



# COMPART -Comparing Partnerships

## CONTENTS

▪ <i>Editor's column</i>	p.1
▪ <i>Territorial cooperation reforms underway in the EU</i>	p.2
▪ <i>The Spain-Morocco partnership</i>	p.3
▪ <i>Interview to Mr. Zurita of FAMSI</i>	p.3
▪ <i>Interview to Mr. Samadi and Abderahman El M'rabet of the Tanger-Tétouan Region</i>	p.5
▪ <i>The MAARIFA project</i>	p.6
▪ <i>Progress of the COMPART project</i>	p.6
▪ <i>News on projects and programmes</i>	p.7
▪ <i>Relevant documents</i>	p.9

## EDITOR'S COLUMN

This first issue of the Newsletter of COMPART (Comparing Partnerships), a project which falls within the framework of the Community Programme INTERACT.

This initiative is intended as an instrument for comparing and examining issues related to cross-border and transnational cooperation with neighbour countries in the Mediterranean (including the western Balkans) and, in general, to territorial cooperation in a very important phase of reform of the European Union (EU) policies.

Territorial cooperation at the external borders of the EU is an important new tool for common sustainable development and for social and economic integration in the Mediterranean. For the first time, such a tool is becoming an instrument of EU external policy, within the framework of Neighbourhood and Pre-Accession policies. At the same time, territorial cooperation is an objective of the EU's structural policy.

The political aim is to overcome the distinction between internal and external policies and among the different geographical boundaries, in order to attain a common and inclusive perception of the development of the entire Mediterranean area. To achieve this goal, the practical application of the concept of partnership becomes highly important. Partnerships involve cooperation among different Administration levels (regional, national and local, in particular), with the private sector and civil society, among territories belonging to the EU and to Neighbour countries of the Mediterranean. A complex partnership which is however necessary if development is to be participative and sustainable.

This Newsletter will carry regular updates on the most important orientations of Community policies, as well as suggestions for literature and documents for going further in depth in relation to the different issues involved.

In addition, specific cooperation and territorial partnership experiences will be analysed through interviews to involved partners both from EU Member States and from Mediterranean Third countries. Information concerning progress made by COMPART, fostered initiatives, activities carried out and results achieved will be given and, once the project's website is active, there will be a section dedicated to information on the website itself.

The Newsletter will also offer information concerning events carried out by project partners, activities and results of other projects similar to COMPART implemented within the framework of INTERACT (in this issue, the focus is on the RE-ACT and EX-INT projects), the INTERACT programme itself and also the ESPON programme.

In this issue, the experience of cross-border cooperation between Spain and Morocco, as well as the important role played within this framework by the MAARIFA project, will be illustrated. Furthermore, the opinions of representatives of two institutions, the Region of Tanger-Tétouan and FAMSII (Andalusia Fund of Municipalities for International Solidarity), which are strongly involved in this cooperation project, will be explained in two interviews.

## **TERRITORIAL COOPERATION REFORMS UNDERWAY IN THE EU**

### **EXTERNAL TERRITORIAL COOPERATION WITHIN ENPI AND IPA (2007-2103)**

From 2007, the relationships between the EU and its neighbour countries will be managed through two financial instruments: the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI)<sup>1</sup> and the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA). Although ENPI and IPA respond to the same objective of promoting security and stabilising the EU's neighbourhood area through the integration of beneficiary countries, they are based on two different strategies. While ENPI would lead to integration covering "everything but institutions", IPA will be addressed to those neighbouring countries recognised as potential (Western Balkans) or official (Croatia, Turkey) candidates to accession to the EU. However, in both cases, the Commission has recognised a strategic and innovative role to cross-border cooperation.

The ENPI cross-border component will be based on the approach used for the management of territorial cooperation under Structural Funds (multi-annual programming; partnership; co-financing) and on the experience acquired from the transitional period. Consequently, cross-border programmes must be prepared, managed and implemented jointly by the beneficiary countries on both sides of the borders. As opposed to the transitional period (2004-2006), cross-border and trans-national cooperation will be managed under the same procedures for each side of the border, even if the ERDF (European Regional Development Fund) will still contribute to the financing of the participation of the European part of the borders. A Joint management authority - normally located in a Member State - will be responsible for the implementation of each cross-border programme.

