

PMC Meeting 1 – Agenda (Rev)

Ireland Wales Programme 2007-13 (INTERREG 4A) Programme Monitoring Committee - Meeting 1 Agenda for Meeting on Friday October 19th 2007 - 10.30am

Venue - Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly, O Connell Street,
Waterford, Ireland

2007-13 Ireland Wales Programme Monitoring Committee

1. Opening and Introduction
2. Background to the Ireland Wales Programme PMC (01) 01
3. Programme Monitoring Committee - Functions PMC (01) 02
4. Programme Monitoring Committee - Rules of Procedure PMC (01) 03
5. Selection Criteria PMC (01) 04
6. First call for proposals information package PMC (01) 05
7. JTS Work Programme PMC (01) 06
8. Steering Committee Membership PMC (01) 07
9. Future Meetings PMC (01) 08
10. Any Other Business

2000-2006 Ireland Wales Programme Monitoring Committee

1. Reconstitution of the 2000-06 PMC (**paper to follow**) PMC (07) 01
2. Minutes of the tenth PMC meeting: 15th December 2006 (for information) (**to follow**) PMC(06) M02
3. 2000-06 Programme Update Report (**paper to follow**) PMC (07) 02
4. Amendments to Programme Complement - PMC Virements December 2006 (**paper to follow**) PMC (07) 03
5. Any Other Business

Secretariat

October 2007

October 10th 2007

Dear Colleague,

**IRELAND/WALES PROGRAMME 2007-2013:
PROGRAMME MONITORING COMMITTEE MEETING
FRIDAY OCTOBER 19th 2007**

I am enclosing the agenda and meeting papers for the first meeting of the Programme Monitoring Committee for the Ireland Wales Programme 2007-2013. This is the successor Programme to the 2000-2006 Ireland Wales INTERREG IIIA Programme.

The meeting will take place on

Date - Friday October 19th 2007

Time - 10h30

Place - Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly Offices, Assembly House, O Connell St, Waterford. (A location map is enclosed with the hard copy of the papers)

Lunch will be served afterwards in the Granville Hotel which is a short walk from Assembly House.

I have also enclosed a copy of the Operational Programme Document which was approved by the European Commission on September 17th 2007.

If you require hotel accommodation which is close to the Assembly can I suggest www.dooleys-hotel.ie, which is on the Quay in Waterford City and is a short walk to Assembly House.

If you have any questions or require any clarification in advance of the meeting please do not hesitate to get in touch.

I look forward to seeing you in Waterford.

Yours sincerely

Simon Baily
Joint Technical Secretariat

Ireland-Wales Programme (INTERREG 4A)

Programme Monitoring Committee

Ireland Wales Programme - Background and Introduction

Issue

1. The aim of this paper is to provide Programme Monitoring Committee members with background information on the Ireland Wales Programme.

Recommendation

2. The Committee is invited to note this paper.

Background

INTERREG - Now a Mainstream Programme

3. Cohesion Policy is to be pursued across three objectives for the new programming period
 - I. Convergence
 - II. Regional Competitiveness and Employment
 - III. European Territorial Cooperation (formerly INTERREG)
4. This means an important change in the status of the INTERREG Community Initiative. It has now been brought into the mainstream of the Structural Funds for the 2007-13 programming period which means that it will be an Objective of the EU's Cohesion Policy in its own right. Its objective is to strengthen cross border co-operation through joint local and regional initiatives, as well as promoting transnational and inter-regional co-operation.
5. Under the new Cohesion policy structures, funding is to be concentrated on implementing Community policies - Lisbon, Gothenburg and the European Employment Strategy - with particular focus on innovation and the knowledge economy, environment and risk prevention, increasing adaptability of workers and enterprises, and enhancing access to employment.

Ireland Wales Programme 2007-13 (INTERREG 4A)

6. The Ireland Wales Programme will run until 2013 and is the successor to the INTERREG IIIA Programme which ran from 2000-2006.
7. It covers the local authority areas of Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Conwy, Denbighshire, Gwynedd, Pembrokeshire and Isle of Anglesey (Yns Mon) in Wales. In Ireland it covers the counties of Dublin, Meath, Kildare,

Wicklow, Carlow, Kilkenny, South Tipperary, Waterford and Wexford. The Programme will also finance limited amounts of activity in areas which are adjacent to these counties. These are the counties of Cork and Kerry in Ireland and the local authority areas of Swansea, Wrexham and Flintshire in Wales.

