic sites*
- *Cooperation to improve the quality of tourism services and develop a higher professional level*
- *Cooperation to increase the capacity of tourism businesses to adapt to best practice in implementation*
- *Redevelopment of declining trading ports into a network of marinas*
- *Joint investigation of new forms of tourism and development of innovative tourism products*
- *Investing in joint facilities for coastal and marine/nautical tourism (e.g. a network of marinas)*

Promote entrepreneurship and facilitate the development of employment and human capital

- *Cross-border co-operation aiming at involving SMEs in the knowledge based economy*
- *Cross-border co-operation to promote entrepreneurship*
- *Development of cross-border networks of SMEs, e.g. for joint exportation actions*
- *Cross-border co-operation in innovative methods for job creation*
- *Joint development of innovative methods for labour market inclusion of vulnerable groups*
- *Joint approaches to deal with maritime sector recruitment problems and opportunities*
- *Provide cross border training and mentoring programmes to enhance management and entrepreneurial skills*
- *Development of joint educational programmes to provide skilled staff matching the needs identified by businesses*

Improve the accessibility of the programme area by optimising the use and mutualisation of existing infrastructures as a priority.

- *Promote development of sustainable transport and logistics services*
- *Joint development and promotion of e-services and cross-border ICT networks*
- *Joint actions to increase the access and use of ICTs in the most remote areas and in SMEs*
- *Develop and implement standards and communication tools for combined use of seaways by commercial and recreational traffic*
- *Joint assessment and prioritisation of major infrastructure investments and infrastructure corridors*
- *Optimise the use of inland waterways infrastructure in cross-border transport*
- *Studies and pilot actions concerning the development of multimodality within the whole area*
- *Cross-border cooperation to promote digital connectivity and home working*

4.4 Priority 2: Promoting and enhancing a safe and healthy environment

4.4.1 General purpose

This priority focuses on protecting and improving the environment in the programme area and puts a special focus on the Channel and the North Sea. In line with the Lisbon and Gothenburg strategies the priority supports a sustainable environmental development of the programme area, making it attractive for both inhabitants and visitors. The environment encompasses both the natural and physical dimensions.

The environmental state of the seas is a common concern that needs specific attention. The condition of the sea affects all regions around it, and most directly the people who visit or live in the coastal zones. There is risk of conflict of interests as many actors want to use this common resource for different purposes, such as waste disposal, fishing, tourism and transportation.

It is crucial to jointly work for a sustainable environmental development of the whole programme area, making it attractive for inhabitants and visitors. This means, on one hand, improving the situation in problem areas, for example by assessments and investments to reduce the impact of growing traffic, eutrophication, hazardous substances, and pollution and taking care of the basic infrastructure for waste management and waste water treatment. On the other hand, it also means preventing future problems, for example through systems for environmental risk prevention and by raising environmental awareness and responsibility. Adoption of best practices in terms of environmental co-operation and know-how could in this way emerge as a future competitive edge for the programme area.

Considering the characteristics of the area, the EU's Marine Strategy Directive will be particularly taken into account, which has the objective of making marine waters environmentally "healthy" by 2020, notably by

creating marine regions and sub-regions which are managed by EU Member States in an integrated manner and based on environmental criteria

All actions under this priority are foreseen to have both direct and indirect impacts on the state of the environment. The aim is to support sustainable development and to improve the condition of the natural and physical environment.

4.4.2 Operational objectives

Based on the findings of the analysis (Chapter 2) and the strategic objectives of this programme (Chapter 3), the following set of operational objectives can be defined for the implementation of this priority.

This priority will support cross-border cooperation projects that contribute to:

1. *Promote and improve the development of activities linked to integrated management of coastal zones, maritime resource and estuaries*
2. *Develop activities to prevent and cope with natural, technological and human risks and to guarantee the quality of the environment*
3. *Stimulate energy efficiency and development of renewable energies*
4. *Promote, improve and manage nature, landscapes, natural heritage, and relations between urban, peri-urban and rural areas*
5. *Improve and enhance good practices in water, waste and resources management, and sustainable use of resources*

4.4.3 Beneficiaries and target groups

The following list presents an indication of the target groups that are encouraged to be involved in cross-border cooperation projects in this priority :

- research institutions
- universities and university colleges
- development agencies
- environmental agencies
- maritime agencies
- energy agencies
- economic actors
- coastal agencies
- logistic and transport actors
- national, regional and local authorities
- Other actors relevant to promoting and enhancing a safe and healthy environment

4.4.4 Indication of supported activities/ topics

Based on the analysis above and the operational objectives defined in this chapter, the following overview provides an insight into some possible examples of cross-border cooperation, grouped by the operational objectives of this priority.

The examples are meant to illustrate what kind of activities the programme will support. This is not an exclusive list, nor does a reference on the list imply immediate approval of an application covering a listed activity.

Priority 2: Examples of cooperation activities that can be supported

Promote and improve the development of activities linked to integrated management of coastal zones, maritime resource and estuaries

- *Cross-border cooperation to develop methods to integrate coastal defence with tourism and nature*
- *Cross-border cooperation in the field of the management of coastal zones and estuaries and the development of the relevant knowledge centres*
- *Joint action concerning the created marine regions and sub-regions: evaluation of the state of the environment and the principal pressures, types of action plans to be developed, installation of monitoring tools, raising public awareness, etc*

Develop activities to prevent and cope with natural, technological and human risks and to guarantee the quality of the environment

- *Joint actions to improve maritime safety and safety in ports and port development areas*
- *Joint awareness raising activities/campaigns regarding risk hazards*
- *Cross-border co-operation in risk prevention, including the development of relevant knowledge centres*
- *Implementation of joint plans and strategies linked to environmental risk management.*
- *Cross-border cooperation, focusing on the social, economic and environmental effects of the climate change, the coordination of climate plans and policies, and the adaptation of the existing socio-economic and environmental structures*

Stimulate energy efficiency and develop renewable energies

- *Joint action in order to stimulate the use of renewable energy resources, including marine resources, and the development of the relevant technologies as well as applications of these technologies in relevant sectors, like logistics and construction*
- *Cross-border initiatives in research and development to improve energy efficiency, including renewable sources.*

Promote, improve and manage landscapes, natural heritage, and relations between urban, peri-urban and rural areas

- *Cross-border co-operation in the management of valuable landscapes and natural heritage*
- *Joint development and exchange of environmental know-how and expertise, including education, training and research*
- *Cross-border co-operation aiming at reducing the environmental load and risks related to growing traffic, but also to eutrophication, hazardous substances and pollution*
- *Cross-border co-operation addressing urban, peri-urban and rural environmental aspects (air, noise, congestion, regeneration, urban sprawl)*

Improve and enhance good practice in water, waste and resources management, and sustainable use of resources

- *Cross-border cooperation related to improvement of qualitative and quantitative water management tools*
- *Joint actions in order to prevent and combat pollution of air, water and soil*
- *Joint identification and assessment of environmental impacts of legislation, strategies and policies, for example the implementation of the Water Framework Directive and Natura 2000*
- *Joint actions in order to reduce and manage environmental impact of waste by integrated waste management (incl. recycling and reduction), including port waste as well as the coordinated monitoring of waste transportation.*
- *Cross-border co-operation in physical and environmental planning (e.g. joint actions in urban environmental initiatives)*
- *Cross-border cooperation as to soil management and land use planning*
- *Promote ecological production and environmental technologies*

4.5 Priority 3 : Improving quality of life

4.5.1 General purpose

The challenges of globalisation clearly need to be counterbalanced with a sense of identity and local belonging. This priority focuses on creating a better living environment for the programme area's inhabitants as an important building block for the region's competitiveness and attractiveness. Developing this aspect therefore contributes to the achievement of the Lisbon and Gothenburg strategies within the programme area. Thus, it is important to address people's health, quality of life and security as well as to set up a proactive co-operation aiming at strengthening cultural exchange and the programme area's togetherness. Improving the quality of life for the citizens is an important aspect of sustainable development, especially in coastal and rural areas where economic activities and job opportunities are often much more limited or too seasonal.

This priority deals with creating a region with equal opportunities for different groups of the population. It also supports their active participation in society. The Lisbon objective of building a more inclusive European

Union is one element in achieving the strategic goal of sustainable economic growth, more and better jobs and greater social cohesion.

This programme focuses on security in the broad sense of the word. Social security encompasses health and social services as well as crime. Quality of life also encompasses people-to-people cooperation as well as an increased cultural activity, focusing on both the creative forces within the society and the promotion and enhancement of the joint heritage.

Through this priority the Programme also wishes to strengthen existing cultural and historical ties within the programme area. As a result the image and identity of the programme area should deepen all the more so since joint initiatives are taken by the regional and local media in the four countries.

4.5.2 Operational objectives

Based on the findings of the analysis (Chapter 2) and the strategic objectives of this programme (Chapter 3), the following set of operational objectives can be defined for the implementation of this priority.

This priority will support cross-border cooperation projects that contribute to:

- *Promote and allow for social inclusion and well-being of different groups in society*
- *Improve the quality of services to the population, including mobility and health care facilities.*
- *Support the development of cooperation in education, training and the assistance to cross-border projects, in order to guarantee the possibility of life-long learning, to set up sustainable cultural partnerships, as well as the foreign language learning*
- *Promote, enhance and conserve the common heritage and cultural partnerships, including development of creativity and design and joint cooperation between the media*
- *Develop active leisure activities, including the promotion and enhancement of infrastructures and social tourism*

4.5.3 Beneficiaries and target groups

The following list presents an indication of the target groups that are encouraged to be involved in cross-border cooperation projects in this priority:

- national, regional and local authorities
- educational and training institutions
- media
- recreational organisations
- Economic actors
- Actors in health care
- Cultural actors
- Community actors and social organisations
- Mobility actors
- Food agencies
- Research centres
- Creative industries
- Development agencies
- Other actors relevant to improving quality of life

4.5.4 Indication of supported activities/ topics

Based on the analysis above and the operational objectives defined in this chapter, the following overview provides an insight into some possible examples of cross-border cooperation, grouped by the operational objectives of this priority.

The examples are meant to illustrate what kind of activities the programme will support. This is not an exclusive list, nor does a reference on the list imply immediate approval of an application covering a listed activity.

Priority 3: Examples of cooperation activities that can be supported

Promote and allow for social inclusion and well-being of different groups in society

- *Cross-border cooperation to facilitate active ageing and independent living*
- *Cross-border co-operation in innovative methods in health and care sectors, and in food safety*
- *Cross-border co-operation in developing methodologies, related to health prevention and lifestyle*
- *Cross-border co-operation in innovative methods for an inclusive society, including social entrepreneurship and integration of immigrants*
- *Cross-border co-operation in urban specific concerns, e.g. integration of minorities, drug prevention, organized crime and social inclusion*
- *Cross-border co-operation in rural specific concerns like mobility, isolation, marginalisation of services.*

Improve the quality of services to the population, including mobility and health care facilities.

- *Cross-border co-operation to increase active participation in society, involving new technologies*
- *Cross-border cooperation in order to set up an exchange of practices, related to e-government and e-inclusion*
- *Promote cross-border exchange of experiences between municipalities concerning for example social services*
- *Joint actions to encourage young people to stay in coastal and rural areas*

Support the development of cooperation in education, training and the assistance to cross-border projects, in order to guarantee the possibility of life-long learning, to set up sustainable cultural partnerships, as well as the foreign language learning

- *Joint actions to develop lifelong learning techniques and encourage participation of the public in these*
- *Supporting cross-border networks and exchange in education and between public institutions, e.g. via exchange of staff or students*
- *Cross border programmes for education and training of people currently not in education, employment or training*
- *Coordinated actions to deal with developments in education, for instance drop-outs.*

Promote, enhance and conserve the common heritage and cultural partnerships, including development of creativity and design and joint cooperation between the media

- *Joint cultural co-operation aiming at strengthening cultural exchange and the area's togetherness*
- *Cross-border co-operation in the fields of traditional culture and crafts, and the promotion of local food traditions*
- *Cross-border cooperation in order to stimulate the use of new technologies in the field of cultural management and cultural product development*
- *Cross-border cooperation in order to set up creative clusters and design networks*
- *Joint actions for cultural interaction and exploration of a common European identity, and its impact on local identity*
- *Cross-border cooperation between the regional and local media in order to promote the adherence to concerned working-area*

Develop active leisure activities, including the promotion and enhancement of infrastructures and social tourism

- *Exchange experiences and build networks to promote diversity of leisure activities to meet the needs of both genders and different age groups*
- *Cross-border cooperation in order to improve the economic, social and health impact of the use of sports and the valorisation of sports infrastructure*

4.6 Priority 4: Common Priority with the France (Channel) - England programme

4.6.1 General purpose

Due to the introduction of a new rule concerning the eligible maritime areas under the programming period 2007-2013, the eligible maritime area between France, England, Netherlands and Flanders covers a wide zone from the South of North Sea to the South of Channel.

In order to take into account the diversity of this whole maritime area and to make sure that the diverse issues, remain dealt with at the cross-border level the four Member States decided to split this large area into two sections as part of two different Operational Programmes (OP's) as described in section 1.4. However, it was agreed to set up a common priority relating to both this OP and to the Channel OP between France and England.

Some key principles for this priority are:

- The cross-border cooperation projects proposed within the framework of the common priority are projects of which the **themes must be strategic for the whole maritime area** in order to justify the coverage of an enlarged geographical area;
- *These cooperation projects will be characterised in a specific or cumulative way by:*
 1. the **development of issues of common interest**, and in particular those which have a cross-border maritime dimension;
 2. the **capitalisation of good practices** implemented in each OP;
 3. the **development of specific strategic projects** upon the suggestion of the bodies of the two Ops

*The **partners' different levels of experience** must be taken into account: certain partners of the France (Channel)-England OP do not have any experience of cross-border cooperation but may nevertheless want to participate in a project across the whole geographical area within the framework of the common priority, particularly if they have been involved in the issues at the transnational level and on condition that the content of their project falls within the cross-border logic.*

In this case, the extent to which this enlarged cooperation is justified should be evaluated

Actions that have a real cross-border dimension must be given priority and must be distinguished from actions which are carried out within the framework of transnational or inter-regional cooperation;

- *There are several OPs within the framework of transnational cooperation which cover a part of or the entire eligible territories (in particular, the transnational programmes covering North West Europe and the North Sea). It is essential to avoid the overlapping of these with regard to the themes where the transnational approach seems to be the most pertinent.*
- *This is also the case for the INTERREG IVC inter-regional cooperation programme, insofar as the pooling of good practices concerning regional development tools is one of the operational objectives of the enlarged geographical area;*

Cross-border cooperation projects proposed within the framework of the common priority must therefore demonstrate their "distinction" from transnational and inter-regional cooperation projects. The cross-border dimension must remain the priority, and the projects must give priority to economic, social and cultural development with the objective of achieving concrete and visible results in the concerned territories.

