

EUROPEAN TERRITORIAL COOPERATION BUILDING BRIDGES BETWEEN PEOPLE



European Union
Regional Policy

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EUROPEAN TERRITORIAL COOPERATION
BUILDING BRIDGES BETWEEN PEOPLE



Dear readers,

Last year we celebrated 20 years of territorial cooperation and I never fail to be struck by the enthusiasm that this most European of activities inspires. All over Europe, we see how much has been achieved so far: tens of thousands of remarkable projects, often relatively small, but making a big impact, creating valuable ties between territories and people.

As the third objective of cohesion policy, European Territorial Cooperation is central to the construction of a common European space, and a cornerstone of European integration. It has clear European added value: helping to ensure that borders are not barriers, bringing Europeans closer together, helping to solve common problems, facilitating the sharing of ideas and assets, and encouraging strategic work towards common goals. The huge cooperation community involving stakeholders at regional and local level, Members of the European Parliament and many of our partners in the Member States share the conviction that cooperation is a great European tool with a lot of potential still to be explored.

This publication will give you an insight into how cooperation, including the European groupings for territorial cooperation and EU macro-regional strategies, currently works, and what the future may hold. It brings you stories about people from all over Europe who either have benefited from, or are somehow connected to, cooperation. I hope it will show you the positive changes cooperation can make to our lives, and why it is crucial to support it at European level.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Hahn'.

Johannes Hahn,

Member of the European Commission in charge of Regional Policy

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“A bird flying over the Upper Rhine sees no borders. The challenge is how to make this happen on the ground.”

Joachim Beck

Director, the Euro-Institute, Germany

ESSENTIALS OF COOPERATION

European Territorial Cooperation policy is constructed around three strands. This section explains how they interrelate, ensuring that the citizens of the European Union work together to attain their shared goals and benefit from common ideals.

THE EUROPEAN UNION BORN OUT OF A NEED TO COOPERATE

From the trauma of armed conflicts to the endless queues at customs and complex border controls putting up barriers between people, a lack of cooperation in Europe held back progress after the Second World War.

As a result, the desire for economic and political union in Europe grew stronger. In the 1950s, French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman set out to create an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe by helping countries and regions to cooperate for the benefit of all.

Cooperation means that a critically ill person on one side of a border can be admitted to the nearest hospital even if that is in another country—it can be a lifesaver. It can also be a money saver—for example, joint planning of roads prevents extra costs. Cooperation through the exchange of ideas and working towards common goals, such as more energy-efficient housing, prevents re-inventing the wheel.

And sometimes cooperation is the only way to resolve a problem—dealing with issues that know no borders, such as the pollution of a river or a sea, requires people to work together.

From the tentative move towards European cooperation launched over 60 years ago by post-war politicians with a vision, to the new macro-regional policies in the Baltic Sea and Danube regions, cooperation is recognised as an essential tool in the construction of a thriving Europe and as a cornerstone of the Union.

European Territorial Cooperation offers a unique opportunity for regions and Member States to divert from the national logic and develop a shared space together, build ties over borders and learn from one another. It is a laboratory of EU integration and EU territorial cohesion. Travelling across Europe, I am constantly impressed by projects that would not exist without it.



José Palma Andres, Director,
Directorate-General for Regional Policy



Haparanda / Tornio, Sweden / Finland

Cooperating for cohesion

Differing cultures, languages and history—the European Union is rich in diversity, but there are common principles and ideals that unite us all. Equality, access to decent work and health care, the ability to move freely throughout the Union, living in a clean environment and getting an education are all shared ideals. Here are some examples of how European Territorial Cooperation is making these ideals reality.

European Territorial Cooperation, previously known as INTERREG, has been a part of cohesion policy since 1990. With its place-based focus, it is on the spot to solve problems that transcend boundaries and require a common approach. It is the key way of helping regions share their knowledge across Europe.

Sharing

Whether it is sharing knowledge, infrastructure or other assets, cooperation helps us by:

- Creating joint research centres, tourism centres, etc.;
- Improving cross-border transport, water and waste systems; and
- Saving time and money by transferring lessons learned from one region to another.

Integrating

Cooperation helps people to integrate into a Europe beyond their borders by:

- Supporting long-term partnerships across borders that enhance trust and mutual understanding;
- Promoting joint cooperation structures; and
- Enabling candidate countries to work with EU partners on shared problems.

Improving the quality of life

We owe many of the things that make our daily lives easier to cooperation which plays a role in:

- Reducing risks such as floods, fires and air pollution;
- Protecting jointly environmental resources such as natural parks;
- Smoothing the way for services like health care; and
- Helping people to find jobs beyond borders.

Making cooperation work: joint French-German fire boat on the Rhine river



Making cooperation work

There are three strands of cooperation:

- **Cross-border** for areas separated by an EU border, as well as for those bordering (potential) candidate countries;
- **Transnational** for a specific larger area like the Alpine Space; and
- **Interregional** for all EU regions.

Achievements

Cooperation contributed to the creation or safeguarding of 115 200 jobs and nearly 5 800 new businesses during the period 2000–06. Nearly 12 000 networks led to around 63 000 signed cooperation agreements. Over 18 000 km of roads, railways and pathways were built or upgraded. But perhaps most important, it has helped to build trust and shared identity between people across borders.

Key features of cooperation

Cooperation tackles a large variety of issues and works with different partners, ranging from ministries to small municipalities, universities to NGOs.

Cooperation is diverse throughout Europe: differing degrees of experience and various geographical features play their role. For example, Nordic countries are more used to cooperating than others.

Cooperation is not easily measured. Results such as changing attitudes or stronger links to your neighbour are not necessarily revealed in statistics.

European Territorial Cooperation budget: €8.7 billion for 2007–13, accounting for 2.5% of the total 2007–13 allocation for cohesion policy.

History of European Territorial Cooperation

The first INTERREG community initiative was launched in 1990 to stimulate cooperation across borders.

The success of the first phase was recognised and built on in the years 1994–99 and 2000–06 under INTERREG II and III.

In 2007, cooperation was seen as a cornerstone of EU cohesion policy and made into a structural fund objective, giving it more visibility, an improved legal basis, closer links with existing thematic strategies, but also higher expectations for its achievements.



Cross-border cooperation 1989 – 2013

Participating regions

 since 1989	 since 2004
 since 1994	 since 2007
 since 1995	 other regions

NUTS3 regions as of 01/01/2008.
Including partly eligible regions.
2007-2013: including ENPI programme areas
(not covered by this publication).

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Map showing, how the eligible areas for cross-border cooperation have evolved after several waves of enlargement from INTERREG I through to European Territorial Cooperation

In 1990, the first 31 INTERREG programmes, supporting cross-border cooperation, were launched, with a community contribution of €1.082 billion. Since then, the number of cross-border cooperation programmes has doubled and the financing has increased five fold. And more important, during this period cooperation in Europe has gradually progressed and matured. However, developing cooperation is a process and there is still work to do for all, including the most experienced regions (marked dark green).

CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION

185 million EU citizens, or 37% of the population, live in border areas. These are often peripheral, underdeveloped or marginalised areas: sometimes the borders are historical scars. The main aim of cross-border cooperation is to reduce the effect of borders as administrative, legal and physical barriers, tackle common problems and exploit untapped potential.

What do the programmes do?

The programmes cover a variety of border regions: some work with maritime areas, others with internal EU land borders or borders shared with candidate countries. Most programmes are bilateral, but some consist of more than two neighbouring countries (e.g. South Baltic programme). The programmes last for seven years.

The programme activities include:

- Repairing and (re)building cross-border roads, cycle paths or bridges;
- Investing in cross-border waste systems, medical equipment, research centres, anti-flood measures, and so on;
- Managing jointly natural or tourism sites;
- Developing common services for the local population;
- Advising on employment issues; and
- Creating thematic networks and clusters for innovation.

How do they work?

The funding is granted on condition that organisations from both sides of the border, such as regional authorities, universities and SMEs, come together to implement projects based on the needs of the border region.

Representatives of cooperating regions, thematic ministries and other local partners meet regularly and decide which projects are going to be supported.

This unique structure is supposed to lead to sustainable collaboration that continues long after the programme ends.

The funding is granted on condition that partners from both sides of the border work together and fulfil at least two of the following conditions: common financing, common staffing, common preparation and common implementation of the project.

Facts and figures

BUDGET—€5.7 billion from 2007–13
53 programmes along internal EU borders and in maritime areas
10 programmes under the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA)



Cross-border cooperation 2007–13: ERDF and IPA programmes

Map showing cross-border cooperation programmes financed under the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) for the 2007–13 period

There are 53 cross-border cooperation programmes on the EU's internal borders, co-financed up to 85% from the European Regional Development Fund. On the EU's external borders with candidate or potential candidate countries (Croatia, Serbia, FYROM, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Albania, Turkey), there are currently 10 cooperation programmes, financed from both the European Regional Development Fund (for EU partners) and the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (for non-EU partners). You can find the full list and related websites (including transnational and inter-regional programmes) in the Annex to this publication.

TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION

Transnational cooperation involving national, regional and local authorities aims to promote better integration across European regions. Challenges, such as reducing sea or river pollution, often need to be addressed through a united, strategic response by all countries involved. Opportunities such as multi-university research can only be fully exploited by collective action on a transnational level.

What do the programmes do?

These programmes cover large areas such as the Baltic Sea Region, Alpine Space, Mediterranean and South East Europe. They focus on projects related to issues such as flood management, transport and communication corridors, international business and research links and urban development.

Facts and figures

BUDGET – €1.8 billion from 2007–13

NUMBER OF PROGRAMMES – 13

Covering areas such as the Baltic Sea Region,
Alpine Space and Central Europe

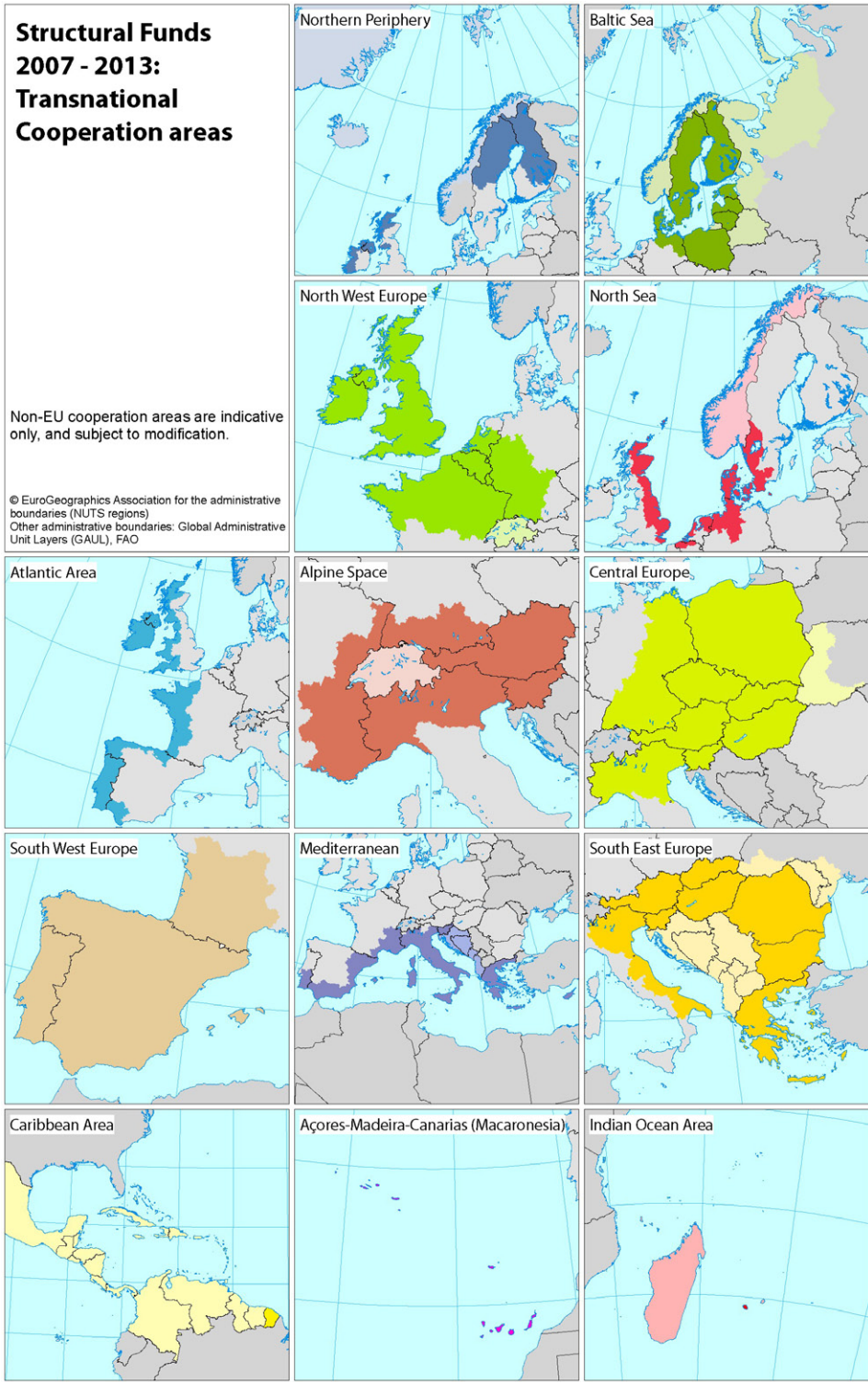
Actions include:

- Water management, risk prevention, energy efficiency and environmental protection activities with a clear transnational dimension;
- Technology transfers to improve access to scientific knowledge;
- Developing common services for the local population;
- Developing joint financial engineering instruments to support research and development in SMEs;
- Activities to improve access to and the quality of transport and telecoms services; and
- Fostering sustainable urban development.

Transnational cooperation adds a European dimension to regional development. It facilitates a coordinated, strategic and common response. It also makes strategic investment possible using regional policy funds and levered financial instruments.

How do they work?

The programmes are managed by a steering committee with representatives from every Member State involved in helping the programmes to succeed. The committee approves projects and monitors and reports on their implementation.



Map showing transnational cooperation programmes co-financed under the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) for the 2007–13 period

There are currently 13 transnational cooperation programmes, supported by the European Regional Development Fund, involving EU members, candidate and potential candidate countries and other non-EU countries (Belarus, the Faroe Islands, Greenland, Iceland, Moldova, Norway, Russia, Switzerland, Ukraine). Programmes such as the ‘Baltic Sea’, support the macro-regional strategies currently being implemented in Europe (EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, EU Strategy for the Danube Region).

INTERREGIONAL COOPERATION

Interregional cooperation links regions and cities in Europe to work on issues of common interest, share good ideas and existing answers to problems, and develop new solutions. Regional and local actors, including those from Norway and Switzerland, participate in networks, for example, to make our cities greener, improve energy efficiency of buildings or enhance innovation in SMEs.

What do the programmes do?

INTERREG IVC and URBACT II programmes enable the exchange of good practice. Through seminars, staff exchanges and other events, people develop ideas together which they can then adapt to their own regional or municipal context. Spreading these ideas to other interested people and putting them into practice through other EU-funded instruments (or 'capitalisation') is encouraged.

How do they work?

Public administrations, universities and other partners from at least three different countries take part. Certain networks focusing on capitalisation (called 'Fast Track') are facilitated by the Commission. Their results are presented yearly at the Regions for Economic Change conference in Brussels.

INTERACT and ESPON: supporting cooperation programmes and territorial cohesion

- **INTERACT** provides all cooperation programmes with practical support, training and advice. Its function is to make sure that cooperation works efficiently and provides the best results.
- **ESPON** (the European Observation Network for Territorial Development and Cohesion) supports policy development in relation to territorial cohesion and harmonious development.

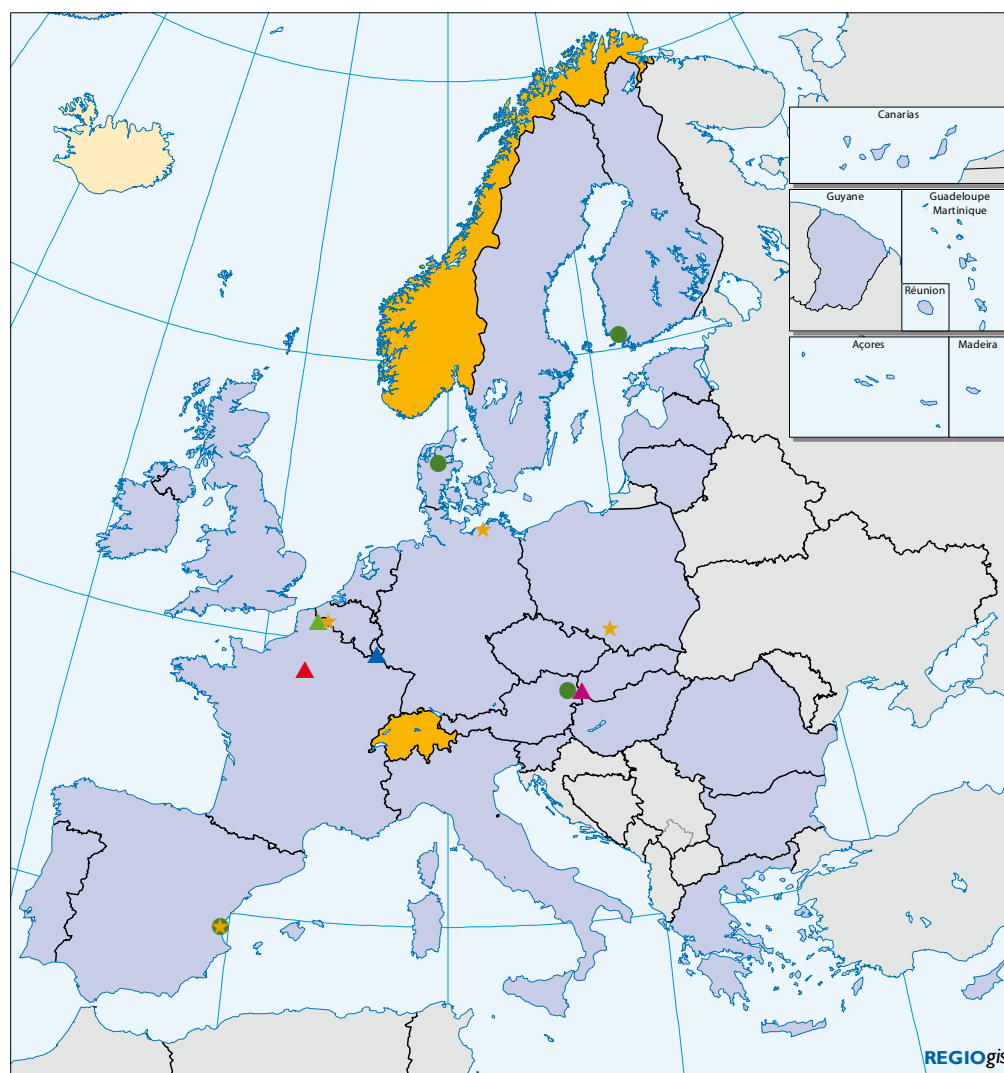
Facts and figures: Budget 2007–13

2 networking programmes:

- **INTERREG IVC** €321 million.
- **URBACT II** €53 million.

ESPON €34 million.

INTERACT II €34 million.



Cross-border cooperation 2007 – 13

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| EU Member States | Managing Authority | Info point |
| other countries participating in interregional cooperation | INTERACT II | INTERREG IVC |
| other countries participating in ESPON | INTERREG IVC | INTERACT II |
| | ESPON | |
| | URBACT | |

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Map showing eligible areas for interregional cooperation, co-financed under the European Regional Development Fund for the 2007–13 period

There are four interregional cooperation programmes (INTERACT II, INTERREG IVC, ESPON and URBACT II), supported by the European Regional Development Fund. On the map, you can see where the Managing Authorities for the four programmes are located, as well as the Info points for the INTERREG IVC programme and INTERACT II.

“I think that it is possible in the future to have a common city hall on the border and common facilities for our employees.”

Raimo Ronkainen
Mayor of Tornio, Finland

REGIONS EVOLVING THROUGH COOPERATION

All over the EU, European Territorial Cooperation is at work, helping people achieve their goals more effectively, across borders, countries and geographic regions. Through cooperation, people in different regions can work together, learn from each other and help transform their regions. The following pages highlight examples of regions around Europe working together to further the common ideals of the European Union.

NEIGHBOURS NOT FOREIGNERS

FINLAND, SWEDEN



What could be more emblematic of cross-border cooperation than children of different nationalities walking hand-in-hand during a school excursion?

This is not a utopian dream but a reality in the Language School, one institution that helps to bring together Tornio in Finland and Haparanda in Sweden.

Set up in 1989, the bilingual Language School is just one of the many projects that today link the two towns in a shining example of European cohabitation.



Crossing the border while playing on the joint golf course



"We've had mixed groups right from the beginning, in drawing, music and gymnastics. When the children are taken outside to learn about nature, for example, they hold hands with a partner from the neighbour country.

As they progress through the school system, the language tuition becomes more intense. They might ask a question in their mother tongue only to be answered in the neighbour language. This is a way of challenging them. We can sometimes teach them a subject and a language at the same time. Sometimes the classes take place in the pupils' mother tongue, but we have classrooms with a thin partition that we can take down to create one big classroom. Both the pupils and the teachers take a very international view here at the Language School. We have exchange programmes and visits to other countries, including Spain, Russia and Turkey."

Hjärdís Lagnebäck
Principal, the Language School

For the Swedes in Haparanda, Finnish is not a foreign language; it is a 'neighbour' language, and vice versa. Cross-border schooling, work and leisure activities come naturally in this corner of the continent, where you can actually pass from one country to another without stepping outside.

Public services are integrated to the extent that the post offices forego centralised sorting in favour of simply dropping mail into the neighbouring town. Joint investment has ranged from fire and rescue services to a sewage treatment plant, a joint tourist agency and a common Facebook page. There are now plans for a common bus station and talk of a common town hall.

Commercial cooperation was given a shot in the arm by European Union accession and has also moved forward at a rapid pace. In late 2008, IKEA opened its northernmost unit in the world on the Swedish side of the joint town, bringing in its wake

another seven shops. Many Finns cross the border daily to work there.

More recently, a larger shopping centre known as Rajalla (means "on the border")—around 20 to 30 stores—opened up, this time on the Finnish side. The catchment area of these shopping complexes extends across a radius of 400 km.

European Union membership brought reduced cross-border formalities for travel and trade and has therefore been a big fillip for the cross-border economy. Tornio and Haparanda have successfully applied for EU funding, in particular from INTERREG, which has co-funded projects from flood defences to schools and a street (the 'Neighbour' Street) connecting the two town centres.

To formalise their partnership, the two towns in 1987 set up Provincia Bothniensis, a cooperation body, and adopted a joint name and logo:

HaparandaTornio – International Meeting Place. The 'on the border project'—a common city centre—is now taking shape and will feature design ideas conceived by local school children.

Cooperation between the two towns can be traced back to the 1960s in the fields of culture and education, though it is only today that they are effectively acting as one.



"Playing on the border"

"Here, you learn two languages, you get to see how things work in Finland—Finnish traditions. You get the best things from both countries. I don't think there's any big difference between Swedish and Finnish students in our school."

Lisa Snäll
15, Student, the Language School



SUPPORT FOR THE NORTHERNMOST FINLAND, SWEDEN AND NORWAY BORDER AREA IS PROVIDED BY:

INTERREG IV A North

cross-border cooperation programme 2007-13.

BUDGET:

€34 000 000

EU CONTRIBUTION:

€22 765 000

More information:

www.interregnord.com

www.pagransen.com

<http://provincia.haparanda.se>



Giant engagement rings symbolising the close bond between the two cities

"The idea is to construct a city across the border. Schooling is just one of the municipal services that Haparanda and Tornio have merged, at least in part. The two towns are physically building towards the border and should have joined within three or four years. EU membership has made it possible to carry this process forward much sooner than we had thought. We have received a

good deal of funding from INTERREG. There are now plans for a new school, an upper secondary school for 16-to-19 year-olds, located right next to the border."



