Factsheet N°1

Introduction & Background

Version N°6 of 13 July 2016

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I. What is European Territorial Cooperation and why participate in an ETC project?

A. What is European Territorial Cooperation?

The Interreg 2 Seas Programme is a European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) Programme and therefore an integral part of the European Union's Cohesion Policy. It promotes cross-border cooperation between the coastal regions of 4 Member States: France, England, Belgium/Flanders and the Netherlands.

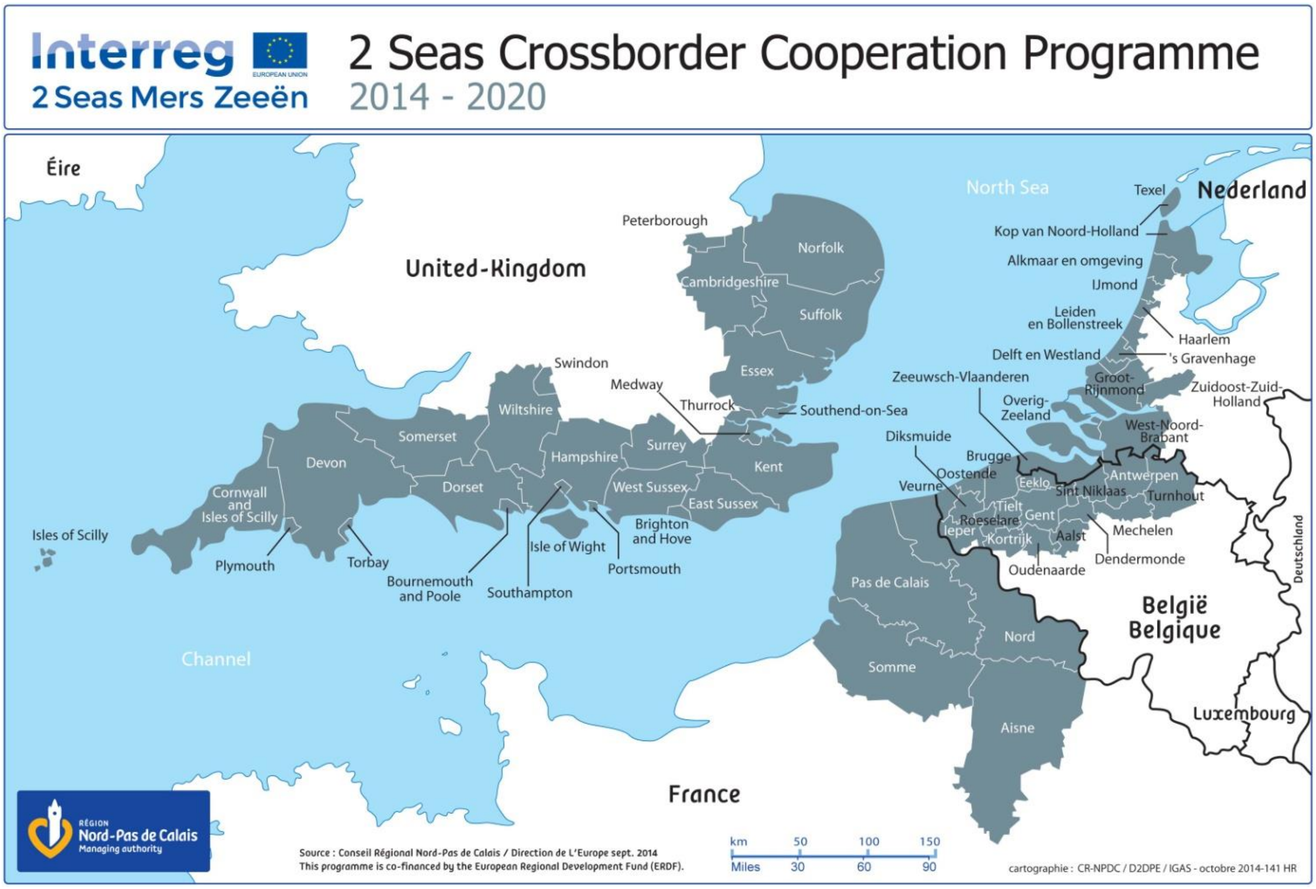


Figure 1: Eligible 2 Seas area 2014-2020

The aim of cross-border cooperation is to overcome national borders and to address common problems or opportunities that would benefit from a common approach. Such challenges are faced by all border regions in the European Union as a result of the fragmentation of markets for labour and capital, infrastructure networks, fiscal capacity, and institutions[1].

