



22 May, 2014
Brussels



Policy sharing, policy learning

INTERREG IVC THEMATIC CAPITALISATION EVENT



Event Report

Published: June 2014

Contents

Introduction	3
Opening Session.....	4
Panel discussion.....	4
Thematic workshops	7
Networking	22
Conclusions: Telling the story of the day.....	22
Participants overview and feedback	24



Introduction

The Thematic Capitalisation event “Policy sharing, policy learning”, organised by the INTERREG IVC programme, informed the participants on the latest policy trends and best practices available from all around Europe resulting from the analysis of the projects in 12 thematic areas.

Over 300 participants from 26 different countries attended workshops on 12 policy themes, ranging from innovation to the environment.

Over the last seven years, the INTERREG IVC programme has been enabling public institutions all over Europe – over 2000 in total – to ‘learn through cooperation’ across 204 different interregional projects aimed at improving regional policies.



For two years, a team of thematic experts have been analysing, benchmarking, and capitalising on the wealth of knowledge generated by projects working on similar regional development issues.

Overview:

- **300** participants
- **26** countries represented
- **60** speakers
- **12** thematic workshops

This one-day event was focused on the durability of project results and how cooperation helps meet Europe’s regional development objectives.

Thematic specialists and practitioners presented the knowledge acquired through interregional cooperation and discussed the latest policy trends and common challenges identified in European regions. It was an opportunity to meet good practice owners and policymakers from all governance levels and learn about innovative solutions that could be useful and easily transferable to your region.



Opening Session



Michel Lamblin, Programme Director of INTERREG IVC, welcomed the speakers and the participants and kicked-off the event with a presentation of the achievements of INTERREG IVC through seven years of work:

- By the **thousands of organisations** who have been involved in interregional cooperation projects: 14,000 organisations applied to be part of an INTERREG IVC project, 2500 of them succeeded;
- By the secretariat, who have studied thousands of project applications (1357 to be precise), followed closely more than **200 projects**;
- By our **capitalisation experts**, who have benchmarked, analysed and distilled the most important information into manageable bites;

He invited the participants to make the most of the networking and learning opportunities of the day.

Panel discussion

Katrina Sichel, the moderator of the event, opened the plenary session presenting the five speakers on the stage.

Ioannis Kaplanis, OECD

Colin Wolfe, European Commission

Markku Markkula, Committee of Regions

Erwin Siweris, INTERREG IVC

Peter Heydebreck, Inno AG



The panel discussion developed around the INTERREG IVC initiative linked to the needs of regions that aim to achieve EU objectives. The participants were invited to reflect on the role of benchmarking, the use of knowledge covered by many initiatives of EC and OECD and how INTERREG IVC contribute to this. The debate went on with the input from one of the expert analysts in the 12 thematic capitalisation topics. The expert focused the attention on the usefulness of the “capitalisation process” related to the benchmark, analysis and comparison of specific cooperation projects as was carried out for INTERREG IVC. The discussion ended with an overview on future perspectives of the interregional cooperation and presentation of the INTERREG EUROPE Programme.

What **use** can interregional cooperation in particular be **to regions**? **Reuse of knowledge**: how can it be exploited? **Good practices**: from good to best. What do regions have to gain from **sharing knowledge**?



Ioannis Kaplanis stressed the importance of benchmarking regional policies in order to make them more effective and to make sure that the right policies are adopted in the right regions. He presented the OECD regional database and the metropolitan database serving as basis for benchmarking exercises:

www.oecd.org/gov/regional-policy/regionalstatisticsandindicators.htm

Colin Wolfe highlighted the necessity of an increased effort to capitalise on knowledge in the EU. He has outlined that the framework Europe is working in nowadays is much different than it was at the start of INTERREG IVC. Europe has gone through economic and financial crises and has now to reinforce the efforts to ensure public money reaches measurable results. For example through the smart specialisation strategies regions will have to focus on implementing the best ideas in the most intelligent way.

“To be smart with public money, we must draw on the best ideas from all over the world.”



Markuu Markkula remarked the fact that the smart specialisation strategies are also built on European partnerships. He has also highlighted that INTERREG IVC established the basis for a more bottom-up approach of policy making in the future.

“Capitalisation is about re-using and re-creating existing knowledge.”

Erwin Siweris, pointed out that the main driver behind the thematic capitalisation exercise was to exploit the treasure of good practices from INTERREG IVC projects. He also shortly described the future programme INTERREG Europe in its main features. Policy learning and knowledge exchange will be reinforced through a new instrument – the policy learning platforms.

“We felt that we need to lift the treasure of good practices from our projects.”



Peter Heydebreck pointed out that while analysing the projects in the field of ‘Innovation Systems’ he was impressed by the ‘treasure’ of good practices. In his view the INTERREG IVC Capitalisation initiative has increased the motivation and the competence of regions on learning.

“It takes a lot of trust and courage to share not only the good practices but also the worst practices. This is crucial to newcomers that are starting to work on certain policies.”



Europe has undergone financial and economic crises, which fundamentally shapes the current environment for regional policy. Regions need to spend their funds in an intelligent and focused way, always keeping a result oriented approach. Partnerships and cooperation are crucial to achieve this.