8. All projects must operate on both sides of the Irish Sea and have at least one Irish and one Welsh partner. Partners also need to nominate a lead partner who will coordinate and lead the project on behalf of the entire partnership and also receive and distribute the ERDF funds.
9. The programme's overall objective is as follows:

Through an integrated approach to economic, environmental, social and technological issues the Ireland Wales Programme seeks to further develop the cross border region and

- *Contribute to its greater competitiveness and sustainable development.*
- *Improve its overall economic, environmental and social well-being*
- *Achieve a more cohesive, balanced and sustainable development of the Ireland Wales cooperation area, and thus to contribute to the overall competitiveness of the Community territory in a globalised world.*

This objective will be taken forward and delivered through two operational priorities which are subdivided into two complementary thematic areas which are as follows:

Priority 1: Knowledge, Innovation and Skills for Growth (€29.7 million in grant support)

Theme 1 - Innovation and competitiveness

Theme 2 - Skills for competitiveness and employment integration

Priority 2: Climate Change and Sustainable Regeneration (€19.8 million in grant support)

Theme 1 – Climate Change and Sustainable Development

Theme 2 – Sustainable Regeneration of Communities

10. Two Cross Cutting Themes will underpin the programme which are Equal Opportunities and Sustainable Development.

Organisational Structure

11. The **Programme Monitoring Committee**, made up of partnership interests in Ireland and Wales, sets the strategy and direction for the programme.
12. A **Joint Technical Secretariat**, mainly based in the Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly in Waterford is responsible for the administration of the programme in both Ireland and Wales. The Secretariat includes a Contact

Office based in the Welsh European Funding Office (WEFO) in Merthyr Tydfil.

13. Three **Development Officers** are also employed and their main role is to assist potential applicants with the development of quality partnerships and grant applications. They are based in the JTS offices in Waterford and in WEFO.
14. Two **Steering Committees** (one for each main priority) are responsible for the selection of projects for grant aid. They include representatives of Irish and Welsh public bodies and agencies who will consider project applications. The Steering Committees are advised by the Joint Technical Secretariat, who conduct an initial appraisal of all projects, including eligibility checks and a ranking against the selection criteria.
15. Under the 2007-13 Ireland Wales Programme the **Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly will act as the Managing and Certifying Authority** which will be supplemented by a Contact Office in WEFO.
16. This is a **change from the 2000-06 Ireland Wales Programme** where the Managing and Paying Authority were both based in WEFO, firstly in Cardiff and then Merthyr Tydfil. This was supplemented by a Contact Office in the Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly in Waterford.

Programme Status

17. The draft Ireland Wales Programme was formally submitted to the European Commission on March 6th 2007 by the Managing Authority. Formal comments were received from the Commission on April 30th. Following negotiation and redrafting of the Programme Document it was formally resubmitted on July 23rd by the Managing Authority. The Programme then entered the European Commission's formal decision procedure on August 6th.
18. On September 17th 2007 the European Commission approved the Ireland Wales Programme (Decision C (2007) 4231). The Programme was the first Cross Border Territorial Cooperation Programme to be approved in the EU 27.

Secretariat

October 2007

Ireland Wales Programme 2007-13 (INTERREG 4A)

Programme Monitoring Committee

Programme Monitoring Committee - Functions

The Programme Monitoring Committee is invited to note the attached list of the Committee's functions, as set out in Chapter 8, page 77 of the Operational Programme Document.