<sup>1</sup> Belarus, Ukraine, and Moldova; the Southern Caucasus countries: (Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan); as well as all the countries on the southern and eastern shores of the Mediterranean (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, as well as the Palestinian Authority) and Russia.

At geographical level, there will be three different kinds of cross-border programmes:

- Cross-border programmes along *land borders* corresponding to NUTS III-level;
- Cross-border programmes along *sea crossings* of significant importance corresponding to NUTS III-level;
- Multilateral Cross-border programmes facing a *common sea basin* corresponding to NUTS II-level or equivalent

A cross-border cooperation component will be part also of the assistance provided under IPA. Under this component, assistance should be provided on the basis of a multi-annual framework per country, which will be adopted by the European Commission. As in the case of the ENPI strategy papers, the IPA multi-annual framework will establish the implementation rules for cross-border cooperation.

At geographical level, cross-border cooperation under IPA could take place both among beneficiary countries and between them and EU border regions. Different management modes could be applied. The implementation of cross-border cooperation between beneficiary countries will take place according to the rules of external aid, while the implementation tasks of cooperation involving EU Member States shall, in principle, be delegated to them, through the shared management mechanism.

From a financial point of view, up till now it is not yet clear how many resources will be allocated to the cross-border components of ENPI and IPA. However the regulation proposal of the European Commission on ENPI and IPA indicates that the financial resources for cross-border cooperation should come from two sources. According to the financial perspective 2007-2103 the participation of regions from Member States should be covered by the ERDF (i.e. €1,4 billion from the ERFD allocation to the new objective 3 cross-border strand of cooperation; and €356 million from the trans-national one); whereas the participation of external regions should be covered by ENPI (whose resources should be at least equivalent to twice the amount of the ERDF) and IPA (whose resources should be at least equal to the corresponding financing from ERFD).

In addition ENPI presents another innovative aspect compared to traditional external cooperation. The operations to be financed within its framework should receive a co-financing also from beneficiary third countries.

### **TERRITORIAL COOPERATION IN THE NEW STRUCTURAL POLICY (2007-2013)**

In the new programming period 2007-2013, territorial cooperation will be one of the three priority objectives of the EU Structural Funds. Cooperation under the new Third objective will follow up the INTERREG

approach. It will take place at three levels: cross-border cooperation through joint programmes; cooperation between trans-national zones; networks for cooperation and exchange of experiences throughout the Union.

As in the case of the other operations to be financed under the economic and social cohesion policy, the partnership principle will apply in the Third objective. Consequently, as in the case of INTERREG, territorial cooperation will see the joint participation of all the actors (*bottom-up approach*) in the development, implementation, financing, monitoring and evaluation of the operational programmes.

The geographical scope of operations to be implemented under the Third objective will continue to concern (the internal and certain external) land borders or groups of borders at NUTS III level regions and “all NUTS III level regions along maritime borders separated, as a general rule, by a maximum of 150 km, taking into account potential adjustments needed to ensure the coherence and continuity of the cooperation action”.

Furthermore, as in the case of INTERREG, also the new Third objective will support cross-border and trans-national cooperation at the external borders of the EU, “where this is necessary to ensure that the regions of Member States which border Third-countries can be effectively assisted in their development”. The possibility to authorise these kinds of expenditures must be on an exceptional basis, up to a limit of 10% of the amount of ERDF contribution to the operational programme and “where they are for the benefit of the regions of the Community”.

According to the initial Commission proposal on the financial perspective, territorial cooperation should have seen its financial resources increasing considerably compared to the programming period 2000-2006 (from 5.8 billion € to 14.2 billion €). In particular, it is worth remarking that trans-national cooperation would have benefited the most from the initial financial proposal of the Commission. On the contrary, during the negotiation on the EU financial perspective the resources for territorial cooperation were considerably reduced (from 14.25 billion to 7.5 billion) and among its different strands trans-national cooperation was the most penalised (from 6.8 billion to 1.4 billion). As far as the resources for cross-border cooperation are concerned, were cut off by 1,1 billion (from 6.8 billion to 5.7 billion).

About €1,4 billion of the resources dedicated to cross-border cooperation and €356 million of the resources for trans-national cooperation will contribute to the EU regions participation in cross-border cooperation projects to be implemented within ENPI and IPA.