In this respect, territorial cooperation stands out as a key tool in efficiently addressing common challenges. In particular, territorial cooperation in the European Union is about reducing disparities between regions, reinforcing cohesion and encouraging optimal economic development. By pooling together resources, exchanging knowledge and sharing good practices, cooperation projects improve the day to day lives of people throughout Europe and beyond[2].

As mentioned above, ETC Programmes such as the Interreg 2 Seas Programme, are part of the European Union's **'Cohesion Policy'**, which is the **principle investment tool to deliver the EU2020 goals**[3].

[1] Extract from the COUNCIL DECISION of 6 October 2006 on Community strategic guidelines on cohesion (2006/702/EC)
[2] http://www.interact-eu.net/etc/etc_2007_13/4/2
[3] Adapted from Panorama n° 48.

'Europe 2020' is the EU's growth and jobs strategy and the overall framework to which all adopted EU policies should contribute. It is aimed at overcoming the economic crisis, addressing the shortcomings of our growth model and creating the conditions for a **smart, sustainable and inclusive growth**. Five targets have been set for the EU to achieve by the end of 2020. These cover employment; research and development; climate/energy; education; social inclusion and poverty reduction[4].

That is why the Cohesion Policy seeks to **invest in actions that will have an impact** on the creation of growth and jobs, on the issues of climate change and energy dependence and on the reduction of poverty and social exclusion[5].

B. Why participate in an ETC project?

Organisations sometimes devise ideas within their policy field they would like to realise, but which may be difficult to implement on their own. The reasons can be many: the organisation works at too small a scale; the issue at hand is by definition not confined to a single territory; essential expertise is required to complement their own, etc.

Addressing the issue through a cross-border project could be a way to take things forward and move towards a solution or accomplishment of what had initially been envisaged. Working at a cross-border level has several distinct advantages: the scale at which a problem is addressed will be increased as a consequence of working with people across borders; if the issue at hand is a cross-border one by default, then it will also require a cross-border solution as suggested above; other organisations could dispose of the external expertise to complement their own which will facilitate mutual learning; etc.

Whilst improving the conditions of life of the people living in the Programme area is the primary achievement of territorial cooperation projects, benefits reach beyond this. Employees of the partner organisations involved in ETC projects, and therefore those organisations themselves, also benefit from working across borders with people who are experienced in similar topics.

[4] http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/europe-2020-in-a-nutshell/index_en.htm
[5] European Commission (DG REGIO), European Territorial Cooperation – Building bridges between people, 2011.

II. The new way of programming and the 2 Seas backbone

A. Thematic concentration

The focus on the overarching targets set at European level for the EU 2020 strategy have to be maintained for ETC Programmes as well. To this end the European Union has decided to **streamline the available funding in fewer relevant themes**. It is expected that this **increased thematic concentration** will strengthen the impact of the financial effort borne by the Union's budget and lead to more tangible and measurable results. This has led to a list of **11 thematic objectives** defined in the European Regulations (Article 9 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013). In turn, each of these have been further **broken down into investment priorities**, which **define in more detail** what Programmes can focus on to achieve the thematic objectives (Article 5 of Regulation (EU) No 1301/2013).

The above outlines the limitations in terms of contents for all ETC Programmes, decided at European level after extensive discussions between the European Council (Member States), the European Parliament and the European Commission.

Furthermore, the Member States constituting the 2 Seas Programme (France, England, Belgium/Flanders and the Netherlands) also have made decision with regard to defining its Programme strategy. The **Programme Authorities have chosen 4 thematic objectives** amongst the 11 defined by the European Union, **along with 1 investment priority** for each of the thematic objectives chosen.

This choice was made on the basis of a thorough situation analysis looking at the Programme area and its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. That document has led to a definition of **common needs, challenges and opportunities for the Programme area** which helped to determine the Programme strategy. The situation analysis equally took into account **development priorities defined at national, regional and local level** which have been laid out by the respective Member States in their different strategies and policy documents.

The chosen thematic objectives and investment priorities have been translated into **four Programme Priority Axes**, which in turn are broken down into **seven specific objectives**. Both elements are **Programme-specific but** are **consistent with the chosen thematic objectives and investment priorities** as defined in the EU Regulations. This constitutes the basis of the Programme strategy.

