

Transnational Communication Network Meeting Report

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Vienna, Austria

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Participants Lina Marcinkutė (LM) – European Commission
Julia Chenut (JC) – Alpine Space
Frank Schneider (FS) – Central Europe
Carla Guimaraes (CC) – Atlantic Area
Paulo Emerenciano (PE) – MED
Kirsti Mijnhijmer (KM) – Northern Periphery and Arctic
Andrea Rodriguez (AR) – Sudoe
Irma Astrauskaite (IA) – Interreg Europe
Eloy Gomez Giron (EG) – Danube Transnational Programme
Alexandre Colombani (AC) – North West Europe Programme
Monica Tanaka (MT) - Interact
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Agenda topics, discussions

Inform/Inio update:

MT gave an update on what was presented at the Inform/Inio network meeting namely: The presentation of the 7 Communication Actions sent by the European Commission to Member States to encourage an active mobilisation and increase the visibility of Cohesion Policy; the suggestion to use IVY in Interreg programmes and projects (<https://www.interregyouth.com/>) and the invitation to the Inform/Inio group to reflect on the preparation of the Communication proposals to be included in the draft Regulation to be tabled by DG REGIO in early 2018. It was indicated that a concrete discussion will be scheduled during the next Inform/Inio meeting late November or early December. A proposal on next steps to give input for the drafting of these articles will be sent out with the minutes of the Inform/inio meeting.

<p><u>Interact</u> to circulate the Minutes from the Inform/Inio meeting as soon as they are sent out. <u>Update after the meeting: DONE.</u></p>

Roundtable discussion



Programmes took turn to present their main communication activities for this year:

KM: NPA will hold their annual event on 21 September focusing on Blue Growth; EWRC workshop on Arctic programme cooperation. Interreg Volunteer recruited.

PE: MED's major event took place in May with all the projects; meeting with projects Communication officers of the Horizontal projects (projects that coordinate thematics) to exchange on the state of the art of thematic communities communication strategies.. In September they are launching an initiative of Axis 4: The Governance platform project with Member States. Currently finishing a web platform for communication. They also organised a meeting with other Interreg programmes whose territories overlap with MED. Topics covered ways to work together for partner search and on the future.

MED to circulate notes from the MED meeting with overlapping programmes for information.
Update after the meeting: DONE.

AR: SUDOE is currently working on the implementation of its capitalisation strategy. They aim at implementing a "communication mentoring" approach, a mentoring from projects Communication Officers in order to ensure the long-term sustainability of projects, and to guarantee their continuity at the end of EU funding. Their approach is based on the potential of projects as EU Ambassadors on the ground.

AC: The NWE gaps analysis is almost finished and can be circulated once approved by their Monitoring Committee. The communication rhythm remains very intense with 2 calls per year and a two-step process. Call 5 closed on 24 May and Call 6 closing in November is under preparation. With the support of the CP network, various local events (info days or other type of initiatives aimed at promoting the programme) will be organized until end of September, with a focus on the gap areas identified. NWE is currently looking at the best ways to reach out to these potential applicants. As for each call, a transnational -mainly networking- event, will be organized, this time in The Hague (NL) on 4 October. NWE will also join the Interreg stand at the European Sustainable Energy week, and will organize an EWRC workshop / panel discussion on "Territorial cohesion in the Brexit era" (Tuesday 10 October afternoon) with various speakers including a project LP from the Atlantic programme; other Interreg programmes are very welcome to participate to contribute to the debate. N NWE will also be organizing a workshop at the Atlantic stakeholders' event on 8 November 2017. Finally, NWE is also currently reflecting on its capitalisation strategy and interested in other programmes experience on that level.

NWE to circulate finalised Gaps analysis when approved by MC. *Update after the meeting: DONE.*

CG: First call for Atlantic Area closed in January and the programme is contracting projects at the moment. On the second semester a workshop/training session will be organised for the support of project lead partners Participation in the European Maritime Day at the "Knowledge of the Seas" exhibition stand. It is also planned the participation on the NWE

workshop at the ERWC and they will organise an workshop on the Atlantic stakeholders event in November in Glasgow.