## **THE SPAIN-MOROCCO PARTNERSHIP**

The INTERREG III A Spain-Morocco Programme, which is the follow-up to previous initiatives, was launched in the year 2000 and will end in 2006 within the framework of the cross-border strand of cooperation. Its aim is to develop synergies among neighbouring geographical areas that can guarantee forms of lasting territorial development. The principal partners in this programme are the region of Andalusia and the territories of Ceuta and Melilla on one side and, on the other, the Northern strip of Morocco.

The programme is based on five main dimensions: organization of the cross-border area; valorization, promotion and conservation of common resources; social and economic development and initiatives in favour of employment; social and institutional cooperation and integration; technical assistance.

So far, 53 projects have been approved and among these, 33 concern project initiatives which involve forms of partnership between Spanish and Moroccan local Authorities.

Following the EU's new guidelines on territorial cross-border and transnational cooperation, the INTERREG III A Spain-Morocco programme developed into the new Spain-Morocco 2004-2006 neighbourhood programme, which will lead to the implementation of the cross-border component within ENPI (European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument).

The following interviews illustrate the interests shared by the territories of Andalusia and the Tanger-Tétouan Region other than by the Maarifa project, which is a particularly important initiative having connected the two shores of the Mediterranean in an innovative way.

### **▪ THE ANDALUSIA INTERESTS**

*(Interview with Antonio Zurita, Director of FAMSI – Andalusia Fund of Municipalities for International Solidarity)*

*Which is Andalusia's main interest in the consolidation of its cooperation activities with the Tanger-Tétouan Region?*

There are many interests involved. The Tanger-Tétouan Region is the closest frontier to Andalusia. Furthermore, this area is part of a more vast territory, the Rif, which was once a Spanish protectorate.

There are also economic motives behind the autonomous community of Andalusia's desire to strengthen its ties with Morocco: at a time in which the European Union is increasing its political and economic cooperation in the Mediterranean area, the intensifying of economic relationships with the southern shore of the Mediterranean can imply a transformation of the role of Spain (and Andalusia in particular) within the Union itself.

*What kind of relationship do you hope to establish between the two shores of the Mediterranean?*

We are aiming at an economic relationship tending towards complementarity and avoiding competition and conflict.

In Andalusia, there are three key sectors: agriculture, tourism and fisheries.

In the case of agriculture, the entrance of Moroccan products on the European market could cause a crisis in the Andalusian agricultural sector and its exports. A similar situation would very probably cause tension with Morocco: in order to avoid this, forms of economic partnership would be necessary.

Also in the case of tourism it would be more convenient for both parties to put different interests in common through the exchange of experience and the transfer of know-how, making the most of geographical proximity. Furthermore, I believe it is in Europe's interest to support our neighbourhood relationships, in order to tone down the cultural and economic differences between the two shores.

#### *How can all this be put into practice?*

In my opinion by following two paths: on one hand, with an intercultural approach, to tone down the differences between these two societies, on the other hand, by promoting the economic development of the Tanger-Tétouan Region in order to reduce the difference in income between Andalusia and Northern Morocco.

#### *At present, how relevant is cooperation promoted by local Authorities within the framework of Spanish-Moroccan relations?*

Spanish local Authorities are very active both from a political point of view and from an economic and cultural one. Andalusian local Authorities act upon two cooperation modes, rarely integrated with each other: INTERREG and the allocation of 0.7% of their resources to development aid activities.

In the first case, through cross-border programmes, some Provinces and Municipalities in the border region have developed interesting activities fostered by the INTERREG.

In the second case, the percentage of development aid allocated to Maghreb has timidly grown over the last few years.

#### *Why "timidly"?*

For two reasons which pose an obstacle to cooperation between the two shores of the Mediterranean: the scarce empathy and a history of conflict. In Morocco, the Spanish are still often perceived as ex colonisers and their approaching (also in a development policy perspective) can be seen as an attempt to settle in this area once again; the Spanish, in turn, fear being somehow "tricked" by the Moroccans.

There is also a controversy in relation to the independence of the Western Sahara: the majority of the Spanish population is in favour of the independence

of this territory, whereas the majority of the Moroccan population is contrary and believes that this area belongs to the Kingdom of Morocco.

