



The Northern Periphery and Arctic programme in brief

Information about progress in the year 2017



About the programme

The Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme 2014–2020 covers a huge area that corresponds to 75% of EU's area. The Programme comprises a cooperation between 9 Programme partner countries; the EU-Member States of Finland, Ireland, Sweden and the United Kingdom (Scotland and Northern Ireland) in cooperation with the Faroe Islands, Iceland, Greenland and Norway. Besides that, Russia and Canada have the status as observers in the Monitoring Committee. This means that the Programme area encompasses the Euro-Arctic zone, parts of the Atlantic zone and parts of the Barents region, with neighbouring areas in Russia. Despite geographical differences, the large Programme area shares several common features, such as low population density, low accessibility, low economic diversity, abundant natural resources, and high impact of climate change. This unique combination of features results in joint challenges and joint opportunities that can best be overcome and realised by transnational cooperation.

The Programme's vision is to help to generate vibrant, competitive and sustainable communities by harnessing innovation, expanding the capacity for entrepreneurship, and seizing the unique growth initiatives and opportunities of the Northern and Arctic regions in a resource-efficient way.



The development needs and potentials of the Programme area, together with the policy and historic context, have resulted in 4 priority axes to achieve the Programme vision:

1. Using innovation to maintain and develop robust and competitive communities.
2. Promoting entrepreneurship to realise the potential of the Programme area's competitive advantage.
3. Fostering energy-secure communities through promotion of renewable energy and energy efficiency.
4. Protecting, promoting and developing cultural and natural heritage.

The sparsely populated communities of the Programme area are the focal point of all 4 priority axes.

The development of the Arctic has had and still has a growing attention at national level as well as in international cooperation, latest expresses by the EU communication on an integrated European Union policy for the Arctic. Therefore, in addition to the four above mentioned priority axes, the NPA addresses the "Arctic Dimension" as a cross cutting theme. This is done by including partners from the Arctic part from the Programme Area and by supporting cooperation, innovation and transfer of knowledge, and technology within themes of specific significance for the Arctic territories. The overall intention is that NPA projects shall foster changes that are of importance to people, including indigenous peoples, living in the Arctic area.

To ensure that indigenous peoples' interest can be met by the programme a representative for indigenous peoples has status as permanent observer in the programme Monitoring Committee. During the period 2014–2020, the Programme will allocate approximately 56 million Euros of programme funding to a target of 54 projects with a maximum total project budget of 2 million Euros per project including match funding.

In terms of monitoring results at programme level, result indicators, baseline values and targets for the six programme specific objectives were developed and approved by the Monitoring Committee during 2015.

Due to the lack of data covering the programme area, the Programme has decided to work with panels of regional experts, who were asked to describe and assess the regional status-quo in quantitative and qualitative terms in 2015 (baseline values), and then to assess the progress towards the achievement of objectives in 2017, 2019 and 2023. Rather than monitoring the entire programme area, a sample of three regions, defined on NUTS3 level, was selected and an expert panel was constituted for each of the six result indicators.

The baseline assessment provides the NPA Programme with a rich data set covering various quantitative-qualitative dimensions that give a detailed and varied picture of the status quo in the sample regions as a basis for monitoring the impact of the Programme's interventions. The 2017 update of the baseline values for the result indicators shows that most of the values have developed in line with the expectations in 2015. Even though three out of 6 values are a little below the expectations the regional experts are still optimistic with regard to reaching the target values in 2023. For one indicator (4) the 2017-update is higher than expected. For this indicator, the regional experts state that even though the overall situation has not changed much since 2015, some



important steps have been taken in one of the three regions concerning international cooperation in relation to climate change adaptation.

In terms of output indicators, two common indicators have been selected for priority axis 1 and 2. One common indicator has been selected for Priority axis 3 and a programme specific output indicator has been selected for Priority axis 4.

Progress in 2017

The Annual Implementation Report 2017 gives an overview of the implementation of the Programme in 2017. The following summarizes some key points in the report:

The Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme 2014 – 2020 was approved by the EU Commission on the 16th December 2014. To ensure a strong implementation right from start, the First Call was opened in the autumn 2014 before the formal approval by the EU Commission. Therefore, a first round of main projects could be adopted by the Monitoring Committee as early as in February 2015.

