Dear Interreg Partners,

Please, let us share a few highlights/information with you,

**Approval of Interreg V-A programmes**

Five more cooperation programmes were adopted through the carry-over procedure on 12 February 2015:

- 05 ES-PT (POCTEP)
- 12 PL-SK
- 21 RO-BG
- 47 UK-IE (Ireland-Northern Ireland-Scotland)
- 48 UK-IE (Ireland-Wales)

Overall, 13 programs were adopted in 2014, 5 in carry-over procedure and 36 Interreg V-A programmes under our unit’s responsibility remain to be adopted.

**Competition launched: EU love without borders – Submission open until 15 March !**

This year, we had something special in store to mark Valentine’s day and at the same time promote cooperation across borders and regions ahead of the 25th anniversary of Interreg: a special Valentine competition inviting lovebirds to share how their personal romance overcame obstacles across European borders (be it cultural, political, linguistic, administrative, geographical, logistical, etc.)! Please, spread the word as submission will close on 15 March.

#EUlovewithoutborders

**2015 RegioStars Awards – Deadline extended to 15 March !**

The deadline for submission of applications has been extended to March 15th midnight. The objective of the RegioStars Awards is to identify good practices in regional development and to highlight original and innovative projects which could be attractive and inspiring to other regions. More information @: [http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/index.cfm/en/regio-stars-awards/](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/index.cfm/en/regio-stars-awards/)

**OPEN DAYS 2015: time to get involved !**

Preparations for 13th edition of the European Week of Regions and Cities have begun. Candidate partners have until 27 March to send their application forms. Overall slogan this year is 'Europe's Regions and Cities: Partners for investment and growth', revealing the reformed Cohesion Policy as the EU’s principle investment tool for delivering the Europe 2020 goals. OPEN DAYS 2015 will be structured around three thematic priorities:

1) **Modernising Europe**: The regions in the Energy Union and the Single Digital Market;  
2) **Regions open for business**: SME development, innovation and job creation;  
3) **Places and spaces**: Urban and rural development, urban-rural integration.

Under each of these priorities, event partners are invited to address challenges and solutions related to programme management, as well as to the cross-border, inter-regional or transnational dimension. Details about conditions of participation and contact details are featured in the OPEN DAYS guide for event partners @: [http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/opendays/od2015/library.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/opendays/od2015/library.cfm)
Interreg Annual Event – Online Survey

We would like to inform you that we have just invited all programme managing authorities to contribute to an online survey with a view to collecting their most desired topics for the forthcoming 2015 technical Interreg Annual Event. This event will be held on 15 September in the morning in Luxembourg (just before the 15-16 September Interreg 25 years' celebrations). The objective of our survey will be to identify the implementation issues deemed most crucial by the programmes in order to prepare an agenda that best meets the needs of the audience, including the desired format (e.g. plenary sessions, workshops or other). Please follow the link below to access the survey: https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/agenda_etc_2015. The deadline to complete the survey is also 15 March ☺.

Star projects in our Inforegio website

In 2014 we made a significant effort to enrich the Inforegio project database with three star projects examples per Interreg IV-A programme. As we now approach the end of the 2007-2013 programming period, we would like to make sure that this database includes at least one star project per priority axis for each programme. Your Desk Officer will soon contact you to discuss this with you.

Arrival of new REGIO D2 Colleagues

We are happy to welcome 3 new colleagues and 2 trainees to the D2 team: Alina MATTISON LAX, Gianluca COMUNIELLO, Vassiliki GERTSOU, Jorge GOMEZ MARTIN and Lucille EHRHART.

- Alina joined on 16 February and is managing cooperation programmes Sweden-Norway, Sweden-Denmark-Norway (Öresund-Kattegat-Skagerrak), Lithuania-Poland and France-Belgium-Germany-Luxembourg (Grande Région/Großregion). She is also working as our liaison officer on the MRS Baltic and our country desk for Lithuania and Luxembourg.

- Gianluca will join us on 16 March and will be managing cooperation programmes Italy-Switzerland, Italy-France (ALCOTRA), Italy-France (Maritime) and Slovenia-Croatia. He will also be working as our liaison officer for the MRS Alpine, Administrative Capacity Building and Communication. He will be our country desk for Italy and Switzerland.

- Vasiliki joined our administrative Aassistants' team on 2 March.

- Finally, two students will be around as trainees in the coming months:
  - Jorge GOMEZ MARTIN from 2 March to 30 June
  - And Lucille EHRHART 23 March to 3 July.

Model for the annual implementation report for Interreg V programmes is out.


The REGIO D2 Team