Furthermore, especially in the past with the Aznar government, diplomatic relations with Morocco were rather difficult, thus determining the scarce commitment of Spain in fostering cooperation towards this area.

#### *What is FAMSI doing in practice to encourage support for cooperation activities carried out by Andalusian local Authorities in Morocco?*

FAMSI encourages three types of actions.

First of all, it promotes twinning between Spanish and Moroccan Municipalities: this instrument has already been experimented successfully in the past (for example, with Latin American cities and with Saharaoui encampments) and it is a cooperation mode, which has nearly always led to a direct, and lasting relationship among the involved actors. These experiences should not stop at a public Administration level: twinning projects between schools, hospitals and universities should be encouraged.

Another initiative fostered by FAMSI is support for the United Nations Gold Programme in Morocco. Our task is to direct cooperation carried out by Andalusian Municipalities towards this area trying to promote the involvement of the Andalusian government itself. Furthermore, FAMSI is promoting the debate on the role of INTERREG and on the new neighbourhood policy through conferences, which involve Andalusian Municipalities themselves.

Also COMPART is an initiative which could influence future European methodology for cooperation with the Southern shore of the Mediterranean.

#### *What is your opinion about the events of October 2005 in Ceuta and Melilla?*

First of all, there is the more general problem of irregular immigration and, secondly, it is necessary to take the present political relationships between Morocco and Spain into account.

As far as the first issue is concerned, it falls within the biggest problem, that is to say the economic gap between the North and the South of the world. As far as the International Community does not commit seriously and in concrete terms, the problem of immigration can only increase and border areas will more and more frequently be the backdrop for tragedies such as the one that took place in Ceuta. It must also be considered that Morocco has been claiming sovereignty over Ceuta and Melilla for years and regards them as "occupied territories". The presence of a substantial number of people wishing to immigrate to Europe and "pushing" at the borders of Ceuta and Melilla was a known fact both in Spain and in Morocco.

However, events escalated exactly at the time in which, in Cordova, the Spain-Morocco Summit was taking

place in presence of the Spanish and Moroccan Ministers of Foreign Affairs. The lack of control by Moroccan authorities may have been a way to stake their claim, which, in this case, is connected to the possible access of Morocco in the European Union. But, at the same time, I think such a tragedy also lays its roots in the lack of an agreement on immigration with Southern Mediterranean countries.

▪ **THE TANGER-TÉTOUAN INTERESTS**

*(Interview with Mohamed Samadi and Abderahman El M'rabet, Tanger-Tétouan Region)*

*Which is the main interest at stake for the Tanger-Tétouan Region in the consolidation of its bonds with the Andalusian Region?*

First of all, Andalusia is the closest territory to our Northern frontier, and Spain the European country that is closest to Morocco. Furthermore, Spain is the Mediterranean country which, at present, has the highest economic growth rate and, considering Morocco has undertaken its path to development, our aim is to have access to Spanish know-how: we want to know and learn from this country's experience.

*Is the Tanger-Tétouan Region moving in this direction?*

Yes, as shown by the Maarifa project, carried out within the framework of "INTERREG III A programme Spain-Morocco" and which we are implementing with the Province of Cadiz. This initiative not only involves the institutions (the Province of Cadiz and the regional Council of Tanger-Tétouan), it also involves the entrepreneurial sector, Universities and Unions both in Spain and in Morocco, thus assigning the role of coordinators of activities to public administration bodies on both sides. Their task is limited to the orientation of the territory so that Universities, hospitals, Unions and enterprises, both Spanish and Moroccan, can work together.

*Is there a development plan in place for the Tanger-Tétouan Region, at present?*

It must be said that the Regional Council of Tanger-Tétouan is a "young" institution, founded about seven years ago. Our administration is oriented towards the development of our territory. However, there is no specific development plan intended as a single document resulted from planning sessions or theoretical studies. There are, instead, a series of actions and measures supported by the Regional Council, that address numerous areas of intervention, with particular attention for agricultural land as Morocco's problem is the development of rural areas.

*Which are your priorities in the area of local development?*

First of all, we consider the social aspect fundamental, especially in relation to health services: we offer financial support to doctors who perform haemodialysis and we also make it possible for people belonging to the weakest segments of the population to receive this service for free.