Thematic workshops

After the plenary, the thematic experts were invited on the stage to present in 2 minutes their workshops and to convince the audience why they should attend.



12 thematic workshops moderated by the experts in the field took place with the presence of practitioners to stimulate new ideas and give inspiration presenting the latest policy trends directly from the source.

During these thematic sessions the participants were given the opportunity to attend 3 workshops out of 12 that covered a variety of topics: innovation, entrepreneurship, sustainable energy, transport, rural development, demographic change, climate change.

The objective of these sessions was to provide insight and learning opportunities about INTERREG IVC results and discuss the findings of the analysis on specific thematic areas.

The experts presented their recommendations and lessons learnt from the analyses of over 100 INTERREG IVC projects in the 12 topics giving the floor also to the good practice owners who shared their experience.





Innovation systems

How can regional innovation systems be strengthened?



Peter Heydebreck, thematic capitalisation expert, believes that there is no consultancy or professor in the world to whom the design of the innovation system of a region could be outsourced. Instead, it makes a lot of sense to engage in partnerships with peers for mutual learning.

“Effective and efficient innovation systems are the only credible base for competitiveness.”

Jean-Marie Pruvot, Director of NFID (FR), presented the ASTRIDE online platform (a good practice example analysed within the topic) for mapping regional innovation stakeholders and assessing innovative and economic performance of local companies in Nord-Pas de Calais region in France. In the beginning it was only a tool to share information within the network, now it helps public authorities to get information about the activities of organisations involved in economic development, thus it evolved into a reporting tool towards policy makers.



“The two impressive things about ASTRIDE is that it’s a live database, meaning that the information is permanently updated and second, the indicators developed within the tool help public intervention towards companies to be more efficient and effective.” – **Nicolas Singer, INTERREG IVC**



Europe is facing worldwide competition in terms of research, education, manufacturing facilities and infrastructures. Innovation holds the key for future economic development on a regional, national and European level. Well-functioning innovation systems are in turn the prerequisite for that innovation to take place. INTERREG projects addressing different functions of the innovation system share similar challenges and have worked towards overcoming these barriers in order to improve their innovation systems in terms of ‘lock-in effects’, fragmentation, system infrastructure, creating synergies, increasing the capability to design effective innovation policies or creating networks of professionals.



Renewable energy

Which opportunities for regions, in terms of energy security, economic performance and social inclusion?

Astrid Severin and Katharina Krell, thematic capitalisation experts, gave an overview of the 8 INTERREG IVC projects focused on renewable energy and the 259 good practices identified and analysed. The main challenges encountered consisted of poor knowledge of the renewable energy potential and social resistance. The average person is in favour of renewable energy as long as his house and his routine are not concerned.



Ioannis Fallas, Director of the West Macedonia Bioenergy and Environment Cluster (EL), stressed the importance of changing the mentality and making people understand that renewable energy is not only a good thing, but is something we can put into practice. In addition, in a period of crisis the use of renewable energy can create more jobs and can also stimulate high quality competitiveness among companies.

Melanie Rasquin, Coordinator of the Grants and Partnerships unit of the municipality of Schaerbeek (BE), explained that the most useful tools while implementing projects have been: clusters/networks creation based on a strong cooperation, study visits and mini programmes. In addition, the involvement of politicians is also essential for the successful implementation of the project, this was the case of EU 2020 which has been supported by the Deputy Mayor. The success of this project has also changed the opinion of the politicians on EU programmes, they are now more interested in participating in EU projects and programmes.



For **Sixto Santonja-Hernandez**, Project Manager at ITE (ES), the financial aid alone is not as helpful as we could imagine. On the contrary, it could create a vicious circle where initiatives exist as long as they are financed by national/local sources. On the contrary, programmes offering a targeted financial support could encourage the systematic use of renewable energy more effectively.



This workshop explored policy instruments that regions can use for boosting renewable energy use from the perspectives of regional authorities, industry and research centres. At the regional level, the moderators pointed out that the achievements should be capitalised in order to avoid losing the experience of spin off activities and incubators. In order to support a successful capitalisation of the regional experience, it is also necessary to have a good communication strategy which could circulate information among stakeholders at an early stage and disseminate the experience of successful projects.



Rural development

Which recommendations and good practices to stimulate rural development?

Marie-Jose Zondag and Bart Van Herck, thematic capitalisation experts, encouraged the participants to explore all types of innovation: product innovation as slow farms or process innovation with the use of open source; marketing innovation by promoting gastronomy as well as organisational innovation by supporting new public/private governance models on forest management. They also believe that the success of the rural regions is strongly related to networks, both internal and external.



“ICT is a driver for growth and jobs in rural regions.”

“Most of the projects did not work on technological innovation, but on social innovation. Social innovation is open for all regions, also for rural regions.”



Thomas Ducloutrier, Head of Territorial Cooperation Regional Tourism Development Board of Auvergne (FR), presented The Nattitude initiative (ICER project) which consists of the creation of a network of local tourist accommodations and development of a quality label.

