Going local: Europe in my regions
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I. Introduction

The sixth OPEN DAYS - European Week of Regions and Cities, the flagship event of European regional policy, took place in Brussels from 6 to 9 October 2008. The result of inter-institutional cooperation between the Committee of the Regions, the European Commission represented by the Directorate for Regional Policy and eight other directorates-general, the European Parliament, the French presidency of the European Union and the European Economic and Social Committee, the OPEN DAYS are both an economic forum and a wide-ranging communication platform bringing together regional, political, economic and financial partners in the course of 150 workshops, seminars, meetings and other exhibitions.

Following on from the Brussels programme, 221 local 'Europe in my region' events took place in October throughout Europe and beyond – Norway, Iceland, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Turkey. The events were organised by regional and local authorities which are partners of the OPEN DAYS with the support of the Europe Direct network and the Commission's permanent representations in the Member States, and the selection of format and current issues were both varied and interesting. Press conferences, forums, exhibitions and workshops, together with festivals, cultural and sports activities, road shows and radio programmes were all opportunities to encourage discussion by local and grassroots-level stakeholders, NGOS, teachers and the general public on major European issues such as the 2008 Year of Intercultural Dialogue, the White Paper on Climate change, the Directive on the Maritime strategy and the future of cohesion policy.

These local events were geographically distributed as follows: Italy (22), United Kingdom (21), France (21), Spain (21), Poland (17); Netherlands (11); Sweden (10); Germany (10); Romania (8); the Czech Republic (7); Finland (7); Portugal (7); Slovakia (6); Greece (5); Hungary (5); Ireland (5); Austria (4); Belgium (4); Bulgaria (4); Denmark (3); Latvia (3); Estonia (2); Lithuania (2); Slovenia (2); Cyprus (2); Malta (2). Countries which do not belong to the European Union are also taking part: Bosnia and Herzegovina (1); Croatia (2); Iceland (1); Norway (5); and Turkey (1).

Through these local events, the regions and cities of Europe play an active part in enhancing constructive dialogue between citizens and EU institutions, raising public awareness and exchanging good practice. By bringing these events to public attention, the local media further highlight the key role of the grassroots level in promoting the development of a real sense of being European.
II. Proceedings per country
In October 2008 Austria hosted two conferences and two information campaigns/discussions centred on the importance of maximising European partnerships in the field of renewable energy (Klagenfurt) and sustainable transport (Graz). In St Poelten a focus was made on the creative industries and the role of education and schools in this matter; European achievements in this field were also described. Finally, the city of Linz welcomed the former, current and future European capitals of culture to exchange experiences and best practice. These four events brought together high-level politicians, members of the European Parliament, representatives of the European Commission (DG Energy and Transport), business people from small and medium-sized companies, environmental associations, students, interested members of the public, and the media.

Enclosed, the report of the local event held in St Poelten, 1/10/2008.
Lower Austria - Sankt Pölten

'Creative Industries – Contribution of Lower Austria for a European way to innovative regions'
1 October 2008, 10:00 – 12:00

Organisers: Regional Management Lower Austria – Offices of Mostviertel and Waldviertel; EuropeDirect Lower Austria

Speakers: Mag. Johann HEURAS, Mayor and member of the regional parliament
Mag. Barry John HEWSON, New Design University St. Pölten
Karl HEIGL, Charly International Trading GmbH

Participants: Mag.Ursula POINDL and Karl G. BECKER (presenters), students, teachers, mayors, entrepreneurs, local disseminators

Outline

The event was opened by Mag. HEURAS, who pointed out all the efforts of the province of Lower Austria to strengthen innovative activities in various fields. Mag. HEWSON showed an excellent PP-presentation on former innovative personalities and the future of creative and innovative activities, especially of the New Design University St. Pölten. Karl HEIGL presented creative and innovative work in his company, where textile goods are manufactured. After these presentations three panel debates on different subjects dealing with 'Creative Industries' with 5 to 8 persons each were managed by the two presenters.

Conclusions

- Interesting presentations and informal panel debates
- Useful information especially for students to get ideas on further training and future jobs

'Close cooperation between schools, universities, local and regional authorities in creating a good basis for creative activities.'
The four local events celebrated in Belgium highlighted the role of the regions in Europe. A lecture underlined the importance of Brussels and of the lobbying work vis-à-vis the EU institutions, while exhibitions and receptions were also held between Belgians and their European neighbours or partners in European regional networks. These events enabled students, local and foreign authorities and the general public to share their common interest in the growing European spirit.

Enclosed, the report of the local events held in Brussels, 14/10/2008; Eupen, 17/10-14/11/2008; and Liège, 7/10/2008.
Brussels Capital Region- Brussels

'Brussels: a regional player in Europe'
24 October 2008, 9:30 – 12:00

Organisers: Ministry of Brussels-Capital Region – VUB
Speakers: Pascal GOERGEN, Brussels Delegate in the Permanent Representation Belgium to the European Union
Mandip TAUNQUE, West Midlands in Europe Office
Pascal LEFÈVRE, Institutional Issues Unit of the European Commission
Participants: University Students: VUB – Université St.-Louis

Outline

During the lecture, 'speakers with field experience' - discussed the role of the regions in Europe and the interest of the EU in the regions. Particular attention was paid to the place and role of the Brussels-Capital Region as one of the regional actors. Due to its institutional situation, Belgium has a specific arrangement regarding the participation of its 3 regions in the Council of the European Union as well as in the Permanent Representation of Belgium to the European Union. The Brussels representative, Pascal GOERGEN, commented on his specific role and tasks within this framework.
Mandip TAUNQUE, business advisor of West Midlands in Europe, explained why his region decided to establish a representative office in Brussels. He also explained how and why representations are lobbying the European institutions. Finally, Pascal LEFÈVRE from the Institutional Issues Unit of the European Commission discussed the role of the regions in the Lisbon Treaty.

Conclusions

- Due to its situation and structure, the Brussels-Capital Region wanted to draw the attention of the students that regions are crucial partners in the European scene.
- Regions have become important players within the institutional structure of the European Union. When the Lisbon Treaty will be ratified, the importance of the regions will increase even further.
- None-the-less, it remains of the utmost importance for the Regions to make their voice constantly heard and to defend their interests. Opening a regional office in Brussels and lobbying through it is an outstanding way to do so.
- Amongst the 250 regions that are present in the Capital of Europe, the Brussels-Capital Region itself is an important and active player. Several intra-Belgian arrangements support its position.

More information
www.brussels.irisnet.be

'Brussels is the warm regional heart of Europe.'
German Speaking Community of Belgium - Eupen

'Our neighbors in Europe – Poland'

Organisers: Europe Direct Informationsrelais der Deutschsprachigen Gemeinschaft, Ministerium der Deutschsprachigen Gemeinschaft, Polish Embassy
Speakers: Karl-Heinz LAMBERTZ, Ministerpräsident
Slawomir CZARLEWSKI, Ambassador of Poland in Belgium
Participants: General public

Outline
The Europe Direct information relay in the German Speaking Community organised a local event called ‘Our neighbors in Europe – Poland’. The aim was to bring together rural population and population of new member states to strengthen the mutual understanding of different cultures and traditions and to reinforce the feeling of belonging to a transnational structure, the European Union. With exhibitions and evenings focused on how the European neighbours live and feel their affiliation to the Union the Information relay tries a practical approach. There were two exhibitions organised, one on Polish posters culture and a touristic exhibition about the City of Gdansk. On 4th November a concert was organised. The evening was opened by welcome speeches of the minister-president of the Government of the German speaking Community and the Ambassador of Poland in Belgium.

Conclusions
Presenting the European neighbours is one way to promote mutual understanding and to avoid misunderstandings and prejudices. Culture is one of the best instruments. It approaches citizens, brings them closer together and helps building a European Union from bottom up. The exhibitions and the evening were successful, some 200 persons participated.

'Cultural exchange is a very important means of deepening understanding of neighborhood and common European values.'
Province of Liège - Liège

'Official Meeting between the Representatives of the Conglomerate's Partners'
7 October 2008, 19:00

Organiser: Province of Liège
Participants: Official Representatives of the Conglomerate’s Partners

Outline

The Province of Liège was proud to participate in the OPEN DAYS 2008 and organised once again a reception together with an exhibition and a debate on its territory. This reception constituted an opportunity for the representatives of the Conglomerate’s partners to meet each other, to discover – thanks to the exhibition – the different partners and their regions, and to discuss different issues concerning their level of power, that is to say the NUTS 3 territories, of which the network entitled CEPLI (European Confederation of intermediate local authorities) was officially created in July 2008. As one of the goals of Europe is to ensure the cooperation between European territories and local authorities, it was important for the Province of Liège to offer this opportunity to the Conglomerate’s partners.

Conclusions

The local event which took place in Liège was a real success. During the afternoon, the Representatives had the opportunity to discover the City of Liège and learn more about Liège’s culture. The exchanges during the evening at the Provincial Palace were very interesting and allowed the participants to meet the other partners’ representatives before the seminars, which were taking place just the day after, but also to learn more about the different regions of the Consortium N3N. It was an opportunity to create a good atmosphere between the different partners of the Consortium.
In the context of the OPEN DAYS 2008 – ‘Europe in my Region’, Bosnia and Herzegovina organised a local event in Sarajevo, in the form of a series of seminars on Europe aiming at a wide range of high schools in the Canton. The ‘Europe in schools’ pilot project was presented by Sarajevo Canton, together with its regional partner, the Veneto region, in cooperation with the European Commission delegation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Ministry of European Integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina.
In the four varied and fascinating local events staged by Bulgaria, an important emphasis was put on successfully implemented EU-funded projects (Bourgas), and an in-depth debate was held about achievement of the Lisbon Strategy objectives and its challenges, followed by a presentation on the role of the capitals and regions in implementing EU cohesion policy, and on the Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion (Sofia). Local and international experts and scientists involved in European affairs, partners from the “Europe Direct” project, local and regional businessmen, and the general public were also able to attend a workshop on “Europe closer to citizens and business” (Plovdiv) or one highlighting the research and development programme “Intelligent Energy Europe” (Stara Zagora).

Enclosed, the report of the local events held in Bourgas, 10/10/2008; and Sofia, 31/10/2008.
Burgas Municipality– Burgas

'To communicate about Europe in Burgas'
10 October 2008, 16:00 – 19:00

Organiser: Burgas Municipality

Speakers: Rumiana JELEVA, Member of the European Parliament and Chairman of the Bulgarian delegation in EPP – ED, Member of the Committee on Regional Development and Deputy Member of Committee on Employment and Social Affairs in EP

Vladislava HRISTOZOVA, Department Bulgaria, Directorate-General for Regional Policy of the European Commission

Ivelina VASSILEVA, Deputy Mayor of Burgas Municipality, Eurointegration and Ecology

Stoyan MARKOV, Director Directorate Economic Development and European Programmes, Sliven Municipality

Participants:

1) Representatives of Local authorities and the Regional Administration
(Rumiana Deneva – Deputy Regional Governor, Yordan Yordanov – Mayor of Bulgarovo, Mehmet Yusuf – Mayor of Izvorishte, Atanas Petrov – Mayor of Marinka, Todor Avramov – Mayor of Dimchevo, Hristo Kolev – Mayor of Ravna, Stanka Kikova – Mayor of Brestovo, Hristo Kunchev – Mayor of Vetren, Maria Tzenova – Deputy Mayor Tzarevo Municipality Eli Kirilova – Nesebar Municipality, officials and representatives of the Burgas Municipality from EU Integration department – Atanaska Nikolova, Antoinette Acar, Reneta Tonich, Iliana Stankova, Ivaylo Trendafilov, Vanja Dimitrova and other departments: Maya Kazandjieva, Silvia Gaidova, Diana Kolcheva,

2) Directors of the Territorial Directorates

3) the Chairman of the Municipal Council
Valeri Simeonov and other members of the Municipal Council – Antoaneta Sabkova, Snezhina Madjarova, Bojcho Georgiev, Evtim Tzintzarski and other local politicians...

4) Representatives of Universities, Schools and Scientific Institutes
Ginka Dikova – Director of Najden Gerov School, Antonia Meserdjieva - Director Saint Kliment Ohridski School, Petranka Gineva – University Asen Zlatarov, Petko Petov – University Asen Zlatarov and others

5) Representatives of Business associations - Regional Chamber of Industry and Commerce: Tzanko Ivanov, Radko Drentchev
Regional Craftsmen Chamber: Maya Stoyanova, Stoyan Georgiev, Donka Georgieva, Burgas Regional Chamber of Tourism – Ivan Ivanov Chairman, AMKO design company – Mariana Racheva, PREZENTA company – Neli Koleva and others

6) Representatives of NGOs
DEMETRA Association – Ana Burieva, Bulgarian red Cross – Ivaylo Ivanov, BAEST – Burgas Association of Ecological Countryside Tourizm – Suren Israiljan, GREEN BURGAS – Daniela Kotruleva, Founation 'Honorable Living' – Koljo Todorov,
Foundation ‘Regional Association of the Romans’, Foundation Youth initiatives and ecology – Malina Stoyanova, Association EQUILIBRIUM – Rositza Krasteva

7) Media representatives

8) General public

Outline

After the welcoming words from the organisers of the event Burgas Municipality Rumiana JELEVA, Member of the European Parliament and Chairman of the Bulgarian delegation of the EPP – ED, Member of the Committee on Regional Development and Deputy Member of Committee on Employment and Social Affairs in the EP made a presentation of the regional policies of the European Parliament with particular relevance to Bulgaria and the South East Region of the country encouraging the initiatives for cooperation among the major municipalities of the region, Vladislava HRISTOZOVA, Department Bulgaria, Directorate-General for Regional Policy of the European Commission made a detailed presentation on European Policy for Sustainable Regional Development with guidelines in relation to its practical aspects and how they are to be translated in the relevant region. Stoyan MARKOV - Director of the Directorate Economic Development and European Programmes, Sliven Municipality presented the initiatives for cooperation of the largest municipalities of the South East Region of Bulgaria and their first joint event – the Presentation in the European Parliament and he outlined some of the areas of common interest for future cooperation and integration. Ivelina VASSILEVA, Deputy Mayor of Burgas Municipality, Eurointegration and Ecology delivered a presentation on Burgas Municipality’s participation in the OPEN DAYS, 6-9 October 2008 with an impressive multimedia presentation and outlined Burgas as a touristic destination alive with opportunities. The presentations were followed by a slideshow of photos from OPEN DAYS 2008 prepared by our media experts. The presentations were followed by a discussion moderated by Atanaska NIKOLOVA – Director EU Integration Department. Some of the topics of the discussion were the delegating more power to the local authorities, the influence of the world economic crises on EU policies and funds and other issues of local interest with respect to the EU initiatives and programmes. There was a concern that the EU funds for the regional policy will be reduced. The discussion continued in a more informal way during the cocktail reception, which followed.

Conclusions

- EU regional policy and its influence on the concrete local socio-economic environment was presented by the European institutions.
- There has been already a number of successfully implemented EU funded projects, which proves the capacity of Burgas Municipality to work along the lines of the EU regional programmes.
- The key to the success for the regional policies is through delegating more powers to the local governments and further decentralisation.
- The Burgas Municipality participated successfully for the first time in the OPEN DAYS with a multimedia presentation presented by Ivelina VASSILEVA, Deputy Mayor, at the workshop “Tourism
Innovations: Sharing Experience’ where the town of Burgas was presented as an attractive tourist destination alive with opportunities for investment, eco and cultural tourism

- United we can achieve better results – South Eastern Region of Bulgaria is working on establishing a shared long-term strategic perspective for a sustainable development within the framework of the EU initiatives
- The South East Region of Bulgaria had its first presentation in the European Parliament, which attracted a lot of attention and was a successful step in the further cooperation of the municipalities of the region.

More information
www.burgas.bg
http://www.burgasinfo.com/more_new1.php?id=16246
http://www.bszone.info/?p=3885
http://www.blitz.bg/news/article/15505
http://www.bulpres.net/news/article/15505
http://www.burgas.bg/bg/index/calendar/2008/10/10
http://www.burgasinfo.com/more_new1.php?id=16221
http://www.bszone.info/?p=4128
http://news.burgas24.bg/62242.html
http://vburgas.com/obstina-burgas-nai-aktivna-na-open-days-v-bryuksel/3347
https://bulpress.net/news/article/18113
http://www.burgasinfo.com/more_new1.php?id=16246
http://evropa.dnevnik.bg/show/?storyid=560306
http://www.dnevnik.bg/browse/?rubrid=11025
http://novini.dir.bg/2008/09/24/news3406460.html
Sofia - City of Sofia

'The application of the Lisbon Strategy to the regional development of the City of Sofia'
31 October 2008, 9:00 – 13:00

Organiser: Sofia Municipality
Speakers: Boyko BORISSOV, Mayor of Sofia
Minko GERDJIKOV, Deputy Mayor for Finance
Prof. Ivan ILCHEV, Rector of Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”
Dr. Boriana SAVOVA, Director of Sofia Representative Office in Brussels
Lotta FINSTORP, Former Chairman of LRN
Benita VIKSTROM, Mayor of Oxelösund and Member of the Regional Council
Zinaida ZLATANOVA, Head of the Representation of the EC in Bulgaria
Irina JORDANOVA, Municipal Councilor, Chairwoman of Municipal Council
Permanent Commission ‘European Affairs and Civil Society’
Dr. Nadia NIKOLOVA, Director European Programmes and Projects
Ana-Luisa BAPTISTA, Foreign Investment Adviser in Brussels Enterprise Agency
Nikola SABOTINOV, President of the Bulgarian Science Academy
Evgeni IVANOV, Executive Director of CEIBG

Participants: Representatives of the Lisbon Network, the Brussels Enterprise Agency, the
Representation of the European Commission in Bulgaria, the Confederation of the
Employers and Industrialists in Bulgaria, Sofia Municipality, Sofia Municipal Council,
Sofia Region, Ministries, Universities, Business, Trade, Media and Non-Governmental
Organizations.

Outline

The conference was opened by the Mayor of Sofia, Boyko BORISSOV who welcomed the participants, stressed on the significance of the Lisbon Strategy and its goals and gave the floor to the speakers. The conference was structured into two sessions. The first session, ‘the Lisbon Strategy and Regional Policy’, served as a basis for further discussions in the second session and introduced to the public the established principles and objectives at European, regional and local level in different countries. The goal was to reveal different experiences and know-how as well as strategic documents and regulations which are needed for the development of the local economy through the synergy between business and science. The second session: The relation Science – Business – Local Authority according to the principles of the Lisbon Strategy revealed the objective to get into further details about the progress and obstacles in front of the practical implementation of the Lisbon Strategy and the cooperation between the key actors – the public authorities, the business sector and the scientific organizations. The best practices in the application of the Lisbon Strategy at regional level as well as the challenges at national level were discussed during the conference. The relation between the Lisbon Strategy and cohesion policy in the City of Sofia playing a key role as a capital of Bulgaria was emphasized. The main topic was the partnership between the three key actors and the promotion of the competitiveness of the knowledge-based economy on local level, following the principles of the cohesion and regional policy and decentralization and the so called ‘bottom up approach’. The conference succeeded to present the Lisbon Strategy objectives as well as best practical examples. A fruitful debate was raised between the representatives of the European, National and Local Government, Business and Science. That upraised a
better understanding of the global processes and the need for development, based on knowledge and cooperation.

Debate

The conference was opened by the Mayor of Sofia Boyko BORISSOV who welcomed the participants, stressed on the significance of the Lisbon strategy and its goals and gave the floor to the speakers. Boriana SAVOVA – Director of Sofia Representative Office in Brussels introduced the speakers and the topics to be discussed. She stressed on the importance of the Lisbon Strategy in the scope of achieving better decentralization and implementation of the cohesion policy and the “bottom up approach”. She revealed the conference objective to introduce a “Triple Helix” method – (Local, National, European) Government, Science and Business hand in hand in order to achieve economic growth and sustainable development according to citizens needs and EU principles.

Prof. Ivan ILCHEV – Rector of Sofia University 'St. Kliment Ohridski', Zinaida ZLATANOVA – Head of the Representation of the European Commission in Bulgaria and Prof. Nikola Sabotinov – President of the Bulgarian Science Academy also opened the conference by giving a few words on the topic. The welcome presentation was given by the Deputy Mayor for Finance Minko GERDJIKOV. He revealed the Achievements of Sofia Municipality in the context of the Lisbon Strategy. A special attention was paid on the extremely low level of unemployment in the Bulgarian capital – positives and negatives. Statistics were given about the large amount of foreign investments and the slow development of the science sector – e.g. innovations and technology. After his speech the moderator – Boriana SAVOVA concluded on the good development of the business environment and local governance and addressed the representatives of business and trade organizations to support and invest more in the science activities. Afterwards she gave the floor to the first speaker in the first session (The Lisbon Strategy and Regional Policy) Lotta FINSTORP – Former Chairman of LRN & Benita VIKSTROM – Mayor of Oxelösund and Member of the Regional Council. They made a very interactive joint presentation on the ‘Realisation of the Lisbon Strategy Objectives in the European Regions’. They revealed the Sormland (Sweden) experience in the implementation of the ‘bottom up approach’ proclaimed by the Lisbon strategy – bigger decentralization in the EU – more power to the local authorities. The conclusion of the moderator was that clear indicators should be set out in order to measure the improvement towards sustainable growth relevant to citizens.

Second in the first session, Zinaida ZLATANOVA – Head of the Representation of the EC in Bulgaria gave a speech on the ‘Challenges in front of the Application of the Lisbon Strategy at National Level’. She revealed the steps taken by the national government in order to apply the Lisbon Strategy in Bulgaria, e.g. incorporation of the Lisbon principles and goals in the National Development Programme 2007 – 2013. The main conclusion after revealing the obstacles and the development was that the objectives of the Lisbon Strategy can be realized only with good cooperation between the different levels of governance. The third speech was given by Irina JORDANOVA – Municipal Councilor, Chairwoman of Municipal Council Permanent Commission ‘European Affairs and Civil Society’ who as a representative of the local power presented ‘The Role of the Capitals and the Regions in the Implementation of the EU Cohesion Policy’. She stressed on the EU cohesion policy and the Lisbon principles concerning regional and local level. Special attention was paid also on the EU Territorial Programme, the Leipzig Charter for Sustainable European Cities and the Green Book for Territorial Cohesion.

The conclusion was that EU has elaborated a lot of strategies and documents in favor of the better collaboration between EU, national, regional and local authorities and Bulgaria should harmonize in order to achieve better decentralization. Dr. Boriana SAVOVA gave the floor to the public who was very interested into the Swedish experience and the EU Commission’s recommendations. She summarized
the different presentations and closed the first session with the conclusion on the usefulness of the topics
that were presented and discussed by so outstanding speakers and participants at a pilot conference on
such an important topic.

The second session 'The Relation Science – Business – Local Authority according to the Principles of the
Lisbon Strategy' was opened and moderated by Dr. Nadia NIKOLOVA – Director European Programmes
and Projects as a natural follow up of the first one. She revealed the objective to get in further details
about the progress and obstacles in front of the practical implementation of the Lisbon Strategy by the
three inseparable wheels of the globalized world – the public authorities, the business sector and the
scientific organizations. The first speech was given by Ana-Luisa BAPTISTA – Foreign Investment
Adviser in Brussels Enterprise Agency. She started with an overview of the 'Best Practices Exchange
Agreement' between Sofia and Brussels and continued about the 'Partnership of Local Authorities with
Science and Business – Best Practices of Brussels-Capital Region’. She paid special attention to the
Regional Innovation Plan (PRI) which is a Brussels’ public coordinated action aiming to boost innovation
in the region and to foster synergies and cooperation between local authorities, academia and industry.
The representatives of the Confederation of the Employers and Industrialists in Bulgaria admitted the
achievements and usefulness of the strategies and best practices revealed by the Foreign Investment
Adviser of the Brussels Enterprise Agency. The second speech was given by Prof. Nikola SABOTINOV –
President of the Bulgarian Science Academy, who spoke on one hand about the obstacles in front of the
scientific sector in terms of lack of funding and the presence of very high expertise of the members, big
potential and capability, proven know-how and successfully developed projects on the other hand.

As a conclusion it was stressed out that the business sector and the government should better support
science activities which are essential for the economy and society development, for the establishment of
economy based on knowledge. Development of the innovation process, education, professional training
and research should be supported and realized. People generate ideas which have to be developed and
financed in order to boost the European and global markets.

The third presentation was made by Evgeni IVANOV – Executive Director of the Confederation of the
Employers and Industrialists in Bulgaria (CEIBG). He spoke about the 'Promotion of the Competitiveness
of the Local Economy Based on Knowledge'. He stressed on the principles laid down in the Lisbon
Strategy concerning the involvement of the business sector and its explicit role. He also revealed the
scientific areas in which Bulgaria has biggest potential to develop on one hand, and the needs and
opportunities of the labor market on the other hand. He admitted the lack of investments in science and
high-technologies and appealed to the national and foreign companies to develop business-science
partnerships. He gave practical examples on financial instruments that could be used in favor of such
cooperation. As a conclusion, in addition to some previous examples and for the future, he declared the
role of the Confederation to serve as a mediator between science and business, by encouraging
investments in the scientific sector, involving in EU research programmes and projects and participating in
the National Scientific Research Fund. After giving the floor to the public for questions and answers the
Moderator of the second session Dr. Nadia NIKOLOVA – Director European Programmes and Projects
summarized and closed the conference with a positive evaluation of the speakers, presentations,
participants’ involvement and the interesting and useful topics that were discussed.
Conclusions

- Good development of the business environment and local governance in Sofia;
- The extremely low level of unemployment in the Bulgarian capital has positive and negative influence on the citizens and the local economy;
- Authorities, Science and Business should work hand in hand in order to achieve economic growth and sustainable development according citizens needs and EU principles;
- Lisbon principles should be observed and applied and clear indicators should be set out in order to measure the improvement towards sustainable growth relevant to citizens;
- Nevertheless the large amount of foreign investments there is a slow development of the science sector – e.g. innovations and technology;
- Business and trade organizations should support and invest more in science which is essential for the economy and society development;

More information
www.sofia.bg

'The objectives of the Lisbon Strategy can be realized only with good cooperation between the different levels of governance – European, National, Regional and Local.'

'The Bulgarian Academy of Science is the most effective scientific organization, participating in the EU framework programmes, leading to successful participation of small and medium enterprises as final recipients of the scientific product.'

'Sofia city has the needed capacity – scientific potential and business environment.'
CROATIA

The cities of Osijek and Rijeka welcomed regional and local administration, entrepreneurs, the Management Authority and Ministry of Energy for their two local ‘Europe in my region’ events. The first seminar was designed to launch the regional Education Energy Agency following the guidelines of European energy policy to respond in the most effective way to the current challenges facing the EU (Osijek). The second conference focused on the role of European regional cooperation in the field of science and innovation (Rijeka).

Enclosed, the report of the local event held in Rijeka, 23/10/2008.
Croatian Regions - Rijeka

'Innovative regions-innovation, technological development and research'
23 October 2008, 10:00 – 14:30

Organiser: Croatian Regions Office (city of Rijeka-member of Croatian regions office in Brussels)
Speakers: Vojko OBERSNEL, Mayor of city of Rijeka; Djani POROPAT, Deputy Mayor, City of Rijeka; Juan Manuel REVUELTA, director of regional office of Valencia in Brussels; Chris JONES, Biobator manager-Leichester university; sc. Vanja SMOKVINA, Head of Informatic activity department and Dr.sc Mladen MAUHER, Prof. Ivo Orlic, CEO, Science and Technology Park
Participants: Regional and local administration, entrepreneurs

Outline

This conference was used to introduce city of Rijeka as intelligent city and the project of first scientific - technological park in Croatia which is about to be open. Scientific-technological park is based on the idea that through synergy of scientific, technological and entrepreneurship potentials of Universities and regions can be created new knowledge and values which will contribute to faster development.

Debate

The conference was opened by Mr OBERSNEL, Mayor of the City of Rijeka who stressed out the importance of OPEN DAYS in Brussels which year by year attracts more and more participants allowing them to learn and do network between various European regions. European Union was present also through speeches of two remarkable contributors who tried to pass European know-how in mentioned issues. Spain was presented through presentation of Juan Manuel REVUELTA, director of Valencia office in Brussels who gave more then interesting presentation on EU strategy on technological parks in the period of 2008-2013 by giving practical examples from Valencia which is nowadays one of most advanced European regions in the field of science and innovation. University from Leichester, UK was represented by Chris JONES who works as a manger in Biobator, the successful business incubator established on the initiative of University as place for exchange and testing of commercial ideas in the early stage.

Conclusions

The conference was attended by many, especially those who are employed in public regional and local bodies as well in private institutions and companies who are applying innovations in their business on daily basis, allowing them in that way to feel little bit of Brussels on the local scene. Participants of the conference had an opportunity to learn about relation between technological development and innovations.

More information
www.rijeka.hr
Two local events were planned by Cyprus in its capital Nicosia. The progress in the implementation of Structural and Cohesion Funds was at the core of the information event organised for local authorities, economic and social partners, non-governmental organisations and the general public. It was followed by a set of presentations, networking sessions and an exhibition of projects and actions carried out by Nicosia Municipality with co-financing from the Structural Funds programme.

Enclosed, the report of the local events held in Nicosia, 15 & 29/10/2008.
Cyprus - Nicosia

'Structural Funds and Cohesion Fund in Cyprus – Present and Future for Cypriot Citizens'
15 October 2008, 15:00

Organiser: Planning Bureau – Managing Authority for Structural Funds and Cohesion Fund
Speakers: Andreas MOLESKIS, Permanent Secretary of the Planning Bureau
George GEORGHIOU, Planning Bureau
Athina ARISTOTELOUS-KLIRIDOU, Department of Town Planning and Housing
Christos PHOTIADIES, Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism
Leukos FILAKTIDES, Cyprus Tourism Organisation
Leonidas ANTONIOU, Research Promotion Foundation
Alexandros ALEXANDROU, Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance
Gabriella FESUS, European Commission, Regional Policy Directorate-General
Irene DEMETRIOU, Planning Bureau

Participants: Broader public sector, local authorities, economic and social partners and non-governmental organizations

Outline

The event was opened by an introductory speech by the Permanent Secretary of the Planning Bureau. During the first part of the event the general progress in the implementation of the Programmes 'Sustainable Development and Competitiveness' and 'Employment, Human Capital and Social Cohesion' co-financed by Structural Funds and Cohesion Fund during the period 2007-2013 was presented. This was followed by presentations of the different Grant Schemes for the private sector available under the two Programmes and more specifically their progress in implementation, financing opportunities and expected results and impacts. During the second part the future Cohesion Policy was presented and discussed. More specifically, the 5th Progress Report regarding the future of Cohesion Policy was presented, together with Cyprus' proposed initial stand on major issues of the debate.

Conclusions

The participants were informed about the progress in the implementation of the Programmes and the financing opportunities offered to the private sector through the Grant Schemes. The participants had also the chance to express their views on how Cohesion Policy could be even more beneficial to the cypriot citizens.

More information

www.structuralfunds.org.cy (Website of the Planning Bureau (Managing Authority) for Structural Funds and Cohesion Fund)
Information Guide – Structural Funds and Cohesion Fund of the EU in Cyprus (2007-2013) (Publication)

‘Our ideas: actions for development.’
Nicosia Municipality - Nicosia

'Europe in my city'
29 October 2008, 10:00-14:00

Organiser: Office of European Affairs, Nicosia Municipality
Speakers: Eleni MAVROU, Mayor of Nicosia Municipality
Androulla KAMINARA, Head of the European Commission Representation in Cyprus
Adonis KONSTANTINIDES, Senior Planning Officer, Planning Bureau
Agni PETRIDOU, Head of Nicosia Masterplan Office
Stravroula GEORGOPOULOU, Officer of Nicosia Municipality Multifunctional Foundation
Jenny FRYDA, Officer of Educational Children Centre
Mihalis LAMBRINOS, Project Manager, Ministry of Communications and Works
Dr. Grigoris MAKRIDES, Executive Director of European Office Cyprus
Rosemary STREVINIOTI, officer of European Office Cyprus – Brussels branch

Participants: Local authorities representatives (Municipality of Nicosia, Municipality of Strovolos,
Municipality of Lakatamia, Municipality of Aglantzia), representatives of the Representation
of the European Commission in Cyprus, representatives of the University of Cyprus,
representatives of the Ministry of Communications and Works, representatives of NGOs
(AKTI, NGO Support Centre, CARDET, ISAG, Europa Donna, Cyprus Family Planning
Association, Centre for the Study of Childhood and Adolescence, Cyprus Youth Council),
private sector employees (Deloitte), general public, media (Sigma TV, ANT 1 TV).

Outline

The conference was opened by a welcoming speech by the Mayor of Nicosia who outlined the structure
of the conference and highlighted its main aims. During the first part of the conference speeches
concentrated in the presentation of rehabilitation projects that have taken place in Nicosia in the context
of the Structural Funds (2004-2006), as well as projects that are to take place during the next
programming period. Moreover the social programmes that are taking place in the restored buildings were
presented, such as the 'Multicultural Children Day Care Centre, Nicosia'. Furthermore the conference
included a presentation of the Programme for the strengthening of the Public Transport System in
Nicosia, as well as a presentation of European programmes addressed to local authorities and NGOs.
The second part of the conference consisted of an exhibition by NGOs and a networking session.
Participating NGOs had a chance to present their projects and functions to the participants, as well as to
network with the other participating organisations (partner organisations of Nicosia Municipality), and
representatives of governmental, semi-governmental and private organisations that were present in the
conference.

Conclusions

The conclusions of the conference can be summed up as follows:

- The synergies between local authorities, governmental bodies as well as non-governmental
  organisations are vital in achieving the desired results in the context of European projects which aim
to benefit local populations
Projects funded by the Structural Funds have strongly benefited Nicosia residents and have helped the socioeconomic development of downgraded areas.

There is a need for further funding from the Structural Funds in the new programming period, for the continuation of existing projects, as well as for the funding of new projects which are indispensable for the harmonious development of Nicosia and Cyprus in general (such as strengthening of the Public Transport System).

