Interreg North-West Europe
European Regional Development Fund

Investing in Opportunities

Interreg NWE Gap analysis

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1. Introduction

a) Why a gap analysis?

Since 2015 the NWE Programme has launched four calls for proposals. The first two calls are closed. In total, 291 step 1 applications have been received and 16 projects have been approved after step 2. 16% of the ERDF programme budget has been allocated to projects so far. There is still a large amount of programme budget available to allocate to projects and project development and selection of new projects will certainly continue in the coming year(s).

At the same time, the programme has committed itself to some ambitions that are mentioned in the Cooperation Programme, among others:

- involving new stakeholders
- reaching out to e.g. peripheral/rural areas or moderate innovation regions
- focus on specific target audiences per specific objective (e.g. public authorities in SO2)
- specific targets regarding indicators and number of projects approved per priority

Some of these ambitions are also mentioned as communication targets in the programme's communication strategy:

  - Obtaining high quality applications from relevant institutions
  - Attracting relevant applicants and guiding them through the application process
  - Increasing the number of successful applications per call
  - Gaining support of decision makers
  - Increasing the level of satisfaction for applicants and decision makers regarding quality of information and accessibility.

After two years of programme implementation, it seems to be a good moment to analyse whether the programme is working towards its ambitions and what kind of projects and stakeholders the programme is attracting. Furthermore, the Commission has requested a gap analysis of the NWE territory, particularly concerning our capacity to reach newcomers.

The objective of this gap analysis is thus **to take stock of the programme's coverage (thematic, geographic, stakeholders), and to define the gaps related to the ambitions set out in the Cooperation Programme.**

The gap analysis is a tool to help the programme:

- analyse the programme performance and results in regards to the ambitions set in the Cooperation Programme
- evaluate our promotion and external communication strategy
- steer generation, development and selection of projects

The gap analysis will also be part of the Annual Implementation Report which will be given to the Commission.

Four types of areas have been identified for the gap analysis:

- Geographical coverage
- Thematic coverage
- Stakeholder coverage (type of organisations, including newcomers)
- Types of activities within approved projects

In order to reach the objectives mentioned above, it was relevant to analyse two parts of the application process:

- at step 1 (all applications submitted): to have a clear understanding of what is submitted to the programme, e.g. who do we manage to reach out to, in which territories and to what extent.
- after step 2 (approved projects): to check that performance at project level is in-line with the Cooperation Programme and to see where there are synergies or complementarities between projects.

b) Process

The gap analysis has been carried out jointly by the contact points and the Joint Secretariat. A small working group of 3 contact points and 3 JS staff was set up in the beginning to define the framework, the structure and the type of data needed for a gap analysis.

To the extent possible, statistics and maps were extracted from the eMS, from submitted application forms.

Contact points looked at the data from step 1 applications to give an analysis per country and put the information into a wider (policy) context. To guide them in the analysis of national / regional data, a questionnaire was drafted. The Joint Secretariat carried out the analysis for the approved projects.

For the future, the idea is to carry out a gap analysis on a regular basis, once a year.

c) Limitations

Before diving into the analysis, a few words of caution:

- The gap analysis is not scientifically based and in some cases, only shows trends. This is particularly true for step 1 submission maps and graphs, which can only be considered as indicative:
    - Partnerships in step 1 applications are not finalized. Some partners drop out after step 1 for approved projects (others are added).
    - We have used the list of all partners in step 1 submissions for maps and graphs (sub-partners and associated partners not included). This means some partners are counted more than once if they have applied in multiple applications.
- Not all elements could be captured at this stage of the programme. For example, there is no analysis on achieved results or outputs as effective project implementation has not started yet.
- Lack of critical mass for approved projects: having only 16 projects approved, synergies in terms of (e.g.) themes are rare and difficult to define at this stage.
- Some data (Nuts region, type of organisation…) concerning partners have been incorrectly entered in the eMS.
- In step 1 applications, it is not mandatory for partners to enter their NUTS codes, so information might be incomplete for some.
- Statistical errors might occur.

In addition, the question of newcomers needs a particular word of caution. In order to make it feasible to identify newcomers, they were defined as follows:

In the VB NWE Programme, newcomers are organisations that have not received funding in IVB NWE as full partners.

Clearly, this definition shows limitations:

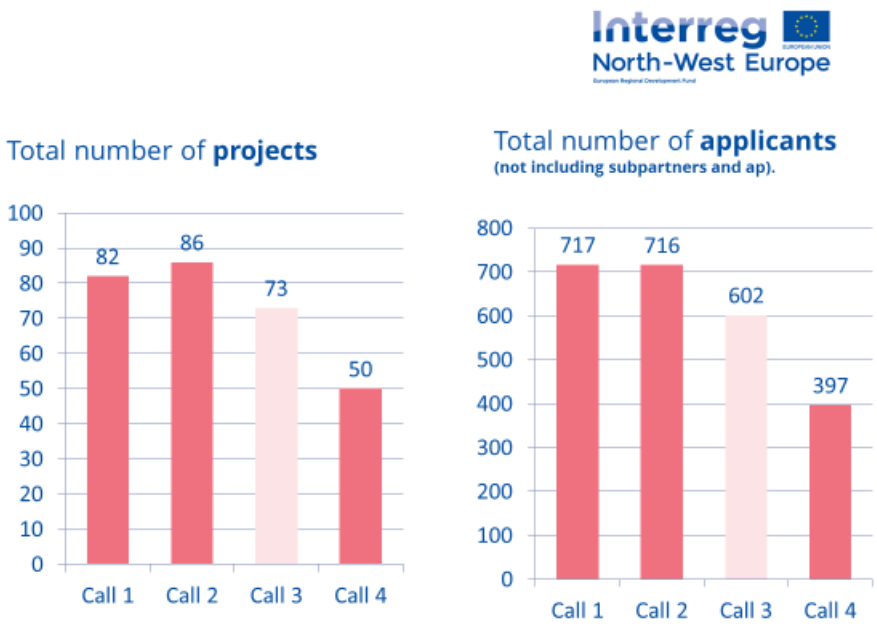
- Organisations funded under IIIB (or even IIC) are not captured
- Sub-partners (from IVB as well as VB) are not captured
- Not all organisations could be spotted (due to differences in names/languages when organisation titles were entered in the application forms).
- No difference was made when there were different departments from the same organisation, they were usually counted as one organisation.

However, even though there are certain limitations, the maps and data presented in this gap analysis will at least show a trend which helps to identify an approximate share of newcomers in the VB NWE Programme so far.

2. Analysis of Step 1 applications

a) Overall picture

In total, the North-West Europe Programme has received 291 step 1 applications, during four calls in the past 2 years. Calls 1 and 2 closed in May and November 2015, and calls 3 and 4 closed in June and November in 2016.

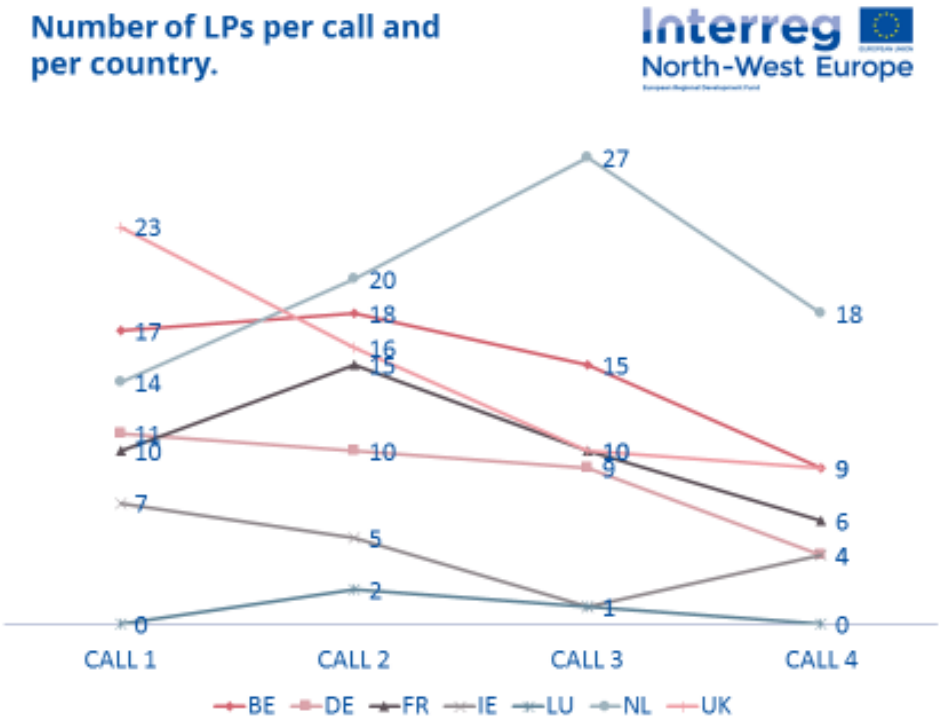


Apart from the North Sea Region Programme, this is substantially less than in many of the other transnational programmes, some of which received more than 291 projects in just their first call:

- Central Europe: 620
- Danube: 547
- South West Europe: 496
- Alpine Space: 219
- Adriatic-Ionian: 376
- Med: 375
- North Sea Region: 96

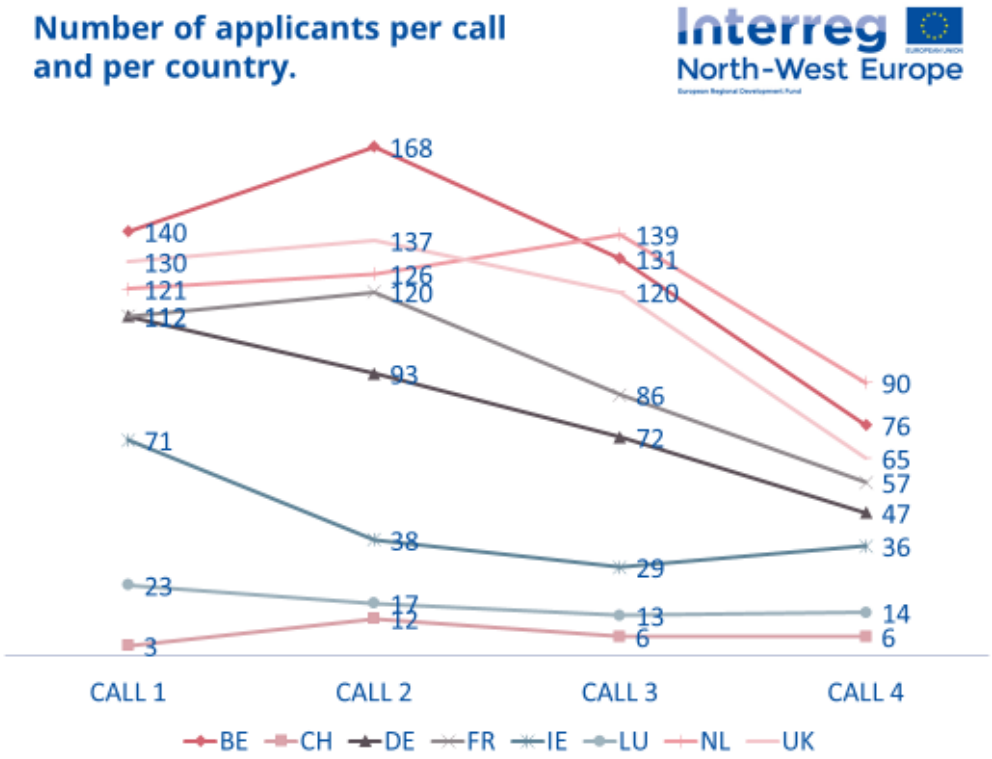
The trend concerning the number of applications received was rather stable over the first 3 calls, but now seems to be clearly decreasing. This decrease was to be expected and a similar one has been observed in other programmes. Nevertheless, for a region as large as the NWE area, the number of call 4 applications received is particularly low, especially

considering that this figure includes approximately 20% of resubmissions from previous calls.



Beyond this general downwards trend in the number of applications received, a closer look at **the number of LPs per call** and per country seems to show that situations are quite different from one country to another:

- BE and NL, although decreasing in call 4 remain over-represented as lead partners in projects, if we take into consideration their population. These two countries lead more than 50% of all projects submitted in calls 3 and 4.
- FR and DE have been slowly decreasing, but can be considered as under-represented considering the population in these areas.
- UK has strongly decreased in its number of LPs since the first call (over 50%). This cannot be linked to the Brexit as the strongest decrease took place between call 1 and 2.
- The variation in IE and LU can be considered as less significant considering the quantity of projects concerned.



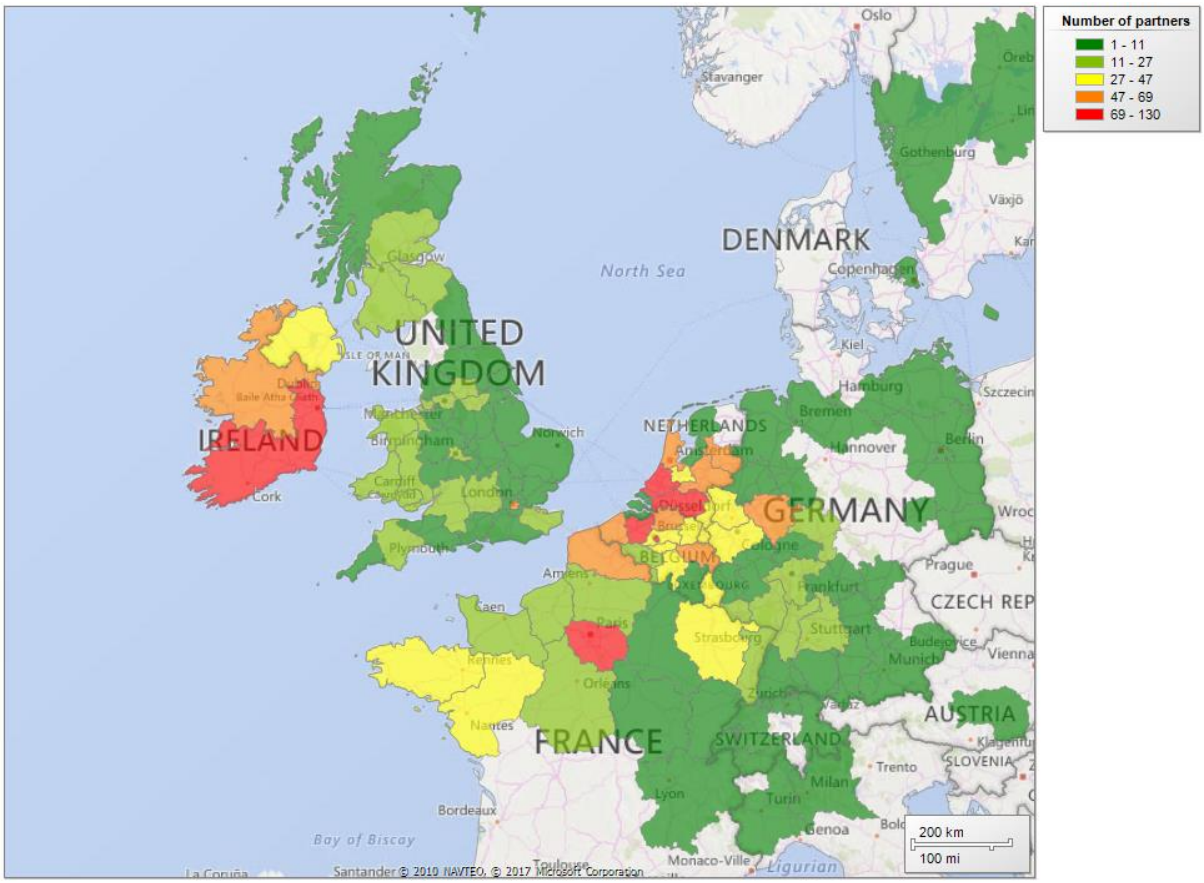
The number of applicants involved in all applications at each call confirms the downward trend in a clearer way. Since call 2, most countries have seen their number of partners involved steadily decrease.

However, a closer look at this figure per country, seems to show that the decrease in involvement has been particularly strong in some countries: it is notably the case of Belgium as well as France, Germany and the UK since call 2 (with a decrease of around 50% in these countries).

Finally, it is also interesting to note that some countries have increased their number of participants (IE, LU) between calls 3 and 4.

b) Geographical analysis

Map 1: All applicants step 1 at NUTS 2 level



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At NUTS 2 level, the first observation that can be made is that – besides Cumbria in the UK and parts of Switzerland - all regions of North-West Europe have had an applicant joining a project in step 1.

Nevertheless, this number of applicants varies widely from one region to another. Some major concentrations can be observed:

- In the **core of North-West Europe** including the former Nord-Pas-de Calais region, the Netherlands, most of Belgium (all regions except Hainaut and Luxembourg) as well as the north-western part of Germany (Nordrhein-Westfalen).

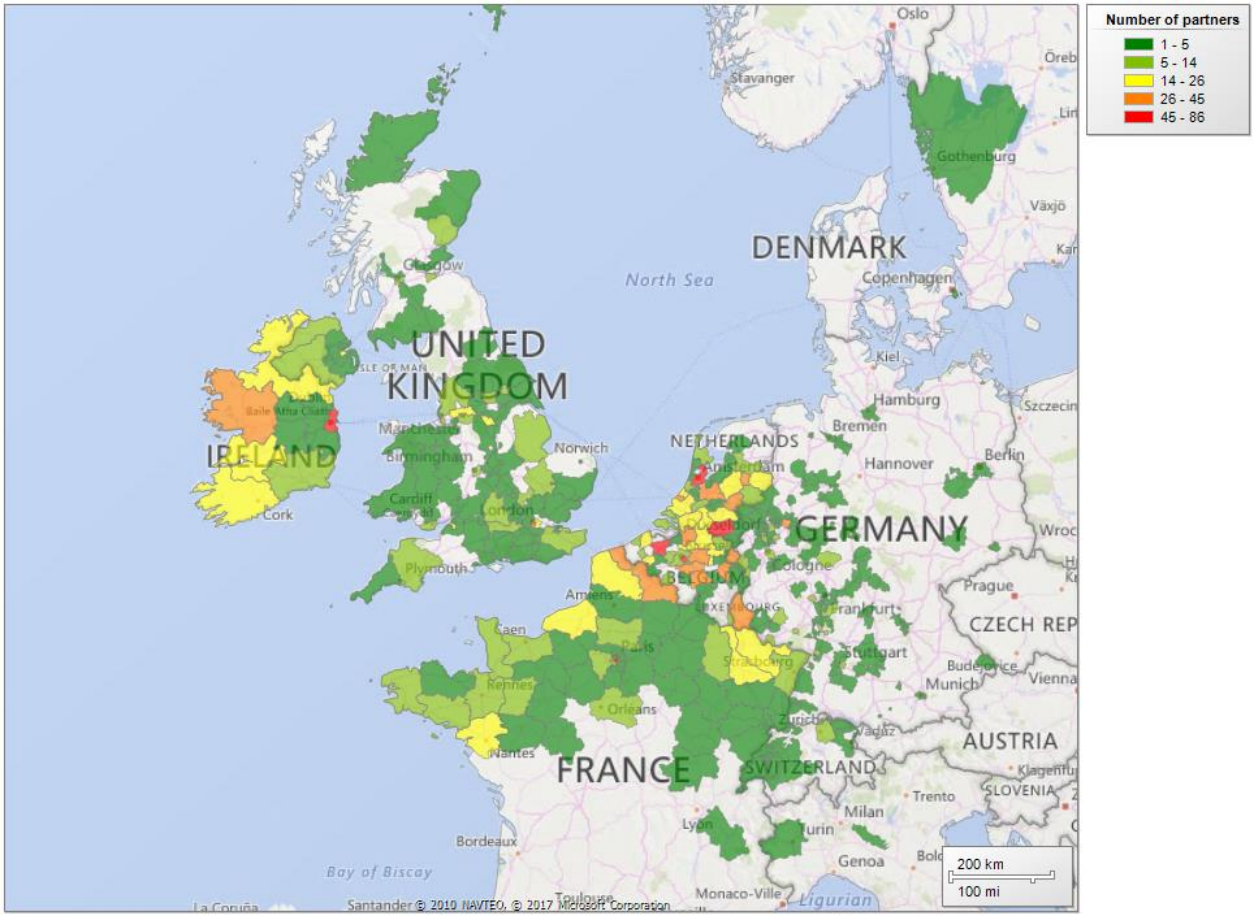
[1] This map does not display all applicants from outside the NWE area. The complete map can be found in annexe I.

- In the **large urban areas** (Paris, Brussels, London, Manchester, Dublin, Dusseldorf, Koln, Stuttgart, Karlsruhe, Eindhoven, Rotterdam, Amsterdam…)
- In the **Atlantic area regions:** western France (Brittany, Pays de la Loire) some western regions of England (Bristol/bath area, Merseyside), Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland, as well as Ireland.

In a similar way, it is possible to identify some areas or type of regions where the number of applicants is much lower:

- Most **rural, less populated and urbanized areas** (Hainaut and Luxembourg in Belgium, Zeeland in NL, Cumbria in the UK, Burgundy or champagne Ardennes in France…)
- Most of the **eastern regions of the UK** (North-East, parts of Yorkshire, East Midlands, East Anglia) as well as some of the southern regions.
- Regions located in the **south east of NWE**, in France (Franche-Comté, Bourgogne) and in Germany (southern part of Baden Württemberg, Bavarian part of NWE).

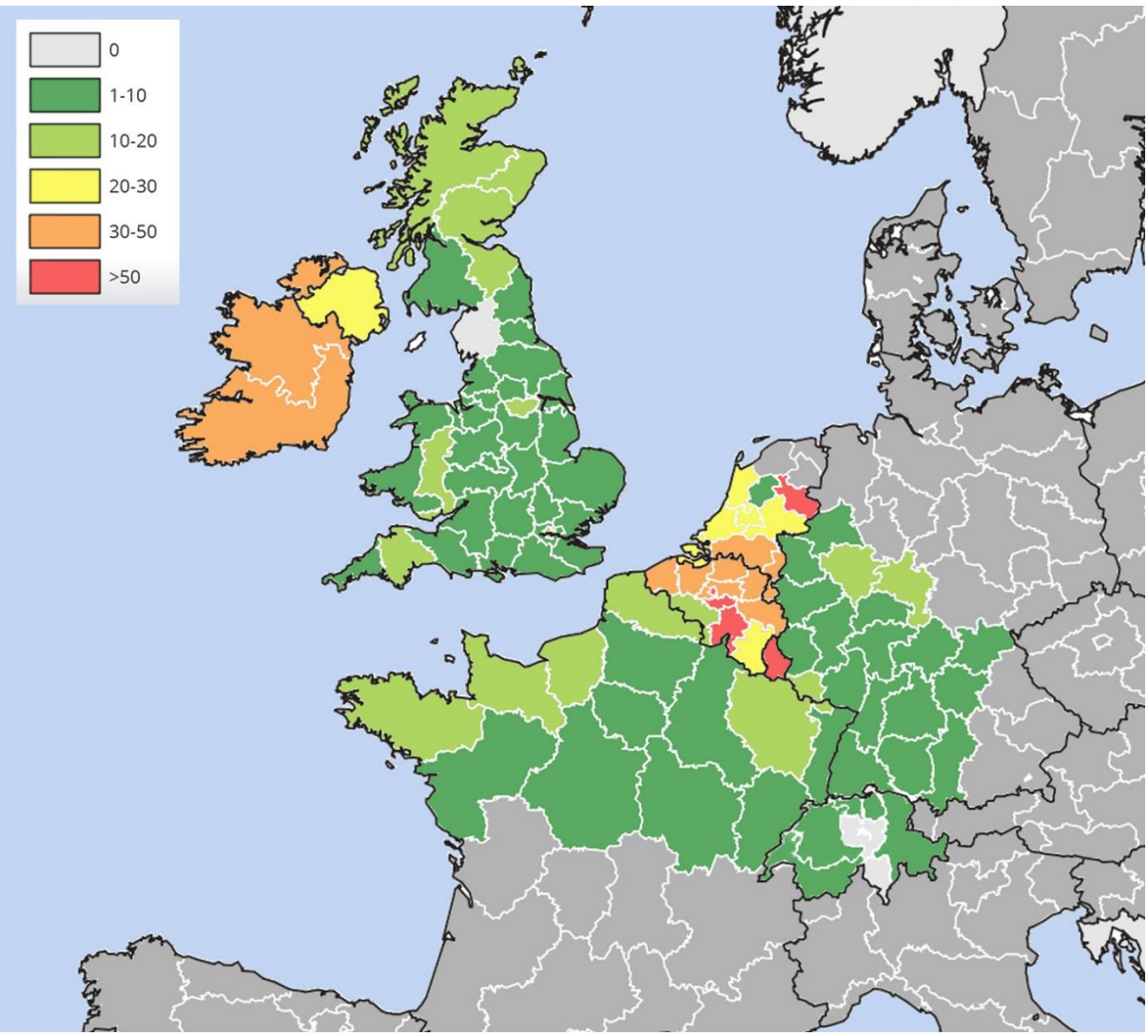
Map 2: All applicants step 1 at NUTS 3 level



To fine-tune this analysis, a look at the NUTS 3 regions can also be useful. It mostly confirms the urban rural divide: within NUTS regions it is quite clear that most applicants come from the NUTS 3 regions which include big cities or very urbanized areas.