“This innovative policy, very nature oriented, is based on a book of ideas used as a tool to advise accommodation owners to combine natural qualities of the region with the expectations of today’s clientele (well-being, environmental respect, discovery of the destination, etc). This group of accommodation owners benefit from specific promotion, marketing and advice for free from the Auvergne Regional Tourism Development Board, but they also benefit from a strong network effect by sharing their know-how.”



Vanessa Garwood, Consultant of the Blue-eyed Tiger Consulting (UK) reported on some of good practices from B2N project, an interregional approach to SMEs and entrepreneurship policies in natural areas. The focus was on SMEs that benefit from/depend upon the region’s natural attractiveness and have a particular potential for developing tourism-related economic activities by assisting them to develop and grow in a more innovative and sustainable way. URNATUR, a small eco lodge, is an example of high quality and responsible eco-tourism. The business concept is a woodland hermitage providing events and conference space, recreational retreat and a calm place in beautiful nature.

“It is in off-the-grid forest but promotes a luxury-is-simplicity message.”



Ken Gericke, INTERREG IVC e-CREATE Project Coordinator at the Ministry of Regional Development and Transport Saxony-Anhalt (DE), presented the smartphone application “Halberstadt App” which was developed by the municipality in close cooperation with tourism service provider from the region. For instance, it enables biking and motorcycling tourists to book an accommodation on their way. The application is free for the users as it works with open source software and links to already existing online services (e.g. booking tools).



“Be aware of the impact of your actions inside and outside of the project.”

“The sense of local identity is important, but services need to address the outside world as well.”

Vaido Mikheim, Project Manager at the Tartu Science Park (EE), shared the experience from GRISI PLUS project on how to attract knowledge centres to rural areas. The geomatic tools such as interactive maps and web-based geoportals enable policymakers to visually represent a wide range of data and information, thereby making the locally more attractive, and better able to attract teleworkers and other potential new inhabitants.



Irmgard Starmann, Director of InKnowCom (DE), presented the “Bauernhofferien” association which connects farms offering tourist accommodation (DANTE project). When the information and booking services were centralised in one website, the interest declined in a first stage as the individual information on the locality and its specialities were missed out. One key lesson learnt is the importance of local identity. They also developed a model for innovation.



“No broadband without public funding”



Rural areas have large potential for development in the realms of (local) tourism, cultural heritage, innovations, entrepreneurship etc. ICT and broadband is a key means to foster economic development in rural areas, but not an objective. Public funding is indispensable for providing broadband access. However, investments are much more efficient if they seek integrated solutions instead of tackling individual sectorial needs.



Creative industries

How to develop sustainable and innovative regional policies for creative industries?

Sylvia Amann and Bastian Lange, thematic capitalisation experts, focused the debate on the policy lessons from creative industries and their experiences as experts for the INTERREG IVC thematic capitalisation initiative. They emphasised the importance of the policies supporting innovation and the access to new international markets.

Alexandra Pisco, Director of Maison de Mode (FR), described how bringing new designers to the region through Maisons de Mode gave the town/ region (Lille, Roubaix) a new feel, attracted new attention to it. Their activities helped to revive a difficult neighbourhood with activities engaging local people, young and old. Regarding internationalisation, its 400 points of sale in 20 countries opened the door to new designers and belonging to Maisons de Mode provided them with credibility at the fashion shows.

“Policymakers need to get the real CCI people on board for CCI strategy to work.”

Renate Ortmanns-Möller, Responsible for regional development and EU coordination at District Administration in Lüchow-Dannenberg (DE), presented a good practice from her rural district, which brought together students from German universities and linked them to local SMEs during a 2-week design camp. As an outcome, several products developed during the Grunewerkstatt already reached the market: a nesting box for children education and a package designed for local organic juice. The key to success is to keep all stakeholders involved.

“Specific examples of the design work help persuade investors.”

Tom Cahill-Jones, Cross Innovation Project Manager (UK) and **Nina Lakeberg**, Policy Researcher (UK-DE) made the case for the role of creative industries outside the CCI sector. They highlighted that for cross-innovation, i.e. for exchanges among sectors, the key issue is trust. Identifying ‘creative quarters’ in cities is a starting point; but then it is necessary to look for other ‘sector quarters’ and make links among them. Cross-innovation can go also to the international scene when SMEs from various countries and various ‘growth’ sectors link to work together on new products and services.



Culture and creative industries (CCI) play an important role in regional development: they shape the image of a region and can provide it with an economic comparative advantage. A region that wants to develop CCI strategy needs to involve CCI entrepreneurs in the process from the very start. A region aiming for internationalisation of its CCI sector can use CCI networks which help entrepreneurs reach new markets. CCI is also a driver of innovation as its creativity can spill over to other sectors via open innovation and cross-innovation. Cross-innovation is an innovation merging two different sectors to generate new products and services.



Innovation capacity of SMEs

How to support SMEs to boost their innovation capacity?