More information
Nicosia Municipality: www.nicosia.org.cy
Planning Bureau: www.planning.gov.cy
European Commission Representation in Cyprus: ec.europa.eu/cyprus
Ministry of Communications and Works: www.mcw.gov.cy
European Office Cyprus: www.eoc.org.cy

‘Through the partnership between the governmental and non-governmental sectors we can achieve better results which respond to the needs and expectations of the citizens.’
The Czech Republic organised seven local ‘Europe in my region’ events. These took the form of an inter-regional conference on crisis management with regard to cross-border cooperation within the Schengen area (České Budějovice); a joint conference on best practices in EU funding (Central Bohemia and Prague) (also in Ostrava); a workshop emphasising the benefits of European initiatives, networks and programmes (Ústí nad Labem); and two press conferences, about European experience in the managing and financing of health-care services (Olomouc) and education in health care (Zlín). In addition, regional authorities, public agencies, private entities, professional associations, individual entrepreneurs and the general public were able to attend an exhibition on the regions’ international cooperation (Plzeň).

Enclosed, the report of the local events held in Prague, 22/10/2008; Ostrava, 2-3/10/2008; České Budějovice, 1/10/2008.
Central Bohemia Region and Prague

'Fair of community grants – best practices in EU funding'
22 October 2008, 9:30 - 15:30

Organisers: Central Bohemia region, Prague City Hall, Eurocentre Prague
Speakers: Markéta REEDOVÁ, Deputy Mayor of Prague for structural funds and foreign affairs
Marek KUPSA, Director of regional council of Central Bohemian region
– Structural funds
Jana KALABISOVÁ, Director of Eurocentre Prague
Patricia TISO FERULÍKOVÁ, Director of department of structural funds EU
– Prague City Hall
Projects managers: Michal STRUHA, Petr HNÍZDO, Jiří HOCHMAN, Michaela SVOBODOVÁ, Karel KLUSÁČEK, Lucie KRUBNEROVÁ, Eva HÁJKOVÁ, Ivana HALADOVÁ, Eva MATULOVÁ, Magdalena RAPANTOVÁ, Ondřej MAREK, Kateřina POJEROVÁ, Hana REIMAROVÁ

Participants: Among participants were representatives of local and regional authorities (cities and towns from: Prague and Central Bohemian region), NGOs (Dom o.s.), SMEs (Technological and innovation Centrum; Czech innovation agency) and also open public, mainly experts on communitarian programs, structural funds or fund-raising. The whole session was attained by more than 400 people.

Outline

Fair of community grants - best practices in EU funding' was prepared thanks to cooperation of two regions, namely the Central Bohemian region and the City of Prague and as a third partner the Eurocentre Prague. The main goal was to prepare presentations about communitarian programmes that will be accompanied by an exhibition of chosen 'best projects', which have been supported during last years, and in some cases even ask project managers to have short presentation about their projects: how did they get the first idea and short discussion about some issues that they had to solve or made them problems during implementation process. Furthermore, part of the project was the preparation of information stands and information materials that will present communitarian programs and will be shown for long period for open public after the workshop. This part is going on in these days in the new building of Prague City Hall (Škodův palace). The whole workshop was divided into two parts and was attended by more than 400 participants. Both parts were accompanied by moderated debates where all participants had chance to ask questions and at the end of whole session had chance to personally discuss their issues in front of the information stands that represented individual communitarian programs or structural funds. Project had also PR promotion in Prague municipal news paper, Central Bohemian newspaper and all three partners informed on their web pages about this event and after the event with some conclusions and contact information.
Debate

The whole workshop was divided into two parts and after both parts were accompanied by moderated debate where all participants had chance to ask questions, mainly how to get proper information about programs, how to find partners, what are the main issues with implementing projects and then very specific questions concerning various projects.

Conclusions

Most of the experts and also open public is getting more informed about Communitarian programs and structural funds and their differences. However, we are at point where we need to inform all participants about best practice and emphasize long lasting projects that are able to survive also after the end of financing period provided by either structural funds or communitarian projects.

More information

www.stredoceh.cz
www.stredoceh-eu.cz
www.praha-mesto.cz
www.prague-house.eu
http://www.centralbohemia.cz/?language=2

“We need to inform all participants about best practice and emphasize long lasting projects that are able to survive also after the end of financing period provided by either structural funds or communitarian projects.”
Outlines

The objective of the conference was to enhance the awareness of the existence of EU Structural Funds and the opportunities available for effectively using subsidies in the Moravia Silesia cohesion region. Another objective was to present the first results of the new EU programming period that began in 2007. The two-day conference was designed as a set of seminars meant for a wide audience and workshops that dealt with specific information, practical examples and experience. The conference was held at three parallel levels that focused on: 1. potential applicants and beneficiaries in the region and the professional public, 2. managing authorities of the operational programmes being implemented in the Czech Republic, and 3. academia and students engaged in European issues.

Debate

Doc. Ing. Karel SKOKAN, Ph.D. introduced the participants to modern trends of and approaches to regional development. Among other things, he said that the objective of each state should be to create conditions that will help achieve an increased standard of living for its citizens. This can be accomplished without developing areas (municipalities and regions) where economic activities are concentrated. In some cases, locations (towns and regions) are striving for being even more competitive than other locations. He also emphasised the relationships both within and outside the region (networking).

Conclusions

It was unanimously concluded that a clear attitude is being applied to implementing regional policy based on collective bargaining and participation and that the policy is implemented by regional authorities with the help of a broad range of partners, local authorities, the non-profit sector, entrepreneurs and other social partners.

More information

‘When planning the future, it is important to think globally and act locally. It is also important to act globally and think locally.’
Region of South Bohemia - České Budějovice

'Crisis Management'
1 October 2008, 10:00 – 15:00

Organisers: The Regional Authority of South Bohemia & Europe Direct of the Region of South Bohemia
Speakers: Jan ZAHRADNÍK, Governor of the Region of South Bohemia
Marta SPÁLENKOVÁ, Head of crisis management department of the Regional Authority of South Bohemia
Stefan KREUZER, Department of protection of inhabitants, Regional Government of Lower Austria
Josef ŠKOLA, the Czech Red Cross
Friedrich EIGENSCHINK, the Red Cross – Lower Austria

Participants: Mayors of the Southbohemian municipalities, students of crisis management university studies (altogether ca 75 persons)

Outline
Climate change has become one of priority issues the European Union is trying to tackle. In this decade Europe has faced several serious natural disasters. In 2002 one third of Bohemia (Czech Republic) was struck by extensive floods which reproduced themselves after a calamitous snow-fall in 2006. In 2007 a large part of the continent was hit by the devastating hurricane Kyrill and this happened again in March of this year because of the hurricane Emma. Generally it is estimated that Europe stands at the beginning of a period when extreme weather phenomenon is going to be more frequent and more damaging. Therefore the crisis management as a competence of the regional governments is likely to become of more importance and significance. Good practice exchange and cooperation among regions, which is one of the undeniable advantages of the European integration, is very important for the transfer of practical experience. This is why the Region of South Bohemia, member of the OPEN DAYS consortium Sustainable Regions III, has organised the OPEN DAYS GO LOCAL Inter-regional conference on crisis management. The conference was focused on the estimated development in the area of the crisis management with regard to cross-border cooperation within the Schengen area. Speakers from the Region of South Bohemia presented the way natural disasters had been dealt with in the past years, as well as the means of ensuring the crisis alert within South Bohemia. The partners from Lower Austria presented the perspectives of their own crisis management. The representative of the Czech Hydrometeorological Institute focused on possible prospects of the climate change and the representatives of the Czech and Austrian Red Cross spoke about handling the repercussions of crisis situations from the point of view of non-governmental organizations.

Debate
The participants from among the Mayors of the Southbohemian municipalities discussed their possibilities of getting more actively involved in the regional crisis management.

Conclusions
The speakers agreed that cooperation in crisis management among border regions is a necessity which has been already proved by several crisis situations. They have asked for a broadening such a cooperation and involving more services in it.

More information: http://www.southbohemia.eu/

‘Natural catastrophes do not know the regional borders – this is the main reason why we have to search together with our neighbour regions for common solutions and to support a tight cooperation of our regional crisis management services.’
Three local events were held in Denmark in the cities of Herning, Soro and Sandefjord. They took the forms of conferences and an exhibition on regional cooperation in Innovation & Research (Herning); a seminar to promote climate dialogue, encompassing EU climate policies (Soro); and a Scandinavian maritime partnership to launch a debate about the influence of climate policies on the maritime industry (Sandefjord).

Enclosed, the report of the local event held in Herning, 21/10/2008.
Central Denmark - Herning

'Regional cooperation on hydrogen technology'
21 October 2008

Organiser: HIRC og Central Denmark EU-office
Speakers: Frans BJØRN-THYGESEN, Director MSc, IAA
          Lars YDE, Tecnical manager BA-E
Participants: Local companies repr., local authorities, municipality repr., financial sector, political
            sector, energy sector m.fl. 28 participants

Outline

The Danish Hydrogen Innovation & Research Centre (HIRC) explained the process and results in their
project RES-FC market which was co-financed by Intelligent Energy Europe and aimed to assess the
market potential of residential fuel cell heating in order to attract more private funding to research on
Hydrogen technology. Hydrogen fuel cell cars will soon be on the roads of Central Denmark and other
Scandinavian partner regions in Sweden and Norway, and several stations for tanking fuel cells are
planned in order to make longer trips possible and build a market for this technology. Once the fuel cell
technology start penetrating the markets, the development is expected to go much faster.

Conclusions

• The conference clearly showed the regional and local decision and opinion makers in the area of
  sustainable energy, that the European Union is contributing to the efforts in Denmark and that the
  benefits of working together in regional cooperation are essential for the development of Hydrogen
  energy.
• The conference also showed the growing interest in fuels cell technology and the participants will now
  spread the knowledge of the area and the Research centre in Herning to others, thus contributing to
  further development.

More information
www.hirc.dk
www.resfc-martet.eu
The Estonian capital, the city of Tallinn, welcomed two local events in the context of the OPEN DAYS 2008 ‘Europe in my region’. At a workshop on European cohesion policy, followed by a festival aimed at discussing the need for a European design policy, social partners, stakeholders, public authorities and famous designers from Finland and Estonia could share their common interest and opinions.

Enclosed, the report of the local events held in Tallinn, 15 & 29/10/2008
Estonia - Tallinn

'Cohesion Policy – a vision for the future'
15 October 2008, 14:00 – 16:00

Organisers: Ministry of Finance, Estonia, Estonian Association of Cities
Speakers: Kadri UUSTAL, Estonian Permanent Representation at the EU
          Katri SEIER, Ministry of Finance
          Väino HALLIKMÄGI, Committee of the Regions
Participants: Social partners, stakeholders, public authorities

Outline

The local event consisted of a workshop for social partners and stakeholders on the possible future
developments in the field of Cohesion Policy. The process of implementation of Structural Funds in the
periods 2004-2006 and 2007-2013 was presented, with examples of financed projects and outcomes.
The event included the presentation of the parties and stakeholders involved in the formulation of
Cohesion Policy, introduction to the timetable and process of policy development, positions of the
Member State itself on the future of the policy area as well as those of other countries.
Member of the national delegation at the Committee of Regions introduced the functions, working
methods of the Committee, and reflected on their views and positions on the future of Cohesion Policy.

Conclusions

The EU has departed to a fascinating path of reflection, analysis and debate on the future of Cohesion
Policy. Member States as well as many of the stakeholders interested in Cohesion Policy have already
formulated their initial views and stances for future discussion and debate. Estonia has put remarkable
emphasis not only on the content of the policy, but also on the need to simplify the delivery of the policy.

More information
Presentations are available at http://struktuurifondid.ee/?id=2342
Tallinn City - Tallinn

'Role of Designers in the Process of Creating National Cultural Value'
26 September 2008

Organisers: Estonian Designers Association; NGO Disainiöö
Speakers: Michael THOMSON
           Gudrun Lilja GUNNLAUGSDÖTTIR
           Tarmo LUISK
           Timothy Jacob JENSEN
           Martin RELANDER
Participants: Famous designers from Finland and Estonia

Outline

Design policies of Denmark and Finland have created an international image for these countries that promotes exports and cultural tourism. This topic was presented by Timothy JENSEN, owner of the design agency Jacob Jensen Design. Martin Relander from the Helsinki University of Art and Design told how the brand Design Made has become a springboard for launching the careers of Finnish designers. Michael THOMSON, one of the top 10 most influential design strategists in the UK and the President of the Bureau of European Design Associations (BEDA), discussed the need for an European design policy. Small countries such as Estonia and Iceland whose industrial sector is weak and natural resources are scarce must use their brains to combat other design giants. Icelandic design was introduced by of Gudrun Lilja GUNNLAUGSDÖTTIR. What direction should Estonian design take: market oriented mass production or individual design; non-industrial design or design-led crafts. Perhaps one of our most universal designers Tarmo LUISK has an answer to this question. He has been involved in both mass production and individual design.

Conclusions

Considering the current situation, where European competitiveness is diminishing due to expensive labour and material costs, each European country should try to find the aspects of its historical and cultural heritage, that would set them apart and help them succeed on the world market.

More information
http://www.disainioo.ee/en/content/seminar.html

‘Design and sustainability should go hand in hand.. Responsibility of designers in creating new products is not to overload the world with new products.’
FINLAND

Seven Finnish cities each organised a local event as an opportunity to bring together representatives of public organisations, research and educational bodies, local authorities/politicians, social partners and citizens around European topics. The seminars focused on Funding opportunities for small and medium enterprises, Sustainable tourism, Environmental awareness, and the need to increase overall knowledge about EU institutions; and the awarding of a prize (event co-organised by North Finland, North Sweden and North Norway).

Enclosed, the report of the local events held in Joensuu, 31/10/2008; Tornio, 23/10/2008; Savonlinna, 28/10/2008; Turku; 23-26/10/2008; and Seinäjoki, 29/10/2008.
'New funding opportunities offered by the EU for the SMEs'
31 October 2008, 12:00 – 16:00

Organisers: East Finland EU-office;
Regional Council of North Karelia;
EUFUND 2010 - Improving the use of EU funding in North Karelia (ERDF);
Project of the Regional Council of North Karelia;
EU information office of North Karelia (Europe Direct North Karelia);
Federation of Enterprises of North Karelia;
Joensuu Regional Development Company, JOSEK, Finland

Speakers: Heikki SALMI, Adviser and Manager in European Commission during 1996-2008, Finland
Jouko PARVIAINEN, Project Manager, Joensuu Regional Development Company, JOSEK, Finland
Erkki VÄHÄRAUTIO, Development Director, The Employment and Economic Development Centre of North Karelia, Finland
Risto POUTIAINEN, Planning Director, Regional Council of North Karelia, Finland
Hanna HEIKKINEN, Project planner, The Ministry of Employment and the Economy, Finland
Irmeli MIKKONEN, Expert, Motiva Oy (an energy sector expert organisation-Finland)
Matti VUOJÄRVI, Executive Director, Federation of Enterprises of North Karelia
Teemu PURMONEN, Programme Director, Joensuu Regional Development Company, JOSEK, Finland
Maria SAASTAMOINEN, Project Manager, North Karelia University of Applied Sciences, Finland
Päivi KORHONEN, senior expert, CEO, FCG ISAI Consulting, Finland

Participants: 78 persons signed up for the event but the final number of participants was 65 due to a harsh autumn storm that made the participants from further away to rethink the travel to Joensuu. 37 were females, 28 males. 29 were from public organisations including regional administration, municipalities, research and educational organisations. 2 were from NGO’s, the rest were from SMEs.

Outline

The event was organised in North Karelia (NUTS 3), Finland but participants from all over Eastern Finland (NUTS 2) and Finland were invited and some participated. The event emphasised SME’s and EU actions in this field. Number of participants was 65 due to a harsh autumn storm that made the participants from further away rethink the travel to Joensuu. The seminar was opened by Annastiina PAPUNEN from East Finland EU-office. She briefed about the update actions of the East Finland EU Office and promoted the SME portal of the EU and the first week of SME in spring 2009. Heikki SALMI spoke about the internal market, new directives, SME policy of the European Union and its possibilities. He also briefed about the funding possibilities. Jouko PARVIAINEN from Joensuu Regional Development Company, JOSEK told about the pioneer bioenergy development actions in North Karelia and the future plans in Eastern
Finland. He also told about the several international projects that were and are implemented in this field. Erkki VÄHÄRAUTIO, Development Director from The Employment and Economic Development Centre of North Karelia told about the regional funding possibilities (mostly structural funds) for the SMEs. Hanna HEIKKINEN, Project planner, The Ministry of Employment and the Economy, told about Europe Enterprise Network and its possibilities and actions. The network does not have a contact point in North Karelia. Irmeli MIKKONEN, Expert, Motiva Oy (an energy sector expert organisation) spoked about CIP Programme and focused on IEE Programme. Matti VUOJÄRVI, Executive Director, Federation of Enterprises of North Karelia spoke about the challenges and possibilities of entrepreneurship in North Karelia and focused on the economic crisis. Teemu PURMONEN, Programme Director, Joensuu Regional Development Company, JOSEK spoke about the staff education services for SMEs that his project is providing. Maria SAASTAMOINEN, Project Manager, North Karelia University of Applied Sciences told about her project that provides a series seminars about project management for North Karelian organisations. Päivi KORHONEN, senior expert, CEO, FCG ISAI Consulting spoke about the real life project work and its challenges.

Debate

- What are the best practices to promote entrepreneurship?
- What methods can be used to aid the growth of the SMEs? Encouragements?
- How to increase to quality and “skill level” of EU export items, at the moment they are mostly low and medium skill products. High skill products?
- SMEs can not afford to apply for a patent, how to aid this and ensure that IPR rights stay?
- Why the ‘oil-economy’ is still nationally subsidised?

Conclusions

Poutiainen concluded the seminar by summing up the discussions as follows:

- Development and support for SMEs is ever increasingly important for the European Union.
- Projects can not generate direct profit to SMEs but can produce added value, aid in finding new markets, developing new products.
- SME support structures in North Karelia are strong which will lessen the impacts of the economic slow down.

More information
Seminar materials are available at www.eastfinland.eu
'A vision for the north of Europe in the year 2020 and beyond'
23 October 2008

Organisers: North Sweden, North Finland, North Norway, East Finland, Mid Sweden
Speakers: Eric GLOERSEN
Participants: Local authorities/politicians from the municipalities of the northern regions.

Outline

A seminar was held to discuss the potential of the Northern regions and the future of the area in the year 2020 and beyond. Eric GLOERSEN, Nordregio presented a working paper on a foresight study regarding the northern periphery regions. The audience were then invited to leave their suggestions on the material presented. Afterward a workshop where held, where the participants could contribute with their vision of the future for the northern regions in the year 2020. Questions like - What kind of development could be made regarding the regions assets? Who will be the main actors? How can our regions bring added value to Europe? The conclusions from the workshops were then presented to the whole audience and Eric Gloersen who will use the input in his work with the foresight study.

Debate

How should the regions assets be taken care of? What kind of development do we want? The regions in the northern periphery have similarities, common interests and common problems that needs to be solved, like demographic problems, depopulation etc. The main focus of the debate was how to increase the cooperation between our regions. The national borders shouldn’t be obstacles. An increased horizontal cooperation in different fields would bring benefit to the northern regions and added value to Europe.

Conclusions

The main conclusions from the workshops were:
- Industries developing renewable energy sources will be prioritized in the future
- Supporting increased processing of raw material in the region
- Horizontal cooperation between the northern regions
- Increased construction of transportation links, especially railway.

More information
http://www.northsweden.org/default.asp?id=3368&refid=1027
South Savo - Savonlinna

'Tourism projects for the benefit of the region'
28 October 2008, 12:00 – 15:00

Organisers: Regional Council of South-Savo & University of Joensuu, Centre for Tourism Studies
Speakers: Development director Eero Aarnio, Regional Council of Etelä-Savo
Raija KOMPPULA, professor, University of Joensuu, Finland
Antti HONKANEN, professor, director, University of Joensuu, Finland
Ilkka KAUPPINEN, project manager, University of Joensuu, Finland
Henna KONU, researcher, University of Joensuu, Finland
Jukka LAITINEN, entrepreneur, SaimaaHoliday, Savonlinna
Heidi TASKINEN, project manager, University of Joensuu, Finland
Kimmo KAINULAINEN, research director, Mikkeli University of applied sciences, Finland
Pellervo KOKKONEN, director of the Centre of Expertise, Savonlinna Innovation Centre, Finland

Participants: Researchers, entrepreneurs, social partners, regional authorities

Outline

The local event in Savonlinna concentrated on giving examples of how to create more competitive development in one field of the economic priorities in South-Savo, tourism. A speciality of the day included drama inserts of tourism product development from the history of the Saimaa flotilla and General SUVOROV. The drama was developed in the project In the waves of the Saimaa Flotilla which was partly financed by the European Union and State Provincial Office of Southern Finland (Neighbourhood programme). After the welcoming speech (Eero AARNIO) the speakers presented results of regional R&D projects as well as current themes in tourism development. Topics included presentations of the work done at Centre for Tourism Studies (Raija KOMPPULA, Antti HONKANEN), e-tourism (Ilkka KAUPPINEN), product development in wellbeing tourism (Henna KONU), research on festivals in East Finland (Heidi TASKINEN), the role of Mikkeli University of applied sciences (Kimmo KAINULAINEN) and the workfield of Savonlinna Innovation Centre (Pellervo KOKKONEN). Jukka LAITINEN discussed the pros and cons of project work from the view of an tourism entrepreneur. Professor Raija KOMPPULA acted as chair of the seminar.

Conclusions

Prof. KOMPPULA concluded the seminar by summing up the presentations and discussions. Tourism research and development in East-Finland has been notedeced as an important business field. A lot has been done and results can be seen. Still, co-operation between actors should be further deepened. Especially entrepreneurs should be more involved in planning and conducting R&D projects.

More information
Seminar program and links to presentations: http://mot.joensuu.fi/sivut/tutkimus/matkailuhankkeet-alueen-hyoedyksi-seminaari.html
Turku and Southwest Finland

'Turku European Capital of Culture 2011 presents: Baltic Sea protection at The Baltic Herring Market'
23-26 September 2008

Organisers: Turku 2011 Foundation
Participants: Turku city inhabitants and Tourists

Outline

The event venue was on the Theater bridge in a very central location during the popular Baltic Herring market. First part of the programme was a 'print factory'. Passerbys were invited to print 'firebreathing herrings' and 'Turku 2011' logos on ecological, recycling material bags. After printing the bags people could donate money for WWF Baltic Sea Programme. Close to 1000€ was collected. A group of art students from Arts Academy at Turku University of Applied Sciences created a sculpture out of bicyclewrecks that local divers had rescued from the river Aura. A photo exhibition with an artistic and environmental focus on the Baltic Sea was our third attraction. The photos were collected in an international competition organised by the ministries of the environment in Finland and Estonia. Turku 2011 foundation organised and coordinated the event to raise environmental awareness and promote the environmental strategy and actionplan it has created. This strategy will be implemented during the European Capital of Culture-year 2011.

Debate

The event raised a lot of discussion among the passerbys on environmental issues acute in the Baltic Sea -region.

Conclusions

Thousands of people visited and participated in the event. The effects on the environmental awareness were evident and expressed in conversations.

More information
www.turku2011.fi
West Finland - Seinäjoki

'Europe of the Regions - Not too far away'
29 October 2008, 12:30 – 16:00

Organiser: Europe Direct West Finland
Speakers: Hannu TAKKULA, Member of the European Parliament
Miapetra KUMPULA-NATRI, Member of Finnish Parliament
Paavo MÄKINEN, Vice President of European Commission Representation in Finland
Pekka NURMINEN, Head of Office, European Parliament, Directorate General for Communication Information Office in Finland (chair of Citizen's Happening)
Jari ALANKO, R & D Manager, Europe Direct West Finland, JAKK Jalasjärvi Adult Education Centre (chair of panel discussion)

Participants: General public (130), specialists of regional development (20)

Outline

The event was divided in two parts with the same speakers concentrating the same issues:

- European Union and economy; How much we spend and what we get
- Communication with citizens through the media; Why is it always EU's fault when something goes wrong and local administration's credit when something succeeds.
- Support of research, technological development and innovations; How EU's Cohesion policy works
- Energy and climate change; Is there something regions can do

The purpose of the event was to discuss about EU related issues interesting in the region and on the other hand to reduce the distance between citizens and European Union policy makers. Both parts succeeded sufficiently, in our region about 150 participants is quite satisfactory, and the most important way to getting familiar with EU institutions is to get familiar with people working in them.

Debate

During the debate Mrs KUMPULA-NATRI pointed out especially the importance of marketing of innovative products created by small & medium sized businesses. Also she noticed the need of common targets and strategies in regions towards climate change. Mr TAKKULA had noticed the lack of public discussion with the innovation strategies in Finland. Also he pointed out the importance of the communication strategies about EU related issues in Finland. It's clear need to accepting the responsibility by local & regional policy makers instead of blaming Brussels bureaucracy. Mr MÄKINEN'S point of view focused on EU's regional & cohesion policy. There is a need for more resources for the development of innovations and above all also regional coordination of resources from Regional Development Fund and European Social Fund in addition to funds of research framework programme. In the energy sector there is plenty of room for Finnish innovations, too.

Conclusions

Strong communication strategy with schools, third sector and EU related institutions is needed to increase the overall knowledge about EU institutions, decision making, structure etc. The main problem isn't the lack of information; it's the lack of knowledge.

Innovation is not only about local business ideas, but concerns cross-cultural and immigration issues as well.'
Twenty-one local events took place in France in the context of the OPEN DAYS 2008 ‘Europe in my region’. They mainly highlighted the crucial topic of climate change, through conferences, meeting and information campaigns (St Malo, Limoges, Toulouse, Poitiers); but also of sustainable development and European Programmes on research and development (Nantes, Villeneuve d’Ascq, Rennes). Participants were also able to attend conferences on territorial cohesion and the future of cohesion policy (Paris), and on the role of local and regional media in Europe (Dunkirk), as well as training sessions designed to inform the public about the European institutions and EU funding programmes (Arconsat, Brioude).

Enclosed, the report of the local events held in Houplin-Ancoisne, 12/10/2008; Toulouse, 21/10/2008; and Metz, 9-10/10/2008.
EGTC Eurometropole Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai – Lille Métropole Houplin-Ancoisne

'Mosaïc, the culture garden'
12 October 2008, 14:00 – 18:00

Organiser: Espace Naturel Lille Métropole
Participants: 1200: families, students, broad public

Outline

Mosaïc, the culture garden, covers 33 hectares, that evokes, through 10 contemporary gardens, the dreams of families who have settled in Lille metropolitan area since one century. Devoted first to families, this park welcomed, in 2007, 65 000 visitors. It's a place of dreams, voyages, activities and meetings. Audio guides in several languages, electric cars for disabled persons, restaurants, hammocks, deckchairs and traditional games are available for visitors. Every Sunday, from Easter to All Saints'Day, activities such as stories, calligraphy, guided tour, games, dances underline the cultural diversity of the metropolis.

Conclusions

On Sunday, the 12th of October 2008, in the framework of the week of Education to Peace, Mosaïc welcomed 'the Peace festival'. The weather was very good and more than 1200 persons visited the garden and:

- found out fair trade, biodiversity, climate change,
- took part in workshops to create kites, to play 'mandalas', to calligraph,
- played traditional or cooperative games,
- discovered fair fashion with a fashion show organised by two artists from Poland and Africa,
- listened to texts on Peace written by some children.

This day offered a voyage of discoveries, meetings and relaxation.
Région Midi Pyrénées – Toulouse

'Sustainable construction in Midi-Pyrénées - How young people will build the future?'
21 October 2008, 9:00 – 17:00

Organiser: Région Midi Pyrénées
Speakers:
- Kim VANGUERS, Head of the European centre for renewable energy
- Joselyne BLASER, Director of the CRC (Comité Régional de Concertation du bâtiment, des travaux publics et des matériaux de construction)
- Bénédicte RIEY, Responsable de l'Observatoire Régional de l'Energie de Midi-Pyrénées
- Bernard REYNIER, Vice-Président fondateur du Cluster (Association 'Cluster bâtiment économe')
- Marie RAMIS, Région DES
- Philippe and Leslie GONCALVES, Eco-architects (Seuil Architecture)
- Geoffrey DAPOIGNY, BE Eco2wattsconseil
- Jean-Yvon CABIOCH, Directeur des études du CAFOC
- Françoise THELLIER, Sandra SPAGNOL, Teachers
- Luc FLOISSAC, Teacher in an architecture school
- Luc PICARD, Proviseur lycée du Sidobre+chef travaux
- Emille LEFEVRE, Educateur à l'environnement 3PA
- Camille MAGNIONT, Doctoral students
- Guy CAPDEVILLE, GAMBA Acoustique
- Christophe SADOK; Rémy SALVADORI; Ali BEN SADIA, AFPA
- Vincent SEPPELIADES, Responsable de l'ARCE
- Nadia ESTANG, Teacher in heating engineers
- Marie JAMIN, Mason
- Christophe FILLET, Emmanuel LAURENTIN, Thermal engineering teachers
- Apprentices

Participants: 270 people attended the conference, mainly high school students and professionals

Outline
Following its participation in the OPEN DAYS, the Midi-Pyrénées Region organised a public event that aimed to give young people in Midi-Pyrénées a forum for airing their views on how to adapt to climate change, with a particular focus on sustainable construction. This event was mainly led by young people and aimed to strengthen dialogue between stakeholders in Education, Research and Economic. A plenary conference took place explaining how the EU and Midi-Pyrenees are committed to combating climate change. Seminars organised throughout the day, to outline practical projects and foster exchanges between young people and professionals. In addition, a European case study was presented.

Conclusions
Young people from the Midi-Pyrenees region attending the conference, most of whom are attending apprenticeship colleges and vocational training centres, contributed to the discussions and in particular gave their opinions on the sector. This audience, rarely invited to participate in this type of institutional event, highlighted the need to adapt vocational training to the realities of the building sector, the challenges of marketing new materials in accordance with sustainable development and the problem of project funding.

More information
http://www.midipyrenees.fr/actualites.asp?pk_actualite=740&univers=6&sX_Men_selectedID=m3_CED1CC84&cat=-1
Moselle – Metz

'Gardens and Tourism: the keys to success'
9-10 October 2008

Organiser: The General Council of the Moselle
Speakers: 32 Speakers coming from France, Germany, USA, Japan, Canada, Netherlands, Portugal, UK, Austria, Morocco
Participants: 350 participants of 13 different countries

Outline

This 7th International Conference has been made to exchange experiences about gardens, listen to the opinions and give advice of those who have either created or who manage outstanding gardens all over the world and answer the questions of the public.

Debate

The debate of the first day focused on different questions as why open a garden to the public?, how to maintain gardens? How to create new gardens (the art of gardens or the art of tourism development?), could ephemeral garden be a new way of seeing gardens?, and what about the quality of services? (towards professionalisation). The second day was more based on the idea of attracting the public and ensuring the long-term viability of a garden's economy: is patronage, sponsorship the right idea?, how to organise garden-related events? How to ensure customer loyalty?

Then, the afternoon of the second day gave place to experiences choosing "gardens and tourism" as platform for developing other projects, networks …

Conclusions

This conference has been based on a tradition of exchanges and quality whilst at the same time defending a very contemporary vision of gardens.
It has been a great success and confirms that there is a real enthusiasm for gardens and garden's tourism.

More information

Publications: The debate of this conference have been registered and will be published and sent to the participants during the first months of 2009.
Website: Jardins-sans-limites.com
Nord-Pas de Calais_Villeneuve d'Ascq

'J’innove avec l'Europe'
10 October 2008, 10:00 – 16:30

Organisers: Regional Council of Nord-Pas de Calais (France);
J’innove en Nord-Pas de Calais (Regional Innovation Network)

Speakers: Alain CAPPY, Director of the Institute of Electronics, Microelectronics and Nanotechnologies (IEMN), France
Arnaud FRÉVILLE, Deputy Director of the Nord-Pas de Calais Regional Council, France
Patrick KLEIN, European Commission, Enterprise and Industry Directorate-General
Elisabeth COUSIN, EURALIA, Adviser in European Affairs, Belgium
Dominique DROMA, RER (European Regional Network), France
Carlos PEREIRA, CIEL Innovation Center, « Action collective Europe », France
Stéphane GERBAUD, Nord-Pas de Calais Regional Council, France
Jérôme LAGET, OSEO, France
Sophie LE FLAMANC, Lille 1 University, Master « Eurostudies », France
Olivier NAY, Lille 2 University, Master « Europe », France
Jean-Paul SMETS, CEO of Nexedi, France
Georges SALMER, Scientific Expert of the Regional Innovation Network, France
Marie-Noëlle LIENEMANN, Member of the European Parliament, Vice-President of the Nord-Pas de Calais Regional Council, France

Participants: 120 participants, i.e. representatives of local authorities and institutions, researchers and scientists, innovative companies interested in European projects, consultants, and university students.

Outline

The forum was carried out in close cooperation with the OPEN DAYS consortium 'Cooperation for Innovation & Innovation in Cooperation'. The consortium organised two innovation related conferences (i.e. 'Innovative projects and territorial co-operation: when innovation stimulates co-operation', and 'Frontrunners fastening innovation in territorial cooperation') that took place in Brussels. The forum in Lille brought some of the reflections and remarks that were made in Brussels back to the Nord-Pas de Calais region. The Forum started with a welcome speech from Alain CAPPY who introduced the innovation topic from the point of view of the director of a laboratory that is interested in working with small companies on research and development projects. Arnaud FRÉVILLE underlined that the Regional council is willing to give the necessary support for small companies that are interested in participating in European innovation projects. Finally, Patrick KLEIN presented some of the tools that the European Commission has developed in order to foster innovation in small companies in the European Union.

Debate

The introduction speeches were followed by four thematic presentations. Elisabeth COUSIN started with a panorama of European programmes on research and innovation. Dominique DROMA and Carlos PEREIRA followed with a presentation of two regional networks (i.e. “Réseau Europe Régions” and
“Action collective Europe”) that help research laboratories and small companies to get involved in European research and innovation projects. Stéphane GERBAUD from the Regional council and Jérôme Laget from the French innovation agency OSEO presented the funding schemes that have been set up in order to help small companies that are willing to get involved in innovative projects on a European level. Last but not least, Sophie LE FLAMANC and Olivier NAY draw the attention of the audience to the fact that the graduates of the European studies courses of the University of Lille could be perfect assets for the management of European research and innovation projects in small companies.

