



NEEBOR (The Network of Eastern External Border Regions) network aims to increase the awareness of EU institutions, member states, regions and local authorities and the civil organizations on both sides of the borders of the weaknesses and strengths of the cross-border region. NEEBOR serves as a platform for open dialogue and coordination of joint actions and initiatives in order to promote the exchange of good practices and enhance cooperation and synergies in the region.

NEEBOR Interreg IVC project (Networking for Enterprises In the Eastern External Border Regions) is a project of 12 partners grown out from the network. The overall objective of the NEEBOR project is to exchange and exploit solutions for a more competitive and innovative SME sector while increasing the efficiency of regional SME development and innovation policies in the external border areas.

APRIL HIGH LEVEL POLITICAL MEETING

The NEEBOR High Level Political Meeting held on 15th of April in Brussels was a hallmark event for both the NEEBOR network and the related Interreg IV C project. After intensive discussions involving regional politicians and experts on regional development issues, the meeting ended with a firm opinion of NEEBOR-future.

Implementation of the decisions made during the meeting will enable NEEBOR to offer more to its members in the field of cooperation, political content, and promotion of Eastern external border issues at the EU level.



NEEBOR ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The upcoming annual NEEBOR conference will be held on 7 - 10 September in Prešov, Slovakia. The theme of the conference is "Innovative Regions in the context of EU Eastern external border".

Various topics are prepared for the discussion such as: 1. Innovation in the context of European policy and external border cooperation 2. Role of regional authorities in the field of innovation 3. Research & Development & Innovation: universities and new trends. 4. Research & Development & Innovation: Relations between universities and private sector.

The annual conference will also provide a special platform for universities, which will gather in Presov to discuss cooperation in the Seventh Framework Programme and joint university degree during the University round table on 9 September 2010. Furthermore, the future NEEBOR collaboration will be discussed by high level representatives.

STAFF EXCHANGE PROGRAMME

During spring 2010 NEEBOR project organized staff exchange programmes. Each region sent at least one participant to other region to gain more in-depth knowledge about the SME development practices in other region. Objective of the programme was to deepen the relations and the understanding of each other's experiences and practices. In generally method was to organise tailored excursions which meet the needs and interest of the visiting region for reaching the best results.

For example Regional Development Agency of Prešov Self-Governing Region (Slovakia) organized one week programme for Észak-Alföld Regional Development Agency (Hungary). During the visit participants became acquainted with Prešov's cooperation practices and programmes with Ukraine as both regions share common border with Ukraine. In addition it was stated that similar economic situation enables regions to share experiences and exchange development practices efficiently. Especially increasing the knowledge of different operational environment between Hungarian and Ukrainian border regions was seen important as it can help to unlock economic potential and make cross-border cooperation easier to SMEs.

In addition to this example ten other staff exchange programmes were organized. More information will be published in www.neebor.eu during the coming months.

INTERREG IVC COMMUNICATION SEMINAR

On 10-11 May 2010, a communication seminar was held for Lead Partners and partners responsible for communication, in Berlin, Germany. The training consisted of various communication workshops such as stakeholder mapping & messages, writing skills for different supports, project websites and social media, media relations, public speaking and presentation skills and event organisation. NEEBOR had the privilege of being one of the presenting organisations when its CO gave a brief introduction of the project and social media applications.



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NEEBOR REGIONAL INFODAYS:

Debrecen

The Europe Day is organised in all EU countries from year to year on the 9 May as a remembrance of the speech of Robert Schuman which is regarded as the first step in the foundation of the European Union. As Észak-Alföld Regional Development Agency Nonprofit Ltd– Lead Partner of the NEEBOR project – is based in Debrecen, this year they organised in cooperation with the Europe Direct local office the above mentioned event.

There was a contest for high-school students for preparing a school newspaper in which the NEEBOR project had a short introduction. After the announcement of results the editors of the best newspaper were asked to take part on the Europe Day organised on the 15 May.

On this event our aim was to disseminate information about the NEEBOR project on a very informal way. Interested



people could test their knowledge, play different games at the 'active' tents and throughout the day they got information about our project, too. There were also some questions about the NEEBOR project during the quiz, for which answers could have been found in some of the dissemination materials. Also the project managers of the project were there to be able to bring the activities closer to everyday people.

It was a great opportunity to increase public awareness on NEEBOR project through such a public event, where people can obtain information about the project in a more friendly and informal way.

North Karelia

NEEBOR project took part to the EU information day which was held on 26th of March in Joensuu, North Karelia. Day's theme was *border* - how does location on EU's eastern border appears in North Karelians' everyday life. Event was open to all and during the day there were many different events such as panel discussions, interviews and exhibition of EU projects and related organizations. Event gathered many politicians, officers and experts to Joensuu to discuss the day's theme.

NEEBOR project had a stand in the exhibition and as an INTERREG IVC project it received a lot of positive reactions from the public as they were interested to hear about the international cooperation between EU regions, effects of the cooperation to regional development and overall objectives of the NEEBOR project.

Main organisers of the event were Europe Information of Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, European Commission Representation in Finland, European Parliament Information Office in Finland and Parliament Information Department.

During the May and June NEEBOR project and network will be presented in North Karelia to regional organisations, politicians, entrepreneurs and other interest groups based on the discussion held in NEEBOR high level meeting in Brussels on 15th April 2010. Objective of these infos is to inform about the network, to get regional actors more involved to NEEBOR cooperation and to discuss the ideas concerning the future of the network.

Region of East Macedonia & Thrace

With the great response of the business community of the Prefecture of Drama, the Region of East Macedonia - Thrace and the Chamber of Drama organised -on the 21st April 2010-, the Info-Day of project NEEBOR.

The theme of the Info-Day was 'Cross-border Cooperation & the Development of Entrepreneurship in the Eastern External Borders of the E.U. - The perspectives which are highlighted through'. The President of the Chamber -Mr K. Charakidis- gave a welcome speech, while Mr Spyros Arseniou -Advisor of the Secretary General- and Mr Vasilis Lepidas -Project Co-ordinator, European Projects Office- presented the project and its good practices to the entrepreneurs of the Prefecture.



The debate has been co-ordinated by Mr Alkis Papademetriou, Responsible for the European Projects Office of the Chamber of Drama. Many local entrepreneurs honoured the meeting with their presence. After the conclusion of the Info-Day, a meeting was organised between the Secretary General of REMTH -Ms Theodora Kokla- and many entrepreneurs of the local business community.

South Transdanubia

The South Transdanubian Regional Development Agency organised a NEEBOR regional infoday on 5th May 2010. in Pécs, the European Capital of Culture 2010. The event was focusing on the presentation of the achievements of the NEEBOR project this far (analyses, good practices, contacts with the relevant stakeholders in the Croatian-Hungarian border region). The event was co-organised with the opening conference of the Hu-Cro IPA CBC project called CROST-II. This project is focusing on the knowledge transfer and preparation of common cross border projects in the Hungarian Croatian border zone, amongst others in the field of common economic development. The regional infoday was attended with 105 participants not only from the Hu-Cro border zone, but also from Zagreb, the capital of Croatia, too.