1. Overview of the 2 Seas Programme strategy

Overall objective of the 2 Seas Programme 2014 – 2020:
To develop an innovative knowledge and research based, sustainable and inclusive 2 Seas area where natural resources are protected and the green economy is promoted

Priority Axis 1: **"Technological and social innovation"**			***Priority Axis 2:*** **"Low carbon technologies"**	***Priority Axis 3:*** **"Adaptation to Climate Change"**	***Priority Axis 4:*** **"Resource efficient economy"**	
S.O 1.1: **Improve the framework conditions for the delivery of innovation, in relation to smart specialisation**	***S.O 1.2:*** **Increase the delivery of innovation in smart specialisation sectors**	***S.O 1.3:*** **Increase the development of social innovation applications to make more efficient and effective local services to address the key societal challenges in the 2 Seas area**	***S.O 2.1:*** **Increase the adoption of low-carbon technologies and applications in sectors that have the potential for a high reduction in greenhouse gas emissions**	***S.O 3.1:*** **Improve the ecosystem-based capacity of 2 Seas stakeholders to climate change and its associated water-related effects**	***S.O 4.1:*** **Increase the adoption of new solutions for a more efficient use of natural resources and materials**	***S.O 4.2:*** **Increase the adoption of new circular economy solutions in the 2 Seas area**

Cross-cutting themes: Support to SMEs and Maritime dimension

107.8 M € of ERDF	**51.3 M € of ERDF**	**38.5 M € of ERDF**	**43.6 M € of ERDF**

Overall budget available for projects: 241 M € of ERDF

B. Result orientation

The **new Interreg Programmes** do **not only have a clear thematic focus**, they are **also very much result-oriented.** Through the process of devising the Programme strategy, Programme Authorities have decided on what they want to change in the Programme territories. This change is defined as a specific improvement of people's or communities' well-being. It should be brought about by **financing projects that contribute to this change**. Again it becomes evident that the Programme strategy can only be successful if projects contribute to realising the change the Programme envisages when achieving their own results. This implies a **shift in the approach** of projects **from focusing on project activities to focusing on the results** to which these activities lead.

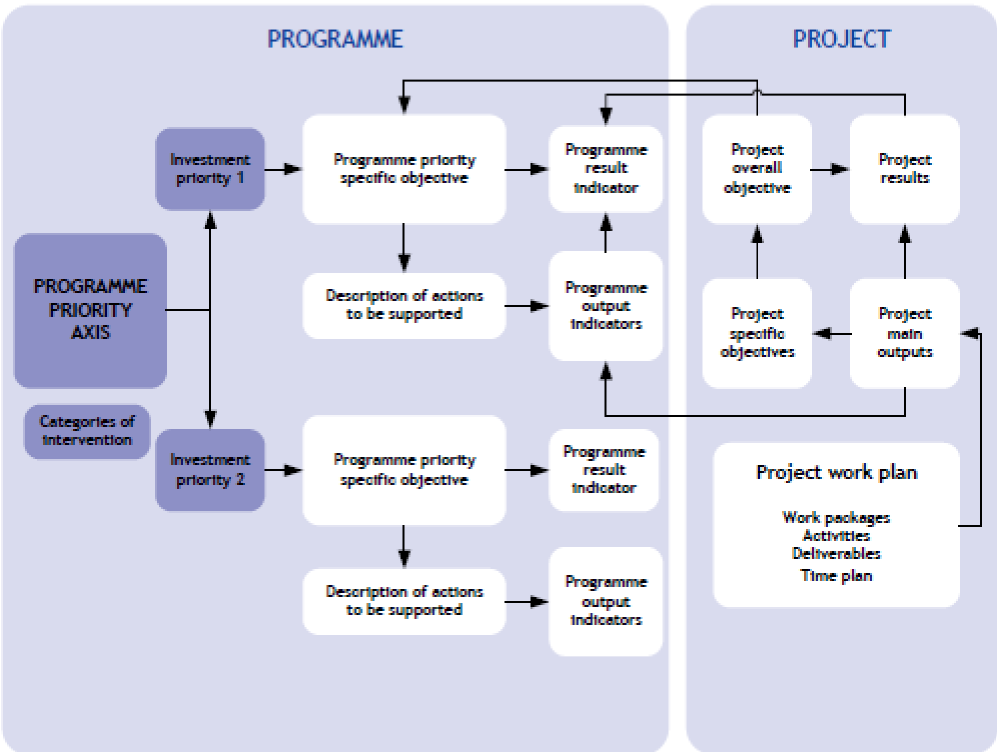
C. Intervention logic

The aforementioned thematic concentration and result orientation are both reflected in the Programme and project intervention logics.

