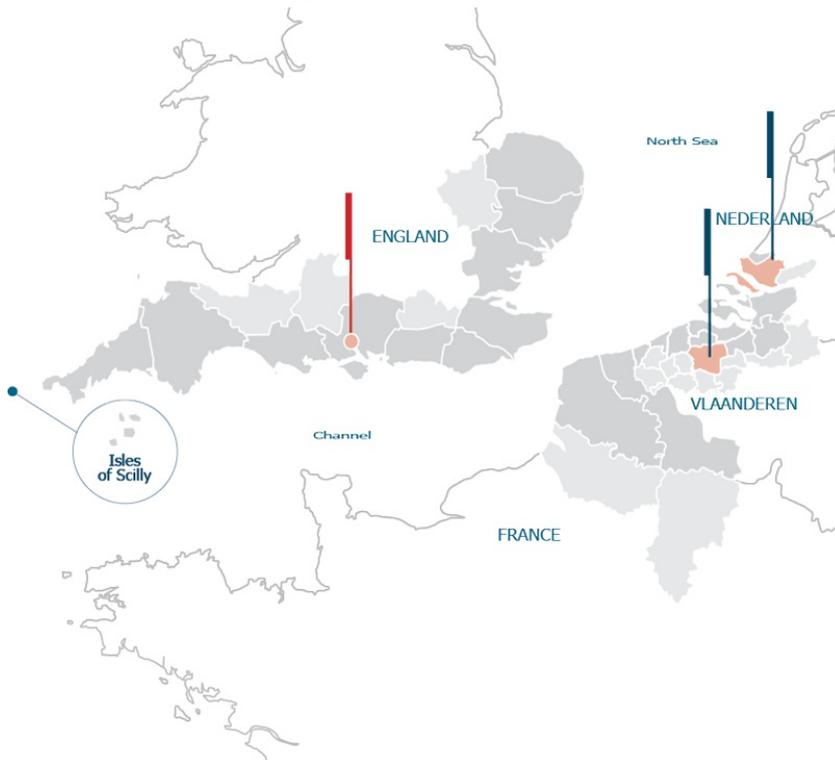


TSE

Tackling Social Exclusion-by examining, testing, and improving service quality



■ Project summary



This project brought together three urban localities in the 2 Seas programme area to examine, test and improve methods of delivering services to improve social inclusion for those people most disadvantaged. The local authority partnership (Southampton, Gent and Rotterdam) worked together to look at examples of best practice and services in social inclusion; to bring together professionals who work to combat social exclusion (both directly and indirectly) and to test innovative methods of improving the position of those people who suffer from exclusion in our communities and neighbourhoods. The project aimed to solve some of the common

problems identified by the partners, improving services that are delivered to the public and providing a record of evaluated local test projects, policies and schemes which are transferable to the wider 2 Seas programme area and beyond. The project examined how elements of 'peer review' can be incorporated into project activities and embracing the fact that partners all had differing strengths in certain areas of social inclusion which the other partners in the project could benefit from and test out. The project also provided a foundation on which further co-operation between the urban areas could flourish. A key area of focus was on providing direct examples of the changing nature of services to tackle social exclusion and how they can be most effective in a challenging economic climate.

■ Activities

What was the project trying to achieve?

The main aim of the TSE project was to provide the project partners with the means to examine, test and improve service delivery to improve social inclusion in their respective areas and also to be able to provide a record of this which was transferrable to other urban areas in

the 2 Seas region and beyond. The project's objectives were to allow managers, policy makers, and those involved in the delivery of projects and programmes to gain from a partnership with other urban areas by: - Observing practice which takes place in the other cities - To test out innovative new actions - To transfer expertise - Benefitting from the ability to see new approaches taking place where there are contextual differences.

What were the activities implemented?

Activities implemented by the TIME project include the following: - 8 discussion/information exchanges on relevant themes (including employment, disability, access to services) - Development of 4 case studies - A comparative analysis (shared activity with Activity 1) - A 'database' of highlighted areas of good practice in social inclusion as recommended by the cities Activity 3 aimed to provide practical working examples of services for socially excluded groups. The activity provided the resources for the three partner cities to test out initiatives in their respective local areas. The activities were carried out locally, but with input from the other partner cities who visited the local projects as part of a transnational study visit (hosted 1 per partner, per year). The project partners were able to learn from the processes undertaken (the good and bad points), whether the activity itself was successful, the framework within which the activity exists (politically, physically, economically etc..) and whether the activity, or elements of it could be replicated elsewhere. Practically, the activities comprise Social exclusion test activities in three partner cities: - SOUTHAMPTON (Catering training scheme, Services for individuals with higher support needs, User Group, Engaging with people in areas of social housing, Employment support for care leavers / young offenders) -ROTTERDAM (Watch Out Security / Community work project, REVIT (later called new influx into the harbour), City Stewards, Care, and in depth research / evaluation activities) -GENT (Accessibility tools, Awareness raising activities, Improving accessibility in the Horeca sector, Improving accessibility in events and tourism, Improving employment for disabled people within the city administration) And activity evaluations (incorporating peer reviews) of all locally tested activity; Transnational study visits to view the activities (incorporating round-table discussions of relevant workers) and the development of toolkits related to the work in the partner cities

■ Results

What were the key results of the project?

