

Fact sheet 1: General information about the programme

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1.1. Programme area

The Atlantic Area covers the western part of Europe bordering the Atlantic Ocean. It comprises regions from the western part of the United Kingdom, Ireland and Portugal as well as the northern and south westernmost part of Spain and western France. In comparison to the period 2007-2013 programme, the current programme covers an expanded area with the inclusion of new regions: Canary Islands (Spain), the Autonomous Regions of the Azores and Madeira (Portugal). The eligible regions are the following:

- ✓ **France:** Haute-Normandie ; Basse-Normandie ; Pays-de-la-Loire ; Bretagne; Poitou-Charentes; Aquitaine;
- ✓ **Ireland:** Border, Midland and Western; Southern and Eastern;
- ✓ **Portugal:** Norte; Centro; Lisboa; Alentejo; Algarve; Região Autónoma dos Açores; Região Autónoma da Madeira;
- ✓ **Spain:** Galicia; Principado de Asturias; Cantabria; Navarra; País Vasco; Andalucía (Huelva, Cádiz and Sevilla); Islas Canarias;
- ✓ **United Kingdom:** Cumbria; Cheshire; Greater Manchester; Lancashire; Merseyside; Gloucestershire; Wiltshire and Bristol/Bath Area; Dorset and Somerset; Cornwall and Isles of Scilly; Devon; West Wales and the Valleys; East Wales; South Western Scotland; Highlands and Islands; Northern Ireland.

Atlantic Area Programme eligible regions



1.2. Programme overall objectives

The programme main objective is to strengthen the integrated territorial development and cooperation in the Atlantic Area.

It is structured around 4 priority axes and 7 specific objectives as illustrated in the diagram below:



The programme maximises opportunities and addresses issues which require a joint response by partners from a minimum of 3 countries within the programme area. The Atlantic Area has carried out a full SWOT analysis and the results can be found in the cooperation programme.

The Interreg Atlantic Area 2014-2020 programme aims to support the achievement of the European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) goal and fits within the wider strategic context of European Union (EU) strategies and objectives.

Project applicants and partners should be aware of the wider strategic context when preparing applications and delivering projects. Some of the main strategic documents are listed below for illustrative purposes only, however this is not exhaustive:

FOR PROJECT DEVELOPMENT	
Cooperation Programme Available here	This sets out the overall programme strategy, the aims, objectives and types of actions to be supported. Note that the full approved version as submitted to the European Commission and a summary are available on the programme website.
Programme Manual Available here	It offers detailed guidance for project applicants and partners on project development and implementation in the Atlantic Area. All rules and guidelines are explained in this document.
Programme approval decision Available here	Decision of the European Commission according to Article 29(4) EU Regulation N. 1303/2013 approving the programme (Decision No C(2015) 8196 / 17.11.2015);
STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK	
EU 2020 Strategy Available here	The overarching EU strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.
Territorial Agenda EU 2020 Available here	Towards an Inclusive, Smart and Sustainable Europe of Diverse Regions, May 2011. Strategic policy paper on Territorial Cohesion in the EU.
Sixth cohesion report on economic, social and territorial cohesion Available here	Investment for jobs and growth. Promoting development and good governance in EU regions and cities, European Commission, July 2014. Report on economic and social cohesion in the EU.
Action Plan for a Maritime Strategy in Atlantic Area Available here	European Commission Action Plan for a Maritime Strategy in the Atlantic Area - Delivering smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.
Marine Strategy Framework Directive and the Maritime Spatial Planning Directive Available here	The Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) and the Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) Directive are important legislation to the Atlantic Area, particularly relevant in the context of transnational cooperation.
LEGAL FRAMEWORK	
ERDF regulation No. 1301/2013 Available here	Regulation (EU) No 1301/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on the European Regional Development Fund and on specific provisions concerning the Investment for growth and jobs goal and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006.
Common provisions regulation (EU) No. 1303/2013 Available here	Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and on general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006.
ETC regulation No. 1299/2013 Delegated acts and implementing acts Available here	Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on specific provisions for the support from the European Regional Development Fund to the European territorial cooperation goal.