The Programme intervention logic can be defined as the theoretical framework that structures and visualises the entire logical and sequential process from defining the themes, investment priorities and specific objectives until the results that should ultimately be achieved.

The project intervention logic, in turn, is then the sequential process of defining a project overall objective, one or several specific objectives as well as the outputs to be produced in order to deliver the results which are in line with the set objectives.

The following scheme should visualise the Programme and project intervention logics:



Programme and project intervention logics, INTERACT

The Programme has established both output and result indicators for each adopted specific objective. Projects will therefore have to demonstrate in their proposal that they will be contributing to achieving both types of indicators by clearly linking their foreseen outputs and results to the corresponding indicators under a given specific objective.

Project and Programme **intervention logics are therefore intrinsically intertwined** and cannot be seen separately from each other. The coherence of the project intervention logic with the Programme one is a prerequisite to deliver the change in the territories as foreseen in the 2 Seas Cooperation Programme. In order to be able to **assess and measure a project's contribution to the achievement** of the Programme strategy, the project needs to establish an intervention logic that mirrors the one at Programme level[6].

The Programme intervention logic incorporates the following elements:

- Selection of thematic objectives, investment priorities and corresponding specific objectives – which relate to the needs of the territory to be addressed,
- Result indicator which captures the intended change for the territory/sector – baseline and target (qualitative or quantitative),
- Output indicators which reflect the direct products of the activities in the priority.

For more detailed information on how to effectively and efficiently put this in place when developing a project, please refer to factsheet on "Project generation.
Please refer to the glossary in the programme website that gives definitions of all terms used in this factsheet.

[6] INTERACT, Establishing ETC Programme logic and linking Programme and Project intervention logics.

III. Delivering the Programme strategy: 2 Seas projects and their characteristics

Even though projects will normally be proposed by the partner organisations on the ground (according to a bottom-up logic), they should be developed in order to directly contribute to the expected results set out by the Programme Authorities. Project proposals will therefore have to fit with the Programme strategy and be able to illustrate this in a concrete way.

In other words, the envisaged **Programme results will have to be reached through good quality projects that achieve their own results, which in turn fit with those of the Programme**. Hence, project bids will need to ensure strong links with the Programme strategy in order to demonstrate their contribution to achieving the expected Programme results and, ultimately, the EU2020 targets.

Programme Authorities will be looking at approving high quality project proposals capable of achieving their foreseen results, and which will in turn contribute to the delivery of the Programme strategy.

The essence of these projects is that they have a precise duration within which to reach specific objectives. They also are implemented by a group of people who might have never worked together before. It is therefore necessary to reach a high level of agreement about how to organise the work, and plan it in a structured way in order to reach the expected result. ETC projects do not vary much from other types of projects in this respect[7].

A. Main features of a successful 2 Seas project

Ideally, a project proposal shall be capable of demonstrating excellence in the following fields:

- **Relevance and strategy in regards to the context of the project.** The project should address a common territorial challenge or a joint asset of the Programme area: there shall be a genuine demand and necessity for the project. Projects should be embedded in wider strategies adopted at one or several policy levels (EU/national/regional/local) and should consider knowledge that is already available.
- **Cooperation character.** The importance of the cross-border approach to tackle the issue at hand is clear. The benefit of cooperating on this topic is evident for the project partners, target groups and the Programme area as a whole. Solutions to the issue the project will be working on go beyond existing best practices or these are adapted and implemented by the partnership. The cooperation principles of joint development, joint implementation, joint staffing and joint financing should be fulfilled (c.f. below).
- **Contribution to the achievement of the Programme strategy[8].** The project overall objective shall be clearly linked to a Programme Specific Objective. The result(s) to be achieved by the project shall be clearly linked to a Programme result indicator, and the main outputs to be produced shall clearly contribute to a Programme output indicator. All these elements (objectives, outputs and results) shall be logically interrelated. In general, the main outputs and result(s) must be realistic, specific, concrete and measurable and address a need of the target audience. Finally, both should be durable and transferable to other organisations, regions or countries. If not, this is duly justified.
- **Relevance of the partnership.** The partnership shall comprise the relevant organisations present in the Programme area to address the common challenge or joint asset and achieve the set objectives. Partners should demonstrate complementary expertise and seek to provide for a balanced relevant representation in terms of Member States, sectors and governance levels. They shall have the necessary capacity to contribute in tackling the issue at hand and must dispose of the required resources to implement an ETC project.
- **Project management.** Management procedures and structures are appropriate in view of the size of the project, number of partners, etc. Procedures shall be clear, transparent, efficient and effective and allow for input from all partners involved. Internal communication within the partnership must be assured. The Lead Partner in particular shall have sufficient competency in managing EU-funded or similar projects. It is considered crucial that the project has a proper risk and quality management system in place.

