



3rd NEWSLETTER

May 2011

EDITORIAL

Dear colleagues,

Welcome to the third newsletter of the Learning Network on Transnational Cooperation in ESF, an initiative supported by the European Commission. This issue provides information about examples of transnational events that took place during the last four months.

We sincerely appreciate your contributions and thank you for sending them in. Some of them are published in this newsletter.

Summary information on activities of the Learning Network on Transnational Cooperation in ESF you will find attached to the newsletter.

The next newsletter will be published in September. Between now and then we will be pleased to receive any information on transnational events, activities, and projects under implementation.

Monika Kocábková, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in the Czech Republic

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THE SECOND TRANSNATIONAL PARTNER FORUM ORGANISED BY THE POLISH NATIONAL SUPPORTING INSTITUTION



The second Transnational Partner Forum, 30-31 March 2011, Warsaw

The Polish National Supporting Institution organized a 2nd Transnational Partner Forum on 30 and 31 March 2011 in Warsaw, Poland. Five countries were represented at the Forum - Poland, Sweden, Finland, Germany and Lithuania, with a total of almost 100 participants and 81 projects (46 from Poland, 20 from Sweden, 6 from Finland, 8 from Germany, and 1 from Lithuania). Projects were at different stages of implementation, some of them being at the "project idea" stage, while others had already received funding but hadn't yet started implementation. The Forum was also attended by representatives of the European Commission, AEIDL (the European Association for Information on Local Development), as well as the Learning Network on Transnational Cooperation in ESF.

The main purpose of the Forum was the same as that for the 1st Transnational Partner Forum held in autumn 2010 – i.e. to help projects to find suitable partners. Introductory remarks were thus limited to presentations on the ESF implementation system in each country and to emphasizing the importance of taking cultural differences into consideration while implementing transnational projects. The subsequent round-table discussions provided the Forum's main focus, each



table addressing one of the following themes:

1. Education of youth from disadvantaged backgrounds
2. Labour market
3. Social exclusion
4. Management standards
5. SMEs
6. Exchange of experience
7. Social inclusion

Themes were selected in advance on the basis of fiches prepared by participants describing their projects; these were submitted ahead of time to the National Supporting Institution.

In order to help participants find partners, the discussion at each table was led by a facilitator from Poland, Sweden or Finland. Participants who did not manage to find partners during the first day were assigned to other tables on the second day, thus expanding their chances for success.

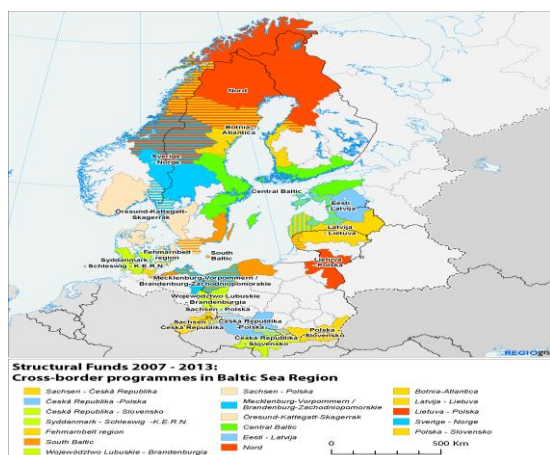
The Forum resulted in almost all participating projects finding potential partners; some of them have already signed a letter of intent concerning future cooperation. In light of the positive feedback received, the National Supporting Institution is organizing a 3rd Forum on 15 and 16 June 2011, also in Warsaw.

Center of European Projects, Poland





PROJECT BALTIC SEA NETWORK ESF



Map of Cross-border programmes in Baltic Sea Region-Source:

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/cooperation/baltic/index_en.htm

The Swedish ESF Council, Managing Authority (MA) for ESF in Sweden, aims to strengthen transnational cooperation between projects funded by ESF in the Member States (MS). A particular focus will be on cooperation between projects and stakeholders in the MSs in the Baltic Sea Region. The Baltic Sea Network ESF project (BSN-ESF) will serve that purpose, for Sweden as well as for the other MSs concerned. The intention is also to analyse the relation and linkage between ESF and the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR). Subsequently, actions will be taken to encourage projects to be better prepared to support the implementation of the social dimension in the EUSBSR.

In the context of BSN-ESF, the existing informal network of MAs in the MSs concerned (Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Sweden) will be consolidated and a number of joint activities will be carried out - conferences, partner search forums, learning seminars, etc. In addition, a common platform for sharing and disseminating information will be developed, covering the network itself, project promoters and stakeholders.