Participation of actors from both eligible areas; *considering the geographical scope of this programme, it is essential to make sure that actors from both programmes are involved to justify its co-financing under this common priority.* In practical terms this means that each project should have at least one partner from the UK, one partner from the French area of the France (Channel) - England programme

and one partner from the mainland area of the 2 seas programme (either the French, Flemish or Dutch part).

4.6.2 Operational objectives

This priority will support cross-border cooperation projects that contribute to :

1. *Promote cross-border cooperation issues and implement joint actions on issues of common interest throughout the whole area, and in particular those with a maritime dimension ;*
2. *Develop the capitalisation and sharing of good practice, and favour networking activities between the projects implemented under each OP and this based on the strategic themes for the geographical area ;*
3. *Develop specific strategic projects considered as priorities upon the proposal of the authorities responsible for both OPs.*

4.6.3 Target groups and partnership

The target groups for potential beneficiaries are all those identified under each thematic priority of the two operational programmes.

As this priority is shared by two programmes, projects applying for support from this priority are required to have a partnership covering both programme areas. In practical terms this means that each project should have at least one partner from the UK, one partner from the French area of the France (Channel) - England programme and one partner from the mainland area of the North programme (either the French, Flemish or Dutch part).

4.6.4 Indication of supported activities

The main focus of this common priority rests on the implementation of the following activities between both eligible areas:

Priority 4: Examples of cooperation activities that can be supported to :

Promote cross-border cooperation issues and implement joint actions on issues of common interest throughout the whole area, and in particular those with a maritime dimension ;

- *Development of joint tools and information systems for the benefit of the territories of the two OPs;*
- *Action plans, monitoring programmes, public awareness raising campaigns, etc. concerning issues of common interest such as the integrated management of coastal and marine zones, the prevention of natural risks, the optimisation of maritime transport flows, etc.*

Develop the capitalisation and sharing of good practice, and favour networking activities between the projects implemented under each OP and this based on the strategic themes for the geographical area ;

- *Share experiences based notably on the results of cross-border projects for the previous period;*
- *Networking activities which enlarge the project partnerships already implemented under one of OPs, or which enable applicants who have independently developed within each of the programmes projects based on identical or similar themes to collaborate in order to exchange and share the obtained results for the benefit of the whole area.*
- *Share good practice at the level of local economic, social and cultural development policies in terms of governance, method, tools, etc.*

To develop specific strategic projects which are considered to be priorities upon the proposal of the bodies responsible for both Ops

- *Organisation of seminars dedicated to the themes which the bodies responsible for both OPs have identified as strategic, allowing key operators to meet and to work together on projects which respond to the concerns of the entire area. To be decided by the bodies responsible for both OPs.*

All topics identified under each thematic priority of the two operational programmes are eligible. The monitoring committee could select if necessary and in close articulation with the programme bodies of the OP France (Channel)-England a few themes to be promoted in priority under this common priority (specific strategic projects).

Further and detailed information related to the implementing procedures of projects cofinanced under this priority (such as the process of instruction, selection, follow-up, 2nd level audit-check, some specific actions concerning the communication or even evaluation, etc) will be included in the Programme manual.

4.7 Priority 5 : Technical Assistance

4.7.1 General purpose

This priority addresses activities necessary for the effective and smooth management and implementation of the programme. This essentially means support to a competent and efficient day-to-day implementation structure that manages the flow of information between the bodies involved, prepares the decision making, and oversees the information collected and its use in the programme management. Technical assistance will basically support the implementation of tasks by the Managing Authority and the Joint Technical Secretariat (JTS), as well as the decentralised support structure of the programme. **4.7.2 Operational objectives**

The operational objectives of this priority are:

- 1. To ensure the smooth and effective management and implementation of the programme*
- 2. To provide information and assistance to applicants and projects*
- 3. To monitor and disseminate the results of the programme*

4.7.3 Supported activities

The activities supported by this priority include:

- *Project generation and advise to applicants;*
- *Evaluation of applications, preparation of approval decisions and contracting of approved projects,*
- *Monitoring and control of projects and the programme as a whole*
- *Capitalisation and dissemination of the results of the programme,*
- *Implementing the financial management of the programme*
- *Preparation and support to the Monitoring Committee*
- *Organisation of meetings and events for applicants, partners, auditors, experts, Member States and other to inform and exchange about aspects of the programme,*
- *Studies and evaluations regarding the programme*
- *Reporting to the Member States and the European Commission.*

The implementation of these tasks will involve expenditure in relation to staff, workplaces, office costs, external expertise, equipment, ICT, print and translations.

4.8 Indicators

To measure the achievement of the programmes objectives, a set of indicators has been developed that will be monitored during the lifespan of the programme.

For each priority of the programme indicators have been selected to cover the operational objectives for the respective priority as described in this chapter. In addition some overall indicators are included covering the programme objectives as a whole, including the cross-cutting objectives of the OP. The full set of indicators is presented in Annex E of this document.

Chapter 5. Organisation and implementation

This chapter presents the different structures within the framework of this programme. It also describes the relations which exist between them under the many mechanisms necessary for the implementation of the programme.

More detailed elements will appear in the Rules of procedure of the Monitoring Committee of the programme, in the description of the management systems and control in accordance with article 71 § 1 of the regulation n°1083/2006 and in several handbooks (for example manual of, handbook implementation of audit, handbook for submission to the stakeholders) prepared by the Managing Authority with the support of the joint Technical Secretariat and approved by the Monitoring Committee.

5.1 INTERREG IIIA to INTERREG IVA: towards a reinforcement of the system of implementation

The system of implementation of 2 seas Operational Programme INTERREG IV A – was elaborated in conformity with ERDF Regulations and is based on the capitalized experience by the Nord-Pas-de-Calais Region in the various european territorial cooperation programmes.

Attributions of the organizations of management of the programme are clarified in EFRD applicable to the crossborder cooperation. Article 14 of Regulation (EC) 1080/2006 lays out in particular that the Management Authority is single, that the Certifying Authority is single, that the Audit Authority is single and that the latter is in the Member State of the Managing Authority.

5.2 The authorities responsible for the 2 seas INTERREG IV A programme

5.2.1 The role of the Nord-Pas-de Calais Region as the single Managing Authority of the programme

a) Managing Authority's missions

As well as tasks delegated to the Managing Authority based on regulations n° 1083/2006 (article 60), the Managing Authority, will carry out its mandate within the framework of a philosophy centred on four main principles :

- respect for territorial and institutional characteristics, taking into account the complexity of the border concerned, its socio-economic heterogeneity and the number of institutional bodies ;
- partnership, entailing a mutually agreed working method ;
- efficiency : implementing efficiency, especially in order to reduce delays in administrative processing and dossier payments ;
- capitalising on experience gained by the Region through the INTERREG III programmes (A, B and C strands).

b) Address

Région Nord-Pas de Calais
Hôtel de Région - Centre Rihour
F 59555 LILLE Cedex

5.2.2 Certifying Authority

The Certifying Authority of the Programme is the **Caisse des Dépôts et Consignations**, public financial french institution. It is the single payment organization for the entire programme whatever the nationality of the lead partner.

a) Certifying Authority's Missions

According to its mission as laid out in the regulation n° 1083/2006 (article 61), 1080/2006 and 1828/2006, and acting for the Managing Authority, the Certifying Authority shall be responsible for:

- (a) drawing up and submitting to the Commission certified statements of expenditure and applications for payment;
- (b) certifying that:
 - (i) the statement of expenditure is accurate, results from reliable accounting systems and is based on verifiable supporting documents;
 - (ii) the expenditure declared complies with applicable Community and national rules and has been incurred in respect of operations selected for funding in accordance with the criteria applicable to the programme and complying with Community and national rules;
- (c) ensuring for the purposes of certification that it has received adequate information from the managing authority on the procedures and verifications carried out in relation to expenditure included in statements of expenditure;
- (d) taking account for certification purposes of the results of all audits carried out by or under the responsibility of the audit authority;
- (e) maintaining accounting records in computerised form of expenditure declared to the Commission;
- (f) keeping an account of amounts recoverable and of amounts withdrawn following cancellation of all or part of the contribution for an operation. Amounts recovered shall be repaid to the general budget of the European Union prior to the closure of the operational programme by deducting them from the next statement of expenditure ;
- (g) receiving the payments made by the Commission;
- (h) making payments to the beneficiaries.

b) Address

Caisse des Dépôts et Consignations

Département Gestion Sous Mandat
15 Quai Anatole France
75356 Paris 07 SP - France

5.2.3 Audit Authority

For a Managing Authority located in France, the **CICC – structural funds** - will assume the role of Audit Authority.

a) Audit Authority's Missions

The Audit Authority's missions based on regulations n°1083/2006 (article 62), 1080/2006 et 1828/2006, which are to be implemented in full by this authority.

In order to coordinate audit missions, the Audit Authority will be assisted by a group of independent auditors, representing each Member State of the programme and corresponding to the auditors, as defined in article 14 § 2 - regulation n° 1080/2006.

These auditors cannot be the same as the controllers responsible for carrying out the controls as defined in article 16 of regulation 1080/2006 and must belong to a functionally independent department.

The Audit Authority will have access to the audit work carried out by the Group of Auditors, who will be under the direct control of the former.

Meetings of the Group of Auditors will be presided over by the Audit Authority and the group will determine its own policies and procedures. The secretariat will be provided by the JTS.

The Audit Authority shall deliver a report that will present the evaluation results of systems set up containing a judgment over the clauses of the regulation (EC) 1083/2006 (art. 58 to 62).

b) Address

Commission Interministérielle de Coordination des Contrôles – Fonds structurels

5 Place des Vins de France
75012 PARIS - France

5.3 Technical Assistance

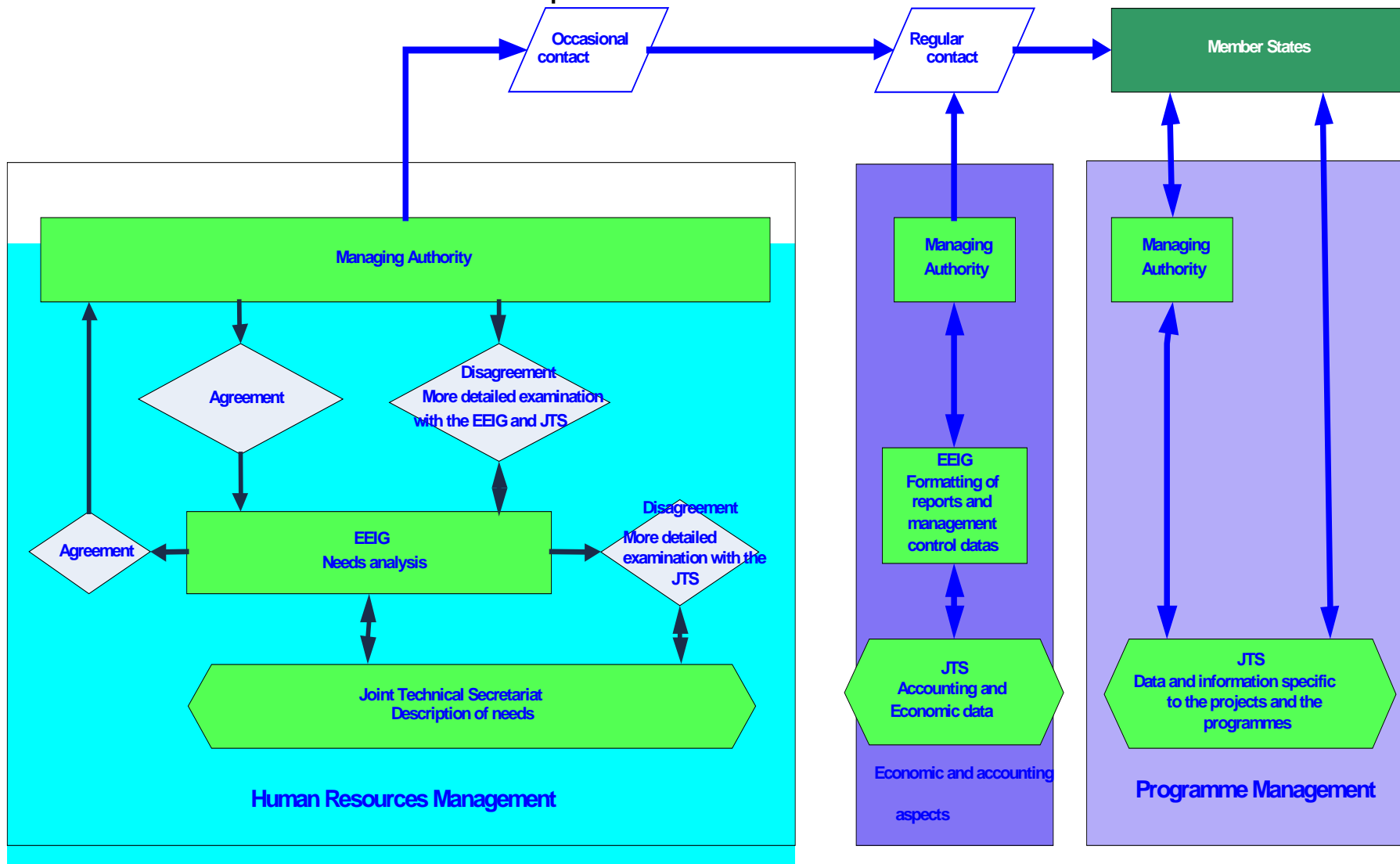
5.3.1 The Joint Technical Secretariat

The Conseil Régional Nord-Pas-de-Calais is, for the new programming period 2007-2013, the Managing Authority of the 3 territorial cooperation programmes, in the 3 strands: cross-border (the 2 seas cross-border programme – Interreg IV A); transnational (transnational ENO programme – Interreg IV B); and inter-regional (Interreg IV C).

The management of the Joint Technical Secretariats (JTS) of these 3 programmes rests upon a European Economic Interest Group (EEIG), called *GECOTTI (Groupement Européen de Coopération Transfrontalière, Transnationale et Interrégionale* - European Group of Cross-Border, Transnational and Inter-Regional Cooperation), a paragonovernmental structure under French law, created from 2004 by the Conseil Régional Nord-Pas-de-Calais and the Walloons Region.

A body legally independent from the Conseil Régional Nord-Pas-de-Calais, the EEIG-GECOTTI is the legal employer of the JTS teams.

