



10th European Week of Regions and Cities
Brussels
8 - 11 October 2012

Workshop

Code of the Workshop: 09B11

Title of the Workshop Creating synergies between EU funds: demographic change and active ageing in European Territorial Cooperation and the ESF

Date and time:

9 October 2012

14:30-17:00

Organiser/leader: INTERACT/ Central Europe Transnational Cooperation Programme

Chair/moderator: Mauro NOVELLO, INTERACT Point Vienna, Coordinator, Austria

Speakers:

Andor Urmos, European Commission, DG Regional and Urban Policy, Thematic Coordination, Innovation Unit, Belgium

Marie-Anne Paraskevas, European Commission, DG Employment and Social Affairs, Social inclusion Unit, Belgium

Heidi Bülow, Handwerkskammer Münster, Project „Wohnen im Wandel“, Germany

Jana Machacova, Centre for Social Innovation, Project “CE-Ageing Platform”, Austria

Outline:

The challenge of demographic change has received considerable attention in all European regions in recent years. The nature and the scale of demographic developments at the same time differ substantially across European territories and pose a major challenge for Cohesion Policy.

The Common Strategic Framework has outlined how activities of various cohesion funds could be better coordinated to create synergies. This workshop highlighted practical examples of how activities within European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) and the European Social Fund (ESF) could be better aligned in view of demographic change challenges. Good practices and strategic approaches were presented by high-profile speakers from the European Commission as well as regional and local stakeholders.

Debate/Panel discussion:

Andor Urmos presented the general ERDF context, including the latest trends, challenges and gaps of demographic change. He presented the plans for the future regulatory package for 2014-20, including thematic focus and strategic orientation of the ERDF programming. He underlined the need to do more on this topic, especially for less developed regions and poorer social groups. Member States are encouraged to take actions on the challenges of ageing population and demographic change, e.g. modernising public sector, health systems and educational infrastructures. The regulatory package offers many tools to join forces, such as multi-regional or multi-funds programmes.

Marie-Anne Paraskevas presented the overall strategic framework on active and healthy ageing from the employment policy perspective. She outlined on-going initiatives and agendas for the future. She also gave examples of how these strategic objectives can be turned into concrete actions, such as e.g. in the work of the Age Network. She showed how the ageing population is widely affecting employment trends: Independent living and working condition for elderlies are only some of the challenges to come. The proposed Common Strategic Framework offers concrete examples inspiring projects on the ground.

Heidi Bülow concretely pointed out how people in the regions can greatly benefit from a Territorial Cooperation project such as Wohnen im Wandel. Great social changes have great impacts also on the ageing population: Not only life expectancy, but also habits and self-perception of elderlies requires innovative solutions, both infrastructural and soft IT solutions. A strong regional and local partnership is a plus for projects across national borders, but also across funding sources and programmes.

Jana Machacova introduced an inspirational video on how ageing can be also an opportunity. She then highlighted what a transnational cooperation project can concretely do to face a joint challenge: Influencing regional and national policy-making, while developing a common vision and joint strategic guidelines for the programme area.

Conclusions: The challenges of an ageing population and demographic changes are horizontally affecting all policy-areas and programmes. More and more this becomes a topic, where joint action and coordination is needed, at all levels: In the policy-making, for EU, regional, national, cooperation programmes and at local and project level. A key to success is the right mind set: Willingness and commitment of people to think out of the box and to cooperate.

More information, links:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=502&langId=en> - <http://esfage.isfol.it/mod/tabfile/index.php?filter=EuropeanPolicies>
http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/what/europe2020/index_en.cfm - www.wohnen-im-wandel.de/projekt/
www.ce-ageing.eu

One representative quote from your workshop with author:

We all have to do more for the demographic change (Andor Urmos)