Interreg turns 25

Luxembourg symbolizing the benefit of 25 years of transborder cooperation

How to celebrate 25 years of transborder cooperation when EU countries seal border crossings to prevent refugees from entering the Union? How to proudly list achievements of cooperation while EU leaders hold emergency talks to share the incoming asylum seekers? The Luxembourgish EU presidency, represented by its Ministry for Sustainable Development and Infrastructure, as well as the Interact Programme did their best to create a festive atmosphere for 25 years of Interreg at the newly opened Luxembourg University at Esch Belval. For a small country like Luxembourg, with almost half of its population having a foreign citizenship, cooperation beyond borders is essential. So the topic had been placed high on the agenda of its EU presidency.

DG Regio’s Commissioner Corina Creţu acknowledged the efforts made. She emphasized that building trust was the essential element of any cooperation. To better explore cooperation needs in border regions, the Commission will launch a public online consultation open until 21 December 2015. Commissioner Creţu called for joint efforts of all EU countries to cope with the present stream of refugees from Syria, Libya and Eritrea. The experience was quite familiar for many Europeans. She recalled that also her family was expelled from their home country in 1945, and had to find a new home.

On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of Interreg, Jean-Christophe Victor, Arte TV film director and geographer, had produced an edition of “Le dessous des cartes” on Interreg. “To introduce me to Interreg I received about 5,000 pages to read - which I did”, he reported. “Interreg is not easy to grasp, in particular the differences between the three strands cross-border, transnational and interregional cooperation, were difficult to understand.” Smiling faces in the audience showed that the message was received. In return, Jean-Christophe Victor’s film was much applauded.
Examples of the benefits of successful cooperation beyond borders were brought up by many speakers from different European regions. In particular, representatives of the outermost areas (OMR) from the Caribbean and the Indian Ocean could not be overlooked as they were dressed up in colourful traditional costumes.

Topics addressed ranged from free movement of labour to common strategies to combat marine pollution. Professor Alejandro Guarín (German Development Institute, Bonn) tested the audience proving that cooperating is actually a genuine human behaviour.

The most important point on the agenda of the 25 year celebration proved to be, as expected: meeting people, talking to each other, networking, exchanging views, eating together – thus paving the way for future cooperation.

Susanne Scherrer
Director of the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat

NEWS

Reminder: EUSBSR Seed Money deadline approaching

Applicants getting ready to submit a proposal to the EUSBSR Seed Money Facility need to contact their respective Priority Area or Horizontal Action Coordinator (PACs/HACs) by Wednesday.

read article

Interreg Baltic Sea Region celebrates European Cooperation Day and 25 years of Interreg

On 22 September neighbours and stakeholders joined the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat (MA/JS) team at its premises in Rostock to celebrate the European Cooperation Day and 25 years of Interreg. The MA/JS colleagues introduced the concept of Interreg, which is all about cooperation and told stories from selected projects.

read article

Solving State aid issues for Interreg projects

State aid is a hot topic these days in the Interreg community. Many programmes have modified their direction, thus allowing new types of project partners to participate and new types of actions to be realised in the projects. Not only authorities, but also advisors and first level controllers are now adjusting to the new situation and are exchanging experience in order to provide the best services
Russia is taking steps to join Interreg Baltic Sea Region

Recently, Russia agreed to the content of the Interreg Baltic Sea Region Programme and has as well nominated national bodies for audit and control to manage its participation in the Programme. Consequently, the Managing Authority and the Joint Secretariat (MA/JS) are now taking further steps to include funding from the European Neighbourhood Initiative (ENI) for Russia in this Cooperation Programme (CP) update.

We welcome new colleagues in Rostock

If you’d like to get in touch with one of our team members, please go to the contacts page.

Marina Kislyak

Marina is a Project Officer, and she is a Champion of Chocolate and Smiles. Marina Kislyak was born in Kaliningrad. She has a diploma in biology from Immanuel Kant Universität Kaliningrad. In 1996-2009 she worked in various positions in different international organisations. During 2010-2014 she was employed at the JTS of Lithuania-Poland-Russia CBC ENPI Programme in Warsaw. Marina is responsible for advice to applicants, assessment and monitoring of projects with the thematic focus on clear waters.

Jan Schmidt

Jan is a Project Officer, and he is a man with a sophisticated sense of humour. Jan Schmidt was born in Berlin. He has conducted studies in the field of Sociology and was employed from 2010 - 2013 at the City of Wittenberge and most recently at Atene KOM GmbH. Jan is responsible for advice to applicants, assessment and monitoring of projects with the thematic focus on energy.

Marcin Kaczmarski

Marcin is a Finance Officer, and he is full of energy and optimism, which is infectious. Marcin Kaczmarski was born in Wschowa, Poland. He has completed an engineering degree at
the Technical University in Szczecin. During 2007-2014 he worked at the Ministry of Infrastructure and Development in Warsaw as Finance and Control Officer. Most recently Marcin was employed at the Centre of European Projects.

Jenő Szecsi

Jenő is a Finance Officer, and he is a dedicated board game geek who thinks that all the spice of life should be put in hot soups. Jenő Szécsi was born in Békéscsaba, Hungary. He graduated as a financial economist in 2000 studied economy and finance and renewable energy at the University of Szeged. Most recently he has worked with EU funded programmes. Jenő and Marcin are responsible for support to applicants and project partners as well as for the monitoring of finances at project level.

Caroline Jacobsson

Caroline is a Communication Officer, she is a type-font nerd and loves regional food. Caroline Jacobsson was born in Lund, Sweden. She has a degree in Marketing in East Asia and has spent a few years working in China, after which she moved to Brussels and Amsterdam to work in communications and marketing for organisations, such as the European Metalworkers’ Federation and Greenpeace International. Caroline is responsible for the implementation of the Programme’s communication strategy, for advice to projects on communication issues and for facilitating MA/JS internal communication.

COMING EVENTS

Open Days 2015
12–15 Oct 2015 | Brussels, Belgium
further information

4th Annual Forum of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region
29–30 Oct 2015 | Ulm, Germany
further information

3rd meeting of the Interreg Baltic Sea Region Monitoring Committee
18–19 Nov 2015 | Malmö, Sweden
further information