

Draft Resolution Resolution on EU Territorial Cooperation 2007–2013

Resolution is forwarded by the Northern Netherlands Assembly

1. The members of the North Sea Commission first of all express their appreciation of and satisfaction with the approach which the European Commission has chosen for the period 2007–2013 in the form of a new objective 3: to introduce European territorial cooperation into the whole of the European Union's cohesion policy. This choice demonstrates the great value which the Commission attaches to regional cooperation in all its variants and facets. By its nature the North Sea Commission focuses on the Transnational Cooperation constituent.
2. The members' general satisfaction is somewhat overshadowed by the strict limit on the number of cooperation themes. The North Sea Commission therefore urges that the number of cooperation themes be enlarged and also that in part they should be adopted by countries and their regions which are involved in the individual programme areas. Examples of such themes for the North Sea would then be Demographic Change, Coastal Management, Energy Futures and Cultural Heritage.
3. The most recent proposals made on behalf of the European Commission with regard to the geographical area classification for the new cooperation programmes have prompted considerable surprise and also disappointment.
 - a. The North Sea Commission observes to its displeasure that, as a result of the addition of the Channel Zone into the two proposed variants, the cooperation area within which the members have collaborated very constructively and with great success since the introduction of Interreg IIC (1997) will undergo a disproportionate enlargement. This will bring about a very substantive and undesirable change in the nature of the programme and the centres of gravity and emphases of the collaboration. This is true of both variants of the North Sea and Channel programme area, but even more so to Option 2.
 - b. The present geographical limits to programme areas are based mainly on common spatial features, one of the characteristics of the North Sea Area being that it consists largely of a relatively thinly populated rural area with a spread pattern of small and medium-sized towns. This characteristic is further reinforced by the part of Norway included in the North Sea Programme.

Common spatial features seem to have entirely lost their relevance in the proposed new area classification.



- c. The North Sea Commission stated – for example at the General Assembly in Gothenburg in 2004 – that it wished to strengthen and intensify collaboration with regions around the Baltic Sea. A number of agreements on this have now been made with the Baltic Sea Commission. It is therefore particularly surprising that the North Sea programme is now being enlarged in a direction which is not desired.

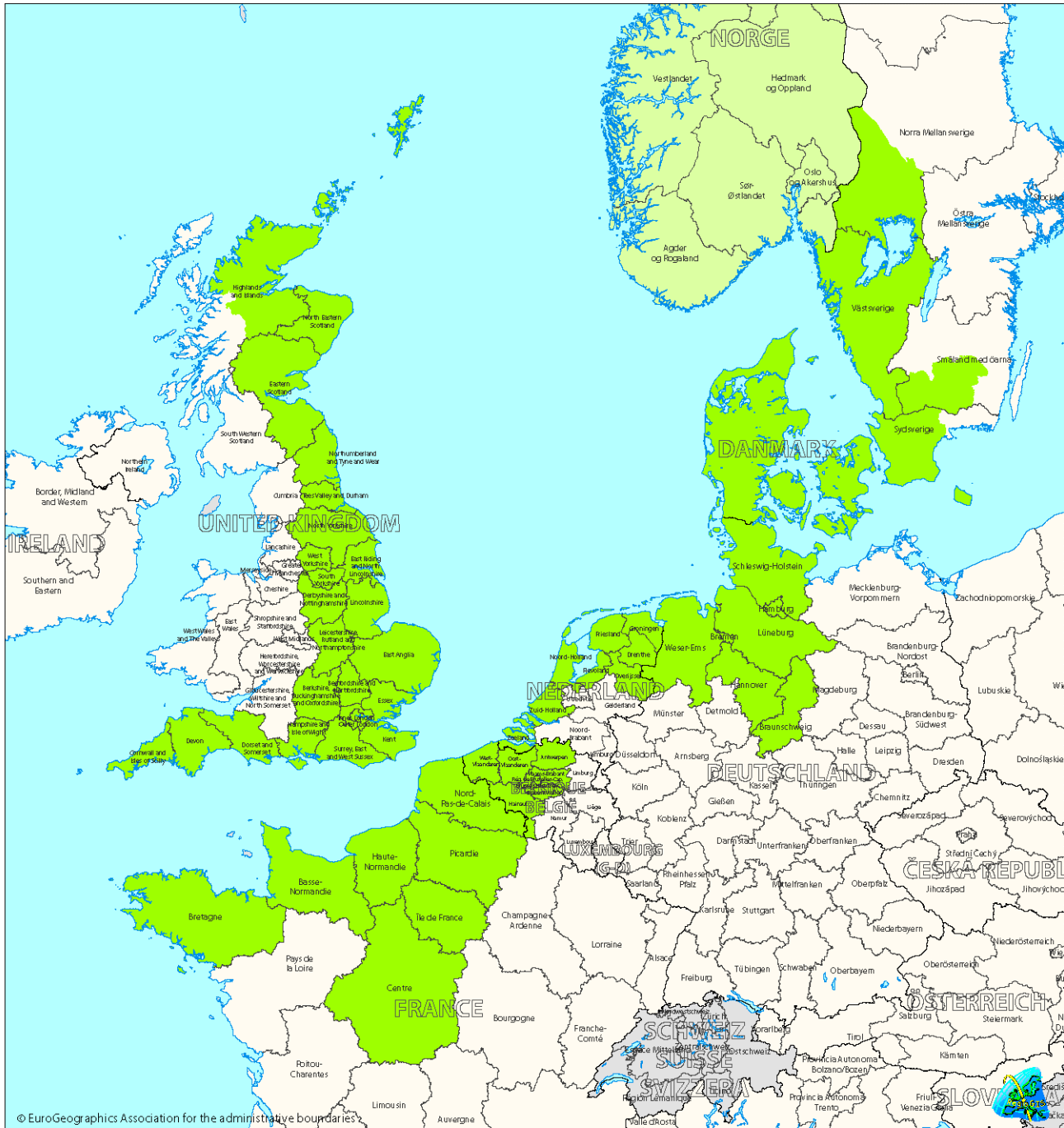
To summarise, the North Sea Commission urges the European Commission and the member states concerned to revise the proposals regarding the cooperation themes and the programme areas for the new period of transnational cooperation 2007–2013 in the spirit of these resolution and to involve regional representatives from the intended programme areas more specifically in this revision.

Enc.:

Draft-maps transnational cooperation areas North Sea and Channel (Options 1 and 2) and Northern and Baltic Sea area.



Enclosure 2
Option 2



**Draft transnational cooperation areas
North Sea and Channel - Option 2**

- EU27 cooperation areas
- Other cooperation areas



**Enclosure 3
Northern and Baltic Sea area**



**Draft transnational cooperation areas
Northern and Baltic Sea area**

- EU27 cooperation areas
- Optional cooperation areas
- Non-EU cooperation areas