It also shows that within NUTS 2 regions there can be very big geographical gaps: Even in Flanders or the Netherlands, some areas have very few or no partners in step 1.

Map 3: Number of step 1 applicants for 1 million inhabitants at NUTS 2 level

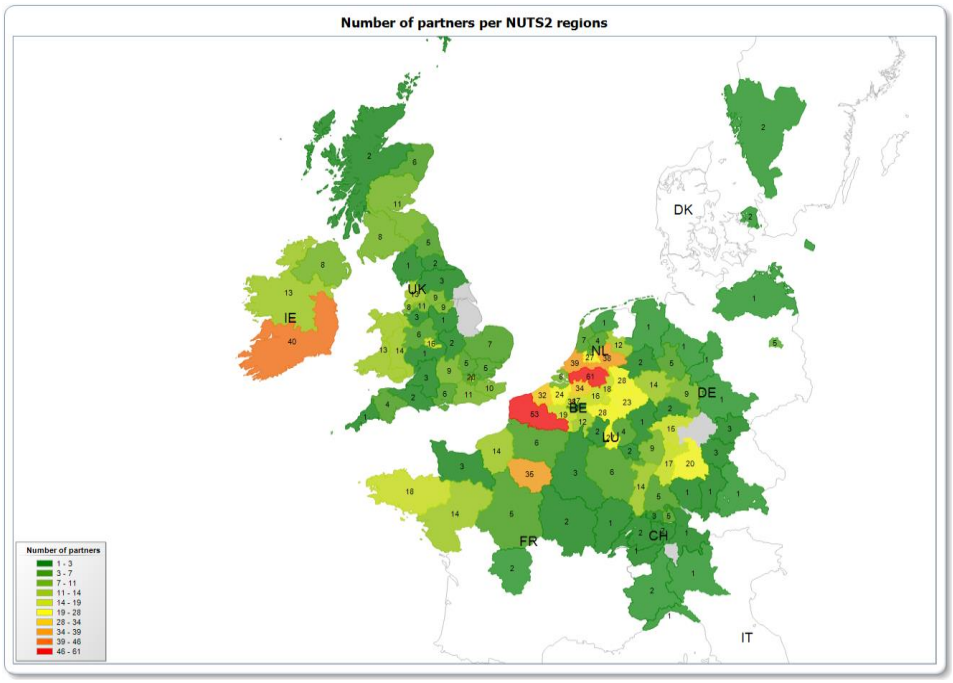


To complete the analysis, it is also interesting to look at the ratio of project partners per inhabitants. Overall it confirms the tendencies appearing in the previous maps, but with a stronger concentration on 4 countries (Belgium, Luxembourg, Netherlands and Ireland) which include all of the most dynamic step 1 regions, with more than 30 applicants for 1

million inhabitants. The UK, France and Germany never exceed 20 partners for 1 million inhabitants, except for Northern Ireland, which has 24.

Finally, if we compare these VB maps to a map of the number of partners from approved projects in the 4B period, the similarities are striking. Most of the observations made on the 5B applicants maps can apply.

Map 4: All partners IVB at NUTS 2 level



It is quite difficult to interpret and give clear reasons for these observations. However, these are some of the most common explanations given by contact points and JS:

- The NWE area is also covered (partially) by 21 other ETC programmes. These **very numerous overlaps with other EU programmes** have both a positive and a negative effect on the number of applicants:
    - Regions covered by many ETC programmes can suffer from the comparative approaches adopted by some applicants. Three main areas of comparison between programmes are pointed out the most:

      - Success rate: In many countries, the very high success rate of other programmes (especially from the Interreg A strand) is pointed out as a possible reason for gaps. For example, the success rates of the Greater Region programme (61% overall) are mentioned as having an influence on the number of applicants in Luxembourg. In Flanders, the Limburg region which is also covered by the Flanders-Netherlands Programme and the

Euregio Rhein-Waal (with a 90% success rate[2]) has shown a greater involvement in these programmes.

- Co-funding rate: The higher level of co-financing can also have an influence on the number of applicants in some regions. In Germany for example, the regions with fewer partners (parts of Baden Württemberg and Bavaria) are covered partly or entirely by several cross-border programmes and the 3 other transnational programmes with higher co-funding rates: Danube (85%), Central Europe (80%) and Alpine Space (85%).

- Timeline of programmes (when have the programmes been launched, when are the calls planned?): In France, the number of partners in Brittany and Pays de la Loire, relatively high in calls 1 and 2 dropped in call 3 when the Atlantic area programme was launched. Similar effects were observed for the Lorraine region when the Greater Region programme was launched or even in the Hauts-de-France when the 2 Seas programme was launched.

- The overlap of programmes can by contrast stimulate a higher interest in the NWE programme:

  - The multiple sources of EU funding in a given territory creates a **favourable ecosystem** for organisations to be informed and get advice and support for their applications. Some regions with only NWE and Interreg Europe as ETC programme are under-represented (Centre Val de Loire in France for example). In contrast, some regions included in multiple ETC programmes are over-represented (Nord-Pas-de-Calais, Northern Ireland and Ireland…)

  - The specific **relevance of our programme** is also taken into account by applicants: In the UK for example, 90% of LPs in call 4 were in P1 when they could have potentially applied on the same theme in the Atlantic area (75% co-funding).

- **Language issue**: unlike other programmes which work in all languages of the programme area (especially cross-border programmes), NWE uses only English. It greatly simplifies many procedures and processes but can also scare away some potential applicants which are not fluent in this language.

- The **presence and activities of CPs:** in the UK, a high number of partners come from the North West and the South West where CPs have been located in the past

[2] Survey of other Interreg programmes present on part of our area.

few years. The temporary absence of CPs in the UK between May and September 2016 might be one of the reasons for the drop in number of applicants between calls 3 and 4. In France, the presence in Nord Pas de Calais of the MA and both CPs of the NWE programme can also explain the high number of partners coming from that region.

- The impact of **programme promotion actions**: the link is rarely immediate between an event or programme promotion initiative and its result in number of applicants in a given region. However, some of the areas with high numbers of applicants correspond to specific communication, promotion or project scouting initiatives from the CPs and JS.

- **National support schemes:** whether on project development or on match-funding some national support schemes have made the NWE Programme more accessible and attractive for applicants. In the Netherlands for example, the national scheme (PSR) that was in place from late 2015 to 2016 to encourage Dutch LPs to develop projects, has certainly played a role in the call results for NL since call 2.

- Some regions or cities are over represented due to the very **high involvement of some specific organisations:** The University of Ghent in Flanders or the University of Liege in Wallonia for example.

c) Types of partners (applicants step 1)

Overall

Types of partners are selected by the applicants themselves in the application form. The NWE Programme Manual gives examples for each category, however it is important to note that many projects do not identify themselves accurately. In some cases, as many as 1/5 of the applicants have been reported to have been identified incorrectly.

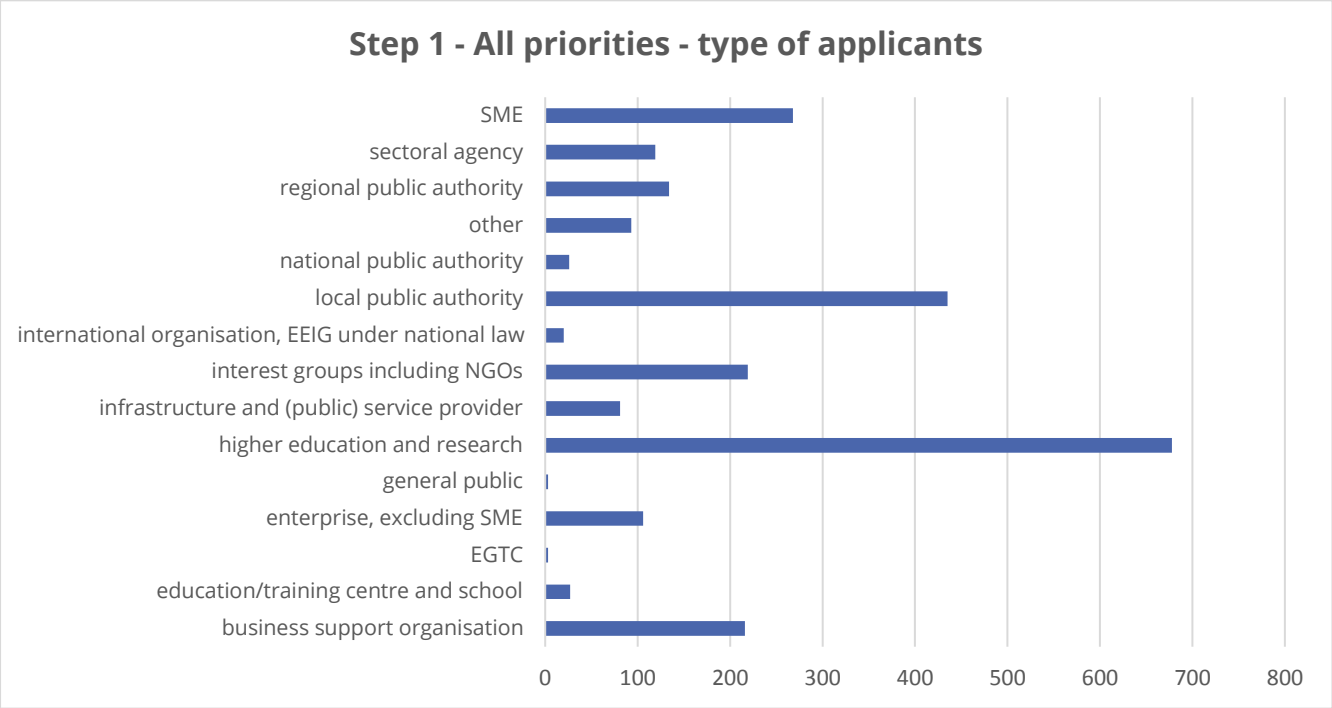
For all priorities, the **three highest categories of type of partners in step 1 applications are**:

1) Higher education and research – 28%
2) Local public authority – 18%
3) SMEs – 11%

Business support and interest groups including NGOs are close behind, but the remaining categories have much smaller numbers of applicants, comprising only 25% of the total. The lowest numbers come from the fields of general public and EGTC, representing less

than 1%. It should also be noted that the distinction in these sectors between public and private are not always clear, as some educational institutions, for example, could fall into either category. **The top three categories represent 57% of all applicants.**

Graph 1: Type of applicant step 1 VB call 1-4



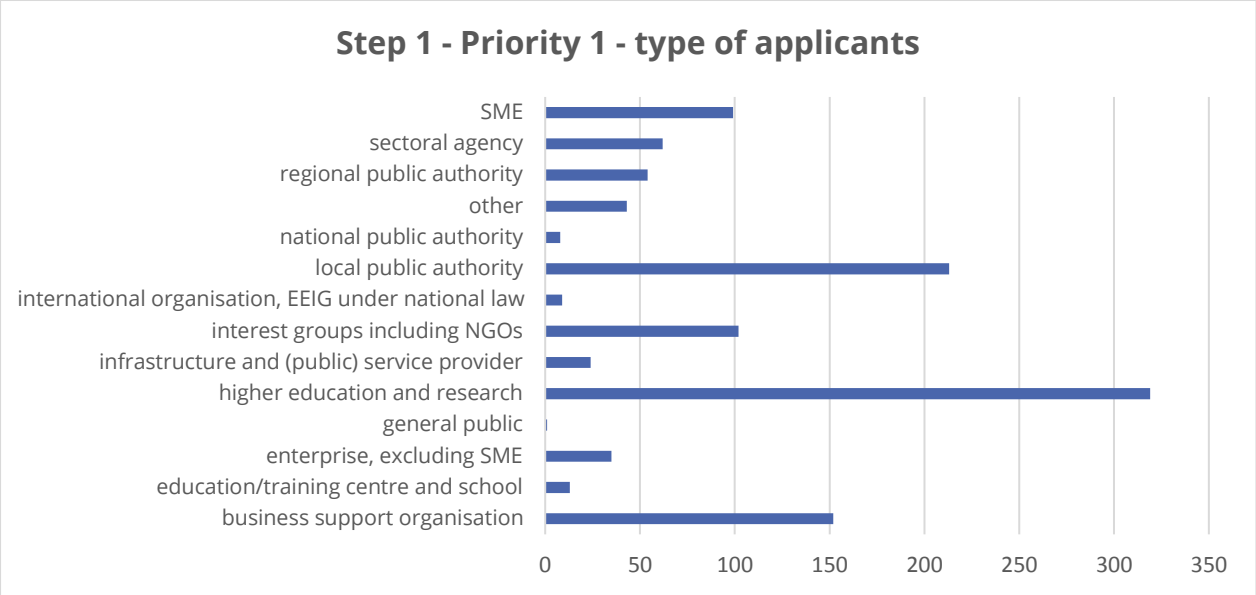
Analysis per priority

Focusing on priority, **the top three categories remain consistent with the overall numbers,** with a few interesting distinctions.

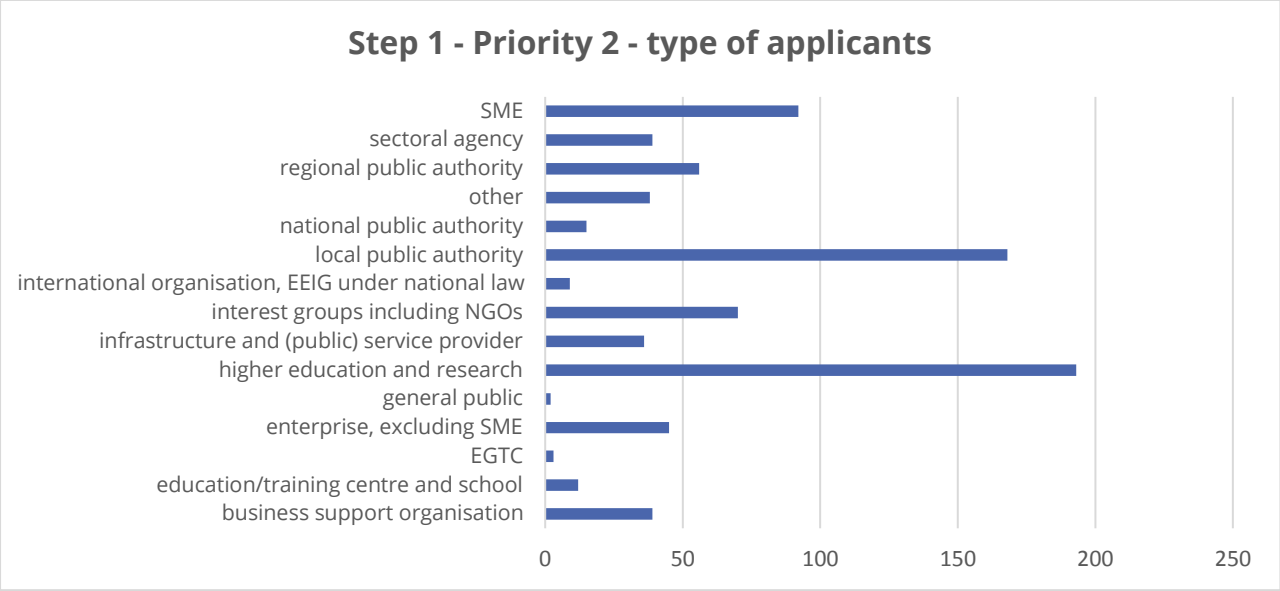
'Higher education and research' make up the largest percentage of applicants, however in priority 3 it more than triples any other sector except SMEs (higher education = 35%, SME = 16%), while in priorities 1 and 2 it is balanced in the majority along with 'local public authority'.

Likewise, **'business support organisation' has a strong representation in priority 1,** but not in priorities 2 and 3. 'General public' and 'EGTC' are the lowest categories in all three priorities, however priority 2 has a proportionally higher number of applicants from 'national public authority,' whereas it is one of the lowest categories for both priorities 1 and 3.

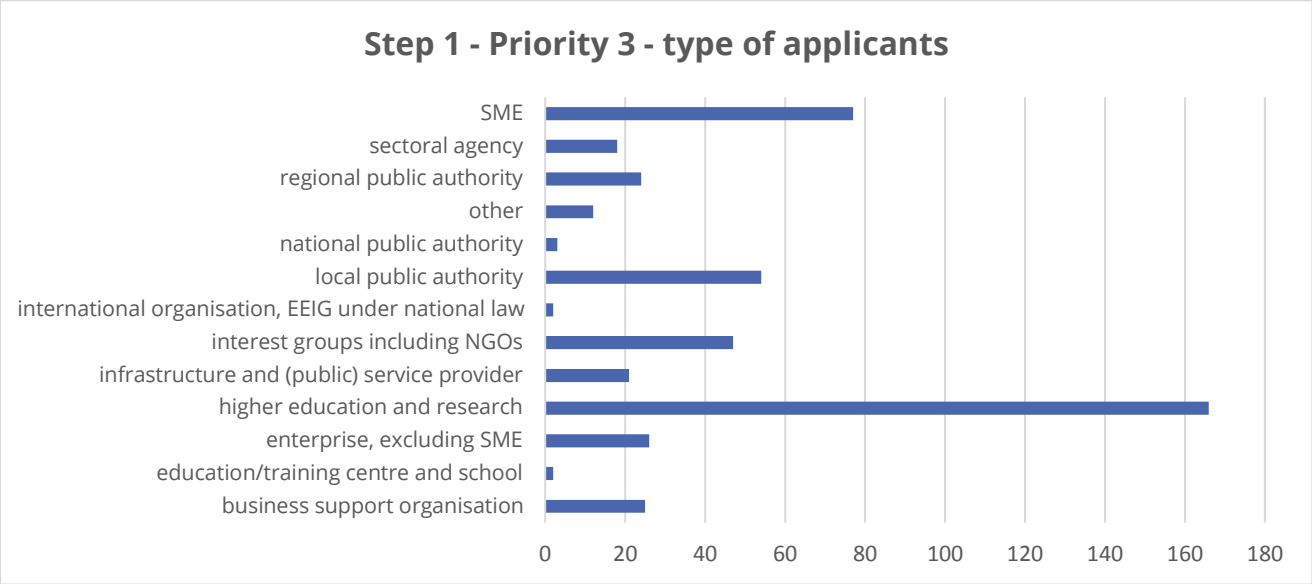
Graph 2: Type of applicant step 1 P1 call 1-4



Graph 3: Type of applicant step 1 P2 call 1-4



Graph 4: Type of applicant step 1 P3 call 1-4



Analysis per call

When comparing applicants from different calls, it should be noted that the top three categories ('higher education and research', 'SME', and 'local public authority') have remained the same. Additionally, the percentage of applicants that are included in those three categories remained consistent (55% in call 3 and 56% in call 4).

Geographical approach

At national / regional level, feedback from contact points indicates that, like the NWE data, per country higher education takes up the bulk of the lead partners and applicants.

Some countries, like Luxembourg for example, report 'higher education' numbers as high as 48% of all step 1 applicants. In priority 2 Flanders also has a high percentage of 'local public authority' (30%) compared to the NWE average. In contrast, Brussels has reported that it is more difficult for SMEs and smaller businesses to become partners over larger organisations and reports that 1/3 of their applicants are EU federations.

SME interest varies, not only by country, but also by priority. For example, SMEs in Wallonia only make up 7% of their total applicants, while 'higher education' and 'local public authority' alone constitute over 50% of the total representation.

Sectors with opportunities for improvement are notably 'interest groups including NGOs', which are not being reached, except in France. Germany otherwise matches the NWE average, except in that there are a low number of infrastructure and public service providers compared to the other regions.

While all the contact points addressed declining numbers of applications in the last call, the Netherlands highlighted a marked shift between 4B and 5B programmes. They cited a decrease in local, national, and regional government participation (50% to 30%), and an increase in private institutions (10% to almost 40%).

Referencing the Cooperation Programme

In terms of targets, in the Cooperation Programme SMEs are consistently referenced as a target group for most specific objectives, especially for SO1, however interestingly, the percentage of SMEs is the lowest in priority 1 compared to the other priorities.

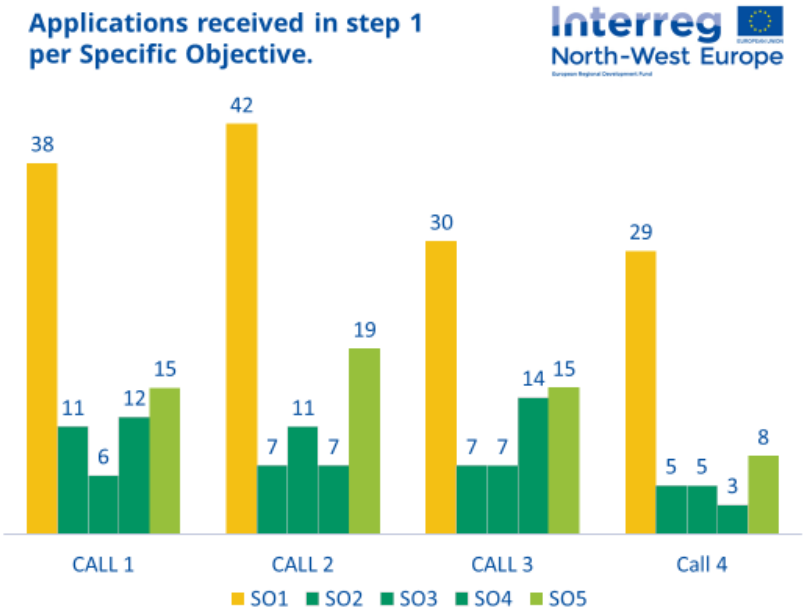
Additionally, the coordination of SMEs with research institutions is listed as a focus (15% baseline, with a 20% target), but that is difficult to extrapolate from this data without providing a more in-depth overview of each step 1 application.

The Cooperation Programme also indicates a high interest in working with regional and local public authorities (SO2), social enterprises (SO1, SO3, SO5), and related enterprises (SO4, SO5). While local authorities is a consistently high-represented category, there is thus room for growth in attracting social enterprises, NGOs, and transport-related enterprises.

d) Themes

Overall the number of applications received per priority follows the general trend of the total number of applications received, with a slight increase from call 1 to call 2 and a decrease since then.

Graph 5: Applications step 1 per SO



However, a closer look per priority and per SO seems to show some differences:

Innovation clearly attracts the most projects and represents around 50% of the project applications received (even more for the last call). Unlike the other priorities there is almost no decrease in the number of applications received between calls 3 and 4.

Within the innovation priority, most projects correspond to the ToA 1 or 2, with two main themes - health and food – addressed by approximately 30% of all applications in innovation. Social innovation is also very popular with 33 projects received on this theme, representing 22% of all P1 applications in the first 4 calls.

Table 1: Priority 1 most popular themes

Project theme / sector	Health / medical	Social innovation	Food / Agro food	Creative, digital and design	Manufacturing
Call 1	5	10	3	10	4
Call 2	8	8	2	4	3
Call 3	7	10	7	1	3
Call 4	4	5	6	-	3
Total	**24**	**33**	**18**	**15**	**13**

Since call 3, our Terms of Reference mentions the fact that our programme is interested in receiving projects addressing the migration challenge. Out of 61 innovation projects in the last two calls, 7 of them mention the migration topic, but none of them fully focus on it.

Priority 2 has received a similar number of applications from call 1 to 3, but a severe drop of more than 50% has been observed between calls 3 and 4. Variations per SO have been constant throughout the first 4 calls on each one of these SOs, but SO4 clearly stands out as the weakest, with only 3 submitted projects in call 4.

Overall, energy efficiency and energy supply projects are the most common, representing over 40% of the total in this priority. Transport represents 34 % of all applications received, which remains high despite the strong decrease in call 4.

Table 2: Priority 2 most popular themes

Project theme / sector	Energy efficiency / retrofitting	Energy supply	Energy storage	Transport	CO2 capture
Call 1	7	5	2	11	-
Call 2	5	7	1	6	1
Call 3	6	5	2	13	2
Call 4	2	3	-	3	2
Total	**20**	**20**	**5**	**33**	**5**

Priority 3 has followed the overall trend of applications received with a much lower number of applications received in call 4. Projects addressing the reuse of materials (textile, paint, various types of waste…) are the most numerous.