**Conclusions**

Jean-Paul SMETS the CEO of “NEXEDI” a small ICT company has already participated in two European R&D projects within the 6th Framework Programme. His message to the audience was clear: ‘I would participate again, because it is worthwhile doing it’. Georges SALMER used to work as a scientific expert for the European Commission. He saw many interesting research and innovation projects. In his conclusion, he asked the small companies to participate in these projects, because there are many things that we can learn from our European neighbours, and that they can learn from us, too. Finally, Marie-Noëlle LIENEMANN closed the forum highlighting the importance of bringing the OPEN DAYS back to the regions. She made clear that the role of European programmes is not only to provide funding for projects. The main role of European projects is to enable cooperation, so that Europeans can overcome existing differences and develop something new, i.e. innovative to our mutual benefit.

**More information**

www.jinnove.com/fr/Actualites/Retour-sur-le-Forum-J-innove-avec-l-Europe
http://www.nordeclair.fr/journal/NE/2008/10/11/EUROPE/ART391631.phtml
http://www.nordeclaire.fr/journal/NE/2008/10/11/EUROPE/ART391632.phtml

'Bringing the OPEN DAYS to our region is a good idea, and the fact that we chose the topics of research and development is essential: we are living in a region that is oriented towards innovation.'
In October 2008 Germany hosted ten local events – conferences, workshops, seminars and even a festival. The main topics discussed were: best practice for regional development (Göttingen); intercultural dialogue, European and international cooperation projects (Magdeburg, Potsdam); Combating climate change (Hamburg); and Sustainable regional development (Wietow). These events brought together local authorities, engineering companies and research institutions, students and interested members of the public.

Enclosed, the report of the local events held in Stuttgart, 17/10/2008; Göttingen, 8/10/2008; Dresden, 10/10/2008.
Baden-Württemberg - Stuttgart

‘Open forum - Colloquium on migration and integration, using as examples the metropolitan areas of Lyon and Stuttgart, in the framework of the “French Week”’
17 October 2008

Organisers: Informationszentrum/ Europe Direct Stuttgart
Speakers: Hélène GEOFFROY, Adjointe au Maire de Vaulx-en-Vélin et Conseillère générale de canton Vaulx-en-Vélin near Lyon
Anne DUFAUD, Head of the Mission locale, Vaulx-en-Vélin near Lyon
Gari PAVKOVIC, Head of “Stabsabteilung für Integrationspolitik”, provincial capital Stuttgart
Gökay SOFUOGLU, Head of the international community center, Haus 49, Stuttgart
Wolfgang NEUMANN, Research assistant of the “Deutsch-Französische Institut, Ludwigsburg”, and Head of the projects city development and sociale Integration in Germany and France

Participants: About 80 participants from different backgrounds. For example: students, activists from the local integration politics and interested citizens

Outline

The topic of the open forum was: ‘European Community in change: migration and integration using the example of the European cities Lyon and Stuttgart’. The aim was to show the different attitudes of state and citizens concerning immigration and to outline the political concepts. Furthermore we asked for a exchange of experience between the different countries to create an relation between the French and the German side for future cooperation and common projects. Finally the topics of the discussion were varied, there are many similarities but also differences. It came out that the integration topic had an explosive power in both member states. The political participation is low among the immigrations in both member states. Differences can be found in the situation of living: in Germany there isn’t such a ghetto-development as in France. Also the language-skills vary a lot between Germany and France. In Germany that’s a much bigger problem than in France. In religious topics France is much more liberal, only the religious education in schools is here a bigger problem than in Germany.

Conclusions

Both, the participants and the audience senses the evening as interesting and informative. The event offered a lively and authentic dialog and was seen as an approach for a inner-european exchange about one of the big social themes. Furthermore contacts between Stuttgart and Lyon were established to result in future collaboration.
Niedersachsen - Göttingen

'Regions and cities in a challenging world'
8 October 2008, 14:00 – 17:00

Organiser: Regional Representation of the Lower Saxony Government Braunschweig
Speakers: Ulrich HAGEBÖLLING, Chief of the Regional Representation of the Lower Saxony Government Braunschweig
Michael GLATTHAAR, Graduate engineer (presenter/moderator)
Prof. Dr. Ulf HAHNE, University of Kassel
Günter PIEGSA, Regional Representation of the Lower Saxony Government Braunschweig
Dr. Martin RUDOLPH, Chamber of Industry and Commerce Hannover, office Göttingen
Rüdiger REYHN, Regionalverband South-Lower Saxony
Stefan G. REUß, Head of the administration of the Werra-Meißner-Kreis
Wolfgang MEYER, Lord Mayor of the city of Göttingen
Reinhard SCHERMANN, Head of the administration of the Landkreis Göttingen
Raimund NOWAK, Metropolitan region Hannover-Braunschweig-Göttingen-Wolfsburg
Michael WICKMANN, Head of the administration of the Landkreis Northeim

Participants: Local authorities and experts

Conclusions

After the impulse speech 'the positioning of regions in Europe' and three examples from out south Lower Saxony a panel discussion took place under line of the moderator Michael GLATTHAAR. This discussion developed very lively and pointed clearly the different opinions to the question of how local regional bodies and even a metropolitan region could take an active part in the organisation of this challenging world. The substantial statements:

- Municipality and border spreading co-operation is important and it’s working quite good in different subjects of politics
- Declining population, increase in percentage of old people as well as a lack of specialists are forcing to strengthen common efforts

Opinions differ about the kind of legal commitment a co-operation could take place.

More information
www.regionalverband.de; www.bildungsregion-goettingen.de; www.suedniedersachsenstiftung.de; www.geniusgoettingen.de
Saxony - Dresden

'European Flood Risk Management Directive – Transposition in the Free State of Saxony'
10 October 2008, 9:30 – 15:30

Organiser: Saxon Regional Conservation Foundation
Speakers: Ulrich KRAUS, Department Head SMUL
          Prof. Dr. Martin SOCHER, Section Head SMUL
          Wolf-Dieter DALLHAMMER, Section Head SMUL
          Uwe HÖHNE, Section Head State Flood Alarm Centre (LfULG)
          Dr. Hans-Ulrich SIEBER, Technical Director Saxon State Dam Administration (LTV)
          Dr. Jochen SCHANZE, Leibniz Institute for Ecological Spatial Development
          Harald GEYER, SMUL

Participants: Local Authorities such as City of Dresden Administration, Görlitz, Regional
          Administration such as District Administrations, Companies involved in Planning and
          Hydraulic Engineering, International Organisations such as International Commission for
          the Protection of the Elbe River (ICPE), Research Institutions such as Technical
          University Dresden, NGO WWF Auen-Institute, Individual Participants, all together ca. 70
          Participants

Outline

The workshop was opened by Ulrich KRAUS who introduced the current activities in Saxony with respect
 to the transposition of the Flood Risk Management Directive on the different administrative levels. He
 outlined that Saxony has learned bitter lessons during the Flood in August 2002 with losses of live and
 extreme damages to private and public properties, industrial enterprises, cultural heritage and the
 environment. After this event and further serious floods in 2003, 2005 and 2006 the Free State of Saxony
 has established a new and complex strategy to cope with this kind of natural disaster. This is, however, a
 generation task which can only be solved with the active participation and engagement of all branches of
 the administration, the stakeholders and the broad public.

Debate

Prof. Dr. Martin SOCHER focused on the on the challenges arising from the technical transposition of
 Flood Risk Management Directive (FRMD). The preparation of the state flood protection concepts went
 along with a strong participation of the public and resulted in a broad acceptance of the proposed 1600
 individual structural and non-structural flood risk management measures. Meanwhile the work on
 hydraulic structures and further measures as part of the reconstruction activities after 2002 merges with
 the State Flood Protection Investment Scheme (HIP). Saxony is particularly grateful to the German
 Federal Government for the establishment of the Reconstruction Support Fund and the EU for the supply
 of financial resources from the EU Solidarity Fund right after the 2002 event and currently for the access
 to funding within the frame of the European Fund for Regional Development.

Wolf-Dieter DALLHAMMER opened his presentation with a thorough analysis of the European FRMD and
 its reflection in federal and state water laws. He identified parts of the national legal settings which are
 already in compliance with the stipulations of the FRMD. Uwe HÖHNE looks back on experiences which
 have been gathered about the functioning of the flood alert system in Saxony, taking into account that in
time and space flash floods in the Ore Mountains may co-occur with pluvial floods in the main rivers and the Elbe River. Saxons Flood Alert System takes vast advantage of up-to-date flood forecast methods and distributes warnings and information via all means of modern communication such as SMS, videotext and the internet. The system is working on the basis of a completely modernised observation and gauging system which has been hardened against flood and other damages by redundant measurement and communication technologies. Dr. Ulrich SIEBER represents the State Dam Administration (LTV) which has the responsibility for all state owned hydraulic structures and the operation and maintenance of the rivers and the dam infrastructure. He identified the main and most important flood protection measures which have been analysed by a new assessment tool taking into full consideration cumulated damage potentials, benefit cost ratios, ecological aspects such as the Water Framework Directive (WFD) and the vulnerability of the concerned regions. This assessment resulted into a prioritisation list which has been made public and is the key for the State HIP. Dr. Jochen SCHANZE is engaged in a number of national and European research activities about flood Risk Management and inter alia climate change. He introduced a scientific model for the management of flood risks for the Elbe River Basin and identified major points for further co-operation with the responsible authorities. Harald GEYER gave an insight into the state led activities for the supports of municipal authorities in their own strive for improved flood risk management and flood protection. Two main points are of particular importance for the municipal authorities and the concerned public. Firstly, the support to prepare flood risk management plans in compliance with the FRMD and, secondly, the funding of equipment for the local water brigades (Wasserwehr) for those communities who are in particular need.

Conclusions

The workshop continued and concluded with a lively round table discussion with the active engagement of the participants of the workshop. Prof. Dr. Martin SOCHER summed up the discussion as follows:

- Cooperation with our upstream neighbours in the Czech Republic is a necessity and will be inter alia further strengthened through the activities of the ICPE
- Communication with the public and the active engagement of all stakeholders is of paramount importance for the success of the State Investment Programme (HIP)
- With the FRMD and the EU funding mechanisms a consistent framework has been established in order to improve flood risk management on international, national and regional levels
- Conflicts between stakeholders and the responsible administrations have to be solved on the basis on a mutual strong will to achieve the best results for the protection of the people, the economy and the environment against natural hazards such as floods.

More information


'The transposition of the European Flood Risk Management Directive needs to be built on a broad partnership within the river basin, among the different administrative levels, the stakeholders and the concerned and broad public.'
The Greek cities of Alexandroupolis, Athens, Heraklion, Larissa and Pirgos all hosted local events for the OPEN DAYS 2008 'Europe in my region'. These included a seminar aimed at finding sustainable solutions in maritime transport; a cultural event with an orchestra playing the "Music of Europe's Water"; a lecture highlighting the development of innovative and alternative forms of tourism; and two seminars on sustainable tourism. Local authorities, researchers, university representatives, the general public and the media all had a chance to share their common interest and opinions.

Enclosed, the report of local events held in Athens, 2/10/2008; and Alexandroupolis, 10/09/2008.
'Innovation in maritime transport'
2 October 2008, 18:00 – 20:00

Organisers: T.E.D.K.N.A. (Local Union of Municipalities and Communities of Attica, Greece) with the collaboration of the Greek Ministry of Mercantile Marine, The Aegean and Island Policy

Speakers: Dimitrios STRATIGOS, Mayor of Poros, Greece
Konstantinos ANASTOPOULOS, Mayor of Hydra, Greece
Theodore KOUKOULIS, Mayor of Kythira, Greece
Evaggelos KONTAXAKIS, Mayor of Spetses, Greece
Christos PALLIS, Mayor of Methana, Greece
Dimitrios NIKOLAOU, Secretary General of the Local Union of Municipalities and Communities of Attica, Greece

Participants: Local authorities of Attica, Researchers, Representants of the University of Athens, Media, Broad public

Outline

The seminar was opened by Dimitrios KALOGEROPOULOS, Mayor of Egaleo and President of the Local Union of Municipalities and Communities of Attica, who outlined the importance of the issue to be discussed due to the existing problems faced by the remote and small islands of the Saronic Gulf. Although they also tackled the alimentation in water, waste management and energy issues, the main focus of the presentations and the discussions during the event was on finding sustainable solutions to the problems of expensive fuel, prohibited prices of tickets in maritime transportation, intercommunication between the islands, special subsidies to be applied and difficulties in the chain supply management of the islands. Dimitrios KALOGEROPOULOS offered the participants food for thought concerning the urgent need to promote development opportunities in maritime transport in order to help ship-owners meet the challenges of the new maritime technologies.

Debate

Mayor Dimitrios STRATIGOS launched the debate by saying that intercommunication between the islands should be ensured all year round especially during the winter period. The monopoly in maritime transportation in the Saronic Gulf has, as a consequence the increase of the price of tickets and the abolishment or insufficiency of maritime routes especially between the smaller or remote islands in the region. Pressure towards the ‘Ministry of Mercantile Marine, the Aegean and the Island Policy’ has to be done on a collective basis with the contribution of all municipalities of the Region, aiming at putting an end to this monopoly. Mayor Konstantinos ANASTOPOULOS: tackled the issue of the expensive fuel that causes huge problems to maritime transport in general and particularly harms permanent inhabitants of the islands and state or other employees that must often travel to the mainland and back. The inhabitants of small islands such as Kithira, Antikithira, Hydra etc… have to ensure that a special subsidy status will be applied. The extension of maritime routes by conventional ships up to the island of Spetses must be guaranteed.

Mayor Theodore KOUKOULIS: added that the insufficient communication between the islands of Kithira/Antikithira and the port of Piraeus is a huge disadvantage for the development of these islands and especially for their tourism industry. If we wish to have sustainable development in the islands, we should
take into consideration the ‘transportation issue’. Mayor Evaggelos KONTAXAKIS: states that the official answer of the authorities concerning special subsidies for the maritime routes in the Saronic Gulf, according to which subsidies cannot be applied because the Saronic Gulf is not considered a “marginal route”, should be reconsidered budgetary wise. We must consider the possibility of contracting a special deal with the ship-owners for the winter period. Mayor Christos PALLIS: proposed to extend the road network on an inter-prefectural basis in order to resolve the problem of the prohibited prices of the tickets and the lack of sufficient maritime routes. In addition, he strongly believes that a subprogram, within the new E.U. programming period (2007-2013), focusing exclusively on the region of the Saronic Gulf must be considered. Dimitrios NIKOLAOU: strongly believes that the creation of an inter-communal maritime transport system will resolve the problem of the connection between the islands of the Saronic Gulf because, in this way, these islands will no longer be dependant on the competition of the private maritime transport sector or the potential adjustments of the Ministry of Mercantile Marine.

Conclusions

Mr KALOGEROPoulos concluded the seminar by summing up the discussions as follows:

- Extend both itineraries and maritime routes of conventional ships in order to cover remote islands of the Region (Kithira/Antikithira) and the island of the Saronic Gulf (Spetses, Hydra, Poros, Methana)
- Avoid the exclusion of maritime communication between the islands
- Apply special subsidies to maritime lines especially in the winter period, establish low prices of tickets for employees and permanent residents of the islands
- Create an inter-communal maritime transport development partnership for the islands of the Saronic Gulf
- EU maritime transport has to reflect in an integrated approach of governance at a European, national and local level
- It is important to develop regional expertise in the maritime transport field. The development of cooperation and good practices networks between local and regional authorities will highly contribute to the competitiveness of the maritime sector.
- The creation, with the contribution of the European Commission, of an administrative unit for the islands, would be a good way to guarantee that the particularities and needs of the islands will systematically be taken into consideration.
- Maritime transport well adapted to specific needs can give life to peripheral and insular regions playing a crucial role in the achievement of a social, economic and territorial cohesion
- The encouragement of cross-border cooperation and territorial cohesion can definitely contribute to a sustainable development of maritime regions.

More information

www.tedkna.gr
www.yen.gr

‘The permanent inhabitants of remote islands are the best guardians of the natural environment and they ensure a sustainable development of their regions.’

‘Transport is a good that belongs to the nation; the nation must manage this public good and not each individual.’
East Macedonia and Thrace - Alexandroupolis

'Music of Europe's Water'
10 September 2008, 19:30

Organiser: Region of East Macedonia and Thrace
Speakers: Maria- Venetia APOSTOLOPOULOU,
Athanasios TRIKOUPIES
Participants: Local society, local authorities

Outline

In the first part, there was a presentation in the European law and actions concerning the protection of the sea and the regional maritime policy of the Region of East Macedonia - Thrace. In the second part, there was a concert with the contribution of the orchestra of the Music Teachers Association of E.M-TH. Region. The orchestra presented music written by European composers and inspired by the “water” issue.

Conclusions

This event was attractive to the local society of Alexandroupolis city. People were informed about European actions on marine protection, and they expressed their sensitivity and concern regarding the maritime environment.

More information
www.remth.gr
Five Hungarian cities held a local event in the context of the OPEN DAYS 2008 ‘Europe in my region’. They focused on cohesion policy (Budapest); on renewable energy (Szombathely, Pécs); on thermal water utilisation for regional innovation (Hajduszoboszló); and on EU Funds and their applications (Pécs). These workshops, debates and exhibitions brought together EU officers, experts, academics, researchers, NGOs, solution deliverers, cluster managers, the general public and the media.

Enclosed, the report of local events held in Budapest, 13/10/2008; Pécs, 8-10/10/2008; Szombathely, 21/10/2008.
City of Budapest – Budapest

‘The future of cohesion policy’
13 October 2008, 14:00-16:00

Organisers: Municipality of Budapest, Office of European Union Affairs
Speakers: Eva KOTI, National Development Agency
          Ivan TOSICS
Participants: EU officers of the different departments of the City of Budapest and from the districts of Budapest

Outline

Gabor BIHARY, member of the Committee of the Regions, welcomed the participants and made a short introduction about the OPEN DAYS. Eva KOTI described the general framework, the time-table and the preparation process of the Hungarian position, she also mentioned some critics of the present cohesion policy. Then TOSICS spoke about the future challenges (demographic change, globalization, climate change, energy) mentioning special problems of Hungary as well. He spoke about the Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion and described different scenarios (competitiveness oriented, cohesion oriented) and opinions (BACHTLER, PALMEN, UNTIEDT). Urban issues were also dealt with.

Conclusions

The seminar gave a very detailed overview of the current programming period and of the future challenges Europe faces. With the many challenges and the different interests it will not be easy to find a common position. Cities have to be active to defend their interests.
Outline

The exhibition aimed at raising citizens’ awareness of the possibilities to support local and regional development by EU Funds in the framework of the European Capital of Culture programme. It targeted the general public, citizens of the City of Pécs and South Transdanubian Region. During the exhibition from 3 to 5 p.m. the Mediterranean Radio broadcasted live from the ‘Csészényi square’, interviewing the professionals working on the infrastructural development plans. This opportunity gave a chance to the citizens to ask and consult personally with them during those hours. On the 8th of October the Transdanubian Region Development Agency held an open day on the location of the exhibition, answering questions considering EU Funds and applications.

Conclusions

The Pécs2010 European Capital of Culture programme underlines the importance of the competitiveness mainly determined by knowledge, innovation, the local level of cultural services and quality of life in the city and the region. The ‘Open plans’ exhibition presented -through concrete infrastructural development plans- how the European Capital of Culture project can contribute to the regional development, and how EU Funds can promote the success of the project.

More information

The exhibition is still installed and can be visited at Csészényi square (Pécs, Szécsenyi square 7) Pécs2010 Management Center: www.pecs2010.hu
Outline

The participants agreed that the last decade clearly shows the national programmes on the renewable energies did not give solutions to the needs of the West Pannon Region. All existing regional strategies of this field have to be harmonised with the EU and national/regional strategies and policies. Also the missing policies on regional level have to determined, than the new regional strategy of the renewable energy has to formed and than implemented. Both the practical experts and the university professors enjoyed the company of each others and they declared their willingness to more firmly cooperate in on strategic level.

Debate

The use of pellets of biomass (especially wood cuttings) heating systems in households was discussed among potential users.

Conclusions

Need to form a regional strategy document on renewable energy.
ICELAND

In the context of the OPEN DAYS 2008 – 'Europe in my Region', Iceland hosted a local event in the city of Bifröst on 30 October 2008, jointly organised by the regions of West Iceland, North West Iceland and Westfjords. This event took the form of two workshops and brought together political personalities, academics, entrepreneurs and members of civil society.
IRELAND

Five local events were organised in Ireland in the cities of Clonakilty, Dublin, West Cork and Carrick-on-Shannon. They took the form of workshops on EU territorial cooperation programmes (West Cork) and cohesion policy (Carrick-on-Shannon); of a conference centred on the opportunities and challenges that exist for Ireland’s waters (Clonakilty); and of a General Assembly of the Union of Capitals of the EU, held in parallel with an exhibition drawing together images of what is unique and special about each of the capital cities within the EU Member States (Dublin).

Enclosed, the report of the local events held in Dublin, 13-15/10/2008 & 13-24/10/2008; Clonakilty, 17/10/2008.
'48th annual General Assembly of the Union of Capitals of the European Union (UCEU)'
13-15 October 2008

Organiser: Dublin City Council - International Relations & Research Department
Speakers: Eibhlin BYRNE, Lord Mayor of Dublin
           John GORMLEY TD, Minister for Environment, Heritage & Local Government
           Dick ROCHE TD, Minister for European Affairs
           Professor Michael PARKINSON (among others: adviser on urban affairs to the European
           Commission, OECD and Eurocities
           Professor Gildo SEISDEDOS (research and consulting in urban planning)
           Charles LEADBEATER, strategic advisor
           Sir Bob GELDOF, Honorary Freeman of Dublin City
           Liz O’DONNELL, former Minister of State at the Department of Foreign Affairs, responsible
           for Overseas Development Assistance
           Peter SUTHERLAND, Chairman of Goldman Sachs International and former EU
           Commissioner responsible for Competition Policy (1985-1989)
           Professor John SWEENEY, lecturer at the Geography Department of NUI Maynooth
           University, expert in climatology, biogeography, geomorphology and environmental
           resource management.
           Niall MELLON, philanthropist founder of a Trust that searches to provide homes to
           impoverished communities in South Africa
           John TIERNEY, Dublin City Manager
           Keshav VARMA, World Bank Director

Participants: Representatives of the capitals of the European Union, Chamber of Commerce, local
organizations, Dublin City Council Councillors and civil servants.

Outline

The UCEU was established in 1961 to preserve continuous links between the European Capitals and to
encourage communications between the inhabitants in order to develop the living feeling of European
solidarity. Dublin City has been honoured with the Presidency of the UCEU for 2008 for the first time since
1988. The theme of the 48th UCEU General Assembly is “Leadership-the new frontier for capital cities”.
There are two dimensions to this theme:

- Looking inwards: the first is in relation to the role of capital cities looking inwards and taking the lead
  on securing economic futures through developing knowledge and creative business
- Looking outwards: the second is in relation to the role of capital cities looking outwards and taking the
  lead on securing global sustainability through tackling climate change and promoting balanced
development across the world.

Thoughts from international opinion leaders with a European perspective were key to stimulate and
encourage debate.
Conference

Prof Michael PARKINSON told a conference that civic leadership was more vital than ever and spoke about a report that is currently preparing to the British government on the impact of the banking crisis for cities. Former attorney general and EU Commissioner Peter SUTHERLAND emphasised the importance of investing in higher education. He noted that Europe was lagging behind the US in this area, with only two of its universities (Oxford and Cambridge) among the world’s top 20. Dr John SWEENY warned that many European’s capitals in coastal locations were at risk of serious flooding as a result of climate change. The former Minister of State at the Department of Foreign Affairs, Liz O’DONNELL, called on European cities to twin with cities in Africa and share their expertise in such vital areas as housing, water and sanitation. Property developer Niall MELLON recounted the extraordinary success of the charitable trust he established six years ago in building houses for poor people living in shacks on the fringes of Cape Town and Johannesburg, in South Africa. Mellon noted that children in particular had benefited from the initiative and he appealed to civic leaders from all over Europe to join the effort, by sending people on this kind of mission. Dublin City manager John TIERNEY talked about the new International Section in Dublin City Council and the new project to help a city in Africa. Sir Bob GELDOF in a video message spoke about urbanisation throughout Africa and the actual challenges.

Conclusions

The Assembly was constructed to stimulate and encourage debate on the key issues, among the leaders of Europe’s capitals on Tuesday 14th October and then to turn this debate into potential action on October 15th, when through networking it was explored how best to develop practical co-operation on a bi-lateral and/or multi-lateral basis. Most of the cities if not all of them left having strengthened links and having developed the basis of a future co-operation inside the European Union.

More information

www.uceu.org
www.citieslinked.com
Dublin City Council – Dublin (2)

'The many faces of Europe's capitals'
13-24 October 2008

Organiser: Dublin City Council - International Relations & Research Department
Speakers: Eibhlin BYRNE, Lord Mayor of Dublin
Participants: 300: participants of the General Assembly, broad public.

Outline

'The many faces of Europe's capitals' is a unique photographic exhibition that draws together images of what is unique and special about each of the capital cities within the member states of the EU. This exhibition is organised in the framework of the Union of Capitals of the European Union (UCEU). It seeks to capture the energy and spirit that mark Europe's great cities. The pictures reflect the cities and their locations. They capture the people and their creativity. They provoke the unexpected views that we often miss in a city. The exhibition seeks to link the citizens of Europe through pictures. The pictures in this exhibition have been gathered by the cities themselves. These images may stimulate a desire to visit one of Europe's great cities. They may awake in the viewer an understanding that what unites us across Europe will always be greater than what differs us. The launching of the Picture Exhibition took place on Monday the 13th October by the Lord Mayor of Dublin Eibhlin Byrne, when around 80 people were present. During the two weeks that the Exhibition will be opened to the public, a number of around 300 people are expected to be attending. Also this Picture Exhibition will be displayed around different public Libraries around Dublin City during the following months.

More information
www.uceu.org
‘Ireland’s Waters: An Untapped Resource’

Organiser: Association of Irish Regions
Speakers: Geoffrey O’SULLIVAN, Marine Institute
Jason WHOOLEY, Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM)
Eanna ROWE, Waterways Ireland
David BYRNE, Central Fisheries Board
Kevin O’CONNOR, Sail West Project, Donegal County Council

Participants: Local Authorities, Regional Authorities, Regional Assemblies, Regional Fisheries Boards, County & City Enterprise Boards, Association of City & County Councils, EU Commission

Outline
The Conference was opened by Cllr James DEEGAN, Chairperson of the Association of Irish Regions who started by informing delegates that the theme of ‘Ireland’s Waters An Untapped Resource?’ was chosen in order to stimulate a debate on the opportunities and challenges that exist for further developing this valuable resource and on whether Ireland is making the optimum sustainable use of this natural resource. Ireland’s waters both inland and offshore are an important untapped natural resource that presents many opportunities and challenges which require research, long-term planning and investment to fully utilise their potential.

Debate
Geoffrey O’SULLIVAN, Marine Institute, gave a presentation on ‘Recent Developments in Ireland in Marine Research, Technology, Development and Innovation’. Jason WHOOLEY, Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM) gave a presentation on ‘Sustainable Development of Irish Seafood’. Eanna ROWE, Waterways Ireland, gave a presentation on ‘Marketing the Inland Waterways of Ireland’. David BYRNE, Central Fisheries Board, gave a presentation on ‘The Development and Enhancement of Ireland’s Inland Fisheries and Sea Angling Resources’. Kevin O’CONNOR, Sail West Project, Donegal County Council, gave a presentation on ‘Donegal Marine and Water Based Leisure Resource Development Programme - Sail West Project’.

Conclusions
The Conference was an outstanding success and provided a suitable forum to discuss the opportunities and challenges that exist for Ireland’s waters. Ireland’s waters contain some of the most productive fishing grounds in the EU and the growing demand for seafood products offer significant development for the industry. It is important that this growing opportunity within the market is captured in a sustainable manner. The conference provided a unique and timely opportunity to examine the potential and identify the opportunities that exist for Ireland’s waters.

More information
Pauline GRENNAN, BMW Regional Assembly: pgrennan@bmwassembly.ie; BMW Regional Assembly: www.bmwassembly.ie; Irish Regions Office: www.iro.ie
Italy organised twenty-two local ‘Europe in my region’ events. Workshops, exhibitions, video-conferences, seminars, round tables and festivals looked at the future of cohesion policy (Isola di Capo Rizzuto); the importance of the European social agenda (Genoa); the debate on earth observation and environmental monitoring (Basilicata); initiatives in the fields of renewable energy (Bozen) and rural development (Teramo); the building of common actions for European awareness in the European internal market (Frosinone); and actions financed by the Regional Development Fund (Umbria). These diverse and fruitful events brought together regional and local authorities, scientific agencies, public research bodies, European officials, other European regions, universities, cultural institutions, the media and the general public.

Enclosed, the report of the local events held in Bari, 30/10/2008; Matera, 30-31/10/2008; Isola di Capo Rizutto, 8/10/2008; Frosinone, 23/10/2008; Rome, 24-25/10/2008; Florence, 23-26/10/2008; Genoa, 28/10/2008; Teramo, 23/10/2008; and Bozen, 8-10/10/2008.
Apulia - Bari

‘Academy and Industry at work: the case of Apulia region ILO Regional Network Project’

Organiser: ARTI Puglia
Speakers: Gianfranco VIESTI, President of ARTI
Andrea PICCALUGA, Professor of Economics and Business Management,
Massimiliano GRANIERI, Department of Intellectual Property Torino Wireless
Giuseppe CONTI, Politecnico Milano
Participants: Representant of Universities – Chancellors and Members of Technical Scientific Committee of ILO Project

Outline

The local OPEN DAYS workshop presented the experience of Apulia Region concerned with developing an Industrial Liaison Office Regional network. The workshop offered a contribution to the debate on the management and transfer of knowledge from research to industry by approaching the discussion in the framework of the European directives, exchanging practices with other EU State Members and exploiting the knowledge acquired at the European Week of Region and Cities in Brussels within the OPEN DAYS. In order to properly achieve the workshop scope described, selected experts from the Proton Europe, the pan-european network of knowledge Transfer Office and companies affiliated to universities and other Public Research Organizations, have been involved and invited to the local event as speakers.

More information
www.regione.puglia.it
www.arti.puglia.it
Basilicata - Matera

'Earth Observation and new technologies for environmental monitoring, assessment and management'
30-31 October 2008, 9:30 – 18:45

Organiser: The Region of BASILICATA
Speakers:
1) Plenary session:
Vito DE FILIPPO - President of the Basilicata Region
Saverio ACITO – Deputy Mayor of Matera
Enrico SAGGESE - ASI’s (Italian Space Agency) Commissioner
Giuseppe VEREDICE - CEO of TELESPAZIO
Elisabetta OLIVI - European Commission Representation in Italy
Hans DUFOURMONT - European Commission Enterprise and Industry Directorate-General
GMES/KOPERNIKUS Bureau
Vincenzo CUOMO - President of TeRN Consortium (Basilicata Earth Observation Technological Cluster)
Antonio COLANGELO - President of CREATEC (Basilicata Consortium of SMEs)
Philippe HAMET - EC DG TREN Unit G4 - Galileo Applications; Intelligent Transport System
Valerio TRAMUTOLI - Professor, University of Basilicata
Gianni PITTELLA - Member of the European Parliament President PSE Italian Delegation
Michele IORIO - President of the Molise Region and Vice President of NEREUS
Vincenzo SANTOCHIRICO - Basilicata Region Councillor for Environment
Michele CAMPAGNA - EC Joint Research Centre, Spatial Data Infrastructure Unit
Vincenzo FIORE - Basilicata Region Head of office “Regional information system and statistic”
Alan WELLS - Professor, Space research Centre, University of Leicester, UK.
NEREUS Representative, East Midlands, England.
Ferruccio CECCARELLI - Lombardia Region - Director of Research and Innovation Function
Nina CHAKRABARTI - CORDIS Marketing and Communications
Peter A. HECKER - Manager of the regional network “GEOkomm”, Brandenburg
Florence LAPORTERIE-DEJEAN - Midi Pyrénées’s Region
Giuseppe BIANCO - ASI (Italian Space Agency) Acting Director, Earth Observation Department
Pierpaolo CAMPOSTRINI - Director, CORILA, Venice
Vincenzo FOLINO - Vice President of the Basilicata Region and Councillor for Enterprise policies and technological innovation
Simona POHLOVÁ - European Commission, Regional Policy Directorate-General
Marcello MARANESI - Vice-President of Telespazio and President of e-GEOS
Marina DOUBELL - INNOVA
Stefano BIZZI - ACS
Raimondo LO FORTI - TES
Angelo DONVITO - DIGIMAT
Outline

Experts from the NEREUS network (the Network of European Regions Using Space Technologies) were invited together with those from other Italian and European Institutions to debate on Earth observation and environmental monitoring. During the conference, and with an exhibition of the local key players, located in the conference's venue, the Basilicata Region presented its expertise for research, technology and governance, shared experiences and best practices and promoted partnerships for future EU projects through a thematic roundtable (GMES-Kopernikus, GALILEO, Territorial cooperation, NEREUS network). During the roundtable the interested participants presented their project ideas for the coming calls for tender to the EC officials and to potential partners. This ensured a preliminary evaluation concerning the coherence with the programmes’ objectives and priorities. At the end of the conference was organised a guided tour to visit the Matera Space Geodesy Center (managed by the Italian Space Agency and Telespazio), the most important Italian research and technology infrastructure in the earth observation’s sector.

Main topics:
- The Italian Space Agency’s activities and the COSMO SKYMED system for disaster prevention and safety
- The Earth Observation’s industry
- The earth observation support to civil protection
- Introduction to the Open Days
- The GMES initiative: towards a KOPERNIKUS programme
- Basilicata Region activities for Earth Observations: technologies, applications and services;
- Galileo’s technology, possible services and the needs of the regions and of the civil society. The frontrunner role played by the European satellite system EGNOS.
- The University of Basilicata research activities on Earth Observation and natural risk mitigation and prevention
- The European space policy for the environment management and protection
- Presentation of NEREUS (Network of European Regions Using Space Technologies);
- The INSPIRE Directive: opportunities for innovation in regional development
- Basilicata Region experience on INSPIRE
• Research, applications and public awareness relating to satellite navigation and earth observation space programmes in the East Midlands, England.
• Lombardia’s experience, services and applications
• CORDIS: The Gateway to FP7 Participation
• Presentation of the Cluster for Geoinformation in the Capital-Region Berlin-Brandenburg
• The Midi Pyrénées’s Region experience and services
• Matera Space Geodesy Center activities and services
• Safeguarding cultural heritage and environment via satellite observations: the paradigmatic case of Venice and Veneto Region
• The territorial cooperation objective: An opportunity for NEREUS network in order to facilitate cooperation among regions in the space sector
• COSMO SkyMed: an operational system on the international market
• The first interpretation results of real COSMO-SkyMed data with particular attention to interferometry
• The RIADE Project: development of an integrated and technologically innovative Decision Support System for desertification monitoring in Basilicata
• Wideband Antenna System for High-Speed mobile application
• The SDI for public bodies - The thematic portal of Lucan Basin Authority
• Full-waveform airborne Laser Scanner;

Projects ideas presented during the round table:
• Support Actions to NEREUS network - NEREUS-SA (INTERREG IV.C 2nd Call)
• STOP FIRES: Space Technologies for Operational Fire Identification from Regional to European Scale (INTERREG IV.C 2nd Call)
• A transnational network of regional Research Driven Clusters (RDCs) focused on environmental themes and associated risks (Region of knowledge FP7 Call 2009 -1).
• Project MANAUS-DAME (Management Approaches to Use Satellite-Data for Multilateral Exchange).