EG: 2nd call for the Danube programme to close this week. Lots of interest from applicants in the area. Support for projects is underway after the Lead Partner seminar and communication training organised in January 2017. The communication training for approved projects counted on the collaboration of other programmes. A Seed money facility event will be organised in the coming months targeting the Danube strategy financing instruments, so other funding will be included too. The Annual Forum of the Danube strategy scheduled in Budapest for 18-19 October 2017 will be co-organised by the Danube Transnational Programme (DTP). For the capitalisation session of the Forum they invited other ETC programmes to join. The DTP Capitalisation Strategy has started to be implemented with all the information already available in the DTP website. They have recruited the first Interreg Volunteer for the Solidarity Corps.

JC: For the Alpine Space a match making event took place early the year. Support to projects is given as well as website training to Lead partners. They will provide a separate communication training to project partners. Call 3 is open. They want to use the mid-term evaluation to look at communication matters too. Instead of capitalization they ask projects to come up with a "mini" strategy for project results for lobbying. Happy to use KEEP as it is now helpful for raw data and maps. Activities to attract the general attention on INTERREG and EU and to link to the 7 communication actions of the EU also by using teaser videos. They are developing short postcards for projects with key info, catchy images or graphics. These are aimed at policy makers and practitioners and inform CPs and MC members to raise awareness on importance of communication. Finally, for lobbying purposes, they try to be present at as many events as possible e.g. EWRC, REGIO stars, EUIMR. They also plan to train CPs and MC members and projects to make messages and promote them, subject to approval by the MC. For them capitalisation is more straightforward: the programme is relatively small, their projects are comparable and can easily make synergies.

FS: Roughly two thirds of Central Europe's programme budget has been committed to 85 projects so far. They have prepared A5 postcards for projects using an excellent editor based in Hungary. Instead of project websites they promote key sites on themes, e.g. environment. Regarding evaluation they are waiting for the 1st report and about half of it focuses on Communication. Externalising it has been positive and it gives legitimacy to the findings. For the Annual Implementation Report they have produced a one-page infograph as a citizen summary. They have a framework contract with the designer for the programming period. Their annual conference on 20-21 September will celebrate their 20th anniversary of cooperation and is organised as a Conference to launch the opening of their call and to have a debate on the future of Cohesion Policy. They have invited Morray Gilland from the Commission, the Polish State Secretary and the event will be moderated by Frank. They will have no workshops as such but on the 2nd day projects will go to different thematic rooms and compete in front of a jury presenting a communication pitch of 2 minutes without using power point presentations. The gamification approach at the annual conference is based on the BBC show "Dragon's Den". They are preparing a video to attract emotion on the 20 years anniversary. Their MC meeting is scheduled in June and includes a point on outreach measures, reaching closer to the national level with support from the CPs. They also suggest

having thematic events for project development. They offer support for projects online and training for website to projects. Social media is gaining importance.

Central Europe to circulate the contact details of the good editor, for information.

IA: Interreg Europe's 130 projects are running and all their websites are hosted by the programme. Everything is working well and it is easy to update for projects – they access the front end (not the CMS). Project partners are trained on story-telling and media relations using an external expert and on social media by internal team members. Hosting project websites seems to be a common practice; Atlantic Area and SUDOE are nevertheless not doing this.

Interreg Europe organised a partner search event in March. Many events were organised physically and online (webinars, videos). For the EWRC they will organise one workshop on Green procurement with the other pan-European programmes (URBACT, INTERACT, ESPON), one on learning processes and will have an interactive project on policy learning platform and good practices. A storytelling studio 'Kiosk' will be set up where participants will record good practices that will be disseminated using various channels.

During the summer they will start to work on tools to disseminate project results. No brochure is printed so far, posters were produced for projects and it might be modified to other communication materials.

The group was warned that when using photos it is important to have rights and licenses for the whole territory and time period where the photo will be disseminated.

Participants to circulate the titles and times of their EWRC workshops, for information.
Update after the meeting: Interact prepared a table with information of known workshops.
Please note that not all information is updated on the EWRC site.