Table 3: Priority 3 most popular themes

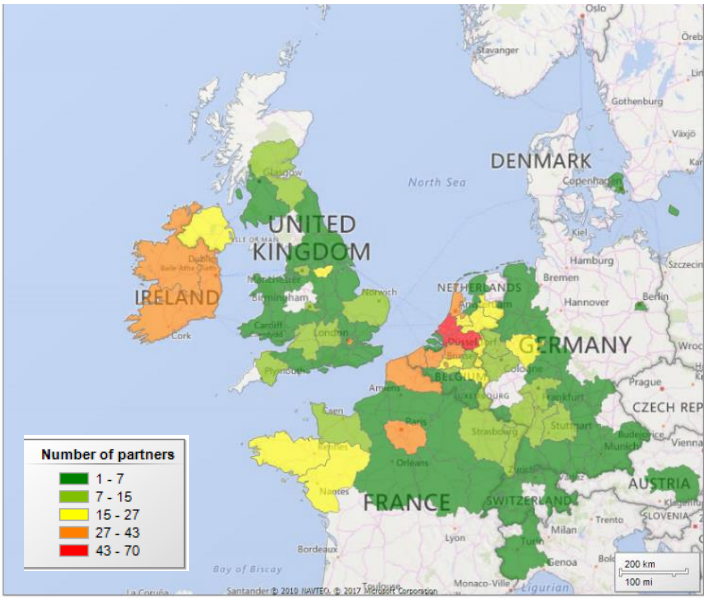
Project theme / sector	Food	Materials	Water	Buildings	Biomass / nutrients
Call 1	-	2	1	5	6
Call 2	2	6	2	2	1
Call 3	2	4	2	2	1
Call 4	2	2	1	1	1
Total	**6**	**14**	**6**	**10**	**9**

Number of applicants per theme at NUTS 2 level

The number of applicants per theme generally matches the overall trends. A look at the maps per priority shows that the regions with a high number of applicants overall are mostly well represented in all 3 priorities and the 3 maps have similar general trends.

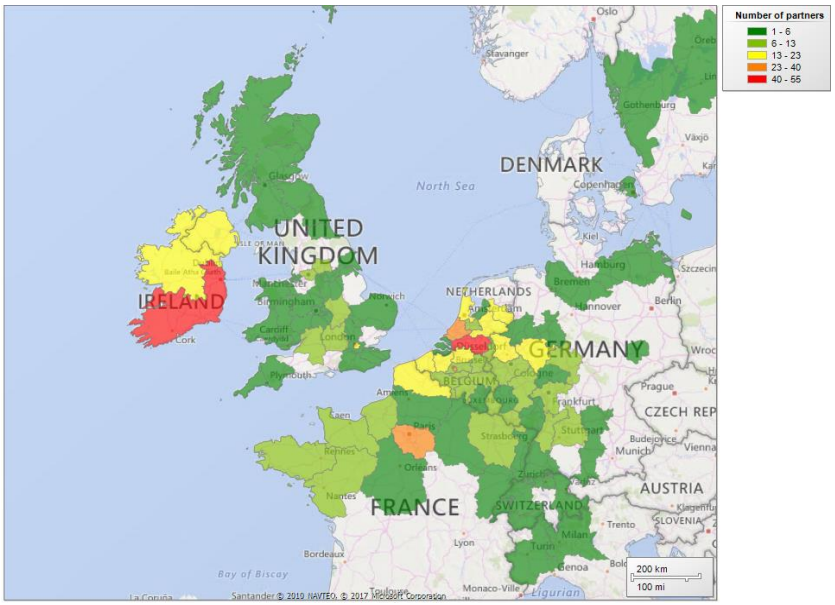
However, a few specificities per priority stand out:

Map 5: All applicants step 1 P1 at NUTS 2 level



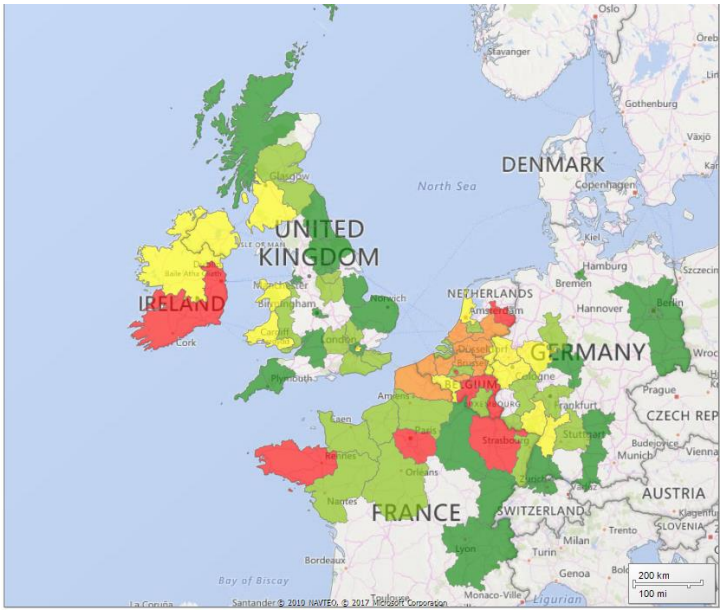
Priority 1 reflects the most the overall situation in terms of number of partners. The core regions of North-West Europe, the big cities (Paris, London) as well as Ireland and Northern Ireland have high number of partners. Within these regions, the Netherlands, and more specifically the Eindhoven region (the university areas: Delft, Eindhoven Enschede) and South Holland stand out as the leading regions on this theme.

Map 6: All applicants step 1 P2 at NUTS 2 level

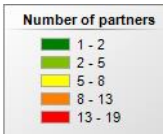


In priority 2, the core of North-West Europe is also strongly represented with once again the region of North Brabant, South Holland, leading. However, the overall picture on this priority is rather more uniform than for priority 1, with 6-23 partners in almost all regions of continental Europe, notably in Germany or in Western France. Although Ireland and Northern Ireland are well represented, the UK seems to be rather lagging behind on this priority.

Map 7: All applicants step 1 P3 at NUTS2 level



In priority 3 the situation is quite different from the other priorities. Although as usual, the core regions of North West Europe and Ireland/Northern Ireland remain well represented, however some others regions are leading in number of applicants: Lorraine, Luxembourg, Brittany, Overijseel.



A few broad keys of understanding can be given to explain this thematic repartition:

- Generally speaking, the very **broad scope of the innovation priority** makes it easier to apply under this theme and is the main explanation for the very high number of applications on this priority compared to others.

- The influence of **national schemes** with thematic focuses: In Flanders, partners involved in an innovation project can apply for match funding (12 organisations already benefit from this scheme in VB); in the Netherlands, a national scheme (PSR) on a topic related to transport is under development and some partners and institutes might be waiting for this first call to submit under SO4.

- **Local / regional specificities:** among other examples, the number of innovation centres in Flanders, the Eindhoven region's strong involvement on innovation in the food and health sector, or the Lorraine region's strong mobilization around post-industry problematics are mentioned as reasons for the high number of applicants on the related priorities (1 and 3). Local policies such as the province of Gelderland's specific focus on energy policy is also mentioned as a reason for a high level of P2 applicants from that region.

- The **funding available for research and development for innovation** is different between countries. The lack of funding in the Netherlands can partly explain the very high number of applicants in this priority.

3. Analysis of approved projects

a) Overall picture

The NWE Programme approved 16 projects after two calls for proposals[3]:

- 6 projects in priority 1 (innovation)
- 6 projects in priority 2 (low carbon)
- 4 projects in priority 3 (resource and materials efficiency)

The distribution per Specific Objective (SO) is as follows:

- 6 projects in SO1 (innovation)
- 4 projects in SO2 (implementation of low-carbon strategies)
- 1 project in SO3 (uptake of low-carbon technologies/processes)
- 1 project in SO4 (low-carbon transport solutions)
- 4 projects in SO5 (resource and materials efficiency)

The projects approved:

Priority 1	**Priority 2**	**Priority 3**
ASPECT	ACE-Retrofitting (SO2)	AFTB
BE-GOOD	CAN (SO2)	Fibersort
Boost4Health	E=O (SO2)	Food Heroes
BioBase4SME	HeatNet NWE (SO2)	RE-DIRECT
eMen	FORESEA (SO3)	
QCAP	CHIPS (SO4)	

Those 16 projects represent a budget of EUR 57.7 million ERDF (EUR 97 million total eligible costs).

150 partners are represented, of which five are involved in two projects each:

[3] Decisions still pending for call 2 projects at MC6

	AFTB	ACE-Retro fitting	HeatNet NWE	CAN	Food Heroes	BioBase 4SME	BE-GOOD
Plymouth City Council (UK)			X	X			
Luxembourg Institute of Science and Technology (LU)	X						X
Energy Cities (BE)		X	X				
Association des Chambres d'Agriculture de l'Arc Atlantique (FR)					X	X	
Aberdeen City Council (UK)		X	X				

Furthermore, 53 sub-partners have been approved, representing a total budget of EUR 5.9 million (= 6% of total partners' budget).

The partners and sub-partners per country:

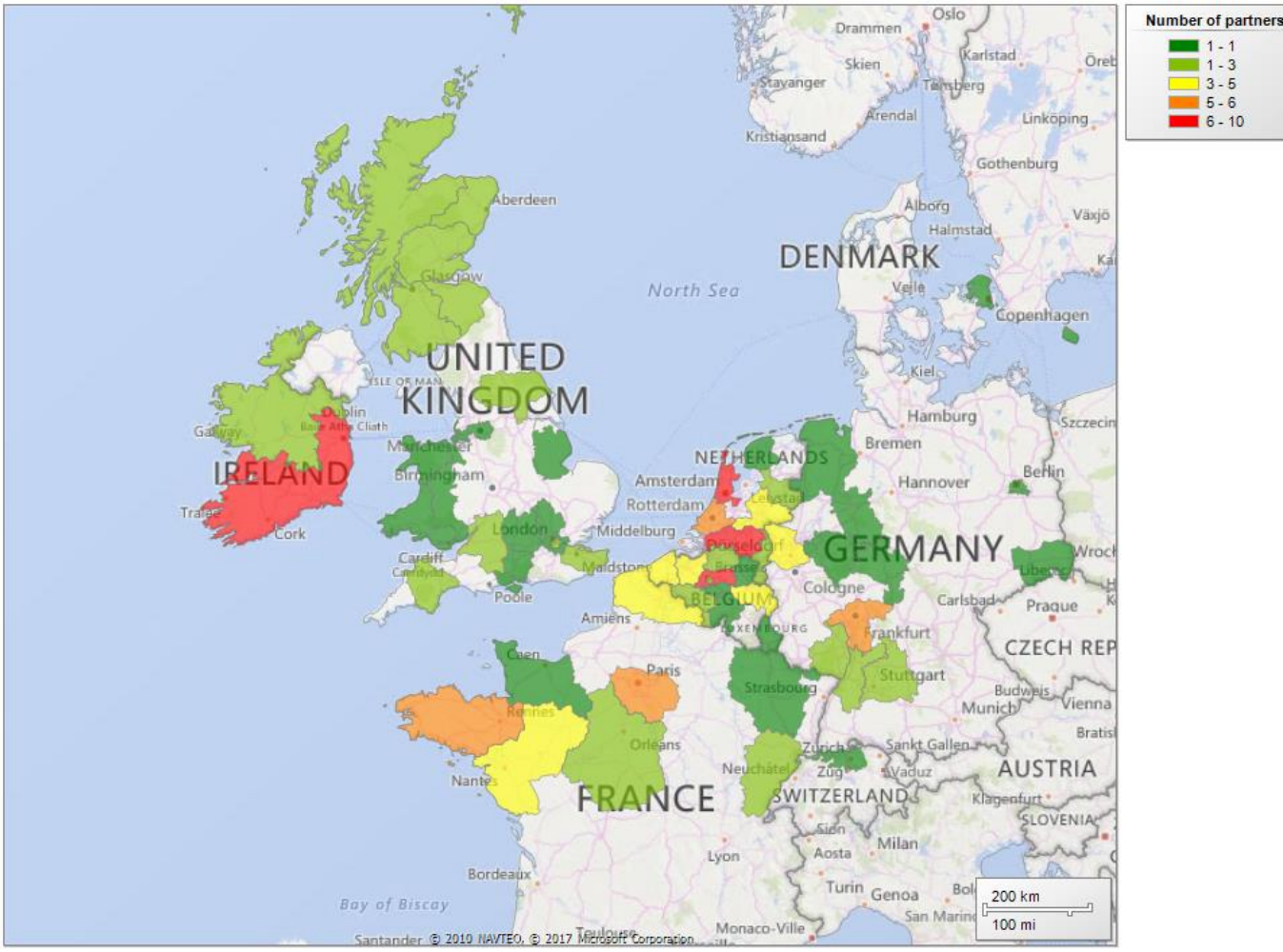
Country	Partners	Sub-partners
BE	27	8
DE	21	10
FR	26	12
IE	11	3
LU	4	0
NL	33	11
UK	25	9
CH	1	0

In addition, there are two partners outside the NWE area: in Denmark and in Spain.

Based on these figures, an average NWE project has a partnership consisting of 9 partners and 3 sub-partners and an average budget of EUR 6 million (EUR 3.6 million ERDF).

b) Geographic analysis

Map 8: Approved partners at NUTS2 level

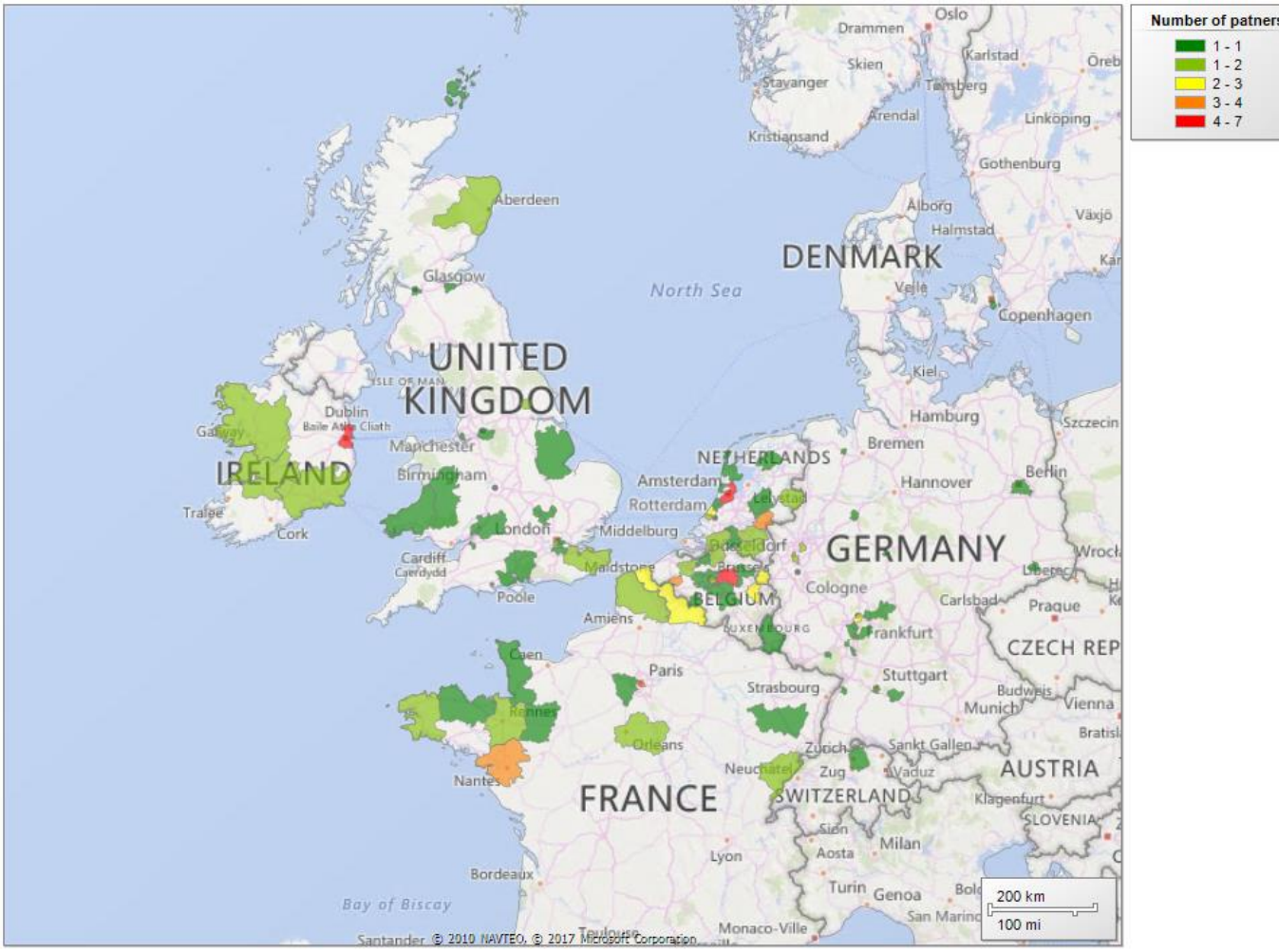


The number of approved projects and partners is still too small to create a critical mass and to have a meaningful analysis of the geographic allocation. Currently, the distribution at NUTS 2 level is quite scattered. However, the trend is similar as in IVB: partners are geographically concentrated in the core area (Belgium and the Netherlands, North of France) and around the main cities (except for Bretagne (FR)). The dark red in southern Ireland is mainly due to the Dublin area, so also concentrating around a main city. A few regions are not covered at all at this stage of programme implementation, such as Burgundy (France), Saarland (Germany) or some central regions of the UK.

When looking at NUTS 3, the above stated trend becomes even clearer: the majority of partners can be found around main cities. **Rural and peripheral regions are not**

well covered at this stage. Also moderate innovators, as defined by the Regional Innovation Scoreboard, **are hardly represented** (e.g. surrounding regions of Paris, see Annex II). **This is contradictory to the ambitions described in the NWE Cooperation Programme.**

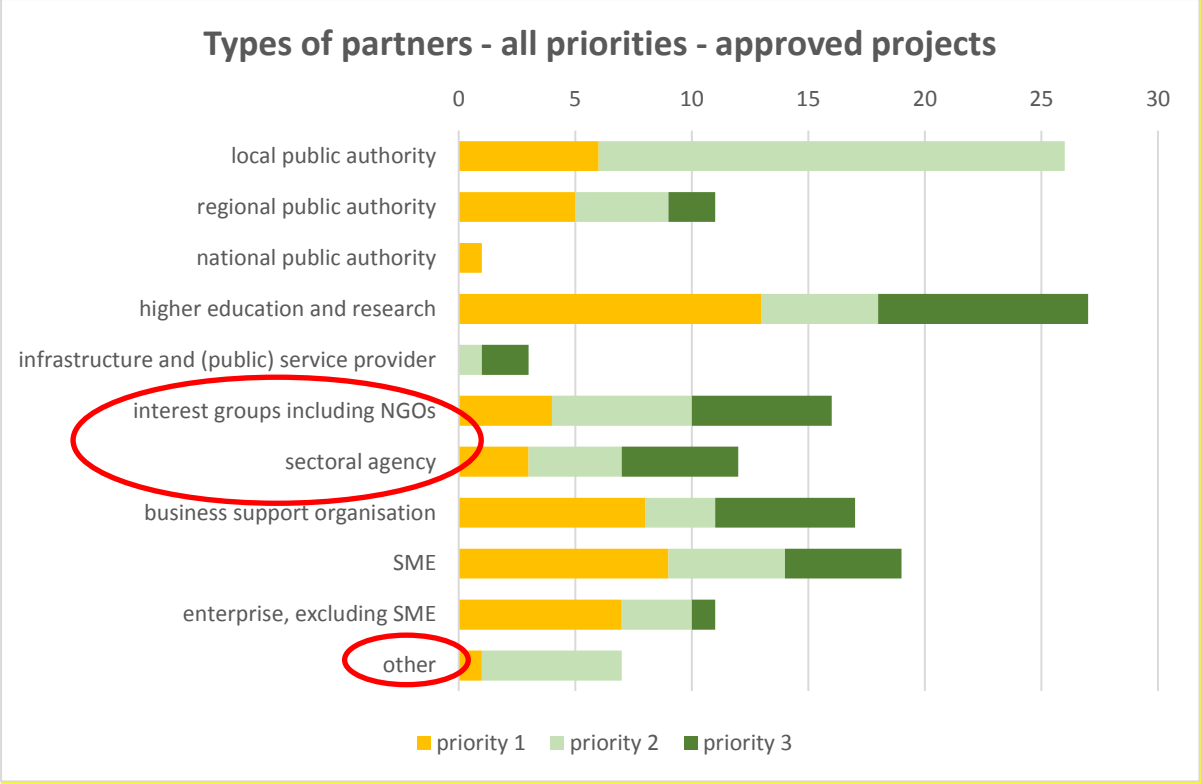
Map 9: Approved partners at NUTS3 level



c) Types of partners

Types of organisations involved

Types of partners are selected by the partners in the application form. The 11 categories were defined by Interact. The NWE Programme Manual gives examples for each category.



Based on these 11 categories, the highest share are **higher education and research organisations (27 partners)** and **local public authorities (26 partners)**, followed by **SMEs (19 partners)**. However, it should be noted that the difference between *NGOs*, *sectoral agencies* and *other* is blurry and most of those organisations in fact represent an interest group or NGO (e.g. energy agencies, associations, foundations etc.). If those three categories were aggregated, the total number of partners under this "broader" NGO category sums up to 35. **This means, that in reality, the highest number of approved partners links to interest groups/NGOs/non-profit organisations (35 organisations).**

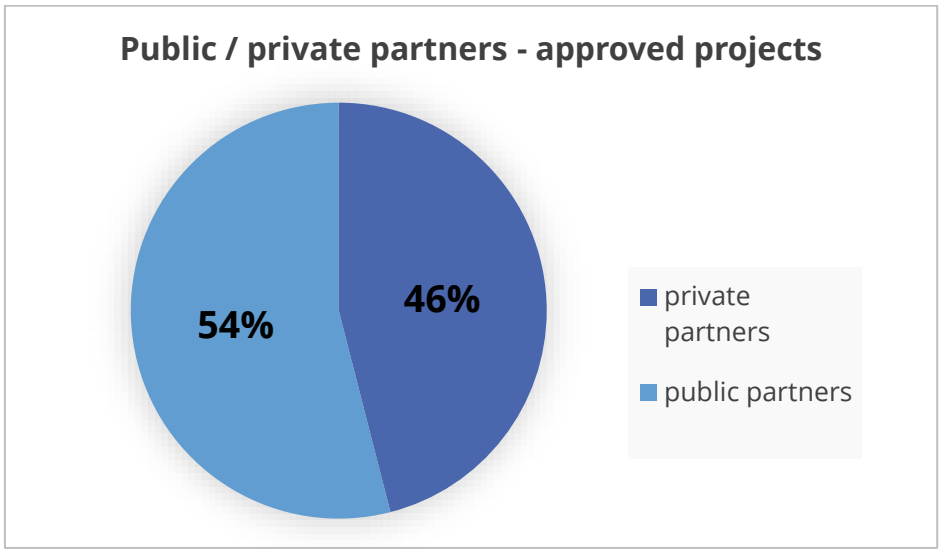
The organisation types that are least represented are national public authorities (only 1 organisation) and infrastructure and public service providers (3 organisations).

At priority level, the picture is slightly different, in particular for **priority 3** (resource and materials efficiency). Here, there are hardly any public authorities involved (only 2 regional authorities) and the focus lies on higher education and research organisations (9 partners).

On the other hand, the involvement of (local and regional) public authorities is strongest in **priority 2** (low carbon) with 24 organisations. The remaining categories are rather balanced.

In **priority 1** (innovation), business support organisations, SMEs and bigger enterprises stand out. This seems rather natural, given the focus on innovation and business support. All other categories are rather balanced.

Public and private partners

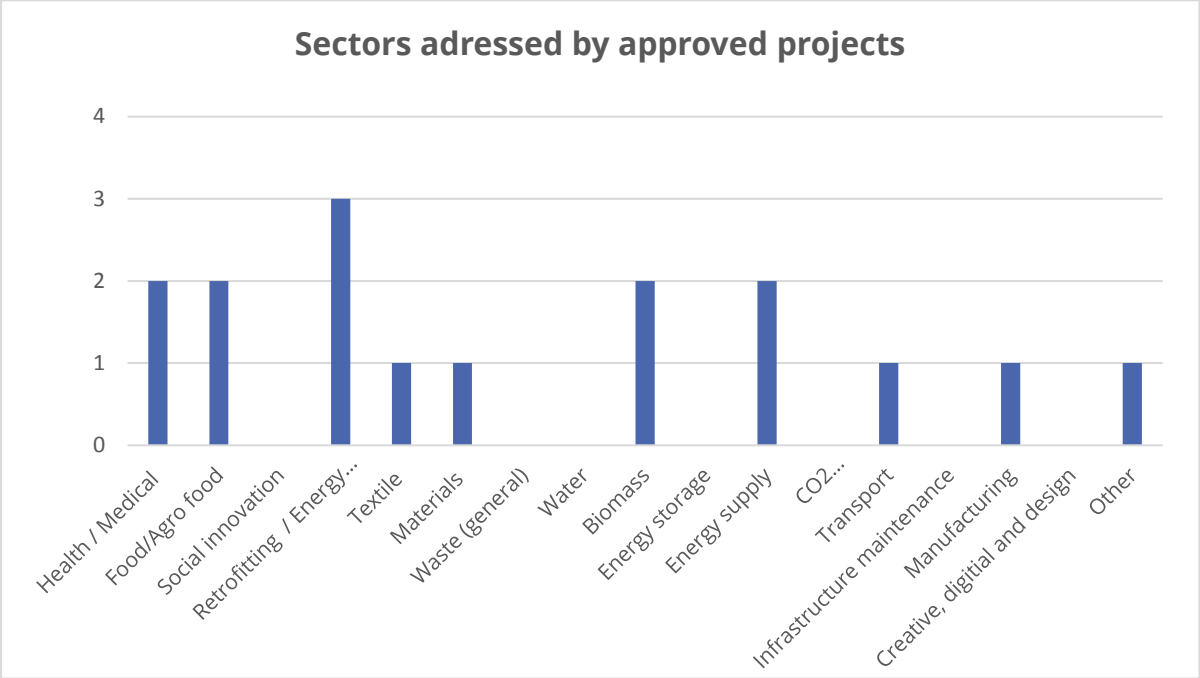


In general, the share of public and private partners is quite similar. Particularly in priorities 1 and 3, the distribution is almost 50/50. Only in priority 2, the share of public partners is higher than the private ones. This is largely explained by the high share of local public authorities in priority 2, in particular SO2 (implementation of energy strategies), where public partners represent 63%. **This is fully in line with the targeted beneficiaries described in the Cooperation Programme for SO2**.