According to Article 65 of the General Regulation; *'The Monitoring Committee shall satisfy itself as to the effectiveness and quality of the implementation of EU co-financed expenditure, in accordance with the following provisions:*

- a) *it shall consider and approve the criteria for selecting the operations financed within six months of the approval of the operational programme and approve any revision of those criteria in accordance with programming needs;*
- b) *it shall periodically review progress made towards achieving the specific targets of the operational programme on the basis of documents submitted by the Managing Authority;*
- c) *it shall examine the results of implementation, particularly achievement of the targets set for each priority axis and the evaluations referred to in Article 48 (3);*
- d) *it shall consider and approve the annual and final reports on implementation referred to in Article 67;*
- e) *it shall be informed of the annual control report, or of the part of the report referring to the operational programme concerned, and of any relevant comments the Commission may make after examining that report or relating to that part of the report;*
- f) *it may propose to the Managing Authority any revision or examination of the operational programme likely to make possible the attainment of the funds' objectives referred to in Article 3 or to improve its management, including its financial management; and*
- g) *it shall consider and approve any proposal to amend the content of the Commission decision on the contribution of the Funds''*

Ireland-Wales Programme (INTERREG 4A)

Programme Monitoring Committee

Programme Monitoring Committee: Rules of Procedure

Issue

1. The rules of procedure for the Programme Monitoring Committee.

Recommendation

2. The Committee is invited to approve the attached rules of procedure.

Background

3. As provided for under Article 63 of the General Regulation each Programme Monitoring Committee can draw up its own rules of procedure.
4. This Programme Monitoring Committee needs to agree a set of rules of procedure, which will determine the way in which it carries out its business. The attached rules set out procedures for meetings, participation in meetings, the treatment of issues by written procedure, the establishment of a schedule of key tasks and the establishment of working groups. They are based on the rules of procedure which were drawn up for the Ireland Wales INTERREG IIIA Programme and have been modified where necessary.
5. The rules make it clear that the Programme Monitoring Committee will operate on the basis of consensus, and it is expected that issues will be resolved through discussion rather than by means of motions and voting.
6. The rules of procedure can be kept under review by the Programme Monitoring Committee. They can be amended by the Committee if necessary, should any difficulties emerge in the way in which the Committee operates.

PROGRAMME MONITORING COMMITTEE: DRAFT RULES OF PROCEDURE

Committee Membership

1. The following organisations have been appointed as members of the Programme Monitoring Committee. The Committee will promote gender equality in its composition.

Ireland	Wales
Joint Chair - Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly <u>Elected Members</u> Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly (3) <u>Officials</u> Department of Finance Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly <u>Social Partnership</u> Irish Business and Employers Confederation Irish Congress of Trade Unions Farmers Association Voluntary and Community Sector	Joint Chair - WEFO <u>Elected Members</u> Welsh Local Government Association (2) <u>Officials</u> Welsh Assembly Government - Dept for Economy and Transport Welsh Assembly Government - Dept for Environment, Sustainability and Housing <u>Partnership Interests</u> Business Wales Wales TUC Wales Council for Voluntary Action Higher Education Wales Countryside Council for Wales
Advisors: The Equality Authority Dept of Environment, Heritage and Local Government	Advisors: WEFO Equal Opportunities Advisor WEFO Sustainable Development Advisor

2. A quorum will be in place in order to ensure that decisions taken by Committee members who are present at a meeting are representative of the views of the Committee as a whole.
3. The quorum will be one quarter of the representation of each member state nominees plus 1.

Meetings

4. The Programme Monitoring Committee (PMC) will determine its pattern of meetings in order to ensure the proper and timely conduct of the Committee's business. It will usually meet at broadly six-monthly intervals, with meetings held in Wales and Ireland on a rotational basis (with the Chair determined by the location of the meeting). For the convenience of members, the PMC will agree a forward schedule showing the dates of future meetings at least six months in advance.
5. Meetings will normally be convened by either of the joint Chairs on his/her own initiative; at the request of the European Commission; or, exceptionally, with the joint Chairs' agreement, at the request of another

member of the Committee. Notice of at least 15 working days will normally be given, although exceptionally this notice may be shorter.

6. The joint Chairs will draw up the agenda, and will include items requested by more than three members of the Committee. Any such requests must be made in writing at least 15 working days before the date of any meeting. The minutes of the previous meeting will be included on the agenda, which will normally be sent out at least 10 working days before the date of any meeting. On the initiative of the joint Chairs, or at the request of another member of the Committee with the approval of the joint Chairs, items for the agenda may be tabled less than 10 working days before the meeting. All working papers for the meeting will be circulated with the agenda, although exceptionally papers may be circulated at a later date.
7. The joint Chairs will decide whether meetings, in whole or in part, should take place in public or in private. Generally they will follow the conventions which have been adopted in their respective countries for other Programme Monitoring Committee meetings.