The responsibilities of the EEIG-GECOTTI



Directly linked to the Managing Authority and falling within the remit of the EEIG, the Joint Secretariat of the 2 seas cross-border programme is, within this framework responsible for the operational programme management in areas where the Managing Authority intervenes, namely the co-ordination and facilitation of the programme, project appraisal, programme monitoring and administration.

To this end, the JTS will:

- Ensure the coordination of the whole of the territorial animation;
- Participate, together with the Managing Authority and the whole partners of the programme to the framework plan for the programme's communication and publicity, for submission to the Monitoring Committee ;
- Be responsible for providing the secretariats for the Steering and Monitoring Committees, for the Group of Auditors and for various work groups set up by the Managing Authority and the Monitoring Committee ;
- Collect submitted projects, acknowledging their receipt and ensure their instruction by associating with it the services instructors of the partners of the programme;
- Draw up, the conventions signed by the Managing Authority relating to Europe's commitment to contribute to and carry out administrative monitoring for accepted projects ;
- Collecting biannual activity reports from the final beneficiaries and carrying out a physical project progress summary (presented in a format which incorporates monitoring, implementation and impact indicators), for submission to the JTS in order to draw up the annual or final execution report ;
- Set up a data collection system to ascertain how the programme is progressing, to aid programme management operating ;
- Update the systems for computerised data management and encode the necessary elements for project monitoring ;
- Manage the monitoring of programming and consolidate the progress reported in the annual and final execution report, and will draw up the financial part of these reports, which will be passed on to the Monitoring Committee ;
- Carry out a check that all documents relating to payment of the European share are in order, before submission by the Managing Authority to the Certifying Authority ;

5.3.2 Crossborder facilitators

The success of the programme, in terms of quality and quantity, will depend upon the ability of partners to set up an effective information, facilitation and assistance system for the preparation of projects. This system will be depend upon a crossborder facilitation network in order to help project leaders throughout the eligible area.

The crossborder facilitators will be coordinated, from the operational point of view, by the Joint Technical Secretariat and will be composed of local experts.

France	<u>United Kingdom</u>	Flanders	Netherlands
2 ETP in Nord-Pas-Calais : Conseil Régional Nord Pas de Calais : Lille (Nord Department competence outside SMCO) Département du Pas de Calais : Arras Pas de Calais Competence (outside SMCO) SMCO et Département du Pas de Calais	1.5 ETP • Région Est (East Region) • Région Sud Est (South East Region) • Région Sud-Ouest (South West Region)	1 ETP Province of Western Flanders, Bruges	1 ETP Province of Zeeland : Middelburg

The missions of the crossborder facilitators, in connection with the programme partners, the Managing Authority and the JTS, are :

- Promote the development of projects throughout the whole cooperation area, in particular by implementing a network of partners from the previous programmes and of new partners and by supporting in their steps towards launching a project :
 - Supporting and advising final beneficiaries in their search for partners in the other Member States within the programme area and supporting partnership building
 - Giving basic advice to potential beneficiaries on requirements at programme and project level, such as project eligibility, including the requirement for a partner in another Member State.
- Highlighting the role of project leaders at ground level and acting as an intermediary between them and the programme's partner authorities ;
- Verify the crossborder character of projects and that projects are well implemented on the base of a link between project leaders, programme partners and the Joint Technical Secretariat ;
- Assuring the good operational for accepted projects, in conjunction with the JTS, the partner authorities via project steering Committees ;
- Promote awareness of the programme and its procedures :
 - Publicising the benefits of the programme and role of crossborder facilitators to potential beneficiaries in a specific region within the eligible area, in line with guidance issued by the Managing Authority

5.4 Decision and Programming Authorities

5.4.1 The Monitoring Committee

The programme's Monitoring Committee is set up by the programme's partner authorities.

It is set up within three months of the date of notification to the Members States of the decision to approve the operational programme. Then, it meets at least once a year, or more frequently if necessary.

The Monitoring Committee defines its Rules of procedure, in the institutional, juridical and financial framework of the programme authorities.

a) Monitoring Committee's missions

The Monitoring Committee ensures the quality and efficiency of the implementation of the programme, in compliance with the 1083/2006 (article 65), 1080/2006 and 1828/2006 Regulations :

- It considers and approves the criteria for selecting the operations financed within six months of the approval programme and approves any revision of those criteria in accordance with programming needs ;
- It periodically reviews progress made towards achieving the specific targets of the operational programme on the basis of documents submitted by the Managing Authority ;
- It examines the results of implementation, particularly the achievement of the targets set for each priority , and of evaluations ;
- It considers and approves the annual and final reports on implementation ;
- It is informed of the annual control report, or of the part of the report referring to the operational programme concerned, and of any relevant comments the Commission may make after examining that report or relating to that part of the report ;
- It may propose to the Managing Authority any revision or examination of the operational programme likely to make possible the attainment of the Funds' objectives referred to in article 3 or to improve its management, including its financial management ;
- It considers and approves any proposal to amend the content of the Commission decision on the contribution from the Funds.
- It approves the publicity and communication strategy

b) Monitoring Committee's Composition

The Monitoring Committee will be made up of representatives, of the following partners, with an appropriate mandate :

For France :

- the Préfet of Nord-Pas de Calais Région, who coordinate the programme, or his representative ;
- The President of the Nord-Pas de Calais Region or his representative;
- The President of the North Department or his representative ;
- The president of the Pas-de-Calais Departement or his representative ;
- The President of the « Syndicat Mixte de la Côte d'Opale » or his representative ;

For England :

- A representative of the « Communities and Local Government » (CLG) ;
- Four representatives for each of the 3 regions (South West, South East, East of England) in a regional and local level, of which a representative for each of the 3 Regional Development Agencies ;

For Flanders :

- 3 representatives of which a representative of the Flemish région, a representative of the three Provinces and a representative designated by mutual agreement between the different Flemish partners

For Netherlands :

- A representative of the dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs ;
- A representative of the three Provinces ;

Other membres are:

- A representative of the Certifying Authority
- The Managing Authority

It is chaired jointly by the president of the Région Nord-Pas-de-Calais, the Managing Authority, and the delegates of the British government, flanders region and dutch government.

Take part, moreover, at the Monitoring Committee, as observers or advisors, with an appropriate mandate :

- A representative of DIACT
- A representative of the Audit Authority ;
- Representatives of the Joint Technical Secretariat ;
- Representatives of university , environmental and socio-economic sectors (each Member State shall designate the most representative partners in the economic, social, environmental and other spheres, in accordance with national rules and practices).
- A representative of the European Commission , in an advisory capacity;

c) Decision-making

The whole partners take decisions on a consensus basis which is coordinated by the Managing Authority.

5.4.2 Steering Committee

The Steering Committee is set up within three months of the date of the notification to the Members States of the decision to approve the decision to approve the operational programme. It meets according to the calendar defined during its first meeting.

a) The Steering Committee's missions :

The Steering Committee's missions are to :

- Examine and evaluate operations for financing purposes, on the basis of the opinion expressed by the Joint Technical Secretariat;
- Select from the proposed operations for Objectif 3 financing;
- Implement the decisions taken by the Monitoring Committee;

b) Steering Committee's composition

The Steering Committee will be made up of representatives, of the following partners, with an appropriate mandate :

For France :

- The Préfet of Nord-Pas de Calais Région, who coordinate the programme, or his representative ;
- The President of the Nord-Pas de Calais Region or his representative ;
- The President of the North Department or his representative ;
- The President of the Pas-de-Calais Département or his representative
- The President of the « Syndicat Mixte de la Côte d'Opale » or his representative ;

For England :

- A representative of the « Communities and Local Government » (CLG) ;
- Four representatives for each of the 3 regions (South West, South East, East of England) in a regional and local level, of which a representative for each of the 3 Regional Development Agencies ;

For Flanders :

- 3 representatives of which a representative of the Flemish Region, a representative of the three Provinces and a representative designated by mutual agreement between the different Flemish partners

For Netherlands :

- A representative of the dutch Ministry of economic Affairs ;
- A representative of the three Provinces,

The Managing Authority

It is chaired jointly by the president of the Région Nord-Pas-de-Calais, the Managing Authority, and the delegates of the British government, flanders region and dutch government.

Take part, moreover, at the Monitoring Committee, as observers or advisers with an appropriate mandate :

- Representatives of the Joint Technical Secretariat ;
- A Representative of the Payment Authority ;
- The crossborder facilitators
- The representatives of the Joint Technical Secretariats of the others territorial cooperation programmes of the area.
- Representatives of university , environmental and socio-economic sectors (each Member State shall designate the most representative partners in the economic, social, environmental and other spheres, in accordance with national rules and practices) ;
- A representative of the European Commission, in an advisory capacity.

c) Decision-making

The whole partners take decisions on a consensus basis which is coordinated by the Managing Authority

5.5. Programme functioning modalities

5.5.1 General implementation of the 2 Seas operational programme

The programme's implementation mechanism will draw from mechanisms in place for the european territorial cooperation of which the Region is the Managing Authority or the National Lead Partner.

The key points of the proposed mechanism are :

- The principle of a common, objective and independant project directive : the aim must be to use in crossborder perspective the necessary resources in the whole partners. If the same requirements are issued to each side and a common framework for analysis is maintained, we can hope to arrive at a consensus for each project ;

- All documents used in the programme's implementation will be in three languages (English, Dutch and French) ;
- Specific cross-border work groups led by the JTS will be set up, if needed, to accompany programme implementation for any area of the programme in need of regular monitoring. Such areas include monitoring rule N+2, implementing the programme's communication plan, and coordinating technical assistance.
- The management and implementation of the common axis of the two operational programmes: the OP France (Channel)-England (of which the Nord-Pas-de-Calais is the Managing Authority) and the 2 Seas OP, assumes that a specific instruction and monitoring mechanism is put in place between the two bodies which are in charge of the two OPs. On the other hand, the management and implementation of the common axis also assumes that a specific information exchange mechanism is put in place between the body in charge of the common priority of the two cross-border programmes and the bodies in charge of the transnational and inter-regional programmes which partially cover the same geographical area. At the launch of the programme, particular effort will be given to the establishment of these mechanisms.

5.5.2 Management and implementation of the common axis

The fundamentals:

The common priority to both maritime cooperation programmes (the " 2 seas " and "France (Channel) - England") will be implemented by the Nord-Pas-de-Calais Region, Managing Authority of the 2 seas Programme.

The instruction of the projects filed in within the framework of this priority will be ensured by the only JTS of the "2 seas Programme. This last will ask for an opinion the JTS of the France (Channel) – England Programme within the framework of the process of instruction.

The Steering Committee of the "2 seas" Programme will exclusively associate the Programme's Managing Authority and the partners of the France (Channel)-England Programme (and if necessary, the partners concerned) concerning this common priority.

The Monitoring Committee of the « 2 seas" Programme will exclusively associate the Managing Authority of the France (Channel)-Angleterre Programme (and if necessary, partners concerned) concerning this common priority.

Envisaged operational approach :

The three operational objectives selected within the framework of the common priority already quite clearly express the specificities linked to this priority so that it is not interpreted solely as the opportunity to work in an enlarged geographical area, and this without consideration.

However, as this common axis has a strong strategic dimension, the priority of the two bodies which represent the two OPs will be to precisely define the selection criteria specific to the projects presented within the common priority, and this in addition to the criteria assigned to the other priorities.

These priorities should evaluate the relevance of a project within this axis (rather than within another axis) and this with regard to the "content" of the project and the proposed "partner".

For the first two operational objectives, it will be a case of giving a clear common position in order that future candidates will have the same comprehension of actions which are eligible within the common priority, regardless of their geographical origin. The third operational objective, which concerns strategic projects, is more of a "top-down" objective in which the bodies responsible for the 2 OPs must jointly study and propose strategic themes on which the projects are based, and this for the benefit of the entire enlarged geographical area.

At the programme launch stage, the bodies in charge of the two programmes should relay information relative to the common priority identically via their available information systems (website, booklet, etc). This is also the case for launching a call for projects specific to the common priority and for all other information relative to the selection and implementation of projects.

At the project selection stage, a joint examination of the applications will be carried out: instruction remains the responsibility of the Managing Authority in charge of the common priority, but the body in charge of the France (Channel)-England programme will be systematically consulted. If necessary, work meetings will be organised.

The Managing Authority in charge of the 2 Seas OP has planned to dedicate time to the examination of proposed common axis projects within its Steering Committees and Monitoring Committees in the presence of the body in charge of the France (Channel)-England programme and of the partners that it should consider useful to call upon. These meetings will also allow: a joint assessment of the implementation of the common axis to be carried out; possible corrective measures to be defined; and the strategic themes according to which strategic projects should be proposed to be suggested.

Concerning the implementation of the common priority, the body in charge of the 2 Seas OP will take on its responsibilities as Managing Authority as for the other priorities in terms of monitoring and control. As such, it is entirely responsible for the monitoring and control of the projects proposed for this priority. However, as is clearly described above, coordination mechanisms are established between the two programmes; they will be strengthened as much as necessary and will be adapted to the issues to be dealt with (e.g. organising a meeting of the territorial leaders; creating a joint publication, etc.).

5.5.3 Instruction and selection of projects

The JTS launches call for projects on a regular basis and according to the calendar defined at the first Steering committee's meeting, in order to select cooperation projects.

All project applications are submitted to the JTS which carries out projects appraisal.

The JTS checks the admissibility of applications for funding in particular checking compliance with applicable Regulations and with the operational programme.

If needed, the JTS draws on the expertise of the programme partners to appraise and evaluate the technical aspects and merits of applications.

For each application for funding a single appraisal report is drafted. It includes a statement on the likelihood of match-funding.

The single appraisal report is submitted to the Steering Committee for its opinion, and which approves or rejects the application.

The criteria used for deciding if a project may receive funding under the programme both constitute an important programme management tool and are fundamental to ensuring that overall objectives are realised.

The appraisal and selection of projects relative to the common priority will be the object of a specific process linked closely to the Managing Authority of the France (Channel)-England programme.

a) Criteria for the selection of the projects

For this programme, criteria fall into three categories :

- Formal criteria, based on the ERDF Regulation (CE) n°1083/2006. For example, in relation to : geographic and temporal eligibility, eligibility relative to the nature of expenditure, or to the respect of equal opportunities objectives, etc.
- Supplementary formal criteria that the Monitoring Committee may adopt should it consider them necessary or useful for achieving programme objectives or ensuring its correct and efficient implementation (e.g. defining minimum/maximum funding allocation, specifying the duration of projects, or excluding certain types of expenditure from allocations, etc.)
- Objective criteria, based on the objectives set out in the programme Priorities or in the horizontal objectives.
- To these basic criteria should be added criteria which are specific to a priority (the common priority) and to particular projects such as defined in the OP (strategic projects, micro-projects).

