

Key Info: Common Priority with the France (Channel) – England Programme

1. Extract from the 2 Seas Operational Programme, Priority 4 : Common Priority with the France (Channel) – England Programme

ERDF amount: 12.63M€ for the period 2007-2013

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.

Key principles for this priority:

- 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).

Operational Objectives

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.

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 2 Seas Programme (either the French, Flemish or Dutch part).

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.*

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).

2. Points of attention :

- The **budget allocated to the Common Priority is limited**: 12.63M€ which equates to 7.56% of the ERDF total within the 2 Seas cross-border cooperation Programme.
- The consequence of this is that particular attention will be paid to project proposals submitted under the Common Priority: **do the projects fit within the three operational objectives of the Common Priority, do they respond to the « key principles » outlined in the Operational Programme:**
 - Do the proposed projects concern « **strategic maritime themes** » for the whole of the maritime area that justifies coverage of the enlarged geographical area?



- Are the proposed projects directly « **maritime related**» i.e. having a specific maritime character
 - Do the proposed projects have a **real cross border dimension** and are, in this sense, distinct from projects that concern transnational and interregional cooperation?
 - The projects are characterised in a specific or cumulative way by: the **development of issues of common interest**, and in particular those which have a cross border maritime dimension; the **capitalisation of good practices** implemented in each OP.
- The proposed projects submitted under the Common Priority have to be « reasonable » concerning their financial plan (total budget and ERDF). Moreover, in view of the specifications for these projects, it is regarded that costs for equipment and investment should be very limited.

To be eligible, projects submitted under the Common Priority must include at least one partner from the UK, one partners 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).

3. Who can help you? Who will evaluate the projects?

- It is advised that project applicants meet with the territorial facilitators of the 2 Seas Programme and France (Channel) – England Programme before submitting a project. This is to ensure the compatibility of the project with the principles and operational objectives for the Common Priority. It will also be possible to meet with the 2 Seas programme Joint Technical Secretariat (JTS) based in Lille.
- Please remember that the evaluation of the projects will be undertaken by the 2 Seas JTS and therefore project applications must be submitted in the Application Form of the 2 Seas Programme. This is available on the website along with the rules and guidance concerning the 2 Seas Programme that should also be respected.

Please note that the authorities responsible for the France (Channel) – England Programme and their JTS will also be very much associated in the development and evaluation of the projects submitted under the Common Priority.

[Version: 07/02/2011](#)