Participation in meetings and decision making

8. Members of the Committee will be eligible, subject to paragraph 6 below, to participate in all business transacted by the Committee. Individual members who are unable to attend a particular meeting may be represented by alternates, provided that the Chair is notified before or at the beginning of the meeting. Any advisor who accompanies a member shall not be eligible to participate in decision making by the Committee, although, with the agreement of the Chair, they may participate in discussions and offer advice to the Committee. Theme Leaders may be invited to Committee meetings as advisors
9. Members of the Committee are required to declare any interest they may have in a particular agenda item before discussion of it begins. A member declaring an interest may be asked by the Chair to withdraw from the meeting for the duration of discussion on that item, or otherwise requested not to participate in that item of business.
10. The PMC and its subordinate groups will operate on the basis of consensus. In the event of a disagreement the joint Chairs, using all appropriate channels, shall seek to resolve any differences arising within the partnership.

Written procedures

11. At the initiative of either of the joint Chairs or, with the agreement of the joint Chairs, at the initiative of another member of the Committee, proposals may be submitted to the Committee for adoption by written procedure. Members will normally be asked to give their written opinion on any such proposal within 15 working days. The proposal shall be

deemed agreed by the Committee in the absence of any written objections within that period.

12. Where written objections from any member are received by the Secretariat within 15 working days, the joint Chairs will determine whether:
 - the proposal shall be deemed lost;
 - discussion should take place with the relevant member(s) concerning their objection(s); or
 - the proposal should be referred back to the Committee for further consideration.
13. The joint Chairs, after consultation with the Department of Finance and the Welsh Assembly Government, may override an objection.
14. A member may withdraw written objections to any proposal at any time and, when every written objection is withdrawn, the proposal shall be deemed agreed by the Committee.
15. Following the 15 working day period, the Secretariat shall inform the Committee:
 - a. whether any proposal submitted to the PMC for adoption has, in the absence of any written objection, been deemed agreed; or
 - b. if any member has registered written objections to a proposal and, if so, what the joint Chairs have determined.

Working Groups

16. The PMC will be free to establish any subsidiary working groups which it feels necessary for the speedy and efficient conduct of business.
17. The Steering Committees will be responsible for the selection of projects under the direction of the Programme Monitoring Committee.

Secretariat

18. The Secretariat to the Committee will be provided by the Joint Technical Secretariat for the Programme. The Joint Technical Secretariat is based mainly within the Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly in Waterford Ireland and includes a local Contact Office based in the Welsh European Funding Office in Merthyr Tydfil. The Secretariat will assist and advise the Committee in respect of all the functions and procedures set out above.

Ireland Wales Programme 2007-13 (INTERREG 4A)

Programme Monitoring Committee

Project Selection Criteria

Issue

1. The project selection criteria for the Ireland Wales Programme (INTERREG 4A).

Recommendation

2. The Committee is invited to approve the attached project selection criteria.

Background

3. Under the terms of Article 65(a) of Council Regulation 1083/2006 the Programme Monitoring Committee shall undertake the following task
 - a. *it shall consider and approve the criteria for selecting the operations financed within six months of the approval of the operational programme and approve any revision of those criteria in accordance with programming needs;*
4. This paper will provide members with the background and methodology which guided the development of these criteria.
5. The criteria were jointly developed by the programme teams in Waterford and Merthyr Tydfil.

Rationale and Methodology

Choice of categories

6. This was partly influenced by what worked well with the last Ireland Wales Programme and also by an INTERACT best practice guide where the last programme received a positive review for having a clear set of selection criteria. As a result, the programme team maintained the same general approach and refined it with the new programme in mind.
7. In relation to Core Criteria this resulted in the inclusion of the question on the extent of cross border cooperation and benefits to the programme

area. The other notable change is the strengthening of the monitoring and evaluation question to include project management.