These 4 categories of project selection criteria will be set out in detail in a separate document, and will be adopted by the Monitoring Committee. They will be included in the information and funding request document/packs sent to potential applicants and will be taken into account in evaluation.

In all cases, the results of the strategic environmental analysis will be taken into account in the project selection and monitoring procedures.

b) Decision-making

The approval of a project following the (pre-requisite) opinion of the Steering Committee means that European match funding is committed.

5.5.4 Financial control system and description of financial flows

In line with Article 16 of Regulation (EC) 1080/2006, each Member State shall set up a control system making it possible to verify the delivery of the products and services co-financed, the soundness of the expenditure declared for operations or parts of operations implemented on its territory, and the compliance of such expenditure and of related operations, or parts of those operations, with Community rules and its national rules.

For this purpose each Member State shall designate the controllers responsible for verifying the legality and regularity of the expenditure declared by each beneficiary participating in the operation. Member States may decide to designate a single controller for the whole programme area.

Where the delivery of the co-financed products and services co-financed can be verified only in respect of the entire operation, the verification shall be performed by the controller of the Member State where the **principal** beneficiary is located or by the Managing Authority.

The European Union allocations are paid into an account opened by the Certifying Authority.

The Certifying Authority, after having received the order from the Managing Authority, pays the allocations that are due to projects leaders.

The financial national counterparts are to be paid directly by co-financing bodies to projects leaders.

For each project, a "Subsidy contract" shall be written in the three programme languages, and signed by the Managing Authority and the operation's Lead Partner. This contract determines the ERDF granting conditions. It shall also include a financing plan for each project partner for the whole project together with the dates of beginning and end of the project and the period of expenditure eligibility.

The project leader shall co-ordinate the project and will be in charge with the tasks that final beneficiaries are responsible for. The obligations and responsibilities of each partner regarding the implementation operations will be set up in a intern contact written between the partners.

Each beneficiary must keep separate accounts in compliance with Community Regulations.

Following this contract, a controlling body responsible for validating expenditure has to be identified for each beneficiary.

This body will be in charge of the first level control and checks the final beneficiaries expenditure claims, making sure that the expenditure :

- is actually incurred under the eligibility period as agreed in the convention and that the expenditure relates to payments effected by the final beneficiaries ;
- is supported by receipted invoices or accounting documents of equivalent probative value.
- Relates to selected operations with a co-financing share in accordance with the criteria and the selection procedure and that complies with the Community rules during the entire period under which the expenditure was incurred and for which all granted State allocation was approved by the Commission.

Once those checks are carried out, the controller writes a control report certificate and transfers the accountant dossier to the beneficiary lead partner.

The beneficiary lead partner consolidates all the control reports given by the controllers, checks that the expenditure claimed by all beneficiaries were validated and sends forward to the JTS a summary expenditure table for all the beneficiaries.

The JTS operate a conformity check of the dossier and verifies the set of the documents required for the liquidation (payment) of the ERDF.

The JTS proceed then to the computerisation of the information in the managing system and send forward the payment claim to the programme Managing Authority.

The Managing authority approve the payment claim and send it forward to the Certifying Authority.

On the basis of expenses certificates collected by the Managing Authority, the Certifying Authority issue payment orders to the lead partner in accordance with EC regulation 1080/2006, art.20, paragraph 1.

In accordance with EC regulation 1083/2006 art.56 and 78, the total amount of the expenditure to be co-financed and that has been paid par the final beneficiary will appear under each priority, in the expenses certificates.

The Certifying Authority consolidate certified expenditure at least three times a year and more if necessary. They send forward to the European Commission an expenditure certificate and a payment claim. For this purpose, the Certifying Authority check the computerised information on the programme database before submitting the certificate to the Commission.

At the end of the project, the controller must check the entire project and give its opinion as well as a complete report on the accounts and overall results of the project.

5.6 Programme procedures and tools

5.6.1 Programme monitoring tools

a) Computerised monitoring system

As stipulated in Regulation (EC) 1083/2006, Art 66 and 76, computerised systems have to be installed, operated and interconnected. This data base system has to meet special requirements.

The Managing Authority will develop a mechanism to gather reliable financial and statistical data for programme management.

This system must be updated regularly by the Managing Authority, the JTS and the Certifying Authority, in order to input new projects and to show the progress of accepted projects.

The system must store and make available information for consultation by the European Commission and the leading programme authorities, providing rapid access to information on the progress of all projects.

The database should be prepared for the input and the processing of the following data, on projects and project partners :

- a. Project number, title, priority and measure;
- b. Result of application assessment;
- c. Approval date, contracting date, starting date and duration of the project;
- d. Eligible expenditure and ERDF co-financing for the project;
- e. Address information of the Lead Partner and all other project partners including name and address of the institution and the contact person, telephone, fax, e-mail and objective area ;
- f. Bank account information of the Lead Partner.

Furthermore the database must be prepared for the input and processing of information received by the Lead Partner's activity and financial reports. The following features should be envisaged:

- a. Facility for monitoring the deadlines for the delivering of reports;
- b. For each report an individual input sheet for the assessment of the reported activities and the reported expenditure in the individual budget lines;
- c. Automatic calculation of the cumulative used budget and indication of exceeded budget lines;
- d. Information on payments made.

To support the Joint Technical Secretariat in meeting its monitoring and reporting duties, the database has to deliver data report sheets, including the following :

- a. Commitments and payments on project level
- b. Reporting status
- c. Project budget overview
- d. Activity and financial report overview
- e. Financial status of project and project partner
- f. Geographical status (region, country) per partner.

The database provides the form and content of accounting information as requested in Article 14 and Annex III of Commission Regulation (EC) No 1828/2006. Use will also be made of the code given for the "Categorisation of Funds assistance" as described in Annex II of the above mentioned Regulation.

In order to transfer computer files to the Commission, the database administration system will have the ability to create interface files in accordance with Article 14 of the Commission Regulation (EC) No 1828/2006.

The computerised systems are designed to allow the sharing of information about the projects with the other programmes. The computerised system adopted by the JTS is already used by the other two programmes for which the Managing Authority is responsible: NWE transnational cooperation and inter-regional cooperation.

Moreover, this system has also been adopted by other transnational or cross-border cooperation programmes in Europe. It was specifically developed for INTERREG programmes. INTERREG inter-programme work groups meet regularly in order to improve it by sharing experience and transferring technology.

b) The annual implementation report and final report

The Managing Authority will, by 30 June each year, starting in 2008, submit an annual report to the Commission. The annual reports will be drafted by the Joint Technical Secretariat in accordance with the requirements of Article 67 of Regulation (EC) 1083/2006. They will be approved by the Monitoring Committee before they are sent to the Commission.

A final implementation Report will be submitted to the Commission by 31 March 2017 following the same rules as the Annual Reports.

5.6.2 Coordinating implementation with other European programmes

The Managing Authority will make sure that the various European programmes within the cross-border cooperation zone interlink smoothly, particularly with regard to the other cross-border cooperation programmes in the zone, the France – Wallonia – Flanders programme, the Flanders –Netherlands programme and especially the France – England cross-border programme. All programmes will share a common axis.

The Managing Authority will also ensure smooth links with the North West Europe ,North Sea and Atlantic Area trans-national cooperation programmes, particularly with its specific experience of maritime areas.

The Joint Technical Secretariats for the trans-national IV B ENO and cross-border IV A programmes enjoy close relations, which will contribute to the effectiveness of trans-national and cross-border project development, particularly via the common axis spanning the two cross-border programmes. By submitting proposals to the two Management Authorities, the partners can define how this common axis will be managed and implemented.

Within the cooperation zone, the closeness of the "IV B" "IV A" and IV C secretariats can also benefit developing projects which, despite their differing aims and themes, may sometimes overlap. The programme partners can consider the Managing Authority a guarantor for excellent cooperation links. The Managing Authority will also uphold the individual identity of each programme according to European Commission recommendations.

Lastly, under the national strategic reference frameworks of the participating Member States, several ERDF programmes at the regional level were approved with the title of the regional Competitiveness and employment Objective. This programme will also take into account these objectives and applies insofar as a proven crossborder element were given in the project.

5.6.3 Evaluation of the programme

The programme will be evaluated on a regular basis in compliance with with the support of the Commission's working paper no. 5 on the indicative orientations of the evaluation during the programming period.

The present paragraph describes the in itinere evaluation process which will be implemented.

The in itinere evaluation is a flexible process composed of a series of evaluations. Its main objective is the continuous monitoring of the implementation and the execution of the current operational programme and of the changes in its external environment, in order to better understand and analyse the achievements and results obtained and the progress in terms of long-term impacts, and to propose corrective measures if necessary.

Thus, as referred to in Article 48 (3) of Regulation (EC) 1083/2006 further evaluations linked to the monitoring of the operational programme may be carried out by the Member States. The results of all evaluations shall be sent to the Monitoring Committee and to the Commission.

The in itinere evaluation process must have a double scope:

- strategic with the objective of improving programme management, monitoring and control systems, and the coherence of selected activities with ERDF objectives and community priorities.
- the evaluation process will also have the objective of identifying in the course of the project any possible gaps in terms of financials or real achievements. It will therefore be essential to provide accurate information as regards indicators.

The authority responsible for the programme will play a driving role in the coordination of the evaluation process and will propose an evaluation plan to the cross-border partnership at the beginning of the programming period, with the main aim of creating a general framework for the in itinere evaluation and ensuring that it is used effectively as an integrated management tool during the implementation phase.

Through this plan, the authority responsible for the programme will establish a close link between monitoring and evaluation and will define the periodicity/regularity of these exercises so as to guarantee the constant obtaining of information and analyses which could be used for management purposes. To facilitate this process, the authority will ensure that the achievement and results indicators which appear in Annexe D are kept informed.

To support itself in this process, the authority will decide on the need for an evaluation steering group composed of representatives from the programmes' partner Member States.

Finally, the evaluation of this programme's common priority will be closely carried out with the authority responsible for the management of the France (Channel) – England programme according to methods which are to be defined by both parties.

In accordance with article 48 (3) of the Regulation (EC) 1083/2006, the results of the evaluations will be transmitted to the Monitoring Committee and to the Commission. They will be invited to actively participate in the analysis of the evaluation results and the recommendations, and to use them effectively in their decision making.

5.6.4 Promotion Policies

The Managing Authority and the Joint Technical Secretariat, in dialogue with the whole of the partners of the programme, will develop a communication and action plan whose objectives and contents are defined below.

a) Objectives and target publics

The action plan of information and publicity of the programme contains three objectives:

1.1 To inform the potential and final recipients, like :

- qualified, regional or local public authorities;
- professional and economic organizations ;
- economic and social partners;
- the non governmental organizations, in particular the organizations for the promotion of the equality between men and women and the organizations working for the protection and the improvement of the environment ;

1.2. To inform the public opinion of the part played by the European Union in collaboration with the Member States, in favour of the interventions concerned and the results of those.

1.3. To inform the populations of the concerned areas so that the construction of Europe is a daily reality.

b) Contents

Taking into account the laid down objectives and range public targeted, it is necessary to articulate promotion and sensibilisation in two phases :

- 1st phase : General promotion of the programme and sensitizing of the potential actors, supporting the call to the projects.
- 2nd phase : Promotion of the actions financed within the framework of the programme, having a double aim of valorization of the action taken by the European commission and the programme partners of one by on the one hand, and, on the other hand, of support for the increase of new projects.

1st phase : General promotion of the programme and sensitizing of the potential actors, supporting the call to the projects.

The Managing Authority and the Joint Technical Secretariat, in dialogue with the whole of the partners of the programme, propose to carry out the promotion of the programme through, for example :

- diffusion of a leaflets and a toolbox ;
- the setting on line, on Internet sites of the whole of the partners authorities, the computerized versions of the document of call and the toolbox. More particularly, an website of the programme will be set up ;
- organisation of crossborder thematic seminars for local beneficiaries ;
- press conferences holding in order to make known the programme, its opportunities and the procedures to file in a project.

The paper tools will be diffused near the whole of the potential actors by the various partners authorities concerned.

Second phase : Promotion of the actions financed within the framework of the programme

The Managing Authority and the Joint Technical Secretariat , in dialogue with all the programme partners will set up a plan of communication to develop the concrete achievements of the programme. This plan of communication is articulated on the following elements :

- strategic accompaniment of the authorities partners
- realization of a new leaflet of presentation of the programme ;
- institutional press actions ;
- annual press meeting per region/territory ;
- implementation of a crossborder press review

Several actions will be developed, for example:

- the implementation of a common internet website to the whole of the partners in order to inform the public and the potential final beneficiaries of the progress report of the programme, but also to relay the practical information relating to the deposit of new projects (deadline of answer to the calls of tender with projects, Vade mecum, card project, summarized presentation of the accepted projects,...) ;
- the implementation of a electronic newsletter, diffused by email ;
- the realization of a trilingual promotional leaflet presenting some examples of projects implemented particularly significant ;
- the incentive to ensure the promotion of the programme by the final beneficiaries, by organizing press "actions" to inform the population on the actions which they undertake ;
- the development of regional press conferences in order to make known the projects near the public ;

c) Evaluation criteria

In order to check the impact of the actions of communication, a specific part "how you were informed of the programme" will be integrated in the card-project deposited by the final recipients. This part will make it possible to identify the vector of communication which made it possible to the final beneficiary to know the programme.

A second type of indicator, relates to the counting of the people coming to connect itself on Internet Website of the programme.

In addition, the specific indicators to the communication will be used to identify the impact of the plan of communication and of the implementation of the projects on the notoriety of the programme :

- number of press actions carried out ;
- number of press articles published ;
- number of Internet websites created or maintained;
- number of visits on the Websites created/maintained ;
- number of TV or radio reports;
- number of leaflets intended for the public diffused.

d) Responsible Authority

The coordination and the control of work of plan-tally of communication and of promotion of the programme will be defined by the Managing Authority and the Joint Technical Secretariat, in dialogue with the whole of the partners authorities of the programme, which will submit to the Monitoring Committee an action plan coordinated. The implementation will be carried out on the basis of budget assigned to the Joint Technical Secretariat for the communication.

Chapter 6. Financing plan

6.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the financing plan of this Cross-border Cooperation Programme. In line with the requirements of Regulation 1080/2006, Article 12.6 there is a single financing plan for the programme, with no breakdown by participating Member State. This financial plan is presented in the form of two tables. The first table presents a breakdown for each year of the programming period 2007-2013 of the financial contribution from the ERDF. The second table specifies the total programme budget (ERDF and national contribution) for each priority axis as well as the co-financing rates.