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[7] INTERACT, The project lifecycle, 2014.

[8] For more information on the actual Programme strategy and a better understanding of the terms under this bullet point, please refer to factsheet on Project generation, part B.

- **Project communication.** Communication activities should be in line with the project objectives, proposed work plan and the main outputs and results. The relevant target groups and stakeholders must be reached and shall be made aware of the project main outputs and results.
- **Realistic, consistent and coherent work plan.** The distribution of tasks among the partners is appropriate and sensible in view of partners' experience, budget, etc. The time plan is realistic and takes into account potential contingencies. The proposed activities are hence relevant and will lead to a timely delivery of the planned outputs and results. This presupposes that project activities and outputs are sequentially planned.
- **Coherent budget.** The project disposes of sufficient financial means to properly implement the project activities. Nevertheless, the budget shall be proportionate and reasonable in light of the proposed work plan and the outputs and results the project is trying to achieve. Value for money needs to be assured. The budget per partner makes sense considering the distribution of tasks. The planned costs in terms of budget lines, periods and work packages are sensible with regard to the work plan. Planned costs shall be clear or realistic in general.

B. EU-defined cooperation criteria

As referred to above, the EU Regulations stipulate **four cooperation criteria** that specifically characterise territorial cooperation projects (Article 12.4 of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013).

These four cooperation criteria are:

- **Joint development.** The project idea and scope are jointly developed by the partners.
- **Joint implementation.** The activities, outputs and results are jointly realised by the partners.
- **Joint staffing.** All partners assume the necessary role to coordinate and take a part of the responsibility.
- **Joint financing.** All partners contribute financially to the project resources.

According to the aforementioned Article 12.4, **partners of ETC projects shall cooperate in at least three** of these fields. The first two fields are obligatory for all projects; the third can be either cooperation in the staffing or in the financing of the project or in both.

The table below explores these concepts into more detail:

Joint development	Joint implementation
• All partners should contribute to the development of the project. • Partners define how the project will operate. Joint development of objectives and outputs, budget, timing and responsibilities for work packages and activities to achieve the objective. • Identifying knowledge and experience, which each partner brings to the project and what each partner expects to get from the project. • This approach secures the joint activities and joint results required by the Programmes.	• The Lead Partner bears the overall responsibility for the project; all partners take responsibilities for different parts of the implementation. • Each project partner responsible for a work package coordinates, ensures that planned activities are carried out, milestones are met and unexpected challenges to implementation are dealt with. • Several partners contribute to each work package as per work plan.
Joint staffing	**Joint financing**
• All project partners have a defined role and allocate staff to fulfil this role. • Staff members coordinate their activities with others involved in the activity or work package and exchange information regularly. • There should be no unnecessary duplication of functions in different partner organisations (for example one project manager per project, rather than several).	• The project has a joint budget with funding allocated to partners according to the activities they are carrying out (the budget split reflects partner responsibilities). • The budget includes annual spending targets and spending targets per work package. • Generally, all partners contribute financially. • All partners participate financially in common activities and joint outputs, such as databases, publicity, project management costs, etc.

Cooperation criteria, inspired from INTERACT

IV. From idea generation to closure: the different phases in a project lifecycle

Projects of all types have very similar lifecycles. That is to say, they go through comparable phases, whether these projects are engineering operations or cross-border cooperation projects.

The idea behind a circular visualisation of this lifecycle is that the lessons learned and outputs as well as results of a project can lead to the generation of new project ideas building to some extent on these. As a general rule, projects shall take into consideration the achievements from previous ones while developing their own. This is to avoid duplication of efforts and add value on what has already been funded[9].