Conclusions

Space technologies play a key role in supporting the economic growth, industrial competitiveness, scientific research and innovation and a sustainable development.

More information

"Promoting use of space technologies for the environment monitoring and protection needs to be built on a broad partnership involving public and civil society institutions and organisations, research centres and enterprises."
Calabria - Isola di Capo Rizzuto

‘The future of cohesion policy through territorial cooperation: the role of Calabria in the Mediterranean basin’
8 October 2008, 9:30 – 15:00

Organisers: CALABRIA Region (with the cooperation of local Europe Direct offices and the European Commission Representation in Italy)

Speakers: Vincenzo FALCONE, Responsible Presidency Affairs – CALABRIA Region
Pier Virgilio DASTOLI, Director – European Commission Representation in Italy
Fausta CORDA, European Commission, Regional Policy Directorate-General
Giovanni D’ORIO, CALABRIA Region
Marinella MARINO, CALABRIA Region
Rocco MERCURIO, CALABRIA Region
Evelina RIZZO, CALABRIA Region

Participants: About 120 pers. Local authorities, (province districts, municipalities), consortia, associations, universities, media, cooperatives. (see attachment participants).

Outline

Within the framework of OPEN DAYS 2008, Calabria Region made a public presentation on the role of Calabria at the core of Mediterranean basin and the role of regional policy and the European Regional Development Fund in the achievement of the aims of territorial cooperation. In particular, all the cooperation projects that Calabria intends to develop in the framework of the main communitarian programmes have been discussed with a clear indication of their priorities and interests.

The seminar was opened by Vincenzo FALCONE, responsible for Presidency Affairs of Calabria Region, who worked, for the period 1999-2004, as General Secretary of the Committee of Regions. So, he expressed how much he was proud of the widespread success that this initiative, promoted by the Committee itself, achieves each year. He affirmed that, this year, Calabria region wanted to participate to this 6th edition of OPEN DAYS very much, in order to demonstrate how much the actual regional government look at Europe, to affirm that our region exists and that is ready to work better and to face the challenge of 2013.

Debate

Pier Virgilio DASTOLI, Director of Representation in Italy of European Commission, confirmed what Vincenzo FALCONE said: after the programming period 2007-2013, Calabria will not be beneficiary of Convergence objective funds no more. After that, he illustrated the Cohesion policy in Italy and its principal priorities (see word file “Dastoli”). He concluded saying that, often the relationships between regions and national governments are not very easy. Therefore, it’s very important to keep and to improve this direct contact between Europe and Regions. Giovanni D’ORIO, Calabria Region Director, explaining the Regional Operational Programme (POR 2007-2013) of Calabria, presented to the audience the contribution that the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) will give to the growth and economic development of our region through the POR itself. Above all, he insisted on the importance to create new synergies between regional policy and territorial cooperation.
Then, Fausta CORDA (European commission – DG Regio), illustrated the objective of Territorial Cooperation policy based on communitarian priorities. In particular, she focused on the three territorial programmes for the 2007 – 2013 period, and of great interest for Calabria region: INTERREG IV C, PO MED and ENPI-Cross Border Cooperation (see PP Corda).

The presence of European commission (in the persons of Pier Virgilio DASTOLI from the Representation in Rome and Fausta CORDA from Brussels) was very important for the success of our initiative and aroused lively interest on the audience.

Followed the presentation, by Calabria Region delegates, of the following Programmes:
1. INTERREG IVC by Marino, responsible for National Coordination of INTERREG IVC (see PP “Marino”);
2. MED by Rocco MERCURIO, responsible for the Programme (see PP “Mercurio”);
3. ENPI by Evelina RIZZO, responsible for the Programme (see PP “Rizzo”).

Conclusions

The OPEN DAYS seminar in Copanello was a very important occasion because European institutions, in particular the Commission, met Calabria Region and other local authorities. The ECommission, from its part, illustrating the opportunities for our region offered by the cohesion policy, brought the audience closer to the European Union. And Calabria region, presenting our activities in the framework of territorial cooperation, had the opportunity to bring out our specificities and our needs. An important message has been launched: it is not just Europe to ‘give’ to the regions, but also regions to give to EU. And Europe could give only knowing better its territories.

More information
Advertisement on “Gazzetta del Sud” regional newspaper
Publication on “Domani” regional newspaper
News on RTC Telecalabria Regional television
European Commission Representation in Italy web site:
http://ec.europa.eu/italia/attualita/primo_piano/pol_regionale/giroitalia_it.htm
Calabria Region web site:
http://www.regione.calabria.it/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1525&Itemid=8
Europe Direct Calabria web site:
http://www.eurokomonline.it/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=185&Itemid=42

'A marginal region, as Calabria is, should become, through territorial cooperation, the Center of Europe.'
Central Italy regions (Lazio) - Frosinone

‘The Revision of European Internal Market’
23 October 2008, 15:00 – 18:00

Organisers: Province of Frosinone, Europe Direct
Speakers: Dr. Maria Cristina DI NARDO, Representative Office of Lazio Region – EU Affairs, Belgium
Dr. Vittorio CALAPRICE, Representation of the European Commission, Italy
Dr. Laura GALLI, European Consumer Centre, Italy
Dr. Massimo VALLONE, Enterprise Europe Network Confcommercio, Italy
Dr. Francesco CRISPI, SOLVIT, Italy
Participants: Local authorities representatives (President of the Province of Frosinone, Head of the Department of Economic Development of the Province of Frosinone, Mayors of various municipalities of the province of Frosinone); representatives of local consumer associations and local enterprise organizations; educational institutes of secondary level and universities.

Outline

The workshop was facilitated by Vincenzo AFFINATI, Head of the Department of Economic Development of the Province of Frosinone. Before introducing the speakers to the audience, he outlined the importance of the workshop as a significant tool for giving more detailed information about the meaning of the European Internal Market, its strengths and potentialities. During the workshop, it was stressed the need of re-launching and reinforcing the issue of “internal market” at all level, providing people with a deeper understanding of the benefits it can have on their daily life. At this regard, all the speakers tried to put in evidence the practical advantages of internal market for citizens, consumers, enterprises, highlighting how the increase of competition among producers caused by the internal market leads to a wider possibility of choosing products, which are qualitative and cost-effective.

Debate

Dr. Maria Cristina DI NARDO introduced participants to the history and main goals of the OPEN DAYS 2008 event. She explained how it represents an opportunity for european regions and cities to work together and get the very best results from applying the European Union’s cohesion policy. The regions and cities have an active role to play in these debates, and the OPEN DAYS offer an ideal setting for demonstrating the relevance of successful regional cooperation and fruitful partnerships among local authorities, businesses, universities and research centres. She illustrated also the program and the four main themes under which all the local events were organised. Dr. Vittorio CALAPRICE gave an interesting presentation of the Communication and Information Plan 2007-2008 about the European Internal Market, promoted by the Representative Office of European Commission in Italy. Dr. CALAPRICE explained that aim of this document is to give more detailed information about all the initiatives and strategies of European Union for the re-launch and reinforcement of the European internal market, stressing that its main beneficiaries are small and medium enterprises and common citizens-
consumers. He showed the web site dedicated to the internal market and how to find all needed information. Dr. Laura GALLI presented to the audience the European Consumer Centre, a network which provides information and assistance to consumers in the framework of cross-border market. The centre informs consumers about their rights within the internal market, with particular reference to EU legislation and its application at national level and gives them assistance in case of complaints against a foreign company or trader. Dr. GALLI outlined how the internal market offers to consumers a wider choice of products and an easier way of buying, for example through internet, but she also outlined the risks and problems which may occur with cross-border operation of buying/selling. Dr. Massimo VALLONE presented the benefits and advantages of the internal market for enterprises and business companies. He focused on the free circulation of services promoted by the european internal market, outlining the advantages for SMEs deriving from a larger competitiveness adn increased innovation. In particular, he highlighted how the internal market has contributed to simplify bureaucracy and then, as contributed to make italian SMEs more competitive on the international market. Dr. Francesco CRISPI presented to the participants SOLVIT, an on-line problem solving network in which EU Member States work together to solve without legal proceedings problems caused by the misapplication of Internal Market law by public authorities. He explained in details how the network works and he gave some examples of cases which have been solved by SOLVIT. He underlined the importance of this tool for european citizens, since it represents an effective mean for solving problems and complaints which may occur between two european countries without legal action.

Conclusions

Dr. AFFINATI concluded the workshop by summing up the discussion as follows:

- The European Internal Market offers a wide range of opportunities for citizens, consumers and enterprises;
- It gives a lot of advantages and benefits for the improvement of competitiveness and innovation in Europe;
- Citizens must be more informed about the internal market, not only in terms of its advantages, but also about the possible problems and risks linked to trans-national market;
- More information is needed at all level about the tools offered by the European Union for providing assistance and advice to citizens and enterprises in case of cross-border complaints.

More information

Commissione Europea-Rappresentanza in Italia: http://ec.europa.eu/italia;
http://www.unmercatounicoeuropeopertutti.com/
European Consumer Centre Italy (ECC-Net): http://www.ecc-netitalia.it/
SOLVIT: http://ec.europa.eu/solvit/site/index_en.htm
Enterprise Europe Network: http://www.enterprise-europe-network.ec.europa.eu
Central Italy Regions (Lazio) - Rome

'Move Together Citizens'
24-25 October 2008, 21:00 – 17:00

Organisers: Institute of Studies for the Integration of Systems (ISIS); Municipality of Rome
Speakers: Alessandro Ferri, Municipality of Rome; Roberto GABRIELE, VII department, Municipality of Rome; Stefano GIOVENALI, VII department, Municipality of Rome; Eleonora VETROMILE, XIV Department, Province of Rome.
Participants: 25 citizens of the city of Rome; local authorities (Municipality and Province of Rome), media (EURONEWS channel); European Union (Opens days representative); Associations (AICCRE; Federmobilità);

Outline

The first day of the panel was focused on the point of view of 25 citizens, one from each of the 19 Rome city districts and 6 surrounding municipalities, on urban mobility in Rome. Citizens, divided in changing groups, have evaluated the outcomes of European Research in roman area. Citizens had the opportunity to meet representatives from the Municipality and Province of Rome in order to understand and raise awareness on research and sustainable mobility activities in the metropolitan area of Rome. The debate was very good and pertinent to the topic, local citizens focused in particular on the need to suggest concrete actions that can be done by them or anybody at the local level to raise the awareness of the population here in Rome on the move together ideas, and hopefully contribute to shift people culture and behaviour towards more sustainable mobility habits. Part of the second day event has been dedicated to the elaboration and drafting of the ‘citizen declaration’ structure, that would be presented at the final event of the project to local policy makers.

Debate

Roberto GABRIELE, responsible for the urban transport planning of the Municipality of Rome, presented the objectives of his office and the importance for Rome to have a transport planning not only in the short period (1-3 years), but more important in the long term. He answered to citizens questions on lack of connection between urbanization and transport planning, and car sharing implementation in Rome. Stefano GIOVENALI, presented the role of VII department of the Municipality of Rome focusing on local public transport, metro viability and ordinary management of traffic. He answered to citizens questions on how citizens participation could be improved and current or planned activities for mobility emergencies in particular for handicaps, air quality. Alessandro FERRI, introduced the new office for mobility security just launched. He will be the responsible of the office on topics of transport system security, end users and public means security. He answered to citizens questions on the dialogue between citizens and local administration introducing the security front office where citizens could give opinions, point out security problems and mobility priorities. The office will elaborate the requests and take actions.
Eleonora VETROMILE gave an interesting presentation of Province competence on urban mobility and the linkage with the work of the Municipality of Rome. She explained to involved citizens the problems on roman metropolitan area and the strategies for sustainable mobility planning. Citizens asked for a longer sessions of questions and answers since they had so many issues for the speaker.

**Conclusions**

The event has been concluded with the evaluation of each citizen on the participation experience of Move Together. They presented their final evaluation as they were telling the Move Together experience to a friend. The whole commitment of the event will be included in the final declaration that will be presented to the final conference at the Municipality of Rome.

**More information**

www.move-together.net

'Release awareness on mobility management proves that for complex problems there are simple solutions.'
Central Italy Regions (Tuscany) - Firenze

'Festival della Creatività Fortezza da Basso Florence'
23-26 October 2008

Organisers: Tuscany Region, Fondazione Sistema Toscana
Speakers: Several panels and workshops on Innovation and Creativity
Participants: Broad public from Europe, cultural institutions

Outline

The Festival of Creativity with this 3rd edition is confirmed as an event of international standing. The Festival had attracted important names in art - such as Michelangelo PISTOLETTO and Peter GREENAWAY – economy, science - with workshops such as Mosaico Digitale (MODI') - FUTOUR_IDEAI of Barcelona - and culture. The Festival puts Tuscany forward as a laboratory of creativity, but its vision goes beyond Tuscany to Europe. In addition to an audience from European and beyond, the festival is linked to the European Year of Creativity and Innovation 2009. Thus, various events have been organised with European partners, such as the Conferences 'Creativity and Innovation through European Regions' and a seminar to launch the European Year of Creativity with the participation of Jean-David MALO, European Commission, Research Directorate-General (Director Unite B4 Knowledge Regions and Research potential Loet LEYDESORFF (University of Amsterdam).

Conclusions

The 2008 edition saw the increasing of the international network with more than 500 organizations and cultural institutions all over the world and an increasing number of private sponsors. Many collaborations didn’t end during the days of the Festival but continue after with other cities such as Liverpool, Stavanger, Barcelona.

More information
www.fondazionesistematoscana.it
www.festivaldellacreativita.it
"Renewing European Social Agenda: a pact for the city of Genoa"
28 October 2008, 9:00 – 17:00

Organisers: Europe Direct Relay of the Municipality of Genoa – Social Regulatory Planning Unit of the Municipality of Genoa – Eurete company

Speakers: Paolo PISSARELLO, Deputy Mayor of Genoa
Paolo VEARDO, City Councillor responsible for Education and Training
Roberta PAPI, City Councillor responsible for Social and Immigration issues
Giulia BOCCHI, European Commission Representation In Italy – Milan
Giorgio PESCETTO, Social Regulatory Planning Unit of the Municipality of Genoa
Massimiliano ZANGHÌ, Eurete company and Europe Direct Relay of the Municipality of Genoa

Participants: Local Civil society and other stakeholders dealt with the EU Renewed Social Agenda issues (voluntary, youth, women, third country citizens, elder people, disables, charities, cultural associations; Social economy actors; Local public bodies operators; other organisms). The attendance was about 160-170 people.

Outline

The workshop was opened by Giorgio PESCETTO, chief of the Social Regulatory Planning Unit of Genoa, who introduced the local Authorities representatives: Paolo PISSARELLO, Deputy Mayor of the Municipality of Genoa, and Paolo VEARDO, City Councillor responsible for Education. Their intervention welcomed the initiative, highlighting social issues actuality and importance of local stakeholders consultations. They asked for a document draft summarizing the workshops conclusions, to be submitted to the City of Genoa Councillors Committee. After a brief exposition of local social policies and objectives, Giorgio PESCETTO introduced Giulia BOCCHI, of the EC Representation in Italy, who presented facts and figures about the social policies of the EU. Closing this first phase, Massimiliano ZANGHÌ, of the Eurete company – occasionally representing also the Europe Direct Relay of Genoa – commented the Renewed Social Agenda contents and proposed a working paper open to discussion.

Debate

The debate took place into each of the three thematic workshops (Social inclusion, Immigration, integration and new citizenship, Social economy), each one coordinated by a panel of three experts. Every panel gathered inputs from local actors attending to their workshop, drafting a “key points” document to be presented to the Municipality of Genoa representative present at the end of conference, Roberta PAPI, City Councillor responsible for Social and Immigration issues.

Conclusions

Some of the 'Key concepts' emerged by the conclusions, shared with the Councillor Roberta PAPI, were: putting individuals at the policies centre; the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) should be adopted at local level too, specially because of the dialogue improved stability among stakeholders, granting a better
intervention programming; rise awareness among policy makers that social exclusion is now a matter that threatens employed people too; stakeholders together with local authorities can contribute redefining a new economic development concept based upon social sustainability; drafting local action plan for social inclusion and against poverty may be a concrete objective to be pursued.

More information
Social Regulatory Planning Unit of the Municipality of Genoa:
http://www.pianoregolatosociale.comune.genova.it/

‘Rethinking the European social dimension means building employment on people needs and not vice-versa.’
Province of Teramo - Teramo

'The regional and European policies on rural development 2007/2013. The integrated management of fishery resources'

Organiser: Province of Teramo

Speakers:
Ermino D'AGOSTINO, President of the Province of Teramo, President of the Arco Adriatico Ionico Association
Natalie CHARBONEAU, in substitution of the European Commissioner for Fishery - Joe BORG (video interview)
Marco VERTICELLI, Councillor for Agricultural and European Policies of the Abruzzo Region
Cesare TABACCHINI, Ministry for Agricultural Policies - Environment and Forests – MIPAAF – General Directorate for Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture;
Massimiliano BENELLI e Luigi POLIZZI, ITALRAP, Italian permanent Representation at the European Union – Agriculture and Fisheries Departement (videoconference);
Vincenzo STAFFILANO, National Federpesca
Francesco MARRONE e Enrico CASOLA, National AGCI – Agriculture and Fisheries sector
Luciano DOTTARELLI, on behalf of the Arco Latino Association
Vangjush DAKO, President of the Forum of the Adriatic and Ionian cities and towns
Doriana CALILLI, Officer PO European Policy Section – Province of Teramo


Outline

The current health condition of the ACP (Health Check) and the new agreement on the EU budget perspectives represent important starting points for a radical change of the agricultural policy. The role and the future development of the agriculture will depend on the workshop’s results of the whole packet of the EU economic and social policies. The workshop was aimed at stimulating a discussion on the
perspectives and challenges in front of enterprise’s strategies and public policies for agriculture, agro-
industry and rural areas. Besides, it has been explained more carefully the theme of the integrated
management of fisheries resources paying a particular attention on the protection and valorization of
biodiversity of the coastal areas, through the implementation of common actions for the integrated
management of fisheries resources. During the conference have been approached also the themes of
stable interaction between scientific research and production and of the synergy between all the possible
activities related to the fisheries and the sea.

Debate

Ermino D’AGOSTINO who attended the conference as President of the Arco Adriatico Ionico Association
formed by 13 coastal Provinces of Marche, Abruzzo, Molise and Puglia, reaffirmed the commitment of the
institutions concerned to act commonly carrying out shared project ideas. Concerning the rural
development at the local level, Ermino D’AGOSTINO underlined that ‘the Province has been engaged in
realizing the agro-foodstuffs district, that is starting with the accessions of institutions, associations, firms
and before the ending of the year it will become a capital company’. In relation to the initiatives for the
fisheries sector, the President expressed the political will to continue the O.A.S.I.S. project with a new
initiative to submit within the IPA Adriatic programme, aimed at improving the marketing conditions and
creating a quality brand of the Adriatic fisheries resources”.

Conclusions

To improve the rural development and promote diversification, the key actions have to be the following:
• Diversification of rural economy to create new jobs in the rural areas belonging to the axis 3
• Increase of activity and employment’s rates in the rural economy
• Encourage the entry of women in the labour market
• Develop micro-enterprises
• Young training on the traditional rural activities
• Encourage the adoption and diffusion of ITC
• Develop the offer and an innovative use of renewable energy sources
• Encourage the tourism development
• Modernise local infrastructures, in particular in the new member states.

More information
www.provincia.teramo.it
www.reterurale.it
www.politicheagricole.gov.it
South Tyrol - Bozen

'Sight visits of renewable energy plants and low energy buildings in South Tyrol'
8-10 October 2008

Organisers: TIS innovation park Renertec, Fiera/Messe Bolzano/Bozen
Speakers: Local engineers, plants managers, handicrafts
Participants: Political representatives, teachers, technicians, private citizens

Outline

During the 6 enertour® excursions 12 power plants in the field of renewable energy production and energy efficiency in South Tyrol were visited. Excursions participants from different Italian regions were accompanied by TIS – Renertec experts and by designers and managers of plants. Thanks to these excursions shaping of opinions, creation of awareness and education of the visitors in the field of renewable energies and energy efficiency was made possible. The beneficiaries of these excursions were mostly decision makers, regional and national technicians, students, individual consumers and companies. The excursions were organised in the framework of the local exhibition Klimaenergy 08 which took place in Bolzano/Bozen.

Conclusions

Participants learnt that:
- Renewable energy can be used in different ways to achieve different goals, like reaching energy autonomy within a municipality, a factory, a private household
- Renewable energy can help to drastically reduce CO2 emissions
- Some of the renewable energy technologies can create economical advantages, like reducing cost for energy supply, creating new jobs in rural areas and enhancing the visibility and image of the region

More information
www.enertour.bz.it

'Thanks to this excursion I could clearly understand why South Tyrol is considered a best practice in Italy in the field of renewable energy.'

'Thanks to this excursion II was able to understand that renewable energies are important not only for environmental issues but also for the economical development of a region.'
In the framework of 'Europe in my region', Latvia organised three local events in the cities of Jelgava and Riga and in Riga Region. They took the form of discussions, forums and conferences on the contribution of the Lisbon Treaty to the growth of local and regional authorities, the finals of the international youth competition on design in an urban environment, and interregional cooperation as a tool for promoting regional development. These events brought together local and regional authorities, European officials, international experts, teachers and students.
Lithuania staged two local events in the cities of Vilnius (6-12 October) and Kaunas (10 October). Vilnius held an exhibition of poems, a creative initiative to spread a message about Vilnius as a capital of open and public-spirited culture and European Capital of Culture in 2009, while Kaunas focused on increasing intercultural dialogue possibilities through cultural tourism exchanges. It provided an opportunity to bring together national, regional and local authorities, ambassadors, experts in tourism, and members of the Lithuanian delegation of the Committee of the Regions.
Two local 'Europe in my region' events were held in Malta. At the core of these seminars and conferences: the benefits of a European common maritime policy, on the one hand; and the cohesion policy introduced for the island since 2004, on the other. The cities of Valletta and Gozo provided the opportunity for political authorities, entrepreneurs, experts and civil society representatives to share their common European interests.

Enclosed, the report of the local events held in Malta, 24/10 -2/11/2008.
Malta

'Investing for today and the future'
24 October – 2 November 2008

Organisers: Managing Authority for Structural Funds, Planning and Priorities Coordination Division, Office of the Prime Minister, Malta
Speaker: Dr Chris SAID, Parliamentary Secretary for Public Dialogue and Information
Participants: General Public and the Media

Outline

The event consisted of a press conference and an outdoor exhibition of photographs of projects which have contributed towards strengthening Malta and Gozo’s competitiveness and human resources on a national and regional level. The photographs, which were mounted on weather-resistant panels, provided visual evidence of the main results of the over 80 projects co-financed by the European Structural Funds in Malta during the period 2004-2006. The exhibition was set up in Valletta’s main street, Republic Street, to ensure visibility and full access to the general public. The exhibition was complemented by information panels and was organised according to the following main themes: the Environment, Infrastructure, Enterprise, Empowering People, Agriculture, Fisheries and investment in the island of Gozo. These themes were in line with the priorities of the Structural Funds Programme for Malta 2004-2006. The exhibition was complemented by a press release and adverts in the local media as well as information sessions on the European Social Fund organised for potential applicants. The logo of the Committee of the Regions was prominently displayed.

More information
www.ppcd.gov.mt
The Netherlands staged eleven local events in the context of the OPEN DAYS 2008 'Europe in my region'. They included seminars on ways of seeking European opportunities for the Dutch cities (Nijmegen); a network meeting about how the Northern Netherlands contribute to sustainable development (Groningen); a workshop promoting research, technological development and innovation (Maastricht); 'Europe à la carte' culinary lunch events (Lelystad); and a debate together with the publication of a 'European Times' newspaper (The Hague). Invited regional experts, entrepreneurs and local governments also took part in a seminar on sustainable tourism (in Middelburg) and in a conference on the successes of cohesion policy (Almere).

Enclosed, the report of the local events held in Nijmegen, 30/10/2008; Lelystad, 6-10/10/2008; The Hague, 20&27/10/2008; and Middelburg, 23/10/2008.
"Europe Day", Seeking European opportunities for the Arnhem Nijmegen City Region
30 October 2008, 13:30 – 18:00

Organisers: Arnhem Nijmegen City region, City of Arnhem, City of Nijmegen

Speakers:
In the plenary parts:
Ian DE JONG, Director General for European Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Hague
Lily JACOBS, Member of the European Parliament
Petra VAN WINGERDEN - Boers, portfolio manager EU agenda, Executive Board Arnhem Nijmegen City Region
Carol VAN EERT, Secretary, Executive Board Arnhem Nijmegen City Region
Guido MATTHÉE, Director of Health Valley Foundation
Hannie KUNST, Alderman City of Nijmegen
Carol VAN EERT, Secretary, Executive Board Arnhem Nijmegen City Region
Guido MATTHÉE, Director of Health Valley Foundation
Hannie KUNST, Alderman City of Nijmegen
Rita WEEDA, Alderman City of Arnhem
Alain VAN DE HAAR, Regional manager Chamber of Commerce
Jos GEUKERS, Mayor of Westervoort
Margeet VAN GASTEL, Local councilor City of Arnhem
Annemieke VERMEULEN, Mayor of Millingen aan de Rijn

Participants:
Local, regional and national authorities, representatives of the Radboud University of Nijmegen and the Radboud University Medical Centre, representatives of the Chamber of Commerce, entrepreneurs, the European Commission in The Hague, the European Parliament, other City Regions in the Netherlands

Outline

Enterprises, local governments and knowledge institutions should make more use of the chances Europe has to offer. Therefore a Europe Day for stakeholders in the region was organised. Central elements were three workshops where was explored what Europe can mean for the City Region and what the region can obtain from ‘Brussels’. The Europe Day also rings in a new era for the regional office in Brussels, as it will focus on a European dimension for the five prominent clusters in the region – health, energy and environmental technology, tourism, fashion and semiconductors. Before and after the workshops several speeches and interviews on stage were held with members of the European Parliament, local and national politicians and representatives of enterprises. A bookazine ‘Arts Meets Science’, which gives an overview of many things our region has to offer, was also presented

Conclusions

The Europe day has shown on different levels that Europe is important; from micro level (what can Europe mean to my company or municipality) to macro (how important is the EU for all of us). During the plenary parts participants were inspired by prominent speakers. In the workshops they learned more on how Brussels works, how to set up projects and what the European agenda means for Energy and Environmental Technology. Important to bear in mind when you want to achieve something in Brussels is
to have a clear focus, to be outstanding, to lobby and get a network, to cooperate with stakeholders, preferably in a cluster, to share knowledge and to be realistic. Then Europe has a lot to offer!

More information
www.healthvalley.nl
http://www.emtproject.nl/
www.coolregion.nl

'This day contributes to the sharing of knowledge on Europe and the internationalization of the region.'

'This day has shown on different levels that Europe is important; from micro level (what can Europe mean to my company or municipality) to macro (how important is the EU for all of us).'

'With an office in Brussels you are on the right track.'
Provincie Flevoland - Lelystad

Culinary lunch event – 'Europe à la carte'
6-10 October 2008

Organisers: Yvonne MONDEN, Sidony VENEMA
Speakers: Andries GREINER, Deputy Queens’ Commissioner from the Province of Flevoland, responsible for European Affairs
Participants: Civil servants and politicians from the Province of Flevoland, chef Vincent Ruhulessin of restaurant “De 4 Engelen”, Sodexho special catering, regional representations in Brussels (Flevoland, Stockholm, South West UK, Central Italian regions, Aquitaine)

Outline

Each day of the OPEN DAYS Week the restaurant of the province presented a variety of tastes from all over Europe during lunchtime. A special ‘OPEN DAYS’ country lunch was prepared by a chef and presented to politicians, civil servants, personnel and guests from the province. This year it was the turn of the countries: Italy (Monday), Greece (Tuesday), France (Wednesday), United Kingdom (Thursday) and Sweden (Friday). Each day the restaurant was transformed into the specific country theme. The regional representations in Brussels kindly contributed to the accompanying country exhibitions. Andries GREINER, Deputy Queens’ Commissioner, responsible for European Affairs in Flevoland officially opened the OPEN DAYS. In his speech he presented an overview of the region’s participation in the OPEN DAYS 2008 and the importance of Europe for our daily life.

Conclusions

‘Europe a la carte’ was received with enthousiasm in the region. It was highly appreciated by staff that they were addressed as a special target group. Apart from the culinary dishes and the international ambience in the restaurant of the province, special intranet newsflashes were communicated before and during the OPEN DAYS, presenting updates of Flevoland’s activities in Europe. The event put ‘Europe’ in a positive daylight which resulted in greater support for other EU activities. The event made existing European coordination structures within the Province more transparent and contributed to a ‘Europe-proof’ way of working. It also created awareness of the European networks and activities Flevoland is part of.

More information
S. VENEMA tel + 32.2.7379954

‘Let the dishes of Europe fill our stomachs and conquer our hearts.’
G-4 (Amsterdam, The Hague, Rotterdam and Utrecht) - The Hague

A newspaper - The European Times (1) and A debate - Grip on Europe! (2)
20 October 2008 (Newspaper), 27 October (Debate)

Organiser: Eveline VAN RENS
Speakers: Annet BERTRAM
Gerard DEN BOER
Peter HESKES
Francine L'ORTYE
Participants: 8,000 readers of the newspaper and 70 participants during the debate

Outline

The newspaper, the European Times has been sent to 8,000 civil servants of the City of The Hague. The paper contained all kind of information about the European Union and The Hague in Europe. The debate was about how the European Union influences the City of The Hague

Debate

During the debate, there were 4 tables with 4 different discussions:
Table 1: The presidency of EUROCITIES offers The Hague lost of opportunities
Table 2: Civil servants are not focused enough on Europe and do not look across the border
Table 3: Unknown, unloved
Table 4: We do not gain from the European Union

Conclusions

Table 1: The EUROCITIES presidency offers lots of opportunities, but it remains important to focus, and not to do everything.
Table 2: Civil servants are aware of European regulations and subsidies, but they can do more.
Table 3: European awareness is important, but back up is needed from administrators
Table 4: Civil servants think that we do not gain much from the European Union, but that this can change if they get more time for European Affairs.
Zeeland - Middelburg

'Masterclass Sustainable Tourism'
23 October 2008, 15:00 – 18:00

Organisers: Kenniscentrum Toerisme & Recreatie & Provincie Zeeland
Speakers: Mathieu HOEBERIGS, European Commission, Enterprise and Industry Directorate-General
Dr. Anja DE GROENE, Hogeschool Zeeland
Ir. Brigitte POMMÉE, Hogeschool Zeeland
Marco OUWERKERK, Stichting KMVK
Monica DE VAST, Marina Port Zélande
Ton KIENHUIS, Senior Games 2009

Participants: Invited regional experts, entrepreneurs and local governments

Outline

The Masterclass Sustainable Tourism was focused on sustainability principles (Cradle to Cradle), regional sustainable developments in tourism and most of all inspiring best practices, such as: research project antifouling feasibility study, sustainable marina of the future, wellness resort, Green Key (on existing and developing new quality marks) and the Senior Games 2009 (on regional effects of organizing this sportive event which will be organised for the very first time in Europe).

Conclusions

Sustainability is growing attention, as well as in the Netherlands, as on European and global level. Also the tourism sector in the province of Zeeland recognizes the importance of sustainable development and entrepreneurship. The speakers told each other and the audience what exactly is sustainable tourism, which initiatives are going on in the region and what is the surplus value for my company/organization/region? The experts debated on these questions and answers and helped each other with good advise and contacts. One of the conclusions was that tourists have a large adaptation capacity (dependant on money, knowledge and time): they can choose another destination or behave themselves different. At the other hand the adaptation capacity of the tourism sector is much less. That's why it urges for creativity on different fields (technical, economic and behaviour, …). A challenge for the south western Delta region!
Norway staged five local events bringing together local authorities, European officials, European offices in Norway, students and the general public to discuss interesting European topics: the European market as the most important export market for Mid-Norwegian enterprises ('Export Day' conference in Trondheim); the educational programmes of the EU as a tool for regional development (seminar in Ålesund); how European networks are used to create an island for innovation and entrepreneurship (seminar in Skien); the relationship with the nearest European Union neighbours in the North Sea Project (Festival in Engøyholmen); and how the experience and resources of the north can contribute to a prosperous and sustainable Europe (seminar in Tornio).

Enclosed, the report of the local event held in Tornio, 23/10/2008.
North Norway - Tornio

'A vision for the north of Europe in the year 2020 and beyond'
23 October 2008

Organiser: North Sweden, North Finland, North Norway, East Finland, Mid Sweden
Speakers: Eric GLOERSEN
Participants: Local authorities/politicians from the municipalities of the northern regions

Outline

A seminar was held to discuss the potential of the Northern regions and the future of the area in the year 2020 and beyond. Eric GLOERSEN, Nordregio presented a working paper on a foresight study regarding the northern periphery regions. The audience were then invited to leave their suggestions on the material presented. Afterwards a workshop where held, where the participants could contribute with their vision of the future for the northern regions in the year 2020. Questions like - What kind of development could be made regarding the regions assets? Who will be the main actors? How can our regions bring added value to Europe? The conclusions from the workshops were then presented to the whole audience and Eric GLOERSEN who will use the input in his work with the foresight study.

Debate

How should the regions assets be taken care of? What kind of development do we want? The regions in the northern periphery have similarities, common interests and common problems that needs to be solved, like demographic problems, depopulation etc. The main focus of the debate was how to increase the cooperation between our regions. The national borders shouldn’t be obstacles. An increased horizontal cooperation in different fields would bring benefit to the northern regions and added value to Europe.