Philippe Delearde and **Séverine Ouvry**, thematic capitalisation experts, showed how the good practices selected from 7 INTERREG IVC projects provide a pre-validated solution to the 5 main barriers to innovation identified:

- Financial resources, R&D Card from DISTRICT+ (VästraGötaland);
- Innovation management skills, Parenthood Projects from ERIK ACTION (Flanders);
- Networking and cooperation, Innovation Assistant from ERIK ACTION (LowerAustria);
- Lack of research capabilities, Innovation Regional Network from INNOHUBS (Loures);
- Marketing of innovation and innovative products and services, Foreign Trade Fairs from PERIA (Saxony-Anhalt).



Christophe Lecante, Founder and CEO of TecKnowMetrix (FR), explained that in France most of the innovation programmes are focused on infrastructures (Cloud, big data). This should change and programmes should be addressed to SMEs since innovation is created close to the markets by identifying problems that need to be solved. It is crucial to help SMEs to have local and early adopters, as well as to create connections with high potential of business between big groups and SMEs.



"We really need to link money with intelligence when financing entrepreneurs." - **Peter Heydebreck, Inno AG, Germany**

"The Stock Exchange and the Association of Incubators signed an agreement to create a joint crowdfunding platform in order to support start-ups to find some alternative funding." - **Karolina Iwinska, City of Warsaw, Poland**

"Crowdfunding cannot be the full part of the answer. If you want to fund a company, buy its products." - **Philippe Delearde, Inno AG, France**



There are more than 20 million SMEs in the EU which represent 99% of businesses. SMEs are a key driver for economic growth, innovation, employment and social integration. The question is how do we allow SMEs to realise their full potential in today's global economy? At EU level, the heterogeneous legislation which sometimes changes substantially from one Member State to another represents one of the main barriers which impedes the growth of SMEs' innovation capacity and competitiveness in Europe. The harmonisation of legislation could help SMEs to spread in Europe before expanding to USA.



Energy efficiency

How can energy efficiency policy goals be achieved?



Koen Rademaekers, Robert Williams and Marie-Jose Zondag, thematic capitalisation experts, took the floor to give participants an overview of the current energy efficiency policy opportunities and mechanisms. They illustrated some key policy developments, mainly the Energy Efficiency Directive and the objective of supporting more investment in Energy Efficiency via structural funds and how INTERREG projects have demonstrated the feasibility of the policies.



Brian Ahern, Project Engineer at the Cork County Council (IE), reflected on the key to energy efficiency: the available data. Only with collecting enough and good data one is in a position to develop sustainable and suitable energy schemes.

“Get your data right!”

Frédéric Delhommeau, Project Manager at Prioriterre (FR), highlighted the importance of the sociology aspect of energy efficiency. Reaching out to the different groups of society requires the use of different and adapted tools.



“People often think they already do everything that is possible, but this is mostly not true. There are still many areas on an individual level which would lead to more energy efficiency.”

Helle Knudsen, Chief Consultant in the Region of Southern Denmark (DK), presented some good practices identified in the LoCaRe INTERREG IVC Project. The master plan “strategic energy planning” concept, involving businesses, the community and energy supply-demand side, was an example of transferable approach involving a multitude of players.



If the field of energy efficiency is divided in 4 blocks: product energy efficiency, industry energy efficiency, transport energy efficiency and building energy efficiency; only for the transport and building blocks, regional policies can have a significant impact. For products and the industry the decision level is either EU or national. And from the results so far, energy efficiency is not that high on the political agendas of the EU or nations, which makes the regional level even more important.

“As a matter of fact there are lots of (good) policies for energy efficiency, but so far the implementation is poor.”



Demographic change

Can demographic change also be an opportunity for a region?



Roos Galjaard, thematic capitalisation expert, opened the workshop with an overview of the capitalisation exercise, including the policy context and gave the floor to the INTERREG IVC project representatives who have shown possible solutions to deal with the consequences of demographic change.

Perti Hermmank, Founder of PH Project management & Consulting (DE), explained that demographic trends are one of the biggest challenges Europe is facing. Meeting the demographic challenges through the consolidation of human capital and the maintenance of public services are key factors in regional policies which intend to overcome the issue.

Iina Oilinki, Senior Adviser at the City Competitiveness Unit of the City of Helsinki (FI), affirmed that Europe needs innovative solutions and improved policies that enable efficient social and health care services. Service design is a simple and powerful tool to tackle societal challenges. It puts people at the centre of its approach and brings the users' point of view to innovation processes.

Dominique Lorette, European Affairs Officer at Regional Council of Lorraine (FR), mentioned that even though in France the organisations in charge of the implementation of policies dedicated to elderly are at national level, the county councils and municipalities, Lorraine region understood the importance of tackling this issue also at regional level. For this reason the region decide to participate in INTERREG IVC project. After four years of cooperation, and thanks to the lessons learnt, the regional Council of Lorraine decided to improve its own regional policies.

“To be successful in dealing with demographic change we should also change the mindset of the decision makers.”



Demographic change is a fact. Regional population decline is due to combined factors such as outmigration, low fertility rate and ageing population. This has an impact on public services which are slow to be adapted to the new societal needs. The main challenge for the European Regions is to turn the demographic change from a problem in to an opportunity and to implement public policies to increase the liveability of areas and the quality of life for the inhabitants.



Entrepreneurship

What are the prerequisites for entrepreneurship policy?