ETC Delegated Regulation on eligibility of expenditure Available here	Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 481/2014 of 4 March 2014 supplementing Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council with regard to specific rules on eligibility of expenditure for cooperation programmes.
FOR PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION	
Application form	A legally binding document that describes the project (relevance, objectives, results, outputs and partnership) and gives detailed information on the work plan and budget. Once the project is approved, the application form becomes the reference document for the whole implementation of the project until its closure. It is annexed to the Subsidy Contract (see below). Its content may be modified to a certain extent during the project lifetime, but only in compliance with the programme's project modification rules and procedures.
Subsidy Contract	The contract between the Atlantic Area Managing Authority and the project Lead Partner that defines the rights and obligations of the partnership.
Partnership Agreement	The contract between the Lead Partner and the partners that defines the rights and obligations of each partner within the context of the project.
Progress report	The reporting template for projects during their implementation. It can be accessed and submitted through the programme website. Projects must submit a progress report twice a year to the Joint Secretariat; failure to do so could result in delay in payment and reduction in funding.
Programme website guidelines	Help and guidance for the submission of claims and reports through the programme website.

1.3. Horizontal principles

Sustainable development, equal opportunities and non-discrimination, and equality between men and women are three major horizontal principles that constitute an integral part of EU policy and the programme. The supported projects have to abide to and promote these principles whenever possible in their activities, outputs and results. In addition, projects must explain in the application form the specific measures they plan to take at the operational level (i.e. project management) to follow these principles. The promotion of the horizontal principles will be considered as a positive factor in the project assessment and selection.

For further information on these principles refer to section 8 of the cooperation programme or Article 7 from Common Provisions Regulation (CPR) (EU) No 1303/2013 regarding accessibility of persons with disabilities.

1.4. Integrated territorial development approach

The Atlantic Area Programme supports integrated territorial development. Projects must address territorial challenges, making use of territorial assets and consider relevant territorial development policies.

The programme encourages projects to build on specific opportunities of the regions involved, for instance through smart specialisation strategies, blue growth, green growth, etc.

The programme also encourages multi-level approach in projects, i.e. involving relevant different levels of governance and types of organisations to help improve effectiveness of territorial solutions.

Finally, the programme encourages an integrated approach to projects, bringing together organisations from the private, public and third sector, such as cooperatives, not-for-profit organisations and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), to help address common challenges.

1.5. Programme budget and co-financing

The total programme co-financing from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) amounts to **140 013 194 euros** for a total budget of **185 366 492 euros**.

Project partners have to provide their own contribution to receive programme co-financing. They are entitled to receive up to a **75% ERDF co-financing**.

PA	Union support (a)	National counterpart (b) = (c) + (d)	Indicative breakdown of the national counterpart		Total funding (e) = (a) + (b)	Co-financing rate (f) = (a)/(e)
			Public (c)	Private (d)		
PA1	47 117 240	15705 748	12 564 598	3 141 150	62 822 988	75%
PA2	29 744 404	9914802	7931 842	1 982 960	39 659 206	75%
PA3	15 267 039	5089014	4071211	1 017 803	20 356 053	75%
PA4	39 483 720	13161 241	10528993	2 632 248	52 644 961	75%
PA5	8 400 791	1482493	1482493	0	9 883 284	85%
Total	140 013 194	45353298	36 579 137	8 774 161	185 366 492	76%

1.6. Programme bodies

The programme is managed and delivered by different organisations, some of them are also responsible for assisting projects.

When applying for, or whilst running a project, it is important that projects utilise all available support from the JS and National Authorities, *via* their National Correspondents (NC) or National Contact Points (NCP), who will be valuable sources of information and support for the development and implementation of projects.

Contact details for the programme bodies can be found on the programme website: www.atlanticarea.eu.

Managing Authority

The Managing Authority (MA) is the *Comissão de Coordenação e Desenvolvimento Regional do Norte* (CCDR-N), located in Porto, Portugal. It is responsible for managing and implementing the programme on behalf of the participating MS in accordance with the relevant European and national legislations.

