NMC-NSR

The Northern Maritime Corridor project for the North Sea Region

Funding: European
Duration: Jun 2000 - Dec 2005
Status: Complete with results

Background & policy context:

The major industries in the regions of northern Europe are based on the exploitation of natural resources like fish, minerals, petroleum and timber. However, most of them find their main markets in the central and southern parts of Europe. The Northern Maritime Corridor is important in this context, connecting the resources of the north to the consumers of the south.

The present situation with regard to freight transport represents major challenges for European society with regard to congestion on roads and emissions. Globalisation and increased trade will make this challenge even more urgent, and for the industries in coastal regions surrounding the North Sea this situation can become a serious threat.

Up to now Short Sea Shipping (SSS) has lost market share with regard to freight transport between regions in northern Europe, and is in many cases not competitive with road haulage.

Objectives:

The overall aim and vision of this NMC Interreg IIIB project is to develop efficient and sustainable maritime transport solutions connecting the coastal regions bordering the North Sea and manufacturing industry in the North Sea basin with industrial development in the Barents region.

The project addresses major challenges in coastal regions regarding efficient and sustainable freight transport. The NMC project is a tool to promote balanced and sustainable development in the northern coastal regions. The project covers both the Northern Periphery Interreg IIIB and the North Sea Interreg IIIB areas, and has also links to regional development outside these areas, i.e. Russia. Partners represent, amongst others, regional authorities, ports, shipping companies, transporters and major industries.

The guidelines from the Commission constitute a transnational platform for all Interreg IIIB programmes in Europe. The document puts a strong focus on effective and sustainable transport, intermodal shifts from road haulage to rail and sea transport, and increased integration between maritime and insular regions. Maritime safety and risk management strategies are also regarded as an important transnational issue.

Measures developed in respect to these priorities should be related to Community policies like The Northern Dimension, TEN and ESDP.

Based on this, the main objective has been formulated as follows: To establish new/improved short sea shipping services to shift cargo from road to sea.
Methodology:

The Interreg IIIB NMC project will include a wide range of different regional and transnational activities, divided into six strands. All activities, both those labelled regional and those labelled transnational, will have a transnational perspective. Regional activities will, however, focus on the relation between one specific region and the North Sea Region, whilst transnational activities will focus on the overall situation in the North Sea Region.

The project activities have been carried out through six different strands:

- Regional maritime clusters;
- Promotion of short sea shipping and development of new services in the corridor;
- New concepts for seafood transport and logistics both within and between regions;
- Maritime transport concepts in the petroleum sector investigating the present situation in the North Sea and future possibilities in the Barents region;
- Implementing and harmonising risk management strategies to secure the sustainability and safety of the Northern Maritime Corridor;
- Management and technical assistance.

The Strand 1 and Strand 6 are the supervisory strands while the other four strands are the thematic strands.

The regional maritime clusters have prepared the ground for transnational cooperation through studies and region-to-region initiatives. For the four thematic strands transnational working groups have been functioning. The project emphasis has been to function as an arena for networking and an international conference has been arranged every year with 100-150 participants from all countries and regions.

Parent Programmes:
INTERREG IIIB - Trans-European cooperation (Community Initiative)

Institute type: Public institution
Institute name: Joint Technical Secretariats for each of the strands, respectively regions.
Funding type: Public (EU)

Partners:
- Rogaland County Council, Lead Partner (NO)
- Aberdeenshire County Council Province of West-Vlaanderen (BE)
- Port of Amsterdam (NL) Groningen Seaports (NL)
- City of Cuxhaven Vest-Agder County Council (NO)
- Hordaland County Council (NO)
- Sogn og Fjordane County Council (NO)
- Møre og Romsdal County Council (NO) Sør-Trøndelag County Council (NO)

Organisation: Rogaland County Council
Address: Peder Klows gt 27, P.O.Box 130
Zipcode: N-4004
City: Stavanger
Contact country: Norway
Telephone: +47 51 51 66 00
Fax Number: +47 51 51 69 44

Key Results:

The achievements experienced by the regional partners can be summarised as follows:

- the established regional maritime clusters have in general been instrumental as a local arena for promoting SSS as well as for regional development;
- some regional maritime clusters will likely continue even after the project period. The cluster members have been connected to a broad international arena for SSS;
• the cluster members have increased knowledge about SSS and the potential for moving cargo from road to sea;
• the cargo flow analyses and market analyses have been valuable;
• most regional clusters have developed scenarios and strategies for developing SSS services;
• almost all regions have been involved in one or more concrete SSS initiatives, mostly in a region-to-region cooperation.

The envisaged direct outcomes from the NMC-project were:

• Policy implications

The core approach of the NMC project has been to create an arena for networking. The means for this have been transnational meetings, workshops, international NMC conferences, missions to Russia as well as B2B meetings.

To involve shipping companies and ports has been rather easy.
To involve important industries and forwarders has been rather difficult. Only within the petroleum sector the involvement of the industry has eventually been satisfactory and gained momentum the last year. One reason for the lack of involvement by the industry is the trend to outsource the logistic services, and hence the industry leaves to third parties to take logistic decisions. The lack of involvement by the forwarders may be due to limited expectations for benefits from participation in the NMC project as well as the competition within the sector.

It has also been a challenge to involve the political level in the regions and to reach relevant bodies on the national level. This may be due to the fact that the Project Description did not accentuate this to any extent. The focus has been on the private sector as the main decision makers in respect to establishing and improving SSS services.

However, in order for NMC initiatives to succeed and to make impacts, the support of politicians and national level authorities is important. This is especially important as to initiatives related to the European Transport Network and development of the petroleum sector in the Barents region. The partners in the NMC North Sea Region decided in 2004 to apply for a follow up project, titled NMC II. The application was submitted in November 2004, an

Related Projects:
• Roro Relay Service North East Scotland Service
• Samskip
• Smyril Line Extended Service
• Scapa
• Flow Container Transhipment Terminal Roro Service
• Norske Skog Mid-Norway Rosyth Service (MINORO) North Sea Bridge
• Sea Cargo RoPax Cuxhaven
• West Coast Norway
• NorFerries Norway
• Benelux Intermodal Service for Seafood Barents Sea Intermodal Service (BASIS)
• Arctic Oil Transport
• Efficient Transport Chain (ETC)
• Cryo Container – Use of new Cooling Technology Door-to-door Guide

Documents:
• NMC Summary Report Final (Final report)

STRIA Roadmaps: Network and traffic management systems
Transport mode: Rail transport
Transport sectors: Freight transport
Transport policies: Societal/Economic issues
Geo-spatial type: Network corridors