



INTERREG IVC East Area Perspective

# EXPERIENCE – COOPERATION – DEVELOPMENT

## Regions of Enlarged Europe Sharing Solutions



**European Union**  
European Regional Development Fund



**INTERREG IVC**

INNOVATION & ENVIRONMENT  
REGIONS OF EUROPE SHARING SOLUTIONS

COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

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**COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN  
PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL  
COMMITTEE, THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS AND THE EUROPEAN  
CENTRAL BANK**

**Five years of an enlarged EU  
– Economic achievements and challenges –**

{SEC(2009) 177}

Twelve countries from Central and Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean joined the European Union in two waves in 2004 and 2007. This was the biggest ever enlargement of the EU and a historic step towards unifying Europe after several decades of division resulting from the Cold War. Five years after the 2004 accessions, the enlargement has emerged as a major success for the EU and its citizens, fulfilling one of the original purposes of European integration.

The enlargement, by hastening the pace of structural reforms, has also better prepared Europe to embrace the benefits and tackle the challenges of globalisation by making it more competitive in the world. An enlarged EU also carries more weight when addressing issues of global importance such as climate change or the international financial crisis. Overall, the accession of 12 new Member States has increased the weight of the EU in the world and made it a stronger international player, in both economic and political terms.

*“Entrepreneurs and citizens throughout the enlarged EU  
have experienced clear benefits.”*

*“The latest enlargements  
of the European Union have brought greater economic  
prosperity for all EU citizens and made Europe a stronger player in the world  
economy.”*

*“The accession process has  
contributed to significantly improve living standards in the  
new Member States, fostering economic and social cohesion  
within the Union.”*





## INTERREG IVC Truly European Actions!

The European Union is not just common policies, common law and institutions. Neither is it limited to the joint funds, the usage of which becomes more and more visible in almost every sphere of public life in Poland and in other Member States.

The European Union is first of all people living in different countries and engaging in the activities of their local communities, companies, schools, universities and other organizations. No common policies or institutions would be in place, were it not for the joint activities undertaken in support of cooperation among the citizens of the EU. Investing organizational and financial efforts in the construction of partnership and mutual trust also contributed to this.

The Interregional Cooperation Programme INTERREG IVC, a successor of the INTERREG IIIC programmes in years 2000-2006, supports joint activities among regions of Europe, focusing on public authorities responsible for regional policy development. INTERREG IVC, which promotes interregional cooperation, is aimed at the regions that are aware of the significance of cooperation and development. It is targeted at the regions willing to share and exchange their experience. And even though the regions' experience can sometimes be similar, they may be using completely different methods.

International contacts, exchange of experience and, first of all, the joint work on new and interesting ideas is very enriching and it builds up mutual trust, relations and the capacity of regions. Such cooperation opens new horizons and offers new opportunities that have not been noticed before. It often becomes a basis for concrete economic and innovative undertakings or even a platform for common, larger investments. What counts most is the willingness and readiness to cooperate as well as to meet and work with others.



INTERREG IVC, having at its disposal previous experience and a team of professional staff, provides assistance with making international contacts and in creating joint undertakings. The Information Point East of INTERREG IVC programme is the first unit of this type established in Poland, which serves all the interested in interregional cooperation from eight countries in the Central and South-Eastern Europe.

Already the first contact with this Programme proves that one has to do with truly interregional activities which fill the process of European integration with a real and concrete contents. I am convinced that in the future the European Union will be, to an even larger extent, investing in programmes such as INTERREG IIIC and IVC and other ones which realize similar goals. Supporting international and interregional cooperation is and will be one of the most effective and necessary undertakings which build relations within the European Union.

*Jan Olbrycht*  
Vice-Chairman of the  
European Parliament's Committee on Regional Development



## Europe is cooperation!

Interregional cooperation has developed hand in hand with European integration, providing concrete tools and measures to identify what works, and what does not, in terms of regional development policy. Interregional cooperation in Europe is unique in its ability to allow diverse regions of Europe work together, to share experience and find solutions to common problems. It also has an objective to allow more and less advanced regions to work together.

This brochure – produced by the INTERREG IVC East Information Point – examines how the eight countries of this East area have benefitted from interregional cooperation projects. Austria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Bulgaria and Romania: five years ago, only Austria was a full EU member. Five years after the most ambitious enlargement of the EU (ten new states including Cyprus, Malta, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia), we are celebrating this event with a brochure, allowing a glimpse into how interregional cooperation has benefitted not only these countries in the East, but Europe as a whole.

During the 2000-2006 period, “third countries” were able to participate in interregional cooperation, through the INTERREG IIC programme. Two hundred partners availed of this opportunity, including 49 partners from Romania and Bulgaria – two countries that, as newly full members of the EU from 2007, are a priority for the INTERREG IVC programme today. Recognising the value of this approach, territorial cooperation, including interregional cooperation, has become a full objective of the EC’s Cohesion Policy.

The INTERREG IVC programme, running from 2007-2013, focuses on two clear priorities: Innovation and the knowledge economy, and Environment and risk prevention. Following the approval of the first



round of projects, almost 28% of the partners come from the East area.

As head of the programme secretariat, I am very proud of the performance achieved in such a short period of time by our Information Point team in Katowice, thanks to the Polish Ministry for Regional Development.