Conclusions

The main conclusions from the workshops were:

- Industries developing renewable energy sources will be prioritized in the future
- Supporting increased processing of raw material in the region
- Horizontal cooperation between the northern regions
- Increased construction of transportation links, especially railway.

More information
http://www.northsweden.org/default.asp?id=3368&refid=1027
Amongst the seventeen local events organised by Poland, the majority focused on European Funds and Community programmes (Lodz, Mazovia-Warsaw, Zielona Góra, Szczecin, Opole and Lublin). Other events were held in parallel: a seminar on initiatives for fighting climate change (City of Warsaw) and climate change conferences (Gdańsk, Poznan); a radio broadcast on sustainable development (Bydgoszcz); conferences on research and innovation as a key factor for development (Katowice, Suwałki); a regional innovation forum (Wrocław); and even a photography competition on ‘Diverse Cultures–United Europe’ (Olsztyn).

Enclosed, the report of the local events held in Lodz, 21/10/2008; Zielona Góra, 6-9/10/2008; and Warsaw, 6/10/2008 & 26-27/11/2008.
Lodz Region - Lodz

'Regional Economy 2028- foresight'
21 October 2008, 10:00 – 18:00

Organiser: Regional Office of the Lodz Voivodship in Brussels
Speakers: Representatives of national and regional administration, universities, NGO’s
Participants: General public

Outline

The fair presented the possibilities of support under European Funds. Gathered guest had the possibility to get acquainted with the character of support offered by Structural Funds managed on regional and national level and under various Community Programs. These possibilities were presented by appropriate managing authorities. The conference: 'Regional Economy 2028- foresight' was introduced with the lecture about 'New technologies - towards the new image of the economy of the Lodz Region. The results of the social debate', which gave an opportunity to detailed analysis of the regions resources and competences as well as to discussion about long-term priorities of its economical development. Invited speakers: experts on new technologies, policy makers, representatives of Polish and international economic environment gave examples of good practices how European funds and regional cooperation can be used to develop the region's economy in the best possible way, with the focus set on new technologies and innovation.

Conclusions

The fair gave the general public from our region the chance to get acquainted with the character and possibilities under European Funds and Community Programs. The conference indicated in conclusion the necessity of close cooperation of local leaders and long-term joint investments in crucial technologies as a principal key to further economical development of the Lodz Region, especially in a crucial sectors as energy, bio- and nanotechnologies, ITC and textiles.

More information
Lodz Region Office in Brussels: www.bruksela.lodzkie.pl
Marshal’s Office in Lodz: www.lodzkie.pl
'Soft projects, hard results'
6-9 October 2008, 13:30 – 18:00

Organisers: Radio Zachod in cooperation with Marshal Office of the Lubuskie Region
Speakers: Regional Experts on EU funds:
  Maciej NOWICKI, Director of the EU Funds department in the city council of Zielona Gora
  Kinga WLOCH, EU Research Programme Contact Point – University of Zielona Gora
  Jacek SARYUSZ-WOLSKI, Member of the European Parliament
  Bogusława REINERT, Coordinator of the Comenius project

Participants: General Public / Citizens of the Lubuskie Region

Outline
The Regional Broadcasting Radio Station Zachod organised a four-day series (Monday 6.10 to Thursday 9.10.2008) of expert discussions and presentations of best practices in trans-regional cooperation especially from entities which have a unique experience in business, academic, and social sectors. The campaign was also accompanied with dissemination of information on a broad spectrum of funding opportunities directly from the so called 'Brussels' founds.

- 6.10.2008 – (Time: 48 min 15 sec) – An 'Open Microphone' broadcasted live with the participation of citizens hosted by Maciej NOWICKI (Director of the EU Funds department in the city council of Zielona Gora). The discussion concentrated on the expectations, advantages and disadvantages related to Polish membership in the European Union in 2004
- 7.10.2008 – (Time: 10 min 40 sec) – An interview with Kinga WLOCH from the EU Research Programme Contact Point – University of Zielona Gora on the subject of possible grant opportunities from the 7th Framework Programme, Maria Curie Programme and current projects run by the University.
- 8.10.2008 – (Time: 10 min 40 sec) - An interview with Jacek SARYUSZ-WOLSKI, live from Brussels on the OPEN DAYS and the main issues on the EU external policy agenda.
- 9.10.2008 – (Time: 5 min 04 sec) - An interview with Bogusława REINERT – Coordinator of the Comenius project – on the possibilities of the intra-school cooperation in Europe under the Comenius programme.
- 9.10.2008 – (Time: 39 min 02 sec) - An 'Open Microphone' broadcasted live with listeners’ participation on the subject of the EU funding possibilities for the years of 2007-2013 and possible trends for the future.

Conclusions
This first information campaign has showed a demand for information concerning EU funds. Poland, as the biggest recipient of the structural funds in the years 2007-2013 in Europe, is still more focused on structural support. There is lack of knowledge or this knowledge is limited as it comes to other programs available directly from Brussels. To summarize the radio listeners were pleased with the Polish accession into the EU in 2004 and are aware of the advantages which came with it. They also agreed upon the necessity of the region’s participation in the OPEN DAYS 2008. According to the audience the region should be present in Brussels, strengthening its regional representation and widening scope of action, although it is the promotion of the region, which authorities should concentrate on in the future.

More information
Our partner in OPEN DAYS 2008 – Local event: Radio Zachód: www.zachod.pl
Mazovia - Warsaw

'In Mazovia means in Europe'
6 October 2008, 9:00 – 15:00

Organiser: Mazovian Unit for Implementation of EU Programmes (MUIEUP)
Speakers: Adam STRUZIK, Marshal of the Mazowieckie Voivodeship
Jacek KOZŁOWSKI, A Mazovian Voivode
Mariusz FRANKOWSKI, Deputy Director of the Department of Strategy and
Regional Development in the Marshal office of the Mazowieckie Voivodeship
Wiesław RABOSZUK, Director of the Mazovian Unit for Implementation of EU
Programmes (MUIEUP)

Henryka MIZERSKA, Deputy Director of MUIEUP responsible for the implementation of
Regional Operational Programme for the Mazowieckie Voivodeship 2007-2013 (ROP MV)
Elżbieta SZYMANIK, Deputy Director of MUIEUP responsible for the
implementation of regional component of the Human Capital Operational Programme (HCOP)

Participants: Local authorities, beneficiaries/potential beneficiaries, media

Outline
The conference was opened by Adam STRUZIK who underlined the role of structural funds in the
sustainable development of the region. Mazovian Voivode has outlined the change in the role of the
governmental administration in the European funds implementation process. Mariusz FRANKOWSKI
presented the institutional framework in 2007-2013 and Wiesław RABOSZUK summarised the
introductory part. Henryka MIZERSKA and Elżbieta SZYMANIK demonstrated the state of
implementation of EU programmes, which are in competence of MUIEUP. Their presentations were
followed by discussion panels, where public could participate actively. Moreover, some beneficiaries from
2004-2006 demonstrated their projects as examples of best practices. Furthermore, beneficiaries of
selected key projects of ROP MV 2007-2013 presented their planned investments (airport in Modlin, road
infrastructure in Siedlce and Ciechanów).

Debate
The beneficiaries, who obtained funding in the programming period 2004-2006, exchanged experience
with the potential beneficiaries, who aim to apply for the financial assistance from the European structural
funds in 2007-2013.

Conclusions
The implementation process of the Integrated Regional Operational Programme in the Mazovia region in
the years 2004-2006 is a success. The conference enabled the presentation of completed projects, which
give a tremendous opportunity for the potential beneficiaries in 2007-2013 to witness the implementation
of EU structural funds in practice.

More information
www.mazowia.eu
Warsaw

‘Participation in european initiatives for financing ecological means of transport and financing climate changes’

26 November 2008, 11:00 – 14:00 (auxiliary event)
27 November 2008, 09:00 – 14:00 (the seminar)

Organiser: The City of Warsaw
Speakers: Andrzej KASSENBERG, Institute for the Sustainable Development
Grzegorz MADRJAS, Warsaw Trams Co., Ltd.
Marcin KOZON, Warsaw Transport Authority
Leszek WIECIECH, Warsaw City Director of the Clinton Foundation
Andrzej RUBCZYNSKI, Vattenfall Heat Poland S.A.
Stanislaw JEDLIŃSKI, Road and Transportation Department of the City of Warsaw
Marcin WRÓBLEWSKI, Infrastructure Department of the City of Warsaw

Participants: Representatives of Warsaw self-government, representatives of Warsaw companies,
people from business sector, employees of NGOs, scientists, journalists, citizens of Warsaw

Outline

The Monday seminar was preceded by Sunday event, which sightseeing visit to one of the tram depot. The guests, including Warsaw families wanting to spend their free time in interesting way, guided by very interesting person Michał KIEMBROWSKI who knows almost everything about trams, had a chance to take an old tram trip and to see many trams representing a 100-year history of electric trams in Warsaw. On Monday the 27th a conference devoted to various initiatives of fighting against climate changes was held, especially on transport – by introduction of hybrid buses or modern trams – but also thanks to pro-ecological investments in the sector of energy or retrofit programmes of municipal buildings.

Debate

The seminar contained seven presentations. Andrzej KASSENBERG talked about influence of public transportation on emission of CO₂ (and its equivalents, i.e. other greenhouse gases) in Warsaw. Then Grzegorz MADRJAS presented the vision of development of Warsaw tram lines, also in context of utilization of EU funds. Marcin KOZON talked about problems connected with choosing of the most proper transport options in great metropolies, involving choice between different options (hybrid buses, trams, underground…). Leszek WIECIECH talked about experiences of various cities from the whole world cooperating with Clinton Foundation in the field of public transport (e.g. Bus Rapid Transit as to park-and-ride solutions of areas of limited access for private cars), while Andrzej RUBCZYNSKI told the guests about many cases of pro-ecological investments of the Vattenfall, both in Poland and abroad. In turn Stanislaw JEDLIŃSKI talked about environmental solutions in transit like biofuels in buses or bus-only lanes. The last speaker was Marcin WRÓBLEWSKI, who presented the thermo-retrofit programmes conducted in Europe and USA and vision of similar programme concerning municipal building in Warsaw.

The last part of programme was debate devoted to different visions of pro-environmental solutions, both
already introduced in some metropolies and being discussed. Especially vivid was exchange of opinions between supporters of modern buses (hybrid or using alternative fuels) and supporters of trams. The debate among experts was exciting especially the dispute on Rapid Bus Transit vs Tram Transit.

Conclusions

The collected guests agreed that we need more initiatives as to fighting climate changes, especially in the field of transport, as well as better exchange of information on the subject between representatives of various sectors.

More information

The information on both Brussels and Warsaw events of OPEN DAYS 2008 were published on the Warsaw website http://um.warszawa.pl/
Seven local events were held in Portugal in the cities of Evora, Lisbon, Miranda do Corvo, Olhão and Oporto, and in the islands of the Azores and Madeira. They highlighted the importance of the regions in Europe; clusters in the fields of European maritime policy, renewable energy and innovation; and the impact of climate change on the outermost regions. Participants could also visit an exhibition focusing on sea technology in renewable energies, aquaculture, research and economy, etc.

Enclosed, the report of the local events held in Evora, 23/10/2008; Olhão, 20/10/2008; Santa Maria Island, 24-25/10/2008; Miranda do Corvo, 24/10/2008; Lisbon, 2/12/2008; and Funchal, 21/10/2008.
Alentejo - Evora

'Amentejo: The Challenge'
23 October 2008, 14:30 – 18:30

Organisers: ADRAL – Agência de Desenvolvimento Regional do Alentejo (Alentejo’s Regional Agency for the Development); CDRA - Comissão de Coordenação e Desenvolvimento Regional do Alentejo (Coordination and Development Commission for the Alentejo Region); Universidade de Évora (University of Évora)

Speakers: Dr. Carlos PINTO DE SÁ, Mayor of Montemor-o-Novo, Alentejo, member of the Committee of the Regions Prof. Carlos MARQUES, Vice-Rector of the University of Evora, Alentejo Arq. André ESPENICA, General Manager of Evora County Association of Municipalities Eng. Victor BARBOSA, President of Evora County Enterprise Association

Participants:
Local Government: Dr. Viana AFONSO, Vice-President of CCDRAlentejo Eng. Manuel MELGÃO, Vice Mayor of Evora
Other: Civil Government representatives; University of Evora (sociology, economy, biology, and other subjects professors); Representatives of alentejo’s companies; Representatives of Regional Education Government; Representatives of Employment Institute; Other social and economic representatives of Alentejo; Students; General public

Outline

The Seminar was opened by the various representatives of local authorities in presence, who welcomed the participants starting the theme Alentejo: The Challenge by offering their vision of the local development in the European context. After these statements made by Prof. Carlos MARQUES University of Evora, Eng. Manuel MELGÃO – Evora County, Dr. Viana Afonso – CCDRAlentejo, Eng Alfredo BARROSO – Presidente of ADRAL and Dra. Margarida MARQUES - European Commission in Portugal, the Moderator, Dr. Nuno VITORINO, introduced the subject offering the other speakers some thought-provoking questions about the future of Alentejo. Every speaker, then, offered his view about the subject and a debate with the audience was opened about their presentations.

Debate

The debate occurred between the speakers and between them and the audience and the following issues have been addressed: Dr. PINTO SÁ – offered the vision of a mayor in Alentejo regarding the need to make some changes in the way territory is administrated, by making the decisions closer to the population, and encasing the need to promote partnerships between the stakeholders. As a member of the CoR, he emphasized the importance for the Region to be represented in this Committee.
Prof. Carlos MARQUES – Made some statements about the future of the University in the Region and what he considered was its contribute for the region and Europe. The aim should be a closer look into the companies and their need’s, the promotion of innovation and competitiveness and a strong support of entrepreneurship among the young people in order to attract new investment to the Region.

Arq. André ESPENICA – offered the vision of the local government and its relations with Europe. One more time the tonic was put in the need to conceive a strategy of development to the region within Europe but capable of maintaining the unique aspects of Alentejo. The aspects of a local government closer to the territory were other issues in his statement.

Eng. Victor BARBOSA offered the view of the region’s companies, point out that their small dimension and fragile structure must be somehow supported if we are to expect them to compete in global markets. Once more it was pointed out that the need to promote innovation based on the unique elements of regional economy.

Conclusions: We can sum up the discussion by the following conclusions:

- Alentejo is still a very fragile region in the European context
- To promote the local companies it must relate more closely with the University, increasing innovation and competitiveness
- There is a need to get a long term strategy that includes the Region in the European context
- There is the need to involve the stakeholders into the discussion and political decision
- The Region must find its own place in Europe by increasing its own culture and by promoting innovation into the companies, promoting also entrepreneurship and attracting new and more qualified people to the territory.

More information
www.adral.pt
www.uevora.pt
www.ccdr-a.gov.pt

'Promoting Alentejo as an European region implies toughen the local economy, attract more qualified people and companies and promote innovation and entrepreneurship, in accordance with local traditions and culture.'
Algarve - Olhão

'Maritime Clusters and Regional Development'
20 October 2008, 14:00 – 18:30

Organisers: Regional Development and Coordinating Commission of the Algarve;
Municipality of Olhão

Speakers: Prof. Ernâni LOPES, SAER, PT
Dr. Brandão PIRES, IPTM

Participants: Local Authorities (Municipalities, Maritime Command, Economic, Authorities); Regional Authorities (Centre Region, Lisbon Region); Notational Authorities (Maritime, Ocean Affairs); University of Algarve; Enterprises Associations; Maritime and nautical Enterprises; Researchers; Sea Unions; Individual Participants

Outline

Prof. Ernâni LOPES, present for the first time, is study centred on the 'Hyper-cluster of the economy of the sea'. In this presentation, the Sea policy was presented as a Key opportunity factor to the regional development in the context of the European and National sea strategic approach.
Dr. Brandão PIRES, focus is presentation at the new opportunities to the sea fronts and the add value of a strategic approach to the sea integrate interventions of national, regional and local levels.

Conclusions

At regional level, we have a big area of opportunities and a long way to achieve a cluster level in the organization of the sector. The new European approach to the sea affairs it’s essential to the regional development strategic framework.
This development need a networking at European level, and this is the key to success.

More information
Azores - Santa Maria Island

'TECNOMAR - Marine Technology Exhibition'
24-25 October 2008, 10:00 – 22:00

Organiser: Regional Government of the Azores
Speakers:
- Rogério FEIO, Regional Government of the Azores Director for Fisheries
- Vítor NOGUEIRA, Lisbon and Tagus Valley Regional Development Coordination Commission CCDR
- Fernando DE LA CALLE, PharmaMar
- Pedro AFONSO, Department of Oceanography and Fisheries of the University of the Azores (DOP/UAç)
- Campbell MCKENZIE, Neptune Minerals (New Zealand)
- Raúl BETTENCOURT, Department of Oceanography and Fisheries of the University of the Azores (DOP/UAç)
- Ana NETO, Department of Biology of the University of the Azores
- Ricardo CONDE, European Space Agency (ESA)
- Frank NEUMANN, Wave Energy Centre
- Rita PATARRA, Center of Research in Natural Resources (CIRN), University of the Azores

Participants: Free entrance to the Marine exhibition.

Outline

This Exhibition was a privileged space and opportunity to display projects, products and services concerning marine technology, in several thematic areas, such as renewable energies, aquaculture, research and economy, fisheries technologies (innovative fishing fleet, fish shoals search and observation tools). During the Exhibition period, some parallel events were organised. On the first day, a Conference starting regional, national and European speakers, focused on technical and scientific aspects of Marine Technology. The Regional Government of the Azores representative opened the conference clearing up that this initiative followed a regional government commitment with the development of a policy that, first, wants to bring the Azoreans closer to the sea, and, secondly, claims that the sea is one of the great axis of the future of the Region. On the second day, series of marine technology related workshops were organised, dedicated to the presentation, by the exhibitors, of their innovative projects; Presented their projects for instance Eurocean, Aquaconcha and Rebikoff-Niggeler Foundation.

Conclusions

The Representative of the Regional Government of Azores concluded the conference by summing that the meeting was very significant because:

- Of the global overview of the subjects articulated and the participation of several sectors of the civil society;
- It allowed the general public to be informed about what is being done in the Region, as well as in other parts of the world, concerning sea technology;
• The quality of the interventions that managed to catch the attention and raise questions from a diversified and vast audience.

The Regional participation in this event confirmed that the Azores Region is dedicated in showing that the statute of an outermost region does not represent merely a set of difficulties, but also demonstrates that the archipelago can be a valid partner in the process of development and technological promotion of the European Union.

More information
Regional Government of the Azores website: www.azores.gov.pt


University of the Azores – Department of Oceanography and Fisheries

'A showroom of what is new in our conglomerate and in your region.'
Central Region of Portugal - Miranda do Corvo

'Perspectives of the regional production of renewable energy'
24 October 2008, 10:00 – 16:30

Organisers: Coordination and Development Commission for the Centre Region and Biomass Centre for Energy

Speakers:
- Alfredo MARQUES, President of Central Region of Portugal
- Fátima RAMOS, President of the Municipality of Miranda do Corvo
- José PENAFORTE, President of Biomass Centre for Energy
- Manuel GARCIA PEREZ, Junta de Extremadura, Energy and Industrial Planification DG
- Santiago DIEZ CASTILLA, Junta de Castilla y León, Regional Entity for Energy.
- Aníbal TRAÇA DE ALMEIDA, University of Coimbra
- Ana ESTANQUEIRO, INETI
- Gil PATRÃO, Electricity of Portugal, EP
- António SARMENTO, Superior Technical Institute – Lisbon
- Luís NEVES, University of Coimbra
- Susana ESCÁRIA, Ministry of Environment
- Luís MEJÍAS, Atlantic Group
- Tiago SOUSA, Martifer Group

Participants:
- Municipalities (14); Energy Agency (1); CBE (1); Universities (10); Forestry Authority (2); Regional Department of Economy (1); CCDRC (2)

Outline

The workshop was opened by local authorities and the organisers (CCDRC and CBE). The first session was dedicated to the presentation of some national and regional examples of strategic visions to the development of renewables: Portugal, Extremadura and Castilla y León (Spain) and Central Region of Portugal. The second session was dedicated to present the perspectives on concrete examples of important energy types on Central Region: wind, forestry biomass, waves and geothermal. The final sessions was dedicated to present some examples of the connection between the growth of renewables and its impact on regional development (job creation, etc.).

Conclusions

Central Region of Portugal is a unique territory where the abundance of different kinds of resources related with renewables is strongly present in the region (sun, wind, forestry, biogas, geothermal, water and sea waves). Some of those resources are underexploited. Actually, in the universities and other technological institutions is made an important effort to develop new projects and technologies to exploit those resources. In other hand there are now an interesting entrepreneurial dynamic that suggest the emergency of a cluster in renewables. Is an important challenge to all those organizations work together, including public administrations (national, regional and local) in the base of a strategic and integrated approach that profit the opportunities from a new global scenario of the energy sector.

More information

Lisbon and Tagus Valley - Lisboa

‘Innovation and Competitiveness in the European Regions: Strategies, Synergies and Opportunities’
2 December 2008, 9:30 – 13:00

Organisers: Regional Commission of Lisbon and Tagus Valley (CCDR-LVT) and the Portuguese Entity Responsible for the Promotion of the Seventh Framework Programme (GPPQ)

Speakers:
Opening session:
António FONSECA FERREIRA, President of CCDR-LVT
Alexandra SÁ CARVALHO, Representation of the European Commission in Portugal

1st Session:
Ricardo MIGUÉIS, Portuguese National Contact Point 7FP – Programme Capacities
Paula Cristina CUNHA, Vice-President CCDR-LVT

2nd Session:
Veijo KAVONIUS, Director for Regional Development, Ministry for Employment and Economy, Finland
Paulette POMMIER, Former Responsible for the Regional Policy of Clusters, France
Borja Belandia FRADEJAS, Director for Planning and Strategy, Basque Government

Closing Session:
Manuel LARANJA, Representant of the Cabinet of the National Coordinator for the Lisbon Strategy and for the Technological Plan; Member of the Commission of the Lisbon Operational Programme

Participants: Representants of the Ministry for Economy and Innovation; Ministry for Sciences, Technology and Higher Education; Ministry for Environment, Spatial Planning and Regional Development; Delegation of trainees of the Committee of the Regions; Municipalities…

Outline

The seminar was opened by the President of the Commission for Coordination and Regional Development of Lisbon and Tagus Valley, António FONSECA FERREIRA. He addressed the importance of Innovation for Lisbon, as a region included in the ‘Objective 2’ for EU funds delivery. Lisbon has the best results in technological development in Portugal, but still needs to develop more to reach the EU levels. Alexandra SÁ CARVALHO also outlined the strategical importance of Innovation for the country and the region and asked for more participation of the Portuguese population in the European decisions in the near future, as for instance to participate more actively in the elections for the European Parliament in 2009.

Debate

The first session of the seminar was on ‘Promotion of Innovation and Competitiveness in the Regions’. Ricardo MIGUÉIS presented the initiative ‘Regions of Knowledge’, within the Programme Capacities of the 7FP. He explained in detail how the call ‘Transnational cooperation between regional research-driven clusters’ can be an excellent way for the regions to get involved in the innovation process and to promote
research strategies able to foster economic regional development. Finally, he gave an overview of the conditions necessary for a project to succeed.

Paula CUNHA explained how the dimensions of competitiveness, innovation and cooperation are illustrated in the Regional Strategy for Lisbon 2020 and the priorities of the Lisbon Regional Operational Programme. She introduced the innovation performance of Lisbon and its comparison with other European regions. The Richard Florida’s thesis on the Creative Cities and his Mega region concept were mentioned as interesting examples on how the regions need to have different approaches concerning innovation and the regional development process.

The second session was on ‘European Models of Clusterisation’ and the chair was Ricardo MAMEDE, from the Observatory of the National Strategic Reference Framework.

Veijo KAVONIUS introduced to the participants the Finnish model for promoting cluster formation and regional-driven clusters and outlined the role of the Strategic Centres for Science, Technology and Innovation. The Centre of Expertise Programme was given as a good example of gateway to Finish expertise. He identified the finish clusters by domain and geographic area and gave an overview of the strategic choices for the cluster policy.

Paulette POMMIER presented the French Model for Cluster Formation. She illustrated the evolution of the French Cluster Policies, a diagnosis on the French scientific and technical potential and identified the main weaknesses of the actual context. She also gave some interesting examples of successful stories related to the implementation of research driven clusters.

Borja Belandia FRADJAS introduced the Basque Model of integration of innovation in sectorial policies. He started with the theme of the impulse of innovation in the competitiveness policy, followed with the Cluster Policy and finalised with the integration of innovation in the Cluster Policy. In the last part he gave a good example on how to innovate using strategic observatories able to identify necessities and to detect opportunities.

Conclusions

Manuel LARANJA concluded with a presentation on the articulation between the sciences policy and the cohesion policy. He outlined the following points:

- Innovation policies must be planned as multi-level, multi-sector, multi-actor and multi-regional realities
- There must be an articulation between the different instruments available for both policies
- It is essential to strengthen the R&D public-private collaborative nets
- Regions must use the Operational Programmes and the 7FP in a complementar way in order to reinforce the transfer of knowledge and innovation
- Dissemination of information is an important vehicle to guarantee the success of regional policies.

More information

All the presentations available at: http://www.ccdr-lvt.pt (Partner website)
7th Framework (Portugal): http://www.gppq.mctes.pt

‘The effective articulation of different instruments and policies and the implementation of flexible strategic approaches are paramount for the accomplishment of a successful regional performance in a context of globalisation.’
Madeira - Funchal

'Climate change impacts on Outermost Regions'
21 October 2008, 15:00 – 18:00

Organisers: Vice-Presidência do Governo Regional da Madeira, Direcção Regional dos Assuntos Europeus e da Cooperação Externa

Speakers: Eng. João Sales FERNANDES CORREIA, Regional Director of Environment
Dr. Rui REBELO, Chairman of the Madeira Electricity Company (EEM)
Eng. José Manuel MELIM MENDES, Chairman of the Regional Agency for Energy and Environment of the Autonomous Region of Madeira (AREAM)
Dr.ª Fernanda CARDOSO, Regional Director of European Affairs and External Cooperation - Moderator

Participants: Members of the Regional Commission of European Affairs and regional public authorities

Outline

The workshop was opened by Drª Fernanda CARDOSO who asked the members of the Regional Commission of European Affairs and regional public authorities to reflect and discuss the different subjects related to climate change impacts in the Autonomous Region of Madeira. The speakers presented their communications (1st The challenge of climate change in Madeira and the project Climaat II; 2nd Strategy to face climate change: the case of EEM; 3rd The package energy/climate and their implications to Madeira) and after there was a time to debate which was very participating. The water scarcity, the impacts of climate change on human health namely the possible emergence of new diseases, the impact of the directive concerning the inclusion of aviation activities in the ETS on the accessibility of the Outermost Regions, were some of the aspects very discussed during the debate.

Debate

Eng. João CORREIA presented the conclusions of the study – 'Climaat II', about the impacts and options of adjustment of climate change at Madeira, namely, negative aspects (the increase of the average temperature between 2.ºC to 3.ºC, the significant reduction of rainfall, the decrease of the available water, the impacts on human health for example tropical diseases) and positive aspects (the increase of potential area of forest Laurisilva, the increase of the banana crop).

Dr. Rui REBELO explained the Energy Plan of Madeira to achieve already in 2017 the objectives defined by the EU on climate change for 2020: maximize the regional endogenous resources (wind and water energy) promote alternative energy (biofuel, natural gas); stimulate rational use of energy (plan to promote efficiency in the energy consumption); improve environmental performance (landscape integration, implementation of an environmental management system).

Eng. Melim MENDES defended an urgent new energy paradigm based on the concept of energy identified as a service, energy efficiency, quality of service, environmental responsible, citizenship, micro production and a more balanced approach between consumption and production. He also pointed out the importance of stimulating investigation and innovation in Madeira through, namely, intelligent network,
smart meters, regional planning and traffic management, new equipments, technologies and management systems of internal transports, innovation and interregional cooperation.

Conclusions

Dr.ª Fernanda CARDOSO concluded the workshop by thanking the three speakers for the brilliant communications and saying that the goal of the workshop was achieved because the members of the Regional Commission of European Affairs and regional public authorities had shown concern about the impact of climate change and that is the first step to go on in the right direction finding solutions in the different departments of the Regional Government of Madeira.

More information
www.aream.pt
www.eem.pt/
Romania held eight local events in the context of ‘Europe in my region’. They took the form of seminars and debates, on sustainable tourism (Tulcea) and development (Targu-jiu) while preserving local multicultural heritage (Baia Mare, Resita), climate change policy and related sectorial policy initiatives (Oradea), and the impact of EU cohesion policy on the region (Focsani). They enabled local and national authorities, regional development agencies, environmental agencies, NGOs, university representatives, students, the general public and the media to share their common European interests.

Enclosed, the report of local events held in Resita, 28/10/2008; Targu-jiu, 17/10/2008; Baia Mare, 21/10/2008; and Tulcea, 2/10/2008, 3/10/2008 & 31/10/52008.
Caras Severin - Resita

'Multicultural Caras - Severin County - European Past & Future'
28 October 2008, 11:00 – 14:00

Organiser: Caras - Severin County Council
Speakers: Sorin FRUNZAVERDE, President of Caras – Severin County Council
Ionesie GHIORGHIONI, Vice president of Caras – Severin County Council
GVOZDENOVICI, RADAN, TIGLA, VIRAG – representatives of ethnic minorities
Participants: Organisations of the minorities living in the region; Professors, students, public administration

Outline

Sorin FRUNZAVERDE, President of Caras-Severin County Council underlined the importance of the regions and the process of going local in the European Union. He focused on the multicultural Europe, our county representing a good example of the cultural diversity. The Multicultural heritage of the Caras-Severin County is an important asset for a common European Presence and Future. He also mentioned that the intercultural dialogue has an increasingly important role to play in fostering European identity and citizenship.

Debate

Slavomir GVOZDENOVICI, President of the Serbian Union in Romania, made a short presentation putting the accent on the social and cultural activities of the Serbian minority in Caras-Severin. At the same time, he underlined that the cultural history of the Serbian people in Romania is dense and significant, having complex interferences with the cultures of the other minorities due to the living together in this area. Mihai RADAN, president of the Croatian Union in Romania, described the history of the Croatian community in Caras-Severin and all the projects that the community has developed. The community core is in Carasova, city that has a Romanian-Croatian bilingual high school. Erwin TIGLA, President of the German Democratic Forum in Caras-Severin, has presented the different activities that the German community had in our county. Some of the most important activities is the tradition preservation by participating at different cultural manifestations. He also underlined the contribution of the 'Diaconovici Tietz' high school with German language classes. This high school that has many European projects, has brought in 2008 the recognition price 'European School'. Vilma RACZ VIRAG, Vice-president of the Democratic Union of Hungarian in Romania talked about the activities of the Hungarian minority, referring to cultural events and the very good collaboration that the Hungarian minority has with other ethnic groups in Caras-Severin County.

Conclusions

Ionesie GHIORGHIONI, Vice president of Caras-Severin County Council, concluded the following:
- The good collaboration between the ethnic groups of our county and Caras-Severin County Council
- The interest of the minorities to carry out common activities in different fields

This event showed us the implication of the minorities in the daily problems of the County, living and working together for the future development of this multicultural space.
'The sustainable development of Gorj County Council'
17 October 2008, 12:00 – 15:30

Organiser: Gorj County Council
Speakers: Ion CALINOIU, President of Gorj County Council, Romania
          Victor BANȚA, Prefect of Gorj County
          Gabriel SANDA, Deputy Mayor, Târgu-Jiu City Hall
          Simona COVRESCU, regional expert, South-West Oltenia Regional Development Agency
          Constantin MIHUTESCU, Mayor, Baia de Fier Local Council
          Elisabeta JUVALOIU, Head of Department, Environment Protection Agency in Gorj
          Paicu ARISTICA – Mayor, Balesti Local Council
          Ion IORDACHE, Mayor, Turceni Local Council
          Ionel DOBRE, Public Manager, Gorj County Council


Outline

The debate was opened by Ion CALINOIU highlighting the fact that the development of tourism in the county, as part of the regional development, has to take into account both the economical opportunities and the environmental priorities. The debate created a place for discussions and reflections on the sustainable development of Gorj County, the enormous touristic potential of our region and the importance of partnerships, of public policies and strategic planning in attracting the EU Financial Instruments. Also, as part of the event, an exhibition has been organised under the name 'Gorj and Europe', presenting the cultural heritage as part of touristic development.

Debate

In his opening speech, the President of Gorj County Council, Ion CALINOIU, stated the importance of this local event, as OPEN DAYS goes local, that is the important events and problems discussed in Brussels.
are freshly brought to our region to be analyzed and disseminated to all stakeholders in the county. On this occasion, Ion CALINOIU brought to the attention of the guests the problems related to the four themes of the sixth edition of OPEN DAYS 2008: innovating regions, sustainable development, cooperation and networking, the future of the European cohesion policy. As Gorj County Council was partner in the conglomerate ‘Meeting the targets of climate change’, Ion CALINOIU focused on the climate change issues, underlying that the regions and cities can not afford to not to take actions and must find together solutions and strategies to better face this problem. As he drew the conclusions to this year’s edition of OPEN DAYS, the President of Gorj County Council closed his speech reinforcing the statement that Europe, and consequently Gorj County would not develop to its full potential unless we form partnerships. In reference to the benefits of the partnerships, Victor BANTA, the Prefect of Gorj County presented an example of good practice in the joint projects between the Institution of the Prefect and Gorj County Council. The two institution collaborated in several success projects, one of which had as target the development of the administrative capacity of the civil servants, so that they would be able to respond promptly and effectively to the citizen’s needs. In completion to this presentation, Gabriel SANDA, Deputy Mayor, Târgu-Jiu City Hall, spoke about the role of partnerships in the process of sustainable development of our county.