8. Both of these changes reflect the desire to ensure stronger levels of joint working and more coordinated project management. This is a consequence of the requirements of the Lead Partner Principle and the Cooperation Criteria which are outlined in Articles 19 and 20 of the ERDF Regulation. Ultimately the aim is to ensure that the programme supports high quality projects.
9. In relation to the Priority Level Criteria the criteria have been split into the respective themes. Under each one there are four specific questions. The questions reflect the theme specific objectives.

Scoring methodology

10. The new system proposes to weight the Core and Priority criteria in favour of the issues which reward good levels of cross border working and are central to the successful delivery of the programme.
11. The weighting is broken into four different sections which reflect the level of priority that needs to be accorded to each of the criteria. This does not suggest that one area is less important than another but it does try to reward projects which successfully address the core issues around cross border cooperation and what helps to deliver the programme’s objectives.
12. The reason for weighting the scores is that the system in the last Ireland Wales Programme did not differentiate sufficiently between the strong and the weak projects. The old system allocated a maximum core score of 36 with a maximum priority level criteria of anywhere between 12 and 36 depending on the number of criteria in each measure.
13. The proposed new system is as follows

Core Scores

Question 1	0-25-45	Questions 4 to 7	0-10-20
Question 2 and 3	0-15-30	Question 8	0-8-15
Maximum Possible Core Score - 200			

Priority Scores

Questions 1-4 in each theme	0-15-25
Maximum Possible Priority Score - 100	

14. The programme teams in Waterford and Merthyr Tydfil carried out detailed testing of the criteria against projects submitted under the last programme. While it was not possible to be totally accurate due to the different criteria used in the last programme it was still possible to draw some clear conclusions.
15. Both teams took a selection of strong, medium and weak projects and carried out the tests independently of each other. In all cases the perceived strong projects scored highly, the perceived medium projects scored average to good while the weak projects scored particularly badly.
16. The JTS for the last programme also carried out an informal weighted scoring exercise for the purposes of the 9th round extension bids that were considered last winter. It was done on a similar range as the proposed new system and had a discernible effect in differentiating between the strong and the weak projects.

Secretariat

October 2007

2007-13 - Ireland Wales Programme (INTERREG 4A)

Core Selection Criteria

1. Extent of cross border cooperation and benefits to programme area
2. Addresses the programme strategy (and by extension national, regional and EU policies)
3. Contribution to the programme targets
4. Monitoring/ Evaluation and project management
5. Innovation
6. Equal Opportunities
7. Sustainable Development
8. Synergy and Complementarity

1. What is the extent of cross border cooperation and what benefits does it bring to the programme area?

Strong - The joint project demonstrates strong cross border cooperation; it complies with all 4 cooperation criteria and brings added-value to the programme in terms of addressing common issues, providing tangible outcomes which have common benefits and the transfer of expertise across the programme area.

Medium - The project demonstrates a medium level of cross border cooperation as it complies with at least 3 of the four cooperation criteria and brings added value to the programme in terms of addressing common issues, providing tangible outcomes which have common benefits and the transfer of expertise across the programme area.

Weak - The project demonstrates weak cross border cooperation based on compliance with at least 2 of the four cooperation criteria but does not demonstrate the added value that it brings to the programme area,

2. To what extent does the joint project contribute to the objectives of the Ireland-Wales Programme and relevant Welsh Assembly Government and Irish Government policies?

Strong - The joint project clearly explains and demonstrates how it contributes to the objectives of the programme i.e. contributing to greater competitiveness, economic, social and environmental well-being in the programme area, and relevant Irish Government and Welsh Assembly Government Policies as outlined in the Programme document.

Medium - The joint project contributes to the Programme objectives and relevant Irish Government/Welsh Assembly Government policies but does not clearly demonstrate or provide evidence on how it proposes to achieve this.

Weak - The joint project provides minimal or no evidence and no real explanations on how it addresses the objectives of the Programme or relevant, Irish Government and Welsh Assembly Government policies.

3. How does the joint project contribute to helping the programme meet its targets?

Strong - The joint project will make a clear contribution to the Programme targets and gives a clear and precise explanation on how their outputs will be achieved.

Medium - The joint project will make a clear contribution to the Programme targets and gives a general explanation on how their outputs will be achieved.

Weak - The joint project gives minimal or no evidence of helping the programme to meet its targets.



