CBC Flash news December 2015

Dear Interreg Partners,

It was a dense year, full of initiatives that will roll on well beyond 2015- hence a dense Christmas newsletter for you to enjoy!

Adoption, we did it!

It was ‘adoption year’! And the great news is that the map is now totally green: 54 out of 54 Interreg V-A CBC programmes (REGIO D2 is in charge of) have been adopted! That has been a tough exercise for all involved, we wish to congratulate everybody for the successful outcome!
**Outcome of the Negotiations: how it all happened**

The European Commission, according to art.16 of CPR, was due to produce a report on the outcome of the negotiations of Partnership Agreements and Operational Programmes, including cooperation programmes. This was done through a **Communication** on “Maximising the contribution of European Structural and Investment Funds to the Commission’s priorities”. **Annex I** of the Communication is specifically dedicated to European Territorial Cooperation. On top of that, the Open Data platform project is progressing and there is now a [page](#) dedicated to Interreg. Here, data on thematic distribution and achievements linked to investments will be shown in the future in an exhaustive manner.

**Interreg logo, the importance of a visual identity**

Since we are now 'on the road' with programmes, we can also have a look at how many of them have taken up the Interreg logo: 30 programmes having adopted their logo so far have decided to go for the common Interreg logo. Not bad, but we would like to remind programmes still working on this that there is a comprehensive manual on logo designing made available by Interact ([see in hyperlink](#)).

![Interreg logo](#)

**The art of implementing...**

Since we are 'on the road' (again...) you may find useful to consult the available [implementation guidances](#) on Inforegio: now it is all about making the programmes work, making the projects run and making results a reality. Easy, no?

![Interreg logo](#)

And we also thought that, since we are 'on the road' (ok, that’s the last one, promised) you may want to seize the opportunity to share your experience, present your ideas, engage with other stakeholders, and help us reach a more effective and efficient management of the funds. This opportunity has even a name and an on-line site, the ENGAGE section of the SIMPLIFY ESIF webpage ([link](#)), which will be feeding the meetings of the High Level Group on simplification. Please, CONTRIBUTE! And

![Interreg logo](#)

...And the art of simplifying

remember we have an Interreg representative in the High Level Group, so there is every chance that your voice will be heard.
Say it better, say it loud, I am Interreg and I am proud!

Many of you are working on your communication strategies for the whole period and on the annual communication plans for 2016. Well, we have also worked for you and created a dedicated webpage where you can find extractions of the Eurobarometer survey on border regions split by programme (please go on the Eurobarometer Results section of this webpage). We invite you to use this information to shape tailored communication actions: the Eurobarometer survey will be repeated in 2020 and the challenge is to make the picture look better!

Public consultation: a huge success needing also YOU

The Eurobarometer survey is not the only 'state of the art' instrument we put on the table. As you know, a thorough cross-border review was launched last September, of which the on-line public consultation Overcoming Obstacles in Border Regions is one of the main inputs in which you can provide your support. As of today, we have received over 500 responses, an amazing number, but you still have some days left to participate and engage border citizens, therefore... let's keep the flow coming!

Refugees’ crisis, a call to act for Interreg

We must also mention the refugees who are seeking shelter in Europe, some of whom with the hope to start a new life.

The European Commission has called upon all Member States authorities and cohesion partners to examine ways in which cohesion funds in general and Interreg in particular can contribute to the new challenges with concrete projects.
Three thematic objectives are especially relevant for the support to refugees: a) promoting employment, b) promoting social inclusion, combating poverty and any discrimination and c) investing in education, training and vocational training for skills and lifelong learning (TOs 8, 9 and 10). For Interreg in particular, capacity building actions under TO11 can be also fully relevant in sectors dealing with the refugees' crisis. Some of you are already planning concrete calls. Greece-Cyprus is reprogramming to this effect. If you are reflecting on possible actions, please let us know. All in all, this is what Interreg V-A is about: cooperating, solving issues and facilitating the lives of people living in border regions.

**Interreg at the top table...**

Did we already mention it was a dense year? Well, among other things, and thanks to the fruitful cooperation with the Luxembourg Presidency, we managed for the first time ever to have a specific focus on Interreg at the meeting of the General Affairs Council on 18 November ([link](#)). The main success is for sure the inclusion in these conclusions of the recognition of our common work done during 25 years of Interreg.

... and at several other tables!

Interreg certainly 'made some noise' with its 25 year celebration topped by the proposal of the Luxembourg Presidency for a new legal instrument to facilitate working across borders on specific projects. The Informal Meeting of the Ministers in charge of Territorial Cohesion also discussed cross-border cooperation at its meeting in November, looking in particular at the Luxembourg’s new instrument. The conclusions can be found [here](#).

The Committee of the Regions too, the political and institutional house of local and regional authorities, reacted with two interesting reports: a Bureau declaration on 'A new impetus for Cross-Border Cooperation' ([link](#)) and one opinion on 'Strengthening Cross-border Cooperation: the need for a better regulatory framework?' ([link](#)).
Another year is over…

So, this amazing 2015 is coming to an end. We all turned 25 this year (well, that would be great indeed). We are enjoying the successes, reflecting on the shortcomings and thinking ahead: in 2016 we will hold the Interreg Annual Event in Brussels and we are glad to announce the dates: it will be held in the Charlemagne building on 6-7 June, with optional project visits planned on the afternoon of the second day. Interactive agenda setting will be the word again – so start thinking about the topics you would most like to exchange upon - Further details will come early next year. Given that the event is scheduled in early June, it will not interfere with Monitoring Committee approval of the first Annual Implementation Report for the 2014-2020 period which, we would like to remind you, is due by the 31 May 2016! 😊😊

... and a new one just to begin!

And 'that's all folks!'... no wait! We can’t leave you without wishing you a pleasant, relaxing and joyful Christmas period and... Interreg 26th year! This 'Christmas tree' is our thank you for being there...

The REGIO D2 Team