The Arc Manche Assembly

The Assembly comprises 5 French Regions and 7 British local authorities bordering the English Channel. The Arc Manche Assembly engages in dialogue, reflection and initiates proposals. The Assembly’s two main objectives are:

- Representing the interests and the uniqueness of Arc Manche as a coherent co-operation area in the European Union;
- Strengthening the partnerships in the Channel area by facilitating the setting-up of joint projects of varying sizes and with different categories of stakeholders.

The Arc Manche Assembly has an Executive Committee and a President and a Vice-President elected for two years (French and English and vice-versa). The Assembly organises an Arc Manche Conference each year, which is an opportunity for exchange and debate with stakeholders interested in contributing towards achieving the objectives of the Assembly and the development of Franco-British partnerships.

1. Région Nord-Pas-de-Calais, Région Picardie, Région Haute-Normandie, Région Basse-Normandie, Région Bretagne.
Arc Manche, a geographical and political area in Europe

Arc Manche is a geographical area made up of the British and French territories bordering or in the English Channel. Since 2003 the Arc Manche is also a political project, strengthened in October 2005 by the creation of the Arc Manche Assembly.

The English Channel is one of the busiest maritime thoroughfares in the world and it has strong characteristics:
- a gateway to Europe;
- a maritime canal between the Atlantic Ocean, the North Sea and the Baltic Sea;
- an area of interacting and overlapping economic, environmental and logistical activities producing a concentration of maritime opportunities and risks;
- a vital thoroughfare for high volumes of people and goods;
- an area that promotes European integration and exchange between the UK, France and the rest of continental Europe.

What are the common issues on both sides of the Channel?

Arc Manche is concerned with and active on issues such as transport, port development and maritime safety, innovation, preservation of natural and coastal environments, achieving a balance between economic and environmental interests and taking advantage of the position of the Channel in Europe.

Why Arc Manche?

The Channel area and the Arc Manche Assembly

The Arc Manche is actively engaged in the debate on the creation of a European Maritime Policy, an issue of considerable importance on both sides of the Channel. The Espace Manche Development Initiative (EMDI) (2004-2007) has been the Arc Manche’s main ongoing project. The EMDI project’s central aim is to increase Franco-British co-operation within the Channel area. The concrete outcomes of the project will be the creation of a database of relevant information on the Channel area (statistics, maps…), production of a Strategic Vision, and implementation of pilot actions on five themes (tourism, maritime safety and transport intermodality, fisheries and fishing resources, research and development, and integrated coastal zone management). More information available at www.emdi.certic.unicaen.fr

Arc Manche Facts and figures

- Coastline length: 5,500 km
- 19,220,000 inhabitants in 2002, of which 7,162,000 on the British side and 12,058,000 on the French side
- GDP of the area: 395,200 million euros in 2002
- 33.8 million tourists in 2004
- Between 500 and 600 vessel movements through the Channel every day
- 1,000 fishing vessels movements recorded every day
- 275 million tons of dangerous products are transported every year on the Channel