Ritua Nousiainen
Provincia Bothniensis



"What is happening here is I believe unique in the world. You can cross the border while inside the shopping centre. People come from afar just to see the way the two countries have joined together. The effect on employment of the shopping centre is considerable–this goes without saying. In towns of this

size the creation of several hundred jobs makes a huge impact. EU membership has been absolutely necessary. Without the EU all this would have been impossible.

Before, EU membership customers couldn't purchase in one country and then take their goods home without paying customs duties and other fees at the border. You couldn't sell them a bed or a kitchen. We want this to be an international example of how you can cooperate across a border. I believe in soft borders; they're a great thing. People shouldn't be punished by hard borders with surveillance and heavy controls."

Göran Wigren
'On the border project'



"I have a very good relationship with Gunnel Simu, the mayor of Haparanda. We have a meeting or call every week. Our town councils have at least one common meeting yearly and town cabinets meet two times a year. I think that it is possible in the future to have a common city hall on the border and common facilities for our employees.

EU membership has led to deeper cooperation. Today we are building a new city centre on the border. We have had good opportunities to seek EU funding from the INTERREG programme—that has accelerated our cooperation. Personally, I cross the border almost daily."

Raimo Ronkainen
Mayor of Tornio, Finland



The "On the border project": developing a new joint city centre

"There has been a lot of support from the EU for our projects. There will be a travel centre on the border as well as Victoria Square, which will be inaugurated by royalty. Integration can still go further. We could have a common town hall and common policies on the environment, climate or attracting businesses to our region. I cross the border two or three times a week to see Raimo Ronkainen, the mayor of Tornio, or to have lunch, to go to the shops. Raimo and I meet together at

two different levels of provincial government. Besides that, we have two municipal council meetings in common, as well as two municipal executive board meetings."

Gunnel Simu
Mayor of Haparanda,
Sweden



COMING TOGETHER TO REALISE POTENTIAL

FRANCE, GERMANY



While the Upper Rhine may for a long time have been a model of disunity, it is now a model of European cooperation, as symbolised by the ever stronger relations between the French city of Strasbourg and the German town of Kehl. The power of this symbol was recognised as early as the 1950s when Strasbourg and Kehl, which face each other across the Rhine, were advanced as candidates to host the new European institutions and to become a dual capital for the European project.



Bridge connecting Strasbourg and Kehl

SUPPORT FOR THE UPPER RHINE
BORDER AREA IS PROVIDED BY:

INTERREG IV Upper Rhine

cross-border cooperation
programme 2007–13

BUDGET:

€132 000 000

EU CONTRIBUTION:

€67 000 000

EU CO-FUNDED PROJECTS
FEATURED IN THIS ARTICLE:

The Euro-Institute, Bateau Pompe
Europa 1 & Jardin des deux rives.

More information:

www.interreg-upperrhine.eu
www.euroinstitut.org
[www.conference-rhin-sup.org/fr/
themes-et-projets/catastrophe/
projets/bateau-pompe](http://www.conference-rhin-sup.org/fr/themes-et-projets/catastrophe/projets/bateau-pompe)



"Its origins date back to when politicians and stakeholders found it necessary to introduce greater professionalism and therefore needed a platform that could train people and facilitate and support cooperation. The Euro-Institute was the pilot project.

Today, Upper Rhine projects are succeeding, because people understand INTERREG and they know about the other culture and also about the funding available.

Before cooperation, it was all about reconciliation, now it's a question of realising potential. For example, a bird flying over the Upper Rhine sees no borders. The challenge is how to make this happen on the ground."

Joachim Beck
Director, the Euro-Institute, Germany

The symbol was revived in 2003 when President Chirac and Chancellor Schröder decided to group the two together within one Eurodistrict, a novel form of European cooperation.

Cooperation in the Upper Rhine, where the French, German and Swiss borders meet, started shortly after the end of the Second World War. The Franco-German Treaty of Friendship of 1963 testified to the two nations' growing trust, as cross-border contacts between individuals from the political, economic, cultural and administrative spheres on each side of the Rhine increased.

The Wissembourg Declaration of 1988, signed by national and regional representatives from France and Germany, launched a number of pilot projects within the Upper



Rhine, whilst the creation of the Upper Rhine Conference in 1991 established an institutional forum that was responsible for proposing and coordinating cooperation within the region and improving the lives of those inhabiting the region.

In parallel, the EU began to offer funding through the first INTERREG programme, which has to date provided funding for just under 400 cross-border projects in the region. The programme has been applauded for its dynamism, encouraging local investment and spreading best practices. About 20 projects in Strasbourg and Kehl have been funded and their presence in the area is palpable.

One such example is the Europa 1 fireboat. This is in response to the Rhine's growing importance as a mode of transport and to the safety threats posed by the industry developing along its banks. Ownership

is shared between France and Germany and the ship's crew comes from both countries. Whereas before the nearest fireboat was five hours away, Strasbourg and Kehl are now in possession of their

"It's like being an organ player who needs to play five different pieces at the same time: there is the administrative aspect, financial aspect, technical aspect, operational aspect, legal aspect, and so on.

I was fortunate enough to work with someone on the German side who had the same objectives as myself. In this type of project, human relations were very important in order to navigate the European, French and German systems.

Once we had defined the boat's mission, there were a number of other questions to deal with. How will we use the boat? Have our firemen been trained in the same way? Can we master our neighbour's language, especially in an emergency situation?

The Upper Rhine Conference was a big asset. It brought all the decision-makers together in one place, most of whom held positions of responsibility and were therefore sensitive to the need for a fireboat of this type."

Lieutenant-Colonel Roth
Fire and Rescue Service for the Bas-Rhin Department, France



own state-of-the-art fireboat, patrolling local waters and assisting fire services on either bank.

Funded under INTERREG I, the Euro-Institute was created in 1993 along with other bodies whose aims were to facilitate the existing cross-border cooperation. With detailed knowledge of the administrative cultures on either side of the Rhine and of the challenges of cross-border cooperation, it specialises in training and advising those involved in cross-border projects and in creating cross-border

networks. The institute, which is based in Kehl, is bi-national and trains over 3000 people per year.

The success and advanced nature of the cooperation between Strasbourg and Kehl is symbolised well by the Garden on Two Banks. This lush public park, which runs along either side of the Rhine River, covers 150 hectares and hosts all manner of cultural events. Citizens from both sides of the river can mingle as they cross the elegant footbridge on their way to work or to continue exploring the garden across the river.

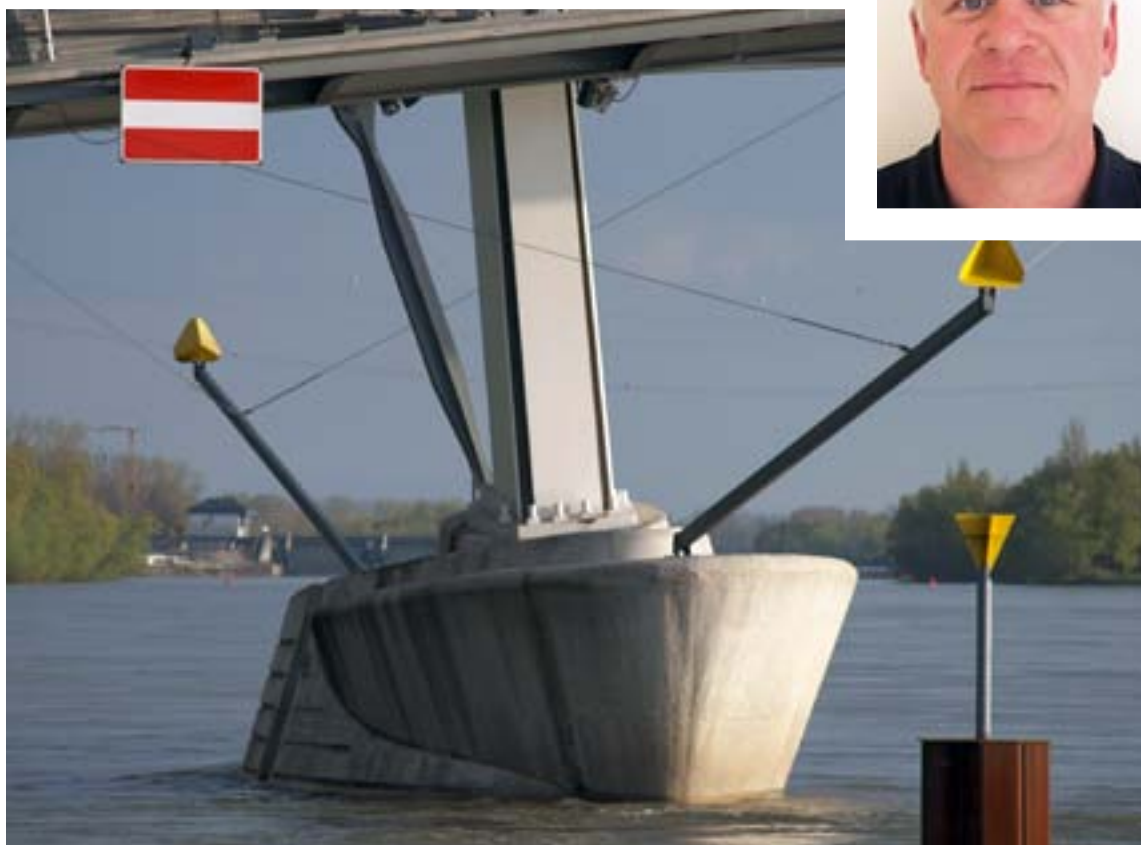


"The boat makes a big difference. There's a huge amount of cargo being transported on the Rhine, including containers, petrol, gas and a lot of dangerous products, with some boats weighing as much as 5 000 tonnes. Add to this the pleasure boats that carry up to 150 passengers each. Before, if we needed to evacuate 150 people from a ship, we had to make do with a speedboat."



We work together with German firemen. We've got to know one another's fire services, equipment and working methods and we take all decisions together."

Yannick Cremmel and Jacqui Nuss
Driver and Mechanic,
Fireboat Europa 1, France





"I use the Garden on Two Banks' footbridge every day to get to work; sometimes also at weekends when visiting the gardens with my family. I like it. It's also a lovely symbol of how the two countries have come together. People forget that every generation here had a war and that we're living at a very lucky time."



Burkhard Bechinger
Professor of Biophysics at the
University of Strasbourg, France

"For our citizens, those projects that give rise to a real improvement in their quality of life are the most important.

The medical cooperation between Strasbourg's university hospitals and the Kork Epilepsy Centre has led to the emergence of a European leader in the treatment of epilepsy. Cooperation between hospitals represents a real opportunity in terms of making care available and accessible to the inhabitants of this region.

The Rhine Port's forthcoming childcare centre is another joint project between our two towns and should open by 2012.

Furthermore, the extension of Strasbourg's tram to Kehl will facilitate mobility between the two towns and will strengthen their links.



Cross-border areas constitute ideal areas for testing territorial cohesion policies. They serve as laboratories for European integration."

Roland Ries
Mayor of Strasbourg, France

Tram from Strasbourg to Kehl



European Parliament, Strasbourg, France

FROM BASIC INFRASTRUCTURE TO CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE

SPAIN, PORTUGAL



Although Galicia and the North of Portugal have enjoyed centuries of shared history and culture, it was not until the EU membership of Spain and Portugal that the foundations of successful cross-border cooperation could be built.

The establishment of the Working Community Galicia-North of Portugal in 1991 and cross-border cooperation programmes under INTERREG (1990–2013) have created benefits that are today enjoyed by a Euroregion population of 6.5 million.



Santiago de Compostela, Spain



"Since 1986, and particularly through the Community Initiative INTERREG (I, II and III) launched in 1990, there has been a lot of cross-border cooperation on the Iberian Peninsula. The results have been positive. Twenty years ago, there was one bridge over the border river. Today there are five.

But cross-border cooperation has also covered almost all other sectors. Examples include the Venture Capital Funds Galicia-North Portugal, the cross-border Natural Park Gerês-Xurés, roads and motorways, regeneration of river basins, construction of sewage plants, the Centre for Development, Cooperation and Cross-Border Business Services, rehabilitation of urban centres and the Euroregion Galicia-North of Portugal Centre of Studies, involving cooperation with all regional public universities.

At the moment, we are in the process of promoting projects that go beyond these programmes, towards improved competitiveness and knowledge, such as the launch of the Iberian Nanotechnology Laboratory."

Jesús Gamallo

Director General for External and EU Relations,
Xunta de Galicia and Popular Party politician

For example, the 2004 completion of a bridge between the isolated towns of Vila Nova Cerveira in the North of Portugal and Goyán in Galicia instantly brought the two communities closer together by replacing a 40-minute drive or inconvenient ferry ride with a 10-minute commute.

This bridge was one of four built across the Minho River, but infrastructure was just one aspect of cross-border success. Joint areas of interest were identified and programmes and organisations set up to improve cooperation in areas such as employment, small business support, environmental planning, heritage conservation, urban regeneration, tourism,

university research, risk prevention, socio-economic integration and technical assistance.

Now under the fourth INTERREG programme (2007–13) there is a new generation of projects. In the past, the priority was to improve infrastructure, says Elvira Vieira, Director of the Galicia-North Portugal European grouping for territorial cooperation. "Now we are investing in creating centres of excellence related to the knowledge economy such as the Iberian Nanotechnology Institute and the Automobile Technological Centre of Galicia."

There have been four consecutive cross-border cooperation programmes between Spain and Portugal within the framework of INTERREG over the periods of 1990–93, 1994–99, 2000–06 and 2007–13



Cross-border Natural Park Gerês-Xurés



"Bilateral trade between Portugal and Spain was practically non-existent before their joint accession in 1986 and the social dynamics of the 20th century had contributed to the desertification of their rural and inland regions.

INTERREG facilitated territorial integration between the two regions and activity was advantageous in terms of infrastructure. However, different areas of work between partners with similar interests were also identified,

for example, universities, business associations and environmental entities.

Some benefits of a less tangible nature included the forming of economic 'clusters' which were designed

to combine skill strengths, for instance in the automotive industry or universities cooperating in research. Cross-border territorial communities such as fire-fighting brigades were also formed.

Today, cross-border cooperation is shifting towards improving local competitiveness. The International Iberian Nanotechnology Laboratory in Braga is an excellent example of how, by improving a new field of technical expertise, the profile and economies of both regions are improved."

Luís Braga da Cruz

former President of the Portuguese Northern Region Coordination Commission, Porto, former President of the Working Community Galicia-North of Portugal and former Minister of the Economy



Porto, Portugal

Bridge between Villa Nova de Cerveira and Goyán

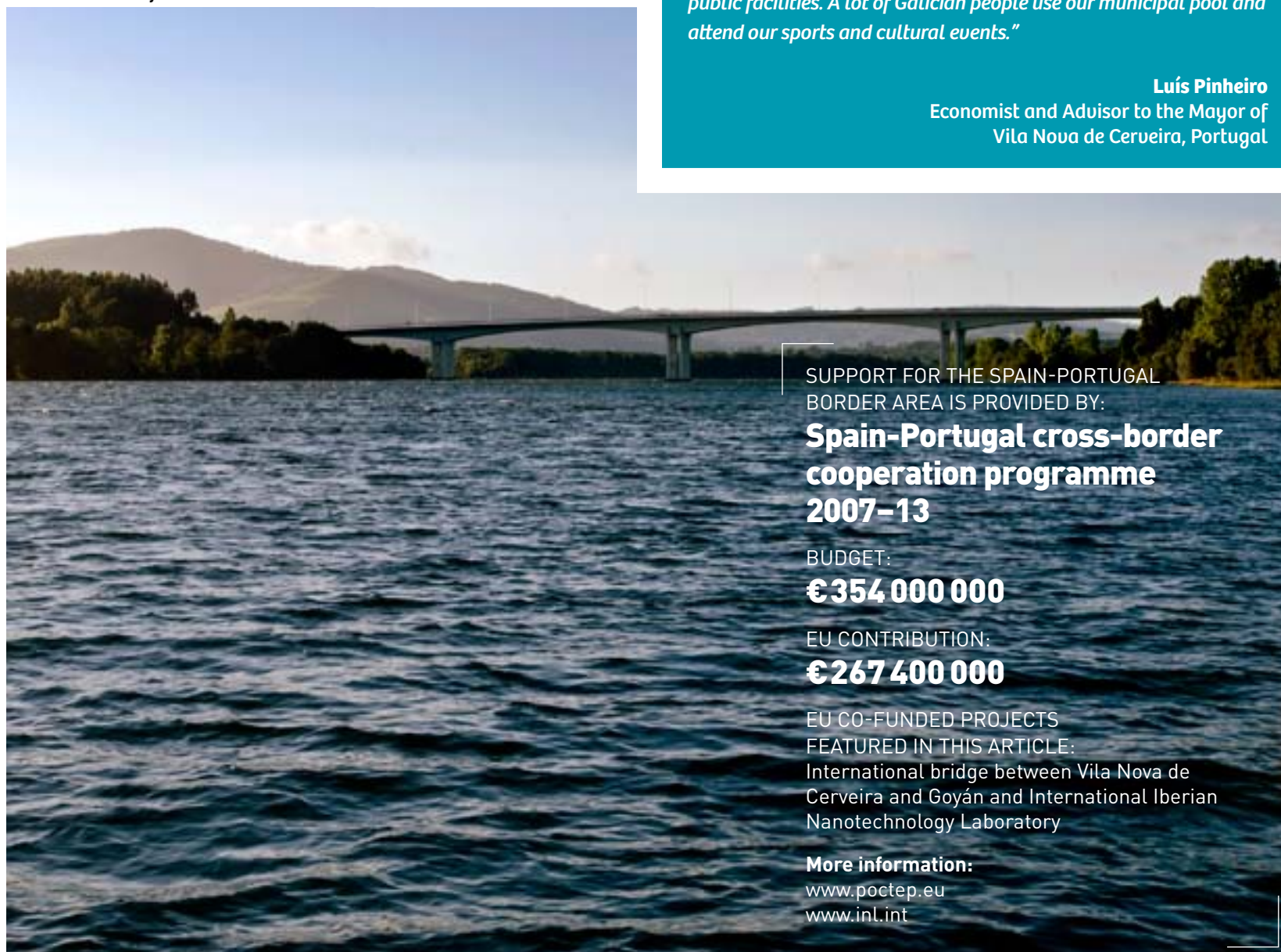


"Before the bridge between Vila Nova de Cerveira and Goyán existed, the natural barrier of the Minho River hampered economic, social and cultural relations. However, we could see there was an opportunity, given the crowds of Galician people using the ferry to come to our market.

Now, after the building of the bridge, we don't know where Portugal ends and Spain starts. And this is fantastic. There has been a successful integration process in economic terms—we can see it every day in our shops and restaurants—and even in the use of public facilities. A lot of Galician people use our municipal pool and attend our sports and cultural events."

Luís Pinheiro

Economist and Advisor to the Mayor of
Vila Nova de Cerveira, Portugal



SUPPORT FOR THE SPAIN-PORTUGAL
BORDER AREA IS PROVIDED BY:

**Spain-Portugal cross-border
cooperation programme
2007–13**

BUDGET:

€354 000 000

EU CONTRIBUTION:

€267 400 000

EU CO-FUNDED PROJECTS
FEATURED IN THIS ARTICLE:

International bridge between Vila Nova de
Cerveira and Goyán and International Iberian
Nanotechnology Laboratory

More information:

www.poctep.eu

www.inl.int

"The creation of an international laboratory by Spain and Portugal was selected as one of the best practice cases in the Lisbon Agenda in 2006. This new type of cooperation focuses on science and technology in strategic nanotechnology areas with a strong social impact.

The success of the cooperation between the countries—I'm a Spaniard working in Portugal—relies on the constant efforts made by scientific institutions, scientists and decision-makers to achieve

outstanding scientific results in the fields of nanotechnology and nanoscience.

INL is now fully operational in Braga, Portugal, with 20 000 m² dedicated to science out of a total area of 47 000 m². The recruitment of staff is underway and by 2014 we expect to have 400 people working here. INL brings new employment and business opportunities to the region, particularly for young scientists.

INL is an important partner taking the research of institutions further

and accelerating the transfer of innovations to industry while developing among other things new diagnostic platforms, drug delivery systems, nanomachines and devices."

Professor José Rivas Rey
Director of the International
Iberian Nanotechnology
Laboratory



"My mentors taught me to approach complex problems by considering which tools work best to elucidate underlying basic principles. Nanotechnology presents very complex problems that cross traditional disciplinary boundaries. So the most attractive features of INL for me are its state-of-the-art facilities and a research environment that encourages collaborative, interdisciplinary work."

Modern scientific teams often have to work across boundaries, not only between disciplines, but also between countries. INL's operation within the cross-border cooperation framework simplifies and encourages my collaboration with colleagues from Portugal, Spain and other European countries.

I also find the people of Braga welcoming. Being recognised as a foreigner here tends to elicit helpful and even protective advice, whether it's choosing from the menu or learning how to fill in a transit card."

Dmitri Petroukh

Researcher at the International Iberian Nanotechnology Laboratory



HOW CHANGE IS HAPPENING AT THE FORMER IRON CURTAIN BORDER

AUSTRIA, HUNGARY



Life has changed significantly for these two neighbouring countries which have a rich and eventful history.

Since the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989, Hungary and Austria have emerged as two countries working together to build stronger economic cooperation. The opening of the borders and the region's geographic location, between Western and Eastern Europe, have resulted in the fastest economic growth, above the European average, in the last ten years.





"One of the main objectives of the project is providing information about the legal conditions concerning cross-border employment. We advise, support and educate, so that employees can find their way in the cross-border labour market. Having bilingual staff is a key element in our work—the language barrier should not be under-estimated when it comes to cross-border cooperation. The project has been very successful in its aims and was recently acknowledged with the 'SozialMarie' award for social innovation.

But there is still more we need to do. Observing developments in Western Hungary and Burgenland and working together with the relevant labour market institutions are important in countering any negative impacts.

Already we have seen positive developments in the opening of the labour market, because now employees are seeking legal advice before taking a cross-border position. Knowing your rights from the outset is vital to ensuring proper terms and conditions are adhered to in employment."

Eszter Toth
Project Manager, IGR, Austria

But it has not been an easy journey for this border region and its 3.7 million inhabitants. As for all former Iron Curtain borders, the conditions in which the cross-border cooperation programme operates are more problematic than in other parts of Europe. They differ considerably in their physical, political and economic aspects. This results in different levels of development.

Hungary and Austria are prime examples of this. Economic and social disparities still exist in the labour market where the wage differential is 1:3 to 1:5. In addition, the migration of skilled workers abroad has led to a shortage of those workers in Western Hungary, impacting on the development of the Hungarian economy.

However, these disparities and challenges are being tackled with the help of INTERREG/ETC funding. With the borders open, the path is leading the way to nurturing development and building relations. Past experience has shown that multilateral projects help further development. Previously, joint projects were not undertaken because of administrative borders, but now cooperation can happen in many sectors of the economy.

One EU-funded project which is dealing with some of the problems faced by Austrians and Hungarians is the IGR project. So far, it has benefited 24814 employees, by helping to reduce social inequalities and illegal employment, establishing terms of payment and improving working conditions.

SUPPORT FOR THE AUSTRIA-HUNGARY BORDER AREA IS PROVIDED BY:

Austria-Hungary cross-border cooperation programme 2007-13

BUDGET:

€100 864 000

EU CONTRIBUTION:

€82 280 000

EU CO-FUNDED PROJECT
FEATURED IN THIS ARTICLE:
IGR

More information:

www.at-hu.net

www.igr.at





"The opening of borders and the new opportunities offered when neighbouring countries joined the EU only became real in the minds of people very slowly, initially being seen as simply making travel easier.

The extreme differences in administrative systems and attitudes to political hierarchies did a lot to hamper people's willingness to cooperate. Real cooperation between the border regions only came about little by little. In this regard, the intensive information efforts of the bodies responsible for the Austrian-Hungarian programme were a big help.