Short and mid term objectives of BSN-ESF:

- establish a common understanding of the role of ESF in relation to the EUSBSR among MAs concerned;
- develop and consolidate the existing informal network between the MAs for identifying policy gaps, exchange of good practices and cooperation in the frame of the ESF;
- facilitate and strengthen transnational cooperation between ESF projects in the Baltic Sea region;
- enhance cooperation between the MSs in the Baltic Sea Region in relation to ESF and its role in the implementation of the EUSBSR; to be linked also to any future, new priorities regarding the social dimension in the EUSBSR.

Long term objectives of BSN-ESF:

- in the context of the new programming period (post 2013), develop and prepare a knowledge base for ESF interventions linked to the EUSBSR, with the aim of strengthening the social dimension in the EUSBSR.

Quantitative targets:

- organizing four regular meetings within the network
- organizing three partner search forums
- organizing at least eight information seminars on transnational cooperation in ESF, to be linked to the Baltic Sea region strategy for project promoters in Sweden
- establishment of a minimum of 30 partnerships between projects in Sweden and other MSs in the Baltic Sea Region
- establishment of a network between the central government agencies concerned, eventually including other relevant organisations, NGOs and social partners





- development of a common information, communication and dissemination platform
- organisation of final conference in 2012.

For more information see
http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/cooperation/baltic/index_en.htm

*Christian Råbergh, Swedish ESF Council,
Sweden*

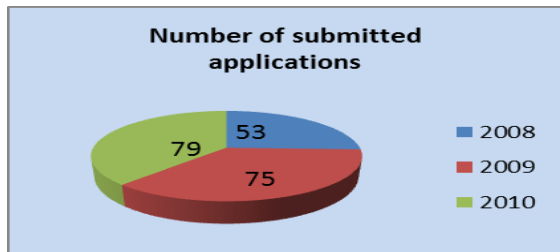
3 YEARS OF TRANSNATIONALITY IN FRANCE: "MIDTERM OVERVIEW"

This article is an excerpt from a longer one published in French on [RACINE's website](#). It intends to give an overview of what has been done in the field of ESF transnational projects over the past three years.

In 2008, after 20 years of involvement in ESF transnational initiatives and programmes, RACINE was made an IB for related actions during the programming period 2007-2013.

Unlike some other Member States, "innovative and transnational actions" comprise a specific measure in the French OP. Responsibility for implementation of the measure is mostly devolved to the regions. The remainder of the measure concerns "national actions" and is the responsibility of RACINE.

Given the significant experience gained from 3 years of implementation and the fact that the programme is about to enter a 2nd phase, now seems an appropriate point to pause and take stock. However, in the absence of EU level technical support during the current programming period, this can only be done at a national level.

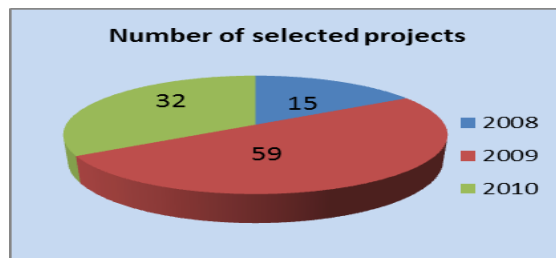


Number of submitted application in 2008, 2009 and 2010, France

What projects can be selected at national level?

Number of selected projects in 2008, 2009 and 2010, France

Since responsibility for most of the



measure rests with the regions, the majority of projects are selected at the regional level. The "national actions" component (17% of the measure's budget) focuses on projects which are implemented at national level, as well as on projects covering at least 3 regions; the latter are more common in this phase of the programme.

Who are the project promoters?

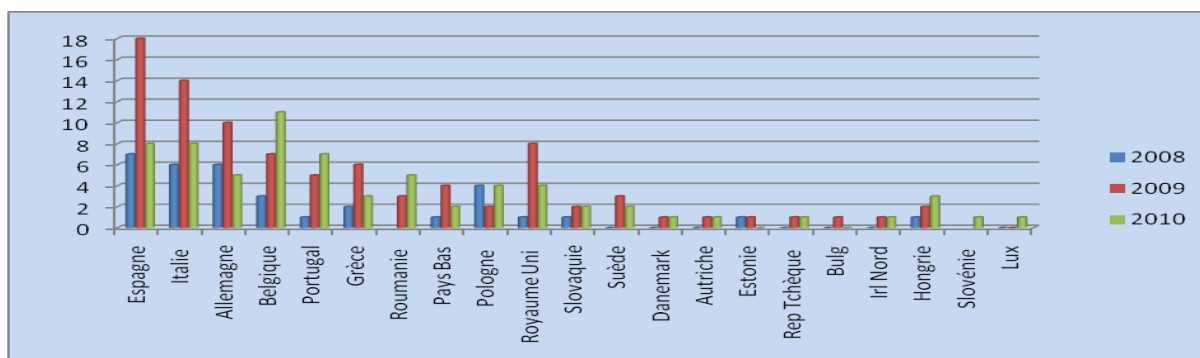
These are mainly small non-profit organisations. Other types of project promoter include Chambers of Commerce, organisations linked to the Ministry of Education, and trade unions.