4. How robust is the project's monitoring and evaluation system and project management plan?

Strong – The project has a strong monitoring and evaluation system in place to ensure it will meet its objectives and provides details on how it will work in practice. It also has a detailed project management plan showing the personnel structure of the partnership, the split in tasks between the lead and project partner and a GANNT chart.

Medium – The project has a monitoring and evaluation system in place but provides limited evidence as to how this will work in practice. Its project management plan is not clearly laid out or detailed.

Weak - The project shows minimal or no evidence of a monitoring and evaluation system being in place.

5. How significant is the project in delivering innovative action in the cross-border area?

Strong - The joint project addresses the challenge of innovation in an all encompassing manner looking at product, process or organisational innovation and seeing how this can bring something new and beneficial to the programme area.

Medium - The joint project demonstrates some elements of innovative action in the programme area such as designing new products or improving innovation processes and organizational procedures but more could be achieved.

Weak - The joint project demonstrates minimal or no levels of innovative action in the programme area.

6. How does the joint project integrate equal opportunities into its management and what benefits will this bring for disadvantaged groups?

Strong - The joint project clearly integrates equal opportunities for all into its project plan with activities costed accordingly and demonstrates a practical benefit to the lives of disadvantaged groups.

Medium - The joint project implements equal opportunities principles in its management but does not clearly go beyond minimum legal requirements.

Weak - The joint project provides minimal or no evidence as to how equal opportunities will be practically incorporated into the management of the project.

7. To what extent does the joint project implement and integrate the principles of sustainable development into its operation?

Strong – The joint project provides strong evidence that it integrates sustainable development principles into its operation, actively promoting the sustainable use of resources and protection of the environment.

Medium - The joint project provides some general evidence as to how it integrates sustainable development principles into its operation but the promotion of sustainable development and environmental protection is quite weak.

Weak - The joint project provides minimal or no evidence as to how the project will integrate sustainable development principles into its operation.

8. To what extent does the joint project positively create synergies and complement other EU funded initiatives?

Strong - The joint project clearly demonstrates how it positively complements other cross border and trans-national (INTERREG) projects and other EU funded initiatives supported by the ERDF, ESF, EAFRD and the EFF by demonstrating joint approaches that will add value on areas of common interest.

Medium - The joint project demonstrates complementarity with other cross border/transnational or other EU funded initiatives but the level of information provided is more general and not as comprehensive.

Weak - The joint project doesn't contribute to create synergies and doesn't give any information on how it complements other cross border and trans-national (INTERREG) projects and with other EU funded initiatives.

Ireland Wales Programme 2007-13 (INTERREG 4A)

Priority Selection Criteria

Priority 1 Theme 1

1. **How will the project develop joint research, and encourage collaboration in technology development between HE/FE sectors and SMEs to aid competitiveness?**

Strong – The joint project clearly demonstrates how it will facilitate cross border collaboration into research and technological development in the HE/FE sector. It will then work with SMEs in order to implement and commercialise the results of the research. The project clearly demonstrates how it aids competitiveness in SMEs.

Medium – The joint project will involve some elements of collaboration in the HE/FE sector regarding research and technological development and transfer and implement the outcomes of this research to SMEs. The project will have some limited benefit towards aiding competitiveness in SMEs.

Weak – The joint project will involve minimal levels of collaboration in research and technology transfer. It does not demonstrate how it benefits the competitiveness of SMEs.

2. **To what extent does the joint project promote the development of business clusters and centres of excellence?**

Strong – The joint project clearly demonstrates how it will assist the development or support of relevant clusters and/or centres of excellence with clear evidence of demand and follow on benefit to the business sector.

Medium – The joint project provides some development or support to relevant clusters and/or centres of excellence with some evidence of demand and benefit to the business sector.

Weak – The joint project provides little or no development or support to relevant clusters and/or centres of excellence with no demand or benefit to the business sector evident.

3. What evidence is there that the joint project will help SMEs to develop innovative products and business practices that will aid competitiveness?

Strong – There is detailed and well explained evidence to show that the joint project will assist SMEs to develop innovative products and business practices as a result of cross-border collaboration.