Simona COVRESCU, regional expert representing South-West Oltenia Regional Development Agency made a power point presentation on the EU funding opportunities for tourism. Under the slogan 'Local initiative. Regional development', the regional expert made a thorough incursion into the Regional Operational Programme, namely into the Priority Axis 5: ‘Sustainable development and promotion of tourism’. The development of tourism is fully in line with the Community Strategic Guidelines on Cohesion 2007-2013 and the implementation of this priority axis will contribute to improving the Gorj County’s attractiveness and also to the creation of more and better jobs. The importance of tourism in our area was also underlined by the Mayor of Baia de Fier Commune, Constantin MIHUTESCU, who gave an interesting presentation on the theme: 'Sub-mountainous Oltenia – present and perspectives'. Baia de Fier Local Council is implementing a programme financed under European Financial Instruments – Phare Large Infrastructure, whose objective is to develop the touristic area around Baia de Fier and Novaci. Elisabeta JUVALOIU, Head of Department, Environment Protection Agency in Gorj, outlined the importance of the programme Natura 2000 in the sustainable development of tourism. Natura 2000 is an ecological network of protected areas in the territory of the European Union. Designation of Natura 2000 network sites offers the possibility of a better development of our county, could assure the increasing of the natural traditional produces on intern and extern markets, could open opportunities for ecological tourism development, could attract special financing sources as the EU POS funds for a sustainable agriculture and sylviculture according to the conservation objectives of the respective site. There are 8 Natura 2000 sites declared on the territory of Gorj County. Paicu ARISTICA – Mayor, Balesti Local Council – presented his experience of ADI – Intercommunitary Development Association, association between Balesti Local Council and Lelesti Local Council formed under the Law 216 and G.E.O. 26/2000. The purpose of this association is to facilitate the access to the Financial Instruments of EU for small towns and communes that can not support the expenses required by a large investment and the supply of quality services. The presentation ended in the description of their best practice case (outputs and difficulties encountered). Ion IORDACHE, Mayor, Turceni Local Council, presented the importance of public-private partnerships and the benefits such an association can bring to the citizens of a region. The establishing of a partnership between Turceni Local Council and Lafarge Factory, with the support of Gorj County Council is expected to be a success story that would create jobs and prosperity in the locality. The partnership’s aim is to put in service a rigips factory in Turceni locality. Ionel DOBRE – Public Manager, Gorj County Council – gave to this event a democratic local colour by bringing to the attention of the participants ‘The European Week of Local Democracy’. This initiative is organised by participating local
authorities in all Council of Europe Member States in order to foster the knowledge of local democracy and promote the idea of democratic participation at a local level. The strengthening of the local democracy concept goes hand in hand with the themes freshly discussed in Brussels and supports the sustainable development of Gorj County.

Conclusions

Ioan CALINOIU concluded the workshop by summing up the discussions as follows:

- We must promote a sustainable development of our region taking into consideration the climate change issues, because our region can not afford to not to take actions and must find together solutions and strategies to better face this problem
- Gorj County has an enormous touristic potential that should be exploited to its full potential, with respect to the programme Natura 2000 for a sustainable development of tourism and the Community Strategic Guidelines on Cohesion 2007-2013
- Communication and the establishment of partnerships are essential for the long time development, including here the partnership the private sector
- The partnership must arise from the necessities and opportunities of similar regions, but it is also important that more developed regions offer their support and know-how to the developing regions

The key to success for the Structural Funds is through local and regional involvement

More information
Gorj County Council: www.cjgorj.ro

'The forming of partnerships and the dialogue between all stakeholders involved in the development of Gorj County is essential, as we all share the same goals: economic growth, sustainable development, creation of jobs and better living standards for the approximately 390.000 of citizens of our county.'
Maramures - Baia Mare

'Cultural Heritage - how to keep it unspoiled'
21 October 2008, 12:00 – 15:00

Organisers: County Center for Tourism "MaramuresinfoTurism" in partnership with Europe Direct Maramures Centre
Speakers: Prof. Drd. Ileana VASILESCU, “Vasile Goldis” West University, Baia Mare
Prof. Dr. Laura GHINEA, Art and Design University, Cluj Napoca
George POP, Tourism Consultant, Baia Mare
Participants: 19 participants: local authorities, NGO’s, mass-media (3 TV stations, 3 newspapers), researchers, students, tourism stakeholders, architects.

Outline

The workshop was opened by Ioana TRIPON, Head of Maramures Tourism Board who introduced OPEN DAYS event to the participants and explained the purpose of the workshop. Tourism plays a key role in raising awareness and generating direct and indirect support for conservation. The aim of the workshop was to stimulate debate along the participants and to involve the local authorities in the conservation of the local heritage. The importance of preserving traditional values in a sustainable way has generated positive responses mainly among the young participants who have shown great interest in identifying some active measures. The core idea was to organise an information campaign and to meet with the public in their home areas.

Debate

Prof. drd. Ileana VASILESCU presented her integrated market research about the perception and preservation of the local patrimony. The research covered over 350 people and discovered some interesting facts, like: people don’t know what the patrimony (heritage) is, so they don’t appreciate it; there are regulations regarding the conservation, but the local authorities don’t have a person responsible for applying them. The most important thing that was outlined is the fact that all the survey respondents realized that if they lose the traditions, they no longer mean anything.

Prof. Dr. Laura GHINEA talked about few contemporary landmarks. After 5 years of intensive research, she noticed a dramatic evolution of the places. The import of foreign influences in the architecture and customs is very aggressive and it is our responsibility to find solutions. The mixture between traditional and modern creates models that are spreading rapidly. For example they use the same traditional patterns that were normally done in wood, in cement. It is very difficult to stop this change, but it is not too late to correct them.

George POP gave an interesting presentation about promoting the authenticity in a sustainable way. The local cultural heritage plays a key role in the tourism development, as the majority of tourists choose this destination because of its heritage. There is a strong need of linking the preservation of traditional values with the sustainable development strategy. Marketing the authenticity is important in the context of an integrated approach.
Conclusions

Ioana TRIPON concluded the workshop by focusing on the next measures to be undertaken:

- Create a qualified working group
- Develop a clear and up-to-date needs assessment
- Identify the areas that best preserved
- Organise an information and awareness campaign targeted towards community leaders
- Identify the financial opportunities for sustaining the conservation

More information

http://adrianmandru.blogspot.com/2008/10/dispar-casele-din-lemn.html
Informatia zilei newspaper
Glasul Maramuresului newspaper

'Today's normal is different than yesterday's.'
‘Traffic & mobility management in the tourism destination Danube Delta’
2 October 2008, 9:00 – 16:00

Organisers: International Friends of Nature (IFN) and the Romanian Nature Friends (PNRO), together with gtz Romania and Tulcea County Council
Speakers:
Raluca BOZAGIEVICI - Danube Delta National Institute of Tulcea
Rita LEIMER – Trafico Consulting, Vienna (Austria)
Alois LANG - IUCN/ National Park Neusiedlersee (Austria)
Christian BAUMGARTNER - IFN
Carmen CHASOVSCHI - gtz Romania

Participants:
Local authorities: Tulcea County Council, Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority (DDBRA), Chilia Mayoralty, Sulina City Hall, Mahmudia Mayoralty, NGOs: Nature Friends International, Nature Friends Romania, Promtour Delta, Romanian Ornithological Society, WWF Romania, National Association Of Rural Ecological and Cultural Tourism ANTREC.
Research institutions: Danube Delta National Institute for Research and Development Tulcea (DDNI), Eco-Museum Research Institute Tulcea.

Outline

The seminar was opened by Silviu COVALIOV, local coordinator in Tulcea of ‘Danube Delta Landscape of the year 2007-2009’ initiative - the starting point for launching a discussion about the future of the tourism related to the mobility in the Danube Delta, about interdependences between the development of tourism and traffic, the mobility needs and the protection of landscape and biodiversity. He outlined the aim of the seminar - to raise awareness of the different aspects, options and consequences of traffic development and of the importance of an adequate mobility management within a sustainable tourism strategy. Therefore, international experts were invited to present best practise examples and experiences from different European regions, such as the Austrian - Hungarian cooperation at the Lake Neusiedl, or guiding instruments such as the Austrian ‘klima:aktiv mobil’ campaign. If and how such models could be adopted in the Danube Delta was the issue of the following discussion.

Debate

Welcome words were addressed by Ioan BOIERU, vice-president of Tulcea County Council (TCC), Christian BAUMGARTNER, secretary general of International Friends of Nature (IFN) and Cristian MITITELU from Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority (DDBRA). The present situation of Danube Delta tourism mobility (how do tourists reach the delta and its most interesting sites) was outlined by Raluca BOZAGIEVICI, from Danube Delta National Institute, who presented a wide range image on existing mobility infrastructure, multiple tourist mobility options and DDBRA approved routes for tourism practice. The following speakers presented successful examples of mobility management in European tourism areas, focussing on aspects that could serve as good practice for the Danube Delta.
Rita LEIMER, from Trafico Consulting, Vienna, gave an overview of environmentally friendly, 'gentle' modes of transport in EU and the respective motivation and experiences of tourists, appropriate public supporting instruments and mobility management concepts. As best practice examples she presented the National Park Neusiedler See and the Alpine locality of Werfenweng (infrastructure, offers and packages, marketing and information) and instruments such as combined rail & bike tickets. Concluding, she provided a summary of all aspects applicable in the Danube Delta.

Alois LANG, from the National Park Neusiedlersee (Austria/Hungary) presented details of the visitor and mobility management in the National Park Neusiedlersee, which is – like the Danube Delta – a transboundary protected area. There, cross-border tourism is considered an additional attraction, with benefit for both sides, and promoted by the slogan: 'Two countries - a dynamic region'. Another successful instrument – result of the cooperation of local stakeholders - is the so-called Neusiedlersee card, that offers overnight tourists free public transport and reduced entrance prices in the region. An EU project initiative for the development of gentle mobility in tourism along the Danube River envisaged by the Austrian Ministry of Environment (still open to Romanian partners) was presented by Christian BAUMGARTNER. The main objective of this project is the transnational cooperation and territorial integration with the countries of SE Europe in the spirit of the Lisbon and Gothenburg processes. There are chosen 6 pilot regions for project implementation; Danube Delta being one of them.

Carmen CHASOVSCHI, consultant of gtz Romania, presented the conditions for the development of gentle mobility – including the financing - in Romania from her experience and previous finalized projects. Best practice examples were taken also from successfully implemented projects in Romania - Nature Fitness Parks, though gentle mobility is still a new issue in Romania. Finally she made conclusions for further tourism development projects.

Conclusions

The debate centered on the questions:

- Which is (the envisaged) authentic profile of the Danube delta as a tourism destination and which would be the responding (gentle) mobility concept?
- How to handle and channel growing tourist numbers, envisaged by improving the transport infrastructure such as the regional airport? (key words: 'speed up'/ 'slow down' measures and effects)
- How to revitalize a regular boat traffic between Romania and Ukraine as a basis for cross-border tourism?

Conclusions:

- Initiatives to improve the accessibility and the mobility must take in account the delta’s - and its visitors’ – profile.
- Private and public stakeholders should cooperate in mobility management, even though legal gaps are still a barrier to public-private partnerships.
- The good practice examples can only be adopted if local stakeholders opt for a sustainable tourism development.

More information

Danube Delta - Landscape of the year 2007-2009: www.nfi.at
www.landscapeoftheyear.net/danubedelta
www.sustainable-danubedelta.net
Tulcea County Council: www.cjtulcea.ro
Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority: www.ddbra.ro

"In sustainable tourism and mobility, time is a filter. Time is money: the more time a tourist stays the more money remains in the region – to the benefit of the local economy and also the conservation of the biodiversity."

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Tulcea - Tulcea (2)

'International seminar- Sustainable tourism in wetlands and coastal areas'
3 October 2008, 9:00 – 16:00 and 4 October 2008, 10:00 – 14:00 (study-tour)


Speakers: Silvia Adriana TICAU – Member of the European Parliament, Vice-president of EP Commission for Transport and Tourism
Diana BOTA - Researcher, Danube Delta National Institute
Katrien BAUTERS - Senior consultant in tourism, WES Bruges
Cristian TETELEA – Project manager, WWF
Floris VERHAEGHE - Scientific expert, Flemish Government - Department for Nature and Forestry, Yjser and Handzame Natural Park (Belgium)
Rita LEIMER - Trafico Consulting, Vienna (Austria)
Stefanie RÖEDER - Project manager, International Friends of Nature (Austria)
Tiberiu TIOC - President of Friends of Nature Association, Romanian branch
Silviu COVALIOV - Tulcea representative and local coordinator, Romanian Friends of Nature Association.

Participants:
National authorities: Romanian Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises, Trade, Tourism and Liberal Professions.
Local authorities: Tulcea County Council, Tulcea Town Hall, Sulina Town Hall, Mahmudia Mayoralty, Chilia Veche Mayoralty, Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority (DDBRA).
Research institutions: Danube Delta National Institute Tulcea (INDD), Eco-Museum Research Institute Tulcea.

Outline

Tourism is, by its nature, linked to almost any other socio-economic sector. Tulcea County has, on its territory, The Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve - a vast wetland area from Europe, with an internationally recognized value. In this particular case, where the delta forms a vulnerable natural eco-equilibrium, the
impact of tourism is felt throughout all the economy, human and animal settlements, ecological balances of all kinds, transportation systems, in short, through all society. As tourism is the intended motor of development, it needs careful consideration regarding the consequences on the other sectors. The purpose of the seminar was to raise awareness of the consequences of tourism development on the envisaged territory. During the seminar, a result of an international partnership project was also presented – The strategic plan for the sustainable tourism development in the Danube Delta. The seminar was followed by a study tour on Danube Delta, by boat, on the 4th of October 2008 (10.00 – 14.00).

Debate

The seminar was opened by Octavian MOTOC - executive director of the Regional Development and Foreign Affairs Department within Tulcea County Council, who addressed a welcome speech and emphasized the importance of these days in Europe. The host introduced the participants. A second welcome speech was offered by Ioan BOIERU, vice-president of Tulcea County Council. Ioan BOIERU referred to the importance of the project implemented in a partnership between WES Bruges Belgium / Tulcea County Council / Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority, taking into account the natural heritage of Tulcea County. Also, Ioan BOIERU spoke about the accessibility in the area, from the point of view of tourism development. It is very important for the local public administration, to develop the access and environmental infrastructure, but this must be done in a strictly controlled way. As an example, it would not be indicated to build a railway parallel with the course of the Danube from Tulcea towards Sulina, as this kind of infrastructure would easily spoil the natural balance of the reserve. Ioan BOIERU also mentioned the fact that public – private partnerships should be created in order to develop the area in a sustainable way, for the benefit of all the stakeholders. The conclusion of his speech is for all the local stakeholders to work as ‘a team’ in order to develop the local potential of the Danube Delta in a sustainable way, without destroying the nature.

Silvia Adriana TICAU, MEP, vice-president of the European Parliament Commission of Transport and Tourism addressed a few words about the European tourism. Silvia Adriana TICAU offered an interesting presentation on the different regulations at European level, regarding the environment protection as well as the consumer protection. The European Parliament offers to the European regions a series of guidelines, such as creating partnerships between the main local, regional and national institutions, training for human resources, reducing part of seasonality for the coastal areas, diversifying the touristic services and offers, combining the balneary with littoral, historic, cultural and sports tourism, educating the tourists on the topics related to the environmental protection. The Lisabon Treaty gave a lot of competences for tourism activity to the regions, inspite of the fact that until recently tourism was the responsibility of each member and, also, the choice how to divide the budgetary allocations. Some issues which need to be approached for the future:

- in the last few years, some European destinations of excellence were awarded, but Danube Delta was not included in the list;
- unfortunately, the employment rate in other European regions, compared to the coastal areas is very small, only 3%;
- the transport for tourists with disabilities is almost impossible in the Danube Delta area and still very difficult in other European regions;
- it was outlined that at European level there were organised a lot of training courses on human resources; other European regions apply for European funds in the economic competitiveness field.
The present situation of the initiatives undertaken on sustainable tourism in Danube Delta area was offered by Diana BOTA, researcher from Danube Delta National Institute of Tulcea, who presented the steps that were followed in organising the tourism activity in the reserve.

- 1991 – the creation of 9 tourist areas on various criteria: accessibility, touristic resources;
- 2002 – identification and approval of 12 aquatic and 7 terrestrial touristic routes;
- identification and approval of sport fishing, hunting and camping areas;
- signs and markings of the reserve territory with the aim to inform the tourists;
- designing and building of the observation towers;
- designing and creation of first information centers in Crisan, Sulina and Tulcea;
- establishment of guidelines for local tour-operators;
- the creation of information documents for tourists (tourist guide, eco-touristic map, code of conduct for visitors);
- other studies targeting tourism organization, such as creation the visiting paths from Caraorman or C.A. Rosetti. Diana BOTA also gave an interesting presentation on the new measures for tourism organization in the biosphere reserve. In this chapter she included: regulations regarding the mobility (the control of the speed for boats), regulations about the accommodation infrastructure, new routes for bird watching, new routes for rare species of birds, touristic routes for Letea and Caraorman forests. Cristian TETELEA, the representative of WWF, presented some details regarding the Natura 2000 European Programme and the sustainable tourism. Danube Delta, as part of Natura 2000, is included in the list of regions where tourism has to follow the framework of two European directives, Habitats Directive and Birds Directive, both of them taking into account a series of measures regarding conservation, management plans etc. 'The mission of the WWF is to build a future where people live in harmony with the nature', Cristian TETELEA emphasized, saying also that 'we cannot save everything that we would like to save, but if we show some commitment, we will definitely succeed in saving more than we normally would do if we would given up'.

The next speakers (Roxana IACOB, deputy executive director, Regional Development and External Affairs, Tulcea County Council and Katrien Bauters, senior consultant in tourism, WES Belgium) presented the main aspects of the project 'Development of the potential for sustainable tourism in a Natura 2000 wetland area: the Danube Delta case' – financed with the support of the Flemish Government through the External Affairs Department. Roxana IACOB offered a short presentation about the project implemented in a partnership between Tulcea County Council, Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve, WES Belgium, having also other final contributors. Katrien BAUTERS offered a presentation about the main aims of the project: strengthening of the institutional capacity in the field of sustainable tourism, for the public administration and private sector. Knowledge transfer through training sessions to local stakeholders in the public and private sector in the field of sustainable tourism in wetland areas, development of a tourism strategy for the Danube Delta and achieving active involvement of all stakeholders in the elaboration of the strategy, awareness creation for an integrated, commonly achieved, vision for tourism development in a Natura 2000 area by workshops, popular brochure and local information sessions, organization of an international conference on sustainable tourism in wetland areas were the main actions undertaken within the project. She also provided information about the situation analysis (tourists offer, tourists demand), vision, critical success factors and actions, planning and management of carrying capacity, quality and integration in an overall monitoring system, which represent the main elements of the Strategic plan for the sustainable development of the tourism in the Danube Delta – the output of the above-mentioned project. The recommendation for developing the offers on the Danube Delta territory was ‘experiencing the Danube Delta in a slow way’. 
The following speakers presented successful examples of sustainable transport and mobility, but also communication and promoting, in the European tourism areas, targeting the aspects that could serve as good practices for the Danube Delta. In this context, Floris VERHAEGHE, scientific expert, Flemish Government, Department for Nature and Forestry of Belgium, presented the case of tourism recreational management plan for Ijzer & Handzame Valley. He presented the figures for this natural area (about 4000 ha, an area without villages and buildings, with extensive agricultural use and a few roads). Thus, the area remains interesting for the birds, being strictly protected by Ramsar Convention. The future management includes flood risk management combining with Natura 2000, recreational activities and agricultural use. The local farmers transformed agricultural use in gentle recreational programmes made in a link with the nature conservation programme. VERHAEGHE presented the concrete achievements of the plan such as: visitors centre, new infrastructure supporting existing recreational network, recreational map. The partnership between the main stakeholders from the region was finalised by the creation of a NGO, funded by the Flemish Government. Conclusion: a touristic-recreational management plan is indicated for Danube Delta also, due to the fact that this kind of plan could indicate what it is or not in the benefit of all the sectors, which are the wishes and needs to the communities, what is possible to undertake or has to be avoid, how to be proactive and to involve other parts and organisations to promote and to use the benefit of the planning.

Rita LEIMER, from Trafico Consulting Vienna, gave an overview on environmentally friendly and “gentle” modes of transport in EU, taking into account the motivation and the experiences of tourists, appropriate public supporting instruments and mobility management concepts and measures. As a best practice example, she presented the National Park Neusiedlersee and the Alpine locality of Werfenweng (infrastructure, offers and tourist packages, marketing and information), developed with the help of some instruments such as combined rail & bike tickets. Trafico Consulting is working on a EU project regarding the gentle mobility along the Danube River, together with 5 - 6 pilot-regions having as the main objective the co-operation between them. Stefanie ROEDER, project manager of the International Friends of Nature, who talked about the IFN and the initiative “Danube Delta – Landscape of the year 2007 – 2009”. IFN represents an organisation with more than 500,000 members in 23 national organisations and with important activities focused on tourism and sustainability. The seminar was closed by Silviu COVALIOV, Tulcea local coordinator of the “Danube Delta Landscape of the year 2007-2009” initiative and Silviu TIOC, president of International Friends of Nature in Romania. Both participants presented LoY as an initiative of IFN, a model for sustainable development, financed by IFN, EC, European partners, donors. Danube Delta is the 11th LoY proposed by IFN; this initiative creates bridges within Europe and gave some recommendations for ecotourism; the undertaken actions such as: transborder cooperation between Romania and Ukraine, certified quality standard, Eco-Label workshops, pension administrators training course …are just some of the results of the initiative.

Conclusions

Octavian MOTOC concluded the seminar by summarizing the discussions as follows:

- Communication and cooperation between different European regions is essential for social and economic development;
- The key for success is the involvement of public and private sectors and the creation of partnerships between them, even if it does not exist a legal basis on the matter;
- The best practices can only be adopted if local stakeholders take into consideration that Danube Delta is a special case with specific needs;
The strategic plan for the sustainable development of the tourism is expected to be implemented starting with 2009, by the support of all the stakeholders.

More information
Tulcea County Council: www.cjtulcea.ro
Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority: www.ddbra.ro
Danube Delta National Institute: www.indd.tim.ro
www.sustainable-danubedelta.net

'Experience the delta – a very fragile wetland - in a slow way is our recommendation for all the stakeholders involved in tourism, to organise their trips in a way in which any tourist could enjoy all the natural, cultural and social elements of Danube Delta life, which has to be preserved. This means sustainable development, when taking into account the local specificity, traditions, customs, natural and cultural heritage, as well as the human resources with their needs and expectations.'
Tulcea - Tulcea (3)

'Danube Delta - an ecological treasure for the Europeans'
31 October 2008


Speakers: Victor TARHON, President of Tulcea County Council
His Excellence, . Henri PAUL, The Ambassador of France in Romania
Pierre-Marie BLANQUET, Vicepresident of the General Council of Aveyron (France)
Jean Claude HOLTZ, Vicepresident of the General Council of Moselle (France)
Liviu MIHAIU, Governor of the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve
Marian TUDOR and . Silviu COVALIOV, Tulcea representatives and local coordinators, Friends of Nature Romanian Association
Joaquim CAPITAO, LIFE Project, The European Commission – DG Environment;
Maria Monica SERBAN, Councillor, The Romanian Ministry of Environment
Dumitru TIRON, Regional Manager A.R.C.E
Gheroghe STEFAN, President of the National Agency for Fishing and Agriculture
Thibaut GLASSER, Branch Responsible for Lindre Domain / The General Council of Moselle
Carmen CONONOV, The South East Regional Development Agency
Dan GALBUR, Manager assistant, Tulcea County Office of Payments for the Rural and Fishing Development
Andrei BLUMER, President of the Ecotourism Association in Romania
Jamil BENABDALLAH, Cabinet Détente Consultants

Participants:
Local authorities : Tulcea County Council, Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority (DDBRA), Environment Protection Authority, Tulcea City Hall, The Prefect's Office, Chilia Veche Town Hall, Sulina Town Hall, Mahmudia Town Hall, Crisan Town Hall, Sfantu Gheorghe Town Hall.
Zapodia ONG, Alexandra Ciuculencu School, Moselle, Aveyron, The European Commission DG Environment,

**Research institutions:** Danube Delta National Institute Tulcea (INDD).  


**Outline**

As a unique territory in Europe, Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve represents the first ornithological reservation within the European Union. The French Presidency of the European Union intends to contribute to the debate concerning biodiversity, along with the theme of the natural patrimony of Danube Delta and with the process of sustainable development of this territory. Presentations of subjects like biomass, aquaculture, ecotourism, as well as LIFE – the European programme were presented on the agenda of the conference. Experts from DG Environment, from French and Romanian Ministries for environment, The National Fishing Agency in Romania, Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority, Danube Delta National Institute, Ecotourism Association in Romania, different NGOs were invited to take part to the seminar. Once the seminar was over, it was launched a campaign for waste collection in Danube Delta, with the support of some schools within the county of Tulcea – the participants went to Mahmudia, a commune situated at 30 km by Tulcea. Another main activity of the seminar was the exhibition regarding the education upon environmental protection, organised at 'Jean Bart' Theater, and the awarding of the prizes for the winners of the drawings contest.

**Debate**

The seminar was opened by Victor TARHON – President of Tulcea County Council, who addressed a welcome speech and emphasized the importance of what was to be discussed during the next few hours.

'The European Union must be a model for the conservation of the environment', said His Excellence, Henri PAUL – the Ambassador of France in Romania. Danube Delta represents a wealthness very easy to lose. Within the last 30 years the planet lost one third of its animal and plants species. In Europe, Romania owns the highest number of protected ecosystems (70% of the species are protected). Ambassador also talked about the things that need to be done to preserve the Danube Delta heritage. Pierre-Marie BLANQUET – Vicepresident of the General Council of Aveyron and an old friend of Tulcea County Council, thorugh the help of the co-operation developed during the last 15 years, mentioned that the environment issue is a collective responsibility of all the stakeholders. He offered the example of the pollution on the Danube, a problem that cannot be solved locally, especially from the point of view of financially contribution. Tulcea County cannot solve the problem of Danube and Danube Delta on its own, although we do have to have local solutions. Since 1856, this region represents the European Commission of the Danube in Sulina – as being the first sentinel of Europe, the gate for the granary of Europe.
Jean Claude HOLTZ – Vicepresident of the General Council of Moselle, expressed the greetings from the president of Moselle and gave a short presentation of the Department of Moselle. Silvia Adriana TICAU - MEP, Vicepresident of the European Parliament Commission of Transport and Tourism, addressed a few words about the solutions that must be found with regards to the protection of Danube and Danube Delta. She thinks that it is an absolute need for some water purge systems in the towns situated on the shores of Danube, systems that involve a lot of investments and the need of changing many regulations regarding transportation on Danube. She appreciates the French initiative regarding the organizing of Municipal Councils of Students around the communities and thinks that is a good example to follow in order to start saving Danube and Danube Delta, by a collective contribution and commitment of many categories of people – starting of course with the youth and the students from the local schools.

The subject of biodiversity in Danube Delta was approached by Liviu MIHAIU – Governor for Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve. In his opinion, Liviu MIHAIU thinks that the 'XXI-st century will be an ecological one or it won't be at all', to make a link with a phrase of a writer. He aims high as far as Danube Delta is concerned, especially when it comes to its protection, in the sense that it is more affordable to preserve than it is to exploit. Although the countries situated on Danube’s shores have signed a treaty in 1996 to protect the river, the situation is still dramatic. As a personal dream, Liviu MIHAIU wishes that Sulina gets renovated. Another project would be maintaining the ethno-cultural diversity and its promotion from the tourist point of view. The action plan for 2009 is to spend money on biodiversity and not on constructions. Liviu MIHAIU agrees the idea of using non-conventional energy, but says NO to the windmills, that destroy the birds’ circuit, for example. The next speaker, Silviu COVALIOV, local coordinator in Tulcea of the ‘Danube Delta Landscape of the year 2007-2009’ initiative gave a detailed presentation of Danube Delta, including harvesting reed typology, old and new proposed reed harvesting areas in DDBR and reed business. Silviu COVALIOV mentioned the GRAT project – ecological houses made from ecological materials. The European Expert in LIFE Programme, Joaquim CAPITAO talked about Financial Instrument for Environment. The period for any project within Life programme is 2007-2013 with costs of billions of Euros, where 78% is allocated for projects; the rest is allocated for environment actives. LIFE appeared in Romania in 1999 where there were 40 financed projects, the total amount granted for these projects being 11 billion Euros out of the 20 billion Euros which represent the total amount. These projects financed the restoration of the habitats, the protection of species, inventories of the areas etc.

Maria Monica SERBAN, councillor for the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development presented the Priority Axis 4 within Sectorial Operational Programme for Environment. She introduced the audience to everything that needs to be done, step-by-step when trying to apply for European funds. A very important subject discussed during the seminar was the biomass – a chance for development in the rural areas, presented by Dumitru TIRON – Head Unit of Territorial Branch ARCE, Galati. Dumitru TIRON emphasized the idea of renewable energy source by making a comparison between conventional energy and renewable energy. He talked about the negative impact of energy consumption on the environment, about the oil price growth, the breakup of the fossils fuels deposits, the dependence upon import, on one hand and why renewable energy on the other. Carmen CONONOV, manager for Agency for South-East Regional Development, presented the Regional Operational Program 2007-2013 (Priority axis 5) – the financing source for sustainable development and tourism promotion in the South-East Development Region. The main objective of the Regional Operational Programme is to support an economic development, social sustainable, territorially balanced of all the regions in Romania.

Dan GALBUR, Manager assistant, The County Office of Payments for the Rural Development and Fishing had an intervention about the general objectives of the national program for rural development, offering some useful information with regards to who can benefits from non-refundable funds and what the
conditions are to be eligible, the maximum value of non-refundable funds, selection criteria, as well as many other useful information. Andrei BLUMER – President of the Romanian Ecotourism Association and Jamil BENABDALLAH – Cabinet Détente Consultants talked together about the tourism certification. They mentioned the project they are working on: ‘A natural gate towards Europe, Ecology and Economy in Harmony’, where they benefited of the involvement of Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority and the National Institute for Research and Development for the Danube Delta. The idea of the project is a plan of ecotourism design in Danube Delta. Their priorities are the slow down experience – and by this they mean to reduce the access of speed boats, and to get the local communities involved and responsible in developing Danube Delta in an ecological way. Gheorghe STEFAN had a laborious presentation on the Operational Program for Fishing 2007-2013. He suggested the creation of the fishing farms for fishermen where fish can grow and develop in a controlled way. The final speaker, Glasser THIBAUT, Branch Responsible for Lindre Domain / The General Council of Moselle talked about the double-importance that tourists as well as public and private sector have in Danube Delta: the piscicultural and touristic importance, which is why people have to think of nature that way they think of a human being.

Conclusions

The seminar centred on:

- Preserving the nature in Danube Delta;
- Involving the local communities in maintaining Delta as an ecological tourist destination;
- Helping people access non-refundable funds;
- Developing the rural tourism;
- Working on the public-private partnership;

On the occasion of this seminar, the focus was on the support offered by the in order to maintain the balance of the natural biodiversity of the Danube Delta as an ecological treasure for the Europeans.

More information

Tulcea County Council: www.cjtulcea.ro
Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority: www.ddbra.ro
Danube Delta National Institute: www.indd.tim.ro
The Embassy of France in Bucharest

'We have to think about nature the way we think about a human being.'
The six local events held in Slovakia took diverse and fascinating forms: information campaigns to increase public awareness of the activities of self-government and European opportunities (Zilina); a variety of presentations and activities about the competences of the regional authority and its role in the European Union (Presov); Europe’s oldest marathon, and a press conference with the President of the Region, who is a member of the Committee of the Regions (Kosice); a debate with young people aimed at preparing them to take an active part in shaping the future of the European Union (Nitra); folklore, exhibition and paintings for the ‘Days of Foreign Slovaks in Bratislava Region’ (Bratislava); and lastly a conference about current developments in today’s society (Trencin).

Enclosed, the report of the local events held in Kosice, 5/10/2008; Presov, 23/10/2008; and Trencin, 30-31/10/2008.
Kosice

'International Marathon under the project's name ‘Europe in my Region’
5 October 2008

Organiser: Zdenko TREBULA, President of the Kosice Self-governing region

Outline

The aim of the event is to promote regions and regional policy of the EU by the occasion of the Europe’s oldest Marathon. Today this marathon, the most massive, and one of the most significant events in Slovakia takes proud in the attribute of being the oldest marathon in Europe.

Debate

One of the co-organisers was Kosice region. The President of this region and the member of the Committee of the Regions took part in the festive opening of the marathon. There has been organised a press conference as well.

Conclusions

The Europe’s oldest marathon has contributed to the better representation, visibility and understanding of the common goals of the Committee of the Regions in Kosice Region.

More information
Presov

‘The OPEN DOORS in the Prešov Region’
23 October 2008, 10:00 – 17:00

Organiser: Prešov Region Office
Speakers: Local authorities, desk officers and project managers from the Prešov Region
Participants: Students of the secondary schools, public institutions and bodies, citizens and media from the Prešov Region

Outline

The event OPEN DOORS in the Prešov Region started by the exhibition of the PULS – folkloric musical band from the Prešov Region and opening speech of Peter CHUDIK, president of the Prešov Region, who welcomed all the participants. The event was organised on two floors in the building of the Prešov Region Office. Various presentations of the competences of the regional authority and its role in the EU, regional parliament, financing, culture, education, health care, social services, regional development, spatial planning, international cooperation, representation of the Prešov Region in Brussels, and a vote for the most beautiful and interesting sites of the region took the place.

Debate

To more than 2000 participants were offered the possibility to meet up in person President of the region, all the Heads of Departments as well as the civil servants from the Prešov Region. The interest of the visitors was fulfilled by various presentations and activities. Each presentation was followed by a discussion.

Conclusions

The President of the Prešov Region Peter CHUDIK concluded the event as follow:
‘Our main aim was to bring the regional authority closer to the public. We are very glad about interest of young generation, their participation and involvement in the activities and discussion. We wanted to open up to our citizens, explain them our competences and to revive the event with something attractive. We succeeded.’

More information
www.vucpo.sk
'Human and technics integrating to indicators of knowledge economy'
30-31 October 2008, 10:00 – 17:00

Organiser: A. Dubček University of Trenčín
Speakers: Miroslav Mečár, Rector, University of Trenčín
Julius ALEXY, Head of department, University of Trenčín
Rudolf SIVÁK, Rector, University of Economics, Bratislava
Jozef HABÁNIK, State Secretary, Ministry of Education
Peter BACO, Member of European parliament
Peter PLAUČAN, Director General, Section of Universities, Ministry of Education
Jozef MIHÓK, Director General, DMD Group

Participants: 100. University representatives, regional SME-s, local and regional representatives

Outline
The conference created discussion forum of involved scientific and pedagogical community and offered informal exchange of suggestions on current questions of modern human society evolution.

