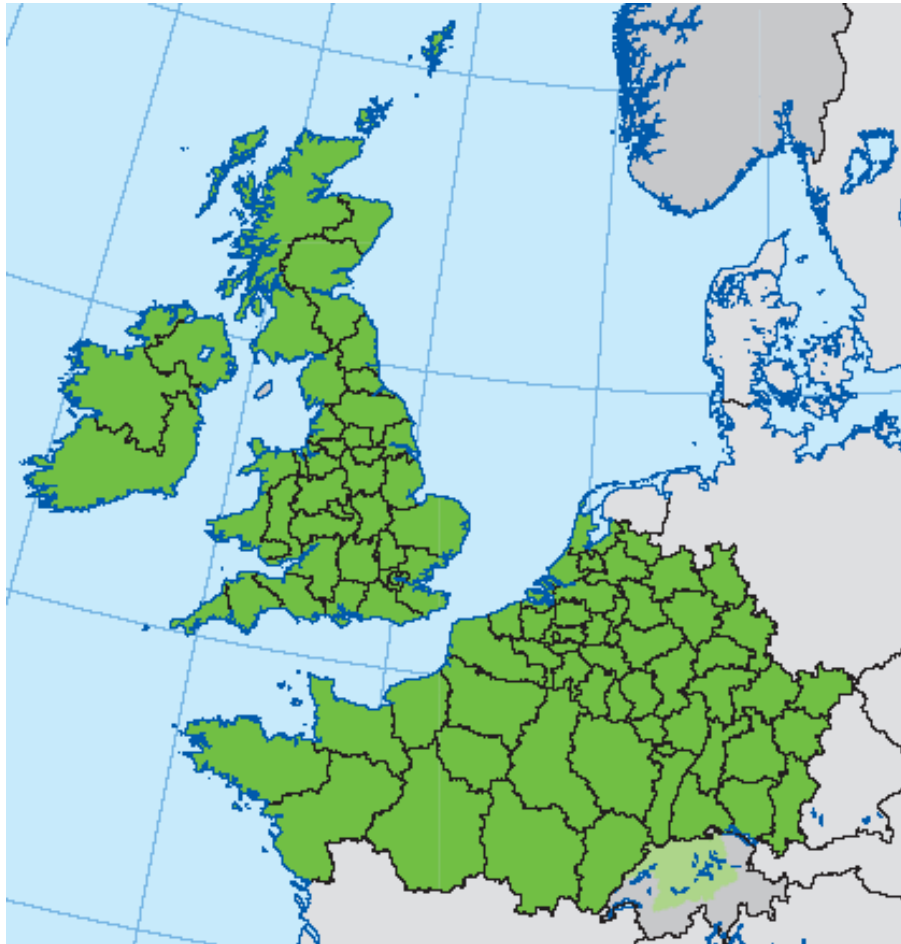


INTERREG IVB

North West Europe Programme



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Special EU Programmes Body
Foras Um Chláir Speisialta An AE
Boord O Owre Ocht UE Projects

This guide is an overview of the selection criteria that will be used to determine whether or not your project is approved under the North West Europe programme. You should use this guide as a basis for developing your project application and you should use it in conjunction with the North West Europe operational programme and the latest version of the project handbook. For more information, please see www.nweurope.eu

Transnational cooperation is about looking beyond local issues and national borders. It is about meeting people, exchanging experiences, sharing knowledge, developing a new culture, and achieving better results together rather than alone. In fact, the “raison d’être” of this Programme is bringing European regions together!

1. The project involves a high level of transnational cooperation.

The overall aim of the project has to be about developing a response to an issue which cannot be resolved without transnational cooperation. ***This is one of the most important selection criteria and together with the value for money criteria carries more weight than the other criteria.***

Cooperation is the basis of a transnational project and so it is important that each partner is involved in the joint action plan and that the benefits of the project are experienced across the whole partnership.

Projects will not be considered transnational if they only consist of a mere exchange of experience, a series of seminars / events or the joint production of a good practice guide.