Sustainable cooperation really kicked off with cultural and social projects. But INTERREG/ETC funding has widened the topics and content of cross-border cooperation. Now, and in the future, regional economic and structural projects (such as joint educational and care facilities, local transport structures and tourism initiatives) will be a focal point for cooperation.

Today, cross-border cooperation is becoming more common. As representatives of a minority, we implement cultural and education projects with our partners from the neighbouring region and are used to applying for funding with them.



What I would wish for in the future is more progress in joint spatial planning and in the development of business clusters. In order to strengthen cross-border activities in a great variety of fields it should be ensured that support for the implementation of cross-border initiatives is also given to small project holders."

Martin Ivancsics
Chair of the Croatian Culture and Documentation Centre, Austria

Ferenc Ivanics and Martin Ivancsics, having helped to make change happen in the border region, talk about the past 20 years and their hopes for the future

"The rest of the world became accessible with the end of the Iron Curtain. This was a great thing because it became obvious how much the barriers erected by communism had closed us off. The real value of knowledge and competence we acquired after the Iron Curtain had been lifted, allowed us a different perception of the world. Cross-border relations started either on the basis of personal contacts or randomly. Some cooperation just happened, with all the advantages and disadvantages of spontaneity.

The institutional system, set up in the last 15 years with EU

funding, has contributed to the sound use of resources, improving cooperation between our institutions and those of Austria. Many initiatives have encouraged us to work more closely together, although there is still a lot to do at both regional and European level. There are still areas which need to be addressed.

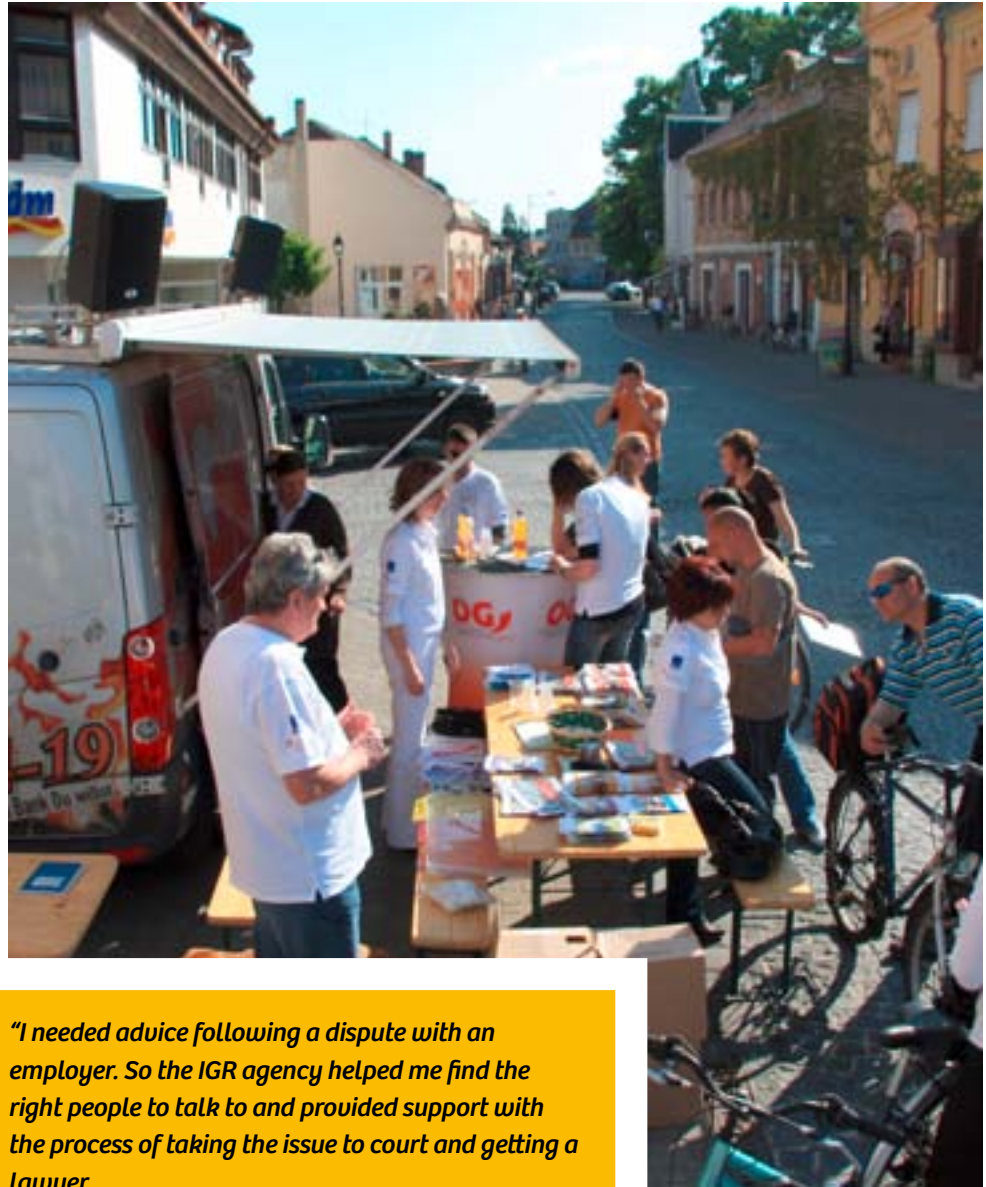
For example, people in the border region still face differences, particularly in the infrastructure they use. Greater accessibility would contribute to the development of relations between the countries. It is also important to find a balance on financial possibilities for the

implementation of cross-border cooperation projects, in order to reduce regional disparities more effectively."

Ferenc Ivanics
Member of the Parliament
Committee on European
Affairs, Hungary



Many Hungarians and Austrians seeking employment, find the legal system very complicated. Because of cross-border employment, there are many questions that employees need to ask such as: if you are Austrian but work in Hungary, where do you pay your tax? This lack of awareness on tax issues and understanding of the labour laws and social legislation, can lead to some employers taking advantage. This was the case for one Hungarian employee who approached IGR to find out about her legal rights



"I needed advice following a dispute with an employer. So the IGR agency helped me find the right people to talk to and provided support with the process of taking the issue to court and getting a lawyer.

Now I am aware of the system and how it works, and what I am entitled to. With the opening of the labour market, I am certain there will be a greater need than before for the services provided by IGR. Many people looking for work do not get what they are entitled to, but understanding employment law and tax issues will help that."

Léhi Katalin
Hungarian employee, Hungary



THE SILESIAN EUROREGION TWO TOWNS BEYOND BORDERS

THE CZECH REPUBLIC, POLAND



The Silesian Euroregion has united inhabitants living near the border of Poland and the Czech Republic through cross-border cooperation since 1998. European integration takes on its full meaning in this region, as the Tesin area was long disputed between both countries. The heart of the region, the historic town of Tesin, was divided in two: Český Těšín and Cieszyn, with the Olza River as a national border. Until 1989, the inhabitants of both regions lived in complete isolation.



Cieszyn, Poland



"When World War I broke up the Austro-Hungarian Empire and Czechoslovakia and Poland emerged, both countries wanted the area of

Tesin. The dispute reached a dramatic climax: an international commission and military units were sent to the region. In the end, the Tesin region was split between the two countries. The historical town of Tesin became a 'two-city' town consisting of Český Těšín and Cieszyn. The Olza River was identified as a national border.

Cooperation between the inhabitants of both countries started after 1989 following the advent of democracy in post-communist countries. People from both sides started to make use of easier border processes, especially when it came to sorting out private matters.

Local authority representatives started establishing cross-border contacts which have

subsequently grown into friendly relations. For example, mayors from both sides of the Těšínské Slezsko–Śląsk Cieszyński Euroregion have been meeting each other in the town of Kyjov in southern Moravia, 200 km from Tesin, every January for 19 years. Their discussions cover cooperation and what steps to take in the future. The main benefit of these contacts can be seen in their permanency, which is independent of any financial grants.

Since 1989, Czech-Polish cooperation has been increasing markedly. The cooperation results are clear and concrete. Naturally, we also make mistakes. The significant EU support received for financing common activities is a very big help. Entering the Schengen area, which means that residents live in one Těšínské Slezsko region once more, has been a major milestone. It is vital to use the EU support in a meaningful way, at the same time ensuring it is used as intended."

Václav Laštůvka
in charge of the Cieszyn Silesian Euroregion

Though the Silesian Euroregion was created through an agreement in 1998, actual cooperation between the inhabitants started back in 1989. Located on the border of the Czech Republic and Poland, the region saw cross-border contacts soon grow into friendly cooperation.

Today, many successful projects are contributing to mutual understanding and knowledge. The Euroregion supports cross-border development in a variety of domains, including culture, education, sport, tourism and the economy. Today, through a project named "Enjoy the enjoyable town—a garden with two shores", over 43 projects are successfully helping revitalise the shores of the Olza River.

The Euroregion is a place where real initiatives can be launched. Many micro projects, which can receive funding for up to 85% of a project's eligible costs, lead to soft projects in various areas of cross-border cooperation. They can then evolve into bigger projects, such as the 'Cinema on the Border' festival or the 'Theatre on the Border' festival. The many quality projects unite citizens through involvement, re-establishing historical links lost for so many years.

SUPPORT FOR THE CZECH REPUBLIC-
POLAND BORDER AREA IS PROVIDED BY:

Czech Republic-Poland cross-border cooperation programme 2007-13.

BUDGET:

€258 187 000

EU CONTRIBUTION:

€219 459 000

EU CO-FUNDED PROJECTS
MENTIONED IN THIS ARTICLE:

Cinema on the border, Garden of two shores, Český
Těšín-Cieszyn Small Projects Fund.

More information:

www.cz-pl.eu

www.euroregion-silesia.eu

www.euroregion.olza.pl/index2/index_a.php



"The Cinema on the Border Film Festival is an annual international event whose aim is to show locals the culture of our neighbouring countries by screening Polish, Czech and Slovakian films. Apart from the films, there are also concerts, exhibitions, panel discussions and workshops. The idea came from members of Solidarność Polsko-Czesko-Słowacka (a Polish-Czech-Slovak Solidarity group which has done a great deal for cross-border cooperation). The organisation has fascinating roots going back to the secret meetings held by activists from the Polish and Czechoslovakian anti-communist opposition groups. The first Cinema on the Border event took place in 1999. We wanted Poles and Czechs to meet not only at border markets, but also at the cinema and concerts. Slovaks soon joined us, as did Hungarians but to a lesser extent.

I was born in Cieszyn and have lived almost all my life here. I've got close family on both sides of the Olza River. I've always felt the trauma of the border very acutely. During Martial Law at the beginning of the 1980s, members of my family were cut off from each other when they closed the border. My mum and her sister used to meet by the Olza every Tuesday at noon sharp, standing on either bank of the river and shouting across to each other. That was the only way they had of catching up with each other, seeing if everything was OK, if everyone was healthy, and finding out how the rest of the family was. For several years now, we've been organising cross-border screenings in exactly the same place. The projector and audience are on the Czech bank and the big screen on the Polish side. Now, when that special luminous bridge—the film—connects the two riverbanks and crosses the border with no problems, I feel we've finally brought the barriers down. This place, which used to be painful and sad for me, now has totally different associations: it unites people and cultures and gives pleasure."

Jolanta Dygoś

Director of the Cinema on the Border festival and project



Revital park - part of the 'Garden of two shores' project, Český Těšín



"Czech and Slovak culture turned out to be fascinating! Thanks to this wonderful programme, I've become familiar with Czech and Slovakian cinema, I've

met many amazing people, and I've learned a lot; not least from watching the work of the festival's organisers. I think that based on what I've learned by coming to several Cinema on the Border events, I can consider myself something of an 'ambassador' of Czech and Slovak culture in Poland. Those couple of days I spend every year at Cinema on the Border are definitely a brilliant way of using my time."

Joanna Jakubik
Student





"Entry to the Schengen area was an important moment, with the opening of border bridges and the removal of passport controls. It hasn't simply made life much easier in Cieszyn and Český Těšín; it has also made organising Cinema on the Border considerably more efficient. It's improved the

atmosphere and made the town more attractive in general. And I'll admit that in the past, we even smuggled artists across the border in a car boot, because they'd forgotten their passports."

Petra Slouáček Rypienová

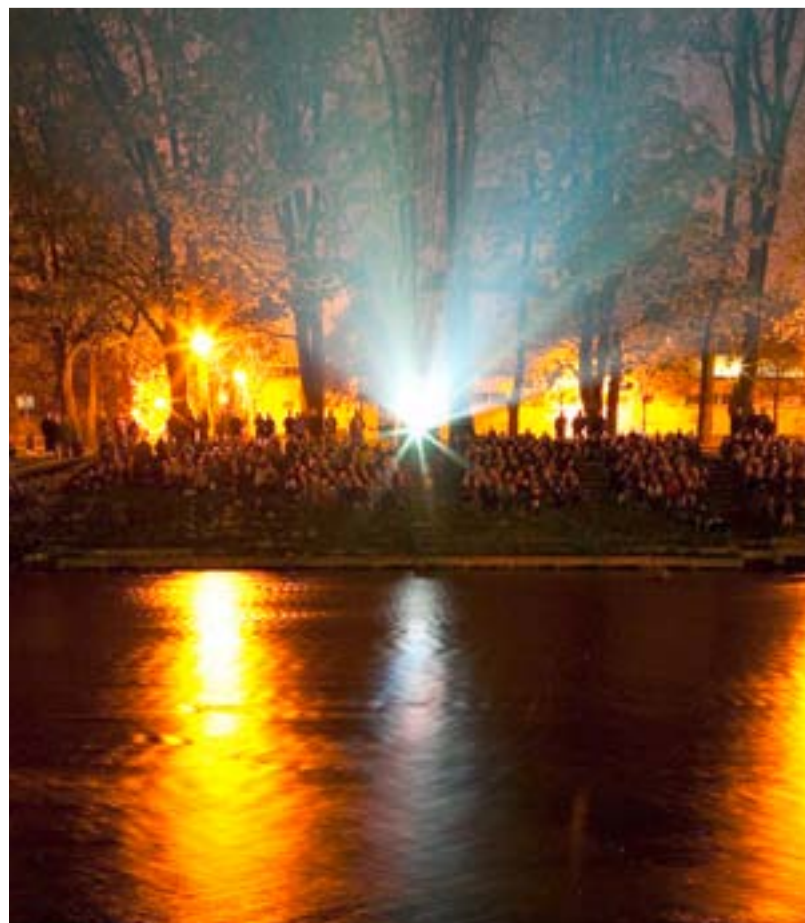
Financial Director of the Cinema on the Border festival



"I'm embarrassed to admit that a few years ago I knew almost nothing about our neighbours. I had no tendency or desire to learn more about them. After the festival, having made new friends and seen movies that showed not only the history of Poland, but

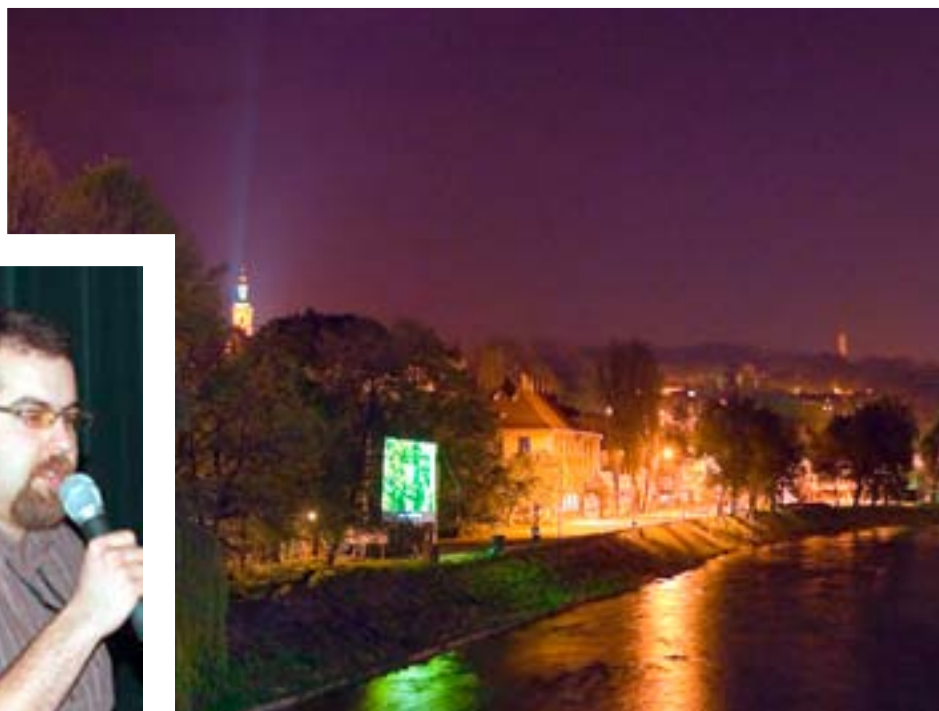
also their sense of humour, I began to observe the life of the Polish. Thanks to Cinema on the Border, I have made many friends across the border and can keep in touch with them."

Lucie Hrušková
Student, Czech Republic



"We ought to remember that the Cinema on the Border event is not limited to our region; it brings people together from across borders. People from all over Poland and from the entire Czech Republic come here. We have participants from Slovakia as well as Germany, France and Great Britain. They get to know each other, talk and party together. We try to infect all of them with our passion: love for neighbouring cultures and especially for cinema."

Maciej Gil
Artistic Director of the Cinema
on the Border festival



ALPINE SPACE

A BETTER PLACE TO LIVE AND WORK

AUSTRIA, FRANCE, GERMANY, ITALY, LIECHTENSTEIN, SLOVENIA, SWITZERLAND



The aim of the Alpine Space Programme is to make this unique area an attractive place for its 70 million inhabitants to live and work in, through the promotion of sustainable regional development. The Alpine Space covers seven countries, and its 450 000 km² include some of the most spectacular natural scenery in Europe as well as some important metropolitan areas.

The Alpine Space Programme is an EU transnational cooperation programme focused



on competitiveness and attractiveness, accessibility and connectivity, environment and risk prevention. €130 million is being invested in impact-oriented projects in which key actors develop shared solutions for specific alpine issues. A board examines all candidate projects and verifies their eligibility. In order to qualify, a transnational project partnership must include cooperation between partners from at least three countries, two of which must be Member States.

During the Middle Ages, the region cooperated using natural pasture, with communities allowing farmers to send their cattle across the village land and commons. This social organisation helped develop the alpine identity. Over the years, particularly after World War I and II, this identity gradually became fragmented.

The Alpine Space Programme was therefore introduced to re-establish the alpine identity through concrete projects enhancing both the quality of life and the strengths in the region. Projects such as ACCESS, which are co-funded by the European Regional Development Fund up



"The aim of the programme is to support cooperation in three priority areas: the environment and risk prevention, accessibility, and competitiveness, including spatial development. Cooperation is necessary in an area as large as the Alpine Space, as the problems to be tackled are not just local or regional, but rather cross-border. A good example is climate change, which is a focus of our current efforts to encourage projects. We cannot manage climate change in each region individually; instead it should be managed in several regions across national borders. This is what

our cooperation programmes are designed for; to encourage and find common solutions to problems.

We currently have 35 projects bringing together various actors, including institutions, private and public organisations, chambers of commerce, NGOs, universities and development agencies. I think for them it's very important to keep going. We're currently having discussions about a macro-regional strategy for the Alpine Space. The strategic alignment of a future programme with the Europe 2020 strategy is important; we must be very clear on what results and impacts we expect from projects. Our objective is for projects in our programme to develop common policies. The need to cooperate comes from increasingly complex problems and challenges worldwide that need answers beyond local, regional and national levels."

Dr Christian Salletmeier
General Programme Manager of the Alpine Space Programme

to 76%, are helping improve the quality of life for locals on a daily basis.

Among the many projects undertaken, three projects stand out: the ACCESS project aims at making general services more accessible in sparsely populated mountain areas; the PermaNET project looks to make an important contribution to mitigating natural hazards resulting from climate change impacts on alpine

permafrost; and the AlpHouse project has set out to preserve and develop the cultural heritage of the Alpine Space, focusing on its building architecture. It also aims to optimise the energy efficiency of these buildings.

SUPPORT FOR THE ALPINE SPACE IS PROVIDED BY:

Alpine Space transnational cooperation programme 2007–13

BUDGET:

€129 981 000

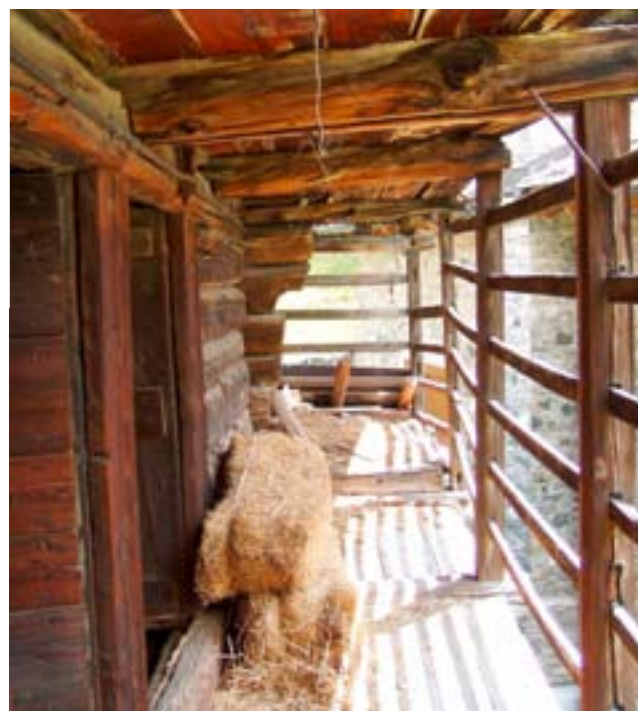
EU CONTRIBUTION:

€97 792 000

EU CO-FUNDED PROJECTS
MENTIONED IN THIS ARTICLE:
[AlpHouse](#), [ACCESS](#), [PermaNET](#)

More information:

www.alpine-space.eu
www.alphouse.de
www.access-alpinespace.eu
www.permanet-alpinespace.eu



"Many traditional buildings can be found throughout the Alpine Space. It is our duty to protect our cultural heritage if we want to avoid losing it forever. Our task is huge, but it's the right time to work on preserving our alpine building heritage and ensuring energy efficiency. There are many incentives and funding options available, given the current focus on climate change worldwide. We aim to make our target group, namely the general public, architects, craftsmen and decision-makers, more aware of the solutions available for protecting the building architecture, which is a feature of the Alpine Space's cultural heritage. The issues go beyond material value; each building is unique to its region and holds cultural value. Some regions and countries might try running such projects using their own means, however by undertaking a transnational project, there is a sense of being in it together, as well as knowledge that their results can also be used by others."



Karhleing Valtl
Director of AlpHouse





"The ACCESS project has 25 pilot activities based on accessibility in the Alps. We currently have a cross-border mobility programme running between Switzerland and Italy, in the region of Lombardi. Today, cross-border mobility is ruled by cars, each individual driving his/her own car, in turn leading to road congestion and environment issues. We conducted a public survey to analyse the willingness of people to change habits and move from cars to public transport. We created a mobility management centre which informs people on where and how they can use public transport. We now have a dialogue platform up and running, offering citizens useful information and practical solutions for mobility. This is both reducing congestion and helping the environment.

Another great initiative we have is in Liguria, where the local Genovese action group wanted to tackle the problem of accessibility in the hinterland. People are leaving the region because it lacks leisure activities. Both the elderly and youngsters are leaving because there aren't enough shops and entertainment. We have developed two approaches focused on these target groups. One is for the younger group where a Disco Bus takes young people to discos. They can go early in the evening and return late. Another bus is organised for the elderly so that they can get around more easily. These two activities are expected to make the hinterland more attractive in the long term."

Thomas Egger
Director ACCESS Project



"For many years I went on holidays to Santa Margherita with my family. I used to meet up with the group of friends I had there. This summer my family wanted to go somewhere else for our holiday, to Sestri Levante. There isn't much variety in terms of leisure activities there. Also, all of my friends are in Santa Margherita, so I really enjoy going to see them and partying with them. With the arrival of the Disco Bus, I now have an opportunity to see them, knowing that I can get home once the party is finished. The ride is easy and I have to say that it's definitely given me a reason to enjoy both a rural environment and the city when I want to."