In February 2017, the Monitoring Committee approved ten projects from the fourth call, bringing the number of approved projects to 35. All 35 projects were contracted by the end of 2017 and in total 38 113 711 Euro or 68% of the total NPA funding for projects was allocated by the end of the year.

After four calls, the partners are very well distributed across the three geographical zones of the programme area: 108 partners in Finland, Sweden and Norway, 94 partners in Scotland, Ireland and Northern Ireland and 40 partners in Greenland, Iceland and Faroe Islands, and other countries 10.

The 35 main projects and 33 preparatory projects are distributed unevenly seen in relation to the four programme priority axes. The most popular theme is Axis 4 (Sustainability) with 10 approved main projects and 7 preparatory projects and a commitment rate of 77% of the ERDF funding. Axis 1 (Innovation) is the second most popular theme with 12 main projects and 10 preparatory projects, and a commitment rate of 72%. In Axis 3 there are 5 main projects and 9 preparatory projects approved and the commitment rate is 60%. The lowest commitment rate is in Axis 2 (Entrepreneurship) with 8 approved main projects and 7 preparatory projects or 60% of the ERDF funding committed.

Distance and costs are often obstacles to the development of a strong and well balanced project partnership, due to the dispersed geography of the NPA Programme area. For that reason, preparatory projects are a programme specific tool developed to bring potential project partners together and to generate high-quality main project applications.

Preparatory projects were launched in early 2015 and by the end of 2017 33 projects were contracted. In 2017 two clustering projects were selected, a new programme tool launched in 2017 for cross-programme collaboration between projects addressing the same theme.

As reported in the 2017 Annual Implementation Report, expectations of projects at application stage are very high in relation to the target values set out for the programme. These values are expected to decrease noticeably once projects are asked to provide robust evidence for their achieved output indicators in their final report. By the end of 2017, values for actual achievements for most indicators



are on or beyond targets. However, one common indicator for priority axis 2 and axis 4 respectively have relatively low reported values, and the specific indicator for axis 4 has no reported achievements by the end of 2017. This is expected to change when projects are further on in implementation, the low values for priority axis 4, in particular, is explained by the fact that there were no approved projects in the first two calls.

Examples of funded projects

Five examples of funded projects from the four calls are listed below. These examples address core themes within the NPA Programme:

IMPROVE - Involving the coMmunity to co-PROduce public serVicEs

The project addresses Priority Axis 1, Specific Objective: 1.2 Increased innovation in public service provision

The project objectives are to:

1. Improve the design of public services by using a transboundary open innovation/living labs approach to their development
2. Define a methodology suitable for co-production of sustainable public services in peripheral and sparsely populated areas
3. Test the effectiveness of the co-production methodology and open innovation/living labs approach, working in combination, to produce high quality and reduced cost innovative public services



IMPROVE aims to increase the level of innovation in six NPA peripheral regions in the field of technology-driven public service solutions. It adapts a novel living labs-driven approach to maximise knowledge transfers between regions and stakeholders. Real communities will demonstrate the approach by using it to co-produce six services, and develop tools and methodologies for use by other regions to implement the results of the project.

The partnership is led by an Irish partner and involves partners from Northern Ireland, Finland, Norway, Iceland, Scotland and Sweden. The partnership consists of regional authorities and research institutes.

Further details: improve.interreg-npa.eu



GREBE - Generating Renewable Energy Business Enterprise

The project addresses Priority Axis 2,
Specific Objective 2.1; *Improved support
systems for SMEs.*



GREBE
Generating Renewable Energy
Business Enterprise

The project objectives are to:

Highlight the most relevant funding
options to the user given their situation,
the innovation stage of renewable businesses and the local context, improve the business
environment for start-ups and SMEs through practical business mentoring services and business
growth strategies for more competitive and successful NPA regions, and, support renewable energy
enterprises in introducing new to market energy technology solutions.

GREBE will provide a platform for transnational sharing of knowledge to demonstrate the full
potential of the RE sector by showcasing innovations on RE technology and strengthening
accessibility to expertise and business support available locally and in other NPA regions.

The partnership is lead by an Irish partner and involves partners from Northern Ireland, Finland,
Norway, Iceland and Scotland. The partnership consists of regional authorities and research
institutes.

Further details: <http://grebeproject.eu>

e-Lighthouse - Energy Saving Lighthouse Cities in the NPA region

The project addresses Priority Axis 3 Increased use of energy
efficiency and renewable energy solutions.