Another area of priority intervention is that of rural infrastructures: we are in the process of building hydraulic plants in many villages in order to make them self-sufficient. We are also distributing the necessary equipment to enable even the most isolated villages to receive mass-media information; we are building schools and roads to connect different villages to each other, working alongside the central government which promotes similar initiatives and has the responsibility of carrying out the great infrastructural work. All these activities are financed with resources that come directly from the budget of our administration.

We are also working for the safeguard of the environment. For example, we are in the process of setting up an ecological urban park, named Perdicaris, with vegetation and wildlife, which are unique in the world and also a natural park between the provinces of Larache and Tétouan.

Another area in which the Tanger-Tétouan Regional Council is active is tourism: this region is extremely rich from a naturalistic point of view: beaches, seaside, and woodland. An important goal is the recovery and improvement of these areas.

Finally, I must remind that a substantial quota of our administration's budget, is devoted to study and research activities in relation to the needs and potential of our territory.

*What relationship is there between the activities promoted by the Council and those carried out at a central level?*

It is a complementarity nexus: the State carries out structural projects, which we integrate by carrying out supplementary activities. We take the initiative for the promotion of human development: the fight against poverty, the diffusion of literacy, and the improvement of living conditions. The Regional Council's role is to act as a "pilot" in order to guarantee the success of this national project at a local level.

*Where do cooperation activities, both decentralized and cross-border, stand in relation to the pursuit of these development goals?*

Cooperation is very important, not only from an economic point of view but, above all, because it makes it possible to facilitate the exchange of

experiences, for example, among operators of public administration bodies.

*What is your opinion of the INTERREG programme?*

INTERREG's main problem are the restrictions on expenses, which cannot be made outside the territory of the European Union thus allowing Third countries to benefit from this programme only in terms of services. Therefore, although there have been positive experiences carried out within the framework of INTERREG, such as, for example, the Maarifa project, our opinion is not entirely positive.

*What do you think of the Neighbourhood policy?*

We are highly doubtful in relation to this issue. It seems that Europe is more oriented towards cooperation with Eastern countries rather than with those on the Southern shore of the Mediterranean: at the moment, only Spain and Italy are trying to save cooperation with Maghreb.

Furthermore, if a streamlining process of administrative procedures does not take place (also the procedure to access Meda funds is very complicated), this initiative will be headed towards failure.

Neighbourhood policy should, first of all, commit in favour of a real decentralization process of administrative bodies in Third countries. Resources should be assigned directly to the Regions, without passing through the central government, which tends to favour its own priorities. Thus, cooperation should be between one (European) Region and another (Third country Region). The success achieved through projects carried out thanks to direct funding proves how it is important to transfer funds directly at a local level. Regions must not only be seen as beneficiaries, but also as actors in the financial management.

*Within this wider framework, how do you perceive the problem of immigration?*

The problem of immigration cannot be solved without supporting the development of the Southern shore of the Mediterranean. And there is only one way to favour growth in this area: investing in its territory and purchasing its products. Unfortunately, Europe maintains a defensive position in relation to this solution, but if Europe wants to face the development of the Mediterranean basin seriously, the only path to follow is that of free trade.

#### ▪ THE MAARIFA PROJECT

The MAARIFA project is promoted within the framework of the "INTERREG III A programme Spain-Morocco" and involves the IEDT (Istituto de

Empleo y Desarrollo Tecnológico), an autonomous body through which the Province of Cadiz operates and the Regional Council of Tanger-Tétouan.

The objectives of this project, approved in September 2003, are the valorization of the Spain and Morocco cross-border territories, social and economic development, and support to social and cultural integration on the two shores of the Strait of Gibraltar. The instrumental aim of this project is to improve the efficiency of the entire "INTERREG III A programme Spain-Morocco" by bringing all the interested actors of the Province of Cadiz (local Authorities, Unions, enterprises, Universities, Chambers of Commerce) together under one single programme.

The IEDT has signed a Convention with the Regional Council of Tanger-Tétouan, which has become the cross-border partner of the project.

MAARIFA is a "sub-programme" composed of initiatives managed by different subjects. The actions foreseen by MAARIFA may be divided into five categories: urban development, crafts and Andalusian culture, University cooperation, tourism and cultural heritage, development of entrepreneurship and new technologies. The initiative's total budget was 12,575,912 Euros, 75% of which co-financed by ERDF and the remaining 25% by the IEDT itself. In order to improve the efficiency of the programme, the IEDT carries out complementary activities with its own resources.