Medium – There is more general evidence that the joint project will involve assisting SMEs to develop innovative products and business practices but limited evidence of the benefit that will accrue as a result of cross-border collaboration.

Weak – There is minimal evidence to show that the joint project will assist SMEs to develop innovative products and business practices and no real benefit will accrue as a result of cross-border collaboration.

4. How will the joint project facilitate the development of potential growth sectors and enterprises (including niche markets and social enterprises)?

Strong – The joint project's central focus is on collaboration and joint working towards the development of potential growth sectors or the creation of new businesses with potential export capability.

Medium – The joint project's work plan contains some elements that relate to the development of potential growth sectors or assisting with the creation of new businesses.

Weak - The joint project contains minimal references to the development of potential growth sectors or assisting with the creation of new businesses.

Priority 1 Theme 2

1. How will the joint project address common skills issues for SMEs such as enhancing management skills and/or developing skills to meet the current and future needs of the changing economy

Strong - The joint project will deliver cross-border training and exchange programmes that will allow companies to up-skill staff leading to the gaining of relevant recognised qualifications. There is also a clear demonstration of demand for these skills in order to meet the needs of the changing economy.

Medium - The joint project will deliver cross-border training and exchange programmes that will allow companies to up-skill staff but will not lead to the gaining of recognised qualifications. There is also some evidence of demand for these skills to meet the needs of the changing economy.

Weak - The joint project will have a minimal or no element of cross border training and exchange and no clear demonstration of demand.

2. How will the project deliver more economic value from the availability of higher level qualifications in the cross-border area?

Strong - The joint project will be centrally focused around cross border collaboration and working together to develop systems and processes to increase the productive utilisation of higher level and graduate skills for the benefit of businesses in the programme area and will deliver more economic value to the area.

Medium - The joint project will have some element of its workplan that will be based on working together to increase the productive utilisation of higher level and graduate skills for the benefit of businesses in the Programme area. However the demonstration of the economic value to the cross border programme area is unclear.

Weak - The project has little or no evidence of the productive utilisation of higher level and graduate skills for the benefit of businesses in the Programme area.

3. To what extent will the project develop skills and address skills gaps that will facilitate economic growth in key business sectors

Strong - The joint project clearly demonstrates that it will involve collaboration and joint working to address and counteract skills gaps in key sectors, clearly demonstrating evidence of need and a contribution to economic growth.

Medium - The joint project provides some evidence that it will address and counteract skills gaps in key sectors. Project demonstrates evidence of need although any contribution to economic growth is not clearly demonstrated.

Weak - The joint project has little or no evidence that it will address and develop skills gaps in key sectors.

4. How will the project collaborate to improve systems of learning and workforce development at all levels of education and lifelong learning to better meet the needs of the cross-border region

Strong - The joint project clearly demonstrates how systems of learning and workforce development will be developed or improved as a result of cross border partnership and collaboration. There is also clear evidence of demand and a demonstration of how the project will meet the needs of the programme area.

Medium - The joint project provides some evidence of how systems of learning and workforce development will be improved or developed with some demonstration of how the project will meet the needs of the cross border region.

Weak - The joint project provides little or no evidence of how systems of learning and workforce development will be improved or developed

Priority 2 Theme 1

1. How will the joint project facilitate the development of new strategies to raise awareness of climate change and influence people's behaviour in relation to the environment and energy use

Strong – The joint project will be driven by close collaboration and exchange of expertise and clearly focused on developing joint strategies to address the challenges posed by climate change. The project will also be clearly able to demonstrate the benefits and perceived behavioural change as a result of the joint project.

Medium – The joint project involves less extensive collaboration and its work plan will have some elements relating to the development of joint strategies to address the challenges posed by climate change. There will be a more limited demonstration of the benefits resulting from the project.

Weak – The joint project provides little or no evidence of the development of joint strategies to address the challenges posed by climate change.

2. How will the joint project facilitate cross border community engagement in climate change and sustainable development issues?

Strong – The clear focus of the joint project will involve the engagement of local communities in the development of pilot projects to allow them to address issues of common concern in relation to sustainable development and the common challenges faced in relation to the possible effects of global warming. The project clearly demonstrates its impact at local level.