In principle, the rate of co-financing by ERDF to a project is 50% of the total eligible cost of the actions carried out by potential beneficiaries, unless otherwise decided by the Programme Monitoring Committee. The co-financing rates presented in table 6.3 will be observed at priority level.

6.2 ERDF contribution per year

The contribution from the ERDF to the programme per year is built up as follows (in euros):

	ERDF
2007	-
2008	48 089 049 €
2009	22 958 021 €
2010	23 225 137 €
2011	24 297 957 €
2012	23 716 199 €
2013	24 713 820 €
Total 2007-2013	167 000 183 €

6.3 Detailed financial plan per priority and ERDF intervention rate

The following table presents an overview of the total programme budget for the 2007 – 2013 period. The budget consist of the contribution from the ERDF (Community Funding) and a National Funding contribution. The national funding part will include both public and private contributions¹.

¹ *No contributions from the European Investment Bank (EIB) are foreseen as part of this programme budget*

Chapter 7. Coherence and complementarity with other EU programmes

Within the scope of the European cohesion, it is important that this Cross-border cooperation programme can build elementary synergies and complementarities with other community and national policies and programmes. This will maximize the strategic impact for the concerned maritime cross-border cooperation area. It is important to identify the distinctive features of each of the concerned programmes, in order to strengthen their respective objectives, as defined by the programme authorities. This will avoid the double EU-financing of identical actions and initiatives.

7.1 Coherence and complementarity with EU policies

Within the scope of the development of the 2 seas cross-border programme, several EU policies are relevant for the implementation of the selected priorities and to realise the overall objective of the programme.

Within the framework of Objective 3 (European Territorial Cooperation, INTERREG IV), this programme aims at the reinforcement of the Innovation, growth and competitiveness policy (Lisbon strategy, the Community strategic Guidelines on Cohesion). Also the Sustainable Development Strategy (Gothenburg Agenda) is at the heart of the programme. Further, this programme will also contribute to the execution of the Bristol Accord (Sustainable communities' accord) and the EU maritime policy. The European transport policy has a direct impact on the region. Also the Innovation and SME policies are crucial in the region, where the economic structures are under permanent renewal and restructuring.

Finally, all projects, set up within this cross-border programme, will contribute to the realization of the equal opportunities for men and women, and to the promotion of the social inclusion. The Monitoring Committee is responsible for ensuring that these requirements are fulfilled.

As to the participation of profit-oriented private actors, it is clear that any state aid, which might be provided under this programme, will be in conformity with the De Minimis rule or with the relevant aid schemes, established by the Commission.

7.2 Coherence and complementarity with other Structural Funds programmes

Within the cross-border programme area, several programmes are financed by Structural Funds. Therefore, it is important to clarify the distinctive features of each type of programme that is relevant.

Within the National Strategic Reference Frameworks of the participating Member States, several regional ERDF-programmes have been approved. These programmes aim to enforce the competitiveness of the concerned regions by developing concrete projects in the field of innovation, knowledge economy and sustainability. This cross-border programme also considers these objectives, and is applicable insofar a clear cross-border element has been determined within the project.

Further, the region is also covered by several other cross-border cooperation programmes. The France-Walloon-Flanders programme and the Flanders-Nederland programme are hereby essential. These programmes also focus on themes like economic development, environment and community development. The concertation and the execution of joint projects can increase the impact of cross-border cooperation. On the other hand, this programme focuses particularly on those projects that are aiming to overcome the maritime border. The requirement to work with partners on both sides of the Channel/North Sea maritime border clearly distinguishes this programme from the other cross-border cooperation programmes. A structured exchange between the relevant programme-managers of these cross-border programmes should be established to oversee and optimize the synergies between the programmes.

As is described in chapter 5 (5.6.2): the Managing Authority will guarantee good coordination and links between the different European programmes concerning the cross-border cooperation area, notably with the other cross-border cooperation programmes in the area, the France-Walloon-Flanders and Flanders-

Netherlands cross-border programmes, and particularly the France–England cross-border programme, via the management of an axis common to both programmes.

Work meetings are held in order to share experience of and knowledge about the monitoring and management of cooperation projects, including the selection and control of projects, with the other cross-border programmes in the area.

As is described in Chapter 4/4.6: priority 4, specific coordination methods and a monitoring tool are planned for the common axis.

Next to the cross-border cooperation programmes, three transnational programmes, North West Europe and North Sea and Atlantic Area, are covering all or part of the area². The transnational programmes are covering quite similar themes like the 2 seas cross-border programme: issues like accessibility, innovation and sustainable communities are within the core of these programmes; but they consider these issues within a larger geographical scope and have a generally more strategic approach. In operational terms also the requirements for composition and type of partnership differ (larger, multilateral for the transnational programmes).

As to the inter-regional programme INTERREG IV C, this programme focuses on the cooperation between all regions in Europe, organizing exchanges of knowledge and experience in the field of innovation, knowledge economy, environment and risk prevention. These are activities of a similar nature to Priority 4 of this programme (Common priority with France (Channel) - England programme). In the context of this OP however an emphasis on exchange of cross-border experience is chosen, whereas the INTERREG IVC programme targets regional policies in general, with a focus on influencing regional competitiveness programmes.

The Managing Authority will also guarantee good links with North West Europe, North Sea and Atlantic Area transnational cooperation programmes, notably via their maritime dimension.

The Joint Technical Secretariats for the transnational IV B ENO and cross-border IV A Programmes, under the responsibility of the same Managing Authority, enjoy close relations, which will contribute to a clear demarcation and a complementarity in the transnational and cross-border approaches of the developed projects; a special effort will be made for the common axis where, in addition to the previous complementarities, the complementarity of the proposed cross-border approaches must be measured in relation to the inter-regional approach, notably concerning the capitalisation of good practice.

Within the cooperation zone, the closeness of the three secretariats, "IV B", IV C" and "IV A", is a benefit for the development of projects which, despite their differing aims and themes, may sometimes overlap. The programme partners can consider the Managing Authority a guarantor for excellent cooperation links. The Managing Authority will also uphold the individual identity of each programme according to European Commission recommendations.

In order to do this, under the coordination of the Managing Authority, inter-secretariat work meetings are held. They have the objective of clarifying the demarcation between the programmes and to strengthen their complementarity.

Different processes are and will be progressively put in place, such as: joint work on selection criteria, compiled information on applications received, and the possible redirection towards a more suitable programme.

It is important to note that the computerised management system adopted by the 2 seas programme is the same as that adopted by the IVB NWE and the IVC, which will greatly facilitate information exchanges.

Finally, to help future applicants, an information sheet will be quickly created which clearly defines the differences between the three programmes, IVA, IVB and IVC. This will help future applicants to choose the programme most suited to their projects.

Special attention shall be given to the services provided by the INTERACT II programme. This EU-wide programme focuses on the good governance of territorial cooperation and provides needs-based support to stakeholders involved in implementing programmes under the European Territorial Co-operation objective.

² The Atlantic Area includes parts of South-West England eligible in this CBC programme and some French regions from the France(Channel) – England programme area, eligible under the Common Priority (Priority 4).

The target groups for INTERACT are primarily the authorities to be established according to Council Regulations 1083/2006 and 1080/2006 as well as other bodies involved in programme implementation. In order to ensure maximum benefit from the INTERACT programme for the implementing bodies of this programme, the use of INTERACT services and documentation as well as the participation in INTERACT seminars will be encouraged. Related costs are eligible under Technical Assistance.

Finally, within the European Social Fund, actions and projects focus on the qualitative improvement of the offer on the labour market and on the work-floor, and on the reintegration of particular groups of unemployed persons. Within this cross-border cooperation programme these themes can be covered insofar a clear cross-border element can be identified or insofar actions are taken to stimulate the creation of a cross-border labour market.

7.3 Coherence and complementarity with other EU programmes and funds.

Related to the diverse European policies, several other programmes and funds have been established that can have a direct impact on the territory of the maritime cross-border area.

The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) will co-finance actions, related to rural development programmes in order to improve the competitiveness of the agricultural and forestry sector, as well as to enhance the quality of life in rural areas. Considering the importance of rural areas in peri-urban zones at both sides of the maritime border, some projects within the scope of rural development can be reinforced on a cross-border level, insofar the maritime cross-border condition is fulfilled and a real cross-border cooperation is set up.

In the regions in the programme area, fishing and fishing-industry has a major place within the sector of the food-industry. Nevertheless, these sectors are under high pressure, due to the new quota regulations of the European Commission, and the related regions are facing decline. Therefore, actions, set up within the scope of the European Fisheries Funds (EFF), can be supported by projects within the 2 Seas cross-border cooperation programme, insofar they are related to sustainable fishing and they fulfill the maritime and cross-border conditions.

As the programme area is an important maritime cross-road on European and world level, involving several major logistic players, it is of strategic importance to guarantee the necessary accessibility within the Southern North Sea. The actions, set up within the scope of programmes, like Motorways of the North Sea, TEN-T, Marco POLO II, in coordination with the European transport policy, can be seconded by projects, set up within the 2 Seas cross-border cooperation programme.

7.4. Coordination mechanisms between the programmes co-financed by the different European funds

The Managing Authority of the OP plans to implement several coordination mechanisms in order to ensure the complementarity with the various other EU funded programmes in the area, notably the European Territorial Cooperation programmes. These mechanisms are described in more detail in Chapter 5.

Coordination mechanisms and information exchange tools have already been launched for INTERREG programmes. They will be completed for the other programmes financed by European funds in the eligible area, and that with the agreement of all of the partners.

Therefore, the coordination mechanisms and information exchange tools will be developed in particular for the other programmes co-financed by European funds, by the two Joint Technical Secretariats of the 2 seas IV A programme and the IV B ENO. In fact, the issue of the complementarity of the ERDF interventions in the different strands of territorial cooperation will be the subject of intense attention from the programme's partners.

The complementarity with the European funds mobilized under the "Mainstream" (ERDF, ESF, EAFRD, EFF) will be checked, for each state, by each National Authority in order to avoid, in the process of instruction and programming of the projects concerned with the 2 seas programme, any risk of double financing. The Managing Authority and the JTS will give a special attention so that the mechanisms and answers necessary on this subject are available in the sight of Steering committee.

Annex A : List of NUTS III eligible and adjacent areas

	Eligible area	Adjacent areas
FRANCE	Nord Pas-de-Calais	Somme Aisne
ENGLAND	Norfolk Suffolk Southend-on-Sea Thurrock Essex CC Brighton and Hove East Sussex CC West Sussex Portsmouth Southampton Hampshire CC Isle of Wight Medway Towns Kent CC Bournemouth and Poole Dorset CC Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Plymouth Torbay Devon CC	Surrey Somerset Wiltshire CC Cambridgeshire CC
FLANDERS	Arr.Antwerpen Arr.Brugge Arr.Oostende Arr.Veurne Arr.Eeklo Arr.Gent Arr.Sint-Niklaas	Mechelen Turnhout Diksmuide Ieper Kortrijk Roeselare Tielt Aalst Dendermonde Oudenaarde
NETHERLANDS	Delft en Westland Groot-Rijnmond Zeeuwsch-Vlaanderen Overig Zeeland West-Nord-Brabant	Zuid-Oost Zuid-Holland

Justification of the adjacent areas

Article 21 of the ERDF Regulation states that: *"In the context of cross-border cooperation and in duly justified cases, the ERDF may finance expenditure incurred in implementing operations or parts of*

operations up to a limit of 20 % of the amount of its contribution to the operational programme concerned in NUTS level 3 areas adjacent to the eligible areas for the programme referred to in Article 7(1) of Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 or surrounded by such adjacent areas. In exceptional cases as agreed between the Commission and Member States, this flexibility may be extended to the NUTS level 2 areas in which the areas referred to in Article 7(1) of Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 are located.”

The adjacent areas listed above have been selected to maximise the impact of this maritime cross border cooperation programmes achievements. The selection of these adjacent areas does not mean that a fixed share of 20% of the programme budget is reserved for partners from these areas. The cross border added value of participation of partners from these areas will be assessed on a project by project basis. The selection of the adjacent areas is justified as follows:

France

The French department **Aisne** works closely with the Nord-Pas de Calais region in several pôles de compétitivité including in the fields of transport and textile. Their inclusion as adjacent areas allows for important cross border cooperation opportunities in these fields between the French side and partners in the other countries.

The department **Somme** is included because of its strong maritime profile, both in terms of location and economic and touristic activities, which can have an important added value for cooperation with similar areas in the other countries in the North programme. Moreover, the Somme department is also part of the Manche programme, which guarantees a good connection between the two programmes.

England

Surrey has several relevant characteristics and a strong network with peri-urban regions including Zuid-Holland and Haute Normandie, which can be further developed under this programme. There are many enterprises developing or exploiting ICT to improve business efficiency and creativity, through programmes such as 'Connected Surrey' which could be developed across other Member States. Surrey has a high rate of entrepreneurship and business start ups, meeting the RES priority of Smart Growth. Innovative work is being undertaken which could be transferred cross border.

The particular and key challenges which face Surrey in terms of its air and road transport routes network have led to successful transnational work being undertaken through transnational exchanges and research initiatives.

Cambridgeshire has developed innovative solutions in sustainable transport which could be developed under this CBC programme. It is keen to develop 'corridor' to the coast for the major movement of transport, people and information. Cambridgeshire could connect axes of excellence to pursue low carbon economy. Cambridgeshire can contribute to the CBC programme in the fields of encouraging entrepreneurship, supporting the process of commercialisation, business support to SMEs and links with innovation centres. Supporting the sustainable growth of construction, to contribute towards meeting regional growth targets. Ensuring that the skills base of the local labour force is better matched to the needs of employers and providing skills that equip businesses to grow. Ensuring that developments are sustainable and of high quality, supporting emerging thinking at EEDA relating to environment technologies and general climate change agenda.

Somerset and **Wiltshire** are developing project to link canals, which could have relevance to CBC programme. Also have twinning programmes with France. Have key road and rail links with coastal areas within programme area, eg Southampton and Portsmouth. They have innovative and successful broadband partnerships which could develop under this programme. There is potential for joint projects on climate change and use of biofuels, also experience of wetlands and chalk downland management, which could be transferred to CBC.

Further key points of potential the added value of their inclusion as an adjacent area are the strong transport links to the Channel ports, which would enhance the spatial and strategic aspects of projects and similarities and links to the eligible areas, particularly in terms of market towns and economic structures;

Flanders

Flanders-Flanders is suffering from a territorial-administrative handicap regarding NUTS III areas. For historic reasons Flanders is characterised by many small NUTSIII areas of a limited surface. They have a role as electoral districts and – to some extent - judicial entities. They don't really correspond to a concrete planning level and only play a rather artificial statistical role. Including these adjacent areas will guarantee having cooperation areas in the different member states of a more or less comparable size with enough "critical mass" on the Flemish side.

