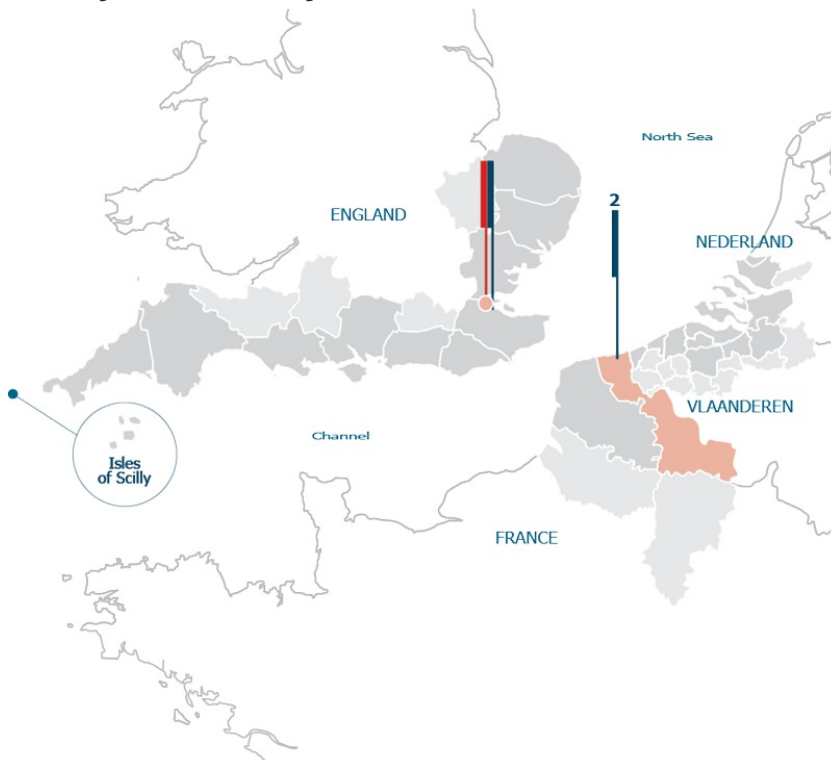


ACCES

Achieving Community Champions and Enhancing Social Capital for Disadvantaged Communities



■ Project summary



The ACCES project's objective is to enhance the quality of life and employability of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods in Medway and around Dunkerque. The Partners have seen the great benefits of offering crossborder opportunities and intergenerational exchanges to these communities. The combined experiences of the partners will enable them to address the concerns of the variety of audiences involved. ACCES will empower these young people by engaging residents and in particular young people in urban regeneration, delivering a crossborder mentoring and parenting skills programme for young parents, and enabling young

people to define and develop community projects which improve their neighbourhoods. Partners will also strive to empower young people through crossborder courses in artistic and cultural expression, personal development and sports marshalling, work experience, training and qualifications.

■ Activities

What was the project trying to achieve?

In the framework of objectives 1 and 3 we saw our young people getting involved in various training courses and they also organised a football competition in their neighbourhood. Also, a cross-border film was produced, working together with the various skills they learnt through the project. Objective 2 saw The Wayfeild children centre, hugely experienced in delivering parenting advice comended the Acces project as being the most successful scheme they have ever run. Through the project, many parents found that other parents in neighbouring France faced the same difficulties as them and they were able to learn from each other, rediscovering the joy of playing with their children, implementing some new and innovative techniques whilst

applying some healthy eating principles. They also produced an exciting book full of nursery rhymes, drawings and pictures. Objective 4 was met through the implementation of various new skills, training and experiences. For instance, young people from France and England had the opportunity to volunteer for the organisation of a modern Pentathlon event, affording these people an opportunity to prove organisational, behaviour and language skills.

What were the activities implemented?

The following activities were realised in Objective 1: Language lessons, sports activities, participation and organisation of events, professional meetings, training sessions: first aid training; disability awareness; Sports Events Management; Life saving (water-based); filming and editing, cross-border visits and the creation of a youth club and a football team in a disadvantaged area of Medway. The following activities were realised in Objective 2: Beneficiaries shared cross-cultural knowledge, experiences and customs, they participated in musical mini-workshops as well as choral and theatre workshops. Participants were successful in acquiring an E111 card, a passport, a library card and an e-mail address for every member of the group - something that was previously out of reach for most of the beneficiaries. There was a joint performance from the Anglo-French company in Chatham Historic Dockyard of "I am the city", completion of individual artworks in The Suitcase Museum, Workshops to learn to sing, drum and present stories in front of an audience, all in order to boost beneficiaries confidence. There were cross border professional meetings to prepare for all of the above activities. The following activities were realised in Objective 3: Local sessions organised by professionals on the subject of good parenting, workshops focussing on skills in cooking; first aid awareness; parenting; baby massages; child behaviour. There was also the provision of language tuition and the production of the "family booklet" which was published also.