Alessandra Moigo
Disco Bus user, resident of Milan



"Our aim is to produce an Alpine-wide permafrost monitoring network, including an information system and monitoring sites. We are currently in the process of producing a permafrost map for the entire Alpine region. Our monitoring activities are running very smoothly thanks to a local population that is very conscious of the issues. Well-structured services such as local civil protection and the geology office provide reassurance for the public. We have a very good relationship with the locals who are interested in, aware of and concerned about our work. They help us carry out our observation work by giving us access for drilling. We keep them informed about developments in permafrost and natural hazards through our website and information channels.

Efforts to improve the quality of the environment in the Alps have also had an impact on the economy; we have created work for freelancers whose responsibilities include installing and monitoring the systems. They are specialised in monitoring services, including rock avalanches and the like. We've also seen some successful public-private partnerships. We installed a monitoring service at a glacier ski resort, which was paid for one-third by a private company, one-third by the municipality and one-third by the province. We work very closely with different entities and public organisations."

Volkmar Mair
Director PermaNET project

BALTIC SEA REGION

A NEW ERA IN EUROPEAN COOPERATION

DENMARK, ESTONIA, FINLAND, GERMANY, LATVIA, LITHUANIA, POLAND, SWEDEN, BELARUS, NORWAY, RUSSIA



With a coastline that stretches for 8000 km, the Baltic Sea has always been a shared concern for all northern and north-eastern EU countries. Since 2004's enlargement of the EU to include the Baltic States, the challenges facing the region have continued to grow. Environmental threats, uneven economic development and insufficient transport links can adversely affect the lives of the region's 100 million people.

Confronting these ever-mounting problems called for improved coordination and



joint actions. The solution: a long-term strategy for the whole region covering everything from boosting the economy via SME funding to environmental protection and better infrastructures.

The EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR), launched in October 2009, heralded a new era in European cooperation. For the first time, all the countries in a macro-region began cooperating on a broad range of policy areas, focusing on priorities such as: environmental, and especially maritime, protection; bringing greater economic stability by promoting innovation; enhancing the region's appeal and accessibility by upgrading its transport links; and improving safety and security.

To convert commitments into actions, various EU programmes have been supporting the strategy. Among them, the Baltic Sea Region Programme addresses the EU's objectives of territorial cooperation by fostering collaborations on transnational issues. In doing so, the programme should boost the socio-economic competitiveness of the region and address the Lisbon and Gothenburg strategies. The EUSBSR overall has embraced some



"The Strategy is not just a good idea; it is also perfectly feasible. Being implemented by different EU projects, it forms a very real instrument that complements the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan (i.e. the Helsinki Convention) and the Marine Framework Directive.

This, added to pressure from politicians and from our citizens, who are spending more of their holidays along the Baltic Sea coast, is pushing all the countries to produce concrete results: we are effectively lowering the nitrogen and phosphorus loads in the Baltic Sea, and our beaches are now cleaner.

I think that we can serve as a model for maritime cooperation anywhere in the EU. But we still have a lot to do in order to combat growing maritime pressures: bigger ships, for example, not to mention more frequent ferries."

Andrzej Jagusiewicz

Chief Inspector of Environmental Protection in Poland



90 projects, including the Baltic Deal project, launched to cut pollution from farming. With the support of the Baltic Sea Region Programme, farmers from the entire region are encouraged to improve their know-how by showcasing their own environmental actions or visiting demonstration farms abroad.

A host of experts and citizens are tackling Baltic Sea Region issues day in, day out, with a view to preserving and improving the region's living space.



"The Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region has introduced a modern concept for many areas, known as the integrated approach.

This means that we are using all the policy instruments we see as somehow interlinked. If you want to address environmental concerns, for example, you need to work with all relevant policy areas, such as agriculture, transport or industry. The same goes for economics: if you want to push for economic growth, you need to encompass every conceivable and relevant policy area. Plus, you have to do it in a concerted way across the whole region."

Erik Kiesow
Swedish Prime Minister's Office, Secretariat for European Affairs

"Geographically, Lithuania is in a very favourable location for cargo and passenger transit, since we are part of the IXB East-West transport corridor.

Despite these heavy flows of traffic, we still have poor transport infrastructures, and our potential as a transit country is not being fully exploited. Lithuania on its own cannot catch up with the western EU regions. Consequently, a common strategy and EU support for infrastructure development projects is of special importance. It will help to more rapidly establish a competitive, reliable and environmentally friendly transport system."

Martynas Armonaitis
Economics and Finance
Director—Klaipėda
State Seaport
Authority, Lithuania





"Cooperation between the Baltic Region countries is essential in medicine and biotechnology. We are very close to each other, and it would be a waste of time, money and energy to develop the same technologies in different countries.

This year, we have concluded collaboration agreements with a Swedish incubator thanks to the EUSBSR. Together we hope to develop a new cancer drug.

We have also approached the Turku Positron emission tomography (PET) Centre in Finland, which specialises in research on cardiovascular and neurodegenerative diseases. We are trying to establish a similar centre in Tallinn, but specialising in cancer research.

We decided to focus our efforts on selected cities and jointly apply our skills. This way, we gain much more from the same amount of money."

Riin Ehin
Chairwoman of the Competence Centre
for Cancer Research, Estonia

SUPPORT FOR THE BALTIC SEA
REGION IS PROVIDED BY:

Baltic Sea Region transnational cooperation programme 2007–13

BUDGET:

€293 170 000

EU CONTRIBUTION:

€230 643 000

EU CO-FUNDED PROJECT
MENTIONED IN THIS ARTICLE:
[Baltic Deal](#)

More information:

<http://eu.baltic.net>
www.balticdeal.eu



"Nutrient and phosphorus losses from farming are one of the main sources of pollution in the Baltic Sea. In the light of this, farmers' federations started to think about what farmers could do to help clean up the sea, and they took advantage of the Baltic Sea Strategy to develop a project designed to improve agricultural practices.

Some countries are further ahead in terms of regulation and environmental measures. For example, Sweden is working on a system of phosphorus traps, aimed at containing and recycling phosphorus in the water. We want to promote this kind of simple and cost-effective measure by establishing a network of 100 demonstration farms around the Baltic Sea Region."



Kaspars Zurins
Lead Partner of the Baltic
Deal project, Latvia





"The region's farmers have always had a strong need to cooperate, but haven't done so very much until now—at least not at grassroots level. Right now, all contacts take place via farmers' associations. Instead, information needs to filter down to the farmers and landowners themselves.

I am very upbeat about the Baltic Deal project. As a showcase farmer, I will be sharing my experiences with colleagues in Finland and other countries. For instance, I will be showcasing the wetlands I've built to stop water from getting into the sea, and the green buffer zones developed around farmland to prevent phosphorus from entering the water. I'll also introduce my fellow farmers to organic farming.

I want to show off the benefits of actions like these for Baltic waters, for biodiversity, and demonstrate that organic farming need not cost more than conventional farming."

Fredrik von Limburg Stirum
Finnish farmer



“I feel we’ve finally brought the barriers down. This place, which used to be painful and sad for me, now has totally different associations: it unites people and cultures and gives pleasure.”

Jolanta Dygoś

Director of the Cinema on the Border festival,
Cieszyn (Poland), Český Těšín (The Czech Republic)

CHANGE STARTS WITH PROJECTS ON THE GROUND

Regional policy supports projects running throughout the EU which deal with common challenges facing people, regardless of which region they are from. By helping people to work together across borders to find joint solutions to common challenges and to jointly develop the potentials of their regions, barriers created by borders can be diminished. Learning from each other's experience also makes sure that time and money are used efficiently and that effective solutions are applied. The following pages highlight the action being taken by regions around Europe to improve quality of life for their citizens and for Europeans as a whole.

BIO BASE EUROPE EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR THE BIO ECONOMY

BELGIUM, THE NETHERLANDS



The goal: to bring together industries, scientists and private sector players from the bio economy and make the Ghent-Terneuzen area Europe's bio-economic hub. Dutch-Belgian organisation Bio Base Europe is now working to make this ambitious cross-border project a reality. Equipped with a training and research centre and pilot facilities, the project's approach is original and unique in many ways.





"The Bio Base Europe Pilot Plant is a pilot innovation open to all—from both the private and public sectors. This is a unique concept, since most European pilot installations are still tied to industry.

The basic concept is to enable companies to develop new bioproducts without the need to build dedicated infrastructure which is both costly and inefficient. Constructing pilots is time-consuming (taking two to three years) and can cost up to €10 million. Individual facilities are often built for a single product, which more often than not fails. But even when products are successful, once they are developed, the

pilot installations serve no further purpose, and this is truly a waste. So it makes much more sense for companies to work with other companies that specialise in pilot testing. The idea is to persuade organisations to collaborate on innovative projects rather than trying to go for it alone.

We have been operating since early 2011 and have already completed several projects for industrial clients, including the development of a technology to glycolise various small molecules such as flavours, a process with multiple benefits. In line with our business plan, within five years we expect an annual turnover of €10 million from our research activities."

Wim Soetaert

Director of the Bio Base Europe Pilot Programme, Belgium

Bio Base Europe grew out of the INTERREG programme, which was initiated jointly by Biopark Terneuzen in the Netherlands and Ghent Bio-Energy Valley in Belgium; its formal kick-off was on April 27, 2011. The project comprises two complementary entities: pilot facilities for bio products and bio processing, and a training centre.

Since January 2011, the Bio Base Europe Pilot Plant (pilot installation) has hosted a range of companies seeking to create new products and/or processes able to transform agricultural products into sustainable bio energies. As the only plant of its kind in Europe, it provides businesses the opportunity to develop and launch market-ready products.

The Bio Base Training Centre is a fully-fledged learning and information centre. Open to both European companies and the public, its mission is to prepare qualified workers and provide information to the general public and schools.



NAME OF THE PROJECT:

Bio Base Europe

BUDGET:

€21 835 000

EU CONTRIBUTION:

€6 000 000

PROJECT DURATION:

**January 2009–
December 2011**

Support provided through the Belgium–Netherlands cross-border cooperation programme 2007–13

More information:

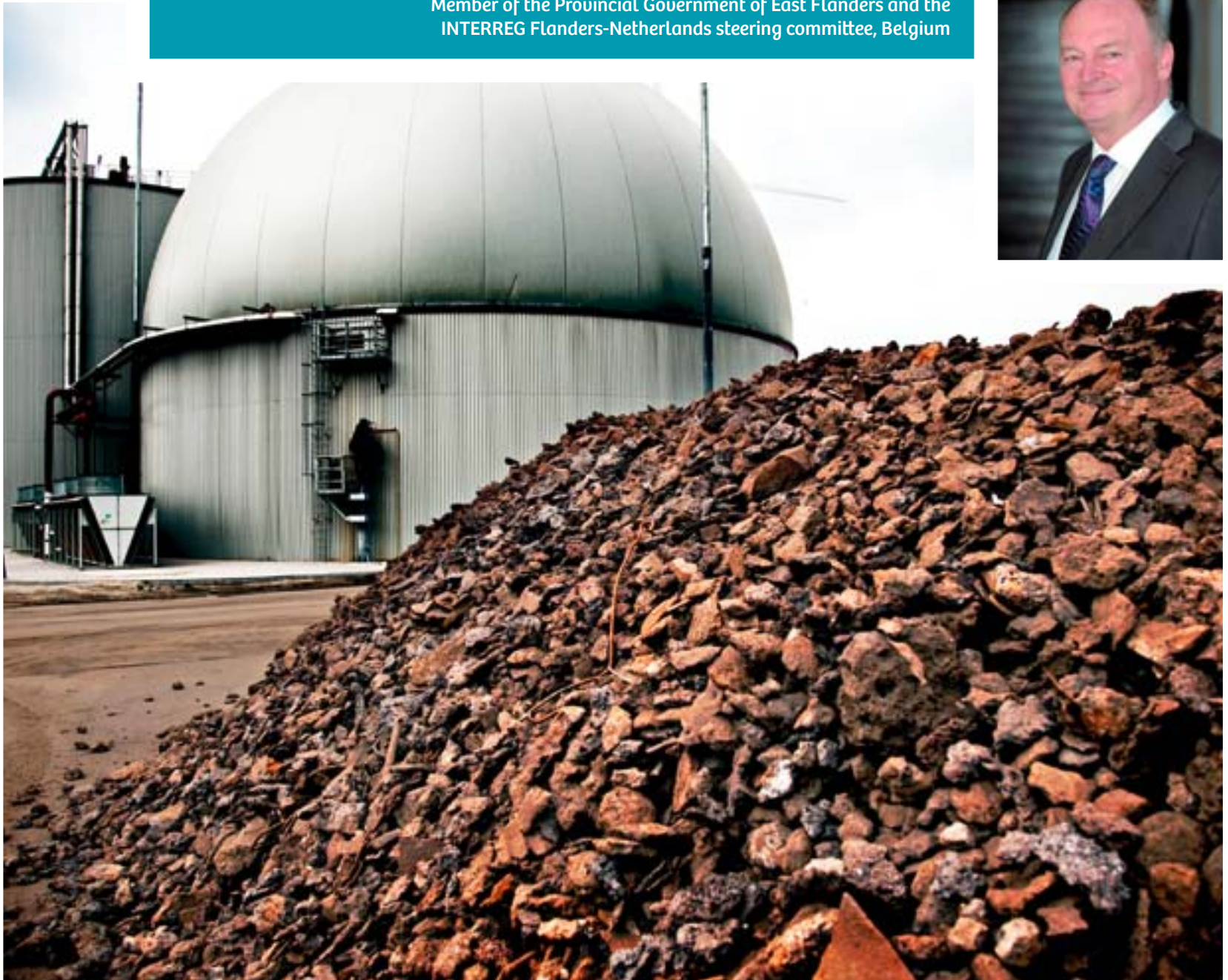
www.bbeu.org

www.grensregio.eu

"The Ghent-Terneuzen area and our two ports have everything to gain by collaborating. This collaboration is of major significance to our region's prosperity. Presenting our respective projects, exchanging knowledge and promoting our image as an incubator for the bio-economy are all crucial steps in encouraging businesses and investors to come to the border region. Only in this way can our region hope to be recognised as a centre, both within Europe and at the global level. Over the past five years in the port of Ghent alone, we have succeeded in attracting over €600 million in investment in the biofuels cluster."

Marc De Buck

Member of the Provincial Government of East Flanders and the
INTERREG Flanders-Netherlands steering committee, Belgium





"Bio Base Europe has allowed us to expand and deepen our various activities, but also to expand our networks using 'smart links'. The Biopark Terneuzen concept was introduced five years ago. Since then, Bio Base Europe has worked continuously to build bridges between companies, both new and established. As an example: it occurred to us, why not put one company's waste to use as a raw material for another company? This idea is coming to fruition. Furthermore, thanks to the Bio Base Europe Training Centre,

our sales staff and operators are becoming better prepared in the area of sustainable development. Finally, I also hope to learn more about CO₂ so that we can better target our activities and sharpen our knowledge in this area."

Arie de Bode

Director of HEROS recycling company, a regular client of the Bio Base Europe Training Centre, The Netherlands



"With regard to training and seminars, we are in contact with all the major manufacturers of biofuels, bioplastics, biomaterials, biodetergents and other biochemicals in the Ghent-Terneuzen area. We plan to offer these companies an impressive array of training opportunities and courses. What is unique about our programme is that we work with simulators similar to those used in aeronautics. These simulators allow each participant to assimilate processes in their own way. In the process industry, facilities are more and more secure and operations are never interrupted, which means that operators have less experience in stopping and restarting their systems. Using a simulator, instructors are able to reproduce full-scale emergencies and shut-down processes. This method is the only one of its kind in Europe, and it meets the needs of a range of companies. Operators come in to the centre, and the simulator is customised for each set of needs. The simulation programme can be viewed on the Web."

Mark Van Waes

Bio Base Europe Training Centre, The Netherlands



INTEGRATION OF ROMA IN THE LABOUR MARKET

HUNGARY, ROMANIA



A large part of the population in the counties of the Bihor-Hajdu-Bihar Euroregion, bordering eastern Hungary and western Romania, is Roma (non-official sources estimate 30%).

Most of them are jobless adults who are willing to work, but face severe difficulties finding jobs.



NAME OF THE PROJECT:

Integration of the Roma population in the labour market of the Bihor-Hajdú-Bihar Euroregion

BUDGET:

€106 000

EU CONTRIBUTION:

€82 000

PROJECT DURATION:

**December 2009–
November 2010**

Support provided through the Hungary–Romania cross-border cooperation programme 2007–13

More information:

www.roma-employment.eu

www.huro-cbc.eu/en/

"The conclusion of the survey, which was designed to get an idea of the profiles of Roma, was that unemployed Roma have the skills to do more complex jobs than we previously thought. People soon discovered their own skills through the survey, while those around them also saw what the people were capable of doing.

The results in Hungary showed that Hungarian Roma are more integrated than Romanian Roma.

This integration helps them when it comes to having their own businesses; employers use the shortlist from the survey results to choose who they want to work with.

The results achieved, thanks to the help of the EU in initiating the project, will hopefully be just the beginning of a real integration process."



Dio Zoltan

Project Manager 'Roma integration' in Debrecen, Hungary



The purpose of the cross-border European Territorial Cooperation project is to promote labour market integration of the Roma people. The key objectives are to identify the main factors influencing employment opportunities for Roma and to set up an institutional framework—counselling centres, job fairs, etc.—aimed at improving professional prospects for Roma in the regions.

300 Hungarian and Romanian Roma have been assessed in order to determine their working abilities. The project involves analysing their profiles which can later be used in the job market and sent to local employers. This project represents a first for the Roma: the fact that their profiles were registered can be seen as the equivalent of having a CV, an identity card and a business card—thus opening up new possibilities.

"I got involved in this project as an organiser of the job fairs. I'm the leader of the Roma Association, a position that allows me to be in close contact with the Roma people. I was able to convince them to take part in the survey of profiles. The target was 200 Roma from three different cities in the Bihor region.

We noticed that the Roma with very basic education did have skills and were willing to integrate professionally.

They proved that they had potential and will, and were eager to continue the struggle and do something constructive with their lives.

The reason I volunteered for this project is due to the fact that I am Roma myself. I have an education, had the chance to succeed in life and would like the children in this community to be able to study as well.

The discrimination and exclusion stems from a lack of education.

If the leaders who have the power to change something do not take care of these Roma, their integration will be no easier in the future. This is what is happening in Romania.

This is why we are happy that initiatives such as this are undertaken for us, as our situation is somewhat unfortunate."

Ioan Lakatos
Leader of the
Association 'Ciore-
Roma' in Oradea,
Romania



"The reasons Roma people encounter difficulties being hired are no surprise: most Roma have no education or work experience—two prerequisites any employer would ask for. We try to take a different approach and provide opportunities where possible. Our activities include sanitation, maintenance of green spaces and household waste collection, fields where high qualifications aren't necessary.

As an employer, RER is a beneficiary of the 'Roma employment' project: we took part in the job fair and have benefited from the pre-selection that project managers made. It was important for us that someone other than us had preselected and evaluated them beforehand. It meant we could pick the best from among them.

Discrimination does not exist in the values of our company. Educated or not, if they are willing to work, we give them an opportunity."

Ionel Ban
Employer—Product Manager at RER, Ecological Service Oradea, Romania



"Our development programme involves using the results of the study of psychological profiles in order to find families able to set up a small business in their village. My responsibility is to select them according to their abilities. Once the budget is clearly established, we try to find a business that can work in the real market. The main activities are in the field of agriculture, fruit and vegetables, and farming."

"Helping these Roma families is not just a job for me, it's a personal investment in the social field. I'm happy when I see hope on their faces and tears of joy in their eyes while saying: It's such a great opportunity for me to finally be able to do business, live on my own and be financially independent. My main motivation is to help them by giving them self-confidence so they can do something with their lives, and to get rid of or at least minimise their strong feeling of being marginalised."

Benedek Zsolt

Development Manager, Biharkeresztes, Hungary



TOWARDS A CROSS-BORDER AREA OF HIGHER EDUCATION

BELGIUM, FRANCE, GERMANY, LUXEMBOURG



Bringing together seven different universities from the Greater Region has created a multicultural higher education and research space known as the 'University of the Greater Region' or 'UGR'.

The UGR facilitates student mobility among its partner universities, simplifies administrative procedures, provides access to its different laboratories, libraries, university canteens and conferences and harmonises double or triple degrees within the context of cross-border courses.



It also provides new networks in the fields of research, which specifically encourages cross-border doctoral training.

From a general point of view, European cross-border cooperation was born out of a desire to move towards a 'Europe without borders' without compromising the different cultures, which Europeans hold so dear. It was under this tutelage that the UGR project was developed, and

in order to make this sort of cooperation between several countries possible, the political will and cooperation of those involved were essential.

The UGR is a success story and a laboratory for Europe, in which the lessons necessary for ensuring integration will be applied.



"Without political support and initiative, I doubt that the University of the Greater Region would exist today. In particular, this included support in preparing for the cooperation, a clear commitment and the financial resources to get this project up and running."

Dr Christoph Hartmann
Minister of Economy and Science
of Saarland, Germany

"When developing trade and strengthening partnerships, we encounter a number of legal, financial and administrative issues. I believe that we can find solutions that can be applied in many other similar situations on a European level. We experience Europe on an everyday basis."

Jean-Pierre Finance
President of the Henri Poincaré
University, Nancy, France



NAME OF THE PROJECT:

**Université de la
Grande Région (UGR)**

BUDGET:

€6 534 000

EU CONTRIBUTION:

€3 267 000

PROJECT DURATION:

**October 2008–
April 2012**

Support provided through the
INTERREG IVA Grande Région cross-
border cooperation programme

More information:

www.uni-gr.eu
www.interreg-4agr.eu

Metz, France

"For me, Saarbrücken was just a city for going shopping in, but when I heard about the University of the Greater Region project and the opportunities that this project could provide me with, such as access to other universities, to their libraries and to all sorts of conferences, I realised that these opportunities were not limited to within the borders of Luxembourg.

I have since been working on improving my language skills on an ongoing basis. I speak French, German and Luxembourgish on a daily basis in my university course and in my interactions with other students.

The multicultural aspect of the Greater Region is now accessible to me. I can work with anyone, whether from Belgium, Luxembourg, France or Germany, because I am able to understand how they function and think and what they say."

Suen Clément
University Student
from Luxembourg



"I am a specialist in modern and contemporary poetry. My work sometimes involves complex interactions with other universities and other students.

The UGR facilitates exchanges and creates established platforms, allowing us to access a much larger audience. If the project did not exist, it might be necessary to seek more distant partners in the research field, in spite of the fact that partners of international standing are located nearby."

Françoise Lartillot
Researcher in Germanic Studies at the
Paul-Verlaine University, Metz, France





Liege, Belgium



"I studied linguistics at the University of Liege. I then undertook a PhD which was proposed by the University of Nancy. Before the creation of the UGR, the registration procedures were complicated. I had to seek funding myself. My travel between Liege and Nancy and the onsite

accommodation were not taken into account.

If I had been able to benefit from the UGR project from the start, I could have enjoyed a clear institutional and structural framework. The UGR would have resolved all the constraints I had to face.

I had to demonstrate great determination. I was made to understand that if I wanted to leave the PhD programme, my reasons would be understood. But I was committed

to doing it and so paid for it from my own pocket. It was a difficult time.

I will continue my research with the University of Trier, and hope to receive the necessary support from the University of the Greater Region project in terms of administrative procedures and research funding."

Pascale Renders
PhD student at the University of Liege in cooperation with Nancy

EDTWIN, CREATING A COMMON EDUCATIONAL FRAMEWORK

AUSTRIA, THE CZECH REPUBLIC, SLOVAKIA, HUNGARY



Reducing prejudices amongst youngsters and fostering skills and competences needed for the Central European labour market—that is the aim of EdTWIN, a unique educational twinning programme in Austria, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary.