The following NUTS III adjacent areas are selected in Flanders: **Mechelen, Turnhout** (Province of Antwerp), **Diksmuide, Ieper, Kortrijk, Roeselare, Tielt** (Province of West-Vlaanderen), **Aalst, Dendermonde, Oudenaarde** (Province of Oost-Vlaanderen).

This selection is based on the following criteria:

- Territorial features: influence of the sea on the selected territory and vice versa
- Spatial-economic structure: maritime functions of an area;
- Inter-modal linkages to sea ports or waterways linked to the sea;
- Environmental impacts of sea-based activities in the area (logistics, short sea shipping, tourism...)
- Cultural links to the sea: presence of maritime based heritage/legacy in the area
- Geographical contiguity with programme areas in other member states.

The selected area is similar to the area participating in the North Sea Region programme. This allows for cross-border cooperation on maritime issues from a cross-border perspective apart from the transnational perspective of the North Sea Region programme. It also allows cooperation with a different set of partners than in the North Sea Region programme.

The Netherlands

The nuts III areas of the Netherlands are of a very limited size. To improve the coverage of the area in the Netherlands 1 adjacent area in the Province of Zuid-Holland is selected; the **Zuid-Oost Zuid-Holland** NUTS III area (Drechtsteden) with the main sea port Dordrecht.

This area is important as it lies in between the eligible areas of Zeeland, Moerdijk area (N-Brabant), Zuid-Oost Zuid-Holland, Groot Rijnmond, Delft and Westland are geographically contiguous adjacent areas of cooperation. It has a strong maritime profile including inter modal links, inland shipping and navigation, distribution functions. Rotterdam and Dordrecht (Drechtsteden) are the same port management area. The area is also important for the Rotterdam area concerning environmental affairs as waterquality and designated as nature compensation area for port developments in the Rotterdam port (Maasvlakte 2). There are strong links with the eligible area of Delft Westland for foodport, greenery and underground transport of CO2.

Annex B : Sources of information and statistics

Documents and programmes Territorial Cooperation:

- *Council Decision on Community strategic guidelines on Cohesion 2007-2013*, COM(2006) 386 final of 13 July 2006 ;
- Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 of 11 July 2006 laying down *general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund* and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999;
- Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 on the *European Regional Development Fund* and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1783/1999.
- *Cross-border cooperation programme–France-Wallonie-Vlaanderen* - Objective 3 “European Territorial Cooperation” (Draft - 28 februari 2007)
- *Update MTE Interreg IIIA France-UK, MC2 Consultants December 2005.*
- *Operationeel Programma (OP) INTERREG IV Grensregio Vlaanderen-Nederland 2007-2013*, 11 April 2007.
- *Operational Programme Transnational Territorial Cooperation (Interreg IV) North West Europe 2007-2013* (final draft), February 2007.
- *Maritime cooperation in the Southern North Sea. Towards a joint cooperation strategy. Final report of the Time 2C project* 6 October 2006
- *A strategic vision for the Channel area Interreg IIIB EMDI*, (Espace Manche Development Initiative, October–2006,
- *European Commission - Working Paper No2 on Indicators for monitoring and Evaluation –2006)*
- *European Commission - Aide mémoire for desk officers; European Territorial Cooperation (2006)*

National and regional documents and programmes :

- *Cadre de reference strategique nationale France*. Programmes de la politique europeéne de cohésion économique et sociale 2007-2013, 31 Octobre 2006.
- Regional European Fund Directorate, Department of Trade and Industry, *United Kingdom National Strategic Reference Framework. European Structural Funds Programmes: 2007-2013*, 23 October 2006.
- *Nationaal Strategisch Referentiekader Structuurfondsen 2007-2013*, Nederland, 29 september 2006.
- *National Strategic Reference Framework Flanders* (summary), April 2006.
- *Operational Programme Competitiveness Nord-pas-de-Calais 2007-2013*, final draft.
- *Operationeel Programma Doelstelling Regionaal Concurrentievermogen en Werk gelegenheid Vlaanderen 2007-2013*.
- *Operationeel Programma voor Zuid-Nederland. Europees Fonds voor Regionale Ontwikkeling 2007-2013* (Concept eindversie), 28 Juli 2006.
- *East of England Competitiveness Operational Programme 2007-13*. Draft for consultation, January 2007.

- *South East England Competitiveness Operational Programme 2007-13*. Draft for consultation.
- *The South West Competitiveness Operational Programme*. May 2007
- *Convergence programme Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly- Operational Programme 2007 – 13*. May 2007
- *The regional economic strategy 2006-2016 – A framework for sustainable prosperity*, SEEDA,
- *East of England: State of the Regional Economy*. East of England Development Agency, October 2006.
- *A Shared Vision: The regional economic strategy for the East of England* East of England Development Agency, November 2004.
- *South East Plan*, SEERA, March 2006,
- *East of England Plan*, Government Office for the "East of England, December 2006,
- *"Sustainable Futures" The Integrated Regional Strategy for the East of England*, E.E.R.A." October 2005,
- *"Just Connect SW" The Integrated Regional Strategy (IRS) for the South West 2004-2026*, South West Regional Agency, November 2004,
- *Regional Economic Strategy (RES) for South West England 2006-2015*, South West of England Regional Development Agency, May 2006,
- *State of the South West 2006*, South West Regional Observatory, 2007,

Other sources:

- EUROSTAT, website: <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>.
- ESPON, website: www.espon.eu.
- Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, website: www.gemconsortium.org
- Institut National de la Statistique et des Etudes Economiques, website: www.insee.fr
- I&DeA Knowledge, Improvement and Development Agency, website: www.idea-knowledge.gov.uk
- Government Office for the South East, website: www.go-se.gov.uk
- Government Office for the South East: www.go-se.gov.uk
- Government Office for the South West: www.gosw.gov.uk/gosw/OurRegion
- East of England Development Agency E.E.D.A., website: www.eeda.org.uk
- NOMIS official labour market statistics, website: www.nomisweb.co.uk
- Studiedienst van de Vlaamse Regering, website: <http://aps.vlaanderen.be/>
- Innotek Business and Innovation Center, website www.innotekbic.be
- Arbeidsmarkt vraag en aanbod statistieken, website <http://arvastat.vdab.be>
- Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, website: www.cbs.nl
- Stad Rotterdam, website: www.rotterdam.nl
- Provincie Zeeland, website: www.zeeland.nl
- Ministerie van Landbouw, Natuur en Voedselkwaliteit: www.minInv.nl
- Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau, website: www.scp.nl
- AME Research, website: www.ame.nl

Annex C : Consulted stakeholders

As part of the consultation process regarding the development of this programme stakeholders were invited to participate in two rounds of consultation sessions in each of the participating countries and a written public consultation procedure in all 4 countries. The following is an overview of all organisations that were involved in these sessions and/or sent a reaction in the public consultation.

<i>United Kingdom</i>		
1st round 9 May 2007	2nd round 26 June 2007	Public Consultation 10 August – 2 November 2007
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Department of communities and local government (DCLG) - East of England Regional Assembly - East of England Development Agency - South East England Regional Assembly - Government Office for the South East - Government Office for the South West - South West of England Regional Development Agency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Brighton and Hove - Business Link Kent - Canterbury Christchurch University - Culture South East - East Sussex - Environment Agency - Forestry Commission - Hampshire - Isle of Wight - Kent - Medway - Portsmouth - RAISE - South East England Development Agency - Small Business Service - Government Office South East - Southampton University - University of Brighton - University of Kent - West Sussex - Southampton - South West Regional Development Agency - Government Office South West - SWUKBO - Cornwall Enterprise - Cornwall - Somerset - Plymouth - Dorset - Suffolk - Thurrock TG UDC - Government Office East 	<p>See Annex E for contributions to public consultation.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Norfolk - Norwich - Greater Essex Prosperity Forum - Essex - Southend on Sea BC 	
<i>Netherlands</i>		
1st round 3 May 2007	2nd round 19 June 2007	Public Consultation 10 August – 2 November 2007
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Province of Zeeland - Province of South Holland - Province of North Brabant (telephone) - City of Rotterdam - Port of Rotterdam - Ministry of Economic Affairs - Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment (telephone) - Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management (telephone) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Province of Zeeland - Province of South Holland - Province of North Brabant - Ministry of Economic Affairs - Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management - Port of Rotterdam - Waterboard Delfland 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - See Annex E for contributions to public consultation.
<i>France</i>		
1st round 2 May 2007	2nd round 19 June 2007	Public Consultation 10 August – 2 November 2007
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Syndicat Mixte Côte d'Opale (SMCO) - Conseil général du Nord - Prefecture de Région Nord-Pas de Calais - Conseil régional Nord-Pas de Calais 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Région Nord-Pas de Calais - Département Pas de Calais - Diren NPDC - Ademe NPDC - DRAC - Rectorat Lille - Région Nord-Pas de Calais DDT - Délégation Régionale du Tourisme - CA d'agglomération du Douaisis - Espaces Naturelles Régionaux - Pôle universitaire - Boulogne-développement - CA de Calais - DRE Région Nord-Pas de Calais - CROSS – Affaires maritimes Pas de Calais - Université du Littoral - Syndicat Mixte Côte d'Opale (SMCO) - Département du Nord - CUD - Région Nord-Pas de Calais Recherche - ADITEC - Secrétariat Général pour les Affaires Régionales 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - See Annex E for contributions to public consultation.

	(SGAR) Nord-Pas de Calais – Communauté urbaine d'Arras – Département Pas de Calais Sports	
<i>Flanders</i>		
1st round 4 May 2007	2nd round 26 June 2007	Public Consultation 10 August – 2 November 2007
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Flemish Community – Province of Antwerp – Province of West Flanders – Province of East Flanders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Coordination Centre for Sustainable Coastal Management – Flemish Government, Department Environment, Nature and Energy – Innotek – Province of West Flanders, department Economy – Flemish Government, department Economy – Province of West Flanders, department Territorial Activities – Province of West Flanders, Development Agency – Province of Antwerp, department External Relations – Tourism organisation of Antwerp province – Tourism East Flanders – Autonomous province company for Tourism and Recreation "Westtoer" – Province of East Flanders, department Economy – Province of East Flanders, department External Relations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – See Annex E for contributions to public consultation.

Annex D : Indicators

To measure the achievement of the programmes objectives, a set of indicators has been selected that will be monitored during the lifespan of the programme.

For each priority of the programme indicators have been selected to cover the operational objectives for the respective priority. In addition some overall indicators are included covering the programme objectives as a whole, including the cross-cutting objectives of the OP. The set of indicators has been developed based on the guidance provided in the European Commissions working paper on Indicators for monitoring and evaluation (2006). Where appropriate the so called 'Core indicators' for European Territorial Cooperation programmes have been included in the indicator set.

In line with the requirements of the ERDF Regulation (EC 1080/2006, art 12.4) a differentiation is used between output and result indicators. Output indicators are a measure of the activities developed by the programme. Result indicators measure the benefits generated by the programmes activities for the beneficiaries.

The Managing Authority of the programme, assisted by the Technical Secretariat, will report on progress towards these indicators to the European Commission in the Annual Reports of the programme.

It is important to highlight that if the objectives are not quantified on a yearly basis at the OP preparation stage, a special effort will be made to this end when the annual reports which are submitted to the European Commission are compiled.

Monitoring indicators will be integrated into the monitoring system, just like the environmental elements gathered from the strategic environmental assessment.

Priority 1: Supporting an economically competitive, attractive and accessible area			
Indicator	Comment	Target value 2015	Source
Output indicators			
<i>Number of projects supporting the development of economic activities, including the maritime economy</i>	<i>23% of projects in this priority</i>	35	Project application/ final report
<i>Number of projects supporting innovation, research and cooperation between universities, knowledge institutes and businesses</i>	<i>18% of projects in this priority</i>	28	Project application/ final report
<i>Number of projects supporting the tourism sector and promoting sustainable tourism</i>	<i>7,7% of projects in this priority</i>	12	Project application/ final report
<i>Number of projects promoting entrepreneurship and supporting development of employment and human capital</i>	<i>7,7% of projects in this priority</i>	12	Project application/ final report
<i>Number of private companies involved in projects</i>	Involved in projects either as co-financing partner or otherwise	48	Project application/ final report
<i>Number of projects encouraging the development of cross-border trade</i>	Core Indicator 45-- EC Working Paper on indicators – <i>5,2% of projects in this priority</i>	8	Project application/ final report
<i>Number of projects developing the joint use of infrastructure</i>	Core Indicator 46-- EC Working Paper on indicators – <i>7,7% of projects in this priority</i>	12	Project application/ final report
<i>Number of projects reducing isolation through improved access to transport, ICT networks & services</i>	Core Indicator 48-- EC Working Paper on indicators – <i>30.7% of projects in this priority</i>	47	Project application/ final report
<i>Number of organisations involved as partner in the projects</i>	Total number--of actors involved in priority 1 - <i>Average 4 per project</i>	612	Project application/ final report
Result indicators			
<i>Number of joint economic actions developed</i>	<i>Average 1 for each project corresp. to output indicators 1, 4 and 6 above</i>	65	Final report of projects
<i>Volume of private investment generated</i>	Private contribution to total costs in Euros - <i>Average € 100.000 per private company involved</i>	€ 4.800.000	Final report of projects
<i>Number of new cross-border cooperation structures between businesses and knowledge institutes</i>	Self supporting structures continuing to exist after ERDF support has ended	10	Final report of projects
<i>Number of new cross-border tourism products generated by supported projects</i>	<i>Average just over 1 for each project</i>	12	Final report of projects
<i>Number of measures to improve the accessibility of the area implemented</i>	<i>Average 1 for each project corresp. to output indicators 7 and 8 above</i>	30	Final report of projects