Due to the large number of multi-regional projects, participation in ESF transnational projects is also open to many regionally based organisations (from at least 14 French regions).

A word on the groups targeted by the projects

While projects generally focus on structural effects rather than clearly defined target groups, each still addresses a specific public. In the French case, these are typically "ESF groups": for example, handicapped people, young drop outs, drugs users, Roma women, and prostitutes.





Country of origin of transnational partners

Details on each project selected can be found at <http://www.annuaire-transnat.fr/>

For further information see www.racine.fr - "transnationalité 2007-2013"

Aurélie Gaulin, RACINE, France

EUROMA

EURoma is a European network made up of representatives of twelve Member States (MSs). Its goal is to promote the use of Structural Funds in connection with Roma related policies and their full inclusion in society.

The primary aims of EURoma are: 1) sharing of strategies, initiatives and approaches, 2) learning based on experience and best practices, and 3) the dissemination and standardisation of such knowledge.

To achieve these objectives, the network uses 2 approaches:

- 1) Transmission and exchange of information through internal and external communication channels;
- 2) Mutual learning - sharing of approaches and strategies, identification and transfer of experience, creation of a forum for the

organisation and management of projects, development of common and horizontal products.

Each participating MS is represented in the network by 2 bodies:

- 1) The ESF Managing Authority or the administrative body to which the former has delegated its authority;
- 2) The MS body responsible for policies addressing the Roma community or the body to which it has delegated its authority.

The MSs participating in the network are Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, and Sweden.

The last meeting of the network took place in Prague on 11 and 12 May 2011. Participants were informed about the problems of social exclusion faced by the Roma in the Czech Republic, and how the





OP “Human Resources and Employment” supports their integration into the wider society. The roles of the Agency for Social Inclusion and the Government Council for Roma Minorities Affairs were also described.

Presentations were given by expert Brian Harvey (on the 1st draft of the EURoma guide for local and regional administrations) and representatives from local authorities (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Italy).

The final version of the EURoma Position Paper on the future Regulations (i.e. those governing the programming period post 2012) was also presented; this was followed by a discussion on possible updates, dissemination options and follow-up in each country in order to see how

MSs could take full advantage of this document.

The EC representative gave an update on recent developments at EU level – on 1) the EU Framework for National Strategies for Roma Integration, 2) the National Reform Programmes, 3) the Europe 2020, 4) follow up on the Amendment to Article 7(2) of the ERDF Regulation, 5) the meeting of the Rome Platform.

The next meeting is planned for Budapest in October 2011.

For more information see
<http://www.euromanet.eu/>

Robert Hřebíček, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in the Czech Republic

A SPANISH TRANSNATIONAL PROJECT - FOSTERING TRANSNATIONAL AND TRANSREGIONAL COOPERATION

The Spanish project “**Fostering Transnational and Trans-regional Cooperation**” was implemented by the Partnership for Employment and Economic Development of Western Vallès, usually referred to as COPEVO, the abbreviation of its title in Catalan (Consorti per l’Ocupació i la Promoció Econòmica del Vallès Occidental). COPEVO was set up in 2006 building upon the experience of a previous Regional Employment Pact for the Vallès Occidental (Western Vallès) which had been signed in 1997. Funded under the Integrated Programme of Active Employment Policies, co-financed by ESF and the Regional Employment Service of Catalonia, it did not constitute a project in the normal sense with a given number of partners, but rather an activity and budget line for COPEVO in the Strategic Plan “Vallès Advances 2008-2013”.

COPEVO is one of the first bodies in Spain that brings together the competent regional authorities and the local actors to promote an area’s economic and employment development. It takes a holistic approach, and deals not only with employment issues but also inward

investment, business development, working relationships and local development.

The project consisted of 2 strands: 1) “**Transnational Relations: Exchange of Experience**” took the form of study visits – either of experts and decision makers from all around Europe to the Western Vallès region in Catalonia to get acquainted with the COPEVO partnership model, or of COPEVO stakeholders to other regions and countries to acquire firsthand knowledge and experience. 2) “**Consolidation of Cooperation Networks and Development of New Projects**” aimed at reinforcing participation in existing networks.

The main goal of the project was to disseminate the COPEVO model of coordinating employment policies and economic development, in which public administrations and social and economic agents (e.g. labour unions, employer associations, NGOs) are active partners. The model has been shared with other organisations at national and European level, and factors supporting or hindering





the model's approach have been analysed closely.