Looking at the private partners in more detail, it becomes clear that only **one fourth of private partners are for-profit** (about 27%; i.e., 19 out of 70 private partners), representing either SMEs or bigger enterprises. The remaining private partners consist of NGOs, sectoral agencies, business development organisations or infrastructure providers, and are not-for-profit organisations.

d) Themes

Sectors addressed



The categories above have been defined at programme level and were distributed to the Monitoring Committee after each call to give an overview of the thematic coverage of project applications. More categories are likely to be identified in the future, depending on the applications to be received.

The sectors that are recurrent in the NWE Programme are retrofitting/energy efficiency in buildings (3 projects), health/medical, agro-food, energy supply and biomass (each sector is covered by 2 projects).

The sector "other" relates to the project BE-GOOD (priority 1) that targets mainly the public sector and how to make use of public data. It has a strong link with the IT sector but does not fit in one of the sectors from those categories.

This analysis is still very light due to the low number of approved projects. It will be interesting to repeat this thematic analysis once more projects have been approved.

Projects per types of activities (ToAs) as described in the Cooperation Programme

Even though ToAs are indicative in the Cooperation Programme, it is worthwhile to look at the allocation of projects per ToA. It gives an overview on which activities described in the Cooperation Programme are sufficiently covered while other topics are still blank.

Type of Activities (ToA)	Number	Projects
Innovation		
ToA1: Building capacity of regions and territories (self-sustaining clusters/networks, internationalisation, infrastructure sharing schemes for R&I)	3	Boost4Health eMen BE-GOOD
ToA2: Improving the competitiveness of enterprises (product/service/process innovation)	3	BioBase4SME ASPECT QCAP
ToA3: Social innovation	0	
Low Carbon		
ToA4: Promoting carbon reduction in cities and regions (implementing strategies)	4	ACE-Retrofitting CAN E=O HeatNet NWE
ToA5: Implementing combined mitigation and adaptation solutions	0	
ToA6: Implementing low carbon technologies and other solutions	1	FORESEA
ToA7: Implementing transnational solutions for low carbon transport systems	1	CHIPS
ToA8: Implementing solutions for optimised traffic management	0	
Resource and Materials Efficiency		
ToA9: Implementing new technologies, services, products and processes to improve resource efficiency	4	AFTB Fibersort Food Heroes RE-DIRECT

Three ToAs are not covered by the approved projects: ToA3 (social innovation), ToA5 (mitigation and adaptation solutions) and ToA8 (optimised traffic management). **In particular, the distribution in priority 2 is quite unbalanced.**

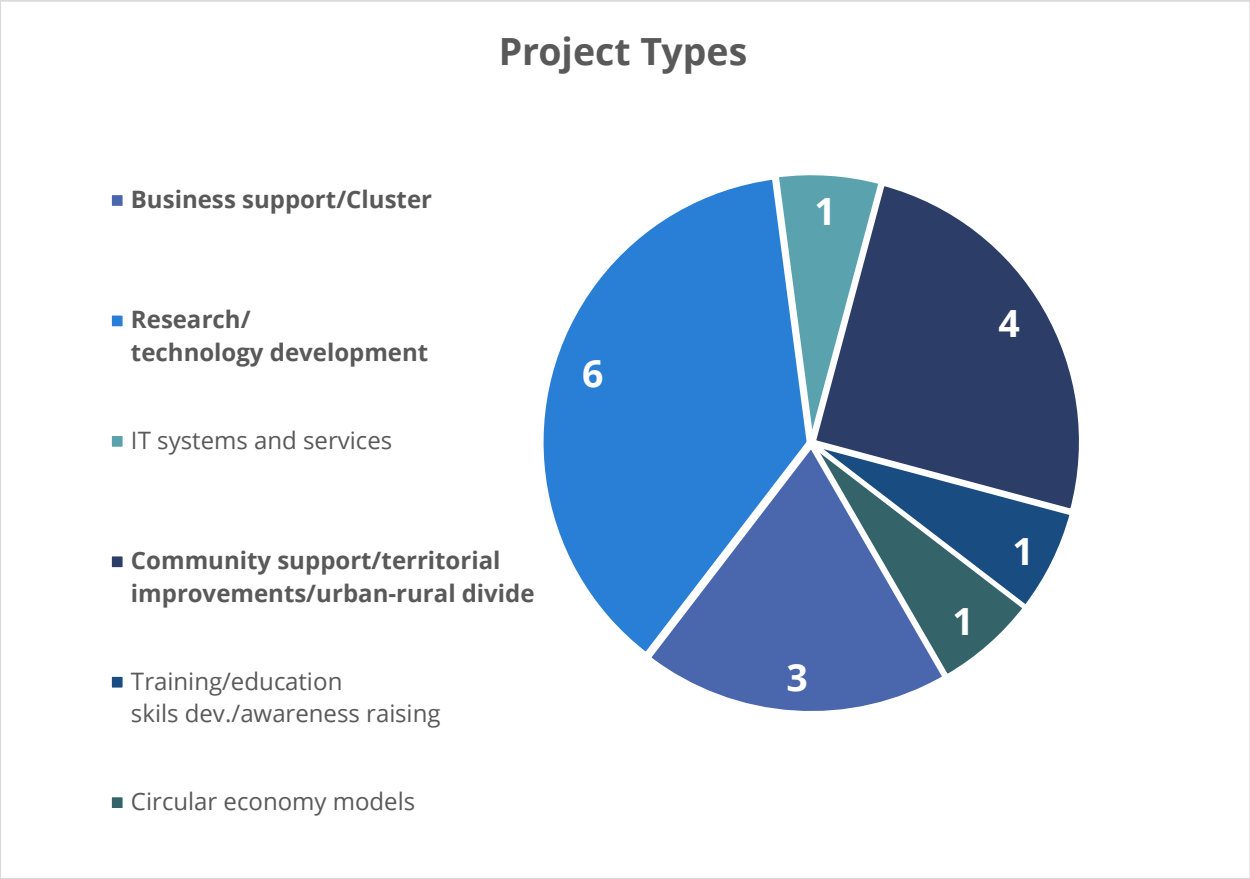
Indicator targets

When comparing the output indicator targets of approved projects to the programme targets per specific objective, the picture is similar as above. It is surprising to see that some indicators are completely over-performing while others are not tackled at all, see annex I. There are still huge gaps (many indicators at 0%). This performance is not coherent with the budget allocation at programme level (for example, 16% of programme budget allocated vs. indicators that are above 50%, or even 100%).

When looking at individual projects, some of the output indicators are not fitting well to the programme indicators and were mainly designed to "fit the programme logic". For example, the indicator *no. of enterprises cooperating with research institutions* in SO1, 3 and 4 seems not relevant for most projects and has a very low coverage. This also raises concerns whether the targets at programme level are realistic.

If the programme wants to fulfil its performance framework, more work needs to be done with projects to select and define their main outputs and indicators and to make them fit with the programme requirements.

Project types



As far as project types are concerned, three types stand out: 6 projects relate to research/technology development, 4 projects deal with community support/territorial improvements/urban-rural divide and 3 projects have a business support/cluster focus. Overlaps between these types exist. For example, FORESEA is mainly a research/technology development project but also offers business support to SMEs through their voucher scheme.

Looking at priority level, the distribution is coherent with the priorities:

- Priority 1 primarily includes business support/cluster projects, closely followed by research/technology development.
- Priority 2 has a major emphasis on community development/territorial improvements/urban-rural divide.
- Priority 3 includes mainly research/technology development projects.

Project activities

As far as activities are concerned, two main activities have been looked at for the time being: vouchers and investments.

Three 'voucher projects' have been approved: BioBase4SME (SO1), Boost4Health (SO1), FORESEA (SO3).

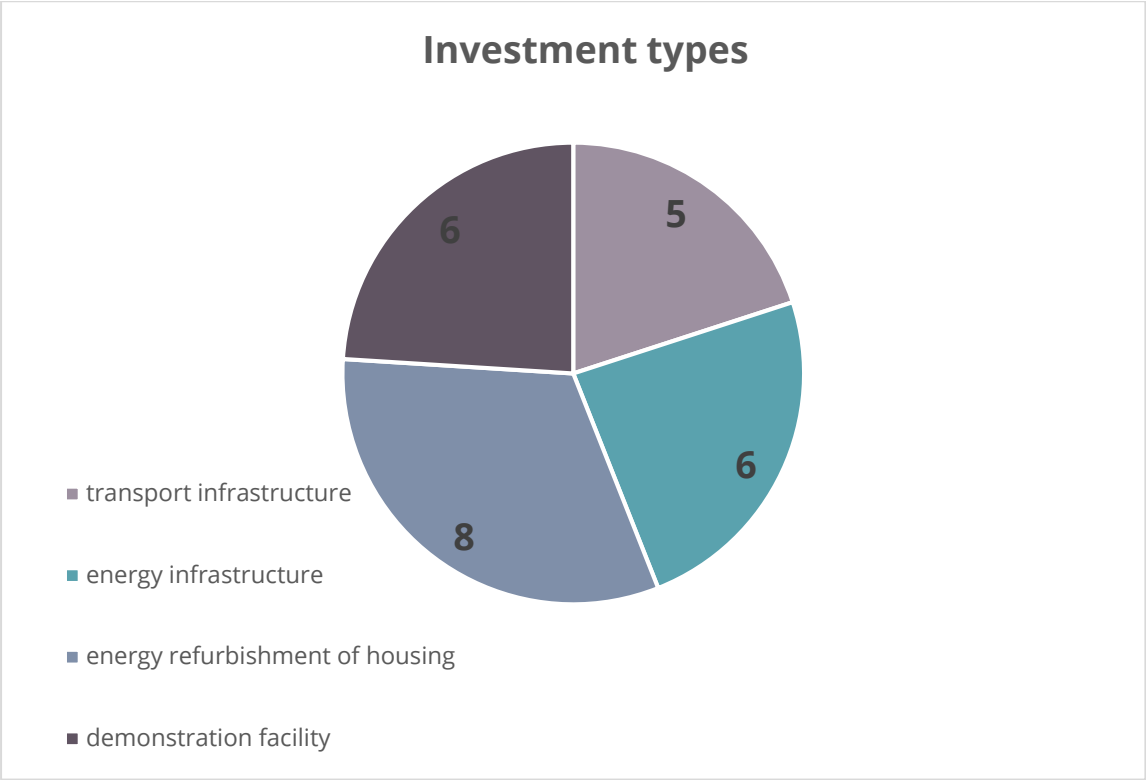
The voucher schemes are all rather similar in terms of selection procedure. In particular, the SO1 projects took the approaches of the IVB projects FASILIS and IN2LifeSciences into account and applied them to their projects. The projects run open calls for SMEs to apply. There are clear selection criteria published and a selection board established by the partnership.

In terms of budget, the FORESEA project differs greatly as the individual voucher value can be very high (up to 475,000€ per voucher). Also, the type of voucher is different as it includes an entire support package including access to the facility, staff time of partners, external expertise, equipment and travel. Moreover, SMEs are not included as external experts (as it is the case in Boost4Health and BioBase4SME) but are to be included as sub-partners once they were selected in the calls (due to state aid compliance).

Seven projects have investments. Altogether 25 investments will be delivered for a total budget of approximately € 16 million. In priority 1, only one project has an investment, BioBase4SME. Most investments (19) are in priority 2, delivered by four

projects: CHIPS, HeatNet NWE, E=O and CAN. The remaining investments (4) are in priority 3, delivered by RE-DIRECT and AFTB.

When looking at the types of the 25 investments, they can be grouped as follows:



Transport infrastructure includes investments related to the transportation network and installations, such as cycling highways, road and rail infrastructure, signage etc. Here, all 5 investments relate to the project CHIPS.

Energy infrastructure includes investments in the energy networks such as grid connections, pipelines and other energy systems needed to supply/store energy. In this case, those 6 investments relate to HeatNet NWE.

Energy refurbishment of buildings includes all measures where houses/buildings will be retro-fitted to increase the energy efficiency/performance. In this case, CAN and E=O are concerned with 8 investments in total.

Demonstration facility includes investments and equipment that relate to large-scale testing and demonstrating of specific products/processes/technologies. Six investments are delivered by BioBase4SME, AFTB and RE-DIRECT.

4. Newcomers

a) Newcomers in step 1 submissions

Newcomers are here defined as **any organisation which has not been funded in the 4B period**. Taking into consideration the limits mentioned in the introduction concerning the calculation of the number of newcomers, the figures presented below should be understood as broad estimates.

Overall, approximately 79% of applicants in the first 4 calls of the VB programme have not been funded in the previous programme and can therefore be considered as newcomers. Although our definition of newcomers is quite restrictive (it does not include partners in previous programmes, or unsuccessful applicants), this remains a very high percentage.

At country/region level, no major differences can be noticed, with a percentage of newcomers always being between 75 and 90, except in countries which do not reach a critical mass in terms of applicants.

Table 4: Newcomers in step 1 submission (estimations)

	4B partners having applied in 5B	Number of applicants 5B (no duplicates)	% of newcomers
BE	54	276	80%
CH	1	27	96%
FR	53	252	79%
DE	50	231	78%
IE	26	101	74%
LU	15	41	63%
NL	43	307	86%
UK	71	286	75%
Total	313	1521	79%

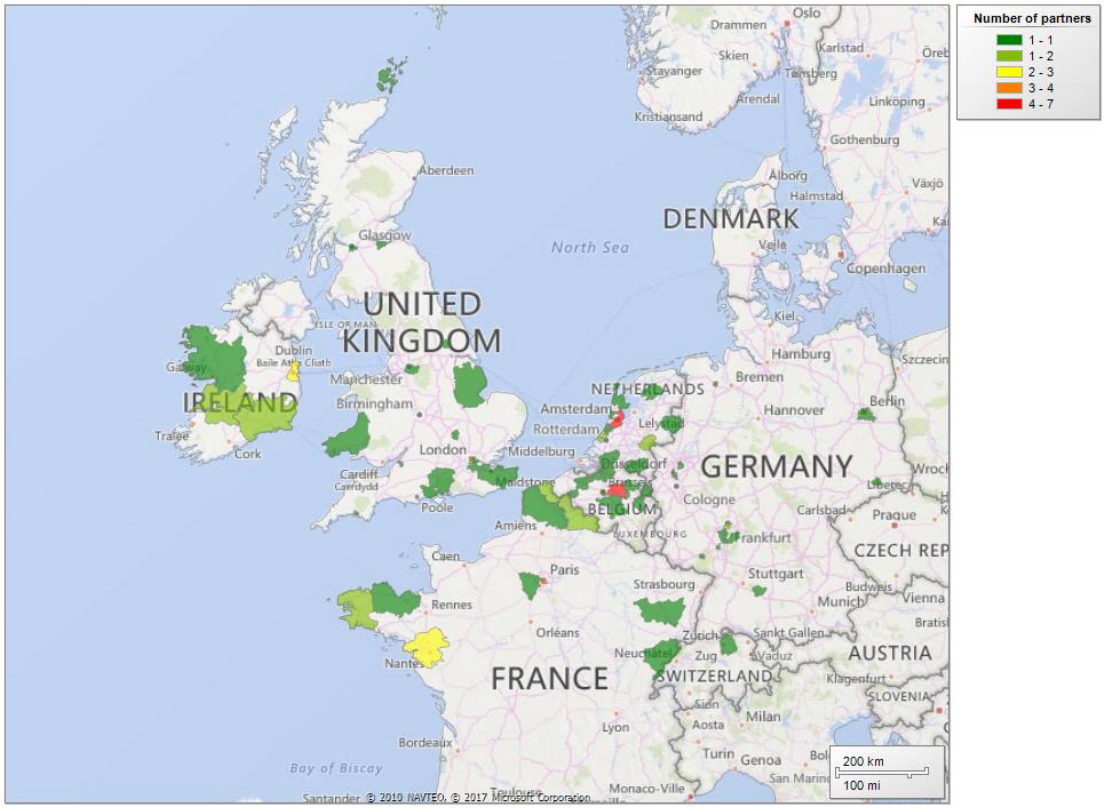
b) Newcomers in approved projects

Around 52 out of 150 (145) partners have been funded in the IVB programme (not counting in sub-partners of the approved projects). This means, **about two-thirds of approved partners are newcomers to the programme and have not been funded under IVB.** As a side note, when looking at Horizon 2020, the newcomer rate is 50%, so therefore lower than in the NWE VB programme[4]. The newcomer rate in NWE seems thus very promising.

However, the percentage of newcomers in approved projects is lower than in submitted step 1 projects. This seems to indicate that experience in NWE funding is helpful in better understanding our expectations and, in the end, building successful applications.

This is the geographic allocation of newcomers at NUTS 3 level:

Map 9: Newcomers step 1 at NUTS 3 level



The distribution is quite scattered across the NWE territory. But the same trend as for all approved partners persists: **newcomers are not necessarily in rural regions but**

[4] Horizon 2020 booklet "Two years on" http://ec.europa.eu/research/evaluations/pdf/h2020_2-years-on_brochure.pdf

mainly concentrated around major cities or dense areas. A few exceptions exist (e.g. Orkney islands in Scotland).

In terms of types of newcomers, there is a mix of private and public organisations. It cannot be said that there is one outstanding type for the moment.

5. Conclusions

Based on the above analysis a number of conclusions can be drawn:

Geographical gaps

1) Overall, our programme receives projects with applicants from almost all regions of North-West Europe (at NUTS 2 level). This shows that our programme communicates well, and that information about it is available and accessible on the whole territory for potential applicants.

2) A comparison of the 4B approved partners and 5B applicant maps shows that in general the same regions are the most involved in our programme. Most of the applicants are located in a Lille-Amsterdam-Dortmund triangle as well as – to a lesser extent – the Atlantic area. The big cities and urban areas throughout NWE are also well represented.

3) Overall, NWE applicants are mostly located in urban areas. Even within more peripheral areas, a closer look at NUTS 3 level shows that applicants come from the big cities or large urban areas.

4) The geographical repartition of approved projects shows similar patterns: mainly urban and core areas are covered by the majority of partners. Also, moderate innovation regions, as defined by the Regional Innovation Scoreboard, are barely covered. Hence, it is unlikely that the reduction of disparities will be achieved.

5) The EU funding environment is a strong determinant of a region's involvement in NWE and can play both ways. Generally speaking, regions covered by many ETC programmes are well involved in NWE. However, overlaps also stimulate a "comparative" approach to ETC from applicants which might also go for the programmes which offer a better success rate and a better co-funding rate. This might be an explanation for the fact that the number of applications received overall is low in comparison to most other programmes.

Thematic gaps

6) An overall decrease in number of applications received can be observed in all priorities since call 2. It is however much stronger in priorities 2 (since call 3) and 3 than in priority 1 which maintains itself at a very high level, representing 58% of all applications received in call 4.

7) In regards to approved projects, interesting themes emerge that are specific to NWE (e.g. retrofitting/energy efficiency, agro-food, health). But critical mass is not yet evident due to the low number of approved projects.

8) Some activities are not covered yet by approved projects, such as social innovation, integrated mitigation/adaptation solutions, and optimised traffic management.

Gaps in type of partners

9) The three highest categories of applicants are higher education and research (28%), local public authorities (18%) and SMEs (11%). Overall, this seems to correspond to the expectations set in the Cooperation Programme. SME's are surprisingly fewer in priority 1 than in other priorities, but voucher systems included in priority 1 projects also contribute to involving private partners. Some clear differences also appear between countries and regions. Social enterprises, NGOs, and transport-related enterprises are not well represented in priorities 2 and 3 where they are mentioned as target groups.

10) In the approved projects, there is a good mix of public and private partners. Partner types are usually coherent with the requirements of the specific objectives.

11) The percentage of newcomers applying in step 1 is very high (about 78%). However, our definition is quite restrictive and "oldcomers" are more successful with their project applications. The rate of newcomers comes down to approximately 60% in the approved projects (this remains higher than other programmes such as Horizon 2020 which has a rate of 50%).

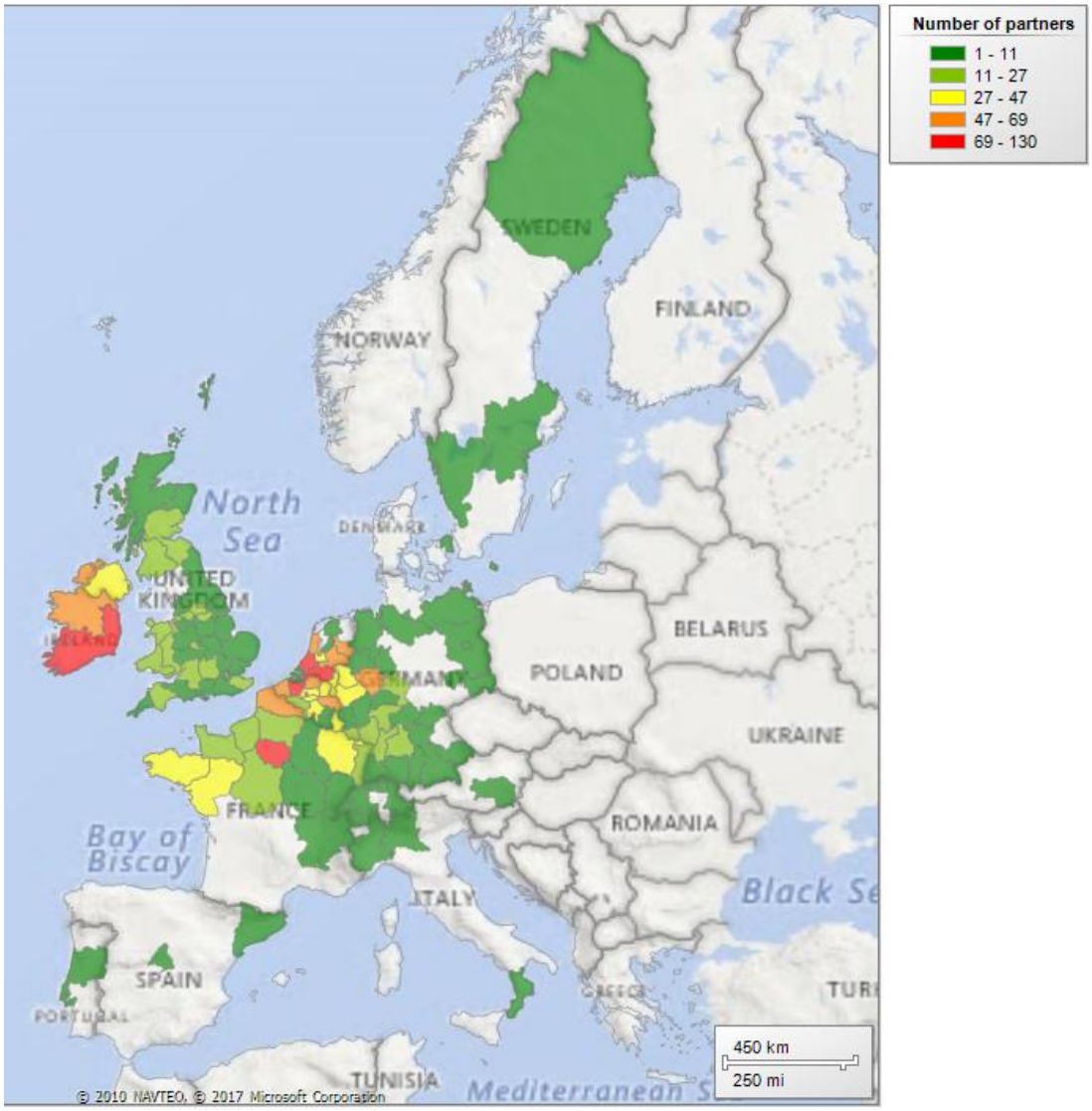
Programme performance and results

12) The number of approved projects is still very low at this stage of programme implementation. This has an impact on the overall programme's performance.