Children of all ages get to know their neighbours in an informative and original way through seminars, language courses and twinning days. The cooperation programme also makes way for educators and teachers to learn new language techniques whilst meeting their foreign colleagues.





"I got an email in September from EdTWIN, presenting the various language workshops and also school partnerships, and went to a partnership day in Bratislava where I met other teachers.

At the partnership day, I learned so much and met so many people that it was amazing. I decided for our school that we would cooperate with a Slovakian school in Malacky and do a language course.

We participated in a Slovak language course; it was great fun and the teacher was very good.

We learned lots of things; we talked about our family, played games and did interactive exercises. We are very similar to Slovaks due to our culture, so I think it's very important to create awareness and create an interest amongst our youngsters. Kids acquire awareness that we have neighbours, and get to know their daily life and our differences."

Michaela Stary
Viennese Teacher, Austria

"The project lasted about four days; on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday we had lessons, and on Friday we went to Bratislava. It was quite interesting because we learned things we don't usually learn in class. We watched films and listened to songs in Slovak. Before we had this project, I didn't think the other neighbouring countries would be as advanced as Austria is, but I've seen that they are as modern as we are. If I couldn't find work here, I would go there. I think my friends would also like it, so I would definitely recommend it to them."

Sinem Cakmak
15, Viennese
Student, Austria



Started as a small initiative of a Viennese School Institute in 1995, the project has evolved into major framework cooperation between students, teachers and inspectors of four countries.

Although Hungary, the Czech Republic, Austria and Slovakia have an important common history, few citizens have a thorough understanding of their neighbours, and the differences between education standards are apparent. Until 1918, these four countries had no barriers, making way for a common labour market in the region. With the age of communism, Hungary and former Czechoslovakia lived in complete isolation for two generations. Today, the standard of living is still higher in Austria than in these three surrounding countries. However, through the cooperation supported, among others, by the EU funding for territorial cooperation programmes,

the CENTROPE region is emerging as an ever-evolving central European region.

By creating opportunities for children to meet, fostering skills to regain a dynamic regional market, EdTWIN is set to change the situation. Based on five key competences identified through a study, the programme fosters skills in the domains of communication, intercultural, strategic, knowledge and social competences.

Results speak for themselves; the teachers are enthusiastic and the pupils happy to get to know more about their neighbour and foster their new skills. Teachers, academics and pupils can only hope for one thing: to keep the adventure going.



"Everything started immediately after the fall of the Iron Curtain, when we had a seminar on English language teaching for teachers from Czechoslovakia. This was the beginning of many projects, courses and seminars based on English language teaching.

In 1995, we were invited to get to know the INTERREG programme. Representatives from the City of Vienna suggested that we should set up a project. The first one was CERNET (Central European Regional Network for Education Transfer) which started in 1996.

From then onwards, various cross-border projects were initiated, together with our neighbouring regions in Slovakia, Hungary and the Czech Republic. The first attempt was simply to establish contacts. One of the initiatives was to find a name for the region. The name CENTROPE was invented by pupils. There was a contest in which more than a hundred schools participated. Ten names were selected by an international jury and finally the name CENTROPE won in an Internet voting contest. In 2004, we launched a new project focusing on quality in education, aimed at joint measures to raise quality standards in the region based on a study 'Living and Working in the CENTROPE Region'. We interviewed more than 200 people in the region, coming from different backgrounds: students, pupils, educators, people industries, people who worked in economics, administrators—very different backgrounds. We asked a simple question: What are the competences you would need for cooperation? It was communicative, social, cultural, strategic and knowledge. In 2007 we decided to set up a platform for establishing permanent partnerships in the regions. Schooling, Vocation and Language are the main areas of concern in the EdTWIN project activities.

Summing up, EdTWIN's aims are to raise awareness about the cultures and languages of neighbours and to develop positive attitudes. This will improve the skills and competences needed to make way for a region of excellence in Central Europe, CENTROPE. Looking back at more than 15 years of EU projects, the main focus has been to give people a chance to meet and to cooperate."



Dr Franz Schimek
Project Manager, EdTWIN, Austria



NAME OF THE PROJECT:

**EdTWIN—Education Twinning
for European Citizenship**

BUDGET:

€2 200 000

EU CONTRIBUTION:

€1 870 000

PROJECT DURATION:

January 2008–December 2011

Support provided through the Austria–Hungary,
Austria–Czech Republic and Austria–Slovakia
territorial cooperation programmes 2007–13

More information and complete list of partners

www.edtwin.eu

"On the Slovak side over the school years 2009–10 and 2010–11, 13 schools were involved in 15 projects within the EdTWIN programme. The schools agreed on an exchange partnership where students and teachers would travel to their neighbouring country to discover their school system and mentality. Our teachers really had issues to discuss with their Austrian colleagues. From my point of view, the Austrian teachers are very innovative, they have other teaching methods and it was very interesting to get to know how their system works. Teachers and students now have various contacts which they can build on.

Three schools teach auto-mechanics in Slovakia. Under the EdTWIN project, a workbook was created that translates technical terms in three languages: Slovak, English and German. This is very useful for our students because when they finish their studies they can now go to work in Germany, Austria or Slovakia and still know their way around mechanics. It broadens their opportunities. This book will also be available for free on the Internet so every Austrian or English speaking mechanic can also download it.

We really hope that the schools will keep in touch and will continue exchanging experiences amongst teachers and students. From our point of view here in the Office of the Bratislava self-governing region and also the department of schools, we will do anything we can to support the cooperation."



Ivan Magát
Department of Strategy and
Project Management, Bratislava
self-governing region, Slovakia

"Last year, when I was in lower primary, I went to Vienna twice with my class. The reward for good performance in the EdTWIN project in the first year was that on 24 November 2010 almost 50 pupils from grade 5 could go to Vienna for the 'Diversity Day'. We performed Hungarian folk dances and folk songs. At 'Diversity Day' we had a go at using a wheelchair. It was both exciting and shocking to experience how difficult the life of physically disadvantaged people is. It was also interesting when—with the help of costumes—we pretended to be a different person, and our photos were taken. We made lots of friends in the 'Kulturfrühling' programme where we acted as 17 German celebrities from all walks of life. I learnt why it is very important to accept all people, regardless of their age, nationality, religion, state of health or financial situation."



Anna Kristofoletti
Student, Hungary



A WORLD CLASS CENTRE FOR INNOVATION

SWEDEN, DENMARK



The Øresund Science Region (ØSR), a Swedish-Danish cross-border initiative bringing together universities, businesses and the regional authorities based around Copenhagen and Malmö, has been recognised as one of Europe's most successful business networks. Launched in 2001, it has been managed by a secretariat which is financially part of Øresund University (bringing together 12 regional universities), which is also an umbrella organisation for different thematic platforms or clusters (IT



Copenhagen Business School, Frederiksberg, Denmark

Øresund, Medical Valley Academy, Øresund Environment and Øresund Food Network).

Its objective has been to design and develop tools to strengthen the most important assets of the region, namely its highly educated population, the region's 12 000 researchers and 2 000 high-technology companies, and Øresund University. Primarily an incubator for regional cluster-facilitating organisations and innovation projects, it is a highly successful example of the cross-border 'triple-helix' model, a tool that brings together academia, business and regional governing institutions.

Today, the ØSR's cluster organisations have evolved and have separated from Øresund University. In this new and evolving model, Øresund Environment,

Øresund Food, Øresund IT and Øresund Logistics operate as independent units administered by Lund University and Roskilde University, giving rise to new financing opportunities. However, the ØSR has created a strong foundation for new thinking and innovation, setting new standards for collaboration and regional development in the EU, with the OECD describing it as a "flagship... a world-class centre... and model for Europe's regions".

In fact, over the next decade, we may well see that the build-up, transfer and commercialisation of knowledge will become one of the most important economic growth factors across the globe.

"The origins of the ØSR were built on cooperation between big pharmaceuticals and universities, which have always worked hand-in-hand. As far as a winning formula goes, I would say the Øresund Bridge created the pioneering spirit; it was the catalyst that created a mind-set for cross-border cooperation."

Timing was also important; industry and business were expanding into bio-tech and IT, and required more and more cooperation with universities. One of the main factors of success however, has been the INTERREG money. It was a real seed for development, but continued access to financing through further investment is vital."

Bengt Streijfert
CEO of Øresund
University



NAME OF THE PROJECT:

Øresund Science Region (ØSR)

BUDGET:

€3862 000

EU CONTRIBUTION:

€1931 000

PROJECT DURATION:

February 2002–May 2005

Support provided through the INTERREG IIIA programme Øresund.

More information:

www.oresund.org/campus



Øresund bridge linking Denmark with Sweden



"The ØSR project is very much a bridge between research and industry, built around fairly large, well educated populations and structures close to its borders. Benefits include the kind of clustering and business-oriented approach we have seen in the

case of, for instance, the IT Academy. It is a fresh approach which I think can be truly 'value adding' for the firms in that specific area or with needs for that particular competence. Perhaps following on from the ØSR model, the region can be a springboard for an extended science belt, between the Øresund Region and Hamburg in Germany. This could even allow a new, greater and more competitive region—the Fehmarnbelt Region—to emerge."

Dr Per Tryding

Vice-President of the Southern Sweden Chamber of Commerce

"The ØSR project has been an excellent example of cross-border cooperation, with regions becoming increasingly important in Europe, and cooperation between countries increasing integration and contributing to greater and more flexible markets for work, education, research and production. It has positively enhanced our cooperation in key cluster areas, and between our universities, businesses and regions.

Although today the ØSR initiative has ceased, having run its natural course, it has been crucial in helping to develop innovative cross-border collaboration. It is important that politicians follow up on this by continuing to be active in creating similar ventures in the future."



Christine Axelsson

Deputy Governor of the Skåne Region





"The ØSR was built around a number of different platforms, including the Øresund Food Network, a knowledge and innovation network within the food value-chain. Being part of the ØSR and Øresund University helped us secure critical INTERREG funding, as well as annual payments from industry. I would say the real benefit of the ØSR was that it helped create informal collaboration across the Øresund Region. I guess another important factor was that the two cross-border communities already had a lot of common ground. After all, we are linguistically linked, so we are accustomed to communicating and therefore we have relatively strong cultural links—communication is important."



Professor Jens Adler-Nissen
DTU and Øresund Food Network



EU BOOST FOR CROSS-BORDER FIRE-FIGHTING

GREECE, CYPRUS



EU regional policy is about closing the wide economic, social and territorial disparities that still exist between some of Europe's regions. The European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) component aims to strengthen cross-border cooperation through joint local and regional initiatives. However, in few ETC projects has this been as abundantly clear as in the case of the supply of fire-fighting vehicles for the fire services of Greece and Cyprus, and the organisation of knowledge exchange events between the two bodies.



NAME OF THE PROJECT:

Cross-border fire-fighting Greece–Cyprus

BUDGET:

€7 400 000

EU CONTRIBUTION:

€5 350 000

PROJECT DURATION:

November 2005–March 2009

Support provided through the INTERREG IIIA
Greece–Cyprus Programme

More information:

www.interreg.gr



“The role of the Cypriot support team was decisive in our fight against the forest fires in 2007, by virtue of their organisation and our previous cooperation at training level. Joint exercises are crucial, because the agencies involved learn from each other, and can coordinate their actions in the case of natural or man-made disasters to maximum effect.

The presence of additional forces from other countries is a psychological boost for those battling fires day and night. Furthermore, it makes a very substantial contribution to extinguishing fires with the least possible material and environmental cost.

Our personnel are aware of the benefits of European funding. However, the citizens probably do not fully grasp their extent. Therefore, we should communicate them to the public in the clearest possible manner.

Other agencies—considering their participation in cross-border initiatives—should thoroughly design all aspects of their project. This would allow them from the very outset to build on their own financial, human and material resources in the most effective way, and to assess and take advantage of the good practices of their project partners. This should encompass both their daily functions and their emergency operations.”

Lieutenant General Stylianos Stefanidis
Chief of the Greek Fire Service

Throughout the summer of 2007, Greece suffered a series of massive and lethal forest fires, and requested help from the EU Member States and other countries. The Cypriot Fire Service was ready and able to respond quickly and effectively, largely on account of their 10 EU co-funded fast-reaction vehicles with airlift capacity which have radically improved their ability to help out following large-scale natural and man-made disasters beyond their borders. At the same time, knowledge-exchange events and past cooperation have ensured that the extinguishing capacities of the two countries can complement and coordinate with each other during a crisis.

"Knowledge exchange between the two countries took place on a smaller scale in the past, including through joint exercises. Our project represents a step in the development of a common approach with regard to improved resource management and joint intervention in cases of large-scale natural and man-made disasters.

We encountered no particular problems or skepticism during the project. Apart from our 'common ground', we were able to explore different operational approaches and discuss the best available solutions.

The participants in the knowledge-exchange events and seminars were aware of the European dimension of the project, thanks to a presentation

of INTERREG by a member of the Thessaloniki-based Greek Managing Authority, which coordinates ETC programmes.

The results of the project should function as a launch pad and encourage further cooperation. Indeed, we have recently signed two more partnership agreements with the Cypriot Fire Service, within the framework of the European Territorial Cooperation programme Greece-Cyprus 2007-13."

Lieutenant Fire Colonel Nikolaos Botsaris
Greek Fire Service, Greece





"In our previous support mission to Greece in 2000, we had only personal equipment and had to borrow additional equipment from the Greek Fire Service. The scope of our assistance was limited due to the lack of resources.

In 2007, our morale was boosted by awareness of our increased operational capabilities. The flexibility and autonomous operation of the new fast-reaction vehicles allowed us to help out swiftly, extinguishing fires shortly after their outbreak and preventing them from reigniting.

The way we were received by both our Greek colleagues and the locals was really moving. There is no doubt that such missions strengthen our bonds and our sense of solidarity. A large percentage of the citizens and the majority of the firemen are aware of European support for the Fire Service. Still, there's always room for improvement in highlighting the work already done, and further supporting cross-border cooperation, expertise exchange and joint exercises."

Sergeant Stylianos Solomou
Cypriot Fire Service, Cyprus



ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE KNOWS NO BOUNDARIES

BELGIUM, FRANCE



Creating a cross-border European health care system spanning the Belgian and French borders was a challenge addressed with support from the INTERREG programme. This cooperation has been ongoing for 20 years. Established in 1992 by an initiative between the hospitals of Tourcoing and Mouscron, cooperation has evolved under INTERREG II, III and IV. Thanks to the work of Belgian and French mutual insurance companies, politicians and stakeholders in the field, a framework agreement on cross-border health cooperation was established on September 30, 2005.



The agreement is unique in that it allows for “organised cross-border health care access areas” to be set up, from the time it comes into effect in 2011. French and Belgian patients can now receive care with the same administrative and financial advantages they enjoy in their home country, across six cross-border areas. Although this sort of cooperation may have already been taking place in an informal way, the legal framework provided by INTERREG is revolutionary in Europe. For example, each year, more than 150 French patients are attended to by Belgian emergency physicians when the French mobile emergency and resuscitation service (SMUR) is overwhelmed.



“The French and Belgian mutual insurance companies that came together in the late 1980s to join forces to develop cross-border cooperation are the source of the Franco-Belgian cross-border health cooperation process. But it is mainly through the projects supported by the Walloon Region under the European INTERREG programmes that it has been possible for such a process to take place.

Health cooperation projects developed under the INTERREG programmes may never have developed to such an extent and seen such progress had these programmes set up by the European Union not existed. As the issue is related to the border, INTERREG was the most suitable instrument for meeting the needs of citizens.”

Rudy Demotte
Minister-President of the Walloon Region



NAME OF THE PROJECT:

COSANTRAN

BUDGET:

€1 130 000

EU CONTRIBUTION:

€570 000

PROJECT DURATION:

**January 2008–
December 2011**

Support provided through the
France–Wallonia–Flanders cross-border
cooperation programme 2007–13.

More information:

[www.interreg-fwvl.eu/admin/upload/page/
file/949.pdf](http://www.interreg-fwvl.eu/admin/upload/page/file/949.pdf)

www.interreg-fwvl.eu

"The attractiveness of a region is linked to its capacity for interregional and international openness. From this point of view, cross-border cooperation led by the Champagne-Ardenne Region along with Wallonia is an additional asset. The financial support given by the EU to jointly developed projects located on both sides of the border is a huge advantage for those living in the area."

Jean-Paul Bachy
President of the Champagne-Ardenne Region



"Because of its location on the border with France and the attractiveness of the coastal region for French tourists, West Flanders receives more frequent requests from French patients than other provinces."

"While health care requirements were at one point temporary, as in the case of medical emergencies, we have found that, due to French immigration and the recognition of Flemish health care, the issue has become structural. In this sense, we have noticed that our region is becoming more attractive to our neighbouring regions. The cross-border challenges which lie ahead are related to providing the highest quality health care possible, making this accessible to citizens in terms of location, and organising health services tailored to the population and its size."

Marleen Titeca-Decraene
MP for the province of West Flanders



"Solidarity in emergency situations has existed for many years. We have been used to cooperating with our Belgian friends for a long time. Before the convention, we were operating in an essentially unlawful legal situation, which could cause problems if there was a dispute with a patient. This legal protection in forensic terms is essential when providing emergency medical care."

In addition, the two financing systems are not the same. In France, when a response team is involved, it operates with a fixed price contract that corresponds to the time spent with the patient, while in Belgium there is a fee per intervention. It was a very difficult situation as nobody was being paid. Nowadays, following the agreement, the funding bodies have agreed to pay the same fee in both situations. This has enabled us to continue to intervene at no cost to the hospital."

Being able to deploy our teams more rapidly thanks to cross-border health cooperation between the French urgent medical aid service and the Belgian emergency services means that we can avoid a number of complications with patients. By avoiding the complications, we can ensure that patients spend less time in hospital after an accident."

Dr Patrick Goldstein

Coordinator of the emergency division—Head of the urgent medical aid service (SAMU), Lille Region, Lille Teaching Hospital



"The Ghislenghien catastrophe in 2004 illustrated the importance of cross-border cooperation. Lille hospital received a formal request for assistance from Belgium. Fifteen teams and four helicopters were dispatched to the location. Many patients had burns, overwhelming our Belgian colleagues. We agreed to bring patients back to the Teaching Hospital in Lille to care for them. This disaster was a tragic event and called for large-scale cooperation. The Minister-President of Wallonia came to personally thank us for our cooperation, further strengthening the ties between the two countries and cross-border health cooperation."

The case of Ghislenghien (in the Region of Tournai, Wallonia), the first example of major cross-border cooperation



"We moved to France, to Givet. We had already known about Dinant hospital for a while. When we arrived here, we asked the social security office which hospitals in the region were covered by the system. The one in Dinant is 20/25 km from Givet while the one in Charleville-Mézière is 50 km away. Obviously, we preferred Dinant hospital as it was closer and had a good reputation. We go there once a month with our child to see the paediatrician. When we arrive, we just show our Vitale card. We receive the invoice with the third-party payment afterwards. We have an excellent paediatrician, it's really great. Everything is going well."

One day, our child had an allergic reaction and we had to go to the A&E. Everything went well, we were only 20 km from the hospital so we got there very quickly. If we had had to go to Charleville-Mézières, it would have been a much longer journey and our child would not have been treated as quickly. For us, being able to go to the hospital in Dinant is really important."

Mother of Mike Cobut

Patient receiving cross-border health care, Givet, France



Ghislenghien, Belgium (2004)

WORKING FOR GREATER JOB OPPORTUNITIES

CROATIA, HUNGARY



The aim of the Mobile Region project is to encourage job seekers in Croatia and Hungary to look for work beyond national borders to improve their chances of employment.

As Croatia prepares for EU accession, the project plays a key role in strengthening socio-economic interaction in the border regions of the two countries by stimulating labour market mobility and raising the low number of cross-border job seekers.

Covering an area of about 7 500 km² and a population of more than 730 000 citizens, the project encompasses the Croatian counties of Medimurje, Varaždin and Koprivnica-Križevci and the Hungarian county of Zala.

For public bodies, institutions and employers, the project improves labour market trend analysis, promotes the exchange of good practice, increases greater understanding of labour market needs and

improves training in human resource planning.

Meanwhile, for job seekers the project provides information about accessing employment opportunities beyond borders and helps them improve their chances of getting work abroad.

Conferences, seminars, workshops, public awareness campaigns, market research, training, job fairs and a web-based labour mobility portal have played roles in the project's success.

The project partners are the Labour Centre of the Government Office for Zala County, Hungary; the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Zala County, Hungary; the Croatian Employment Service, Regional Office Čakovec, Croatia; PORA, Regional Development Agency of Koprivničko-Križevačka County, Croatia; and the Croatian Employment Service, Regional Office Varaždin, Croatia.

"The main beneficiaries of the project are local unemployed people. Through the project we expect their chances of getting work will be improved by overcoming factors that previously limited cross-border mobility.

Cross-border cooperation is important as Croatia prepares for EU accession. Within a year of the project's implementation, we worked on improving collaboration between employment stakeholders, we introduced the unemployed to the job possibilities of cross-border mobility and increased public awareness about the need to create a competitive labour market.

With the development of a joint web portal we want to improve the availability of information about cross-border opportunities for job seekers and employers. We are planning more training for employers as well

as promoting the benefits of mobility to high school students and their parents.

At job fairs in Varaždin and Čakovec visitors were given information about work opportunities and employment rights in border areas. More than 5 000 visitors attended and we expect increased interest in job seekers looking abroad for employment."

Darko Radanovic
Lead Partner of the project,
Međimurje County (Croatia)



NAME OF THE PROJECT:

Mobile Region

BUDGET:

€212 000

EU CONTRIBUTION:

€180 000

PROJECT DURATION:

May 2010–August 2011

Support provided through the
Hungary–Croatia IPA cross-border
cooperation programme 2007–13

More information:

<http://mobileregion.info/>
www.hu-hr-ipa.com



Čakovec, Croatia



"MetalBox Ltd was started in Székesfehérvár, Hungary, and is the market leader in sales of metal furniture. We have offices in Hungary, Slovakia, Romania, Serbia, Poland, Bulgaria, Slovenia and Čakovec, Croatia.

As one of the objectives of the project is to encourage labour mobility across borders, we can say from experience that such a project at a time of expansion greatly facilitates the employment of the necessary work force.

Projects like this raise public awareness of labour mobility, contribute to a better choice of high-quality workers for employers and give greater opportunities to the unemployed."

Dijana Čalopek
Human Resource Manager at MetalBox, Croatia



"The project's main goal is to provide new opportunities for people with a low level of education as well as opportunities and vocational training for job seekers.

Further objectives include the exchange of data between labour market institutions and the adoption of good practice to help job seekers and employers find each other.

It was not always easy to reach a common denominator in both countries, but it was not impossible, and cross-border cooperation is a first step to success. The data collected and the cooperation generated is useful to both sides. Improvements can be made and the needs of employers and employees in both countries can be harmonised."

Tódor Gábor
Transnational Coordinator, Labour
Centre of the Government Office
for Zala County, Hungary



"People on both sides of the border must realise that soon after Croatian accession to the EU, they will live with the right to free movement of employees. Our chamber is a partner that supports businesses and their employees in exploiting the opportunities provided by a cross-border labour market.

The success of the project was achieved by cooperation, partnership, identification of common goals, optimal tasks and regular productive contact. And, as the analysis of the labour market includes recommendations as well as present findings, the data will be extremely useful in the future."

Ferenc Maggag
Chairman of the Chamber of
Commerce and Industry,
Zala County, Hungary



Zalaegerszeg, Hungary

FASTER TRAINS GREATER CAPACITY

THE NETHERLANDS, GERMANY, ITALY, SWITZERLAND



CODE24 is a coordinated support initiative which spans several countries. Its aim is to upgrade and develop trans-European railway axis No 24, which runs between the North Sea port of Rotterdam and the Mediterranean port of Genoa.

The rail route passes through the Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland and Italy, along the central portion of what is known as the 'Blue Banana'. This is a densely-populated corridor that curves its way through Western Europe and occupies a prime economic position, since it is home



to one of the world's highest concentrations of people, innovative industry and transport facilities.