Priority 2: Promoting and enhancing a safe and healthy environment			
Indicator	Comment	Target value 2015	Source
Output indicators			
<i>Number of projects dedicated to integrated coastal zone management, maritime resource management and the management of estuaries</i>	<i>14,3% of projects in this priority</i>	15	Project application/ final report
<i>Number of projects on the prevention and management of natural, technological and human risks</i>	<i>10,7% of projects in this priority</i>	11	Project application/ final report
<i>Number of projects related to energy efficiency and renewable energies</i>	<i>32,1% of projects in this priority</i>	34	Project application/ final report
<i>Number of projects related to management of nature, landscape, natural heritage, and urban-rural relations</i>	<i>35,7% of projects in this priority</i>	38	Project application/ final report
<i>Number of projects related to water management, waste management and sustainable use of resources</i>	<i>7,3% of projects in this priority</i>	8	Project application/ final report
<i>Number of projects encouraging and improving the joint protection and management of the environment</i>	Core Indicator 49-- EC Working Paper on indicators - <i>Total number of projects in priority 2</i>	106	Project application/ final report
<i>Number of organisations involved as partner in the projects</i>	Total number--of actors involved in priority 2 - <i>Average 4 per project</i>	424	Project application/ final report
Result indicators			
<i>Number of new cross-border plans or tools for management of coastal, maritime areas or estuaries</i>	<i>Average 1 per project</i>	15	Final report of projects
<i>Number of new cross-border plans or structures for risk management</i>	<i>Average 1 per project</i>	11	Final report of projects
<i>Number of joint renewable energy / energy efficiency measures implemented</i>	<i>Average 1 per project</i>	34	Final report of projects
<i>Total area of nature and landscape developed and / or protected by the programme</i>	Gross total area in square kilometres <i>Average 5 km2 per project</i>	135 km2	Final report of projects
<i>Number of new cross-border plans or tools for water, waste or resources management</i>	<i>Average 1 per project</i>	8	Final report of projects

Priority 3: Improving quality of life			
Indicator	Comment	Target value 2015	Source
Output indicators			
<i>Number of projects related to community quality of life, social inclusion and well-being of different groups in society</i>	<i>25,8% of projects in this priority</i>	64	Project application/ final report
<i>Number of projects developing cooperation in the field of –ublic services</i>	Core Indicator 47-- EC Working Paper on indicators – <i>19% of projects in this priority</i>	47	Project application/ final report
<i>Number of projects supporting cooperation on education and training</i>	<i>18,4% of projects in this priority</i>	46	Project application/ final report
<i>Number of projects related to heritage and cultural assets</i>	<i>29,3% of projects in this priority</i>	73	Project application/ final report
<i>Number of projects dealing with recreation and social tourism</i>	<i>7.5% of projects in this priority</i>	19	Project application/ final report
<i>Number of organisations involved as partner in the projects</i>	Total number–of actors involved in priority 3 - <i>Average 4 per project</i>	996	Project application/ final report
Result indicators			
<i>Number of new measures jointly implemented improving community quality of life, social inclusion and well-being</i>	<i>Average 1 per project</i>	64	Final report of projects
<i>Number of joint public facilities and services developed</i>	<i>Average 1 per project</i>	47	Final report of projects
<i>Number of people participating in joint education or trai–ing activities</i>	Core Indicator 50 - EC Working Paper on indicators. <i>Assumption: 30 training activities with 25 participants each.</i>	750	Final report of projects
<i>Number of joint cross-border cultural activities developed</i>	<i>Average 1 activity for every two projects</i>	38	Final report of projects
<i>Number of people benefiting from new joint events and recreational facilities during lifespan of projects</i>	<i>Assumption: 300 visitors / users per event / facility on average</i>	9450	Final report of projects

Priority 4: Common priority with Channel/Manche programme			
Indicator	Comment	Target value 2015	Source
Output indicators			
<i>Total number of projects supported by the common priority</i>		38	Project application/ final report
<i>Number of joint action projects based on issues of common interest throughout the area</i>	50% of projects	19	Project application/ final report
<i>Number of networking projects between the projects implemented under each OP, on strategic themes for the geographical area</i>	30% of projects	11	Project application/ final report
<i>Number of specific strategic projects</i>	20% of projects	8	Project application/ final report
<i>Number of organisations involved in the projects as partners.</i>	Average 6 per project	228	Project application/ final report
Result indicators			
<i>Number of joint tools and information systems developed</i>	Average 1 for 2 co-financed projects	19	Final report of projects
<i>Number of action plans, monitoring programmes, public awareness raising programmes, etc. on issues of common interest.</i>	Average 1 for 2 co-financed projects	19	Final report of projects
<i>Number of good practices and experiences shared</i>	Average 1 for 2 co-financed projects	19	Final report of projects
<i>Number of networking opportunities resulting from the widening of the project partnerships already implemented under one of the two OPs</i>	Average 1 for 2 co-financed projects	19	Final report of projects
Priority 5 : Technical Assistance			
Indicator	Comment	Target value 2015	Source
Output indicators			
<i>Number of projects assisted / monitored</i>	Total number of projects in all priorities	546	Annual and final reports programme management
<i>Number of applications assessed</i>	<i>Assumption: success rate of 40%</i>	1365	Annual and final reports programme management
<i>Number of promotion and publicity activities</i>	<i>Average 5 events per year (2008 – 2013) by JTS and info points</i>	30	Annual and final reports programme management
Result indicators			
<i>Number of jobs created for the management of the programme</i>	In full time equivalents (fte) <i>JTS staff and info points</i>	21	Annual and final reports programme management
<i>Amount of ERDF subject to automatic de-commitment (N+2)</i>	In euros	0 €	Annual and final reports programme management
<i>Number of annual and final reports approved by the European Commission</i>	For the 8 year period 2008 - 2015	8	Annual and final reports programme management

Overall indicators			
Indicator	Comment	Target value 2015	Source
Degree of cooperation			
<i>Number of projects respecting two of the following criteria: joint development, joint implementation, joint staffing, j-int financing</i>	Core Indicator 42 - EC Working Paper on indicators	0	Project application/ final report
<i>Number of projects respecting three of the following criteria: joint development, joint implementation, joint staffing, j-int financing</i>	Core Indicator 43 - EC Working Paper on indicators	0	Project application/ final report
<i>Number of projects respecting four of the following criteria: joint development, joint implementation, joint staffing, j-int financing</i>	Core Indicator 44 - EC Working Paper on indicators	546	Project application/ final report
<i>Number of Member States represented in project partnerships (Priority 1,2&3 / Common Priority)</i>		2,5 / 3,5	Project application/ final report
Horizontal issues			
<i>Number of jobs created (permanent / temporary / share women)</i>	Number of jobs in full time equivalent (fte). Permanent jobs refer to fixed contracts; temporary jobs have a finite nature either during or after project. <i>Assumptions: 25% of projects generate one permanent fte; 50% of projects generate one temporary fte</i>	136 / 273 / 50%	Final report of projects
<i>Number of people getting employment on the other side of the border as a result of a project (permanent / temporary / share women)</i>	Core Indicator 51 - EC Working Paper on indicators <i>Assumption: 50% of all jobs created</i>	68 / 136 / 50%	Final report of projects
<i>Share of projects having a contribution to sustainable development which is neutral/positive/main aim</i>		30% / 40% / 30%	Final report of projects
<i>Share of projects having a contribution to equal opportunities which is neutral/positive/main aim</i>		50% / 40% / 10%	Final report of projects

Annex E : Summary of the ex-ante evaluation and SEA

Below the summary conclusions of the Ex Ante Evaluation and Strategic Environmental Assessment are presented. The full reports are available on : www._____.____

Main conclusions of the Ex-ante Evaluation

1- Context of the ex ante evaluation

A- An ex ante evaluation that covers two cross-border cooperation programmes

The ex-ante evaluation of the "2 Seas" cross-border cooperation programme is actually part of a joint evaluation process that also covers the France (Channel) - England cross-border cooperation programme. The ex ante evaluation of the two programmes took place over a seven-month period between April and November 2007. The firm of Deloitte adopted an interactive "iterative" approach with the Managing Authority and the firms of program writers in order to adjust and enhance the quality of the two programmes. Four different draft versions of the "2 Seas" operational programme were submitted to the evaluator and gave rise to numerous recommendations.

B- The four main sections of the ex ante evaluation

The ex ante evaluation is structured around four sections:

- Evaluation of the strength of the territorial diagnostic review
- Evaluation of the relevance and coherence of the programme
- Evaluation of the expected results and their impacts
- Analysis of the implementation provisions

For each of these sections, the Evaluator attempted to illustrate their analyses by lessons learned from previous INTERREG programmes even though the 2 Seas OP itself constitutes a new programme that is notable for covering a very large territory.

C- The work performed by the Evaluator

The main work performed was as follows:

- An analysis of the characteristics of the North programme eligible area;
- An analysis of the OP in light of current European Commission legislation;
- A series of interviews with members of the evaluation committee, the *DIACT* (French delegation for territorial planning and regional competitiveness) and the European Commission;
- A written consultation process in the form of an on-line questionnaire sent to members of the evaluation committee that elicited 8 responses. The Evaluator had initially planned to consult a large range of socio-economic actors using this questionnaire, however the programme partnership expressed reservations concerning this type of consultation process and the Evaluator ultimately decided to send the questionnaire only to members of the evaluation committee.

2- Contribution of the ex ante evaluation process

The following paragraphs describe the contribution of the ex ante evaluation on a thematic basis.

A- The Evaluator's contribution to the description of the methodology used by the programme writers

The different phases involved in developing the operational programme were presented in a separate section. In accordance with the recommendation made by the Evaluator, the program writers included a list of bodies consulted in the appendix. However, details of the contribution of the various partners were not included in the version of the OP dated 3 August 2007 and submitted for public consultation.

B- The Evaluator's contribution to the diagnostic review

The diagnostic review was clarified and enhanced thanks to the insertion of maps and the inclusion of benchmark years for the context indicators.

C- The Evaluator's contribution to the internal coherence of the programme

The internal coherence of the programme was enhanced thanks to the inclusion of examples of actions or projects for each operational objective. However, these examples could be enhanced still further if they were a little more concrete.

D- The Evaluator's contribution to the system of indicators

The Evaluator was only able to issue an opinion concerning the system of indicators insofar as these were not included in version 3 *bis* of the OP dated 3 August and submitted for public consultation. However, the Evaluator deemed the system of indicators proposed in the final version of the OP to be appropriate and in line with European Commission guidelines.

E- The Evaluator's contribution to the implementation provisions

The Evaluator was not able to evaluate the implementation provisions in their entirety as they were only partially included in version 3 *bis* of the OP dated 3 August and submitted for public consultation. The remarks concerning the composition and missions of the Managing Authority, the Certifying Authority and the Audit Authority were taken on board. The section was reorganised into three sub-sections as recommended by the Evaluator and the sections initially left out were included. The role of the Technical Secretariat and the technical teams (to be renamed in line with the request of the Commission) has been modified by the programme writers in light of the comments submitted by the Commission. At present, the partnership is still evolving to incorporate the Commission's comments more effectively.

Conclusion

The Evaluator had a significant influence on how the programme was prepared. The program writing firm and the Managing Authority were very receptive to the proposals of the Evaluator firm and its main recommendations were taken into account both in the thought process and in the drafting of the OP.

Non-technical summary of the Strategic Environmental Assessment ³

Context

The France (Channel)-England and 2 Seas 2007-2013 cross-border cooperation programmes reflect the whole range of policies and strategic orientations defined at the European level for national deployment. Policies for cooperation during the period 2007-2013 have been developed as part of the Commission's strategic orientations and have been approved by the European Council and Parliament. The new regulations governing structural funds for the period 2007-2013 were published in the EU's Official Journal at the beginning of July 2006.

As provided for by Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment, and in accordance with the joint letter dated 2 February 2006 of the European Commission's regional policy and environmental directorates, a strategic environmental assessment of the France (Channel)-England and 2 Seas cross-border cooperation programmes has been performed.

As provided for by the above documents, the strategic environmental assessment deals with specific objectives, as opposed to projects.

The purpose of the assessment is to:

- Recall the environmental context of the eligible zones and highlight the priorities arising based on the preliminary focus defined for the assessment;
- Assess the degree of integration of these environmental aspects within the priorities defined for the OPs, whether comprising initiatives specifically devoted to the environment or other initiatives liable to have direct or indirect environmental impacts;
- Assess the environmental impacts of the specific objectives provided for, define corrective measures and alternatives if appropriate or formulate environmental criteria designed to attenuate any environmental impacts of the designated objectives.

The assessment has been based on the versions 5 of the applicable OPs. An assessment based on the third versions of the applicable OPs has been submitted for public consultation.

³ The Non-technical summary produced by the authors of the SEA covers both this OP and the France (Channel)-England OP. In this Annex only the sections relevant for this OP are reproduced. Removed segments are marked as follows: [...].

Summary of the operations of the Operational Programme

The environmental aspects of the "2 Seas" OP have been integrated:

- Via the measures for protection of the environment included within the number 2 priority of "Promotion and development of a safe and secure environment";
- Via transversal aspects of other, not specifically environmental operating objectives whose implementation may nevertheless generate positive or negative environmental impacts (cf. the number 1 priority of "Creation of an accessible, attractive and economically competitive zone" and the number 2 priority of "Improvement of the quality of life").

[...]

Summary of the key environmental issues

The following key environmental issues have been identified for the North zone:

- Protect and maintain biodiversity and natural environments,
- Improve water quality (water table, surface, coastal),
- Reduce the production of household and industrial waste and improve recovery,
- Ensure sustainable management of water resources,
- Control energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions,
- Reduce the risks of flooding,
- Preserve and promote the regional landscape heritage.

Summary of the public consultation

Details of the public consultation process

The following tables describe the consultation process engaged in for the 2 Seas OP:

Internet consultation	England	http://www.erd.f.comunities.gov.uk/WhatIsERDF/ERDFTerritorialCoopProgrammes .	From 10/08 to 02/11
	France	http://www.nordpasdecalais.fr/instit/actualites/intro.asp	From 12/09 to 12/10
	The Netherlands	www.structuurfondsen.ez.nl	From 17/09 to 29/10
	Flanders	http://www.mervlaanderen.be	From 27/09 to 15/10
Public meetings	England	No public meeting was held	
	France	The following seminars and meetings were organised by regional government: - An external seminar for regional actors in the process held on 9 October 2007, - Presentation and consultation sessions organised for agglomerations such as Dunkirk, Roubaix and Lille between May and November 2007	
	The Netherlands	A public meeting took place on 3/10	
	Flanders	No public meeting was held	

It should be noted that in Flanders, more targeted consultation of several public institutions was undertaken.

[...]

Comments received from the public consultation process

Remarks on the strategic environmental assessment were formulated, during the process of public consultation, by the following organisations:

- The English Environment Agency,
- MER - Milieu Agentschap Vlaanderen
- The Agentschap Ruimtelijke Ordening Entiteit Onroerend Erfgoed (Flanders).

It should be noted that we received the response of the Environment Agency at a late stage during the final assessment meeting held on 7 November 2007 in Lille.

- **Comments dealing with the strategic environmental assessment as a whole**

Remarks were made as to the lack of information relating to the methods employed in assessing the environmental impact of the programme topics and specific objectives. A paragraph of explanation has therefore been added to appendix 1 of the present report.