The project objectives are to:

Increase energy savings in municipal buildings as well as old
and new domestic buildings.



eLighthouse.eu

TOWARDS ENERGY EFFICIENT COMMUNITIES

Project actions will support increased energy efficiency in
buildings (40% of EU energy consumption) and increase the uptake of renewable energy, thus
decreasing carbon dioxide emissions. Our goal is to support and follow-up the retrofit of more than
250 public buildings. In the private sector with the consultation of building supervisory authorities,
the project aims to influence the decision makers (of energy efficiency) of 2500 domestic retrofits
and 2000 new residential houses. Improved local and regional monitoring methodologies and
practices would greatly enhance the effectiveness. The e-Lighthouse project will tackle this problem
by providing guidelines and tools to reliably and efficiently calculate those important figures
annually. By showing good examples of good codes-of-conduct such as municipality citizenship, e-
Lighthouse partners will encourage other local and regional organizations to sign the new joint
Covenant of Mayors, to commit to energy saving at the political decision-making level.



**Northern Periphery and
Arctic Programme**
2014–2020



EUROPEAN UNION

Investing in your future
European Regional Development Fund

The partnership is led by a Finnish partner and involves partners from Greenland, Ireland, Norway, Scotland and Sweden. The partnership consists of regional authorities and research institutes.

Further details: www.elighthouse.eu

BuSK - Building Shared Knowledge capital to support natural resource governance in the Northern periphery

The project addresses Priority Axis 4 -Natural and Cultural Heritage Increased capacity for sustainable environmental management

The project objectives are to:

Combine and disseminate of the best practice knowledge, and increase local acceptance and participation mechanisms in different nature-based industries, and, amalgamate indigenous and local knowledge into land use planning.

This project develops planning tools that enhance the use of participatory techniques, and gives assistance for decision makers concerning land use planning and natural resource governance. Concretely, the development of participatory tools such as participatory GIS (PPGIS) is needed. Until now, these tools have been developed for urban areas and utilized successfully. However, the challenges of the use of the tools in rural areas are the following how to reach various stakeholders in sparsely populated areas, and how to make especially socio-cultural as well as indigenous and local knowledge spatially explicit. In addition, the challenge is how to apply information technology dependent participatory methods for remote regions. The project will work with stakeholders in such livelihoods as herding, tourism, recreation, forestry, agriculture, mining and energy production. The focus is in local, as well as in indigenous, residents' knowledge.

The partnership is led by a Finnish partner and involves partners from Faroe Islands, Greenland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. The partnership consists of regional authorities and research institutes.

Further details: www.luke.fi/busk





APP4SEA - Arctic Preparedness Platform for oil Spill and other environmental Accidents

The project addresses Priority Axis 4 -
Natural and Cultural Heritage Increased
capacity for sustainable environmental
management

The project objectives are to:

Strengthen the preparedness of
environmental authorities and the
awareness of general public in the coastal
areas of the NPA region regarding oil spill response.



ARCTIC PREPAREDNESS PLATFORM
FOR OIL SPILL AND OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ACCIDENTS

Combating oil spills in harsh, northern conditions is challenging with current technologies. Oil spills do not recognize national borders, and inefficiencies are brought by different practices and methods, which are used by different countries, as well as the challenges due to different sea and environmental conditions, and the variety of oil types used and transported by ship across the NPA region. APP4SEA will unite coastal authorities, pool their competences and data on oil weathering, share best practices in oil spill response technologies and models. By learning from each other, the authorities can respond faster and more efficiently in order to minimize environmental and social impacts of oil-in-water accidents. The project will produce an interactive smart map, which will be an open access platform showing search and rescue centers along the NPA coastline, their equipment and level of preparedness for oil spill accidents, weather conditions in accident zones, as well as information about important ecological areas and species that can be affected by oil spills. The smart application will also have a predictive function to advise in case of accident what equipment to deploy considering the place and scale of spill and environmental conditions. The project will also produce a gap analysis and improvement suggestions to improve OSR infrastructure and preparedness level in the NPA region. The end users of the project are local authorities responsible for oil spill response; social groups, educational institutions and the general public. APP4SEA will also involve local entrepreneurs, to support northern entrepreneurship and attract interest to environmental issues. In addition the general public will be provided access to illustrative educational tools.

Further details: app4sea.interreg-npa.eu