Furthermore, in order to overcome the obstacle of the obligation imposed by INTERREG to spend resources only within the Community's territory, a Convention (4 years) has been signed with the Province of Cadiz which allocates the sum of 60,000 Euros a year in favour of initiatives which require a direct investment in Moroccan territory.

After having performed the role of interface with the Institutions, the IEDT assigns the activities to single partners who carry them out.

Due to the positive results attained by this experimental initiative, in March 2004, the Directorate General for Community Funds of the General Secretariat for Budget of Spain's Ministry of Finance approved a new project named MAARIFA II with a budget which amounts to 26,436,114 Euros.

## PROGRESS OF THE COMPART PROJECT

#### ▪ OBJECTIVE

In the framework of the INTERACT programme, the COMPART project aims at paving the way to the creation of effective partnerships in multilevel programming and in projects between regions and local authorities belonging to EU member States and partner

countries, to anticipate the improvement of the implementation of cross-border and regional cooperation of the new EU external assistance policies (ENPI, IPA) and of territorial cooperation of the Structural Policy (new Objective 3) for the programming period 2007-2013.

▪ **ACTIONS**

- 1) A *Concept Paper* will analyse the new programming methodologies and procedures under the new Neighbourhood Programmes and the next cross-border and regional cooperation window of ENPI and IPA, as well as in territorial cooperation of the Structural Policy; crucial questions and proposals for an articulated, in-depth definition of principles and methods of partnership will be put forward;
- 2) A *stakeholder survey* will compare questions and proposals of the various actors (Commission and its delegations; Central Governments; regional and local authorities; civil society and private sector) to define new models for a more effective partnership in programming;
- 3) A *benchmarking analysis* on INTERREG projects (strand A and B) will identify proposals for improving the partnership in projects elaboration and implementation;
- 4) *Three seminars of policy dialogue* will compare the positions of decentralised and central actors to identify common proposals for the improvement of partnership in joint programming and projects that will be summarized in a *final policy paper*.

Over the past months, the initial activities of the project have been developed, thus laying down the organizational structure of the project.

The first Steering Committee was held in Chiclana de la Frontera (Andalusia) on May 18<sup>th</sup> 2005. The meeting issues were: project start-up, project work plan and timetable validation, partnership agreement approval, working document for the experts' committee presentation, budget allocation.

In the months, which immediately followed, CeSPI prepared a draft of the concept paper. At the same time, the methodology for the stakeholder analysis has been defined through the identification of a reference grid and of the categories of stakeholders themselves. Alongside the methodology, a questionnaire, which each stakeholder will have to complete, has been prepared.

These documents (concept paper and stakeholder analysis methodology) were officially presented during the Expert meeting which was held on the 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> of November in Kozani, Western Macedonia, Greece. After this date, stakeholder analysis, carried out by various experts, has become operational and will,

presumably, be completed in February 2006 with the elaboration and following presentation of a report. At the same time, CeSPI is working on a benchmark analysis methodology which, also on the basis of the results emerged from the stakeholder analysis, will be operational in Spring 2006.

<b>Partners of COMPART</b>	
➤	<b>ITALY</b>
	▪ Tuscany Region (Project leader)
	▪ Friuli Venezia Giulia Region
	▪ Calabria Region
➤	<b>GREECE</b>
	▪ Western Macedonia Region
➤	<b>SPAIN</b>
	▪ FAMSÍ (Andalusia fund of Municipalities for International Solidarity)
➤	<b>BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA</b>
	▪ Serda (Sarajevo Economic Region Development)
➤	<b>CROATIA</b>
	▪ Local Development Agency of Verteneglio
➤	<b>MOROCCO</b>
	▪ Region of Tanger-Tétouan
➤	<b>TUNISIA</b>
	▪ Gouvernorat of Sousse
➤	<b>CRPM</b> – The Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions of Europe
<p>CeSPI (Research Centre on International Politics), as the COMPART Scientific Coordinator.</p>	

**NEWS ON PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES RELATED TO COMPART**

▪ **NEWS ON INTERACT PROJECTS**

*RE-ACT – REGIONAL ACTORS IN INTERREG COOPERATION*

The procedures for the management and planning of programmes which fall within INTERREG III A, are substantially different from each other and, consequently, also the quality of projects in terms of identification, management, partnership building, and coherence with regional and national policies.