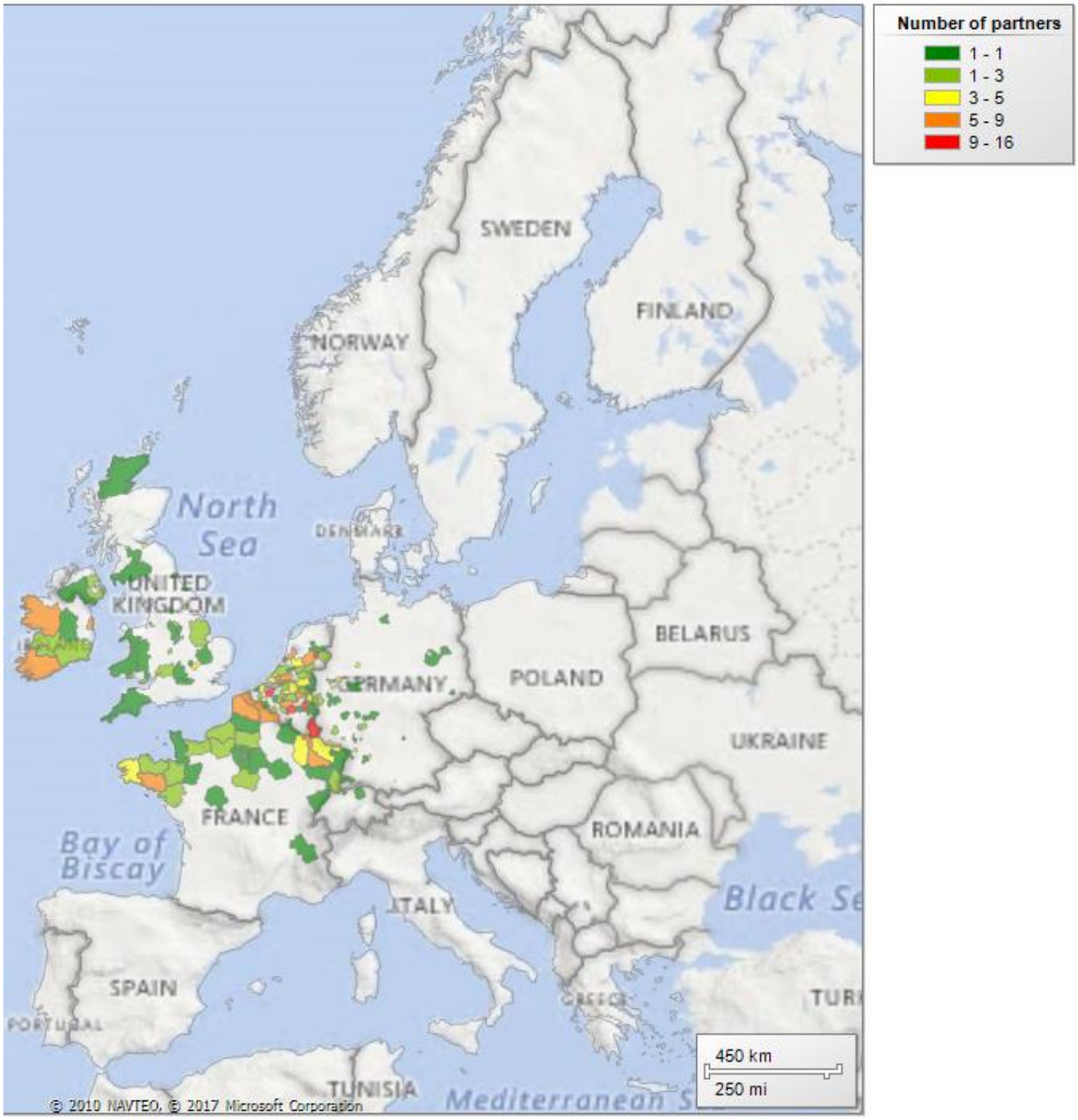
13) The achievement rate of the programme output indicators is unbalanced. There are many gaps between the targets set by the approved projects and the targets set at programme level (in the CP). This is particularly true for the mandatory output indicators for SO3 and SO4 that are under-performing.

6. Annexes

Annex I – Map all applicants step 1 all priorities NUTS 2



Annex II – Map all applicants step 1 all priorities NUTS 3



Annex III – Data on other Interreg Programmes (April 2017)

/ : not decided yet
X : no (more) calls
N/A : not applicable
_ no data

Contact via email

Answer from website

Programme	Type	Budget	Co-financing	Budget available	Success	Launch	Calls	Next call	Projects	Comments
North-West Europe	B	€370 mio	60%	77%	13.7%	2015	2	Nov-17	23	
Interreg Europe	C	€359 mio	85%	_	28%	2015	3	/	130	
North Sea	B	€167 mio	50%	65%	25%	2015	3	Jul-17	24	Call 3 just closed. Stats on call 1&2.
Northern Periphery and Arctic	B	€55.2 mio	65%	25%	36.70%	2014	4	Oct-17	35	4 countries outside the EU
Danube	B	€263 mio	85%	45%	9.87%	2015	1	May-17	54	
Atlantic Area	B	€185 mio	75%	100%	N/A	2016	1	_	0	
Alpine Space	B	€139 mio	85%	45%	10%	2014	2	Apr-17	27	
Central Europe	B	€246 mio	80-85%	30%	10%	2014	2	Sep-17	85	
Two Seas	A	€241 mio	60%	70%	18%	2015	4	Aug-17	26	
Grande Région	A	€140 mio	60%	40%	61%	2015	2	Mar-17	36	
Rhin Supérieur	A	€110 mio	50%	55%	30%	2015	x	Summer 2017	39	No calls, can apply at any time.
Ireland-Wales	A	€99 mio	80%	_	_	_	_	_	9	
Ireland-Northern Ireland-Scotland	A	€282 mio	85%	13%	50%	2016	10	x	27	Thematic calls
PEACE	A	€270 mio	85%	57%	15%	2016	6	x	19	Thematic calls
Euregio Maas-Rhein	A	€90 mio	50%	100%	N/A	2016	1	_	0	
France-Wallonie-Vlaanderen	A	€170 mio	50%	3%	25%	2015	3	/	74	2 calls + 1 micro-projects call
Bayaut	A	€54.5 mio	85%	27%	_	2014	x	x	42	No calls
France-Suisse	A	€66 mio	50-75%	72%	79%	2015	1	Apr-17	49	Half of the budget in CHF
Alpenrhein-Bodensee-Hochrhein	A	€51 mio	50%	33%	64%	2015	x	N/A	57	No calls
France (Channel) England	A	€25 mio	69%	78%	10%	2014	5	Sep-17	9	
Grensregio	A	€152 mio	50%	87%	28%	2014	3	/	24	
Euregio Rhein-Waal	A	€222 mio	50%	27%	90%	2014	x	N/A	20	no calls; intensive discussions before

Interreg North-West Europe
European Regional Development Fund

Annex IV – Achievement indicator targets

	Output indicator	Target values of approved projects	Target values set by the programme	Achievement (%)
SO1				
1.01	**Number of new or enhanced transnational clusters or innovation networks**	2	27	7%
1.02	Number of technologies, products, services and processes developed and tested in real-life conditions	33	68	49%
1.03	Number of pilot actions implemented, focusing on social innovation	0	30	0%
1.04	Number of jobs created in all economic sectors	115	860	13%
1.05	Number of jobs maintained in all economic sectors	0	860	0%
1.06	Amount of funding leveraged by the project (in €)	0	222,000,000	0%
1.07	Number of end-users benefitting from social innovation	0	600	0%
CO01	**Number of enterprises receiving support**	358	540	66%
CO26	No. of enterprises cooperating with research institutions	11	540	2%

	Output indicator	Target values of approved projects	Target values set by the programme	Achievement (%)
CO28	Number of enterprises supported to introduce new to the market products	318	340	94%
CO29	Number of enterprises supported to introduce new to the firm products	5	200	3%
SO2				
2.01	**Number of solutions facilitating the delivery of existing or emerging low carbon, energy or climate protection strategies**	17	18	94%
2.02	Number of combined mitigation-relevant adaptation solutions implemented	0	15	0%
2.03	Number of jobs created in all economic sectors	13	200	7%
2.04	Number of jobs maintained in all economic sectors	20	200	10%
2.05	Amount of funding leveraged by the project (in €)	14,000,000	80,811,405	17%
2.08	Estimated annual decrease of GHG (in tons)	28,558.00	450	6346%
CO31	Number of households with improved energy classification	16,192	450	3598%
CO32	Decrease of annual primary energy consumption of public buildings	0	300,000	0%

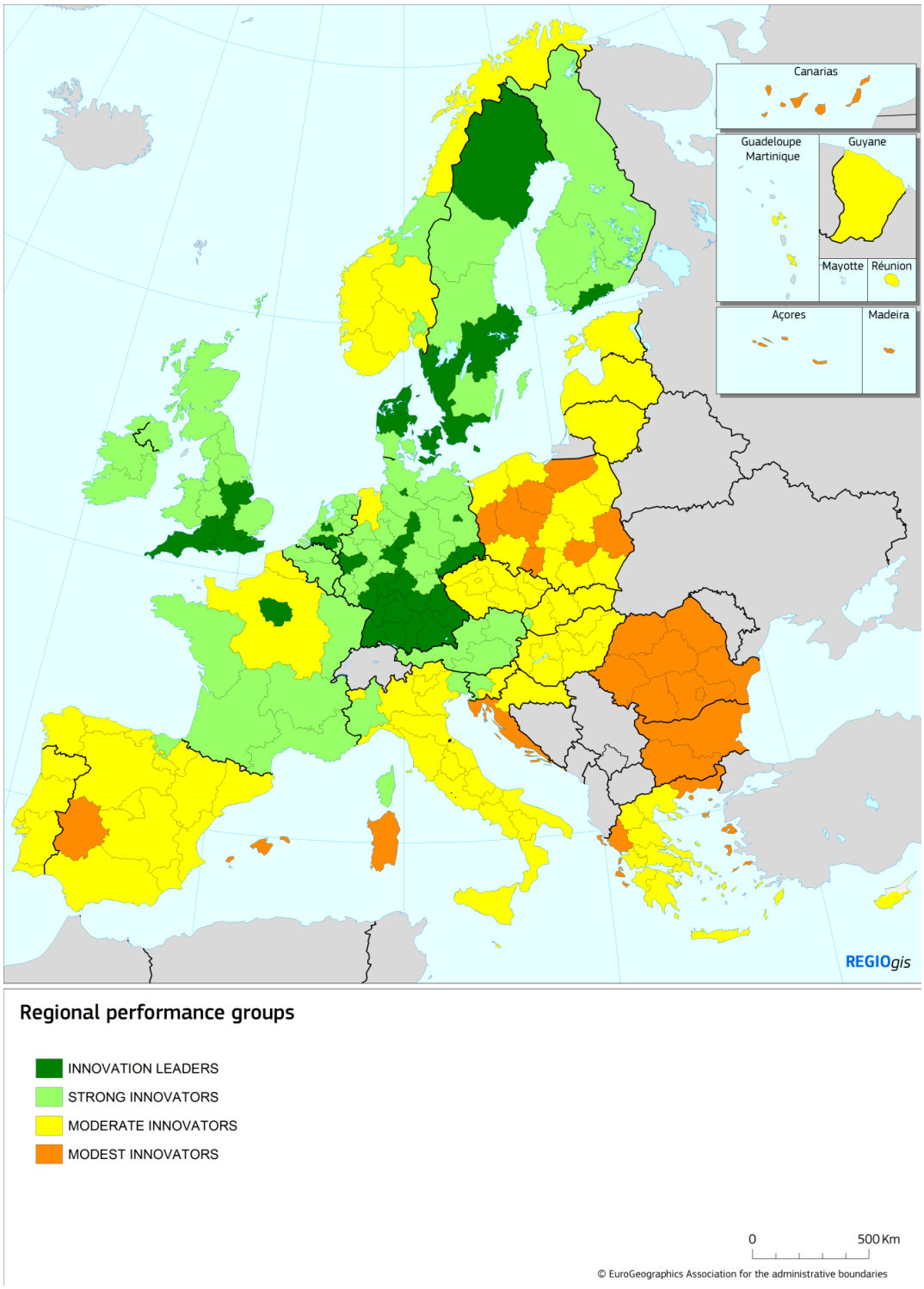
	Output indicator	Target values of approved projects	Target values set by the programme	Achievement (%)
SO3				
3.01	Number of adopted or applied low carbon technologies	26	44	59%
3.02	Number of jobs created in all economic sectors	0	220	0%
3.03	Number of jobs maintained in all economic sectors	0	220	0%
3.04	Amount of funding leveraged by the project (in €)	30,000,000	87,545,688	34%
CO26	**Number of enterprises co-operating with research institutions**	26	220	12%
CO28	Number of enterprises supported to introduce new to the market products	52	220	24%
CO29	Number of enterprises supported to introduce new to the firm products	0	220	0%
CO30	Additional capacity of renewable energy production (MW)	0	120	0%
CO31	CO31. Number of households with improved energy classification	0	660	0%
CO34	Estimated annual decrease of GHG (in tons)	0	500	0%
SO4				

	Output indicator	Target values of approved projects	Target values set by the programme	Achievement (%)
4.01	Number of implemented low carbon solutions in transport	11	20	55%
4.02	Number of new or improved transport management systems leading to GHG reduction	0	10	0%
4.03	Number of transport operators supported implementing low carbon solutions	0	200	0%
4.04	Number of jobs created in all economic sectors	0	200	0%
4.05	Number of jobs maintained in all economic sectors	0	200	0%
4.06	Amount of funding leveraged by the project (in €)	0	80,811,405	0%
CO26	**Number of enterprises cooperating with research institutions**	0	200	0%
CO28	Number of enterprises supported to introduce new to the market products	0	200	0%
CO29	Number of enterprises supported to introduce new to the firm products	0	200	0%
CO34	Estimated annual decrease of GHG (in tons)	0	200	0%
SO5				
5.01	Number of efficient natural and material resources	23	42	55%

	Output indicator	Target values of approved projects	Target values set by the programme	Achievement (%)
	solutions implemented and tested			
5.02	Number of innovative uses of waste processes/products/services from waste materials	11	18	61%
5.03	Amount of funding leveraged by the project	2,000,000	161,622,811	1%
5.04	Amount of decreased raw material use	30,000	1,000,000	3%
5.05	Amount of increased material recovery, re-use and recycling	14,000	1,000,000	1%
5.06	Number of jobs created in all economic sectors	65	400	16%
5.07	Number of jobs maintained in all economic sectors	25	400	6%
CO01	**Number of enterprises receiving support**	150	200	75%
CO26	Number of enterprises cooperating with research institutions	46	200	23%
CO28	Number of enterprises supported to introduce new to the market products	28	200	14%
CO29	Number of enterprises supported to introduce new to the firm products	23	200	12%

Indicators in **bold** are mandatory for the respective SO (part of programme's performance framework)

Annex V – Regional Innovation Scoreboard 2016[5]



[5] https://ec.europa.eu/growth/industry/innovation/facts-figures/regional_en

Annex VI - Analyses at national / regional level

A) Gap analysis BE – Brussels

Introduction

Brussels Capital Region is a particular case in North-West Europe: it is a city-region of 1.187.890 inhabitants. There are no rural areas in the region and the population density is very high.

When we look at the program statistics, it seems that Brussels is very active in the NWE program compared of other regions but it is only partly true: A lot of the partner organizations based in Brussels can't really be considered as organizations from Brussels. This is due to two main reasons: first, Brussels, as the capital of EU, is home for most EU federations. A third of the partners who have submitted a project and are based in Brussels are EU federations. Second, Brussels is the capital of Flanders. As a consequence, a lot of public (and private) organizations are based in Brussels but should be considered Flemish.

However, if we consider the size of Brussels and the fact that there are only 19 municipalities, we can see that our region is still active.

The competition between European programs can't be seen as an influential factor given the fact that Brussels Capital Region doesn't participate in any cross-border program.

Geographical gaps

Not relevant for Brussels as a « city-region »

Thematic gaps

I. The partners based in Brussels Capital Region are mainly active on priority 1 and 2. But if we look at the SO's, we can see that SO 1 is up front followed by SO 5. Inside priority 2, the SO 4 attracts much more partners that SO 2 and 3. This could be explained by the heavy mobility problems that faces the region which are partly responsible for carbon emissions and by the fact that very few public organizations have applied.
II. We can't see any correlation between the geography of Brussels and the focus on priorities 1 and 2.

III. We don't see any objective reason to explain why priority 3 is behind but it seems that it is a general observation on the NWE territory.
IV. A local infoday had been organized at the beginning of the program. It could explain the higher participations in the first two calls. The low ratio of success might also be a factor of the smaller mobilization for the lasts calls.

Newcomers

I. Most partners having applied in VB are newcomers. The only old-timers are big public organizations. We think it shows that SME's and smaller associations have huge difficulties in becoming partner on approved projects.
II. A financial public support appear to be a condition to reach of these smaller newcomers

Type of partners

I. Different types of organization based in Brussels have applied in VB but, as written above, only big organizations have been able to be approved during IVB. If we take into account only the organizations from Brussels (leaving out EU federations and Flemish partners), it appears that universities and research institutes have been the most active followed by public bodies and a few private companies. None of them are NGO's
II. We can see that the university and research institute have being more active than any other kind of partners. Brussels as a capital counts number of universities which seem to be a great advantage to build a strong partnership for many projects.

Conclusion

Most of partners who have applied for program didn't contact the Brussels national Contact Point and their candidatures have a low rate of success. It indicates the necessity for the contact point team to be more proactive towards the eventual partners from Brussels in order to give them a better guidance.

We hope that the infoday organized on February 14th in Brussels will attract new participants. We will contact all the organizations having applied (and not approved) during VB to see if they are thinking of applying again. If they do, we will work with them on their AF's.

B) Gap Analysis BE – Flanders

Introduction

Total number of Flemish partners per call

Call	1	81	Flemish	Partners
Call	2	95	Flemish	Partners
Call	3	61	Flemish	Partners
Call	4	50	Flemish	partners

After call 2 there was an important decline in the number of Flemish project partners applying in step 1. During call 3 and 4 there was a stabilization of the number of Flemish partners applying in step 1. (Flemish organizations based in Brussels have not been taken into account.)

National schemes/policy context

In Flanders the Interreg North-West Europe programme is coordinated by the Flemish government agency responsible for innovation and entrepreneurship ("Flanders Innovation & Entrepreneurship"/"VLAIO"). The policy of VLAIO is to support demand oriented projects, with strong partnerships and a relatively short valorization period for citizens and companies.

There is no automatic scheme to provide match-funding for Flemish project partners. There is a possibility to apply for match-funding for innovation projects, but this is limited and has to be applied for. Twelve organizations already received match-funding in the current program period (2 million euros). The match-funding was on average 11% of the total eligible cost of the organization in the project.

Geographical specificities (rural-urban divide etc.)

Flanders is very densely populated. There is virtually no rural-urban divide.

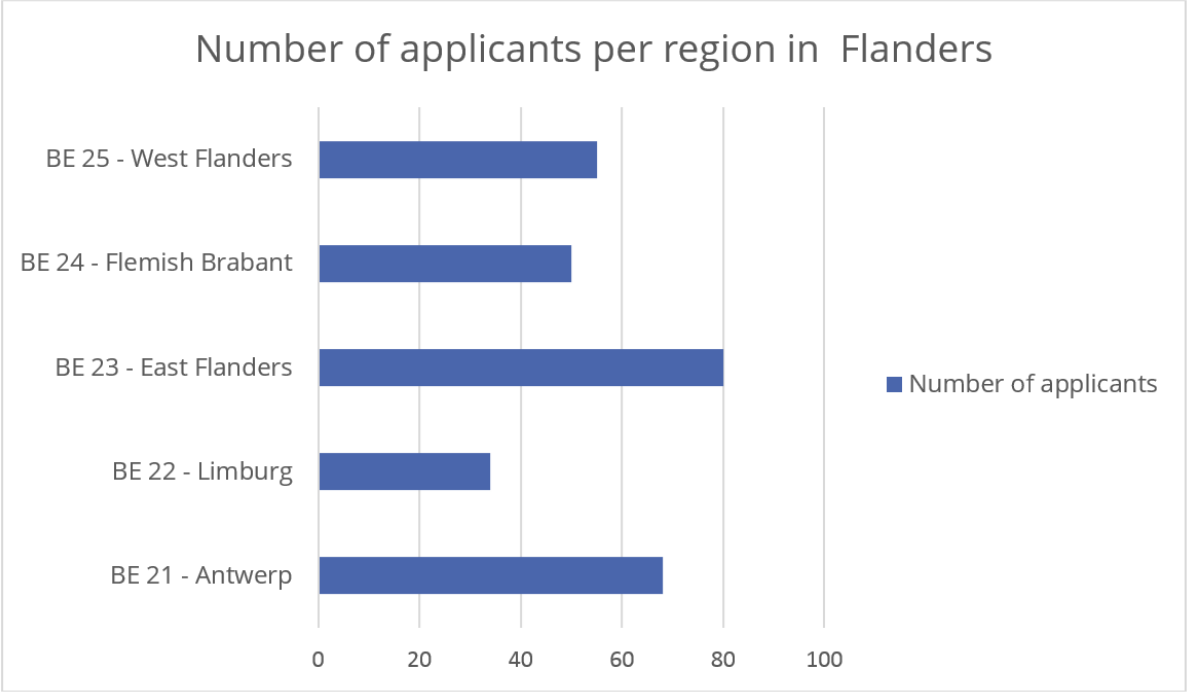
ETC coverage of the region (co-financing and success rate of other programmes, thematic objectives)

In Flanders there are two transnational (North-West Europe, North sea region) and four crossborder (Flanders-The Netherlands, Euregio Meuse-Rhin, France-Wallonia-Flanders, 2 Seas) Interreg programmes applicable with similar thematic objectives and geographic coverage.

The success rate of projects in Interreg North Sea region is 46% in step 1 and 43% in step 2. For Flemish partners in this programme the success rate in step 1 is 52% and 67% in step 2. The crossborder programmes, mentioned above, have a success rate of 41% in step 1 and 75% in step 2. For Flemish partners this is virtually the same.

Since the start of the fifth programme period there have been 185 approved projects in total in these six programmes and Flanders participated in 147 of these projects (80%). These numbers confirm the high level of involvement of Flemish organizations in the transnational and crossborder Interreg programmes.

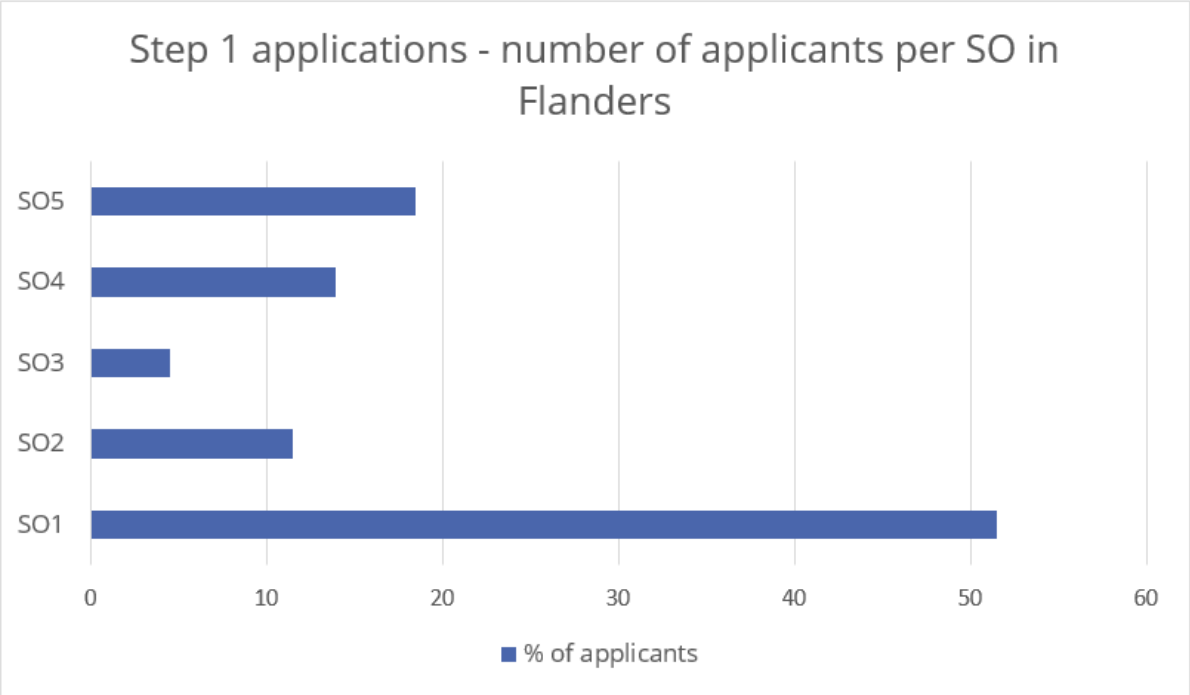
Geographical gaps



The geographic gap analysis has been done at NUTS2 level. East-Flanders has the highest number of project applicants (80), while Limburg has the lowest number (34). One of the reasons by which the high number of participants in East Flanders can be explained, is the high involvement of the university of Ghent. Limburg is historically a province with less involvement in the Interreg North-West Europe programme due to the fact that organizations in this part of Flanders are more active in the Interreg programmes Flanders–The Netherlands, Euregio Meuse-Rhine and/or prefer to carry out projects within the Flemish regional ERDF programme.