Arjan de Bruin, Gosse Hiemstra, Marloes Sikkema and Astrid Severin, thematic capitalisation experts, explained to the audience why it is important to support entrepreneurs and how can they implement an effective support tool.

“In the light of Smart Specialisation Strategies, regional authorities can support entrepreneurs to exploit a region’s unique knowledge & skills, thereby creating competitive advantage for the region.”

The speakers were invited to express their views on the following **key points**:

All stakeholders in a region can effectively collaborate on entrepreneurship support.

According to **Cristina Marina**, Project Manager in the social entrepreneurship area at Ada-und-Theodor-Lessing-Volkshochschule Hannover (DE), businesses need a stable environment to flourish and creating partnerships between stakeholders takes time and requires trust.

Bob Pels, General Manager of European Territorial Cooperation project in the Province of Flevoland (NL) has explained that in Flevoland all stakeholders collaborate effectively; however to even more convincing of the value of cooperation, small and simple projects such as ‘Summer Entrepreneurship’ are needed.

Supporting social entrepreneurs is better than financing charities.

Cristina Marina affirmed that social enterprises can empower certain groups such as the unemployed, disadvantaged or minorities and thus contribute to social inclusion. Those businesses have survived the economic crisis, some have even flourished.

Astrid Severin argued that social entrepreneurs can create a lot of added value; though, every entrepreneur should be a bit social.





The role of policymakers is to reduce red tape rather than to create different kinds of support.

For **Christian Weinberger**, Senior Adviser in DG Enterprise & Industry at European Commission (BE), reducing the administrative burden is of utmost importance for entrepreneurs. In this regard, public authorities have a key role to play.

“Entrepreneurship refers to an individual's ability to turn ideas into action. It includes creativity, sense of initiative, innovation and risk-taking, as well as the ability to plan and manage projects.”



Terry O'Brien, EU Projects Manager with the South-East Regional Authority (IE), affirmed entrepreneurship education should also be encouraged and promoted from primary school to university so that people can develop a genuine entrepreneurial attitude.



Small firms depend on entrepreneurs – the individuals who have the ideas and are willing to take the risks necessary to get a firm off the ground. Europe needs more entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurs are not just a driving force for economic and job creation; they can also contribute to solving social issues such as low employment rate or the exclusion of certain groups. To really help entrepreneurs, it might be necessary to develop tailor-made support tools for separate segments of entrepreneurs and for businesses in each phase of the business life cycle. Nevertheless, successful entrepreneurship support is not just a matter of offering some stand-alone support tools, but of a long-term, comprehensive entrepreneurship policy.





Eco-innovation

What regional actors can do to keep their region green and sustainable?



Asel Doranova, Laura Roman, Geert Van Der Veen, thematic capitalisation experts, provided an overview on the approaches to eco-innovation and types of good practices identified in the INTERREG IVC projects and their contribution to smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

“Projects have given a push to the dialogue between policymakers and industry and expect it to continue in future.”

Ingrid Rozhon, Project Manager at Lower Austria Regional Government (AT), presented the Eco-management voucher scheme of Lower Austria which is a demand-driven voucher scheme, designed to motivate enterprises and municipalities in starting the process of environmental management. Among its strategic goals, the scheme aims to increase the number of organisations with environmental management schemes (EMAS, ISO). Depending on their size and the number of environmental measures that they commit to adopt, businesses and municipalities are awarded 2 to 8 days of project consultation.

Henrik Poulsen, Manager at The Green Entrepreneur House (DK), pointed out that green start-ups that need support in the stages of ‘proof of concept’ and ‘proof of business’ when they have to demonstrate the financial viability of their product/business. The Copenhagen Cleantech Cluster (CCC) makes networks, mentoring and financing opportunities available to start-ups with the aim of helping them unfold their cleantech potential. The CCC is an example of triple helix cooperation, bringing together private companies, public authorities and research institutions.



Marko Mälly, Senior Advisor International Affairs Regional Council of Päijät-Häme (FI), made the case for the Päijät-Häme Region about the cooperation between businesses and the knowledge institutions needed to be reinforced. To bridge this gap, eco-innovation was included as a component of the Research and innovation strategy for smart specialisation (RIS3) of the Päijät-Häme Region. Among the measures to be supported: eco-innovation in waste management and recycling, green public procurement and eco-innovative SME internationalisation.



Mikheim Vaido, from Tartu Science Park, highlighted that the transfer of good practices poses a number of difficulties in the field of eco-innovation. There is a timing issue to be solved in the cooperation between universities and SMEs: the former act with a view of 5 to 10 years whereas the latter need to act within 5 to 10 weeks. Bridging this gap is one of the challenges ahead.



Besides its environmental benefits, eco-innovation also has an important economic and societal dimension, in terms of turnover generated, jobs created and quality of life improved. Introducing eco-innovation measures is an opportunity for companies, organisations and regions to improve their image and can result in a market advantage in the long run.

When adopting new eco-innovative practices, your regional context must be taken into account and this has to do with the economy of your region, its regulatory framework, technological maturity and natural profile, as well as citizens’ readiness to accept eco-innovation.



Sustainable transport

What are the models and the policies for dealing with the challenges of European energy and transport trends?