CODE24 has developed planning tools and tailor-made solutions to remove major bottlenecks and encourage the pro-active involvement of regional actors and other interested parties. For projects of this size, the transnational approach has proven essential in focussing on regional aspects and joint development strategies, and strengthening the position of regional actors and stakeholders, in turn strengthening cohesion along the corridor.

Economic development is CODE24's ultimate goal. Removing bottlenecks and increasing overall transport capacity will help to steer the region's economic development along the length of the corridor, in tandem with carefully devised spatial integration and keeping in mind any possible negative environmental impact.



"It's a vast, intricate project: not just a rail infrastructure, but a complex system of environmental, economic, social and transport measures.

Regions and cities, as well as scientific bodies and universities like ETH Zurich, kick-started the project. The Swiss, for instance, have invested heavily in alleviating bottlenecks through massive infrastructure schemes such as the Lötschberg and Gotthard tunnels. Removing these bottlenecks is crucial if we are serious about increasing capacity and reducing train transit times—Rotterdam to Genoa currently takes about 12 hours by train, but the Chinese can cover a similar distance in roughly three hours!

Undoubtedly the real goal is faster trains and higher network capacity, but at the same time we must remember the environmental aspect. Getting more people and freight off the roads and onto trains improves the quality of life for people living in the corridor.

Public involvement and continued support and cooperation on the part of regions and politicians are imperative. Support and cooperation beyond the lifetime of the project must be guaranteed."

Jörg Saalbach

Verband Region Rhein-Neckar—Lead partner



NAME OF THE PROJECT:

CODE24

BUDGET:

€6 697 000

EU CONTRIBUTION:

€3 192 000

PROJECT DURATION:

January 2010–December 2013

Support provided through the INTERREG IV B North West Europe transnational programme 2007–13

More information:

www.code-24.eu

www.nweurope.eu

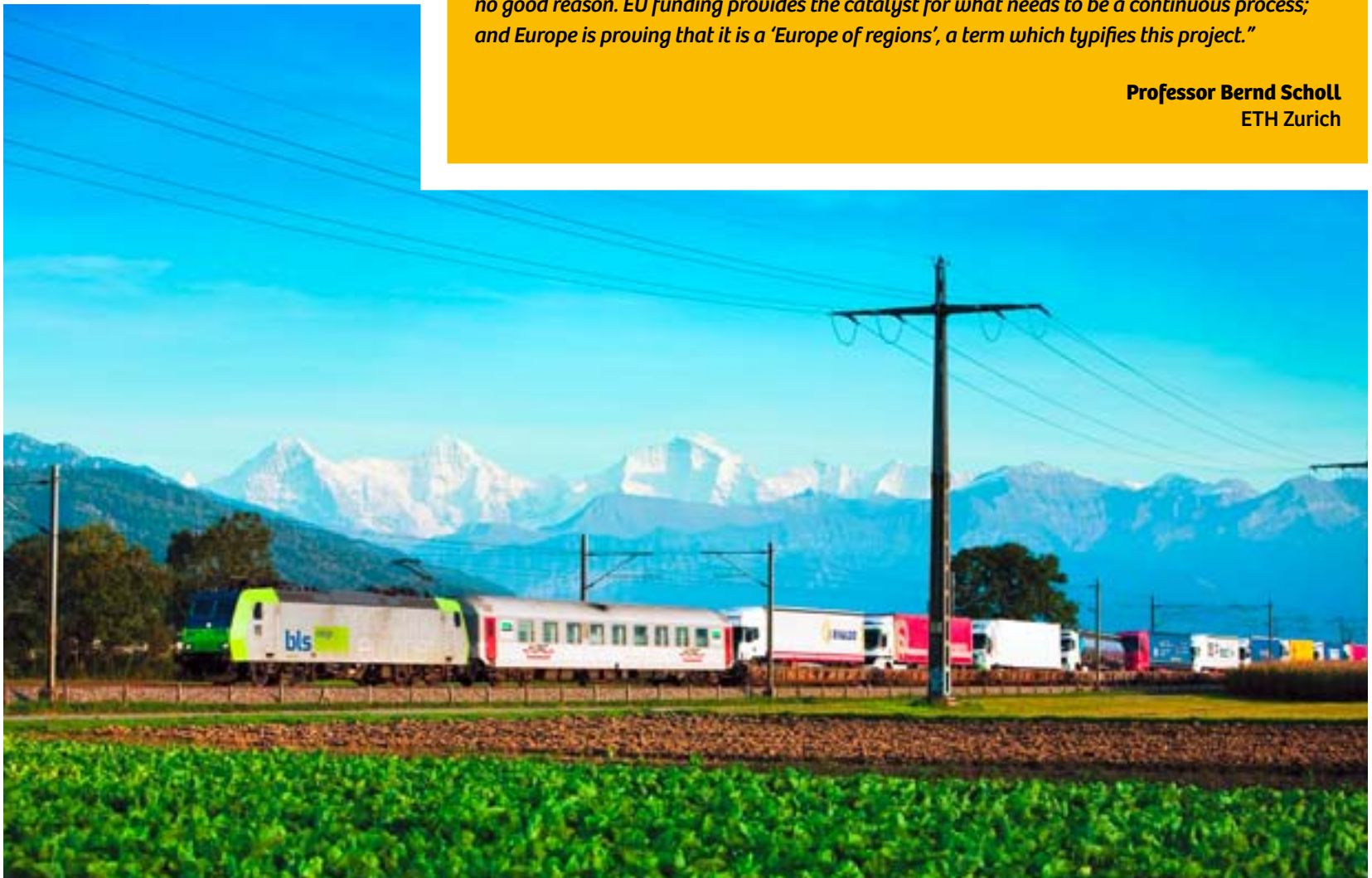


"As spatial planners, we want to achieve development by utilising the existing 'inner development potential'. This basically means building on brownfield sites in preference to greenfield ones. Tapping into this potential tomorrow calls for transport system investment and development today—that's what CODE24 is all about.

Passenger and freight services are competing because there is simply not enough capacity, and the bottlenecks along the route make it congested and slow. This is where transport development and spatial planning come together as one—they are two sides of the same coin.

We know there is a need for intensive development in the future to boost freight and remove bottlenecks. That's why CODE24 is turning out to be so important for coordinating cross-border cooperation solutions and avoiding conflicts between priorities which might tie up funding for no good reason. EU funding provides the catalyst for what needs to be a continuous process; and Europe is proving that it is a 'Europe of regions', a term which typifies this project."

Professor Bernd Scholl
ETH Zurich





"The main railway station in Mannheim is one of the largest rail hubs and the second-largest intercity express interchange in Germany; its freight yard is one of the biggest, and has one of the highest capacities, in Europe; and its port is the second-largest inland port in Germany. As you can see, developing this rail corridor is extremely important, not only for economic development in the Rhine-Neckar metropolitan area, but also for all of the corridor's regions and port areas.

However, local bottlenecks have adversely affected efficiency along the entire corridor. Cooperation between all the parties involved on every level and the coordination of their activities hold the key to the effective removal of these bottlenecks and to increasing the corridor's efficiency, as CODE24 has set out to do.

Infrastructure development calls for planning security, which is achievable only through cross-border cooperation between planning authorities, participating companies and public-interest representatives. At the end of the day, the desired overall strategic outcome is trans-European, cross-border economic development."

Christian Specht
Deputy Mayor, City of Mannheim

JOINING FORCES TO FIGHT FLOODS

AUSTRIA, GERMANY, HUNGARY, THE CZECH REPUBLIC



Central Europe got a terrible wake-up call in August 2002. Record-breaking floods swept through some eight countries, causing massive damage and taking dozens of lives. Almost a decade later, the area's authorities are better prepared for a similar catastrophe—thanks to international cooperation driven by the idea that rivers and floods know no borders.



To prevent floods around the River Elbe, several countries jointly agreed spatial planning actions under the EU-funded ELLA project (2000–06). Their politicians and water authorities also developed maps of flood hazard spots and a basic action plan for this major Central European river.

The initiative continues under LABEL, bringing together key partners from Germany, the Czech Republic, Austria and Hungary. Besides flood protection around the Elbe, this project focuses on water-management issues such as tourism and navigation.

Its 20 partners aim for the first time to develop a single strategy for flood prevention, covering the entire river basin. Their transnational approach includes forecasts, information and a risk management system. This has caught the attention of the International Commission for the Protection of the Elbe, which will feed the project's work and results into implementation of its own flood-protection strategy.



"River Elbe flood-protection and water-management issues must be considered at a regional level, which is why this territorial cooperation project has been so well received by politicians and decision-makers in Germany, the Czech Republic and Hungary. For example, it helped us to avoid greater damage from floods in Saxony in 2006 and 2011, thanks to good communication between the Czech and German partners, and with the help of the Vltava

cascade. LABEL and its predecessor project have played a role in creating a region-wide consensus on long-term flood-damage protection measures. One conclusion is that we need to plan for more land areas to absorb future floodwater, which means we can avoid building more expensive flood-protection infrastructure."

Dr Fritz Schnabel
Head of Division for European Spatial Planning,
Regional Development, Dresden, Germany

NAME OF THE PROJECT:

LABEL (Adaptation to flood risk in the LABE-ELbe river basin)

BUDGET:

€4 280 000

EU CONTRIBUTION:

€3 360 000

PROJECT DURATION:

**September 2008–
February 2012**

Support provided through the INTERREG IV B Central Europe transnational programme 2007–13

More information:

www.label-eu.eu

www.central2013.eu

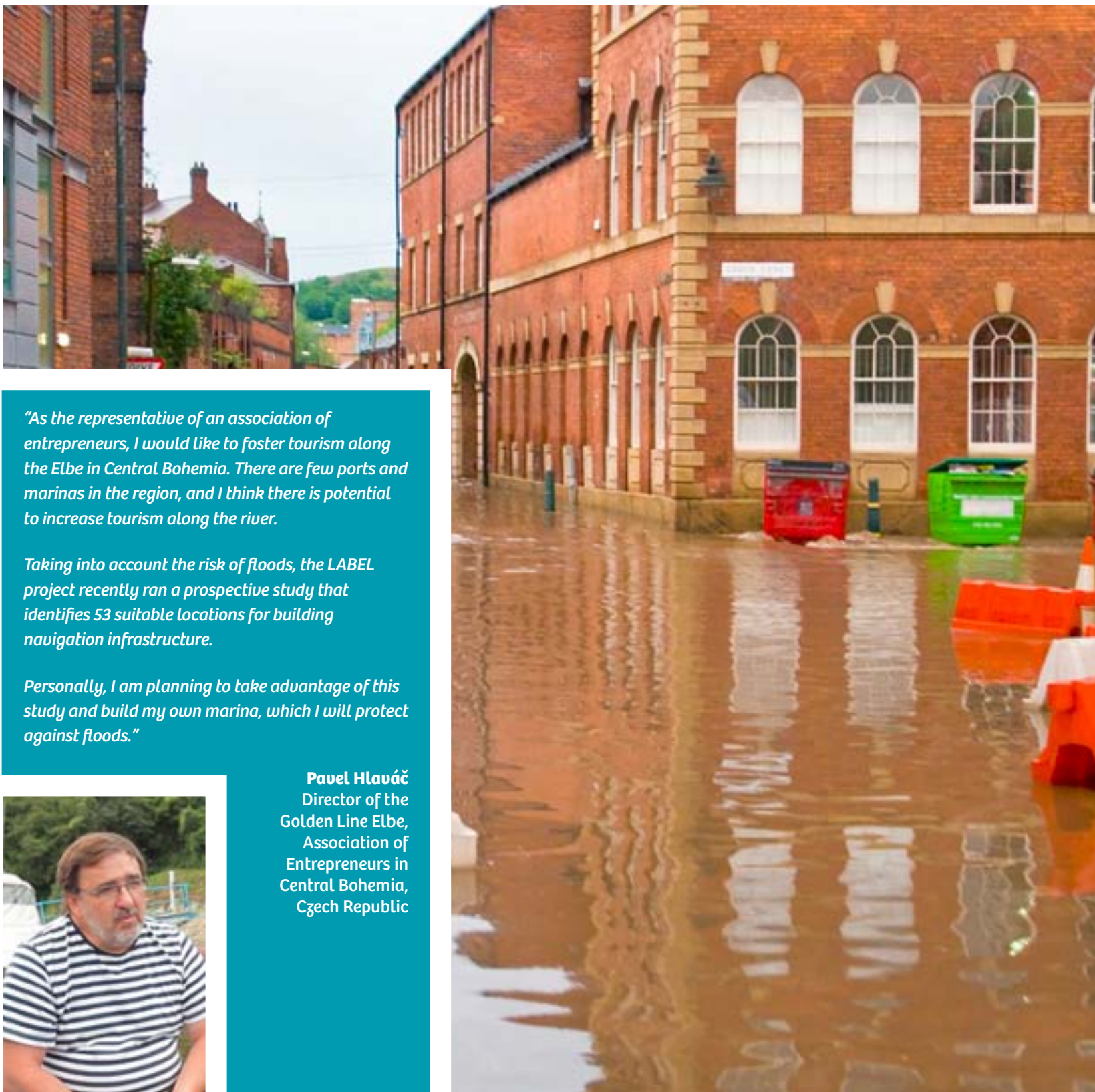
"The flood we saw in Görlitz in 2010 was one of the highest in the past hundred years. The water level reached 7.2 metres and caused enormous damage. At that time, we needed a lot of technology and special material to handle the situation, and one of our main resources came from the project LABEL which had produced maps and interactive software—the so called INGE maps—that helped us to inform our citizens about the situation faster and more efficiently."

Uwe Restetzki
Head of Görlitz Fire Brigade, Saxony, Germany



"Many of Hungary's rivers have been dyked for some two centuries, creating a higher riverbed, flood channel difficulties and more flood peaks here than in other River Elbe countries. But the water-management problems we face are similar to those elsewhere along the Elbe, so we can learn a lot from the work and solutions coming out of LABEL."

Attila Lovas
Middle-Tisza District Water Authority
(DWA), Szolnok, Hungary



"As the representative of an association of entrepreneurs, I would like to foster tourism along the Elbe in Central Bohemia. There are few ports and marinas in the region, and I think there is potential to increase tourism along the river."

Taking into account the risk of floods, the LABEL project recently ran a prospective study that identifies 53 suitable locations for building navigation infrastructure.

Personally, I am planning to take advantage of this study and build my own marina, which I will protect against floods."



Pavel Hlaváč
Director of the
Golden Line Elbe,
Association of
Entrepreneurs in
Central Bohemia,
Czech Republic

MARITIME SHIPPING CONNECTING SUPPLY WITH DEMAND

THE CARIBBEAN



The concept was ambitious: a database linking maritime shippers to every port in the Caribbean. In response, an innovative, one-of-a-kind research tool has been developed that covers the entire Caribbean Basin and surrounding countries of the Americas. The initiative targets local import-export companies with the goals of streamlining freight costs and developing transshipment transport routes. The BECCA project (Electronic Caribbean Maritime Trade System for Short Sea Shipping) was developed in



Guadeloupe and its official launch took place on April 19, 2010, when the search engine came on line.

The BECCA project is operated under the auspices of the European INTERREG Caribbean programme and its goal is to boost the competitiveness of European overseas departments, thus contributing to regional job creation. For example, a Guadeloupian business looking to export cement to Martinique would be able to investigate round-trip cost-sharing opportunities with Guadeloupian importers of goods from Martinique. Project originator CEI.BA succeeded in gathering information on 125 established operators connecting 217 Caribbean ports, along with technical specifications on 319 ships. After an initial breaking-in period, the platform will be made available by subscription to area operators who will be able to search all available services and submit individual orders with shipping companies.

"It's a terrific tool for us in the import-export business. This platform really helps me save time. In this business, we are constantly criss-crossing countries in the region searching for the best deals and the best quality. When we get a good lead, we need to immediately find out how long it will take to move the merchandise. This information is especially critical when dealing with fresh produce, since freshness is a major quality factor. Previously, it could take days or even weeks to find out the transit time on the shipping routes. It was time-consuming, tedious work since you needed to visit each company and check with the staff on site. Thanks to this program, we are able to get instant answers. This major time-saver allows us to focus our energies on our core business, making the import-export business easier, and above all, more profitable."

Patrick Doquin

Manager of import-export company Courtage Négoce Caraïbes, Guadeloupe, France

NAME OF THE PROJECT:

Electronic Caribbean Maritime Trade System for Short Sea Shipping

BUDGET:

€698 000

EU CONTRIBUTION:

€466 000

PROJECT DURATION:

September 2008–April 2010

Support provided through the Caribbean Area cooperation transnational programme 2007–13

More information:

www.becca-exchange.com

www.ceiba-gp.com/fr/becca



"BECCA is a totally new achievement, even in its concept. There were no precursors on which to base our project, so it was an enormous, exciting challenge.

Our project is not yet complete, since BECCA is a living Web project, and new needs arise as it is used. We have therefore developed an adaptable Web infrastructure so that the program can evolve in response to outside requests and frequency of use. We are currently receiving a stronger-than-expected response from the countries in South America, which seem very interested in the project and its future capabilities. Our choice is turning out to be a good one!"



Oliver Watté
Chief Technical Officer, IPEOS software
company, Guadeloupe, France





"To gather our information, we call on consultants from a range of cultural backgrounds who know the Caribbean inside out.

There was a tremendous amount of work in the field. We sent one of our experts to visit every port to find data on every company, even very small companies with only small, aging boats—you would laugh if you saw some of them! She went everywhere, in every kind of weather, sometimes waiting for hours on the docks. There were language challenges as well, since some of the people speak English mixed with Creole.

While the large companies had information on their websites, there was no information available on the small companies. It took a lot of schmoozing at the ports to find out the number of quay berths, opening hours, contact information, etc. None of this was easy since Caribbean culture can be quite tight-lipped. This is why statistics are in short supply, even on the number of containers handled each year. Fortunately, our two consultants know these ports and customs very well. They managed to break through barriers and collect the data we needed."

Michèle Montantin

General Director and CEO, CEI.BA, Guadeloupe, France

ERIK ACTION AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO KNOWLEDGE SHARING

ITALY, GREECE, ROMANIA, SLOVAKIA, PORTUGAL, SPAIN, FRANCE, BELGIUM, AUSTRIA, SWEDEN



The most innovative ideas for regional development are happening all round Europe and often there are good practices which could be used again in a different location. Erik Action has brought together 11 regions from 10 Member States, not just to network and exchange ideas but actually to transfer tried and tested development projects from one region to another. This capitalisation process has delivered new benefits from existing successes. In the space of two years,





"We were struck by the level of openness in our discussions with other regions. We have all shared our weaknesses and strengths, something that goes beyond the normal scope of networking, but it has made our cooperation more

real and lasting. The TIP Coaching Programme has now been successfully transferred to Tuscany from Lower Austria, and expert advice is going directly to SMEs in 12 different sectors. The transfer process has sharpened up the performance of all involved."

Nadia Crivelli
Department for Regional Policy, Tuscany, Italy

a graduate apprenticeship scheme has been adapted by several other regions and developed further to deliver a new level of benefits to European SMEs. A business advice service is getting technical and financial expertise directly into SMEs. Other regions have identified common ground in a number of different sectors, such as the wood industry, and can now look at boosting innovation in manufacturing processes and marketing. Erik Action has allowed successful development projects to be fine-tuned and given a new life in a completely different regional environment.



"The Regional Programme for Industrial Research, Innovation and Technology Transfer (PRRIITT) has a track record of helping SMEs to grow commercially and cooperate more, and now this good practice has been transferred beyond the region.

We have also been encouraged to see how the Innovation Assistant principle developed in Austria fits the strong research base and commercial assets of our region. Emilia-Romagna has taken this on a further step, by allowing firms to employ graduate researchers in their field who can then continue to a post-graduate level and be employed on a 'High Apprenticeship' contract. In 2008, seven High Apprenticeship contracts were agreed with regional universities and firms already benefiting from the PRRIITT programme."

Angelica Laterza
Department for Industry, Commerce and Tourism, Emilia-Romagna, Italy





"Being involved in Erik Action has introduced a new level and depth of cooperation between companies in Western Macedonia. Massive new investments are completely changing the structure of the electricity industry, and two types of European cooperation have emerged from this process.

Firstly, we need to retrain employees from the old electricity industry. At the same time, metal manufacturing companies supplying the electricity industry need to adjust to embrace the new opportunities of power generation through photovoltaic cells. Learning from other regions has shown us how these diverse needs can be combined and met. The Metal Manu cluster group is allowing new ideas and best practice to be adopted more quickly and this has fed specific requirements into an adapted version of two key training programmes from Lower Austria and Småland och Öarna (Sweden)."

Yiannis Bakouros

Associate Professor, MATER lab (Management of Technology Research Lab), University of Western Macedonia, Greece

NAME OF THE PROJECT:

Erik Action

BUDGET:

€1 900 000

EU CONTRIBUTION:

€1 500 000

PROJECT DURATION:

July 2008–June 2010

Support provided through the INTERREG IVC interregional cooperation programme

More information:

www.eriknetwork.net/erikaction/index.html



"O grande Aquário - The Great Aquarium" – winner of the ERIK ACTION photography contest



"It was surprising how much common ground we discovered between the wood processing industry in Western Macedonia and our own situation in Banská Bystrica. We used their experience to generate new commercial opportunities with greater innovation and entrepreneurship. New links are flourishing between forestry research, wood processing and marketing."

A Slovak Wood Cluster group was formed in Zuolen, but this was just the start. The cooperation with Western Macedonia has resulted in further common projects financed by the 7th Framework Programme, INTERREG IV C and the South East Europe programme."

Veronika Jaceková

Division of Climate Change and Economic Instruments,
Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic, Slovakia

Banská Bystrica, Slovakia



Constanta, Romania

"It was so much easier to explain the concept of cluster groups and to persuade companies of the benefits using the real examples from other regions. This ready-made expertise stopped us from trying to reinvent the wheel and filled the gaps in our knowledge. Now we have much more direct contact with our counterparts around the EU and are in a strong position to develop future commercial partnerships, especially those benefitting small businesses."

Study visits have built trust and provided first-hand experience that enabled innovation to happen. As stakeholders in regional development projects, we have used expertise from Andaluc a (Spain) and Sm land and the islands (Sweden) to create a Regional Marketing Centre, a European Business Park and a Regional Business and Innovation Centre."



Ioan Danut Juganaru

General Director of the Chamber of Commerce,
Industry, Navigation and Agriculture
in Constanta, Romania

NETWORKING FOR SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY

PARTNERS FROM 15 COUNTRIES, INCLUDING BULGARIA, LITHUANIA, POLAND, SLOVENIA



Sustainable mobility is a sound solution to the congestion, noise and pollution caused by dense traffic in our cities. It aims to reduce traffic problems by encouraging individuals to abandon their vehicles in favour of public transport, car sharing, cycling or walking. The many benefits include less stress, healthier lives, fewer CO₂ emissions and better use of existing capacity.



NAME OF THE PROJECT:

PIMMS Transfer
(Partner Initiatives for the development
of Mobility Management Services)

BUDGET:

€3 300 000

EU CONTRIBUTION:

€2 600 000

PROJECT DURATION:

November 2008–October 2011

Support provided through the INTERREG IVC
interregional cooperation programme

More information:

www.pimms-transfer-eu.org

www.interreg4c.net

Not less than 15 European cities faced with similar mobility challenges have been sharing their experience and expertise, thanks to the EU's 3-year PIMMS Transfer project. Successful mobility ideas, policy and best practice are spreading throughout the network and beyond, thanks to study visits and mentoring workshops.

For example, Gdansk picked up tips on developing cycling routes and training, while Klaipeda is boosting public transport service in its suburbs. Sofia is rolling out three new parking zones, an idea that also features among the mobility measures adopted by Maribor. Frankfurt has got more than 3 000 primary school kids from 15 schools walking from home to school at least once a week, in emulation of London's 'Walk on Wednesday' school travel scheme.