This analysis does not take into account the Flemish organizations based in Brussels, which would account for a higher number of Flemish participants.

Thematic gaps



There is a clear mobilization on SO1 in Flanders due to the fact that there are a significant number of innovation centers in this region (universities, research centers, etc.) and that SO1 has the broadest scope which makes it "easier" to apply in this SO.

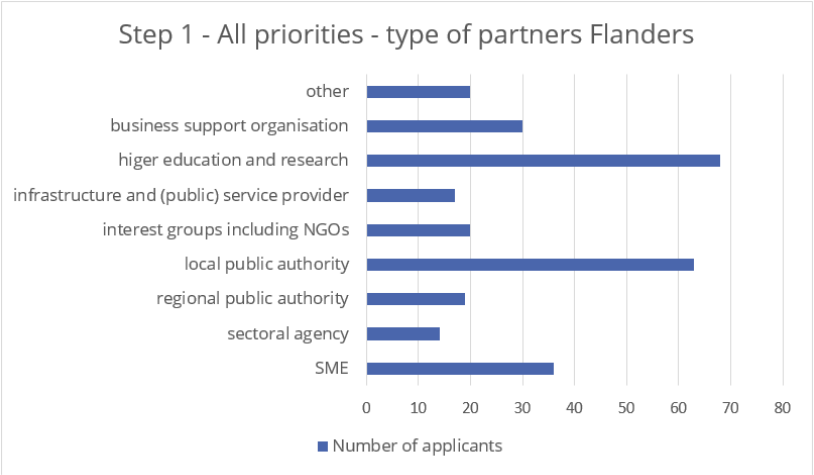
The mobilization per SO[6] of the overall programme compared to Flanders is almost parallel (SO1; FL: 51.5%, NWE: 46,6% /SO2; FL:11.5%, NWE: 11,1%/SO3; FL: 4.5%, NWE: 9,7%/SO4; FL:13.9%, NWE:12,9%/SO5; FL:18,5%, NWE:19,6%).

Newcomers (not funded in IVB)

There are 112 new (not funded in IVB) Flemish partners in the 4 calls. The highest number of new partners can be found in Antwerp (28), then East-Flanders (24), West Flanders (23), Flemish Brabant (21), and finally Limburg (16).

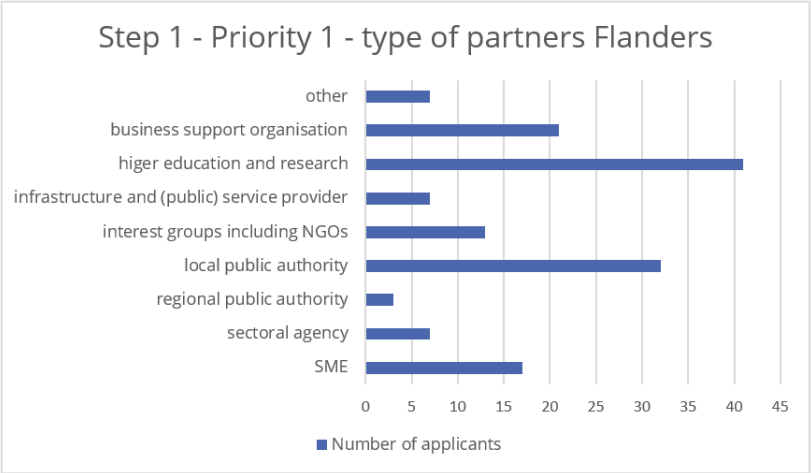
[6] number of project partners per SO during four calls applying in step 1

Types of partners

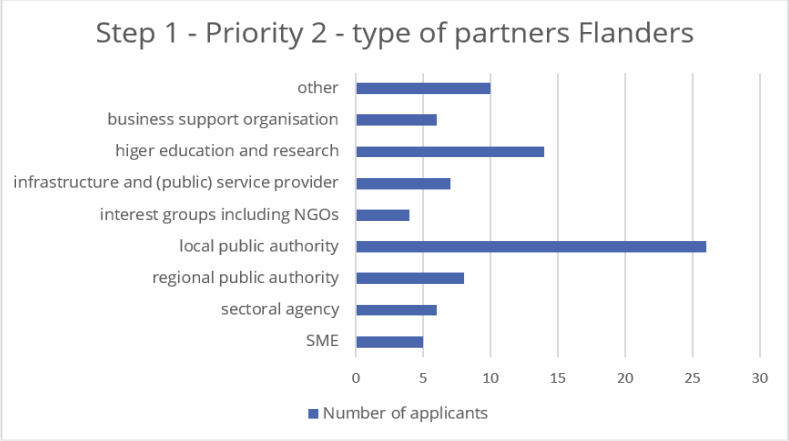


Flanders has practically the same involvement of SME's as on programme level (FL: 12.6%/ NWE: 11%) taking into account the three priorities. The same goes for sectoral agencies, regional public authorities and business support organizations. With regards to the involvement of local public authorities, Flanders has a slightly higher score than the programme (FL: 21%/ NWE: 18%). The interest groups in Flanders account for 7,6 % of the partners. In the programme it is a slightly higher percentage, namely 9%. The higher education centers are represented by 28% of the partners in the programme, a slightly higher percentage compared to Flanders (24%).

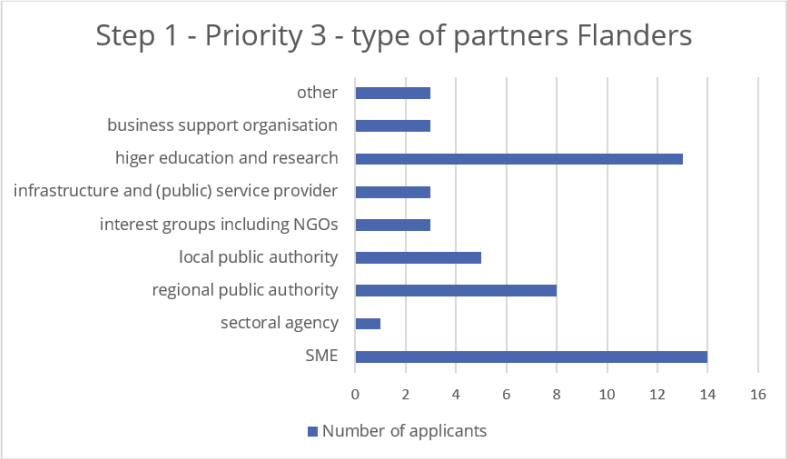
Types of partners in Flanders per priority



- SME's Flanders 11.4% / NWE: 8,7%.
- Local public authorities in Flanders: 21%/ NWE: 18,7%
- Business support organizations in Flanders: 13.5% /NWE: 13,5%.



- SMEs in Flanders: 5.7% / NWE: 11,3%
- Local public authorities in Flanders: 29.8%/ NWE: 20,5%
- Interest groups in Flanders: 5.7%/ NWE: 8,5%
- Higher education in Flanders: 16% /NWE: 23,5%



- SMEs in Flanders: 25%/NWE: 15,9%
- Regional public authority in Flanders: 13.5%/ NWE: 5%
- Higher education in Flanders: 27% /NWE: 34,8 %

Conclusion: proposals for action in Flanders

General: Evaluation of the reasons behind the decreasing trend in the number of Flemish project applicants in the last two calls (in order to raise the number of submitted projects in the upcoming calls).
Thematic: Raise more interest in priority 2 in Flanders (especially SO3).
Geographic: Try to get more involvement of project partners in Limburg.
Type of partners:

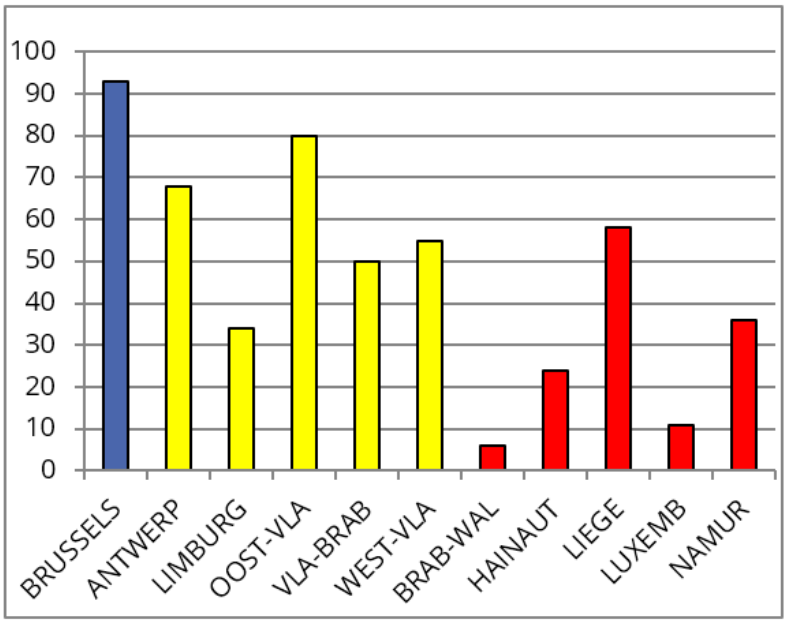
- Raise the involvement of SME's, higher education and research centers, as well as interest groups in priority 2.
- Raise the involvement of higher education and research centers in priority 3.

C) Gap Analysis BE – Wallonia

Projects by province (Nuts2)

Nuts2	Province	Partners	Inhab (Mio)	Partners/inh (Mio)
BE10	BRUSSELS	93	1.137	82
BE21	ANTWERP	68	1.773	38
BE22	LIMBURG	34	0.847	40
BE23	OOST-VLA	80	1.449	55
BE24	VLA-BRAB	50	1.089	46
BE25	WEST-VLA	55	1.168	47
BE31	BRAB-WAL	6	0.384	16
BE32	HAINAUT	24	1.320	18
BE33	LIEGE	58	1.082	54
BE34	LUXEMB	11	0.273	40
BE35	NAMUR	36	0.479	75
TOTAL	BELGIUM	515	11.001	47

Number of projects by province (Nuts2)

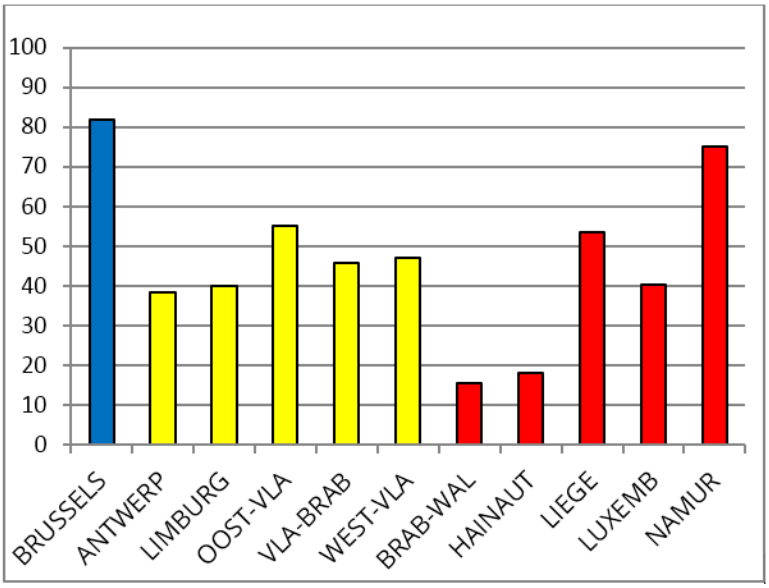


An analysis simply on the number of projects shows that:

- Brussels Region and the Province on East-Flanders (having Gent) are leaders.

- Walloon-Brabant and Province of Luxemburg are gaps, but the number of inhabitants is low.

Number of projects per million inhabitants (Nuts2)



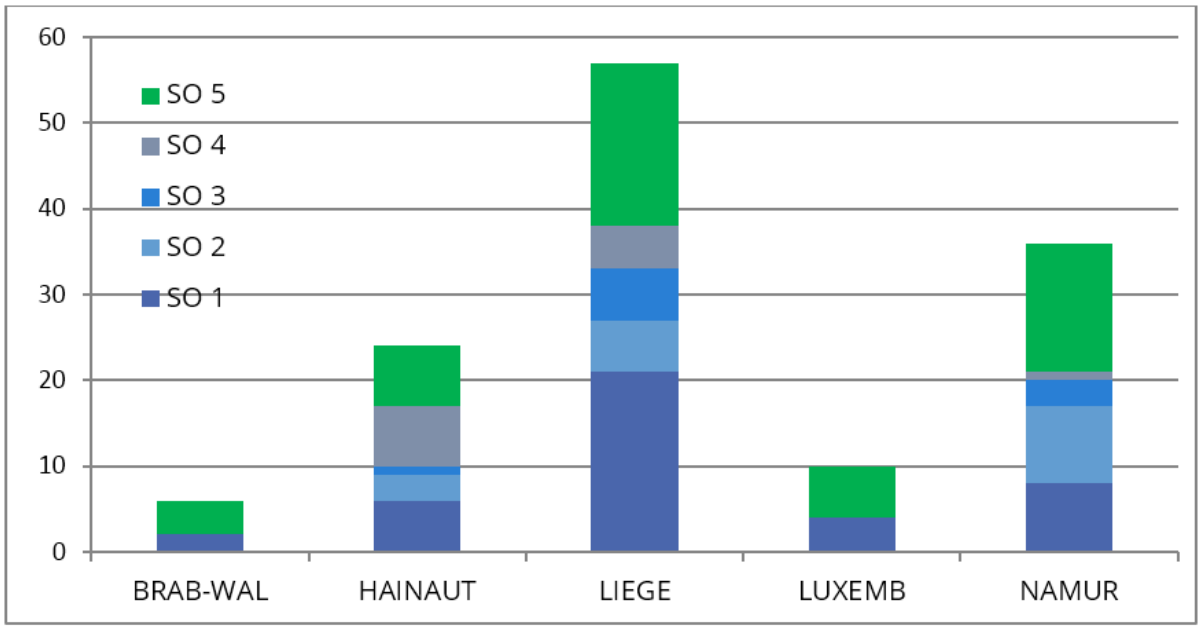
A better analysis should be to do a rate per inhabitant (2nd graph) that shows:

- Again the Brussels Region but then Province of Namur as leaders.
- Again Province of Hainaut but also Walloon-Brabant are gaps.
- A good balance in Flanders (yellow).

Projects by province (Nuts2) and SO

Nuts2	Province	SO 1	SO 2	SO 3	SO 4	SO 5
BE31	BRAB-WAL	2	0	0	0	4
BE32	HAINAUT	6	3	1	7	7
BE33	LIEGE	21	6	6	5	19
BE34	LUXEMB	4	0	0	0	6
BE35	NAMUR	8	9	3	1	15
BE3	WALLONIA	41	18	10	13	51

Number of projects by province (Nuts2) and SO

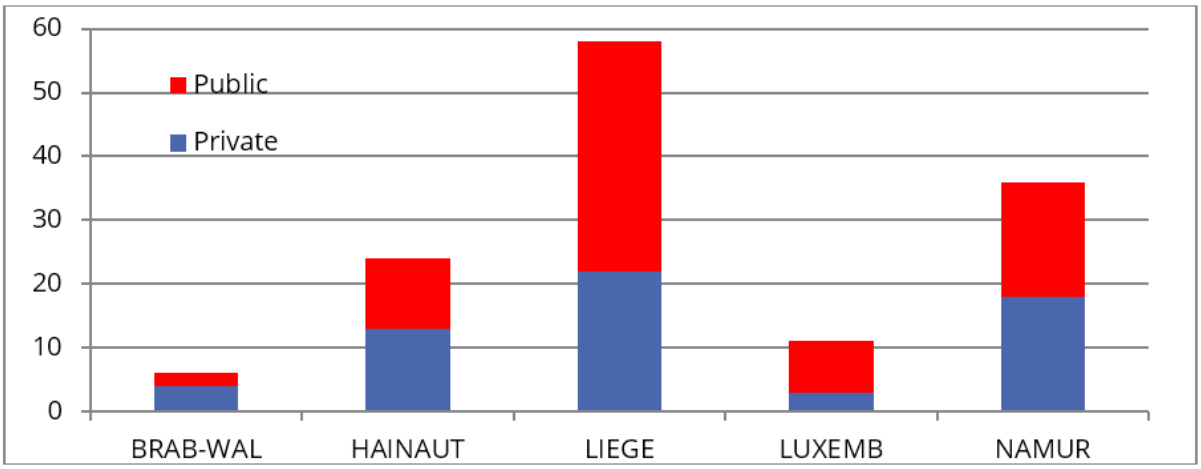


Clearly, the Walloon partners are very attracted by the SO 5 thematic, even more than SO 1 having the most funds.

Projects by province (Nuts2) and private/public status

Nuts2	Province	Private	Public
BE31	BRAB-WAL	4	2
BE32	HAINAUT	13	11
BE33	LIEGE	22	36
BE34	LUXEMB	3	8
BE35	NAMUR	18	18
BE3	WALLONIA	60	75

Number of projects by province (Nuts2) and SO

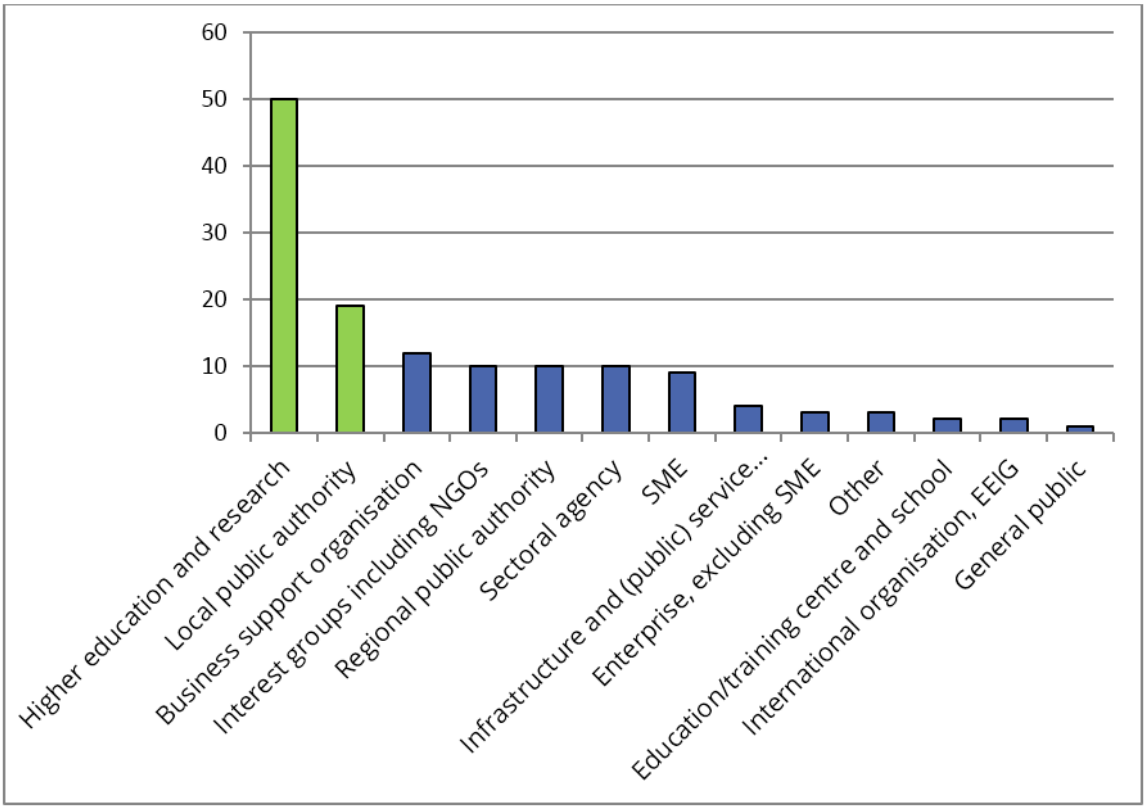


We have never had so many private partners, but we have to be careful with this statistic. We think that the rate of private partners should be even much lighter if we include sub-partners.

Type of partners

Type of entrerprise - --	Number	Partners/inh (Mio)
Higher education and research	**50**	**37%**
Local public authority	**19**	**14%**
Business support organisation	12	9%
Interest groups including NGOs	10	7%
Regional public authority	10	7%
Sectoral agency	10	7%
SME	9	7%
Infrastructure and (public) service provider	4	3%
Enterprise, excluding SME	3	2%
Other	3	2%
Education/training centre and school	2	1%
International organisation, EEIG	2	1%
General public	1	1%
TOTAL WALLONIA 0	135	100%

Half of the partners belong to these 2 types



We don't see here particular gaps. The university of Liege is really a motor as they have put in place a real 'policy' to play with the Interreg A+B programmes. We could put more effort on mid-size cities and maybe SMEs.

Newcomers

We see newcomers especially on:

- Regional specialised agencies (like the SPAQUE on brownfields)
- SMEs

D) Gap analysis – DE

General involvement of German project applicants call 1 - call 4

324 German project applicants can be counted from call 1 to call 4 (numbers extracted from ems, contain duplicates). The involvement of German partners declined from one call to another. In call 4 (47 partners) approximately half of the number of German applicants were involved compared to call 1. Concerning the number of German Lead Partners a decline has to be stated as well: From 11 Lead Partners (LP) in Call 1 the number changed to 10 LP in call 2 to 9 LP in call 3 and to 4 LP in call 4.

Geographical gaps

In Germany six federal states take part in the NWE programme. The repartition of the 323 project applicants shows some major differences between the different federal states. The highest participation can be found in Nordrhein-Westfalen (135), followed by Baden-Württemberg (57), Hessen (50), Rheinland-Pfalz (28), Bayern (22) and Saarland (19).

The different federal states involved in the NWE programme are very different in terms of geographical size, density of population etc. Saarland for example is a very small federal state and for Bayern only parts of the state do belong to the NWE area.

NUTS 1	Federal State	Project partners	NUTS 2
DE 1	Baden-Wurttemberg	57	DE 11 Stuttgart: 23, DE 12 Karlsruhe: 27, DE 13 Freiburg: 4, DE 14 Tübingen: 3
DE2	Bavern	22	Oberfranken: 1, Mittelfranken: 7, Unterfranken: 4, Schwaben: 6
DE7	Hessen	50	Darmstadt: 27, Gießen: 6, Kassel: 17
DEA	Nordrhein-Westfalen	135	Düsseldorf: 34, Köln: 31, Münster: 10, Detmold: 11, Arnsberg: 49
DEB	Rheinland-Pfalz	29	Koblenz: 10, Trier: 2, Rheinhessen-Pfalz: 17
DEC	Saarland	19	19
	outside NWE	12	Berlin: 3, Brandenburg: 1, Bremen: 1, Hamburg: 1, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern: 1, Weser-Ems: 3, Dresden: 1, Leipzig: 1; Oberbayern: 3, Niederbayern: 1
	Total	324	

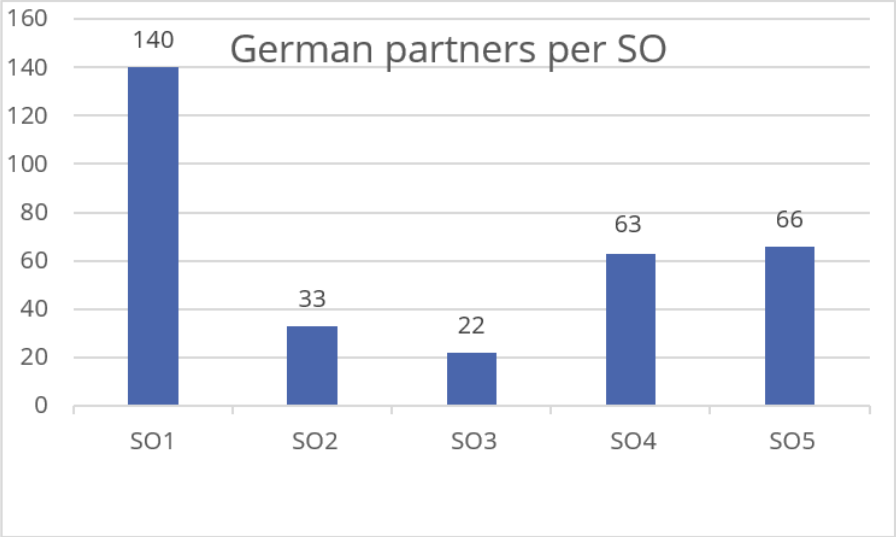
Having a closer look at the NUTS2-level

- Most of the project applicants come from the regions Arnsberg (49), Düsseldorf (34), Köln (31), Stuttgart (23), Karlsruhe (27) and Darmstadt (27). The six regions represent almost 60% of the projects applicants.
- Less participation can be observed in the regions Oberfranken (1), Trier (2) and Tübingen (3).
- Almost 5% of the German applicants are coming from outside the NWE programme area.

