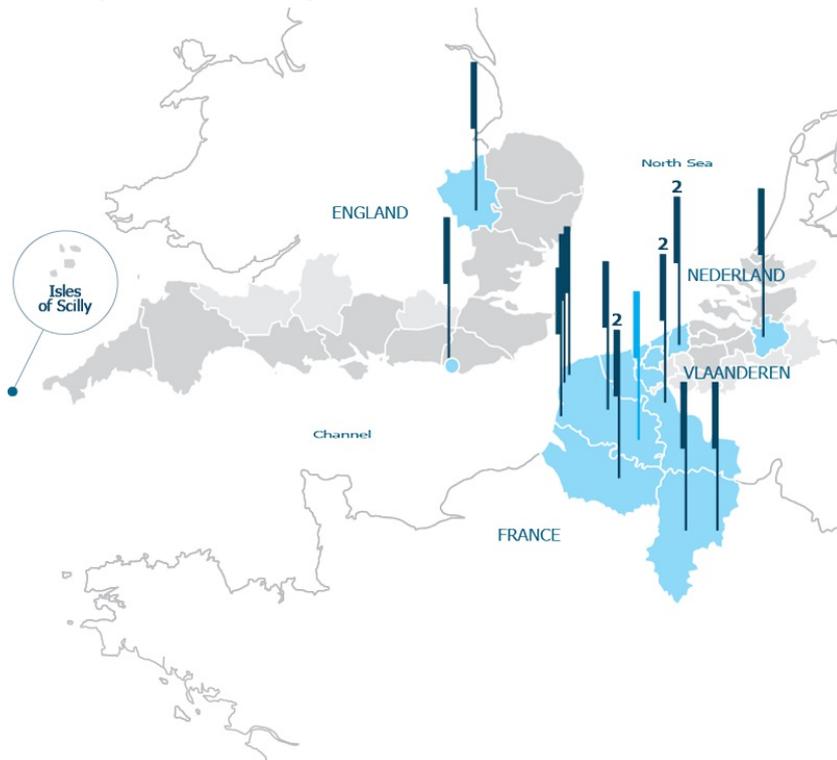


# Great War

## Great War between the Lines

### ■ Project summary



The legacy of the First World War can still be seen today in the landscapes of the 2 Seas area from Flanders to Aisne passing through the Somme and Nord-Pas de Calais. It is also present in the mindset of the people of Britain and the Commonwealth, who come as “remembrance tourists” to visit and discover the landscapes and stories of the Great War. The GREAT WAR project gathers together 15 partners and aims to develop a quality and innovative tourist offer, centered on the remembrance of the First World War and more immediately, the commemorations of the Great War planned between 2014 and 2018. The project will also contribute to local economic growth and will have

a particular focus on the younger generations by developing innovative methods of engaging with these people by using educational toolkits, interpretation resources, workshops, lectures and cultural events.

### ■ Activities

#### What was the project trying to achieve?

The "Great War : between the lines" project aimed at preserving, enhancing and promoting the common heritage of WWI through crossborder cooperation in the perspective of the forthcoming 2014-2018 commemorations. This was based on the existing social and cultural legacy in order to generate economic returns in the 2 Seas area impacted by the project. In order to achieve their common goal, the Great War project partners established a list of objectives ; - transnationally prepare the WWI commemorations of the centenary in general - and the 100th anniversary of the beginning of the Great War in particular - to pay collective respect and perpetuate the remembrance of the conflict, and insist on the common heritage WWI left to our region ; - improve the touristic offer in WWI remembrance sites to attract more tourists in the eligible area so as to generate jobs and economic returns, develop and support memory tourism ; - raise awareness on the WWI commemoration events and the impact of

these events for professionals ; - develop a greater understanding of the conflict amongst the local communities, the tourists, and in particular younger generations in order to enlarge potential audiences ; - install a network to exchange good-practices and experiences in terms of heritage tourism, to link stakeholders with complementary knowledge on WWI, and coordinate WWI local sites and museums, programmes and resources.

### **What were the activities implemented?**

To prepare for the WWI commemorations, the partners set up a webpage translated in three languages (French, English and Dutch) used as a common agenda for events and exhibitions taking place on the 2 seas region after a brief presentation of the project's goals. In the same perspective of a joint management of the centenary commemorations, a touristic brochure covering the most important, relevant touristic remembrance sites in each partners area has been produced. A touristic study was planned, so as to better know the visitors' profile, their habits, and thus adapt the touristic strategy to improve the touristic offer and enhance the impact of tourism in the area. People counter devices have been installed on targeted location so as to provide quantitative information, and a qualitative survey was conducted on site to bring more details on the agents and flows. Eductours were organised by project partners and aimed at showing to foreign journalists and local tourism professionals the remembrance sites, museums and potential activities happening on the territory for the centenary. A working group has also been formed to investigate cycling and pedestrian itineraries. It has been decided to establish suggestions of travel routes, the corresponding maps and information pannels that would be displayed and handed out to visitors. The younger generations but also the general public were key targets of the project from a more cultural/pedagogical perspective. Project partners tried to reach these audiences to bring awareness on our common WWI history and bring potential new visitors to remembrance touristic sites within a better environment. To achieve this second aim, a group to develop a digital application was also created, so as to reach a more "technology oriented" audience and raise the interest of the youngest of the tourists.