Comments were also made as to the manner in which the process of assessment has been integrated into the drafting of the operating programme. It must be stressed that the appraiser is not intended to intervene in drafting the operating programme. Nevertheless several meetings have taken place and several reports have been prepared which have allowed those responsible for drafting the operating programme to take account of the appraiser's recommendations in each successive version of the operating programme. In turn the appraiser has regularly verified that appropriate account was being taken of the recommendations formulated. For example, it was as a result of the appraiser's recommendations that the environmental dimension was integrated within specific objectives 3 and 4.

It was also suggested that the summary of the environmental assessment of the programmes' specific objectives did not adequately reflect the issues proper to each eligible zone, inasmuch as the assessment was limited to the major environmental topics (biodiversity and natural environments, pollution and environmental quality, natural resources, safety and risks, living environment, heritage and climate change). It must however be stressed that in determining each region's priorities, a major issue was identified for each topic and so to this extent the assessment did indeed reflect the main issues for each eligible zone.

It was equally suggested that inadequate detail was provided as to the source data for the environmental context indicators and that there was a lack of integration between those indicators and the performance indicators defined by the OPs. However it must be noted that few environmental context indicators were provided in the France (Channel)-England OP and none in the 2 Seas OP, and that the performance indicators defined within the OPs were effectively not correlated with the few environmental context indicators that were defined. The appraiser was thus not able to establish a link between the two categories of indicators, nor was it the appraiser's vocation to seek to identify their source data.

The lack of review of the interrelationship between the 2 Seas and France (Channel)-England OPs and other relevant plans and programmes was also underlined. The consistency of the OPs with other plans and programmes was in fact addressed as part of the ex ante evaluation but nevertheless, in response to this comment. A summary of that analysis has been included within the present document. For more detail in this respect the reader should refer to the ex ante evaluation report.

Finally, it became obvious from the public consultation process that there was a need to prepare a non-technical summary of the present report, which has therefore been prepared to include the following items:

- A summary of the OPs' content,
- The salient aspects of the environmental situation and characteristics of the zones liable to be impacted by the OPs,
- The environmental problems relating to the OPs as well as their main probable impacts on the environment,
- A description of the associated environmental indicators.

- **2 Seas OP**

The following views were expressed:

- Further information relating to the environmental issues confronting Flanders:
All the information has been integrated into the present document with the exception of the remark relating to green spaces within urban areas: such spaces are considered to be areas of nature despite their urban surroundings.
- Comments relating to contextual indicators:

A proposal was made for the contextual indicators relating to landscapes and heritage detailed in the table below. None of these indicators have been included in version 5 of the 2 Seas OP.

Landscapes	Percentage of total surface area occupied by traditional landscapes (preparation of a landscaping atlas) Surface area of listed landscapes
Heritage	Number of listed monuments Number of listed urban sites (towns and villages) Number and surface area of listed landscapes Number of listed archaeological sites Centralised archaeological inventory, inventory of architectural heritage, landscaping atlas

However it should be noted that inasmuch as the topics and specific objectives presented in the 2 Seas OP are essentially of an intangible nature, the definition of environmental context indicators does not appear to be a necessity for monitoring the OP's environmental impact.

- Comments regarding implementation of the appraiser's recommendations in respect of priority strategy 1:
The appraiser has proposed project selection criteria for this priority strategy (cf. p. 73); we therefore do not understand the intent of the Environment Agency's remark.

[...]

Assessment of environmental impacts

The positive or negative environmental impact of the operating priorities and objectives is strongly dependent on the means of programme implementation. Most of the strategies defined in response to objectives (whether or not of an environmental nature of themselves) are essentially of an intangible nature. Their potential positive environmental impacts are thus of an indirect nature and are dependent on the means of implementation. In addition, the current level of detail of the 2 Seas operating programme does not enable determination of whether implementation of the programme's objectives will have a positive or negative impact on the environment.

For specific objectives with a potentially negative impact, selection criteria must be defined in order to limit the negative aspects.

No selection criteria have been defined in version 3 of the operating programmes for specific objectives dedicated or not dedicated to the environment. Hence, for many specific objectives, it is difficult to determine whether their implementation will limit or boost environmental quality in the eligible zone. Accordingly, the impact on the environment of a specific objective may be either positive or negative.

Hence, selection criteria must be defined for all the specific objectives whose implementation procedures will affect the environmental impacts they generate.

The operating objectives focused on the environment deal with all the major regional environmental priorities (biodiversity and natural environments, pollution and environmental quality, safety/risks, living environment and climate change) and will have a positive impact on the environment, but most of these objectives deal with intangible aspects, such as promoting an understanding of issues, and as such their positive effects must be expected to be limited.

[...]

Overall summary of the foreseeable impacts of the "2 Seas" operating programme on the environment

Legend:							
☺ Potentially strong positive impact on the environment	Biodiversity and natural environments	Pollution and environmental quality	Natural resources	Safety/Risks	Living environment	Heritage	Climate change
😊 Potentially positive impact on the environment							
☹ Neutral impact on the environment or dependent on the approach to implementing the specific objective							
☹ Potentially negative impact on the environment							
☹ Potentially strong negative impact on the environment							
Priority strategy 1 – Creation of an accessible, attractive and economically competitive zone	☹	☹	☹	☹	☹	☹	☹
Priority strategy 2 – Promotion of a safe and secure environment	😊	😊	😊	😊	😊	😊	😊
Priority strategy 3 – Improvement of living conditions	☹	☹	☹	☹	☹	☹	☹

Overall summary of the foreseeable impacts of the operating programme on the environment

Legend:							
☺ Potentially strong positive impact on the environment	Biodiversity and natural environments	Pollution and environmental quality	Natural resources	Safety/Risks	Living environment	Heritage	Climate change
😊 Potentially positive impact on the environment							
☹ Neutral impact on the environment or dependent on the approach to implementing the specific objective							
☹ Potentially negative impact on the environment							
☹ Potentially strong negative impact on the environment							
Common Priority	☹	☹	☹	☹	☹	☹	☹

Assessment of performance indicators

The environmental indicators proposed in the 2 Seas and France (Channel)-England OPs are structured as follows:

- Indicators are provided as to the implementation of and results achieved for objectives relating to the environment;
- No indicators have been provided as to environmental impact.

The indicators as to implementation of and results achieved for objectives relating to the environment within the France (Channel)-England and 2 Seas OPs have been assessed within the framework of the ex-ante evaluation.

[...]

No indicators have been provided as to environmental implementation and results for the objectives associated with priorities 1 and 3 of the 2 Seas OP which are not dedicated to the environment. Inasmuch as the related project selection criteria may be defined on the basis of their potential environmental impact, they should be associated with indicators as to the number of projects complying with those criteria.

Our analysis did not extend to any indicators as to environmental impact, the absence of which may be justified by the essentially intangible nature of the programmes' specific objectives and the associated measures proposed.

Annex F : Indicative breakdown of ERDF contribution

As specified in the ERDF Regulation (EC 1080/2006, article 12.5) the following tables present an indicative breakdown by category of the programmed use of the contribution of the ERDF. The overview consists of three separate lists of categories, notably by priority themes, form of finance and territory:

If the allocation of the priority themes to the first three thematic priorities of the OP is relatively easy, it was not possible nor desirable to distinguish the portion of the funding which would go to the common priority for the following reasons:

- It is not truly compatible with the selected plural and open approach;
- It will partially fall on the Monitoring Committee to give its opinion on the themes that it judges to be priorities regarding the actions to be jointly developed with the other actors of the France (Channel) – England OP as the programme progresses.

TABLE 1: CODES FOR THE PRIORITY THEME DIMENSION

Code	Priority theme	ERDF budget		Priorities
		€	%	
<i>Research and technological development (R&TD), innovation and entrepreneurship</i>				
1	R&TD activities in research centres	€ 5.010.005	3%	1
2	R&TD infrastructure (<i>including physical plant, instrumentation and high-speed computer networks linking research centres</i>) and centres of competence in a specific technology	€ 5.010.005	3%	1
3	Technology transfer and improvement of cooperation networks between small businesses (SMEs), between these and other businesses and universities, post-secondary education establishments of all kinds, regional authorities, research centres and scientific and technological poles (<i>scientific and technological parks, technopoles, etc.</i>)	€ 5.010.005	3%	1
4	Assistance to R&TD, particularly in SMEs (<i>including access to R&TD services in research centres</i>)	€ 1.670.002	1%	1
5	Advanced support services for firms and groups of firms	€ 1.670.002	1%	1
6	Assistance to SMEs for the promotion of environmentally-friendly products and production processes (<i>introduction of effective environment managing system, adoption and use of pollution prevention technologies, integration of clean technologies into firm production</i>)	€ 5.010.005	3%	1
7	Investment in firms directly linked to research and innovation (<i>innovative technologies, establishment of new firms by universities, existing R&TD centres and firms, etc.</i>)	€ 3.340.004	2%	1
8	Other investment in firms	€ 1.670.002	1%	1
9	Other measures to stimulate research and innovation and entrepreneurship in SMEs	€ 1.670.002	1%	1
<i>Information society</i>				
11	Information and communication technologies (<i>access, security, interoperability, risk-prevention, research, innovation, e-content, etc.</i>)	€ 3.340.004	2%	1
13	Services and applications for the citizen (<i>e-health, e-government, e-learning, e-inclusion, etc.</i>)	€ 1.670.002	1%	3

Code	Priority theme	ERDF budget		Priorities
		€	%	
14	Services and applications for SMEs (<i>e-commerce, education and training, networking, etc.</i>)	€ 1.670.002	1%	1
15	Other measures for improving access to and efficient use of ICT by SMEs	€ 1.670.002	1%	1

Transport

24	Cycle tracks	€ 1.670.002	1%	1
25	Urban transport	€ 1.670.002	1%	1
26	Multimodal transport	€ 1.670.002	1%	1
28	Intelligent transport systems	€ 1.670.002	1%	1
30	Ports	€ 6.680.007	4%	1
31	Inland waterways (<i>regional and local</i>)	€ 3.340.004	2%	1

Energy

39	Renewable energy: wind	€ 5.010.005	3%	2
40	Renewable energy: solar	€ 3.340.004	2%	2
41	Renewable energy: biomass	€ 3.340.004	2%	2
43	Energy efficiency, co-generation, energy management	€ 5.010.005	3%	2

Environmental protection and risk prevention

44	Management of household and industrial waste	€ 835.001	0,50%	2
46	Water treatment (<i>waste water</i>)	€ 835.001	0,50%	2
47	Air quality	€ 1.670.002	1%	2
48	Integrated prevention and pollution control	€ 1.670.002	1%	2
49	Mitigation and adaptation to climate change	€ 3.340.004	2%	2
50	Rehabilitation of industrial sites and contaminated land	€ 1.670.002	1%	2
51	Promotion of biodiversity and nature protection (<i>including Natura 2000</i>)	€ 1.670.002	1%	2
53	Risk prevention (<i>including the drafting and implementation of plans and measures to prevent and manage natural and technological risks</i>)	€ 3.340.004	2%	2
54	Other measures to preserve the environment and prevent risks	€ 1.670.002	1%	2

Tourism

55	Promotion of natural assets	€ 6.680.007	4%	2
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Code	Priority theme	ERDF budget		Priorities
		€	%	
56	Protection and development of natural heritage	€ 5.010.005	3%	2
57	Other assistance to improve tourist services	€ 5.010.005	3%	1

Culture

58	Protection and preservation of the cultural heritage	€ 6.680.007	4%	3
59	Development of cultural infrastructure	€ 5.010.005	3%	3
60	Other assistance to improve cultural services	€ 5.010.005	3%	3

Urban and rural regeneration

61	Integrated projects for urban and rural regeneration	€ 5.010.005	3%	2
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Increasing the adaptability of workers and firms, enterprises and entrepreneurs

62	Development of life-long learning systems and strategies in firms; training and services for employees to step up their adaptability to change; promoting entrepreneurship and innovation	€ 1.670.002	1%	1
63	Design and dissemination of innovative and more productive ways of organising work	€ 1.670.002	1%	1
64	Development of specific services for employment, training and support in connection with restructuring of sectors and firms, and development of systems for anticipating economic changes and future requirements in terms of jobs and skills	€ 1.670.002	1%	1

Improving access to employment and sustainability

67	Measures encouraging active ageing and prolonging working lives	€ 1.670.002	1%	3
68	Support for self-employment and business start-up	€ 1.670.002	1%	1
69	Measures to improve access to employment and increase sustainable participation and progress of women in employment to reduce gender-based segregation in the labour market, and to reconcile work and private life, such as facilitating access to childcare and care for dependent persons	€ 1.670.002	1%	3
70	Specific action to increase migrants' participation in employment and thereby strengthen their social integration	€ 1.670.002	1%	3

Improving the social inclusion of less-favoured persons

71	Pathways to integration and re-entry into employment for disadvantaged people; combating discrimination in accessing and progressing in the labour market and promoting acceptance of diversity at the workplace	€ 3.340.004	2%	3
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Improving human capital

Code	Priority theme	ERDF budget		Priorities
		€	%	
72	Design, introduction and implementation of reforms in education and training systems in order to develop employability, improving the labour market relevance of initial and vocational education and training, updating skills of training personnel with a view to innovation and a knowledge based economy	€ 3.340.004	2%	3
73	Measures to increase participation in education and training throughout the life-cycle, including through action to achieve a reduction in early school leaving, gender-based segregation of subjects and increased access to and quality of initial vocational and tertiary education and training	€ 1.670.002	1%	3

Investment in social infrastructure

75	Education infrastructure	€ 3.340.004	2%	3
76	Health infrastructure	€ 1.670.002	1%	3
77	Childcare infrastructure	€ 1.670.002	1%	3

Mobilisation for reforms in the fields of employment and inclusion

80	Promoting partnerships, pacts and initiatives through the networking of relevant stakeholders	€ 1.670.002	1%	3
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Strengthening institutional capacity at national, regional and local level

81	Mechanisms for improving good policy and programme design, monitoring and evaluation at national, regional and local level, capacity building in the delivery of policies and programmes.	€ 1.670.002	1%	3
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Technical assistance

85	Preparation, implementation, monitoring and inspection	€ 6 554 757	3.925 %	5
86	Evaluation and studies; information and communication	€ 3 214 755	1.925 %	5

TABLE 2: CODES FOR THE FORM OF FINANCE DIMENSION

Code	Form of finance	ERDF budget	
		€	%
01	Non-repayable aid	€ 167.000.183	100%

TABLE 3: CODES FOR THE TERRITORIAL DIMENSION

Code	Form of finance	ERDF budget	
		€	%
08	Cross-border cooperation area	€ 167.000.183	100%