This principal Programme guidance document for approved beneficiaries and potential applicants is structured on the basis of and encompasses the aforementioned different phases of a project lifecycle.
A **factsheet is available for each project phase**, providing relevant information with regard to that specific moment in a project lifecycle as well as useful links to other factsheets, key documents etc. In addition to these, there are also detailed **factsheets regarding horizontal topics** available for consultation.

The aim is to facilitate **easy access to information** by people who are in very different phases of the development or implementation of their project.

The titles below indicate what is understood by every project phase[10] and the contents of the dedicated factsheets linked to that phase.

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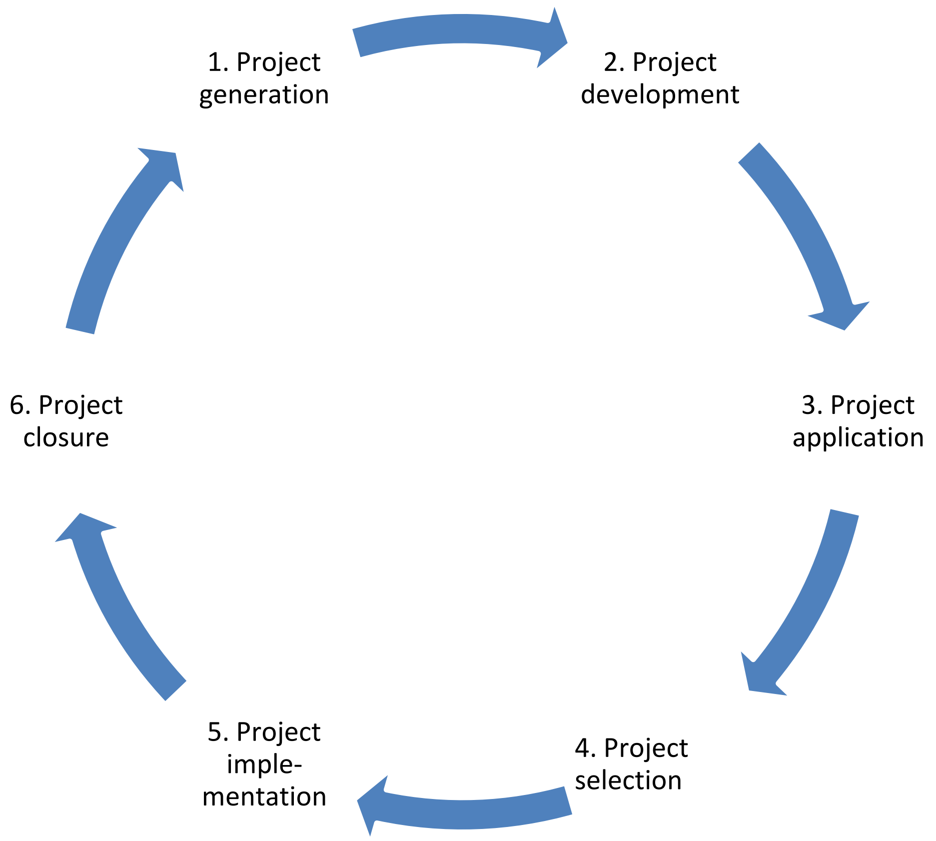
[9] INTERACT, The project lifecycle, 2014.
[10] Partly based on INTERACT, The project lifecycle, 2014.



A project lifecycle

A. Project generation

This is the time when an idea is being shared among and pitched to potential partners until the moment it becomes clear that it is necessary and relevant to the communities in the Programme area. In other words, until the moment when it becomes evident that the project idea addresses a common need, challenge or opportunity of the territories involved in the Programme with regards to one of the four chosen thematic objectives.

The main actions are:

- To establish the need for a project based on an analysis of shared needs, challenges, or opportunities in the Programme area;
- To check if the project idea fits the Programme strategy and requirements;
- To establish the baseline, i.e. what has been already carried out and how to capitalise on this.
- To search for and involve partners;
- To outline the general scope and content of the project and revise it as more partners join the project;
- To contact the Territorial Facilitation Network for support and guidance (cf. below).

The factsheet on this project phase focuses on:

- The templates and procedures of the Programme to foster project idea and partnership development;
- How to ensure that the project idea fits the Programme strategy and intervention logic;
- Where to find assistance during this phase.

B. Project development

In this phase partners are to translate the initial project idea into an actual project proposal, by defining strategic and operational details as well as the responsibilities amongst partners. The aim of this phase is to be able to formally apply to the 2 Seas Programme.