## ■ Results

### **What were the key results of the project?**

One joint Brochure has been realised by the partners, and some partners also adapted their own brochures to fit the selected design (printed at 150.000 units) 7 touring exhibitions and 4 big local exhibition were created. 6 educational toolkit were set up and it is estimated that it reached over a thousand pupils and kids. 9 EducTours for professionals raised awareness on WWI remembrance tourism for more than 300 professionals and journalists. Fare trade were attended and the material produced by the project used to establish contact with more than a hundred tourism professionals (around 25 contacts per fare). 'Great War' partners managed to set up two local networks counting over 200 tourism professionnals, the Remembrance partners network in Flanders (BE) and the Northern France battlefield partners in France. Some itineraries without a single access point cannot be accounted for in this results overview, at least not in terms of visitors. For partners of this workpackage, the results mainly consisted in on-site improvements, for example the installation of panels and signs with thematic information about the city of Etaples and the fortifications of Antwerp. People counting devices, surveys and

interviews allowed project partners to draw a very thorough profile of the visitors in the region, which was rendered in a 'touristic study' and a presentation.

### **Did all partners and territories benefit from the results?**

As described in the application form, the first target group was the tourists that had the opportunity to experience improved sites (itineraries, panels), discover new historical material (exhibitions, publications), be provided more information to plan their trips (communication, marketing) and guided by informed professionals (eductours, network). The tourist from the Commonwealth were particularly targeted. The second main target group was the young audiences in the 2 seas region, whether they are tourists or locals. They have been either directly and locally targeted (educationnal toolkits) or indirectly and generally targeted by being identified as potentially more receptive to new forms of rendering information (online toolkit, victoria app). Dedicated activities have also been set up to approach differently the subject (theater and music events, workshops, reenactments). General public also benefited from the dynamics of the project.

### **What were the effects / outcomes for the territories involved?**

The project developed the integration of WWI heritage sites into the local community and increased awareness of WWI heritage sites across the 2 seas area. This is by far the widest outcome of 'Great War: behind the lines'. Increased touristic flows in the partner regions that support local economy (a bigger touristic offer allows to retain the visitor longer on the territory, incurring bigger spendings). Thanks to the project, we can also note an enhanced relationship between local historians and authors and local authorities and academic insitutions, therefore allowing to build bridges between research and communities. Project team available as a point of contact for WWI information and events.

## ■ **Distinctiveness**

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

The real added-value of the cross-border dimension consisted in the appropriate scale to develop a remembrance touristic network on WWI. The same way that the Great War blurred the borders, tourists do not hold themselves on one side of a border. Thanks to the cross-border study led by the partners and funded by the programme, it has been shown that tourist from Commonwealth and UK do travel from Belgium to France (and vice-versa) in their visits, whereas tourists from France or Belgium would have a strong tendency to remain in their country. A synergy has been created by gathering partners from Belgium, France and the UK so as to better tackle the reality of the Great War remembrance tourists and patrimony and accentuate the linkage work between the countries. Without INTERREG, partners would have worked at the national/regional/local level and missed a great opportunity to give a major event of European history the dimension it deserves.

### **Have any synergies been developed with other projects or networks?**

Not an EU funded project, the Somme Battlefield network has strongly inspired the Great War project. Numerous exchanges of good practises have been taking place through eductours (tourism professionals and local actors brought to visit Somme's experience) :



[http://www.sbpartner.fr/somme\\_battlefields\\_partner/](http://www.sbpartner.fr/somme_battlefields_partner/) Mémoire de la Grande Guerre was a project funded under the INTERREG IV France - Wallonie - Vlaanderen :  
<http://www.memoire1418.org/fr/projet>

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

## ■ Project Information

<b>Title</b>	Great War between the Lines
<b>Total project budget</b>	€ 5 496 789
<b>ERDF</b>	€ 2 748 394
<b>Priority &amp; objective</b>	Priority 1 d. Support the tourism and promote sustainable tourism
<b>Timeframe</b>	2010-02-01 - 2014-09-30
<b>Lead partner</b>	Département du Pas-de-Calais (D62)
<b>Project Coordinator</b>	Hélène BLANC(blanc.helene@cg62.fr)