Joint Secretariat

The Joint Secretariat (JS) is responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the programme and assisting with the project development process in close collaboration with the National Authorities, as well as for project monitoring and follow-up once projects have been approved.

It assists applicants and partners in all the steps of the project cycle (from development to post-closure).

Please contact the JS to obtain:

- ✓ Detailed information about the Atlantic Area Programme;
- ✓ Information on how to develop a project proposal (from project idea to project submission);
- ✓ Information about the assessment procedures;
- ✓ Assistance during the project implementation;
- ✓ Information about communication issues.

National Authorities

The National authorities in Spain, France, Ireland, Portugal and the United Kingdom have appointed a NC and/or NCP to support the programme and work with projects partners in their respective countries.

National Correspondents: Support the programme promotion and ensure a wide dissemination of programme information within each country. They also support the MA and

JS with programme business, including input to implementation arrangements as they affect the territory and assistance with information of national laws, regulations and policies that should be taken into consideration for programme implementation. NC may also, for some countries, provide a point of contact for potential applicants.

National Contact Points: Provide advice and guidance to applicants on the application process, support in identifying potential partners, and specialist advice on the development of projects.

Meetings between MA/JS and NC are organised to evaluate progress of the programme, discuss issues raised by project partners and disseminate good practice within the programme.

Monitoring Committee

The Programme Monitoring Committee (PMC) provides strategic direction to the programme, agrees the planning, orientation and financial allocations to calls for proposals. The PMC is responsible for selecting and approving submitted projects. It is comprised of representatives of the MS of the programme and representatives of the stakeholders as advisory members. The list of the PMC members is available on the programme website.

Audit Authority and Group of Auditors

The Audit Authority (AA) is the *Inspecção Geral de Finanças* (IGF) and is located in Lisbon, Portugal. The main task of the AA is to ensure that audits are carried out on the management and control systems. Audits on projects will be spread during the entire programme lifetime. The AA¹ will be assisted by a Group of Auditors (GoA) comprising representatives of responsible bodies of each MS participating in the programme.

Certifying Authority

The Certifying Authority (CA) is the *Agência para o Desenvolvimento e Coesão* (AD&C). It is located in Lisbon, Portugal, and is responsible for payments to project partners and for compiling and submitting payment applications to the European Commission (EC), following the certification of expenditures made by projects and programme bodies (technical assistance).

1.7. Programme languages

The main programme documents will be in English, however the official languages of the Atlantic Area Programme are English, French, Portuguese and Spanish. This means that the

¹ In line with Article 25(2) of the ETC regulation.

general public, stakeholders, project Lead Partners and individual partners may use the four languages in their general communication with the JS and MA.

The Expressions of Interest (EOI) and full project applications must be submitted in English with the project title and brief summary provided in the four languages.

The following key documents for the public, applicants and project partners are available at least in English:

- ✓ Atlantic Area Cooperation Programme;
- ✓ Call for proposals announcements;
- ✓ Project summaries;
- ✓ Programme manual;
- ✓ Help guides;
- ✓ Subsidy contracts;
- ✓ Partnership agreements;
- ✓ Application forms;
- ✓ Implementation report forms;
- ✓ Project modification forms.

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Abbreviations used in the Programme Manual

AA	Audit Authority
AD&C	Agência para o Desenvolvimento e Coesão
CA	Certifying Authority
CCDR-N	Comissão de Coordenação e Desenvolvimento Regional do Norte
CPR	Common Provisions Regulation
DCLG	Department for Communities and Local Government
EOI	Expression of Interest
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESI	European Structural and Investment Funds
ETC	European Territorial Cooperation
EU	European Union
FLC	First Level Controller
GBER	General Block Exemption Regulation
GoA	Group of Auditors
IGF	Inspeção Geral de Finanças
IPR	Intellectual Property Rights
JS	Joint Secretariat
MA	Managing Authority
MS	Member State
NC	National Correspondents
NCP	National Contact Points
PAF	Project Approved Form
PMC	Programme Monitoring Committee
SIGI	Integrated management information system
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
WP	Work Package