The main actions are:

- To agree on what needs to be exactly achieved and how to get there, all of which shall be in line with the Programme strategy;
- To organise the responsibilities and accountabilities in the partnership and agree on who will take the role of the Lead Partner;
- To develop the project content and rationale with the partners & stakeholders;
- To work in detail on the project proposal, its justification and expected contribution to the Programme strategy, using the dedicated templates;
- To prepare the project budget;
- To keep regular contact with the Territorial Facilitation Network to get support for the development of the project and the application (cf. below).

The factsheet on this project phase focuses on:

- Programme area;
- Partnership requirements;
- Project activities as a means of achieving the sought after results;
- Planning a budget: important financial principles and horizontal issues;
- Where to find assistance during this phase.

C. Project application

This phase concerns the actual delivery of the project proposal to the Programme through the established procedures. The application procedure in the Interreg 2 Seas Programme consists of two steps.

The main actions are:

- To fill out the application (Concept Note) and submit it to the Programme in accordance with the applicable procedures and rules;
- To consider the Member State recommendations on the Concept Note and potentially draft a full Application Form following this;
- To fill out the application (Application Form) and submit it to the Programme in accordance with the applicable procedures and rules.

The factsheets on this project phase focus on:

- The templates and procedures in order to apply to the Programme in two steps (Concept Note and Application Form);
- Where to find assistance during this phase.

D. Project selection

This phase concerns the different Programme bodies involved in project selection on the basis of full Application Forms.

The main action is:

- A formal Member States decision on the application: rejected, referred back or approved.

The factsheet on this project phase focuses on:

- The eligibility and admissibility of the application: assessments which are performed by the computerised application system, Joint Secretariat and Member States;
- Quality assessment of the application on the basis of pre-defined criteria, the subsequent Monitoring Committee decision and notification thereof;
- Where to find assistance during this phase.

E. Project implementation

This phase is the largest and most important one in terms of time, delivering what has been foreseen in the approved application, and administration and management efforts. It touches upon several different elements.
The partnership carries out the work planned to produce the desired outputs and results. Regular administration, management, monitoring and reporting activities will take place, along with communication and promotion tasks as stipulated in the Application Form. Changes and issues in the project are managed according to the established procedures and rules.

The main actions are:
- To sign the Subsidy Contract with the Managing Authority;
- To finalise the Partnership Agreement and to have it signed by all partners;
- To set up the project coordination and decision-making structures and indicative times for the project meetings;
- To carry out project activities to deliver the agreed project outputs to budget and time schedule;
- To set up smooth monitoring and reporting procedures;
- To anticipate and manage risks in agreement with the partners and the Programme;
- To identify and solve issues among partners, to keep things working smoothly;
- To communicate and promote project work and achievements;
- To build up a network of relevant contacts and initiate the uptake and use of project knowledge, outputs and results.

The factsheet on this project phase focuses on:
- Initiation stage: contractual arrangements and requirements imposed by the Programme in terms of management and administration;
- Project management: generic tools and methods to guarantee a proper project implementation (exception plans, reporting, tolerance levels with regards to risks);
- Project communication throughout the lifecycle of the project;
- Where to find assistance during this phase.

F. Project closure

At this phase the project content activities should be completed and all outputs delivered. The partnership takes care of the final administrative provisions before the funding is over. The project and the Programme reflect together on the results and lessons learned.

The project lifecycle formally ends with the closing date of the project, however the project outputs and results are intended to continue producing value, e.g. being used or enjoyed by the community. Depending on the nature of the outputs and results and of the users they are produced for, there should be different concrete measures taken during and after implementation. It is too late to address the transfer of project results and durability in the closing phase of the project.

The factsheet on this project phase focuses on:

- Legal requirements to consider after project closure;
- Where to find assistance during this phase.

V. Where to find assistance during the phases of your project?

Different Programme bodies can provide technical assistance to applicants and beneficiaries, before the submission of a project proposal and during the implementation of approved projects, respectively.
The paragraphs below are meant as a general introduction to these bodies. Detailed descriptions on how these Programme bodies can be of assistance during a given project phase will be described at the end of each chapter on that project phase.

A. Territorial Facilitation Network (TFN)

The Territorial Facilitation Network is the 2 Seas counterpart of what are called "Contact Points" in many other ETC Programmes. They are the first interlocutors for project applicants and project partners in the respective countries. They assist the partner organisations in the project generation and development phases. In addition to this, they also have a role to play in the follow-up of project implementation in collaboration with the JS.