Therefore, a more efficient integration of INTERREG programmes' results into regional planning and a stronger involvement of local communities appear necessary.

The project in question attempts to solve the above mentioned problems and its objectives are those of contributing to the improvement of management procedures and of the management capacity of administrative bodies of the various INTERREG programmes.

The foreseen results are: a database of projects, a handbook for the management of INTERREG projects, recommendations for the harmonization of management procedures as well as staff exchanges among the different partners and training seminars.

The project activities started in March 2005: two working groups, respectively for research and for analysis of INTERREG programmes and projects, were created in order to pinpoint best practices. In January-February 2006, the final report prepared by the research group will be carried out whereas the handbook on management procedures should be completed next summer. The total duration of the project is 24 months. The project involves 8 partners belonging to the following countries: Italy, France, Greece, Ireland, Slovenia, Spain and Bosnia-Herzegovina. The Region Emilia-Romagna (Italy) is the Lead Partner for organization.

The total expense forecast for the project amounts to 1,121,500 Euros.

#### *EX-INT – FROM EXTERNAL TO INTERNAL: Managing the transformation of borders and preparing for the New Neighbourhood*

This project lays its roots in the previous cross-border cooperation experiences both within the framework of Community programmes (INTERREG, PHARE) and of initiatives included in bilateral cooperation programmes. These experiences have highlighted the positive results achieved, the difficulties encountered and the existing potential.

Therefore, also in view of the introduction of the new Neighbourhood programmes, the EX-INT project aims, in general, at preparing the operators of involved partners and the stakeholders for the ongoing and future changes in cross-border cooperation and at facilitating the exchange of experiences and know-how of INTERREG programmes. More specifically, EX-INT aims at:

- Gathering and disseminating the experiences of previous cross-border cooperation;
- Favouring the gradual but effective inclusion in INTERREG of new Member States and of countries going through the accession process;
- Using the local know-how and mobilizing local stakeholders.

The project is divided in three phases. The first phase (*forming stage*) foresees the setting up of common structures for project partners; the second stage (*informing stage*) is focused on the dissemination of experiences, on the transfer of instruments and the exchange of best practices; the third phase (*performing stage*) proposes the use of the results of the previous phases during which, once operational, the structures

8

set up, the network and the communication platforms will contribute to the programming and carrying out of cross-border projects and initiatives.

The project activities started in May 2005 and will end in April 2007.

Involved partners belong to three countries, two of which are already members of the European Union, Greece and Cyprus, and the other, Bulgaria, is set to become a member of the Union in 2007. There are 7 partners, out of which the Lead Partner is the Ministry of Macedonia and Thracia (Greece).

The total estimated cost of the project is 1,215,000 Euros.

#### ▪ **NEWS ON THE ESPON PROGRAMME**

Within the framework of the ESPON (European Spatial Planning Observation Network) programme, two initiatives were recently launched.

First item is a thematic study in cross-border cooperation. This study propose to analyse and compare the various ongoing activities addressing cross-border cooperation in the light of ESPON findings in order to draw up proposals for future action, identify gaps and stimulate synergies. The study shall run from December 2005 and July 2006, with an important milestone being a INTERACT event based on the findings of this study, probably June 2006.

The second proposal is the carrying out of a thematic study on polycentric development and rural-urban partnership. This study analyses and compares the various ongoing activities addressing polycentric urban development and rural-urban relationships in order to draw up proposals for future action, identify gaps and stimulate synergies. The study shall run from December 2005 and June 2006, with an important milestone being a INTERACT event based on findings of this study, probably April 2006.

For further information please visit the ESPON website (<http://www.espon.lu>)

#### ▪ **NEWS FROM INTERACT**

##### *Cross-border Cooperation within ENPI and IPA 2007-13*

On 9-10 February and 7-9 March 2006 Interact Point MT is organising three major conferences addressing the cross-border component of ENPI and IPA.

For more information: <http://www.interact-eu.net>

##### *Steps towards Territorial Cooperation Programmes 2007-13*

Two days of workshops and presentations covering the latest developments in the proposals for the new programming period 2007 – 2013 was held in Brussels (25-26 September 2005).