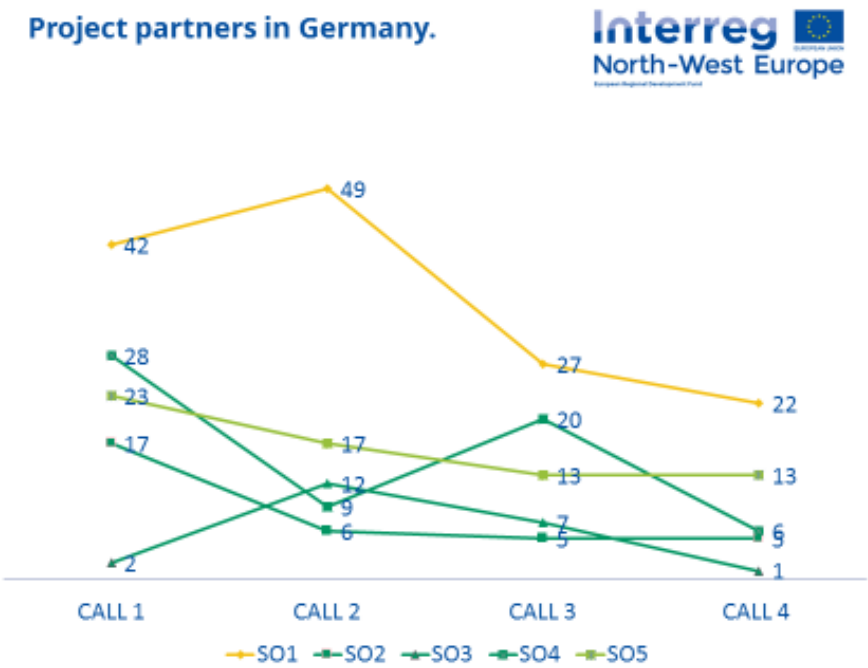
Possible reasons

- The high participation in some of the regions may be explained by the fact that these regions are urbanised covering big cities, sometimes the capital of the federal state. Most probably, these regions have a higher density of potential stakeholders, political decision makers and state authorities. The more rural areas might face some disadvantages concerning accessibility of EU funding programmes.
- Competition with other programmes on parts of the German NWE area:
- There are three other Interreg B programmes that also cover most of the states of Baden-Württemberg and Bayern.
- Interreg Danube covers the NWE regions Baden-Württemberg and Bayern offering a cofinancing rate of 85%. Furthermore, it is a new started programme in the Interreg V period, that is why it might attract more project partners.
- Interreg Central offers a cofinancing rate of 80% and covers in Baden-Württemberg and Bayern the same areas than NWE.
- Interreg Alpine Space has a cofinancing rate of up to 85% and overlaps the regions Freiburg, Tübingen and Schwaben. Traditionally there is a high identification of Bavarian partners with the Interreg Alpine Space programme.
- Six Interreg VA programmes overlap the NWE programme area. Some of these programmes have a quite high success rate, which may attract potential applicants.
- Without further investigation, it is difficult to state valid conclusions where the overlapping with other programme areas might have negative or competitive effects or maybe even positive awareness raising effects.

Thematic gaps

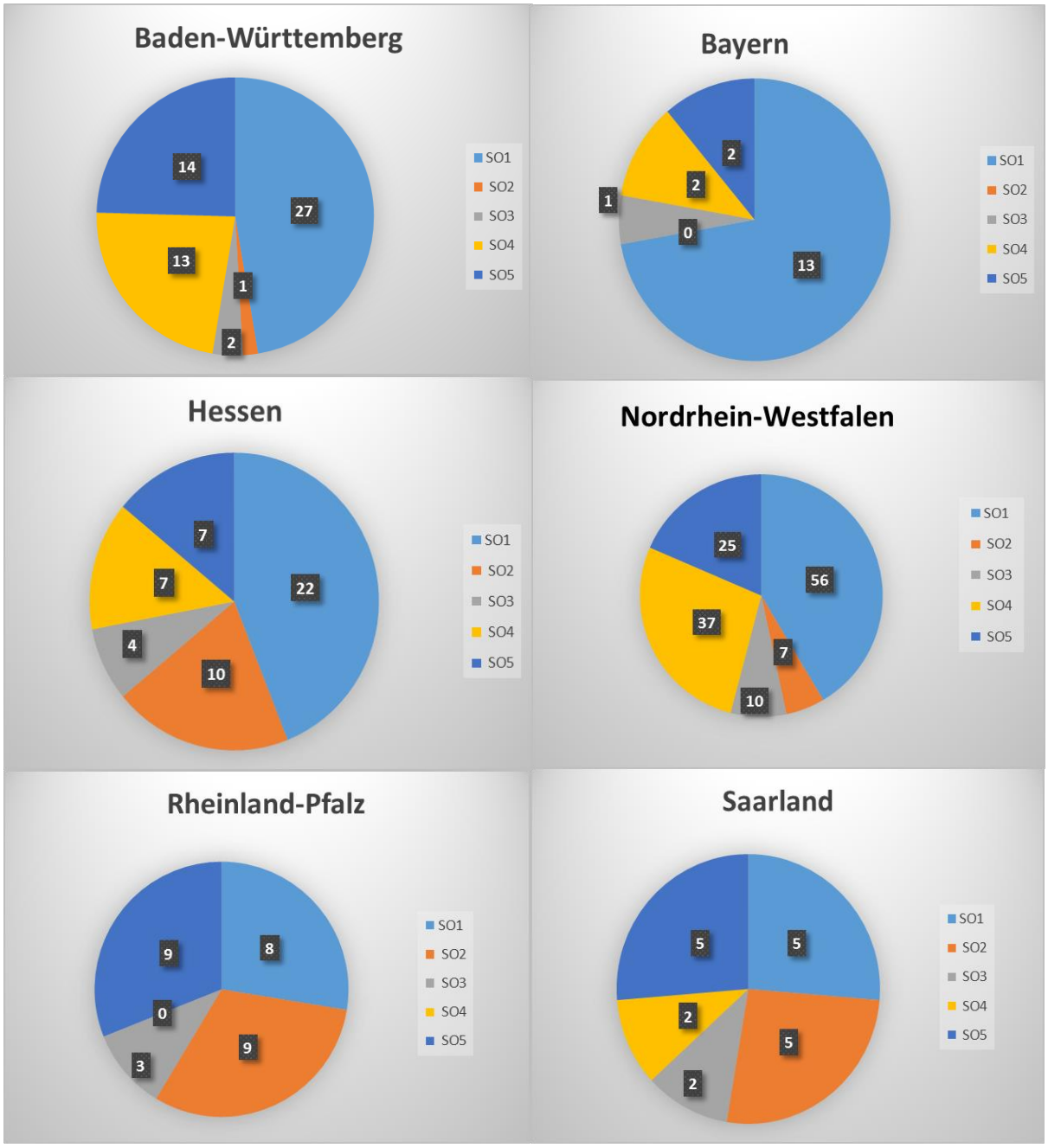


- 43% of the German project applicants are involved in a project of SO1. The high participation in the innovation priority is congruent with the picture in the overall NWE area.
- SO4 and SO5 are almost equally ranked and represent both around one fifth of the participation of German applicants.
- The lowest number of project applicants can be stated in SO3 (7%).



German partners per call

The participation of German partners in SO5 remained relatively stable throughout the four calls. For SO4 huge differences can be observed from one call to another. The participation in SO1 declined following the general decline of the number of projects applicants.



Different observations can be made from the shown graphs:

- Whereas the part of project partners in SO1 is quite high for the federal states Baden-Württemberg, Bayern, Hessen and Nordrhein-Westfalen, the states Rheinland-Pfalz and Saarland show a more balanced participation in different SO's.
- In correlation to the total number of project applicants per federal state Hessen, Rheinland-Pfalz and Saarland partners are more involved in SO2 projects than the other three states. In Bayern there haven't been any project applicants in this SO until now.
- A high number of projects applicants for SO4 can be observed for Nordrhein-Westfalen followed by Baden-Württemberg and Hessen. Rheinland-Pfalz has no projects applicants so far in this SO.

Newcomers (= not funded in IVB)

Out of 231 German project applicants (without duplicates) 50 partners have been funded project partners in Interreg IV B NWE. This means that 181 of the German VB applicants have not been involved in the IVB programme. Therefore, these numbers can be interpreted as 78% newcomers in Germany.

Type of partners

Type of partner	Number	Percentage
business support organisation	27	8,4
education/training centre and school	5	1,5
EGTC	2	0,6
enterprise, excluding SME	15	4,6
higher education and research	108	33,4
infrastructure and (public) service provider	12	3,7
interest groups including NGOs	13	4,0
local public authority	67	20,7
regional public authority	25	7,7
sectoral agency	10	3,1
SME	32	9,9
other	7	2,2

NB: The numbers are based on the data extracted from the ems-system. The data in ems is entered by the project applicants. Unfortunately, a certain number of applicants did not classify their organisations correctly. For this reason, the numbers and conclusions have to be put into perspective.

- The repartition of type of partners in Germany is very different. Out of 324 partners (duplicates included) one third of the projects applicants are classified as higher education and research. The type of organisations classified under this category vary a lot. There are universities and research institutes on the one hand and industrial research institutes with companies as members on the other hand. A more precise analyse would be needed here.
- The traditionally high number of local public authorities continues the ranking.
- A percentage of almost 10% SME'S represented shows that there is progress in attracting SME's.
- It can be observed that a low number of infrastructure and (public) service providers and sectoral agencies can be attracted as project partners for the NWE programme in Germany.

E) Gap analysis - FR

Context in France

In January 2016, France reorganized its regions. The changes have had direct and indirect impacts on the involvement of French partners.

Two major changes have to be enlightened :

- 9 out of the 13 Nuts2 French regions taking part in our programme, have been concerned by a merging. This merging has led to a lower involvement of the regional councils from mid 2015 up to now as either direct partners and/or financial counterpart. The 4 regions that have not been involved by the merging are : Ile de France, Bretagne, Centre Val de Loire and Pays de la Loire;
- Following to regional elections, there has been also a political change for most of the French regions. This has led to changes in the priorities of the regions and in-depth change in the executive board, which also slowed down the involvement of regional authorities.

One year after these events, the situation has not yet returned to normal as there are still some regions under reorganization. The regional officers in charge of ECT programmes have had their job description changed, and for some regions, there were no contact for Interreg NWE during several months (Alsace, Champagne-Ardenne, Bourgogne). The lack of territorial relay has had a direct impact on the communication on the ground.

Global picture

During the first four calls, 375 French partners have been involved in projects (372 within the NWE area – 252 from different structures).

When looking only at the gross figures (nb of partners), Ile de France appears first overall. Nevertheless as there are significant discrepancies between regions, it is not relevant to use the gross figures. The figures should be linked to other indicators, as for instance the number of inhabitants.

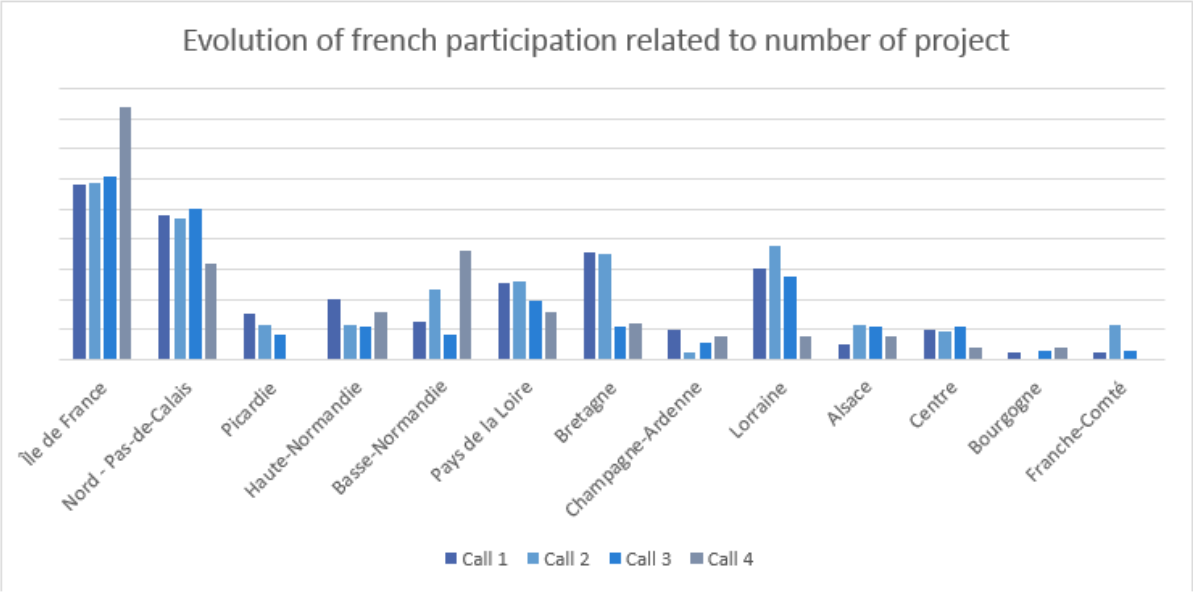
In this case, Ile de France ranks 7th whereas Basse-Normandie ranks first.

Nuts2	Name	Nb partners	Per 100 000 inhabitants
FR25	Basse-Normandie	27	1,83
FR41	Lorraine	40	1,71
FR30	Nord - Pas-de-Calais	65	1,60
FR23	Haute-Normandie	21	1,14
FR52	Bretagne	36	1,10
FR51	Pays de la Loire	33	0,88

FR10	Île de France	91	0,76
FR22	Picardie	14	0,74
FR42	Alsace	13	0,70
FR21	Champagne-Ardenne	9	0,67
FR43	Franche-Comté	7	0,59
FR24	Centre	13	0,51
FR26	Bourgogne	3	0,18

Evolution of the French involvement throughout the calls

The following graph shows the involvement of French partners related to the number of projects: as there has been a significant decrease in the number of application forms at call 4, it is more relevant to have relative numbers rather than gross numbers.



Annex 1 lists the date of workshops and infodays organized on the French territory.

Two main observations and conclusions can be drawn from this graph :

- Impact of the other ECT programmes

Only 2 out of the 13 Nuts 2 regions are concerned by only one Interreg (except from Interreg Europe): Ile de France and Centre Val de Loire are the only regions that do not benefit from another transnational or crossborder ECT programme.

The number of partners from a region is closely linked to the other programmes' calls. For instance, the call 1 of Atlantic area was launched in the same time as the call 3 of NWE: we saw the number of partners in Brittany and Pays de la Loire dropping down at call 3. We can notice the same mechanism for Lorraine with the Great Region Programme,

and regions Nord-Pas-de-Calais and Picardie with the 2 Seas programme, which accelerated the pace of the calls recently.

At the opposite, regarding the functioning of the France Channel programme, we have more partners from Normandy that are coming.

- Region Ile de France

Up to now, there had been infodays in every part of the territory except Ile de France. Paradoxically, this is the area which have the strongest increase of number of applicants during call 4. This is also the area where there are the most important number of structures that are involved in projects without taking advices from CPs before submission. The result is a rejected rate higher than average.

Newcomers in France

During the programming period 2007-2013, there have been 264 structures that applied for Interreg IVB NWE.

During the first four calls, there have been nearly the same number of structures (252) : the programme is better known on the French side, as it attracts more applicants.

	Applicants		
	2007-2013	Call 1 to 4	Newcomers
Bourgogne	2	3	100%
Basse-Normandie	6	18	89%
Île de France	68	68	87%
Lorraine	12	23	83%
Haute-Normandie	17	17	82%
Picardie	13	10	80%
Franche-Comté	6	4	75%
Pays de la Loire	12	17	75%
Nord - Pas-de-Calais	61	41	73%
Bretagne	32	26	73%
Champagne-Ardenne	10	7	71%
Centre	8	7	57%
Alsace	17	11	55%
Total	264	252	79%

The percentage of newcomers, meaning structures that didn't apply in IVB and came to VB, is of 79%. 198 structures came to the programme for the first time. This high number

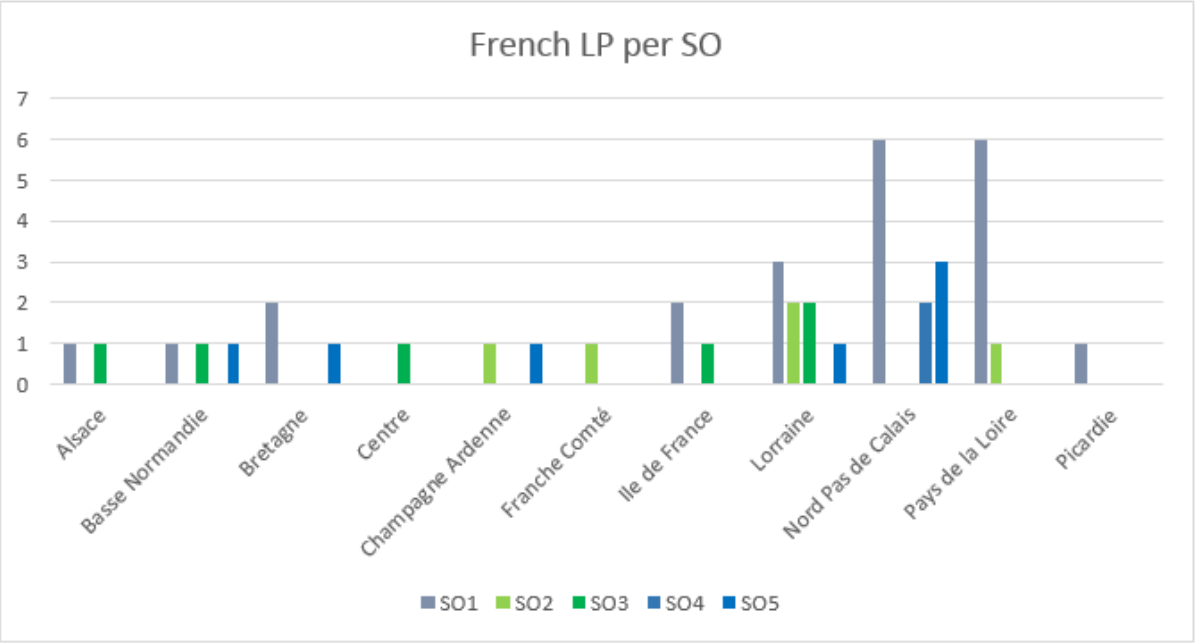
of newcomers is linked to the larger target groups of the VB NWE programme and to the numerous infodays organized on the French territories.
There are still big discrepancies between the regions, with Champagne-Ardenne, Centre and Alsace lagging behind.

Type of partners

All numbers here are approximate since the type of partners are not very often well inquired in the EMS.

France has a strong representation of enterprises & smes (50), local public authorities (48) and Universities (43). These 3 types of partners represent 55% of all partners. ONG and Business Support Organisations are well-represented too (28 both = 22 %). France has mainly newcomers and not-redundant actors. Only some business support organisations (28 actors out of 50 participations) and universities (43 out of 80 participations) come twice or more. Nevertheless, France seem to have a lack of national public actors.

Thematic gaps - Repartition by priority (lead partners)



Out of the 41 projects with French LP, 53% were on priority 1, 29% on priority 2 and 18% on priority 3.

11 out of 13 French NUTS2 had a LP on its territory. Only Haute Normandie and Bourgogne did not have any LP.

After a first call which was very focused on innovation (9 out of 10 French LP), France had the almost exact average repartition rate for the programme for the second and third calls. The fourth call is more focused on the low-carbon priority (3 out of 6 LP).

- **Priority 1 – Innovation**: half of the LP came from Nord-Pas-de-Calais and Pays de la Loire. They were there especially during call 1 and 2, but due to the low-success rate, it did not encourage French LP to submit: call 1 there were 9 projects and call 4, 2 projects.

- **Priority 2 - Low-carbon**: it is geographically the most diversified priority. 9 NUTS2 out of 13 are involved as LP. Lorraine had 4 LP out of the 12 projects.

- **Priority 3 – Ressource efficiency**: only 5 NUTS2 out of 13 have had LP. 3 out of 7 projects had LP coming from the Nord-Pas-de-Calais.

NB: France counted 42 LPs in step 1 submitted project, but the project E=0 changed LP in step 2 (went from an LP from Alsace to a Dutch LP).

Repartition by priority (partners)

Except some high presence of partners of Lorraine in the third priority (where there is a strong mobilization around the post-industry problematics), there is no particular correlation between geography and thematics : it's more about the general dynamics of a territory to join an INTERREG project.

Conclusion

The territories where there are less applicants than during the last programming period and where the ratio per inhabitants is the lower are:

- Champagne-Ardenne
- Alsace
- Centre
- Franche-Comté
- Bourgogne.

Except for region Centre Val de Loire, the 4 other regions are active on other ECT programmes (both crossborders and transnational).

Champagne-Ardenne, Franche-Comté and Bourgogne share common characteristics: more rural problematics with economy mainly based on agriculture and high dependence on regional funds.

Infodays and workshops organized on the French territory in 2015 and 2016

Several workshops and infodays have taken place in France:

2015
6 February Lille : ECT infoday (including NWE)
17 March Lille : transnational workshop call 1 NWE
10 April Nantes Pays de la Loire : infoday NWE + IE
3 July Lens : workshop ECT (including NWE)
30 September Rennes : transnational workshop priority 3
5 October Orléans : Infoday NWE + IE

2016
15 March Reims – Champagne-Ardennes : Infoday NWE
30 June Rouen – Haute Normandie : Infoday NWE + IE
20 September Orléans Infoday NWE + IE
27 September Dijon Infoday NWE + IE

Small presentations of the programme in specific events in 2016 :
12 February Laon – Agriculture
27 November Le Havre – Blue Growth
8 December Paris – Automotive
In January 2016, France reorganized its regions. The changes have had direct and indirect impacts on the involvement of French partners.

F) Gap analysis – IE

Introduction

In the first four calls, 174 (7%) of all Step 1 applicants were from Ireland, 16 of which took on the role of Lead Partner. Irish participation was highest in Call 1 (74) compared to subsequent calls. This appears to be a common trend for most NWE Member States and for the programme overall. In Ireland, this is most likely due to other Interreg programmes becoming available since Call 1 giving applicants a wider funding choice.

Irish participation appears to be linked to geographic factors, particularly population distribution, urban/ rural split, and the location of HE/ FE intuitions. These are also reflected in NWE partner distribution across the two Irish NUTS II regions.

The Southern & Eastern (S&E) NUTS II region accounts for 73% of the population. Whilst large parts are rural, 4 of the 5 Irish cities are located there, most significantly Dublin and Cork. Six Irish universities and 9 Institutes of Technology in the region. The Border Midlands and West (BMW) NUTS II region is predominantly rural with one city, one university and five Institutes of Technology.

Ireland participates in 6 Interreg programmes, all distinct regarding eligible area, theme and intervention rate. The regions, particularly in the west of the country, have access to up to 5 these which could be more thematically suitable, such as for tourism and marine/ maritime activities. The intervention rate in the other programmes (65-85%) can also be more attractive to applicants.

The NWE programme's themes have good synergies with Irish national policy. For Priority 1, it relates to *Innovation 2020, Ireland's Strategy for Research & Development, Science & Technology*; for Priority 2, *Ireland's Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Future 2015-30*, and for Priority 3; *Delivering our Green Potential, Government Policy Statement on Growth & Employment in the Green Economy*.

Geographical Analysis

Two thirds of Irish applicants are from the S&E region. The Dublin region accounted for 33% nationally, as a capital city region housing 28% of the Irish population and a significant number of HE/FE institutions. The South-West region accounts for 16% of all Irish NWE applicants. This is lower than anticipated considering Cork City, Ireland's second city is located in this region. However, the South-West is eligible for 4 other Interreg programmes with higher intervention rates than NWE.

A third of applicants are from the BMW region and the West had the second highest participation rates nationally at 23%. This is could be attributed to active HE/ FE institutions, but also to a high level of interest in Priority 1.

A programme gap on relates to the Mid-East and Midland regions, respectively providing 0,5% and 2% of applicants nationally.