More specifically, their main tasks are:

- Promote the Interreg 2 Seas Programme and its aims towards interested organisations;
- Answer to general queries about the Interreg 2 Seas Programme;
- Provide assistance and support to project applicants through different kind of exchanges during the project generation, application phase and implementation;
- Communicate about the projects development with the other facilitators from the other countries, as well as with the JS and the Member States;
- Help applicants fill in a Concept Note and help them to follow the Member States' recommendations once the assessment as been done;
- Provide assistance to partners during the whole project lifetime;
- Help partners in the closure of their project;
- Provide an interface between project leaders, the Joint Secretariat and the Programme's partner authorities.

Although the Facilitators' involvement starts from the project generation and lasts until the project closure, their contribution is significant during the project generation and application phases.

The Facilitators' network is based in all four Programme Member States and is permanently available for applicants and project partners. Contact details can be found on the Interreg 2 Seas Programme web-site.

Please note that the Facilitators are not involved in the project selection. This is the role of the Programme Member States with assistance from the JS to decide upon project approval, referral back or rejection.

B. Joint Secretariat (JS)

The Joint Secretariat is charged with the day-to-day management of the Programme on behalf of the Managing Authority. In this quality the 2 Seas Joint Secretariat is responsible for the Cooperation Programme management in areas where the Managing Authority (MA) intervenes, namely the co-ordination and facilitation of the Programme, project assessment, Programme monitoring and administration.

The JS assists the Programme authorities in carrying out their respective functions and its main tasks are:

- Cooperate with organisations, institutions and networks relevant for the objectives of the Programme;
- Distribute information and publicise the Programme, its various components and its projects, including running a Programme website and undertaking Programme dissemination;
- Draw up and implement the Programme communication strategy;
- Establish a Programme database and project online monitoring system to provide data in computerised form necessary for the monitoring, evaluation, financial management, verification and audit;
- Develop for approval by the Monitoring Committee (MC) a transparent selection procedure, selection criteria, terms of reference for the calls for applications, application pack including funding rules;

- Manage the project application process for all projects, including providing information and advice to applicants (e.g. by means of an applicants' pack), assessing applications on the basis of approved criteria and procedure, and informing partners on MC recommendations and decisions;
- Assist and organise activities to support project generation and development;
- Monitor commitments and payments of ERDF funds at Cooperation Programme (CP) level by categories of intervention;
- Provide advice and assistance to projects regarding implementation of activities and financial administration;
- Monitor progress made by projects through collecting and checking reports, monitoring outputs, results and financial implementation;
- Ensure that payments to projects are made within the agreed timeframe;
- Support the MA in setting up a coherent Programme management and control system ensuring the legality, regularity of declared expenditure and the respect of the principle of sound financial management and liaise with first level controllers designated by the Programme partner states to carry out the verifications pursuant to Article 23 (4) of the ETC Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013;
- Fulfil the usual work of a Programme JS, i.e. organisation of meetings, preparation of documents, drafting of minutes, etc.;
- Liaise with the body carrying out the functions of the CA and to make all relevant data available to them;
- Undertake any other necessary tasks as required by the Programme authorities and in line with the applicable regulatory framework.

As shown above, the JS' assistance and support take a higher importance during the implementation and closure phases of a project.

The Joint Secretariat (JS) is based in Lille and can be contacted at any time for any queries related to project development, implementation, finance, communication, management, etc.

Contact details can be found on the Interreg 2 Seas Programme website.

C. National Authority (NA)

The National Authorities are the governmental bodies in each Member State in charge of the 2 Seas Programme. These institutions are backed by a political mandate of their respective governments to devise the Programme strategy (thematic objectives, investment priorities, et cetera) within the limits set by the European institutions Regulations and supported by the JTS and consultants.

Their main tasks are:

- Implement all required measures related to the Programme communication;
- Coordinate the Programme animation;
- Ensure quality checks on the first level control with the participation of MA and JS;
- Bear responsibility in regard to the establishment of a proper application of the Union's State Aid rules and public procurement rules;
- Inform project partners about other National rules;
- Circulate information to the Programme Certifying Authority;
- Undertake any other necessary tasks as required by the Programme authorities and in line with the applicable regulatory framework.

Contact details can be found on the Interreg 2 Seas Programme website.