Robert Stussi, Marco Mastretta and Joachim Bergerhoff, thematic capitalisation experts, opened the debate giving the audience an insight into the main findings from INTERREG IVC projects and presenting the common sustainable transport challenges at regional level:

- to develop local administrations' planning capacities
- to increase modal share for sustainable transport modes
- to build adequate political commitment.

"Political commitment is so necessary to make things work"- **Marco Mastretta, Perform Energia, Portugal**

"For a transfer to work you need the staff to be capable"
Joachim Bergerhoff, STIB, Belgium



Malgorzata Ratkowska, specialist on international projects at City Hall of Gdansk (PL), talked about getting people to cycle and bus to school rather than parents individually driving their child to school. She emphasised that in adopting practices from elsewhere it is necessary to adapt the practice to your specific situation. Also, it is important to raise the awareness of users on practices that really work.

Sergio Alegre Calero, Vice Mayor of Local Government (ES), evidenced that when considering pollution created by airports, many people don't realise that only 50% of the emissions come from aeroplanes. The rest comes from the other activities linked to the airport, such as staff getting to the airport. Finding ways to optimise processes to make them more efficient is essential. An example of this would be a bus service tailored to the needs of airport workers. Users in different locations send a text requesting the service, an efficient route is planned and the user is informed of the schedule and a pick up point. Another interesting point that was emphasised by several speakers throughout the day was that getting the attention of politicians is crucial. Getting them to come to site visits and see with their own eyes has an irreplaceable effect on them in promoting practices. Much better than setting a report on their desk. Perhaps site visits should be shorter, this would make it easier for them to attend given budgetary constraints these days.



Live demonstration is the most powerful tool in convincing decision makers. All practices discussed in the workshop (smart bus transport for airport workers, cycling to school) do not rely on developing new technology but using available means more effectively.

With growing freight and passenger transport, pollution and congestion risk is aggravating. Europe Union is now focusing on a form of mobility that is sustainable, energy-efficient and respectful of the environment.



E-government services

What are the challenges and the opportunities of e-government services ?



Christophe Pannetier and Gil Goncalves, thematic capitalisation experts, opened the discussion with an introduction of the main results and policy recommendations from the Capitalisation exercise.

“The problem is not to develop an adequate digital policy, but ‘to digitise’ public policies.”

“The success of IT development depends on the strong support of policymakers...and on the ‘triple involvement’: policymakers, public authorities and the stakeholders.”

Giovanni Grazia, ICT Project Manager at Regione Emilia Romagna (IT), highlighted 3 key principles that must be taken into account when developing e-government services:

- Invest in people before investing in tools: training staff to use new technologies is essential
- Collaborate rather than negotiate with ICT suppliers
- Capability to adapt to change is very important

Isabella Marangoni, European Policies Officer at City of Venice (IT), has outlined that thanks to ICT the public administration has started considering also the needs of the users i.e. the citizens. Social innovation and digital divide are also key issues to be tackled. The use of ICT in the public sector may also deepen the socioeconomic disparity between users who have access to technology and are capable of using it and users who don't. This aspect must always be taken into consideration when developing e-government services. At the same time, ICT can be the tool to reduce disparities (e.g. easier access to services for people with disabilities).

“Digital by default can be good but digital is not good by default.”

Eva Lundin, Senior Advisor at Hedmark County Council (NO), indicated as the main problem the mentality of many civil servants, who are often reluctant to change procedures and apply innovative solutions.

Carlos Nêves, Vice-President at CCDR Coordinator in the Group OERN (PT), underlined the importance to move towards public-private-population partnerships and enhancing ICT in the public sector is the way to achieve this.



E-government is not only a matter of technology, it is mainly a matter of policies. ICT offers new and more innovative opportunities that can potentially impact the way public services are provided to citizens. The key challenge is trying to improve the way these services are delivered so as to ensure more efficiency. The key to success is to renew the overall structure/organisation of the public administration.



Climate change

How to face the challenges on climate change adaptation and mitigation?



Jennifer McGuinn and Venelina Varbova, thematic capitalisation experts, welcomed the participants and the invited speakers with a presentation of the main outcomes and findings stemming from the analysis of INTERREG IVC climate change projects.

The debate was dedicated to the analysis of the key climate change challenges and drivers for action at regional level, the main achievements of the projects in relation to EU climate policies and the usefulness of project results for other European regions.

“Not all is climate change, some of it is just typical Brussels weather.”
Jennifer McGuinn, Milieu Ltd Belgium

Age Niels Holstein, Project Manager for the Nieuw-West City District of Amsterdam (NL), focused his intervention mainly on tools, like heat maps. He reminded everyone that it was not only about working on climate change as such. There is a broader context which can also help to motivate people, when geared more towards individual behaviour. Demonstration projects play a key role.



Mario Hergesell, Hydrologist at the Hessian Agency for the Environment and Geology (DE), reflected on the work carried out in the WaterCore project and emphasised that it was necessary to continue with the cooperation. The project has built an action group on regional governance to implement the regional action plans.