Medium – The joint project will have some elements that will facilitate the engagement of local communities to address issues of common concern in relation to sustainable development and the common challenges faced in relation to the possible effects of global warming. There is some evidence of impact at local level.

Weak – The joint project provides little or no evidence of engagement with local communities in the development of projects to allow them to address issues of common concern in relation to sustainable development and the common challenges faced in relation to the possible effects of global warming.

3. To what extent will the joint project facilitate cross border collaboration on the research and development of innovative technologies to assist with the development of renewable energy and demonstrate their application through pilot projects?

Strong– The joint project provides clear evidence that the project's central focus will be on cross border collaboration in the development and usage of renewable energy. The project also provides clear evidence of the benefit for businesses and wider communities in the programme area.

Medium – The joint project provides more limited evidence that the project will have some focus on the development and usage of renewable energy.

Weak – The joint project provides little or no evidence that the project will have some focus on the development and usage of renewable energy.

4. To what extent will the joint project facilitate collaboration in the protection of biodiversity, ecosystems and/or the coastal and marine environment whilst reconciling the needs of economic development with environmental sustainability?

Strong – The joint project clearly demonstrates that collaboration and exchange of expertise relating to the protection of biodiversity, ecosystems and/or the coastal and marine environment will be the central focus of the joint project.. The project also clearly demonstrates how it reconciles the needs of economic development with sustainable environmental protection.

Medium – The joint project provides some evidence of collaboration and the exchange of expertise relating to the protection of biodiversity, ecosystems and/or the coastal and marine environment. The project provides some evidence to demonstrate how it reconciles the needs of economic development with benefits to the environment.

Weak – The joint project provides little or no evidence of collaboration and exchange of expertise in relation to the protection of biodiversity, ecosystems and/or the coastal and marine environment.

Priority 2 Theme 2

1. To what extent will the joint project assist the health and well being or environmental regeneration of communities in the programme area?

Strong – The joint project’s central focus will enable partners to collaborate and/or exchange best practice in the area of health and well being or environmental regeneration. The project provides clear evidence of benefits to the communities concerned.

Medium - The project’s work plan does contain some measures that will enable partners to collaborate and exchange best practice in the area of health and well being or environmental regeneration. The project provides some evidence of benefit to the communities concerned.

Weak - The project provides little or no evidence of collaboration or exchange of best practice in the area of health and well being or environmental regeneration.

2. How will the joint project enable the promotion and development of cultural heritage initiatives with emphasis on supporting the development of communities in the cross border area?

Strong - The joint project’s central focus will be based on promoting and developing cultural heritage initiatives with an emphasis on supporting the development of communities in the cross-border area. There is a clear rationale for the development of the project and evidence of direct benefits to the communities concerned.

Medium – The joint project will have some aspects which will promote and develop cultural heritage initiatives with an emphasis on supporting the development of communities in the cross-border area. There is some added value for the communities concerned.

Weak – The joint project provides little or no evidence to show that it will promote and develop cultural heritage initiatives with emphasis on supporting the development of communities in the cross-border area.

3. How will the project enable the engagement of local communities to develop joint initiatives which promote and facilitate social inclusion on a cross border basis?

Strong – The central focus of the joint project will be the development of formal links between community groups and organisations which will allow them to cooperate and work together on developing joint approaches to promote and facilitate social inclusion.. The project shows clear evidence of need and perceived benefits.

Medium - The joint project's work plan will have some parts that will involve networking between community groups and organisations to promote and facilitate social inclusion. The joint project demonstrates some evidence of need and perceived benefits.

Weak – The joint project shows little or no evidence that the project will focus on social inclusion.

4. How will the joint project assist in developing economic regeneration including social enterprises?

Strong – The joint project clearly demonstrates how it will address economic regeneration issues through cross border networking and exchanges of best practice between community groups or organisations in the programme area. It clearly demonstrates the direct economic benefits to the communities concerned.

Medium – The joint project has some parts which will focus on economic regeneration through cross border networking and exchange of best practice between community groups and organisations. There is some evidence that the project will deliver economic benefits to the communities concerned.

Weak – The joint project provides minimal or no evidence that the project will address capacity building in communities and community groups.