"We identified eight public transport black spots in our city, where bus services were too infrequent or absent or where people found it hard to access them. Some solutions we are developing come from our study trip to Frankfurt, where we saw the importance of gathering data and indicators on everything from the population of local districts to the physical spacing of bus stops. After visiting Frankfurt, as well as London, Graz and Stockholm, we revised our public transport tendering procedures. Our new contracts for operators now include requirements on the age and engine of buses in a fleet, the focus being to deliver modern vehicles, and a bonus-minus system based on the quality of transport services. Furthermore, bus travel times here are faster, and free-riding has been reduced by 30% after the city obliged passengers to enter vehicles by the front door and leave by the rear. We adopted similar rules to those already in force in our partner cities in Almada and London."

Andrius Samuilovas

Deputy Head, Klaipeda Public Transport Authority, Lithuania



Klaipeda, Lithuania



"Gdansk is Poland's first city to offer young schoolchildren cycling training in real traffic conditions. Our new course follows a visit from a Graz cycling expert, who showed us how to organise this training, in collaboration with local schools and the council's road safety department."

Gdansk is also recognised as Poland's leading city for progressive cycling policy. Under a new scheme copied mainly from Graz in Austria, our cyclists can use roads closed to drivers and they can travel in both directions down one-way streets."



Malgorzata Ratkowska
Main Specialist in EU Projects
Gdansk City Council, Poland





Sofia, Bulgaria

"Our citizens love the fact they can now travel anywhere in the city for one hour on one bus ticket, an idea we copied from Frankfurt after our visit there. We've also divided Maribor into six parking zones, to tackle chronic parking problems and encourage people to use public transport or park outside the centre. Our scheme was inspired by a similar one in Graz. Moreover, thanks to our study visits to Frankfurt and Graz, the Maribor delegation learned the importance of collecting good data on public transport passenger numbers, ticket prices and bus zones—especially by using electronic travel cards. We collect this data regularly now and have used it to set up a more sustainable mobility system in our city. Maribor is also Slovenia's first city to enable mobility for the handicapped and blind people by providing new infrastructure in the city centre—the work is to be completed by 2012. It has learned from Graz about best practice for barrier-free measures and tactile surfaces in public areas, and is now sharing this with other Slovenian cities."

**Vili Eisenhut**

Director of the Department for Traffic, Communal, Environment and Spatial Planning Municipality of Maribor, Slovenia



"Following our studies of congestion charging in London and Stockholm, Sofia has set up three parking areas—blue, green and yellow. The central blue zone, which only allows vehicles to park in one spot for an hour between 08.30 and 18.30, is already

operating successfully. The green and yellow zones are planned for 2012. Our goals include freeing up bus lanes and persuading car drivers to switch to more sustainable transport modes such as walking or cycling."

Mariana Georgieva

Expert in EU Programmes and Projects,
Sofia Municipality, Bulgaria



Maribor, Slovenia

NEW POTENTIAL FOR HISTORIC BUILDINGS

GERMANY, ITALY, THE UNITED KINGDOM, POLAND, MALTA, AUSTRIA, LITHUANIA, ROMANIA, FRANCE



In Europe's historic cities, the buildings tell a story of past eras, created through economic circumstance and cultural traditions. But economic success for the future is built around responding to change and not being hampered by history.

HerO recognises the need for both, and champions urban developments that preserve historic buildings and restore their value, while embracing new commercial

opportunities. This exciting approach to urban planning allows for constant adaptations as economic and social needs change.

A snapshot of HerO in action in four cities shows the contrast between the projects and also how working with other cities delivers more effective and far-reaching objectives. Regensburg and Valletta have involved local people in planning the future and there is an ongoing commitment to

seeing their cities develop. Liverpool offers a unique range of industrial and commercial heritage that has also been a testing ground for sustainable restoration techniques. In Naples, small shops and businesses are flourishing in the historic centre alongside monuments, while in Lublin, HerO has added weight to an existing local passion for cultural heritage.



"It has been challenging but inspiring to work with cities on such different scales. To start with, it was hard devising common objectives, but once a core strategy was agreed, each city became more motivated. Through HerO, €100m of new funding has been earmarked for urban heritage projects, many more stakeholders have become involved in each city and there are clearer strategies for balancing restoration with new developments.

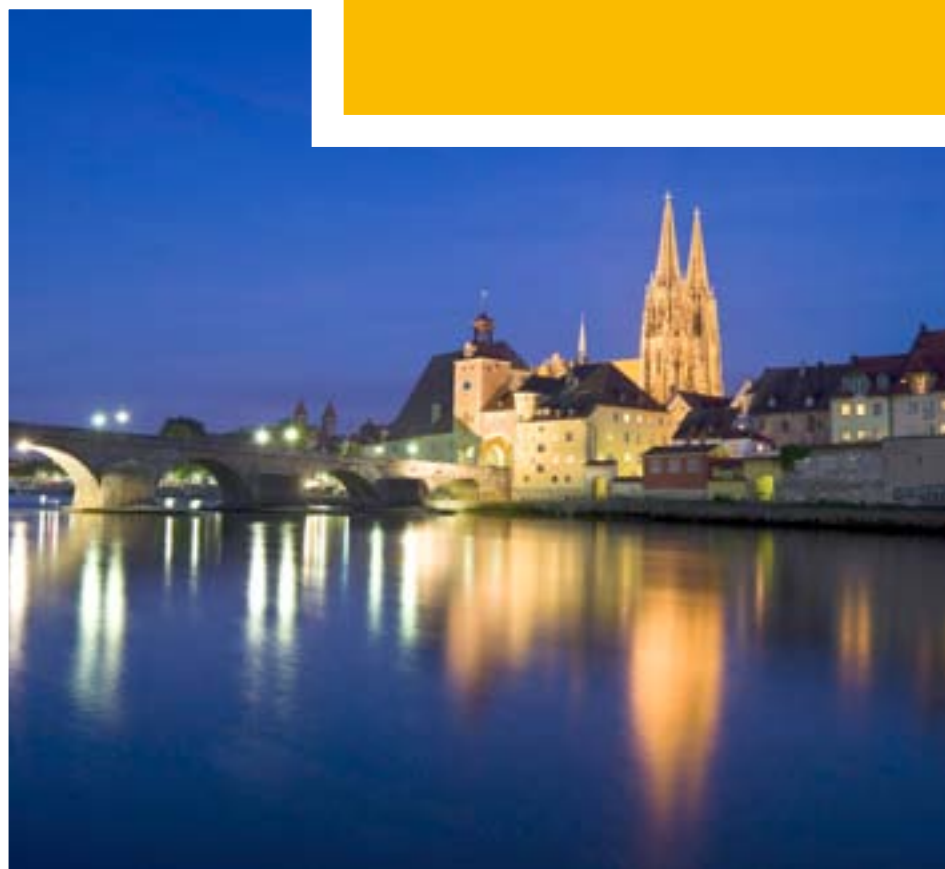
A key feature of the city's management plan has been to integrate old, medieval buildings within a vibrant, modern local economy and to balance the needs of residents and businesses with tourists. Contemporary buildings are bringing commercial and cultural opportunities, but need to be carefully blended in with the historic environment.

We wanted local people to be part of the heritage development process and invited them to take part in a 2-day World Heritage Dialogue, where they could discuss specific ideas and projects with staff from the local and regional government. The event contributed to the strong identity that residents and businesses feel in the city."

Matthias Ripp

Project Coordinator of the HerO network and World Heritage Coordinator, Regensburg

Regensburg, Germany



NAME OF THE PROJECT:

HerO–Heritage as Opportunity

BUDGET:

€635 000

EU CONTRIBUTION:

€462 000

PROJECT DURATION:

April 2008–April 2011

Support provided through the URBACT II interregional cooperation programme 2007–13

More information:

<http://urbact.eu/en/projects/cultural-heritage-city-development/hero/homepage/>

<http://urbact.eu/en/>

"The privilege of being granted UNESCO World Heritage Site status comes hand-in-hand with the

responsibility of securing lasting prosperity in such a preserved environment. EU-wide contacts, with relevant expertise, have helped Naples to meet this challenge.

and this encouraged us to work closely with local residents groups and private investors seeking to develop the historic centre.

The flourishing small arts and crafts businesses are key issues for the City Council, increasing the attractiveness of the historic centre. There are also interesting contrasts, such as the arts and archaeological underground stations; a mix of alternative museum inside new architecture."

Gaetano Mollura
Naples Commune



We wanted our

Local Action Plan to continue after HerO had completed its term



Lublin, Poland

Naples, Italy



"HerO has given us a great chance to access expertise and experience from other cities. It has raised the profile of heritage restoration and involved local people. Residents have a strong local identity, but also see the need to rejuvenate the city's economic vitality. They increasingly want high-quality green spaces in the city and are keen

to see how this can be blended with restoring historic buildings.

The former Jewish district in Lublin had become very run-down, but is now getting back on track commercially and culturally. New small businesses are becoming established here, offering crafts and regional products. HerO has also prompted us to make best use of funds by extending the scope of restoration projects. The renovated theatre, for example, has extra exhibits on show to the public and a new director to take the venture forward."

Ewa Kipta
Municipality of Lublin



Liverpool, United Kingdom



"As an academic historian interested in public history, the HerO network allowed me to engage with architects, planners, civic leaders, heritage officers and other professionals working in urban heritage across Europe. The network and contacts built up have given us a more outward-looking focus and brought recognition for our own work."

Today's challenges are about continuing to deliver the best

restoration projects, using the latest environmental criteria and sustainable techniques. Many key restoration projects have been successfully completed over the last ten years, including St George's Hall, a fine example of neo-classical architecture, and the Oriel Chambers, a unique iron-framed building. Among widespread restoration work in the historic docks, the Rolling Bascule Bridge was reopened to traffic towards the end of 2010."

Professor John Belchem
Professor of History and
Pro-Vice-Chancellor, University of
Liverpool



"Valletta had a lot of untapped potential in terms of heritage development. We have been able to forge ahead using new planning tools and the criteria that accompany UNESCO World Heritage Sites."

HerO gave us the opportunity to talk to local people about their lives and aspirations, and to build their identity into an ongoing development plan. Architects, planning experts and council officials are now much more in tune with local residents."

Study visits to other partner cities reassured us that we share the challenges of blending heritage with contemporary landscapes. Working with our European counterparts has encouraged us to experiment with new approaches to planning while remaining part of a recognised strategy."

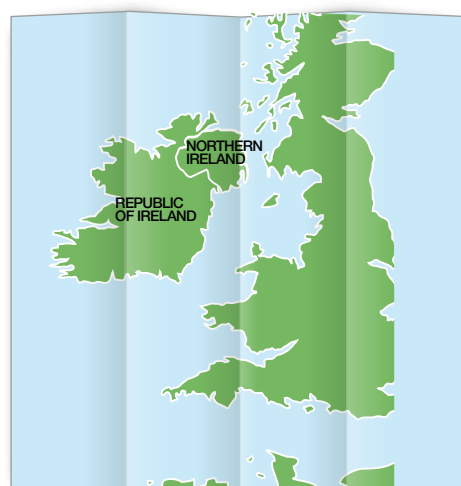
Dr Malcolm Borg
Heritage Enterprise, Malta



Valletta, Malta

FOOTBALL HEALING COMMUNITIES

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND, NORTHERN IRELAND (UNITED KINGDOM)



Established by the Irish Football Association in 2000, the 'Football For All' initiative aims to eradicate sectarianism and racism from football and to encourage healthy, safe and inclusive participation at every level of the game.

Thus, at grass roots, national and international level, the education, assistance and communication services provided by Football For All have led to increased commitment from fans, players, coaches, clubs and communities. Football For All



has received widespread recognition. Not only has it been highly innovative in its approach to encouraging grass roots engagement but it is implemented by people on the ground who actively seek ways of integrating marginalised communities and overcoming prejudice and fear.

Seminars, training and workshops have improved awareness of community issues. Solutions for tackling issues come from clubs and fans themselves. These include: encouraging non-sectarian support during games; awareness workshops organised by volunteers; self-policing on the terraces; training clubs in their communities; and the setting up of World United teams which include players who are refugees or asylum seekers from all over the world.

The project successfully demonstrates how sport can have a significant and lasting impact on local communities. Football For All receives assistance from the European Regional Development Fund under the EU PEACE programme which specifically promotes peace and reconciliation in Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland.

NAME OF THE PROJECT:

Football For All

BUDGET:

€1 000 000

EU CONTRIBUTION:

€760 000

PROJECT DURATION:

2000–06 and 2007–13

Support provided through the PEACE II and PEACE III programmes.

More information:

www.seupb.eu/programmes2007-2013/peaceiiiprogramme/overview.aspx



M. Boyd and EU Commissioner J. Hahn

"Football For All has been a success because fans and volunteers have been empowered and valued as drivers of change. When the project started in the year 2000, there were crowds as low as 2 000 supporters at Northern Ireland home internationals and sectarian chanting was commonplace.

Today home internationals sell out with up to 15 000 spectators and the atmosphere is fun, safe and family orientated.

What others can learn from the project is that listening to fans and investing in and supporting volunteers are key to success. Football For All has made a meaningful difference locally, but we see it as a model that other countries in Europe can learn from. The most important challenge is to build trust and work at maintaining positive relationships, and this requires ongoing hard work, honesty and commitment."

Michael Boyd

Head of Community Relations, Irish Football Association, Northern Ireland





"Throughout the troubles, fans at internationals would turn up in red, white and blue colours to express their Britishness even though the team played in green. But green was perceived as Catholic and red, white and blue Protestant. Loyalist songs were sung, yet the team was representative of both communities. Attendances plummeted and sponsors disappeared because of sectarianism.

Through Football For All, sectarian chants were replaced with non-sectarian songs, chanting sections established, a megaphone used to lead songs and, through the initiative 'Sea of Green', fans started wearing the green and white colours of the team. Now internationals sell out and IFA attracts a lot of sponsorship. In 2006, AONISC was presented with the Brussels International Supporters Award.

There was initial opposition from some quarters, but reasoned debate persuaded the majority of supporters that our approach was for the good of the team. We also brought groups from across communities to witness for themselves the changing atmosphere at internationals. In 1999 there were 11 clubs involved in AONISC, now there are more than 70."

Jim Rainey

Committee Member of the Amalgamation of Official Northern Ireland Supporters Clubs (AONISC), Northern Ireland



"Football occupies an important focal point in our culture. Nations celebrate their identity and collective spirit through sport. In a context of violence, this makes the game vulnerable to the passions of conflict. Football For All succeeded in emphasising celebration over violence in a situation of conflict and made a huge contribution to the atmosphere of inclusion.

Having done this at a Northern Ireland level, the project has now gone on to emphasise the same values at grass roots level. Sport is seen as an alternative to violence. How? By reducing the atmosphere of violence—drawing a distinction between following a team and declaring war—by engaging fans, players, clubs and authorities in a common enterprise of including everyone. Football For All's success has bred success. Once people saw progress, more joined in."

Duncan Morrow

CEO of the Northern Ireland Community Relations Council, Northern Ireland





"Football For All continues to have a ripple effect, changing behaviour in a positive way. The work continues with the recent cooperation on the Game of Three Halves between Rugby Football, Gaelic and Peace Players International to promote the concept that those who play together can live together."

The challenges were huge, a sectarian society ripped apart by violence. The fans had to overcome embedded attitudes from the past and work within a divided society. They

managed this by incremental positive change. This work continues and this is a marathon without end.

A large number of individuals took considerable risks, but they wanted to create a sense of inclusion and they involved the help of people right across the community. Sport is a powerful tool in reconciliation and often underestimated."

Trevor Ringland
former Irish and British Lions rugby international, Northern Ireland



"I am proud to be a Football For All ambassador. Through Football For All, real progress is being made eradicating both racism and sectarianism from the game at all levels."

Niall McGinn
Northern Ireland and Celtic Football Club player, Northern Ireland

"The IFA and Northern Ireland fans are working hard to tackle the issue of sectarianism. As players, we appreciate the improvement in the atmosphere and the fact that the fans get behind all players regardless of background or club."

Andrew Little
Northern Ireland and Rangers Football Club player, Northern Ireland

“We have seen great progress, whether in person to person contacts, joint economic initiatives or development of common infrastructure. Growing together is a long-term process, but it is clear that there is already much success.”

Dirk Ahner,
Director-General for Regional Policy,
European Commission

THE WAY AHEAD

Acting as a facilitator, the EU aims to support cooperation and boost political momentum, providing a wider strategic approach. This section explains some of the ways in which this support takes shape and looks at what the future holds.



MACRO-REGIONAL STRATEGIES

JOINT RESPONSES TO COMMON CHALLENGES

Geographic features such as sea or river basins often cross national or regional borders. The same goes for many cultural, economic and other characteristics—and for the challenges and opportunities they present. Actions implemented at regional, national or EU level therefore cannot always provide adequate solutions, and the number of different policy areas impacted means that sectoral approaches may have limited results.

This is why the EU decided to launch its first macro-regional strategies. The EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region was adopted in 2009, followed by the EU Strategy for the Danube Region in 2011.

Covering all relevant policy areas, the strategies include aspects that cannot be addressed by the countries or regions individually, such as certain environmental issues, but also areas such as tourism where the actions implemented receive added value through becoming part of a wider strategic approach.

The voluntary character of the strategies shapes their outputs: rather than imposing activities, they are geared towards the demands of those hoping to benefit from them. Extensive consultation exercises have provided stakeholders with the opportunity to give their input at an early stage.

Driven by demand

Based on a bottom-up approach, the strategies go back to the initiative of Member States seeking to join forces in the most efficient way to address common issues. They share the overarching objective of embedding existing resources, structures and legislation in a framework maximising their benefits with a view to strengthening European integration. The EU acts as a facilitator, aiming to support collaboration between actors at all levels and adding political momentum in the process.

EU STRATEGY FOR THE BALTIC SEA REGION JOINING FORCES ACROSS THE BALTIC SEA

Bordered by the Scandinavian Peninsula, the mainland of Central and Eastern Europe and the Danish islands, the Baltic Sea links eight EU Member States, creating both a strong interdependence between them and a chance to seize common opportunities. The EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region aims to enhance cooperation between these countries to help them take up joint challenges and boost development throughout the area.

Initiated by a group of Member States, Europe's first macro-regional strategy was outlined by the European Commission in June 2009 and endorsed by the Council in October of the same year. The integrated framework includes all Member States surrounding the Baltic Sea and focuses on four challenges: environmental concerns, prosperity, accessibility and security.

Four pillars

Broken down into 15 priority areas outlined in the Strategy's Action Plan, the four key challenges form the cornerstones of the overall structure.

The most pressing tasks lie ahead in the field of environment. Water quality is a major concern: eutrophication provoked by agricultural run-offs, ship-generated waste and other forms of pollution is threatening marine ecosystems, biodiversity and ultimately the well-being of people in the region.

To promote a sustainable environment, priorities in this field include the reduction of nutrient inputs and the impact of hazardous substances, the preservation of biodiversity, cleaner shipping and the mitigation of climate change.



The environmental challenges are closely linked to the achievement of economic targets. Making the Baltic Sea Region's economy more competitive involves efforts to increase the sustainability of the agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors and to explore the potential of the region in terms of research, innovation, entrepreneurship and human resources. The Strategy also offers opportunities for overcoming the dividing lines between the more prosperous Northern and Western parts of the macro-region and the developing East and South.

Another crucial aspect is connectivity. Transport and energy networks lie at the heart of efforts aiming to make the Baltic Sea Region an accessible and attractive place. The focus of activities in this field is put on actions improving transport links as well as the efficiency and security of energy markets. These are complemented by measures targeting education, tourism and health.

Safety and security form another focal point of the Strategy. As maritime traffic is likely to increase, involving a higher incidence of accidents and pollution, and climate change induces a greater risk of extreme weather events, protection against emergencies will be sought, both at sea and on land. Cooperation in the field of cross-border crime also needs to be stepped up.

Achieving tangible results

To translate these thematic priorities into achievements on the ground, around 80 flagship projects were outlined in the Action Plan, providing for concrete solutions and improvements in all 15 priority areas. A priority coordinator was tasked with supervising the implementation of projects in each of the areas. National contact points were established to follow up the process and liaise with the Commission and each other. Coordinated on a day-to-day basis by DG Regional Policy, the Strategy involves many different Commission services as well as other institutional actors such as the European Parliament and the Committee of the Regions which play a monitoring role.

Rather than making additional funding available, the Strategy relies on a flexible approach aligning existing sources of funding with strategic projects. Sources of funding include Structural and Cohesion Funds as well as thematic funding programmes such as the Seventh Research Framework Programme and LIFE+ for environmental projects.

A wider reach

Other thematic and geographic instruments are feeding into the Strategy. Countries outside the macro-region stand to benefit from its wider effects through project participation. The external aspects of cooperation are addressed in the Northern Dimension policy framework involving the EU, Iceland, Norway and Russia. As a gateway between Europe and Russia, the Baltic Sea Region plays a strategic role in EU-Russia relations, and a number of projects of joint interest have been identified together with the Russian foreign ministry.

The overall EU growth objectives outlined in the Commission's Europe 2020 strategy are instrumental in orienting the Strategy. Shining a spotlight on how Baltic Sea countries can contribute to and benefit from smart, green and inclusive growth, a series of conferences allows stakeholders to exchange good practices in these fields.

As a positive side effect, the synergies between the two strategies create increased political momentum and improve the visibility of individual initiatives.

Efforts paying off

A lot has already been achieved since the launch of the Strategy. Through creating, strengthening and improving cooperation links, the groundwork for macro-regional integration has been laid. A number of new projects were set up, including the Baltic DEAL initiative aiming to halt eutrophication without impairing competitiveness, the InnoShip project reducing ship and port emissions, and the BATMAN research project for sustainable manure management. The Strategy has also added value to many existing networks and projects.

Maintaining this momentum will be among the major challenges for the future. The start of a new programming period creates a window of opportunity for mainstreaming the macro-regional dimension into the new generation of programmes, thereby amplifying the Strategy's benefits and making them sustainable.

EU STRATEGY FOR THE DANUBE REGION USING THE UNITING FORCE OF THE WORLD'S MOST INTERNATIONAL RIVER

Originating in the Black Forest and emptying into the Black Sea, the Danube flows through more countries and capital cities than any other river in the world. The area stretching along its banks is home to a population of around 115 million people living in eight EU Member States and six other European countries.

The EU Strategy for the Danube Region outlines a highly ambitious set of objectives for integrated development across the macro-region aiming to make full use of its economic and social potential while meeting environmental challenges.

Drawing on the positive Baltic Sea Region experience, the Strategy follows a similar request by Member States through the European Council. The macro-regional framework proposed by the Commission in December 2010 builds on four pillars which set the main priorities. The thematic objectives feed into an overall effort towards European integration using existing structures wherever possible and requiring neither changes to EU legislation nor additional funds. Sources of finance include Structural Funds and other EU funds, as well as funding from national and local sources and international financing institutions such as the European Investment Bank.

Better connecting the region

Improving connections throughout the region involves action in the fields of transport, energy as well as culture and tourism.



The Danube is a vital transport axis. Improving mobility and multimodality is therefore a key target. In the field of energy, challenges to be addressed include the modernisation of infrastructure and the extension of energy networks, higher supply security and energy efficiency as well as a higher share of renewables.

In the cultural field, targeted action is needed to preserve the region's unique heritage sites and attract more visitors to them.

The Trans-European Networks will play an important role in the framework of the first pillar. Other projects identified include the Network of Danube Waterway

Administrations (NEWADA) aiming to develop waterway connections, the Danube Region Renewable Energy Action Plan, and the Danube Limes initiative supporting the nomination of a Roman-era site common to Hungary, Austria and Slovakia for UNESCO world heritage status.

Protecting the environment

The Danube Region's environment deserves special attention: the riverbanks are home to around 7 000 different species, and the Danube Delta is Europe's largest remaining natural wetland.

Actions will focus on improving water, air and soil quality, preserving biodiversity and landscapes, and managing environmental risks such as floods or industrial accidents.

The cross-border cooperation network Danube Parks is among the projects forming part of the Strategy in this field. It brings together experts from riparian countries to preserve protected zones along the river.