Étienne Viénot, Project Manager at Rhonalpennergie-Environment (FR), presented the observatory structure in France, which works as a good facilitator for regions or municipalities. He also highlighted that there was a dire need for funding actions and less studies: information was already widely available, but it was necessary to act upon those.



Regions are key players to help combat climate change, both in terms of mitigation and adaptation. Climate impacts and vulnerabilities as well as capacities for adaptation are therefore determined at local and regional levels, where detailed information and strategic action plans are required. Closer cooperation between national and regional governments is needed in order to translate national and European targets and objectives into the regional context.

Networking

This event has provided a space for networking that served as a good starting point for building future partnerships or even project opportunities. It was the place to meet hundreds of like-minded people to share ideas and to make contacts with potential prospects.



Conclusions: Telling the story of the day

A group of professional artists gave a performance on the capitalisation process of INTERREG IVC and the ways regions could use its results.

They interpreted with acting the **key messages** for achieving effective policy learning and sharing:

- **study** all available information
- **communicate** and **cooperate** with other stakeholders to receive even more information on the best practices you think might be useful for your region
- **convince** decisionmakers of your regions to be involved



A video filmed during the event was used where participants reflected on the approach and value of capitalising on existing knowledge.

“Capitalisation is about exploiting and re-using the knowledge capital, it’s all about not reinventing the wheel!”

Magdalini Anagnostou, INTERREG IVC Capitalisation Officer



During the performance, **Michel Lamblin**, INTERREG IVC Programme Director, was invited on the stage and together with the artists gave a short presentation about the INTERREG EUROPE future programme.

“Be ready to involve regional managing authorities in the future projects.”

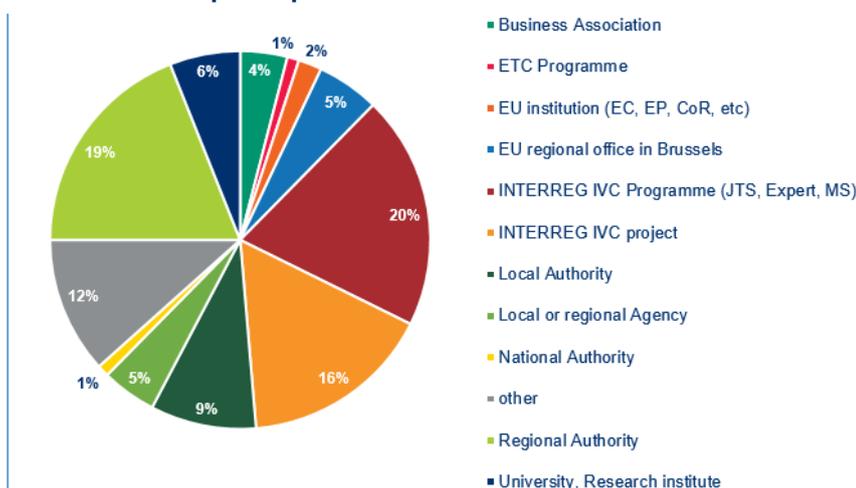
Participants overview and feedback

Over 400 people from 26 different countries showed interest to learn more about the latest policy trends and good practices on 12 policy themes, ranging from innovation to the environment. The event was fully booked before the registration end with 450 people registered.

In total 300 participants attended the “Policy sharing, policy learning” event on 22 May in Brussels.

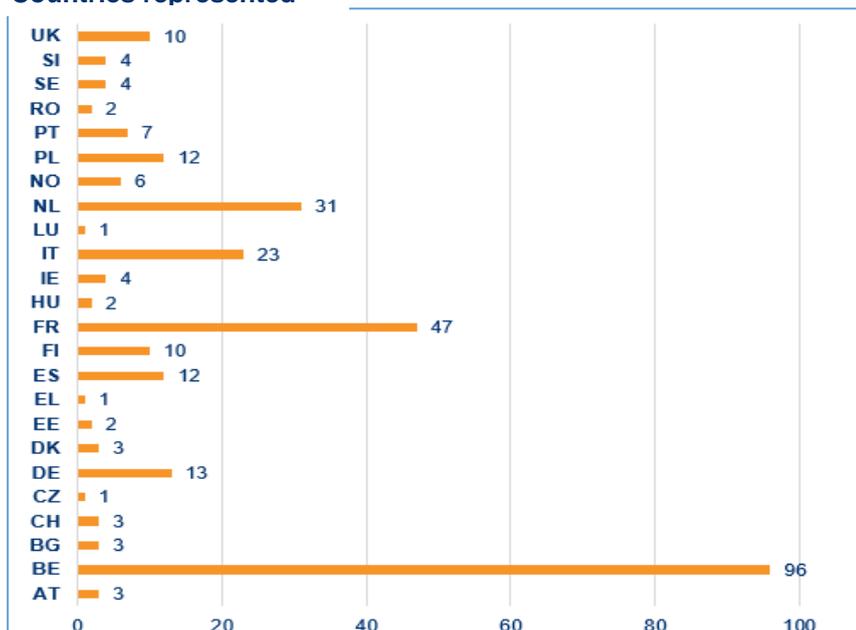
The audience was made up of regional and local authorities, regional development agencies, European Commission staff and other relevant policy-makers and practitioners.