■ Results

What were the key results of the project?

Activity 1 1 Bilingual language training, 1 Cultural awareness event, 5 Language training sessions for the English/french young people, 2 first aid training session as well as disability awareness course, stewarding of the pentathlon world cup and 4 video-making workshops sessions. Activity 2: 12 passports processed, 17 E111 cards obtained, 3 Library accounts set up, 6 e-mail addresses were set-up for beneficiaries, two cross-border meetings, 5 local performances in the UK, 4 local performances in France, 2 cross-border final performances in Medway & Dunkerque, 1 cross-border visit in Dunkerque, 16 weekly choir sessions, 20 sessions of 2 hours per week at the Suitcases museum Activity 3: 16 Passports for participants, 5 Cooking sessions, Paediatric first aid awareness, Healthy lifetime workshop, 37 language-training sessions, weekly sessions for parents in cooking, parenting, baby massages, child behaviour, production and publication of families' book and 3 French & 3 English nursery rhymes recorded.

Did all partners and territories benefit from the results?

The benefits for each territory were that professionals had the opportunity to share learning and transfer knowledge to/from each other which greatly improves the ability to deliver programmes that offer improvements to beneficiaries' quality of life. Partners tested new

programmes of work with residents and they were able to evaluate the qualitative results of these. The Acces project activities were different from what is usually funded through other programmes so it was very good to be able to test something innovative. Each participating territory benefited from helping residents to acquire a better quality of life and improve their living conditions. Some beneficiaries secured jobs thanks to the project which contributes to lowering unemployment and state dependency at a time when sovereign debt and budget deficits are very much in the limelight. This is an indirect impact but we feel it is important to note.

What were the effects / outcomes for the territories involved?

The quality of life of the residents who participated in the Acces project has notably increased. Despite only focussing on two areas in the programme zone, the lessons learnt from the project will have a positive and sustainable effect on the territory as: The activities targeting the well-being of the participating residents will mean that they will be more likely to be economically active in the future. The young people involved in the project learned new skills and acquired qualifications that increase their employability. The organisations and professionals involved will be able to use the knowledge they have gained from the project to deliver a better service to the residents. Elected members from the territories involved in the project were present at several meetings and they also interacted directly with residents allowing them to experience first-hand the project results in the hope that this might influence their decision and policy making.

■ Distinctiveness

What was the real added-value of doing this cross-border project?

The real-added value of participating in such a project has come through being able to share and implement cross-border best-practice and learning from one another, getting young people to think that they can actually use the freedom of movement principle in the European Union and that France and England are not that far from each other. Cross border projects can actually inspire people... The Acces project helped residents to realise that even in other countries there are people with similar problems and that led to the adoption of new ways of working, parenting, teaching, behaving etc. A particular case in point is one of the beneficiaries gaining sufficient confidence to actually go to France on his own and become involved in the HEROES 2C project, also funded by the 2 Seas programme. Before Acces, this would not have been possible.

Have any synergies been developed with other projects or networks?

Unfortunately, with the ACCES project being one of the first projects to be approved under the 2 Seas programme, it was quite difficult to link with other projects. However, some of the project beneficiaries have become involved in other projects such as INSPIRER and HEROES 2C.

What are the key messages , key lessons learned you would like to share?

Acces's top tips from the lessons we learned, as partners, over the course of the project are: - Start to link with other projects from the development stage of your proposal - Initiate recruitment procedures very quickly after you receive the subsidy contract to allow the



Developing your crossborder ambitions!

implementation of project activities from the very start of the activity phase - Prepare your partners and ensure the very best information flow from the start of the project - Make sure that your partners understand the requirements and expectations of a partnership project with clearly defined roles and responsibilities.

■ Project Information

Title	Achieving Community Champions and Enhancing Social Capital for Disadvantaged Communities
Total project budget	€ 1 019 854
ERDF	€ 509 927
Priority & objective	Priority 3 a. Promote and allow for social inclusion and well-being of different groups in society
Timeframe	2007-11-01 - 2011-10-31
Lead partner	Medway Council
Project Coordinator	Solène FERREIRA(solene.ferreira@medway.gov.uk)