When	Code: Programme	Title	Where
Tue 10 Oct 2017 11:15-13:00	10C14: Interreg Europe	Explore good practices with the Interreg Europe Policy Learning Platform.	Atrium-5
	10A11: Interact	Interreg Talks: How Projects impact on the policy level? The effective contribution of Interreg results to the EU Climate Action policy.	CCAB-1A
Tue 10 Oct 2017	10B38: NWE	Territorial cohesion in the "Brexit era".	JDE-53

14:30-17:00	10B45: Interact	Smarter Europe – smarter funding? Maximising support for a more innovative EU.	CCAB-1A
Wed 11 Oct 2017 09:00-10:45	11C59: NPA	Delivering results through a collaboration between Arctic EU programmes.	CCAB-OC
Wed 11 Oct 2017 11:15-13:00	11C72: Interreg Europe	Transforming learning into actions.	Atrium-5
Wed 11 Oct 2017 14:30-17:00	11C120: Interact	Addressing urban and regional challenges through public procurement.	Atrium-5

Eurobarometer results/Interreg branding

LM presented the main outcomes of the 2017 Eurobarometer ‘Citizens awareness and perceptions of EU regional policy’ which is not published yet. Some interesting outcomes include:

- ✓ 35% of respondents have heard of EU co-financed projects in their region; 78% of respondents think cohesion policy has a positive impact on their region; the main source of information remains TV, and specifically the national TV, local and/or regional newspapers;
- ✓ 22% of respondents are aware of cooperation between regions from different countries because of the EU regional funding (Highest figures for LV, PL, MT);
- ✓ 13% of respondents are aware of Interreg even if they may not always know what it stands for (GR among MS with higher figures). Lina will circulate the link of the results when formally published.

European Commission to circulate the link to the Eurobarometer 2017 results when formally published. Update after the meeting: DONE.

What rules for stronger communication now and post 2020 (in light of the 7 Communication Action Points)?

MT gave some examples of the type of feedback given during the Inform/Inio meeting to the discussion on the post2020 regulation for communication. The following points were mentioned by the group:

- For investments only request for an EU flag to indicate the EU funded identity of the investment without reference to font restrictions (which could be a recommendation). Colour reference would be helpful.
- No posters but billboards for investments whose size should be proportional. The size of the EU flag should "not be smaller than other logos".
- Keep the nomination of Communication officer.
- Request that communication officers fit the position with appropriate background.

- Keep the list of operations but rename "list of projects". Remove obligation to have it in 2 languages.
- Take out "major" and replace with annual communication activity.
- Keep the requirement to have a communication strategy but allow flexibility as to how it will be done.
- ETC to be renamed "INTERREG" and add ENI too (this needs to be checked).
- Interact could propose a short meeting to DG REGIO outside the INFORM network so as to give feedback on top of any other official position that may come (e.g. INTERREG/INTERACT).
- Include communication as a mandatory item on PMC meeting's agenda.

Interact to check with DG REGIO if a bilateral meeting between them and the TNC Communication network on the draft regulations could be helpful. Alternatively, a webinar could be considered or the review at the next TNC network meeting. Update after the meeting: Request was sent and awaiting response.

General Discussion

- LM reminded the group that the proposal for the communication part of the regulation (like other parts of it) will not only be decided by the Communication Unit of DG REGIO. It will be deliberated by the legal unit too among others. As Interreg is a member of the Inform network it is possible to have a voice. Lina encouraged everyone to reach out to national representatives to get alliance.
- PE also emphasised that if there isn't a participation of Interreg in the drafting with some recommendations it is highly unlikely that any specific suggestion coming from the cooperation could be even discussed. Paulo also mentioned that the EC proposal will very likely endure in depth modifications during the Council negotiations and therefore any specific rule concerning cooperation should be clearly stated in a specific regulation. There was then the suggestion to make a survey amongst programmes or some other method to obtain the recommendations and to contact Agnès Monfret.
- The Monitoring Committees could be a platform – communication should be on the agenda on every meeting if possible. It should be presented in an interesting way so that MC members may get some interesting info which can be easily passed on.
- Invite Commission representation offices and Europe Direct staff. They are useful supporters and good communicators in general.

TNC Heads of Programmes – post 2020 preparation

- MT provided an update on what has happened in the first half of 2017: Workshops with TNC and CBC programme representatives that led to the drafting of 2 opinions on their added value, one for TNC/IR and one for CBC. The CBC opinion is the basis for further workshops to be organised as of autumn. For the TNC the paper can be found on Interact's website: Long version: http://www.interact-eu.net/library?field_fields_of_expertise_tid=78#1231-report-ideas-interreg-post-2020---transnational-programmes-long-version and short version http://www.interact-eu.net/library?field_fields_of_expertise_tid=78#1232-report-ideas-interreg-post-2020---transnational-programmes-short-version.