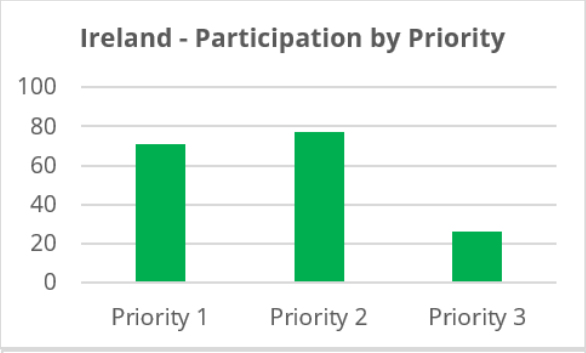
NUTS II	Partner Spread by NUTS II	NUTS III	Partner Spread by NUTS III
Border Midlands & West	59 (34%)	IE011 Border	15
		IE012 Midland	4
		IE013 West	40
Southern & Eastern	115 (65%)	IE021 Dublin	58
		IE022 Mid-East	1
		IE023 Mid-West	15
		IE024 South-East	13
		IE025 South-West	28

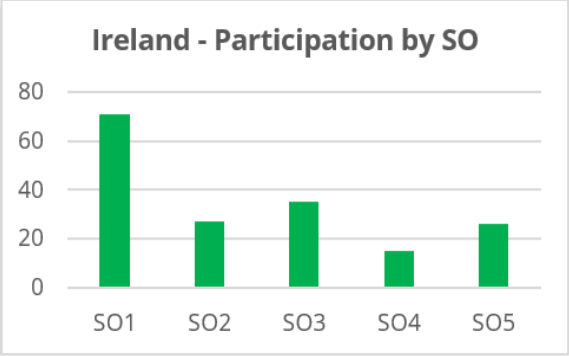
Thematic Analysis

Irish partners have been predominantly active under Priorities 1 & 2. Priority 2 is slightly more popular than Priority 1 whilst only 15% of applications with Irish partners were under Priority 3.

Looking at the Specific Objectives gives a different view. SO1 (innovation) is by far the most popular among Irish partners. Participation is lowest for SO4 (9%) whilst SO2 has almost the same take up levels as SO5 (15%). The themes for SO4 (transport) and SO5 (resource efficiency) are a priority for Irish policy; there is a need to make a target link between the programme and national/ regional policy in future publicity efforts.

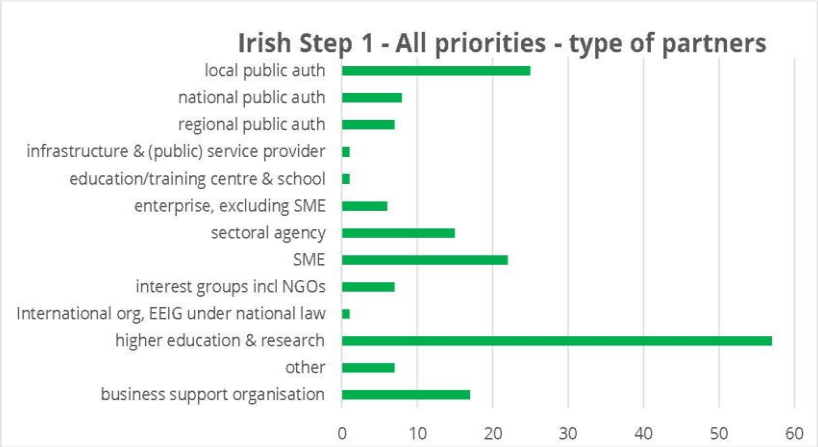
Irish Lead Partner participation follows similar trends, low for SO4 and equal numbers for SO's 2 & 5. SO's 1 & 3 have the same numbers for Irish LPs.





Types of Partners

Thirteen different types of partners from Ireland applied to the programme under the first four calls. Higher Education & Research represented the highest percentage of Irish partner type (33%). SMEs and Enterprises excluding SMEs represented 13% and 3% respectively. Participation by public authorities is mixed, with low levels for regional and national authorities. More local authorities could be encouraged to increase participation levels; however, Interreg Europe is more attractive due to the emphasis on policy enhancement and the higher intervention rate.



Geographically, 6 NUTS III regions produced a Lead Partner. Two regions did not have any Lead Partner participation, the Mid-East and the South-East. In general, Irish organisations are more interested in joining partnerships, rather than leading them.

Newcomers

Compared to the number of funded partners under the IVB programme, approximately 74% of VB applicants are considered newcomers to the programme. The VB programme is open to private sector participation and this is reflected in the newcomer organisations, accounting for approximately 16% of new applicants.

Conclusion: Proposals for Action

Geographical Gaps

There is a gap in programme uptake in the Midlands and Mid-East regions. This could be addressed with the help of the Eastern & Midland Regional Assembly to identify synergies between the regional needs and the programme priorities.

Thematic Gaps

Take up in SO's 4 & 5 need to be addressed through activities to target those specific organisations in the public and private sectors. This can be linked to gaps in partner types and geographical location.

Newcomers

Ireland is attracting a respectable level of newcomers to the programme. Maintaining this trend could be linked to publicity targeted at the regions and SO's with lower take up.

G) Gap analysis - LU

Introduction - involvement step 1

In 4 calls in total 67 partners from Luxembourg have been involved in step 1 applications, 3 of them have even been submitted by a Luxembourgish lead partner. With regard to the size of the country in terms of territory and population and in relation to other member states this involvement seems to be proportional. The number of partners in the 1st Call with 23 Luxembourgish partners was the highest compared to the following 3 Calls. One reason might be the delayed start of the cross-border programme "Greater Region". In the following calls the involvement of Luxembourgish partners stabilised at a lower but still satisfactory level (Call 2:17, Call 3:13, Call 4: 14 partners).

Policy context

The policy context is about to change as regards the emphasis on circular economy and the National Strategy Study on the Third Industrial Revolution (http://www.troisiemerevolutionindustrielle.lu/) which was elaborated by Jeremy Rifkin with the involvement of 300 stakeholders.

NWE-priorities fit well with Luxembourgish policy strategies.
National support schemes to foster the development of Interreg-projects do not exist.

ETC coverage

Luxembourg has a long tradition in European Territorial Cooperation. The country is participating in 3 Interreg programmes. The most important one with regard to the number of projects is the crossborder programme Interreg "Grande Région", followed by the transnational North-West Europe programme. In 3rd position with regard to project involvement we find the interregional Interreg Europe programme.

The overall success rates in the different programmes are 44% in the Greater Region (Step 1: 49%, Step 2: 86%) and 27.5% in the Interreg Europe programme. This is considerably above the success rate of the NWE-programme which might negatively influence the decision of potential partners to apply for the NWE-programme.

The funding rate for GR and NWE with up to 60% is the same. Here Interreg Europe is more attractive with 85% for public authorities, but a different focus and no possibility to finance pilot investments.

Although the programme priorities of all 3 programmes seem similar, the type of projects is quite different. Therefore competition with regard to the project scope is

deemed low. The majority of Interreg "Greater Region" projects (http://www.interreg-gr.eu/fr/projets-interreg-v-2014-2020/) has a clear cross-border scope and therefore don't fit the NWE-programme. But as a lot of organisations from Luxembourg apply for both, cross-border and transnational programmes, limited institutional capacities and a higher success rate of the Greater Region programme might have a negative effect on the participation in the NWE-programme.

Different programme languages might also play a role: GR asks for bilingual project applications in DE and FR, but difficult to state if this should be considered as an advantage or a disadvantage for NWE with EN as only working language.

Competition between NWE and the Interreg Europe programme is deemed rather low as the aims and types of eligible activities are quite different from NWE.

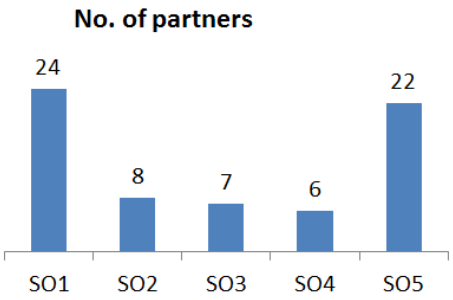
Geographical specificities

The Luxembourgish territory is mainly characterized by rural areas, except of the agglomeration of Luxembourg and to a certain extent the "South Region". 580.000 inhabitants are spread over 105 municipalities implying that most municipalities are rather small with limited staff capacities to participate in Interreg projects. A regional level from an administrative point of view does not exist, but a few regional structures, mainly organised as syndicates with a specific mission, e.g. nature parks, waste water syndicates or syndicates for regional development like Prosud or Nordstad exist.

Geographical gaps

NUTS 3 refers to the whole territory of Luxembourg therefore with the application of 67 partners in Step 1 after 4 Calls for proposals no "gap" can be named.

Thematic gaps



Partners from Luxembourg have been applying nearly equally over all 3 programme priorities. An analysis on SO level shows a different picture. The number of applications for SO 2, 3 and 4 is much lower compared to SO 1 and SO 5. As CO_2 reduction and mobility / transport issues are very important topics also on national level the involvement of Luxembourgish partners seems quite low. Especially the low number of applications in SO 4 (6 project applications in 4 calls) is not satisfactory. With regard to the evolution per call on SO level numbers seem too small for further interpretation.

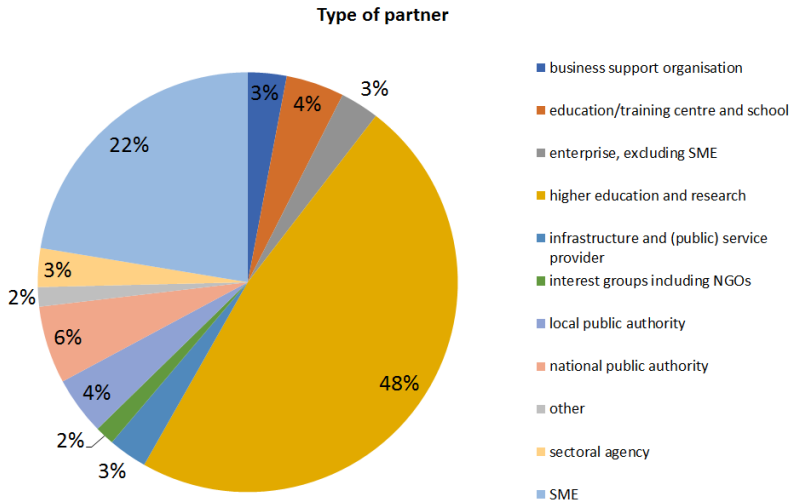
Newcomers

A comparison of partners who have participated in the IVB programme as a project partner and STEP 1 applicants in VB reveal a newcomer rate of **63% (26 newcomers out of 41 different partners in VB**) which is seen as a very good performance. Half of them are from the public sector, half from the private sector.

Based on the information available it is not possible to give more detailed reasons for this rather high newcomer rate. Past information events might be one reason, but also the reduced investment in time to submit a STEP 1 application might play a major role.

Type of partners

According to the step 1 application forms (Call 1-4) 11 different types of partners from Luxembourg have applied (67 partners in total, including resubmissions). This variety is deemed positive.



Nearly half of the partners are from the "Higher education and research" sector. Already in 2nd position we have SMEs with a share of 22%. Worrisome is the low participation of public authorities. Local and national authorities together only reach a 10% share. Regional authorities are not relevant for Luxembourg as they do not exist.
Also the involvement of interest groups including NGOs with 2% seems quite low.

Proposals for actions

Geographical gaps

As no geographic gaps have been identified no special action is needed.

Thematic gaps

In order to counter the lower number of applications especially in SO 4 together with colleagues from the Greater Region Programme a meeting is already scheduled with public key actors from the transport sector in Luxembourg in order to trigger further projects ideas.

Newcomers
The percentage of newcomers from public sector as well as private sector is very high. Therefore no specific action is needed at the moment.

Type of partners
Proposals for improvement:

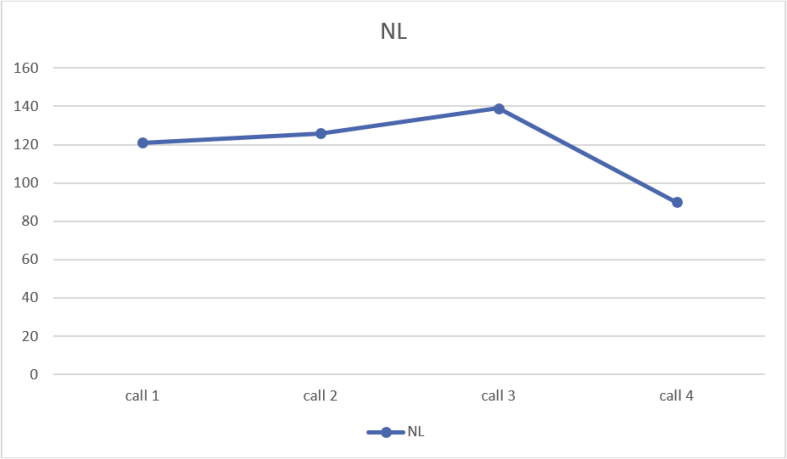
- Continued targeted communication of the opportunities of the NWE-programme to public authorities on local and national level;
- *NB: in March 2016 two specific events have already been organised for municipalities: an Infoday (half day) and a training session (full day) on Interreg with the national public training institute for the public sector; effects might only become visible in the upcoming calls;*
- Interreg-brochure including information on NWE currently being finalised and distributed soon to all municipalities.
- closer cooperation with the Syvicol (a syndicate where all municipalities are member) in order to make use of their communication channels.
- proposal to ask every municipality to nominate a contact person for European programmes to whom future mailings can be addressed.
- Review of databases with paying special attention to key persons within national ministries and administrations.
- *NB: a meeting with the Interreg-correspondents in the different Ministries took place on 15th February 2017 to inform about the state of the art in the different Interreg programmes and to inform and exchange about the national consultation process.*
- Review each SO for relevant NGOs in the sector and approach them actively.
- Research institutions in approved projects will be asked to pay special attention to the transfer of know-how to the Luxembourgish territory, e.g. via stakeholder groups.
- When searching project partners in Luxembourg the effort will be continued to especially address local municipalities, national authorities and NGO's and to involve them in future projects maybe jointly with research institutions in the same project representing a tandem of research and implementing partner. This would also provide for good prospect of implementations on Luxembourgish ground.

H) Gap analysis – NL

Introduction

As the start of the NWE programme took a long time, partners in the Netherlands, especially those familiar with our programme, waited in great anticipation for the first calls for proposals. There were quite a number of project ideas lying around waiting for the first call for proposals due to a lot of communication from the Dutch ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment and the Dutch CP's for the NWE programme who kept the interest in the programme very much alive during late 2013 and all of 2014/2015. We created a INTERREG mini marketing campaign in which we hosted "from IV to V events", celebrated the successes of the former programming period, hosted a dedicated website, hosted webinars with information about the new programme, made a brochure with information on the new programme, send out newsletters. At the start of our program already a lot of newcomers with project ideas were ready to submit. Also for this new program, the Ministry dedicated three million Euro's for project development – for three Interreg programs (NWE, NSR, Europe).

Number of partners



Looking at the overall number of partners for the Netherlands, we are second with quite a high number of partners during the first 3 calls (121, 126, 139) and a drop for the 4th call (90), which is in line with other countries.

We see the following reasons for that decline:

1. The diminishing interest in our programme due to a constant low success rate (11%) and a - perceived - relatively long development trajectory
2. The diminishing interest of "oldcomers" due to the change in the program: more result oriented and more targeted towards technical driven projects with lesser place for our core submitters: regional and local communities and government bodies.

Also important is that the budget for our national scheme (PSR) that was in place during late 2015 and 2016, to encourage Dutch LP to develop projects, is now exhausted. Important to know is also that the scheme was not in place for the first call.

LP	Call 1	Call 2	Call 3	Call 4
Netherlands	14	20	27	18

It is expected that the high numbers of Dutch LP's will get a bit more in line with those of other countries, although we expect still relatively high numbers due to the marketing in the past, and activities currently underway.

Other programs

In the Netherlands there are 4 cross border programs which are of interest, with the NL-DE and the NL-VL programme as main competitors to our program, due to overlap in priorities. The EMS program started very late and the success rate for the 2-Seas program is even lower than ours. The way of operating for all cross-border programmes is however quite different from our program as project promotors and secretariat develop projects together and lobbying is actively promoted to gain support for projects. The cross-border programs are seen as easier to access and be successful in, mainly due to their cross border scope instead of our transnational scope, where partner search and difference in culture and language still plays a role.

Geographical gaps

Traditionally the area around Eindhoven, Amsterdam, Rotterdam/The Hague and the Technical University areas (Delft, Eindhoven, Enschede) are heavily involved in INTERREG NEW in the Netherlands. Relatively new to the program is the more active involvement of the South East with the University Maastricht (including the University Hospital) as an active applicant, although not very visible in the overall image.

When looking at all SO's, all Dutch regions are involved in the program, with Flevoland and Zeeland as regions with the least partners. Also Utrecht and North- and Central Limburg have relatively few partners. Reasons might be the competition with the cross border programmes 2 Seas / NL-BE, particularly for the SW region (Zeeland), Limburg and for larger cities in the Western part of the Netherlands. When zooming in into the Priorities we see some differences:

Priority 1

North Limburg, the North of North Holland ('Kop van Noord-Holland') and East- South Holland are underperforming (zero applicants)

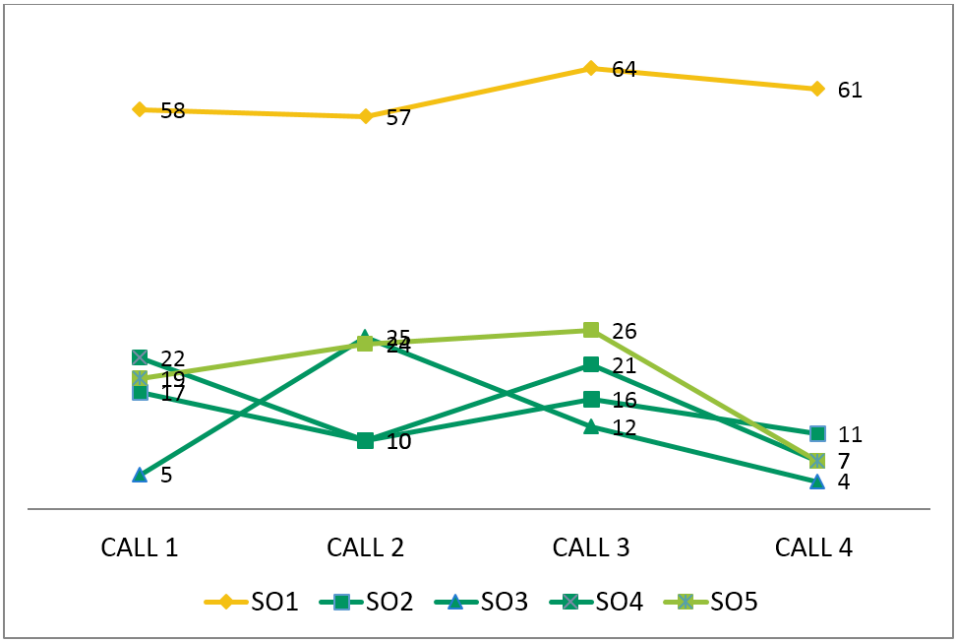
Priority 2

North and Central Limburg, Gooi-en Vechtstreek, Zuidwest-Gelderland, West-North Holland ('Haarlem Agglomeration', 'Ijmond', 'Zaanstreek', 'Alkmaar en omgeving'), Zeeuws Vlaanderen, West-North Brabant and the Northern part of Overijssel is underperforming (zero applicants)

Priority 3

North-Western parts of Noord-Holland ('Kop van Noord Holland', 'Alkmaar en Omgeving' and 'Ijmond'), Oost-Zuid Holland, Agglomeration Den Haag, Agglomeration Leiden en Bollestreek, Central North-Brabant and East-Gelderland ('Achterhoek'), Zeeuws-Vlaanderen and Flevoland are underperforming (zero applicants)

Thematic gaps



There is heavy interest on innovation in the Netherlands, especially targeted toward "the market" and SME's, also driven by the liberal government and initially enforced by the economic crises, whereas overall funding, especially for universities and science has declined. Therefore the pressure on existing schemes, where often money is partially coming from industry or private partners is high and organizations are encouraged even by the state to actively search for EU funding.

In the Netherlands the budget for innovation and science is below average, compared from EU data. This leads to the overall need for more EU funding and therefore high interest in EU funding schemes.

The interest in SO4 is below average, this might well be the result of a national scheme being developed in the Netherlands with known partners and institutes waiting for its first calls, expected Q2 2017, because the success rate and conditions are hoped to be better / easier.

The province of Gelderland has an active energy policy and is therefore willing to co-fund projects in line with their energy policy (sustainables / insulation / renovation). This is directly reflected in a number of larger projects that successfully submitted in our programme (E=0, CAN, CleanMobilEnergy, now Step2)
The (larger) Eindhoven region is heavily involved in innovation related to food and health which directly shows in a number of initiatives submitted in our programme. Although we could expect a large correlation between agri-related topics, our priorities 2,3 and 5 and the area were WUR University or her institutes reside, participation is hampered by internal policy due to unfavourable intervention rates, high administrative burden of our programme, which is not in line with, p.e. H2020 and low flat rates for admin costs.

Newcomers (= not funded in IVB)

According to the statistics 14% of the Dutch PP are known to the program as former approved partners in IVB. This is only an estimate, but it certainly shows that attracting newcomers to the program has been successful.
We do have a lot of newcomers. In the Netherlands we see them – to a certain amount - come from "spill over" projects from H2020, but a big part are indeed (relatively new) organizations working on our thematic priorities which weren't involved in NWE before.

Type of partners

The typology of participating partners shows a shift from IVB to VB. Less local, regional and national government partners participate in our program (less than 30% now, versus a little over 50% in the last programming period) and more private partners, businesses and business related organizations participate (from less than 10% in IVB to nearly 40% in VB). The knowledge institute partners show a slight shift from universities to other educational organizations, such as Universities for Applied Science, or Validation centres of Technical Universities. This might be due to the more 'results-oriented' focus of the program.

The decline of participation of governmental organizations might lead to less anchoring of results and policy recommendations of our projects on all policy levels.

I) Gap analysis – UK

Introduction

In June 2016, the UK public voted to leave the European Union, i.e. Brexit. There was some initial feedback that prospective applicants from other NWE Member States were concerned about UK involvement in projects. UK partners also expressed uncertainty that being lead partner would hinder chances of success at the MC, as a result of Brexit. However, since the Programme made a public statement at the PI lab in Dublin in October 2016, along with on-the-ground positive messaging, partners seem reassured and confident to remain involved at all levels. The situation will need to be monitored as things progress.

Another factor that could have impacted the number of UK submissions in Call 4 is the lack of UK CPs in the lead up to this deadline. 2 new UK CPs have only been in post since September 2016 and a third UK CP also joined in February 2017.

In terms of ETC coverage, NWE competes with the North Sea Region and Atlantic Area in the transnational strand, which have a 50% and 75% intervention rate respectively. Both programmes are at various stages of financial commitment and calls, so at present there is no direct evidence that links the commitment or intervention rate of NWE to success against other 5b programmes. In fact, in Call 4, nearly 90% of applications submitted by UK lead partners were in the innovation axis, Atlantic Area also has an innovation priority axis with a 75% intervention rate; thus, UK applicants do not appear solely motivated to submit proposals based on funding rates. Likewise, the whole of the UK is covered by NWE, and other Interreg programmes cover specific geographical areas, yet this has not had a significant impact on the relatively balanced distribution of UK partners participating in NWE projects.

Geographical gaps

Most applicants are located within the major cities (London, Manchester, Birmingham), the North-West & the South-West counties have the highest concentration.

In general the East of England and parts of the Midlands has fewer partners.
What reasons may explain this:

- Competition with other programmes on a given area
- Local support scheme / absence of local support scheme

This situation reflects over-representation of a region linked to multiple applications from one partner. The North-West and the South-West counties are where the previous CPs were located.

Thematic gaps

Generally UK statistics evidence a decline in the number of UK LPs; all specific objectives are seeing this declining trend, with the exception of SO3. (*The decreasing number of LPs is a trend generally consistent with other NWE Member States, further aligned with the decreasing number of applications submitted). The majority of UK partners tend to submit under SO1, with more geographical gaps noticeable in SO5 around the Midlands, North-West and parts of the South-West. However, there is only a small difference in the figures indicating this may not be statistically significant.

There is generally a wide distribution across the UK on where project partners are located.

The NI region *generally* have a higher number of applicants than mainland England in all priorities. Furthermore, the Scottish highlands tend to be noticeably more successful in attracting partners under SO3. SO1 partners are generally more widely spread.

Priority Axis 1/SO1 has been distinctly the most popular for UK partners in all 4 Calls, and appears to fluctuate consistently in relation to the number of applications submitted. Across Priority 2 (SO2-4), the number of partners does not fluctuate too dramatically. The major decline seems to be in SO5, where the number of partners has gone from a peak of 30 in Call 2, to 5 UK partners in Call 4.

In general there is decline in UK participation; this may be due to CP turnover, Brexit, or following the general decline in number of applicants and partners seen across the Programme's Member States.

Newcomers (= not funded in IVB)

No formal outreach to newcomers has been conducted, but this is a priority for new CPs.

Type of partners

The data shows that higher education and local public authorities are the most common type of stakeholder.

Conclusion

The UK CPs will continue to develop knowledge, stakeholders and outreach. 2 info days are planned for Call 5. 1 provisional date is being discussed for Call 6.

There are also plans to join up with local government structures to develop localised knowledge and networks. There has also been a recent push with coordinating more closely with the Devolved Administrations.