The follow up documentation can be found on INTERACT web site.

## RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

❖ Interact Qualification & Transfer (2005), *Overview of the Draft Regulations for the New Period, 2007-2013*

(<http://www.interact.eu.net/download/application/pdf/890032>)

This is a very interesting and detailed document, which explains the functioning of the new objective 3 on “Territorial cooperation”. Based on an analysis of the draft regulations (General regulation laying down the overall rules for managing the Structural Funds and the ERFD regulation), the document gives a clear overview of the thematic priorities the future programmes should work with, the new cooperation criteria and the content of the operational programmes; it explains the role of the future joint bodies, the monitoring and evaluation procedure, the financial management and controls methodology.

❖ Communication to the Commission, *Implementing and promoting the European Neighbourhood Policy*, 22 November 2005 ([http://europa.eu.int/comm/world/enp/documents/sec\\_2005\\_1521\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/world/enp/documents/sec_2005_1521_en.pdf))

In this communication, the Commission describes the main achievements in implementing the European Neighbourhood Policy since the adoption of the ENP Strategy Paper in May 2004. Moreover the Communication provides an overview of the Commission next tasks for 2006-2007.

❖ European Commission, *Partnership in the 2000-2006 programming period. Analysis of the implementation of the partnership principle*, November 2005 ([http://europa.eu.int/comm/regional\\_policy/source/s/docoffic/official/reports/pdf/partnership\\_report2005.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/regional_policy/source/s/docoffic/official/reports/pdf/partnership_report2005.pdf))

This document describes the perceptions of DG REGIO Desk officers and of social and economic actors regarding the role and involvement of partners (regional and local authorities; social, economic and civil society partners) in the different stages of the programming cycle of the programmes supported by the structural funds (2000-2006).

❖ Council of the European Union, *Financial perspective 2007-2013*, 19 December 2006 ([http://ue.eu.int/ueDocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressData/en/misc/87677.pdf](http://ue.eu.int/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/misc/87677.pdf))

It is the multi annual spending plan that translates into financial terms the Union's policy priorities. It sets the annual maximum amounts (ceilings) of commitments for the main categories of expenditure (called headings) and an overall payments ceiling.

❖ European Commission's Enlargement Directorate General, *Enlargement news*, 21 December 2005 ([http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/docs/newsletter/latest\\_weekly.htm#a3](http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/docs/newsletter/latest_weekly.htm#a3)).

“Enlargement news” appears twice a month, highlighting key developments in the EU, the member states and the aspirant countries. It provides a topical account of the progress, the problems, the preparations and the politics of enlargement.

❖ CEPS, *The Reluctant Debutante. The European Union as Promoter of Democracy in its Neighbourhood*, 2005 ([http://shop.ceps.be/downfree.php?item\\_id=1242](http://shop.ceps.be/downfree.php?item_id=1242))

This paper analyses the role of the EU as promoter of democracy in its neighbourhood from an historical and institutional point of view. On the basis of 6 case studies covering the Balkans, Turkey, Russia and Ukraine, Maghreb and Israel-Palestine this paper illustrates how the EU's democracy promotion has been driven also by several other priorities, such as strategic security, energy supply security, strategic diplomacy, conflicting visions for the future of Europe and world views.

❖ Emerson M., Noutcheva G., *From Barcelona Process to Neighbourhood Policy. Assessments and Open Issues*, 2005 ([http://shop.ceps.be/BookDetail.php?item\\_id=1209](http://shop.ceps.be/BookDetail.php?item_id=1209))

Considering the Barcelona process as an insufficient driving force to have created a momentum for economic, political and social advancement in partner states, the authors propose alternative approaches for ENPI to become a driving force for reform in the region.

❖ Kelly J., *New Wine in Old Wineskins: Policy learning and Adaptation in the new European Neighbourhood policy*, 2005 (<http://www.pubpol.duke.edu/people/faculty/kelley/SAN05-01.pdf>)

In this paper, Kelly defines the European Neighbourhood policy as a prime example of institutional learning and strategic adaptation from enlargement policies. From this starting point, the author tries to answer to the following question: Can the EU promote political reforms in the ENP beneficiary countries without the membership carrot?

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