Debate
The discussion during 2 days conference turned around three main issues:
- New trends in knowledge economy
- Information and communication technologies
- Progressive technologies and environmental ethics
The round table organized as a collateral event had the objective to exchange with Mr. BACO, Slovak MEP on funding opportunities offered by EU and enhance co-operation between regional SME-s and University representatives in building European projects.

Conclusions
Participants tried to define problem factors and evolutionary tendency prediction. The University representatives stressed importance of University exchanges and cooperation at European level, e. g. European week of cities and regions in Brussels.

More information
A. Dubček University, Faculty of social and economic relations: www.tnuni.sk
In the context of the OPEN DAYS 2008 'Europe in my region', Slovenia scheduled two local events: an exhibition and workshops in the cities of Litija and Maribor. The first focused on the importance of networks and local action groups, and the second on cultural tourism for creating new jobs and sustainable growth in regions. Participants included experts, NGOs, young project managers and local media.

Enclosed, the report of the local event held in Litija, 17/10/2008.
Litija

'Slovenian Network for heritage interpretation and competence centers'
17 October 2008, 10:00 – 13:00

Organisers: The Association of Municipalities of Slovenia (AMS), Litija Development Centre (LDC), Sava group, Sinergija Development Agency and Notranjska Environment Centre (NEC)

Speakers: Robert SDELJ, president of AMS
Franci ROKAVEC, Mayor of Litija Municipality
Lili MAHNE, NEC
Zvonko BELIČ, Sava Group
Mija BOKAL, LDC
Ivo PIRY, Govermental Office for Local Self – Government and Regional Policy – Head of the Unit for International Co-operation
Aljaž STARE, President of Slovenian Project Management Association
Dr. Josip KOROŠEC, National Institut for Herritage

Participants: Local Authorities (Mayors) (13); NGOs – members of Slovenian network for interpretation of heritage (4); Competence centers (3) – 8 experts, technical and administrative staff of the AMS (2), young project managers (3); representatives of ministries (regional development) (2); media (3)

Outline

- What is the position of the slovenian members in EU board of regions
- What are the messages of OPEN DAYS 2008 for Slovenia citizens and especially for small local communities
- Competence centers as an useful tool for cooperation, communication and partnership
- Slovenian network for rural heritage interpretation as a powerful management tool for sustainable development and the system of values of heritage
- The case of Litija Rural development programme
- IPMA (International Project Management Association) standard of excellence

Debate

Robert SDELJ and Franci ROKAVEC - Small rural municipalities are more flexible and can make the progress more effective and efficient. AMS is open for innovative ideas for cooperation, dialogue and partnership.

Lili MAHNE- OPEN DAYS have strong and important messages for local communities and citizens Slovenia. Slovenian Network for Rural Heritage has the position to organise conglomerate in the field of TRANSINTERPRET.

Ivo PIRY – EGTC is possible also in Slovenia and the AMS is the right form to start. Zvonko BELIČ- Competence centers of knowledge (CC) are a unique form of network management of companies that are majority-owned by Sava d.d. They are small yet efficient and incorporate the specialised knowledge of
experts from various Group operations in their work. These centers consist of members from the competence centre management and are, as a rule, employed by the company Sava d.d., and other members from the Group subsidiaries.

Dr. Josip KOROŠEC- Herritage as a basic asset of the regions need to be more respected on the point of Local Action Groups.

Mija BOKAL- Knocking on the Herritage Door – project financed by the ERDF the case of good practise in interpretation of herritage.

Aljaž STARE – Project management as technical tool, interpretation of herritage as contents tool, competence centers as organisational tool – the innovation for efficient and effective euroregions. IPMA ‘Project Excellence’ model which helps a project team to reflect on its own strengths and potential improvement areas. Project excellence can be achieved by good management and right results. IPMA ‘Project Excellence’ model which helps a project team to reflect on its own strengths and potential improvement areas. Project excellence can be achieved by good management and right results

Conclusions

All participants agreed that such events really bring Europe in the regions. The partnership AMS – competence centers will go next year to OPEN DAYS together. The idea of TRANSINTERPRET conglomerate under Slovenia leadership was strongly supported.

More information

AMS - http://www.zdruzenjeobcin.si/ ;
Litija development centre - http://www.razvoj.si/?id=84 ;
NEC – http://nec-cerknica.si;
Sava - http://www.sava.si/;
Sinergija development agency - http://www.ra-sinergija.si/

'The idea of the TRANSINTERPRET conglomerate under Slovenian leadership was strongly supported.'
Spain organised twenty-one local ‘Europe in my region’ events. Seminars, conferences and exhibitions highlighted initiatives in the sustainable development (Las Palmas, Bourgos) and energy (Valladolid, Pamplona) fields; the necessity and benefits of a European maritime policy (Cádiz); the mechanisms and dynamics of collaboration in the innovation sector (Bilbao, Toledo, Murcia) and sharing European cluster experience (Don Benito). They also highlighted the vital role of regional and local authorities in increasing public confidence in Europe (Madrid); European transnational networks and their results (Mérida); local initiatives to meet the objectives of the Lisbon Strategy (Barcelona). These diverse and fruitful events brought together regional and local authorities, research centre agents, the Chamber of Commerce, banking services, European officials, Europe Direct representatives, universities, the general public and the media.

Enclosed, the report of the local events held in Cádiz, 30/10/2008; Bilbao, 22-23/10/2008; Las Palmas, 15/10/2008; Santander, 21/10/2008; Burgos, 22/10/2008; Valladolid, 16-18/10/2008; Toledo, 21/10/2008; Don Benito, 29/10/2008; Madrid, 28/10/2008, and Murcia, 22/10/2008.
Andalucia - Cádiz

'The Maritime Policy: An integrated overview of a complex environment'
30 October 2008

Organiser: The Andalusia External Affairs General-Secretary coordinating the Andalusian Regional Departments of Environment, Transports, Fishery, Innovation and Infrastructures.

Speakers:
Elvira SAINT-GERONS HERRERA, Andalucia Regional Government Delegate in Brussels
José GUIRADO ROMERO, Andalusian Natural Heritage and Sustainable Development General Secretary
Martín FERNANDEZ DÍEZ-PICAZO, European Commission, DG for Maritime and Fishing Affairs
Juan Manuel BARRAGÁN MUÑOZ, Sea Sciences Head of Department. Cadiz University
Ignacio ÁLVAREZ- OSSORIO, Transport Area Executive Director Andalusian Ports Public Agency
Francisco Antonio MACÍAS DOMÍNGUEZ, Vice-rectorate for Research, Development and Innovation. Cádiz University
Antonio MUÑOZ MARTÍNEZ, General Director of Tourist Planning of the Andalucia Regional Government
José Manuel GAITERO REY, Assistant General Director of Fishing and Aquaculture of the Andalucia Regional Government
Francisco JIMÉNEZ LUQUE, General Director of the Agroindustry Sector. Andalusian Innovation and Development Agency
José GUERRA MACHO, Andalusian Technological Corporation General Director
Juan Manuel GARCÍA DE LOMAS, Andalusian Center of Technological Acuiculture Foundation General Manager

Participants:
Agents of the Cadiz University, Pablo de Olavide University Málaga University, Granada University, Córdoba University, Andalusia Regional Government representatives, local authorities and innovation & research centres agents.

Outline

The seminar tried to show a 'photography' taken from several points of view offering a wide vision of the close relation between Andalusia and its sea. In a first step, the Andalusia Regional Government Delegate in Brussels presented the seminar in the OPEN DAYS 2008 framework explaining the objective of this European initiative. The representative of the European Commission offered a wide vision of the European Maritime Policy arguing its necessity and advantages. After this, Juan Manuel BARRAGÁN MUÑOZ presented the Andalusian Strategy of Integrated Management of Coastal Zones proposal explaining the participation process within they have worked from the Cadiz University and the legal moment of this Strategy. Ignacio ÁLVAREZ- OSSORIO, the Transport Area Executive Director Andalusian of the Ports Public Agency explained the participation of the Andalusia Region in the Commission public consultation of the European Maritime Policy with an especial accent in the maritime transports contribution. Finally, a Round table took place.
Debate

Representatives of the Cadiz University, Andalusia Fishery Regional Department, Andalusian Innovation and Development Agency, Innovation and Research and business sector discussed about the several points of view of the maritime policy. They proved that the maritime issues are taken into account from several agents and interests and there is not any organism in Andalusia that could manage the relation with the sea in a more horizontal plane.

Conclusions

- The participants concluded underlining the importance of a European Maritime Policy and the need of a good participation of all the society and economy agents in its development and implementation. Also, in the Andalusia region this exercise must be undertaken.
- The University representative pointed out that the business and political word must have the research results more into account.

More information

celia.rosell@juntadeandalucia.es

'The regions are essential actors in the European Maritime Policy development framework.'
Basque Country - Bilbao

‘VIIº Business Global Conference +i’
22-23 October 2008

Organisers: The Society for Industrial Promotion and Reconversion (SPRI), the Spanish Association of Electronics, Information Technology and Telecommunications Industries (AETIC), the Association for Telecommunication Technologies in the Basque Country (GAIA) and PMP, an innovation and management contents company.

Speakers: Representatives of some of the world’s best-renowned innovation centres

Participants: Industry, professional services, consultancy, banking services, office computing, telecommunications, communication and image, health services, engineering services, financial management, logistics and transport operators, IT, e-business, etc.

Outline

This Conference was one of the several dissemination activities that are foreseen in the framework of ‘2008: the Year of Innovation in the Basque Country’. The Year is dissemination and awareness raising initiative and it involves promoting activities designed to draw attention to innovation in the Basque Country in 2008, via a programme involving a group of players. Designed to stimulate the dialogue between innovation and society, the action facilities innovation by ensuring society understands, accepts and acknowledge it.

Conclusions

The seventh BGC+i conference, held at the Palacio Euskalduna in Bilbao, has drawn more than 700 participants. During the two-day meeting, whose theme was ‘Open Innovation, the Sum Total of Ideas’, around twenty speakers both from national and international institutions presented their insights on innovation as well as their own experiences in their companies and organizations. This year the emphasis has been on the mechanisms and dynamics of collaboration which are based on the mutual sharing of ideas and which lead to innovation. The conference was organised by the Society for Industrial Promotion and Reconversion (SPRI), the Spanish Association of Electronics, Information Technology and Telecommunications Industries (AETIC), the Association for Telecommunication Technologies in the Basque Country (GAIA) and PMP, an innovation and management contents company.

The organising committee has expressed its satisfaction with the outcome of the conference and has pointed out that the large number of participants is a good indication of the growing interest and attention that the conference attracts. In particular, the organisers have noticed that there are delegates who keep coming back to these meetings year after year. This shows how ‘people who have attended the Conference in previous years have put into practice in their own businesses the ideas that they learnt here and have established relationships which have had a real impact on their businesses.’ The organisers have emphasised that innovation is now more relevant than ever and that the small and medium-sized companies in the Basque Country must not miss the opportunity to join in with the innovations efforts.
Plenary speakers included representatives of some of the world’s best-renowned innovation centres. Among them was Henry CHESBROUGH, executive director of the Centre for Open Innovation at the Haas School of Business in California and considered to be the father of ‘Open Innovation’, who offered some insights on how to turn innovation into a valuable asset in organisations. Enric VON HIPPEL, head of the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Group at MIT Sloan School of Management, highlighted the new rules of the game that organisations must take into account in order to face ‘the biggest change since the Industrial Revolution’. Joaquim VILÀ, head of the Executive Programme on Management Innovation and Innovation Professor at IESE, showed the ways in which innovation is crucial for the continued success of an organisation. Jules GODDARD, research fellow of the Management Innovation Lab at the London Business School, gave an overview of the six fundamental pillars on which current management must be based, in the context of people’s expectation and the new rules of the game of the current environment. Participants also had the opportunity to gain first-hand access to the experiences of companies like Nespresso, NH Hotels, Ikea, Alegria, SkunkFunk and Cirque du Soleil.

More information
http://www.ebgconference.com/ingles
Canary Islands - Las Palmas

'Sustainable Development: Regional Answers to Climate Change'
15 October 2008, 19:00 – 21:30

Organisers: Canary Agency for Sustainable Development and Climate Change.
Speakers: Prof. Santiago HERNÁNDEZ LEÓN, University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Department for Marine Biodiversity, Canary Islands, Spain.
Juli CAUJAPÉ-CASTELLS, Department of Molecular Biodiversity and DNA for flora of the canary Islands. Botanical Garden "Viera y Clavijo".
Participants: Prof. Matías GONZÁLEZ HERNÁNDEZ, University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Economy Department, Canary Islands, Spain.
D. José FERNÁNDEZ PÉREZ, Land planning Director, Cabildo Insular de Gran Canaria
D. Santiago HERNÁNDEZ TORRES, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria City Council
D. Antonio HERNÁNDEZ RODRÍGUEZ, Ben Magec Ecologistas en Acción.

Outline

The workshop was opened by Faustino GARCÍA MÁRQUEZ, Director of the Canary Agency for Sustainable Development and Climate Change. It started by a piano concert for 15 minutes, followed by two presentations about impacts and adaptations possibilities to the climate change for marine and land ecosystems. Afterwards took place a round table with specialist of many spheres debating of the consequences of climate change in land planning, economy, biodiversity, and infrastructures.

Conclusions

Climate change affects biodiversity in form of direct impacts to species and plants or marine communities, but also by indirect impacts through their ecosystems and changes in the relationships between different species. Biodiversity loss affects ecosystems, making them more vulnerable to perturbations and less able to supply humans with valuable services, just because ecosystems provide the basic necessities of life such as food, clean air and water. Effects of climate change like rising of temperature and sea level, increase of extreme events and forest fire affects directly plants, land animals and fishes activity period changing the own ecosystems. The high velocity of this changes make very difficult or impossible to much of this species to adapt to this situation, differing substantially across regions and across populations within regions. In this context Botanical gardens and natural protected areas are a solution for species with less capacity of adaptation. Climate change requires a new living code, just because is necessary and crucial to make important changes in human behaviour in order to give future generations the chance of knowing much of this species, and enjoy live as we know. So, its time to adopt concrete solutions based on less emissions of greenhouse gases but also adopting different models of land planning for reducing mobility necessities. But also Economy is a very important aspect of climate change, so its necessary to make a change in understanding and the problematic and taking the right solutions. Adaptation plans (present solutions for future problems), required to adopt solutions thinking in long benefits.

More information
Agencia Canaria de Desarrollo Sostenible y Cambio Climático: www.Gobiernodecanarias.org
Edificio de Servicios Múltiples I; C/ Prof. Agustín Millares Carló 22, 8ª pl.; 35003 Las Palmas de Gran Canaria. Tel. (0034) 928 452071 / Fax. (0034) 928 455887

'Promoting regional answers to climate change needs to be built on a broad partnership involving economic, public and civil society institutions and organisations.'
'University – Industry relationship: a key link toward regional growth'
21 October 2008, 9:30 – 14:00

Organisers: GRUPO SODERCAN with the support of the European Enterprise Network.

Speakers: In order of appearance in the program.
Salvador BLANCO, CEO, General Director, Grupo Sodercan
Jesús DE LAS CUEVAS, Directorate General for Innovation and Entrepreneur Development, Grupo Sodercan
Martin SILVAN, Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Navigation from Cantabria
Dr. José Carlos GOMEZ SAL, Vice-rector of Investigation from the University of Cantabria
Andres FONT, Director ENTER, Centre for the Analysis of the Information
Claudio ROVEDA, Fondazione Rosselli (Italy)
Declan MURPHY, Director Strategy Partners (Ireland)
Andrés HOYO, General Director for Innovation and Investigation, Government of Cantabria

Participants: Representatives from the Regional Development Agency of Cantabria; regional authorities (General Direction of Universities and Investigation); Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Navigation of Cantabria as well as the Vice-rector of the University of Cantabria. Moreover, more than 50 entrepreneurs from the Region of Cantabria attended to this conference. At the European level we were pleased to have people from Ireland and Italy.

Outline

The aim of the conference was to explain the results of the workshops held in Brussels during the OPEN DAYS 2008 as regards the cooperation between 'University and Industry'. It was also the chance to present the priorities as well as the financial programmes that the regional government of Cantabria has put it into practise in order to enhance this collaboration. Moreover, best practices from different Europeans regions were outlined, specifically, from Italy and Ireland.

Debate

The conference was opened by Andrés HOYO, General Director for Universities and Research of the Government of Cantabria. He explained that the duty of a public administration is to provide and facilitate adequate channels for SMES to 'seek knowledge wherever it occurs, which is (mainly) at the universities'. He also pointed out two programs that the Government of Cantabria have developed in order to foster this collaboration: Invesnova program (Regional Development Agency) and the measures for enhancing the cooperation between University and Industry.

The second part of the conference was dedicated not only to give an overview concerning the results and conclusions from the OPEN DAYS workshop celebrated in Brussels, but also to present the European
Enterprise Network and its specific label for Cantabria: Galactea Plus, where the Regional Development Agency and the Cantabria Chamber of Commerce work closely together. The rest of the conference was devoted to summarize different regional practises. For instance, Claudio ROVEDA explained the case of Lombardy, Declan MUPHY outlined the innovative initiatives at European universities and José Carlos GÓMEZ SAL gave a presentation about the University of Cantabria and its role in fostering the development of the Cantabria region.

**Conclusions**

- The Triple Hélix a spiral model of innovation that captures multiple reciprocal relationships at different points in the process of knowledge capitalization: Implementation of this new model to integrate and guide the interaction between University and Industry.
- Convergence of Policies and Implications need Recognition + 'Ownership' in the Knowledge Society.
- Higher education institutions (HEIs) are among the most important sources of knowledge and innovation.
- Aim: to promote trans-regional and trans-national cooperation.
- Establishment of institutional framework agreements with other regions, in which academia-industry cooperation can be activated and supported.
- Aim: to support spin-offs from academia.

**More information**

Grupo Sodercan: [http://www.sodercan.com](http://www.sodercan.com)

University of Cantabria: [http://www.unican.es](http://www.unican.es)

*The Open Innovation is a new challenge for the Europeans Regions: The case of Cantabria. New systems for innovation and collaborative processes for creative development.*
Castilla y León - Burgos

'Día Eólico (Wind Energy Day)'
22 October 2008, 10:00 – 14:00

Organiser: APECYL (Wind Energy Promoters of Castilla y León)
Speakers: Miguel DUVISON GARCIA, Red Eléctrica Española
Cristobal COURET STORICH, Acciona Energía
Javier Esteban BARBADO, Maeco Eólica
Participants: Entrepreneurs mainly members of the Chamber of Commerce of Burgos and promoters of wind energy, regional authorities such as the regional vice minister for economy, representatives from the Regional Energy Agency, local authorities, students…

Outline

The Association of Wind Energy Promoters of Castilla y León organised this event. Its main objective was to assemble the main actors in the wind energy field in Castilla y León, entrepreneurs, regional and local authorities, energy agency, etc.
A special focus was given to maintenance of wind parks and the connexion to the grid. An overview of the current status of energy parks in Castilla y León was presented.

Debate

A debate around different tables was organised. The discussion tables were: research and development, management and subcontracting and remote control functioning of wind parks.

Conclusions

Wind energy in Castilla y León is a major economic sector. It has created more than 4000 employments in 10 years and wind energy production has gone from 15 MW to more than 3.000 MW (6.000 taking into account the already authorised parks).
Nevertheless, despite this incredible deployment some difficulties still appear, the main one is the access to the grid. Public acceptance and some technical maintenance problems affect also to wind parks.

More information
www.apecyl.com

'We are worried about grid access, but together with the Regional Government we will keep on fighting and looking after the interests of wind promoters in order to make that Red Electrica de España diminish the bureaucracy and give access to the network to the wind parks of the Region.'
Castilla y León - Valladolid

'Expobioenergía'
16-18 October 2008

Organisers:  AVEBIOM (Spanish Association for the Valorisation of Biomass) & CESEFOR (Forest Ressources Centre of Castila y León)
Speakers:  Kent NYSTROM, President of the Bioenergy World Association
          Heinz KOPETZ, President of the European Biomass Association AEBIOM
          Josep PUXEU, Secretary of State for Rural Development
Participants:  13,186 visitors to the exhibition and more than 600 people to the congress

Outline

Expobioenergía 08 closed its doors with a total of 13,186 visitors. This confirms that the use of bioenergy is a reality and a sure bet for economic development. 424 enterprises from the bioenergy value chain were present.

Debate

During the congress celebrated in the framework of Expobioenergía, different tables were organised:

- Links between bioenergy and rural development
- Biofuels at the stake
- Forest biomass and its links with rural development
- Energy crops to produce solid biofuels
- District Heating, an intelligent solution
- Agriculture biomass, a complement for farmers revenues
- Heat uses of biomass
- Electricity from biomass, a sustainable alternative
- Plans for bioenergy, an useful tool
- Pellets production, a new industry
- Biogas and energy valorization, technologies and opportunities.

Conclusions

Bioenergy is a major economic sector, despite all the non justified attacks to this renewable source. During the congress the positive effects of bioenergy productions were underlined: They are good for agriculture and development in rural areas as they fix rural population and diminish energy dependency from fossil fuels. Bioenergy is recognised as the greatest employment creator between the renewable energy sources. Bioenergy also help to fight global warming and atmospheric pollution and thus they help to implement Kyoto’s Protocol.

More information

www.avebiom.org

'Bioenergy value chain is able to generate the economic development that rural areas need, and it is one of the few possibilities that still remain for rural areas as every day more and more farmers leave their lands.'
Castilla-la-Mancha - Toledo

'Europe in our Region. Public Procurement'
24 October 2008, 10:00 – 14:00

Organisers: General Directorates of European Affairs and Research and Innovation. Junta de Comunidades de Castilla-La Mancha.
Speakers: Eva CARRASCO MORALES, Junta de Comunidades de Castilla-La Mancha
Mar ÁLVAREZ ÁLVAREZ, Junta de Comunidades de Castilla-La Mancha
José Luis PEREZ SALINAS, Science and Innovation Ministry
Cecilio MADERO VILLAREJO, European Commission, Competition Directorate General
César SANTOS GIL, European Commission, Enterprise and Industry Directorate General
Participants: Local authorities, Public servants, enterprises...

Outline

The forum has discussed the important role that government plays, as buyer of technology, to boost the position of regional companies in emerging markets. Public procurement should be considered as a possible way to promoting the participation of private capital in research and development processes leading to the acquisition of new products by the government. This seminar has also analyzed regulations concerning free competition.

Conclusions

Before using public procurement as a tool to improve private investment in research and development, some questions must be pointed out:
- Best industrial sectors?
- Defining evaluation industrial i+d investment parameters.

More information

www.jccm.es
http://www.jccm.es/prensa/nota.phtml?cod=30162
http://www.revista-jccm.es/

'Public procurement is an interesting tool to increase private investment in research and development.'
Extremadura - Don Benito

'Clusters. The model to implement innovation'
29 October 2008

Organisers: Regional government of Extremadura: Second Vice-presidency of Economic Affairs and Regional Economy, Trade and innovation Ministry
Speakers: Dña. Macarena MUÑOZ RUIZ, NCP, Spain-Capacities
D. Ricardo MIGUEIS, NCP, Portugal-Capacities
Dña. Clara HOMBRADOS, European Commission, Directorate-General for Research
D. SCHOCH, Agency for economic trade promotion Heilbronn-Franken
D. Ivan BOESSO, Head of Unit European and Technology Transfer Project Veneto Inovaziones Spa
D. Veijo KAVONIUS, Director of Regional Development Ministry of Employment and the Economy Finland
D. Juan José MANGAS, Foundation for technological innovation, COTEC
D. Jesús ALONSO, Regional’s DG for Innovation and company competition
D. Borja BELANDÍA, Cluster coordinator, Basque Country
D. Jacinto CANÉTE ROLLOSO, General Director, Agency for Innovation and Development, Andalusia, Spain

Participants: Coordinators of R+D+I policies from various EU Member States and regional representatives for innovation and clusters

Outline

The Forum was structured in two sessions. The morning session started with a presentation on 'The Regions of Knowledge' and 'Research Potential' of the 'Capacities' programme from the 7FP. And it was followed by a round table on 'European Clusters models' where regions from Germany, Italy and Finland presented their projects. The afternoon session was focused on 'National models for Innovation', where Extremadura (INNOVEEX), Andalusia and the Basque Country presented their models.

Conclusions

The models, strategies and tools the different regions presented during the sessions, threw some light on how European regions could help the development and competitiveness of SMEs through access to funding, research, technological development and innovation in order to make them sustainable. The sharing of successful experiences and good practices contributed to see clusters as catalyst agents for regional public-private strategies in innovation and as models to improve competitiveness and productivity of SMEs.

More information
http://www.innoveex.es/foro/
Madrid Municipalities - Madrid

'Local entities, a key factor of regional development'
28 October 2008

Organisers: Dirección General Asuntos Europeos y Cooperación con el Estado
Speakers:
- D. Salvador VICTORIA BOLÍVAR, Viceconsejero Vicepresidencia y Secretario General del Consejo de Gobierno de la Comunidad Madrid
- D. Alfonso CUENCA MIRANDA, Viceconsejero de Justicia y Administraciones Públicas de la Comunidad de Madrid
- D. Antonio GONZÁLEZ TEROL, D.G. Asuntos Europeos y Cooperación con el Estado
- D. José María GIL-ROBLES GIL-DELGADO, Director del centro de excelencia « Antonio Truyal ». Ex presidente del Parlamento Europeo
- D. Ignacio SAMPER, Director Oficina Parlamento Europeo en España
- D. Bartolomé GONZÁLEZ, Presidente Federación de Municipios y Alcalde de Alcalá de Henares
- Dª María CASADO, Oficina Comunidad de Madrid en Bruselas
- D. Jacques HUCHET, Responsable Relaciones Institucionales
- D. Alberto MÉLIDA ASENSIO (Colaborador externo campañas para el ciudadano
- Dª Susana DEL RÍO, Miembro Comité expertos de la Comisión Europea en asuntos de comunicación con los ciudadanos y gobernabilidad
- D. Jaume DUCH GUILLOT, Portavoz Parlamento Europeo y Director de Medios de Comunicación
- D. José Luis GONZÁLEZ VALLVÉ, Director representación de la Comisión Europea en España
- D. Felipe SAHAGÚN, Profesor titular de Relaciones Int. Universidad Complutense y miembro del Consejo editorial de « El Mundo »
- D. Juan CUESTA RICO, Director Europa 2008, de TVE

Participants: Civil Servants and representatives from the Region of Madrid and different cities of the region

Outline

The 6th OPEN DAYS European week of regions and cities was held in Madrid on October 28 th. This year’s event under the headline ‘European Communication with the cities. How to connect with the citizens?’ Was really very interesting. It has been an event that successfully has brought together important speakers from the European Commission cities and journalists. Events like this one epitomises the Europe of results that we are building together. One of the great efforts of Madrid is our ability to interact with one another through exchanges of experiences and ideas, as the massive response to the OPEN DAYS demonstrates. The theme we have chosen for the agenda of our Seminar: 'How to reach the citizens' has really been interesting. Focusing on these issues helps bring the EU closer to citizens.
Debate

There has been very little time for debate. Anyway, it is clear that people who have been in the Seminar now have the conviction that the regional and local authorities have a vital role to play to increase the confidence of citizens in Europe.

Conclusions

It is important to underline the importance of this initiative. This event has brought together representatives from the different cities of our Region. The basis of European integration is regional solidarity based on social cohesion. The meeting has tried to dial with communication with citizens and has tried to focus on how cooperation between different actors such as regions and cities can be further developed in different areas in order to develop growth and jobs. The spirit of the Seminar has proved that a real Europe is being created through our actions, enriched by dynamism and enthusiasm.

More information

www.madrid.org/europa
Region of Murcia - Murcia

Think Tank 'Innovation and Society'
22 October 2008, 9:30 – 15:00

Organisers: Murcia Region Development Agency & Murcia Science Park in cooperation with Europe Enterprise Network Murcia & Europe Direct Murcia

Speakers: Salvador MARIN, Regional Minister of Universities, Enterprises and Research
Mike BOWMAN, President of the Northamerican Association of Science Parks (videoconference)

Participants: Representing the four players in this frame: financial institutions, business community, public administration and university-scientists:
Francisco VIDAL, Gerente Parque Científico de Murcia (acting as chairman)
Yolanda HERNANDO, Responsable de la OTT del Cebas (Oficina de Transferencia de Tecnología)
Ramón GÓMEZ, Director de Inversiones BPEP
Pedro ABELLÁN, Director del Centro Global de Tecnologia, Grupo HERO
Juan GUILLAMÓN, Decano del Colegio de Ingenieros de Caminos
Jose María ESTEBAN, Director de La Verdad
Jose María CASANOVA, Director Alvalle
Jose Antonio FRANCO, Vicerrector Investigacion UPCT
Gaspar ROS, Vicerrectorado Investigación UMU
Angel FERRÁNDEZ, Presidente de la Academia de Ciencias, Región De Murcia
Alfonso ROSIQUE, Director Corporación Empresarial Cajamurcia

The event was also broadcasted by internet in life through http://www.parquecientificomurcia.es (150 potential internauts)

Outline

The event was opened by MARIN who introduced 'Innovation Think Tank' as local event in the frame of OPEN DAYS 2008. He evoked the previous co-operation issued between INSTITUTO and PARQUE for the event held in Brussels and how PARQUE was marketed as a real example of co-operation between regional authorities, universities and the regional business community as well as a useful tool to make stakeholders interact and enable synergies and value chains for enhancing regional economic growth.. He also addressed the Regional Strategy 2007-2013 for the Murcia region and the specific operational plan adopted by the very recently created regional ministry to emphasyse R+D+i and University-Enterprise approach as crucial factors to achieve an advantageous position in economic development within the so called knowledge-based society.

By videoconference, BOWMAN offered the audience a few thought-provoking arguments. First of all he introduced his ordinary work as manager of the Science Park of Delaware (USA) as well as the role of the Northamerican Association of Science Parks. Following BOWMAN, inventors don’t exist anymore (as it was in previous centuries) so innovation is currently linked to research teams, groups or synergies. 'It worth making more with less so as to ensure sustainable development and economic growth', BOWMAN stressed.

Debate

Animation of the round table was assured by VIDAL -chairman- who addressed the audience (both physical and virtual) with provocative remarks and invitations to intervene. Participants addressed on the following topics:
• Young population currently blocked: need to pay mortgaged properties (forget about creativity and innovation for years, …)
• Innovation is also a cultural challenge for regions (assumption of risks, foster creativity, entrepreneurial spirit, Spain rejecting business failure and success, …)
• 'Inventions are to be perceived, innovations don’t'
• The role of Murcia Science Park as facilitator, that’s to say instigator of a new culture within the regional Innovation frame
• What is the cost of non-innovation?
• How Innovation infrastructures and services may interact with the society to boost ‘open innovation’?
• Need for a sustainable and long-term co-operation between university and companies (not only punctual patents)
• Making EU and EIB funding available for companies (ie. Jeremie)

With a view to dynamise the event, questions and remarks were welcome from the audience, in particular those who attended the live broadcasting by internet. Some arguments:
• What a ‘think-tank’ is?
• What ‘innovation’ is meant to be, are there any limits for innovation?
• Need for seed-capital instruments for tech-based projects & companies
• Despite of millions of mobile phone users, scarce initiatives to generate talent & progress
• Is Innovation deemed to be profit-oriented?
• Does the educational public system duly stimulate creativity, talent and innovation?
• Is there real offer for access to funding (risk capital, equity, …)?

Conclusions

Participants were requested to propose strategies or activities to be undertaken by Murcia Science Park in a short-mid term. Following the key sentence ‘It worth making more with less’, some proposals were issued, as follows:
• Need not only to consolidate infrastructures & services but also to attract funds and capitals for innovation and technology purposes
• Inventions Fair once a year
• Raising awareness on I+D+i+bienestar (R+D+i+Welfare)
• Survey in progress on technological offer within the Murcia region
• Need for other analysis of technological demand in the region (market-in approach)
• Need to get private research groups also involved in the innovation policies
• Evaluator of good tech & innovative projects looking for investors in the region
• Concentrate efforts on our real skills (priorities are to be stated in accordance to our strengths)
• Annual awards to innovative projects
• Reliable researchers should be out of educational and clerical tasks
• Promoting a new vision of the region abroad on the basis of Innovation
• Open the market of business innovation to new companies on a permanent basis; etc

More information
http://www.parquecientificomurcia.es/inicio/index.aspx

‘It’s worth making more with less.’
The Swedish regional partners of the OPEN DAYS 2008 'Europe in my region' held ten local events on their premises. Local authorities, experts in innovative fisheries, researchers, stakeholders, universities, European representatives and members of the public were able to participate, according to the format and topic, in various activities, including a seminar on the added value of northern regions to Europe (Tornio), workshops tackling the future of regional research (Östersund, Härnösand, Sundsvall), initiatives taken regionally, locally and at EU level to improve growth in the creative sector (Rättvik); and the Swedish maritime award (Göteborg).

Enclosed, the report of the local events held in Tornio, 23/10/2008; and Göteborg, 30/10/2008.
North Sweden - Tornio

'A vision for the north of Europe in the year 2020 and beyond'
23 October 2008

**Organisers:** North Sweden, North Finland, North Norway, East Finland, Mid Sweden  
**Speakers:** Eric GLOERSEN  
**Participants:** Local authorities/politicians from the municipalities of the northern regions.

**Outline**

A seminar was held to discuss the potential of the Northern regions and the future of the area in the year 2020 and beyond. Eric GLOERSEN, Nordregio presented a working paper on a foresight study regarding the northern periphery regions. The audience were then invited to leave their suggestions on the material presented. Afterward a workshop where held, where the participants could contribute with their vision of the future for the northern regions in the year 2020. Questions like - What kind of development could be made regarding the regions assets? Who will be the main actors? How can our regions bring added value to Europe? The conclusions from the workshops were then presented to the whole audience and Eric GLOERSEN who will use the input in his work with the foresight study.

**Debate**

How should the regions assets be taken care of? What kind of development do we want? The regions in the northern periphery have similarities, common interests and common problems that needs to be solved, like demographic problems, depopulation etc. The main focus of the debate was how to increase the cooperation between our regions. The national borders shouldn’t be obstacles. An increased horizontal cooperation in different fields would bring benefit to the northern regions and added value to Europe.

**Conclusions**

The main conclusions from the workshops were:
- Industries developing renewable energy sources will be prioritized in the future
- Supporting increased processing of raw material in the region
- Horizontal cooperation between the northern regions
- Increased construction of transportation links, especially railway.