Building prosperity

Huge disparities in terms of wealth and living standards are a major challenge for the Danube Region. Improving cooperation can help to overcome this divide. Efforts will target the competitiveness of businesses, skills development and job creation. The knowledge society is to receive a boost through research, education and information activities.

One of the projects will contribute to fostering a Danube Research Area and integrating it into the European Research Area, making full use of good practice such as the existing 'SEE-ERA-net plus' for enhancing the coordination of Research and Development (R&D) cooperation between EU Member States and South East Europe countries.

Strengthening the region

Safety and stability have an important impact on the quality of life of people living in the region while also being a prerequisite for the Strategy to work effectively and generate results. This is why measures to build institutional capacity, improve cooperation and tackle serious crime were included in the Strategy. Well-functioning democratic institutions and administrations are key in this context.

Projects include the creation of common guidelines for improving spatial planning and the production of a Serious and Organised Crime Threat Assessment (OCTA) tool for the Danube Region.

Cooperation beyond EU borders

The number of non-Member States bordering on or crossed by the Danube means that their involvement is crucial to make the Strategy a success. The consultation phase has given these countries the possibility to have their say early on in the process. Many priority areas are coordinated in association with a non-EU country. The bottom-up approach of the Strategy allows them to make suggestions and participate in projects according to their needs.

For countries on the road to membership, funding is made available through the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA).

Living up to the 2020 vision

Adapting broad EU growth objectives for a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy to the local context, the Danube Strategy is a tool for attaining the objectives set out in the Europe 2020 strategy. To ensure that the actions help deliver its objectives, a deadline has been set for specific targets: the development of efficient multimodal terminals at Danube River ports to connect inland waterways with rail and road transport by 2020; the restoration of eco-systems in the Black Sea to 1960 levels by 2020; and the investment of 3% of GDP in R&D by 2020. Broadband internet access should also be brought to all EU citizens in the region by 2013.

EUROPEAN GROUPING FOR TERRITORIAL COOPERATION **A PRACTICAL TOOL FOR TRANSCENDING BORDERS**

Giving public bodies from different countries and regions the means to work together efficiently is useful in many contexts, from providing public transport and emergency services to pooling research capabilities. The creation of a legal instrument, the European grouping for territorial cooperation (EGTC), directly applicable in all EU Member States, represents a crucial step forward in this context.

The EGTC is a tool for implementing a variety of activities involving diverse actors from different countries. Launched in 2006 with the primary aim of managing and implementing territorial cooperation programmes and projects, the instrument has nonetheless a wide scope enabling public bodies from regional and local

authorities to jointly implement actions with or without EU funding. The creation of an EGTC gives this cooperation a structure as well as legal certainty, and makes the signing of an international agreement unnecessary.

The demand for this type of tool goes well beyond the implementation of Structural Funds: out of the 18 EGTCs set up so far, 16 deliver a broad range of joint services funded from different national and European sources.

Gathering speed

The positive experience on the ground has created an incentive for more EGTC initiatives to be launched, and the number of groupings is likely to see a steep increase in the years to come as many setups are under preparation (currently 20).



A General Assembly of the Eurométropole Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai, the first EGTC in Europe

A CROSS-BORDER HEALTH CARE NETWORK IN THE HEART OF THE PYRENEES

SPAIN, FRANCE



Surrounded by enormous mountains, the high plain of Cerdanya is a difficult area to access. To provide quality health care to its population, which is divided between Spain and France, close cross-border cooperation is essential.

The establishment of the Cerdanya Hospital European grouping for territorial cooperation (EGTC-HC) is a fundamental step in the process of integrating hospital services on both sides of the border. The EGTC, a recently established legal



Cerdanya cross-border hospital being constructed



"The hospital is being jointly constructed and will also be jointly managed. The EGTC-HC has made a close relationship between two entities possible, and is based on an asymmetrical link: a country on one side (France) and a region on the other (Catalonia)."

In Spain, the difficulties related to managing French patients will disappear. The population of Cerdan, on the French side, will have a hospital with accident and emergency services available. In parallel, the entire plateau area will have a new cutting-edge health facility.

The integration of health services on both sides of the border contributes—through economies of scale—to ensuring continued availability of health care, which in the past has been sporadic, notably due to the small size of the population."

Albert Alins
Government Delegate of the Generalitat de Catalunya, Hautes-Pyrénées and Aran (Spain)

structure, helped launch this project to build a new hospital, jointly operated by Catalonia and France.

Building on the existing medical specialities in each country, this network provides residents with quick and easy access to the most sought after medical services, but also offers them the possibility to make use of new cross-border centres of excellence in the fields of geriatrics, rehabilitation and paediatrics.

The hospital is expected to open in 2012 and will allow patients in the region to benefit from health care which, though provided beyond their national border, will have the advantage of complying with both French and Spanish social legislation standards.

NAME OF THE PROJECT:

Cerdanya cross-border hospital

BUDGET:

€31 000 000

EU CONTRIBUTION:

€18 600 000

Support provided through the EU cross-border cooperation programme Spain–France 2007–13

More information:

www.hccerdanya.eu



"The building of a cross-border hospital will provide us with additional resources, allowing us to improve the quality of hospital care."

For me, as a Spanish doctor, the most interesting and motivating aspect of this is the daily exchange with the French doctors, in terms of knowledge and methods used. In order to avoid language problems, the Puigcerdà hospital staff members are taking courses in French. For local residents, the project will improve the quality of medical care."

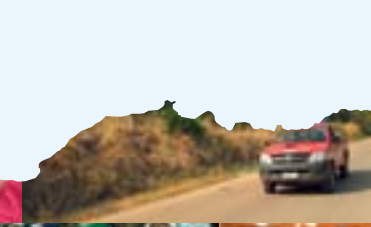
Enric Subirats Bayego
Doctor at the hospital in Puigcerdà (Spain)

"The opening of the new hospital will improve the range of services offered to the Catalan population and extend this range to the French population of Cerdanya. For the latter, given the geographical distance, this previously required at least two hours of travel."

The maternity department of the current Puigcerdà hospital is already open to residents of French Cerdanya. The service has increased exponentially from two deliveries in 2003 to 60 births in 2010, and will be further improved by mixed teams of health workers in the field, when the new structure is opened."

Catherine Barnola
Head of the 'Care and autonomy' centre (Pyrénées-Orientales) and Member of the Executive Office of the EGTC-HC (France)





EUROPEAN TERRITORIAL COOPERATION DEALING WITH COMMON CHALLENGES TOGETHER

Many of the issues we face are ones we need to tackle together—environmental challenges and transport questions are the first that spring to mind. Whether it is our need for secure energy supplies which demand joined-up supply networks or the ability to travel and pool business or research ideas freely, the European Union needs to embrace cooperation to grow.

Cohesion policy addresses socio-economic and environmental issues across the EU and the European Territorial Cooperation objective works to support these goals through over 80 multi-country programmes. These help to make common action more effective and efficient.

Many develop common approaches, such as clusters for innovation or common marketing services. However, they often lack sufficient resources, or should be better linked to national development strategies and project work.

Cooperation at the heart of policy

The EU is increasingly designing policy and funding with cooperation in mind, requiring better planning at all levels. Cohesion policy assists this by putting emphasis on partnerships at local and national levels across regions, borders and larger geographical zones. Doing this increases the chance that Europe-wide ambitions are incorporated in national and local policy and funding decisions.

Territorial cooperation needs to be undertaken with the ambitions of the Europe 2020 strategy more clearly in mind, for example in terms of overcoming fragmented telecom markets. Cooperation should fill the gaps in terms of the investment and organisational work being

undertaken at national and sub-national level to make Europe more smart, sustainable and socially inclusive.

Taking on board the wider picture

It is increasingly accepted that trying to address issues in isolation, either through sectoral policy-making or using a limited geographical scope, is inefficient and can even be counterproductive.

Decisions taken frequently have ramifications and these need to be considered as a whole—the impact on the environment of a decision taken in relation to agriculture has to be factored in when designing policy, for example. Integrating policy-making across sectors and borders ensures greater efficiency and reduces the risk of negative secondary effects.

Where do we go from here?

The way ahead embraces: shared health care facilities where the nearest hospital is the primary consideration in an emergency, not your passport; shared infrastructure projects where planning and financing can be rationalised and coherent; shared environmental measures where one country's policies to protect river waters' quality are not undone downstream.

The next step is to make cooperation a reflex action rather than prey to a drawn out decision-making process. Whether through European Territorial Cooperation programmes, or by mobilising other EU policies and programmes, cooperation needs to become part of policy-making and implementation at all levels—ensuring an interconnected Europe keeps pace with global competition.

COOPERATION, A SUBSTANTIAL FORCE BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS

INTERVIEW WITH DIRK AHNER

DIRECTOR-GENERAL FOR REGIONAL POLICY, EUROPEAN COMMISSION



What are the first three words that come to your mind, when people say “cooperation”?

Integration, solidarity, development.

How does European Territorial Cooperation fit into future cohesion policy?

European Territorial Cooperation has, potentially, very high added value—but this potential has not yet been fully reached. This must be developed—not just financially—so that we have a clearer idea of what we are doing and what the results are on the ground. We must be fully aware of everything that is happening under this policy.

What do you see as the success factors of European Territorial Cooperation? Which cooperation achievements in Europe have you been impressed with?

We have seen great progress, whether in person-to-person contacts, joint economic initiatives or development of common infrastructure. Growing together is a long-term process, but it is clear that there is already much success.

Do you think that in order to be more effective, European Territorial Cooperation needs to be allocated more funding in the future?

Yes—but it is not only about the money. A more important aspect is to ensure that the right measures are introduced into the right context—avoiding the “That’s what we always do” approach.

People working with cooperation programmes often say that they are administratively too complicated. Do you think something can be done to overcome this?

Certainly. It is true that in our efforts to integrate the cooperation objective more closely into mainstream cohesion policy, we have applied common rules which, in some circumstances, have increased the burden on managers of territorial cooperation actions. We recognise this and are taking steps to ensure that the specific context of cooperation programmes is better recognised in the regulations so that appropriate rules and a measure of proportionality can be applied. Our plan for a specific regulation for the cooperation objective in the next period should make this easier.

Do you see specific EU-wide needs which can only be addressed through cross-border, transnational or interregional cooperation?

There are a number of needs that are common across the Union and can be better dealt with through this objective. First, there is still much to be done to make the internal market function better across borders. Even 20 years after the 1992 package, there is work to be done to make the borders disappear, and the European Territorial Cooperation mechanism, as well as the funds that go with it, can help with that. Second, we are finding that the interregional initiatives are allowing peer-to-peer interaction, resulting in exchanges of experience and the creation of more ideas. Interregional networks such as Regions for Economic Change can help to bring these initiatives into the mainstream. However, this doesn't happen without systematic follow-up. And of course, we aren't talking only about cross-border issues here. Transnational cooperation through our programmes is becoming increasingly important.

What role could macro-regional strategies play in Europe in the future?

Macro-regional strategies are very important in stimulating cooperation. This cooperation can be effected partly through cross-border cooperation and transnational programmes, but also through other policies and instruments. But I should emphasise that the initiative for any macro-regional strategy should always come from the Member States and regions concerned. Moreover, the issues addressed and the instruments used should go well beyond cohesion policy.

Are you happy with the development of the European groupings for territorial cooperation in Europe? Would you like to see more of them? What should be their main role in the future?

The recent report from the Commission shows that while take-up of European groupings for territorial cooperation has been modest, those regions that participate are generally happy with the instrument. We are therefore trying to reduce the obstacles to establishing new European groupings for territorial cooperation, facilitate the operation of those that exist or are being created, and provide greater opportunities for when they can be used, based on the experience of existing users. So we would like to see more, because we believe that in many circumstances a European grouping for territorial cooperation is a very useful tool. As for their role, clearly it goes beyond managing programmes and projects; it extends to developing strategic planning capabilities at one end and managing specific regional infrastructure at the other.

Where do you see the biggest potential for European Territorial Cooperation in the future?

I see European Territorial Cooperation as a tremendous force breaking down barriers that have existed for many years. Look at the border areas within 'Old' Europe—for example in the Rhine region. Today, you couldn't call the towns either side of the border disadvantaged in any way. Yet 60 years ago, before the Union and its predecessors had started their work, these regions were seriously disadvantaged, remote vis-à-vis their capitals and services, and had roads that went nowhere. Across Europe in general, much work is still to be done, but experience shows that it can succeed.

Where do you think cooperation will be in Europe in 2030?

There will still be a role, though of course it will not be the same as now. It's really important that we are able to show success stories like in the Rhine region mentioned above, or along the old Iron Curtain. I expect to see a greater role for macro-regional strategies, and for transnational programmes. Of course, European Territorial Cooperation is not the only driver behind these developments, and as I said, cooperation goes much deeper than money; though clearly the financial element can be a powerful incentive for cooperation!

ANNEX

CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION PROGRAMMES

1. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Austria-Czech Republic' 2007-13
Website: <http://www.at-cz.eu/>
2. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Austria-Bavaria' 2007-13
Countries participating in programme: Austria, Germany
Website: <http://www.interreg-bayaut.net>
3. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Austria-Hungary' 2007-13
Website: <http://www.at-hu.net>
4. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Slovak Republic-Austria' 2007-13
Website: www.sk-at.eu
5. Cross-border cooperation programme 'France-Wallonia-Flanders' 2007-13
Website: <http://www.interreg-fwvl.eu>
6. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Flanders-Netherlands' 2007-13
Countries participating in programme: Belgium and the Netherlands
Website: <http://www.grensregio.eu/>
7. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Central Baltic' 2007-13
Countries participating in programme: Estonia, Latvia, Finland and Sweden
Website: <http://www.centralbaltic.eu/>
8. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Czech Republic-Poland' 2007-13
Website: <http://www.cz-pl.eu/>
9. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Bavaria-Czech Republic' 2007-13
Countries participating in programme: Germany and the Czech Republic
Website: http://www.stmwvt.bayern.de/EFRE/Interreg_IV/Grenzuebergreifende_Zusammenarbeit/Bayern_Tschechien/
10. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Saxony-Czech Republic' 2007-13
Countries participating in programme: Germany and the Czech Republic
Website: <http://www.ziel3-cil3.eu/de/index.html>
11. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Germany-Netherlands' 2007-13
Website: <http://www.deutschland-nederland.eu>
12. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Mecklenburg-Vorpommern-Brandenburg -Poland (Zachodniopomorskie)' 2007 – 2013
Countries participating in programme: Germany and Poland
Website: <http://www.interreg4a.info/>
13. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Saxony-Poland' 2007-13
Countries participating in programme: Germany and Poland
Website: <http://www.sn-pl.eu/de/index.html>
14. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Fehmarnbelt' 2007-13
Countries participating in programme: Denmark and Germany
Website: <http://www.fehmarnbeltregion.net/>
15. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Syddanmark-Schleswig-K.E.R.N.' 2007-13
Countries participating in programme: Germany and Denmark
Website: <http://www.interreg4a.de>
16. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Estonia-Latvia' 2007-13
Website: <http://www.estlat.eu/>
17. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Spain-France-Andorra' 2007-13
Website: <http://www.poctefa.eu>
18. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Spain-Portugal' 2007-13
Website: <http://www.poctep.eu/>
19. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Greater Region' 2007-13
Countries participating in programme: Belgium, Germany, France and Luxembourg
Website: <http://www.interreg-4agr.eu/>
20. Cross-border cooperation programme 'France-Switzerland' 2007-13
Website: <http://www.interreg-francesuisse.org/>
21. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Upper Rhine' 2007-13
Countries participating in programme: Germany, France and Switzerland
Website: <http://www.interreg-rhin-sup.eu/>
22. Cross-border cooperation programme '2 Seas' 2007-13
Countries participating in programme: Belgium, France, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom
Website: <http://www.interreg4a-2mers.eu>
23. Cross-border cooperation programme 'France (Channel)-England' 2007-13
Website: <http://www.interreg3.com>
24. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Greece-Bulgaria' 2007-13
Website: www.interreg.gr
25. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Greece-Cyprus' 2007-13
Website: www.interreg.gr
26. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Greece-Italy' 2007-13
Website: www.interreg.gr
27. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Hungary-Romania' 2007-13
Website: www.huro-cbc.eu
28. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Hungary-Slovakia' 2007-13
Website: <http://www.husk-cbc.eu>

29. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Ireland-Wales' 2007-13
Website: <http://www.irelandwales.ie/>
30. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Italy-Austria' 2007-13
Website: <http://www.interreg.net>
31. Cross-border cooperation Programme 'Italy-Switzerland' 2007-13
Website: <http://www.interreg-italiasvizzera.it>
32. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Italy-France (ALCOTRA)' 2007-13
Website: <http://www.interreg-alcotra.org>
33. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Italy-France (maritime)' 2007-13
Website: <http://www.maritimeit-fr.net>
34. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Italy-Malta' 2007-13
Website: <http://www.italiamalta.eu>
35. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Italy-Slovenia' 2007-13
Website: <http://www.ita-slo.eu>
36. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Lithuania-Poland' 2007-13
Website: <http://www.lietuva-polska.eu>
37. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Latvia-Lithuania' 2007-13
Website: <http://www.latlit.eu>
38. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Euregio Maas-Rhein' 2007-13
Countries participating in programme: Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands
Website: <http://www.euregio-mr.eu>
39. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Lubuskie-Brandenburg' 2007-13
Countries participating in programme: Germany and Poland
Website: <http://de.plbb.eu>
40. Cross-border cooperation programme 'South Baltic' 2007-13
Countries participating in programme: Denmark, Germany, Lithuania, Poland and Sweden
Website: <http://en.southbaltic.eu>
41. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Poland-Slovak Republic' 2007-13
Website: <http://pl.plsk.eu>
42. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Romania-Bulgaria' 2007-13
Website: www.cbromanianbulgaria.eu
43. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Oresund-Kattegat-Skagerrak' 2007-13
Countries participating in programme: Sweden, Denmark and Norway
Website: <http://www.interreg-oks.eu>
44. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Botnia-Atlantica' 2007-13
Countries participating in programme: Sweden, Finland and Norway
Website: <http://www.botnia-atlantica.eu>
45. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Nord' 2007-13
Countries participating in programme: Finland, Sweden and Norway
Website: <http://www.interregnord.com>
46. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Sweden-Norway' 2007-13
Website: <http://www.interreg-sverige-norge.com>
47. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Slovenia-Austria' 2007-13
Website: <http://www.si-at.eu>
48. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Slovenia-Hungary' 2007-13
Website: <http://www.si-hu.eu>
49. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Slovak Republic-Czech Republic' 2007-13
Website: <http://www.sk-cz.eu>
50. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Spain-External Borders' 2008-13
Website: <http://www.poctefex.eu>
51. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Northern Ireland-Border Region of Ireland-Western Scotland' 2007-13
Website: <http://www.seupb.eu>
52. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Alpenrhein-Bodensee-Hochrhein' 2007-13
Countries participating in programme: Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Liechtenstein
Website: <http://www.interreg.org>
53. Cross-border cooperation programme 'Amazonia' 2007-13
Countries participating in programme: France, Brazil and Suriname
Website: <http://www.europe-guyane.eu>

INSTRUMENT FOR PRE-ACCESSION ASSISTANCE (IPA) CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION PROGRAMMES

1. IPA Cross-border cooperation programme 'Hungary-Croatia' 2007-13
Website: <http://www.hu-hr-ipa.com>
2. IPA Cross-border cooperation programme 'Hungary-Serbia' 2007-13
Website: <http://www.hu-srb-ipa.com>
3. IPA Cross-border cooperation programme 'Bulgaria-the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia' 2007-13
Website: <http://www.ipa-cbc-007.eu>
4. IPA Cross-border cooperation programme 'Bulgaria-Serbia' 2007-13
Website: <http://www.ipacbc-bgrs.eu>
5. IPA Cross-border cooperation programme 'Bulgaria-Turkey' 2007-13
Website: <http://www.ipacbc-bgtr.eu>
6. IPA Cross-border cooperation programme 'Greece-Albania' 2007-13
Website: www.interreg.gr
7. IPA Cross-border cooperation programme 'Greece-the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia' 2007-13
Website: www.interreg.gr
8. IPA Cross-border cooperation programme 'Romania-Serbia' 2007-13
Website: <http://www.romania-serbia.net>
9. IPA Cross-border cooperation programme 'Slovenia-Croatia' 2007-13
Website: <http://www.si-hr.eu>
10. IPA Cross-border cooperation programme 'Adriatic' 2007-13
Countries participating in programme: Italy, Slovenia, Greece, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Albania.
Website: <http://www.adriaticipacbc.org/>

TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION PROGRAMMES

1. Transnational cooperation programme 'North Sea Region' 2007-13
Countries participating in programme: Belgium, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, the United Kingdom and Norway
Website: <http://www.northsearegion.eu>
2. Transnational cooperation programme 'Northern Periphery' 2007-13
Countries participating in programme: Ireland, Finland, Sweden, the United Kingdom, Faroe Islands, Greenland, Iceland and Norway
Website: <http://www.northernperiphery.eu>
3. Transnational cooperation programme 'North-West Europe' 2007-13
Countries participating in programme: Belgium, Germany, Ireland, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and Switzerland
Website: <http://www.nweurope.eu>
4. Transnational cooperation programme 'Alpine Space' 2007-13
Countries participating in programme: Germany, France, Italy, Austria, Slovenia, Liechtenstein and Switzerland
Website: <http://www.alpine-space.eu>
5. Transnational cooperation programme 'Atlantic Area' 2007-13
Countries participating in programme: Ireland, Spain, France, Portugal and the United Kingdom
Website: <http://atlanticarea.ccdr-n.pt>
6. Transnational cooperation programme 'Baltic Sea Region' 2007-13
Countries participating in programme: Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Finland, Sweden, Belarus, Norway and Russia
Website: <http://www.eu.baltic.net/>
7. Transnational cooperation programme 'Caribbean' 2007-13
Countries participating in programme: France (Guadeloupe, St Martin, St Barthelemy, Martinique and French Guiana) and non-member countries bordering the Caribbean Sea, in particular those in the Caribbean Forum of ACP States (CARIFORUM).
Website: <http://www.cr-guadeloupe.fr/>
8. Transnational cooperation programme 'Central Europe' 2007-13
Countries participating in programme: the Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, Hungary, Austria, Poland, Slovenia, Slovakia and Ukraine
Website: <http://www.central2013.eu/>
9. Transnational cooperation programme 'Indian Ocean' 2007-13
Countries participating in programme: France (Réunion) and the countries around the Indian Ocean
Website: <http://www.europereunion.org/>

10. Transnational cooperation programme 'Mediterranean' 2007-13
Countries participating in programme: Greece, Spain, France, Italy, Cyprus, Malta, Portugal, Slovenia, the United Kingdom, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Montenegro
Website: <http://www.programmemed.eu/>
11. Countries participating in programme: Bulgaria, Greece, Italy, Hungary, Austria, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, Serbia and Ukraine
Website: <http://www.southeast-europe.net>
12. Transnational cooperation programme 'South-West Europe' 2007-13
Countries participating in programme: Spain, France, Portugal and the United Kingdom
Website: <http://www.interreg-sudoe.org>
13. Transnational cooperation programme 'Madeira-Açores-Canarias' 2007-13
Countries participating in programme: Portugal and Spain
Website: <http://www.pct-mac.org/>

INTERREGIONAL COOPERATION PROGRAMMES

Interregional Cooperation Programme INTERREG IV C
Countries participating in programme: EU-27, Norway and Switzerland
Website: <http://i4c.eu/>

URBACT II
Countries participating in programme: EU-27, Norway and Switzerland
Website: <http://urbact.eu>

ESPON
Countries participating: EU-27, Norway, Switzerland, Iceland and Liechtenstein
Website: <http://www.espon.eu/>

INTERACT II
Countries participating in programme: EU-27
Website: <http://www.interact-eu.net/>

EU PROGRAMME FOR PEACE AND RECONCILIATION

EU Programme for Peace and Reconciliation 2007 -13 (PEACE III)
Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland
Website: <http://www.seupb.eu/>

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/cooperate/cooperation/index_en.cfm

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