- TNC Heads of programmes plan to meet on 6+7 September to look at common messages and a coordinated approach to promoting Interreg. Interact was asked to check with TNC directors if support from Communication officers could help and possibly join the September meeting.

Interact to check with TNC heads how to involve communication officers. *Update after the meeting: Monica and Lise spoke to Luca who was eager to invite Communication officers to accompany their heads at the September meeting. Invitations will be sent out accordingly before the end of June 2017 (sent).*

EUROPCOM

- LM confirmed that the deadline for the submission of proposals for the award is 1 September.
- The group suggested making a collective proposal on the Interreg communication campaign award proposal based on last year's application and focusing on trying to see how many people were reached globally e.g. adding Facebook likes, the Eurobarometer, dialogues on media, social media profile, Branding etc. FS and JC volunteered to offer help. Interact was asked to look at the requirements for this year and check what was submitted last year in order to produce a very first draft by the end of June 2017.

Interact to check the requirements for 2017 EUROPCOM awards and review last year's application in order to produce a very first draft by the end of June 2017. *Update after the meeting: Interact will prepare a proposal with the 2 volunteers and send out a draft to the group.*

Preparation of EWRC 2017

General discussion

- Several ideas were suggested with regard to the focus of the October workshop discussing with Interreg and H2020 colleagues: What funding for innovation in our region? And competitiveness? Funding opportunities and results - Innovation for growth and jobs - Making our regions smarter - EU supports growth and jobs. The aim is to intrigue the participants to attend and also get information for their regions and cities. The workshop will be an occasion to showcase Interreg results and its unique place-based and cooperation angle.
- Andrea asked if it is possible to stream/Facebook live the workshops to overcome the fact that some people may not be able to attend them. SUDOE are considering a calendar for communication officers with clear deadlines on key events.

Interact to circulate updated draft following the input and to keep the group involved in the preparation of the workshop. Also check if streaming the EWRC workshops is possible. *Update after the meeting: The EWRC Secretariat replied that it is possible to stream a workshop. They also said that "Most of the workshops at the CCAB will be webstreamed and the complete list of webstreamed workshops will be confirmed in September".*

AOB

Toolkit

- AO announced the Interact Communication toolkit is being prepared and will be fully updated by the autumn.
- Danube asked for a Word version to make it easier to work with it.
- NWE, SUDOE, Atlantic Area and Interreg Europe volunteered to review chapters which are almost ready.

Interact to send out the Toolkit chapters which are almost ready to the volunteer Programmes and request for input giving a 2-3 weeks deadline.
When publishing the updated version of the Toolkit in the autumn a Word version will also be uploaded. *An update after the meeting: Exchange with volunteers done.*

Interact Needs Assessment:

- JC: Link of KEEP and translation of regulation (bring all articles together, prepare factsheets for all requirements).
- Coordination of list of operations through KEEP and link the EMS with all programmes.
- Evaluation of joint branding for visibility (e.g. Eurobarometer) and what it means for the programmes (e.g. cost savings, changing the HR).
- Checklist guidance communication for the Annual Implementation Report.
- Evaluation group to streamline this for all programmes. (Output library).
- Interreg portal: Will it be ready for EC day?

An update after the meeting: The Interreg portal offers are currently being evaluated and it is expected that the portal will be ready in the autumn but not necessarily before the 21st September the EC day.

Participants to send any further requests for Interact support via the ongoing link on Interact's website: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/interact-feedback-form>
Interact to pass on the views and needs expressed during the meeting to relevant colleagues. *Update after the meeting: DONE.*

Considerations for next meetings

- Participants indicated that it would be useful to have a calendar of deadlines for recurrent events.
- MT suggested that these be included in the agendas of the forthcoming meetings including deadlines for awards, events etc of the following year when known.

Interact to include in the agenda a point on forthcoming meetings and any deadlines of relevant known events, competitions etc.

Next meeting:

- Next meeting to be organised back to back with the TNC post 2020 workshop on 5-6 September 2017 in Vienna, subject to confirmation of the participation of Communication officers by the group.