Dear Interreg Partners,

Another Interreg year is coming to an end: challenging, stimulating, never boring. That's a good way to define Interreg believers... we rarely have the time to get bored! That's why, not surprisingly, also the last Newsletter of the year is full of items... and some of them are a real Christmas bomb!

Learning from others: Interreg Staff exchange

It's a thing we experience everyday also here in Brussels: peer learning is often one of the most effective tool to improve our ability in get things done. That's why we warmly recommend you to become part of Interreg Staff Exchange. Interact has recently published a guide with recommendations and considerations that could help you understand the usefulness of the tool. Exchanging experiences with someone facing the same "Interreg issues" that you face is a valuable asset for your daily work: give it a thought!

Assessment of Border Needs: study available online!

In the last issue of this Flash news we reported on the presentation about the Border Needs Study. This time we go one step further by proudly announcing that the study is available online for everybody to read. 25 indicators, a comparison between 62 border regions (both land and maritime): the effort was huge and quite unique. The full report, an executive summary, a presentation and the video about the presentation are available here... could you honestly ask for more? 😊.
Interreg Volunteers in the context of European Solidarity Corps: bring young people into Interreg!

Interreg is proud to be part of the European Solidarity Corps initiative launched by President Juncker. DG REGIO will join the initiative with EUR 1 million to offer young people aged 18-30 the possibility to serve as 'Interreg reporters' supporting an Interreg programme in promoting the concrete results of Interreg projects or as 'Interreg project partners' on a concrete project. The Interreg Volunteers initiative aims at offering to the extent possible the same advantages as the European Voluntary Service, covering notably travel, lodging, food and insurance. Applications by young volunteers may be submitted from 07/12/2016 onwards via the European Youth Portal https://europa.eu/youth/solidarity_en. DG REGIO will entrust the selection of the hosting bodies (managing authorities, joint secretariats, 2014-2020 on-going projects) to the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR). Programmes' communication officers can already start preparing task descriptions and related materials to make the best possible case for their organisation to be selected to receive young volunteers' early 2017. Volunteers will receive a posting proposal when the portal is ready to ensure access to selected hosting bodies. However, we wish to be quicker on this: for the Interreg reporters strand, the idea is to have young Interreg volunteers deployed as early as possible before March. For this, the AEBR will ensure manually the matching of volunteering young people (starting with the Interreg reporters) and managing authorities and joint secretariats eager to receive their support. We firmly believe this is a great chance for the Interreg world and we are here to help you spreading the news about this opportunity!

KEEP portal going through a facelift – make sure your programme is in!

The KEEP portal currently holds information on over 17,000 Interreg and EN(P)I cross-border projects and nearly all programmes that ever existed since the year 2000. The database is about to grow rapidly with new 2014-2020 programmes and projects. Every programme now needs to make sure they are active for their own part to get their data on funded projects to KEEP. At the same time, the portal is going through a total renewal by the turn of the year with new functions coming up. It will be possible to filter projects even more precisely than before: instead of by country, the data will be available by regions. There will also be a partner search function for applicants to search the organisations in the database. In KEEP, all the programmes have their data available in the same format. To know more follow KEEP in Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

To get the wheels turning for your programme data delivery to KEEP, contact keep.support@interact-eu.net
Welcoming Refugees - local experiences to be shared in Norrköping

The full title is "Welcoming Refugees - Local European Experiences": it is a three days conference running from 25 to 27 January in Norrköping, organized by the Municipality of Norrköping and its partners REMESO at Linköping University and the think tank Arena Idé. The conference will provide new insights on different aspects of the reception of newly arrived. It will also be a great opportunity to network around potential innovative projects. More information can be found at the following link.

"Second generation migrants well integrated in the labour market" says EUROSTAT.
Education, employment, relation with peers and relation with the first generation: plenty of information is available in the recently published series of articles by Eurostat on second generation immigrants. If you are interested in the topic, you can read the English summary at this link or you can have a look at the complete series of statistics and articles on this webpage.

A new interactive map to help your reporting activities!
As you are aware, in the current programming period you have to provide in the Annual Implementation Report a breakdown of projects by degree of urbanisation (see the Guidance Note). To help you in this job, our colleagues here in REGIO have created an interactive, public website where anyone can look up a municipality or a street address to find out the degree of urbanisation of that location. In order to simplify the task for Interreg Managing Authorities, the location of the lead beneficiary will be the one taken into consideration.
Save the dates: Berlin and Valencia Interact meetings
A good bunch of events organized by Interact at the beginning of 2017 if you work on communication or you want to discuss the post-2020 scenarios! Firstly, on 17 January Interact will organize a brainstorming in Berlin on European Cooperation Day 2017. [Here is the link](#) to the event presentation. If you are a West Mediterranean programme, 7/8 February is another date to mark on your calendar: the Interact point in Valencia will organize the [MedLab Group meeting](#), where the second day session will be dedicated to discuss the post 2020 scenarios for this specific area. Finally, coming back to communication, another important event taking place in Valencia on the 15-16 February: the [Interreg Communication Seminar](#) will look into the link between communication and capitalisation, will explore the communication activities planned for 2017 and will provide some practical training. All in all, a great menu: the choice is now yours 😊

Interreg Annual Review Meeting: shaping the event in Malta (26-28 April 2017)
The work of the Advisory Group for the organization of the 2017 Interreg Annual Review Meeting has started, with the video-conference meeting on the Agenda for the Plenary Session and the Workshops. The following step in the context of this specific task will be a vote through an online Survey of the shortlist of topics discussed by the Advisory Group: [you can vote at this link](#) until 15 January! Concerning the four Advisory Groups responsible for shaping the content of the four workshops, the registration is still possible [through this link](#).

A reminder to all programmes: one pager on 2007-2013 expected by the end of the year!
Before concentrating on Season greetings, before relaxing and before defining your New Year resolutions... something still to be done! As you may recall, this summer our Director addressed to all of
you a note in which she was asking to provide by the end of 2016 a one page summary of the programme concrete results in the 2007-2013 period. Some of you already sent it. This is an important exercise not only for the Commission but for the whole Interreg policy development: in a phase in which we are starting to discuss the future, promoting what we concretely achieved in the past is an important step to understand which direction we want to go. The one pager should be concise (it's one page!) and able to really tell us and citizens why your programme had a concrete impact in the recent past. We are sure you are up to the challenge. 31 December is approaching, so speed up the preparation and send it to your programme's desk officer!

So that was the end of a loooong Christmas Flash News. Only thing left to say is that we wish you to spend great quality time with your loved ones during the Christmas festivities. We are proud to work with you! Merry Christmas and a happy 2017 Interreg Year!

You can find this Flash News and previous issues on our webpage.