Profile of event participants



16% of participants who joined the event represented INTERREG IVC co-financed projects. 19% and 9% were representatives from regional and local authorities respectively, 20% represented bodies related to the management of the INTERREG IVC programme, the Joint Technical Secretariat, Capitalisation Experts and INTERREG IVC Member State. University and Research institute as well took part in this intensive one day of learning even though with a smaller percentage.

Countries represented



A detailed overview on the participation per country can be seen in the graph on the left.

Belgium, France and Netherlands were the most represented countries. The high presences from Belgium is linked to the fact that the event was organised in Brussels.

22 out of 28 European countries were represented. Norway and Switzerland also had participants.

After the event, an evaluation form was sent to all participants who attended in order to analyse the impact of the event and know how they liked it. 86 participants completed this feedback form. The presented analysis of the evaluation is based on these answers.

The overall feeling from the participant comments is extremely positive given that more than 80% of the respondents found some benefit from the workshops and admitted what they learned will impact their daily work.

Participants expressed their appreciation on how the workshops were structured, the interactive methods used and the set-up of the location in general that stimulated dialogue and creativity thus improving learning and networking opportunities. Several participants appreciated also the innovative idea of using the eco-chairs that were offered later to local schools and reused by children.



Participants feedback figures

- 100 % satisfaction on networking opportunities (good, very good, excellent)
- 97 % respondents said that event met their expectations (good, very good, excellent)
- 66% said that the event will have an impact on their work
- 93% of respondents read the publications
- 67% of respondents read the reports
- 95 % say that reports and publications helped them to improve knowledge on the interregional cooperation issues
- 70% already applied the knowledge and tips from the publications in their daily work

Quotes of the respondents:

About the event

"The event was very useful and created great opportunities for networking."

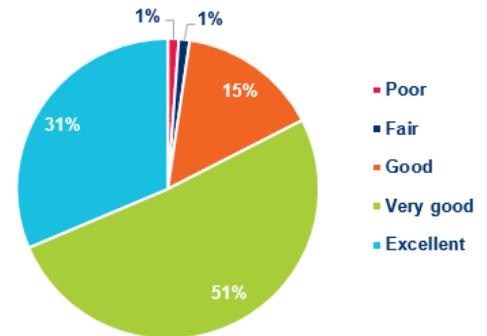
"All the speakers were knowledgeable and engaged, or passionate about their work."

"As we split into different workshops, there was enough time to treat the topics in-depth that you are really interested in. The interactivity was high because of the shared interest and background from the audience and the real experience from the good-practice-speakers."

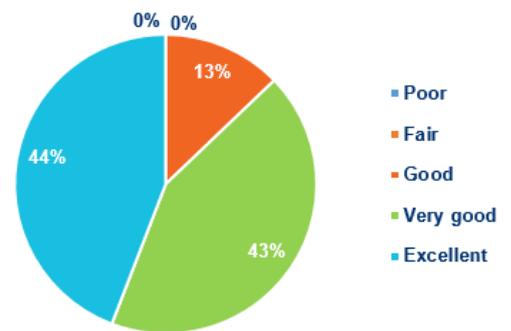
"The agenda was very well designed with a lot of opportunities for networking and direct exchange with the participants."

"The event was very different from all the classic days around European Programs. The cooperation spirit of INTERREG IVC was floating in the air."

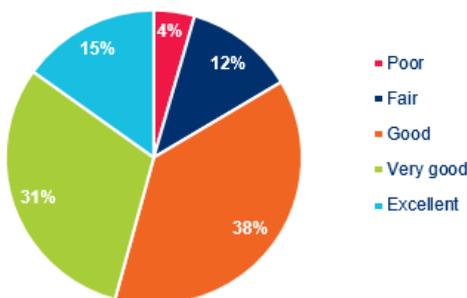
Did the event meet your overall expectations?



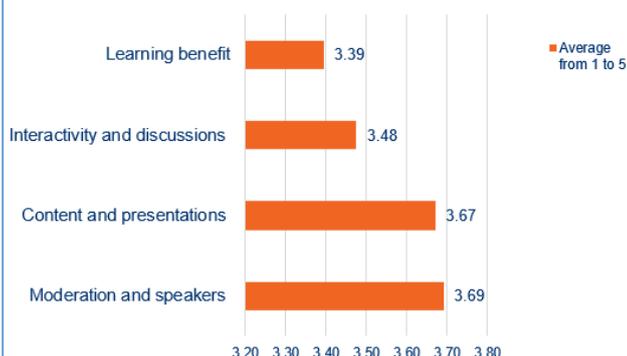
How you liked the networking opportunities



Please evaluate the learning benefit of the workshops



Workshops: overall



What did you learn?

"I got new perspectives and ideas for the new phase of the programme."

"I made interesting contacts for future cooperation projects."

"I learned many things about projects in Europe and the challenges to set up a successful project/business."

"I had a good opportunity to hear about the variety of INTERREG IVC projects, the usefulness of looking for the past projects and the orientations for the future programme as well."

"I learned how to improve the methodology to share the knowledge, experience and knowhow between the participants coming from entire Europe."

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