**More information**
http://www.northsweden.org/default.asp?id=3368&refid=1027
West Sweden - Göteborg

'The Swedish Sea and Seafood Week 2008'
30 October 2008, 12:00 – 16:00

Organiser: Kungsfenan The Swedish Seafood Award
Speakers: The judging panel for Sustainable Fishing:
Axel WENBLAD, director-general, Swedish Board of Fisheries, Chairman of the Judging Panel
Stefan EDMAN, Biologist and Author
Reine J. JOHANSSON, Chairman, Regional Advisory Council, RAC, the Baltic Sea
Armin LINDQUIST, former Manager of FAO’s Fisheries Department, Professor with the Institute of Marine Research, Lysekil
Susanne PHIL BADEN, PhD, Professor of Marine Ecology, University of Gothenburg, Sven Lovén, Kristineberg
Per HÖRBERG, Environment Officer, the Environmental Secretariat, Västra Götaland’s Regional Council
The Judging Panel for Maritime Gastronomy:
Göte BERNHARDSSON, former County Governor for the Västra Götaland Region, Chairman of the Judging Panel
Fredrik ERIKSSON, Restaurant owner, Långbro Världshus, Chairman of Årets Kock (Chef of the Year), Artistic Leader RestaurangAkademien
Gert KLÖTZKE, Professor, University of Umeå
Leif MANNERSTRÖM, Restaurant owner, Sjömagasinet
Peter RYDELL, deputy MD Swedbank
Mikael SKAGER, Head chef, Restaurant Fiskekrogen

Participants: Fishing innovators and researchers, media, etc..

Outline

Kungsfenan The Swedish Seafood Award is a Swedish maritime award aimed to inspire the entire world. Since 2002, innovators within research, fishing gear development, gastronomy and fish related entrepreneurship from a number of countries have travelled to Gothenburg to be rewarded for their achievements.

Fiskoteket is the popular science presentation of the award winners for 2008. This is where researchers, professional fishermen and anglers, authorities, media and consumers gather to delve deeply into understandable science around fishing, fishing gear development and resource management. But that’s not all. Fiskoteket is also about the raw material and the food. Fish in the kitchen and on the table. New species, new preparation methods, new traditions. The joy of food. Chef’s hat, doctor’s hat and sou’wester in a fish scale-glistening and educational mix.

The Kungsfenan award is presented annually in three categories:

- Sustainable Fishing - The award is given to an individual, organisation or business that, in practise or through science, has contributed to strengthening our belief in the future and increased our knowledge about our oceans, rivers and lakes as sustainable sources of nutrition.
- Maritime Gastronomy - The award is given to an individual, organisation or business that has inspired, or contributed scientifically to, a strong and sound development of fish as food, and helped to encourage new ideas in which fish and shellfish play a prominent part.
- Innovator of the Year - The Judging Panel’s special prize dedicated to innovators and entrepreneurs with groundbreaking ideas. The award should be given to one or more individuals, organisations or institutions for outstanding achievements within the area ‘oceans and lakes as sources of nutrition’. Achievements of an innovative, research or knowledge character will be rewarded within the following areas; environment, quality, gastronomy/culinary experience. The Judging Panel’s decision is final.

Conclusions

- Fishing researcher Mats ULMESTRAND from Lysekil receives Kungsfenan in the category Sustainable Fishing for his work with developing selective fishing gear. His outstanding work has led to a functioning management system for the Norway lobster and prawn fishing on the Swedish west coast.
- The two star chefs Moreno CEDRONI and Mauro ULIASSI from Italy will share the prize in the category Maritime Gastronomy. These two gastronomic giants are breaking new ground in fish gastronomy.
- The Innovator of the Year prize 2008 goes to Svenska FISKHANDELSFÖRBUNDET for arranging the Swedish National Seafood Championship

More information
www.kungsfenan.se
In the context of the OPEN DAYS 2008 – 'Europe in my Region', Istanbul held a conference on various aspects of its relations with Europe and the benefits of accession for Turkish citizens, with special focus on women and children. This event took place on 30 October 2008 and was attended by European experts, teachers and the general public.
UNITED KINGDOM

The UK organised twenty-one varied and fascinating local ‘Europe in my region’ events. They ranged from schools’ competitions on key issues affecting the European Union (Cardiff, London) to conferences and seminars on the challenges of energy & environment (Pembroke Dock) and climate change (Rogerstone); a roadshow in Cornwall promoting the EU among young people; debates on innovation and competitiveness (Birmingham); and a festival about how the economic, social and environmental priorities of local players can be supported and enhanced by working at EU level (Chester). The events brought together the Environment Agency, rural networks, Harbour Commissions, local authorities, NGOs, private businesses, public bodies, universities and colleges, the general public and the media.

Enclosed, the report of the local events held in Exeter, 5/10/2008; Lincoln, 19/10/2008; Lowestoft, 13/10/2008; Truro, 25-26/09/2008; London, 16/10/2008; Llandudno, 9/10/2008; Pembroke Dock, 31/10/2008; and Birmingham, 17/10/2008.
‘Cheshire Year of Gardens 08 & Developing International Links’
14 October 2008, 10:00 – 14:00

Organisers: Europe Direct Cheshire, Cheshire County Council
Speakers: Cllr Brendan Doyle, Cheshire County Council
Gill ALCOCK, Europe Direct Cheshire, Cheshire County Council
Louise GARFORTH, Cheshire Year of Gardens Manager, Visit Chester and Cheshire
Pernille KOUSSGAARD, Head of European Policy, North West Development Agency
Margaret REID, European Policy Manager, 4 NW

Participants: 30+ managers and decision–makers from sectors and agencies including: public /municipal and regional authorities; private sector; higher and further education centres; community sector; training providers; Chester Zoo; Prison Service; regional and sub-regional partnerships

Outline

The event focused on how the economic, social and environmental priorities of local actors in Cheshire can be supported and enhanced by working at an EU level. The event explained the purpose of Brussels OPEN DAYS, and highlighted Cheshire’s contribution to an inter-regional consortium, through which the Cheshire Year of Gardens had been showcased to a wide audience in Brussels. We then focussed on the achievements of the Cheshire Year of Gardens 08 to date and the potential for further European promotion and working. The event also gave participants the opportunity to discuss what should be the priorities for the North West of England region’s European Policy Framework for 2009-13.

Conclusions

The event affirmed the value of working at a European level, both in Brussels and with other regions across Europe, to support the achievement of locally-identified social, economic and environmental objectives. It also affirmed the value and importance of co-ordinated local engagement with EU initiatives and developments.
Devon - Exeter

'Workshop - Devon Maritime Forum'
5 November 2008, 10:00 – 16:15

Organisers: Devon Maritime Forum; Devon County Council
Speakers: Cheryl HILES, Regen South West
          Hannah CHERRY, Crown Estates
          Randolph VELTEROP (Environmental Scientist), Royal Haskoning
          Prof. Peter BURKHILL, Plymouth Marine Science Partnership
          Rupert OWEN, Plymouth City Council
          Dr Mel AUSTEN, Plymouth Marine Laboratory
          John HOLMYARD (MD), Offshore Shellfish Ltd.
          Ken BUCHAN (Co-ordinator), Dorset Coastal Forum
          Jack KNOTT, South West Regional Ports Association

Participants: Environment Agency; SW Water; National Trust; Local Authorities; Plymouth
             Marine Labs; Wildlife Trusts; Devon Rural Network; Finding Sanctuary Project;
             Estuary Partnerships; Harbour Commissions; Archaeologists; Natural England;
             and project developers; Fisheries producers; Boat builders; Marine colleges

Outline

The forum is an inclusive partnership across the county of Devon reaching to organisations beyond the county boundary, having a stake in, or having an effect upon the maritime environment of Devon. It meets twice a year and investigates up to date concerns, themes and issues in need of address. The November 2008 event was comprised of three main sections: 1) A session on offshore wind energy capacity, development, planning issues and environmental impacts; 2) A ‘soap-box’ session form various maritime stakeholders; 3) Workshop sessions on exploring, defining and improving mechanisms for Maritime Forum stakeholder engagement. Venues vary and this time the event was held at the Royal Marine Base, Lympstone, Devon, on the banks of the Exe estuary.

Debate

Cheryl HILES (acting chief executive of Regen SW) spoke regarding wind energy in the South West of England, both existing generation and potential. She explored offshore wind energy in particular, looking at potential generation zones off the coast of South West England and combined this with a discussion on existing technology and constraints, other offshore sources and likely technological developments in the short to medium term. She also discussed UK Government and European targets for generation of energy from renewable sources and carbon reduction. Link attached: Wind energy in the South West of England

Hannah CHERRY (Stakeholder relations at Crown Estates) spoke regarding planning and site selection issues around offshore wind power in England and Wales. The Crown Estates is the stand alone Government arm with responsibility over the seabed around the UK and has issued licences in two rounds to potential wind power operators or consortia of operators. A third round of licences are about to
be issued. The reasons for selection of various sites were discussed in depth during the session. Link attached: Crown Estate and the Round 3 process

Randolph VELTEROP (Environmental Scientist at Royal Haskoning) spoke regarding the potential environmental impacts of offshore wind energy, linking to previous research and case studies. In particular Environmental Impact Assessments were discussed looking at the physical, biological and human considerations of windfarms. Link attached: Environment impacts of offshore wind farms

Professor Peter BURKILL (Chairman - Plymouth Marine Sciences Partnership) spoke regarding the formation and development of Plymouth Marine Sciences Partnership and its potential for the future. Plymouth already has significant expertise in marine issues and the main aim of the partnership is to facilitate a co-ordinated cluster of joined-up partners, playing to the city’s strengths in coastal science; marine organism biology; environmental human health and alternative energy in marine waters, combining the capabilities of the 500 plus marine scientists located in the city. Various proposals for the future of the partnership were made to the stakeholders at the Maritime Forum. Link attached: An Introduction to the Plymouth Marine Sciences Partnership

Five minute ‘soap-box’ sessions:
Rupert OWEN (Plymouth City Council) discussed the decision of location of the new UK Marine Management Organisation and updated accordingly. Link attached: Plymouth and the Marine Management Organisation
Dr Mel AUSTEN (Plymouth Marine Laboratory) discussed the implementation and assessment of the Lyme Bay closed area monitoring project. Link attached: Lyme Bay Monitoring Project
John HOLMYARD (Managing Director Offshore Shellfish Ltd) spoke regarding applicable aquaculture case studies to Lyme Bay and the potential for mussel cultivation in particular at various sites within the bay. Link attached: Lyme Bay Mussel Farm Proposal
Ken BUCHAN (co-ordinator Dorset Coastal Forum) spoke about the C-Scope project. This has a pilot project element in Dorset (as part of a wider European project) and combines elements of the marine and terrestrial planning systems to assist delivery of the 2012 Olympic games (sailing events to be held in Dorset). Link attached: The Dorset C-Scope Project
Jack KNOTT (South West Regional Ports Association) spoke regarding the membership, aims and advantages of the South West (England) Regional Ports Association. Link attached: An Introduction to the South West Regional Ports Association

Workshops: Two workshops were then held. These were to 1) Explore mechanisms for improving engagement with the DMF and 2) Define final mechanisms for stakeholder engagement with DMF. Conclusions are listed in the following section.

Conclusions

Workshop conclusions summed up by Jim MASTERS - Devon Maritime Forum Coordinator:
- The Devon Maritime Forum meetings work well
- There is a need to orchestrate more structured and prolonged networking opportunities
- The Forum is a valued vehicle for integration and appeals to all sectors
- There is a need for greater representation from the industry and tourism sectors within the Forum
- The constitution of the Forum needs to evolve whilst retaining a level of simplicity, openness and clarity
There is a need for a high-level strategic document to underpin the work of the Forum
There is a need for clearer explanations of the role of the current steering group
There may be a need for working groups in the future
Working groups need to be mixed, have distinct aims and time-spans, and come from within the membership of the Forum
The current steering group could be expanded to include other sectors, rather than creating a whole new layer of management
The Forum Coordinator needs to be using existing networks, business clusters and other organisations as a matter of course
The Coordinator needs to network with as many organisations as possible
Mixed models for engaging with the Forum were preferred that allow for greater sectoral representation but that do not require disproportionate additional administrative burdens or time commitments from members
Specific elements of Forum meetings could be put aside to address the need for wider sectoral representatives to meet without increasing the burden of meetings, and to capture ideas for potential future forum themes directly from the floor

http://system.newzapp.co.uk/EditSite/Customers/7684/nz-docs/workshop_feedback_summary.pdf

More information
Devon Maritime Forum - http://www.devonmaritimeforum.org.uk/
or e-mail Devon County Council – jamie.evans@devon.gov.uk
East Midlands - Lincoln

‘East Midlands EXPO 2008’
19 October 2008, 9:30 – 16:30

Organisers: East Midlands Regional Assembly, Government Office East Midlands, East Midlands Development Agency

Speakers: Opened by Councillor PARSONS. This event included various speakers from different backgrounds depending on the nature of the side events: East Midlands Green Infrastructure Network Conference, Building Climate Friendly Communities Seminar, Regional Spatial Strategy Partial Review Consultation Event, Local Producers Talks, Solar Active Education Method Session, Rural Energy Case Studies, Lincolnshire County Council: Education for Sustainable Development – The Role of Sustainable Schools Advisors

Participants: This event is a wide event, incorporating various Local Authorities, NGOs, Private Businesses, Public Bodies, Universities and Colleges, School Parties, a visiting Romanian School

Outline

EXPO in the East Midlands is an annual free event focusing on sustainability. It provides an opportunity to see how we can achieve our vision of a vibrant economy that values all our people and protects and enhances our environment locally and globally. This year we are focusing on Climate Change and the ways that as a region we can respond innovatively to this serious challenge. The EXPO will provide a showcase of solutions for reducing our carbon impact of our buildings, our use of energy and resources, the goods and services we consume and the ways we move around. It will also include a local food producers’ market, showcasing the variety of produce available locally. It also provides a unique opportunity for networking across many sectors.

Debate

East Midlands Green Infrastructure Conference: Planners and developers had an opportunity to share best practice in delivering good quality multifunctional greenspace as part of the overall land use development in the region. The new Green Infrastructure Good Practice Guide was launched to help inform practitioners.

Building Climate Friendly Communities Seminar: Local Authority officers and councillors were invited to consider how they can facilitate their local communities attempts to reduce their own carbon footprint. In particular they were given the opportunity to discuss action with a number of NGOs active in this field.

Sustainable Energy and Zero carbon homes workshop: Planners and developers were given the opportunity to discuss the challenges in delivering on 15% renewable energy requirement via landuse planning policy and target setting at regional level.

Biomass Heating Showcase: The audience was introduced to aspects of wood fuel heating for buildings and shown case studies where such systems had led to multiple benefits, including woodland
management. The audience had the opportunity to view a working system in the boiler rooms of the venue.

Local Producers market and Locavores Exhibition: Local food and the idea of seasonal locally produced food was showcased, with all catering on the day supplied by local producers or fair trade products.

Face your Elephant Exhibition: The visitors to the exhibition learnt how reducing their carbon footprint could be broken down into a number of smaller steps. Thus reducing the elephant sized problem of climate change to more manageable proportions.

EPIC Centre Building Tours: The visitors were given the opportunity to see the various sustainable measures built into the new Events centre at Lincolnshire showground. These included rainwater harvesting, energy efficient design, passive solar design, green roof and local materials.

Main Exhibition: Over 80 exhibitors of sustainable goods, services and advice were available for visitors to access and good quality business to business networking. These included renewable technologies, green roof technology, straw bale building, transport solutions.

Schools Competition: Five local Lincolnshire Schools were presented with certificates for their entries into a competition on schools travel plans. A Romanian School from Hundeora County visited with their winning exhibition of art work on climate change and local pollution. They were presented with certificates and a book on the East Midlands. The Romanina School Sisigmund Toduta also made good links with North Kesteven School and are interested in furthering international links.

Conclusions

- There is a wide range of local provision of products and services across the East Midlands, all working to promote more sustainable lifestyles. These include everything from technological solutions, food and drink produce, lifestyle products, and much more.
- Participants of the Green Infrastructure Network Conference gained the opportunity learn how to develop multifunctional green spaces. Building Climate Friendly Communities Seminar addressed the means that public bodies can use to support their own communities in their efforts to reduce the carbon footprint.
- Due to the event and the various exhibits, side events, and conferences, many people have been given the tools and the awareness in order to adopt more sustainable thinking and principles.

More information

http://www.ea.gov.uk/news/events/east-midlands-expo - EA EXPO Website

‘EXPO is designed to enable us to build capacity across the region for delivering real changes in the way we do business to ensure that we can begin to dramatically reduce the carbon emissions from our region.’
East of England - Lowestoft

'East of England Coastal Conference'
13 October 2008, 10:00

Organisers: Environment Agency, Coastal Initiative Steering Group
Speakers: Steering Group representatives, including:
Barbara FOLLETT, Minister for the East of England
Ivan ANNIBAL, Globe Regeneration
Peter FREW, North Norfolk District Council
Caroline SALTHOUSE, the North West Coastal Forum
Birgit SNOEREN, European Commission

Participants: Local Authority members and officers; other regional and local coastal stakeholders

Outline

The Regional Minister set the scene by outlining the challenges faced by the East coast and urging participants to work together to tackle these. The morning session presented the evidence which the Initiative pulled together and allowed discussion in smaller workshop groups. After lunch the conference considered issues in parallel by means of smaller workshop groups. Two groups discussed regional responses to 'coastal' policy, covering the Defra consultation on appraisal for flood and coastal erosion risk management; how coastal issues could be reflected in the Regional Spatial Strategy and how regeneration could be managed on the coast. Two groups discussed the objectives of any regional Coastal Forum, membership and how the Forum might work. In the final session, the conference received and discussed the experience of another UK region in tackling some of the same issues and a view from the European Commission on Intergrated Coastal Zone Management Policy.

Conclusions

Tim FREATHY summed up the conference proceedings as follows:
- The Minister’s interest and desire for a sustainable future for the coast was clear and she will follow up with her fellow Ministers;
- There is not one coast – situation is different in different coastal zones;
- One of the key building blocks for the future is the need to ensure that coast is properly reflected in regional strategies, including the Regional Spatial Strategy;
- There is a great need and willingness to work together to tackle the challenges England’s East coast faces

More information
http://www.gos.gov.uk/goeast/environment_and_rural/environment_issues/Coastal_Initiative/?a=42496

'In order to build on the conference, I will ensure that our elected members are kept informed and ensure that Urban Development Companies contribute in the future.'

'It was very useful to have the European perspective.'
'The Coastal Initiative conference managed to create a positive environment for discussions.'
'Whilst not resulting in a clear overall conclusion, the day has brought to light a number of important issues for further consideration.'
South West UK - Truro

'Roadshow - Europe Direct OPEN DAYS Roadshow'
22-26 September 2008

Organisers: Europe Direct Cornwall/Cornwall County Council
Participants: 150 young people

Outline

The Cornwall European Week OPEN DAYS Roadshow travelled through five towns in Cornwall using the County Council trailer promoting the European Union amongst local people and communities. It provided an opportunity for members of the public to come and find out more information about European issues and highlight funding opportunities. The Roadshow was specifically promoting the Youth in Action programme and European Voluntary Service to young people between the ages of 18 and 30. To this end, Point Europa, Cornwall's only sending organisation for European Voluntary Service and Eurodesk at the British Council. Over 500 young people came to the trailer for information and over 1500 flyers and posters on European Voluntary Service were handed out.

Conclusions

The week was a large success with a large number of young people receiving information about opportunities presented by European Voluntary Service. 150 young people have received additional information since the event and it is hoped that these young people will soon be experiencing their own European adventure volunteering in another Member State.

More information
http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=45107

'The Europe Direct Team are working very hard to connect young people with organisations that can help them to help others and gain good life skills. I think the experiences young people can gain by being involved in a project in another country can be far reaching. The Roadshow tour forms part of a larger work programme for the Europe Direct Cornwall project over 2008/09 which aims to raise the profile of the information service which is available to everyone. Assistance and advice on anything to do with Europe is available in person in Truro, over the phone, by email or on-line.'
Southern England - London

‘Do You Speak European?’ Youth Debating Competition
16 October 2008, 10:00 – 14:00

Organisers: Southern England Local Partners (SELP)
Speakers: Cllr Brad WATSON OBE, Cabinet Member for Communications, West Sussex County Council – Chair
School speakers:
St James Secondary School, Exeter, Devon;
Costello Technology College, Hampshire;
Kingsmead Community School, Somerset;
Chichester High School for Boys, West Sussex
Judges:
Dinendra HARIA, Youth Engagement Project Manager, Democratic Engagement Branch, Elections and Democracy Division, Ministry of Justice
Dave PHILLIPS, Programme Manager - Youth Action Team, The National Youth Agency
David CLARK, Programmes and Training Manager, British Youth Council
Richard ASHWORTH MEP, Member of the European Parliament for the South East
Cllr Gordon KEYMER CBE, Leader of the UK Delegation to the Committee of the Regions and a Vice-President of the CoR.
Participants: St James Secondary School, Exeter, Devon; Costello Technology College, Hampshire; Kingsmead Community School, Somerset; Chichester High School for Boys, West Sussex

Outline

Cllr Brad WATSON welcomed all the participants and thanked the House of Lords and in particular Lord HANNINGFIELD for their hospitality. He gave the background and history of the Do You Speak European debating competition that was created by the West Sussex Youth Cabinet three years ago. He stressed how important it is to be aware of what’s happening at European level, so we can make better-informed decisions.

After this, Master of Ceremonies David CLARK opened the competition and each team was introduced. The teams came from schools in Devon, Hampshire, Somerset and West Sussex. Each team had a maximum of 7 minutes to do their presentation. After each presentation the judges were invited to make a short comment on what they have seen. Next, the audience had a chance to ask questions of the team.

Debate

The team from Devon presented their findings of asking people in the street, as well as politicians, what Europe means to them. The result was a professional video document. Gordon KEYMER asked whether MEPs and MPs have different views on European citizenship. The team did not find this and said that the more educated you are, the better your understanding of Europe is. Therefore, people need to be introduced into citizenship early on.
The team from Hampshire did a play that showed ‘the man on the street’ zapping through all the European channels. The team aimed at raising awareness that we are much more European than we think: we watch European football, wear Italian fashion, watch the weather in other parts of Europe. When asked, the team said that Europe means a lot to them in terms of travel, culture and solidarity. The team from Somerset opposed advantages of being in the EU to arguments of Eurosceptics. Richard Ashworth asked what the team is expecting from the EU for their future. The team replied it expects the EU to play a major role on the world stage.

The team from West Sussex presented a professional film on how sports bring Europeans together. David PHILLIPS asked whether they saw other devices to stimulate the debate on Europeaness. They said that fashion, music, cookery and art would also be valuable means to connect European citizens.

Conclusions

The judges found it very hard to choose the best team, as all the presentations were very original and imaginative. They showed how much hard work and preparation had gone into the competition. In the end, the Kingsmead Community School from Somerset won the first prize in the finals of the ‘Do you Speak European?’ debating competition with their presentation on the advantages of being part of the EU. The team from Kingsmead School will go through to represent the UK at the European finals in Brussels on 3 December 2008.

More information
Sietske de Groot / Pandora Ellis / Eleanor Shaw
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europe-office@westsussex.gov.uk

‘International Citizenship is fast becoming a major part of the Citizenship curriculum in Schools and youth groups in the UK.’

‘Surveys have shown that young people are struggling to understand how they fit in. They want to know what the EU is, and the difference between citizenship and international citizenship.’

‘I believe that the ‘Do You Speak European?’ competition is designed as a way to introduce young people to Europe. It allows them to start exploring the challenges and opportunities that Europe can present.’
Wales - Llandudno

'Futures work: looking ahead to identify and respond to risks to communities'
9 October 2008, 14:10 – 15:15

Organiser: WLGA
Speakers: Alan NETHERWOOD, Netherwood Sustainable Futures and Katie Cavell, WLGA Brussels office
Participants: Primarily officers and elected members from local authorities across Wales

Outline

The seminar looked ahead at some of the developments (climate change, peak oil, rising levels of obesity etc) that will impact on communities in the years ahead and looked at ways that communities can develop resilience in the face of the challenges that will be presented. The second part of the session identified some of the issues that are being currently debated within the European Commission in relation to these subject areas and are likely to feed through in terms of new directives and UK/Wales-based legislation and guidance.

Debate

There was a question and answer session at the end during which delegates acknowledged the need to address these matters in a comprehensive way.

Conclusions

There was a recognition amongst many of the delegates that ‘business as usual’ approaches will not be sufficient to address the major challenges and more radical approaches based on no/low carbon technologies and changed lifestyles will be necessary.

More information
Copies of the presentation by Alan NETHERWOOD and the report by Katie CAVELL are available on request.

'We are glad we have been able to include today’s session as part of the Open Days European Week – many of the things we have discussed today are international in nature and require a collaborative response across regions and nations. We need to learn from good practice but it is clear that good practice has to become the norm and not the exception if we are to stand a chance of developing sustainable futures – and the time to start acting is now.'
Wales - Pembroke Dock

'Responding to the Climate Change Challenge'
31 October 2008, 9:30 – 17:00

Organiser: Pembroke County Council
Speakers:
Cllr John ALLEN-MIREHOUSE (Chairman)
Cllr Paula BAKER, Member of the Committee of the Regions
Professor Marc CLEMENT, Vice Chancellor University of Swansea
Ed TOMP, Chevron
John MCELROY, RWE nPower
David KANER, Wave Dragon
Richard COCHRANE, Quiet Revolution
Esbjorn WILMAR, NIK Energy
Sean MATTHEWS, Halcrow Ltd
Professor Lucian GILL, Oceans-ESU
Professor Tavi MURRAY, Swansea University

Participants: Regional Government (Welsh Assembly Government Dept of Economy & Transport, Welsh European Funding Office), Local authorities (including Pembroke County Council, City & County of Swansea, Wexford County Council), Academics (including Swansea University, Sustainable Development Commission, Aberystwyth University), Business (including IBM, OCF, Mechdyne, Doosan Babcock, Infinergy, Celtic Biodiesel, Dragon LNG), journalists (including Mantis PR, Radio Pembroke), members of the public.

Outline

The keynote address was given by Cllr Paula BAKER, CoR rapporteur on the renewable Energy Directive, who set the scene by explaining the relationship between energy, carbon emissions and climate change. She expanded by covering the complexities of developing a policy response to diverse issues such as (yet inter-related) energy security, energy prices, biofuels and food prices, the need for action across frontiers and the EU response to these challenges. This was followed by the official inauguration of the Mike BARNSLEY Climate Change Centre at Technium Pembroke, and a demonstration of the capabilities of the IBM supercomputer 'Blue Ice'. These themes were expanded upon by subsequent speakers (see above) from the perspective of businesses in the conventional energy (hydrocarbon) sector, various renewable sectors (including wave and wind power), remediation of oil fields and finally a view from glaciologist Prof. Tavi MURRAY.

Debate

The event primarily comprised contributions from invited speakers and whilst there were questions from the floor the amount of debate around the issues was limited, at least in the plenary sessions. However, a networking event was held the evening before the main conference where a number of workshops were run, these allowed for more free debate on the use of electric smart meters, carbon capture, bio-refining.
and other renewable energy initiatives. Moreover, small, medium and large business presence at the networking event allowed for free debate in the atrium.

Conclusions

Professor Tavi MURRAY summed up by explaining that in her view the world was facing a very uncertain future. Research facilities such as that at Technium Pembrokeshire and the engagement of businesses engaged in innovative energy technologies was vital in ensuring the world met the climate change challenge.

More information

www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk/content.asp?nav=102&parent_directory_id=646&id=16478&Language=
http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/wales/7701431.stm
http://www.technium.co.uk/server.php?show=nav.8342

'First class coverage of complicated subject matter.'

'Excellent exposition of a wide range of energy technology companies.'

'Extremely clear and vitally important. Excellent.'

'Fascinating – wonderful !'

'Good organisation, excellent networking opportunities, excellent food.'

'Great venue.'
West Midlands - Birmingham

'Medical technologies and Europe'
17 October 2008, 9:30 – 12:35

Organiser: Advantage West Midlands (Regional Development Agency)
Speakers: Malcolm HARBOUR, Member of the European Parliament
Rob CHESTERS, Medilink West Midlands
Guy SMALLMAN, Coventry University,
Jitka DOLEZALOVA, Advantage West Midlands,
Richard TUFFS, West Midlands in Europe
Participants: 35 delegates from medical technologies and health sector in West Midlands

Outline

The seminar was opened by Malcolm HARBOUR MEP who stressed the importance of innovation for the EU economy and particularly the role of public authorities in pre-commercial procurement. Public bodies can act as technologically demanding first buyers, public procurers can drive innovation from the demand side that he considered had a future in the medical technologies and health sector to drive forward innovation. Two examples of innovation were then presented. Rob CHESTERS introduced the i-house a converted house in the region that was used to showcase assistive medical technologies and show they could be used in a standard house or apartment. Guy SMALLMAN then introduced Coventry University’s new Health Design and Technology Institute which had the objective of testing new innovations and helping SMEs trial products and ideas before going to market using a range of services from design to marketing. Jitka DOLEZALOVA from Advantage West Midlands then gave participants a review of travel grants available for project development. Richard TUFFS then gave an overview of the role of West Midlands in Europe and outlined current EU policy and funding opportunities in terms of health.

Debate

The seminar ended with a general debate chaired by Christina KEEY-ANDERSEN the Medical Technologies Cluster Manager for Advantage West Midlands on how the medical technologies cluster could get more actively involved in European activities and exploit opportunities more effectively. It was also quite clear that the seminar was an excellent opportunity for many smaller SMEs to meet up and exploit networking opportunities.

Conclusions

Malcolm HARBOUR MEP for the West Midlands drew the meeting to a close by emphasizing the growing market for medical technologies and the opportunities that existed in Europe and the need for continual innovation to retain competitive advantage.
More information

Web sites
Medilink West Midlands http://www.medilinkwm.co.uk/
i-health http://www.myi-health.co.uk/
Warwick University Medical School http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/med/
Keele University School of Medicine http://www.keele.ac.uk/depts/ms/
Birmingham University Medical School http://www.medicine.bham.ac.uk/
Coventry University HDTI http://www.coventry.ac.uk/hdti/

Publications
West Midlands Medical Technologies Cluster Plan

'The application of IT to health and social care offers huge opportunities for improving services and engaging innovative business. The seminar was a great opportunity to bring West Midlands providers and suppliers together. As a regional MEP, I welcomed the chance to set out the EU's engagement and support for e-health research, and encouragement for innovative customers to drive technology advances with innovative suppliers'

'Businesses increasingly operate in a global market - they can no longer afford to operate in just one market place if they are to be successful. Europe offers many opportunities for growing companies. By collaborating with other European partners on innovation or R&D companies can get a stepping stone into new markets. The BIRTH event has offered an ideal opportunity for companies and partners to come together and exchange ideas and knowledge.'
III. Conclusions: The impact of the 'local events'

Following on from the Brussels programme, more than 30,000 people participated actively in around 220 local "Europe in my region" events during the month of October 2008 in 31 European countries including Norway, Iceland, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Turkey. Speakers included members of the European Parliament and the Committee of the Regions. The events were organised by regional and local authorities with the support of the Europe Direct network and the European Commission's permanent representations in the member states.

As regards the themes, the majority of events focused on 'EU cohesion policy and its future' (50 events), followed by 'climate change' (45), 'cooperation and networking' (29), 'intercultural dialogue' (21) and 'regional governance' (16). Press conferences, debates, exhibitions and workshops, together with festivals, cultural and sports activities, road shows and radio programmes were opportunities to encourage discussion by local and grassroots-level stakeholders, civil society organisations, teachers and the general public on major European themes. Most events had the format of a seminar or conference (57%), followed by exhibitions (14%), cultural or sports events (7%), festivals (4%) or other (3%) such as radio programmes, press conferences, school competitions etc.

OPEN DAYS 2008 local events: Themes
While the average number of participants in seminars was between 100 and 200, some events stood out with 600 (conference in the Czech Republic) 2,000 (conference in Slovenia) or even 4,000 (marathon in Slovenia).

On all local events, a total of 43 questionnaires (19%) covering 73 local events answered to the online survey between 10 October and 18 November 2008. Questions concerned background on and expectations of the organisers, whether the latter were met by the events and looked for ideas and recommendations for the future of local OPEN DAYS.

The following results can be highlighted:

- The majority of institutions answering the survey were public authorities which had organised one or two events, most of these targeting the general public (47%) and experts' audiences (37%);

- Organisers’ interests were ‘presenting the region/city’, a motive considered ‘very important’ or ‘important’ by 97%, followed by ‘learning about good practice’ (95%) and “networking with regional representatives” (84%);

- Expectations were best met for the aspect of ‘good practice’ for which 63% answered ‘very much met’, followed by ‘networking’ (60.5%) and presenting the region/city’ (59%);

- On quality of the events, the presentations and the moderators, all organisers were very much satisfied with ‘excellent’ assessments between 55 and 60%;

- around 95% of the local event organisers were satisfied by the support offered by OPEN DAYS organisers such as printed material and the website judging them either ‘excellent’ (37%) or ‘good’ (58%);

- 58% said that they received support, too, by the European Commission’s representations, delegations or networks in their country;

- all 43 local event organisers answering the survey would participate again in the OPEN DAYS.

Some selected recommendations by the local organisers

- 2009 Themes: the theme most often mentioned was ‘regional responses to climate change’, followed by ‘EU funds’, ‘cross-border cooperation’ and the ‘European Year of Creativity and Innovation’;

- Organisation: comments made indicated the need for more straightforward communication, setting realistic deadlines and better support through speakers from EU institutions.
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Together with other sources of the OPEN DAYS 2008, the publication is available online at: www.opendays.europa.eu

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Organised by the Committee of the Regions and the European Commission’s Regional Policy Directorate-General under the heading ‘Regions and cities in a challenging world’, the 2008 OPEN DAYS mobilised roughly 300 institutional partners, whereof 216 regions and cities representing 32 European countries. 145 seminars were held in Brussels between 6 and 9 October including more than 800 speakers and 7,400 individual participants. During the month of October, another 221 local events organised in 31 European countries attracted around 25,000 participants. Politicians, experts, representatives of enterprises and citizens exchanged views on a variety of subjects including cooperating across borders in research and innovation, sustainable development and regional responses to climate change, and cooperation and exchange of best practice between Europe’s regions.

More information including the event’s speeches, presentations, photos and videos available at: www.opendays.europa.eu