ACTIVITY 1 - STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT & DIRECTION; PARTNERSHIPS & STRUCTURES: 9 transnational study visits; 8 formal discussions 4 case studies Comparative analysis ACTIVITY 2 - THEMES, THEORIES & APPROACHES - CRITICAL FACTORS IN SOCIAL INCLUSION: 9 transnational study visits 8 transnational seminars 4 case studies Comparative analysis (with Activity 2) ACTIVITY 3 - LOCAL INTERVENTION & PEER REVIEW: 9 Transnational study visits 8 Round table discussions 16 Social inclusion test activities 3 activity evaluations 5 toolkits

Did all partners and territories benefit from the results?

All project partners benefitted from the activities undertaken and their results, as all project partners were involved in all the activities of the project. In particular, partner city representatives from all three partner were present at all project meetings / study visits / discussions and talks. In addition to this, all three partner cities hosted a visit to their city per

year. In all of these activities, those involved were individuals working to tackle social exclusion in the cities. The beneficiaries of the project were as follows: - Public administration / Local Authority staff – practitioners and managers - Other organisations and their staff involved in the project activities (health services, community and voluntary organisations, NGOs, other local and national public bodies) - Those individuals benefitting from service improvements and those who received services as part of the test activities in the cities (final beneficiaries)

What were the effects / outcomes for the territories involved?

The outcomes realised by the project are manifold. The major outcome is the increase in the number of professionals and practitioners in the field of social inclusion gaining expertise and working with cross border partners, in order to increase capacity and competency levels to deal with the current issues of social inclusion. The TSE project also allowed for an increased number of innovative pilot projects to be run and evaluated for their impact upon social inclusion, which lead to an increased number of individuals benefitting from interventions relating to social inclusion and bringing more marginal areas of society in to the mainstream.

■ Distinctiveness

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

Through a genuinely successful partnership of relevant actors in three countries, the TSE project has been able to: - Develop materials transferrable to a pan-EU audience to enable actors to improve social inclusion in their respective cities. - Provide practitioners with the opportunity to work with peers from their own field / outside of their own field, and across borders – the impact of which is further learning, understanding, and self-development. - Provide a common understanding of issues relating to social exclusion / inclusion across the 2 Seas area. - Provide the project partners themselves with the opportunity to develop further projects and initiatives. - Provide the project partners with examples of best-practice from other countries which have the potential to be replicated and implemented elsewhere.

Have any synergies been developed with other projects or networks?

At various times during the project's implementation, the TSE project has linked with the following organisations / networks / projects: - Shaping 24 – an Interreg IVA 2 Seas partnership between Gent (BE) and Norwich (UK) which explores the link between culture, heritage and tourism - EUROCITIES – in particular the Social Affairs Forum and Cities for Active Inclusion - EAPN (European Anti Poverty Network) - European Social Network - www.esn-eu.org

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

The strength of the partnership is probably one of the key factors in cross border working. Spending time on building and maintaining a successful working partnership is paramount. Ensuring all partners are fully involved is key to the success of the project and often ensures the sustainability and long lasting effect of the project work. However, working with a large partnership (18) can mean decision-making is protracted so a smaller partnership might be preferable. Cross border projects involve working with partners of different nationalities. Using multiple languages may be a problem but perhaps more significant are the cultural differences. Not only do these involve recognising the different ways organisations are structured and



Developing your crossborder ambitions!

operate across borders but also the way people think and work. It takes time to understand and accommodate these differences and it is important that this is done at the start of the project; time spent on this will pay dividends later.

■ Project Information

Title	Tackling Social Exclusion-by examining, testing, and improving service quality
Total project budget	€ 2 310 100
ERDF	€ 1 154 150
Priority & objective	Priority 3 b. Improve the quality of services to the population, including mobility and health care facilities.
Timeframe	2009-01-01 - 2011-12-31
Lead partner	Southampton City Council
Project Coordinator	Kerrie PROWTING(kerrie.prowting@southampton.gov.uk)