2. The project will deliver tangible outputs going beyond, for instance studies, benchmarking, seminars and workshops.

The outputs provided by the project have to be relevant and linked with the field of action of the project. Training is not enough as a sole tangible output. North West Europe projects cannot be aimed exclusively at delivering training schemes. Training is for a tangible output only if it is connected to implementing new processes, or if it is aimed to improve the partners involved in the project.

3. The action plan is consistent with the intended objectives.

Projects often announce aims which are too ambitious and are not matched by the action plan (where the ERDF is actually spent). Projects are advised to play down aims where the project is addressing several objectives and priorities of the Programme.

Finding a niche, a competitive advantage that the partners may have (area of expertise, geographical situation) - will help the partnership position their aims and objectives.

Focusing will also help a project be consistent and coherent. Any project should identify the Priority (and related objectives) which best address their issues. This focus should then apply to the aims and the outputs of the project.

4. The project adopts an initiative approach to tackle the territorial challenges of NWE.

Projects should be able to tackle the territorial changes of North West Europe. The overall strategy devised by the project has to be innovative, more so than the tools or individual elements themselves.

Projects need to address the challenges outlined in the SWOT analysis of the Operational Programme.

5. The project will promote cross-sector integration.

Economic development involves a cross sectoral approach. Therefore, a project should pay due attention to all sector policies relevant to their topic area. Involvement of a range of actors responsible for policy at all levels is encouraged. It is also important to consider EU, national or local policies in relation to your particular project.

6. The bidding partnership is consistent, i.e. it brings together the relevant partners with the capacity to deliver and make use of project results.

The project should include partners based on geographic and thematic experiences, depending on the topics tackled by the project. A good sample of organisation/institutions is also advised. For example for transport projects: Operators, companies, infrastructure managers, local/regional authorities should be considered.

This criterion looks at vertical coordination, the different levels of intervention for the different actors involved in a project. Vertical coordination is more about effective governance; it is the process of ensuring that each successive stage in the implementation of a project is appropriately managed and interrelated to the next.

A current project which provides a good example of a partnership is the Scaldwin Project: <http://www.scaldwin.org>

7. The project is sustainable: it strengthens the economic competitiveness of North West Europe in response to the Lisbon Agenda for Growth and Jobs and the project increases the environmental quality of North West Europe in response to the Gothenburg Agenda.

The Lisbon agenda is focused on developing the knowledge economy through economic growth, promoting competitiveness and job creation. The Gothenburg agenda is focused on sustainable development. Projects need to be in line with either Lisbon and/or Gothenburg strategy. Transnational cooperation in North West Europe which will address at least one of those priorities is highly encouraged.

8. The project reduces territorial disparities of North West Europe by the promotion of transnational actions that will enhance economic potential of local and regional assets.

All projects which will reduce disparities in territorial development in the North West Europe area will be favoured, particularly if they focus on employment and social cohesion issues.

9. The project takes into account earlier EU-funded programmes. It represents a significant added-value compared to projects already approved.

Projects need to add value to previous activities. Preference will be given to projects that complement developments made by previous projects (rather than duplicate them) and explore new grounds on the way paved by earlier programmes, if possible.

10. The project provides good prospect for long-lasting activity and leverage for extra investment.

The project should lay the ground for long lasting activities or investments. Projects in line with this approach will be given priority.

11. The project has an effective communication strategy. The results and experience acquired by the project will be transferable and clearly communicated.

The EU emphasises the importance of sharing the knowledge gained from transnational projects that is why all projects need to include a good communication strategy.

The communication strategy should contribute to the goals of the project. It should include the following elements: Communication objectives (SMART: specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-based), public (the target audience should be clearly defined); messages; channels and evaluation (of outputs and outcomes).

12. The project financial and management structure is sound and presents good prospect for a quick start and efficient running.

Managing a transnational partnership can be difficult, so a project application needs to clearly outline how it will address management issues. This will ensure that, if approved, the project can ensure a quick start and can be run efficiently.

13. The individual elements of the project budget breakdown are reasonable compared to their market price.

Each element of the budget should demonstrate value for money and costs should be as economical as possible.

14. The project budget represents good value for money as it is proportionate to the expected outputs and results.

This criterion is essential because it outlines the added value of the ERDF financial contribution. It summarises all the criteria and arguments from above. ***This is the most important criterion, together with the transnationality of the project.***