In the context of the Covenant for the Integrated Programme of Active Employment Policies 2008-2009 (The Programming document, the agreement to which the actions presented here are linked, in the framework of the Catalonian ESF programming), COPEVO implemented transnational activities over the course of two years; these took the form, almost exclusively, of study visits. Given the interest in the COPEVO model and its experience with negotiating policy, participation involved a wide variety of entities from across the EU. Relevant details are given below.

The European Commission has identified COPEVO as an example of good practice in the field of territorial cooperation.

The role COPEVO plays is highlighted on the EC's website - its approach to partnership and the consensus that this achieves are considered examples of good practice, a fact confirmed by the numerous visits paid by experts and politicians from across Europe. Some examples are given below.

Date: 4 April 2008

Who: Lithuanian Chambers of Commerce

Activity/purpose: fact finding mission regarding the partnership model employed in the Western Vallès region

Date: 19 May 2009

Who: several regional administrations from Central and Northern Italy - civil servants and officials from departments of education and work and social services on a 1st visit, representatives of Employment Agencies on a 2nd visit.

Activity/purpose: fact finding mission regarding projects aimed at integrating people with special difficulties in the labour market

Date: 3 June 2009

Who: about 30 staff from the Polish Employment Services

Activity/purpose: fact finding mission regarding the management of employment projects

Date: 9 to 13 November 2009

Who: 4 Romanian regions – 20 representatives of the same regions had also visited between 21 and 24 September 2009

Activity/purpose: sharing know-how regarding Local Employment Pacts at regional, provincial and municipal/local level

Date: 1 December 2009

Who: A delegation from Bosnia-Herzegovina; the Directorate of International Relations of the Provincial Administration of Barcelona

Activity/purpose: fact finding mission regarding the partnership model employed in the Western Vallès region. The visit was linked to a project aimed at building the capacity of the Development Agency of the Sarajevo Economic Region; the project was led by the Spanish Agency for Development Cooperation (AECID).

In addition to the above, COPEVO took part in a study visit to Local Development Agencies in Sweden organised by the Province of Barcelona; it also participated in several European conferences or seminars.

BENEFITS OF TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION

By sharing experience with other organisations in the framework of transnational cooperation, we found that we were better able to analyze and evaluate our approach to partnership, and thus to strengthen it. It is often the case that approaches which appear fresh when they are first introduced come to seem routine with the passage of time; transnational cooperation allowed us to see our work in a new light and appreciate its unique character.

The active participation of many members of the COPEVO partnership in transnational cooperation also brought them a deeper understanding of the





partnership's complexity, as well as its reliance on the cooperation of all stakeholders. This then led to an increase in ownership on the part of the partnership's membership.

Even after the Integrated Programme of Active Employment Policies 2008-2009 came to an end, transnational cooperation activities have continued even though no longer financed by ESF and the Regional Employment Service. A few examples are given below.

Date: October 2010

Who: COPEVO

Activity/purpose: Participation in the 1st National Conference on Experience and Good Practices concerning Pacts, Partnerships and Cooperative Networks. The activity took place in the context of the trans-regional project "EMPLEA-NET, Weaving Networks around Employment" financed under the EUROEMPLOEO call for proposals administered by the Andalusian Employment Service. In April 2011 EMPLEA-NET staff in turn visited COPEVO.

Date: November 2010

Who: A delegation from Algeria

Activity/purpose: fact finding mission regarding the Western Vallès Pact and the programmes implemented under it. The study visit took place in the context of a technical assistance programme supporting the Algerian Employment Agency and the Ministry of Labour; it was implemented by the CIREM Foundation and financed by the Spanish Agency for Development Cooperation (AECID). In January 2011 COPEVO staff attended a conference in Algeria.

Date: May 2011

Who: A delegation from Berguedà county, Catalonia

Activity/purpose: fact finding mission regarding COPEVO administered vocational training programmes

Date: July 2011

Who: A delegation from Romania

Activity/purpose: fact finding mission regarding COPEVO's approach to

partnership; exploration of possibilities for cooperation projects between Romania and the Western Vallès region.

Date: 2011

Who: COPEVO

Activity/purpose: Regional and Transnational Forum on employment strategies addressing the effects of the recent economic crisis. At present the Forum represents an initiative from the side of COPEVO and has yet to be organised; support will be sought from the regional and national level.

For more information see

<http://www.consorciocupaciovalles.cat/>

http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/local_employment/lla/fo/best_practices.do?method=prepareEditBestPractice&practiceId=1e27113d16d2dc5d0117ac9119760108

Elena Donate Montoya, Consorci per l'Ocupació i la Promoció Econòmica del Vallès Occidental, Spain