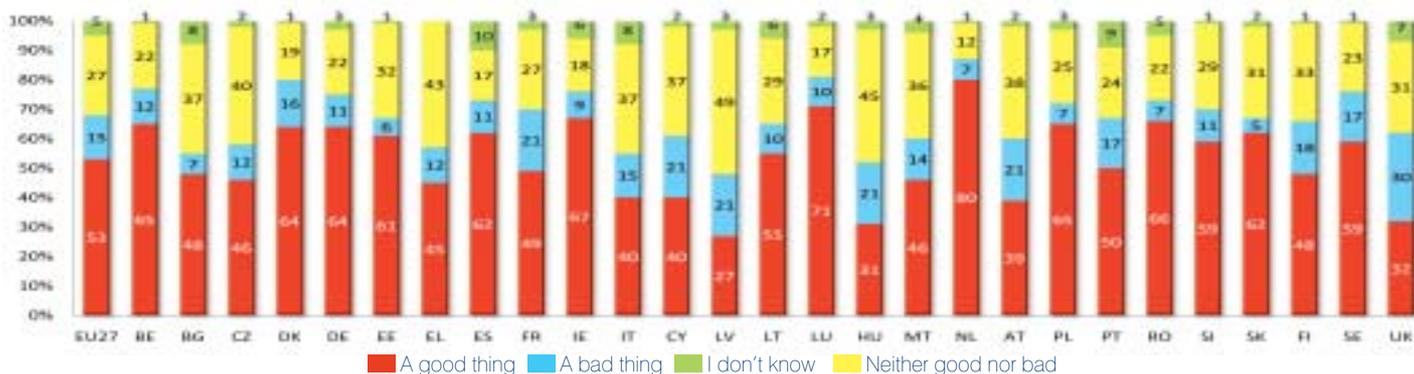
This brochure is an initiative designed to help regional and local authorities capitalise on successful exchanges of good practice. At this time of economic uncertainty, it is clear that interregional cooperation has an important role to play in boosting the economic competitiveness of regions – not only from the “new” Member States – and may alleviate the impact of the crisis. The examples in this brochure are just a sample of the ways in which the East area, and Europe as a result, have benefitted from cooperation with neighbours, near and far. We put it forward as a modest example of cooperation for success.



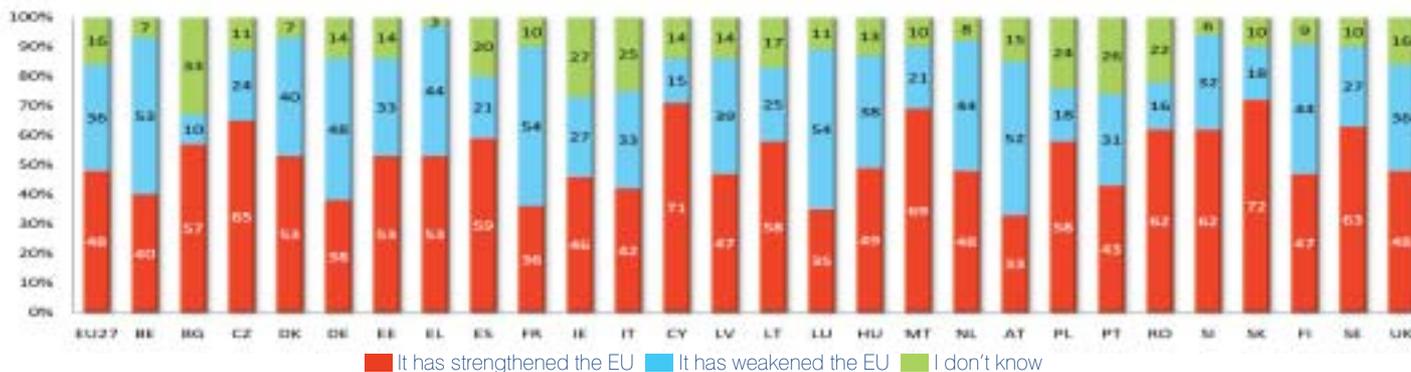
Michel Lamblin  
 INTERREG IVC Programme Director



Generally speaking, do you think that your country's membership of the European Union is...?



Since 2004 the European Union enlarged from 15 to 27 countries.  
Overall, how would you judge this enlargement of the European Union?





## INTRODUCTION

The INTERREG IVC Information Point East (IP East) has a pleasure of presenting a brochure entitled *“EXPERIENCE – COOPERATION – DEVELOPMENT. Regions of Enlarged Europe Sharing Solutions. East Area Perspective”*.

The 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the European Union enlargement in 2004 was the inspiration for us to reflect on achievements of the new Member States in the field of interregional cooperation. The selected examples included in the present publication focus on the eight countries within the IP East scope of activity: the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Romania and Austria, identified by the programme as East area. Thus the overall aim of this publication is to demonstrate the involvement of countries from the programme “East area” in interregional cooperation projects within INTERREG IIIC and INTERREG IVC programmes in the context of the European Union enlargement.

In order to show the capitalisation nature of INTERREG IVC programme, which means building on experience, another selection criterion assumed the identification of only such partners who participated both in IIIC and IVC programmes. Therefore, in the brochure you will find project partners from the new Member States which joined the European Union in 2004 (CZ, HU, PL, SK, SI) and those of the enlargement in 2007 (BG, RO). The perspective of the new Member States is matched with the experience and views of an Austrian partner – the old Member States’ representative – which are stemming from the cooperation with partners from the new Member States.

Direct contacts with project partners and data gathered by means of a questionnaire developed by the IP East were basic sources of information to be included in the brochure. In the questionnaire partners were asked about their first steps in interregional cooperation, the EU enlargement impact and challenges, as well as major project achievements and benefits for their region in a longer perspective. They also shared their general impressions on interregional cooperation and on exchanging experience among European regions in the time-span of the last 5 years.

The contents of this publication therefore gives an overview of the selected joint activities implemented by the European regions, targeted at the improvement of regional policies. The brochure also outlines some popular tendencies and themes of interregional cooperation within INTERREG IIIC and INTERREG IVC programmes.

*Katowice, May 2009*

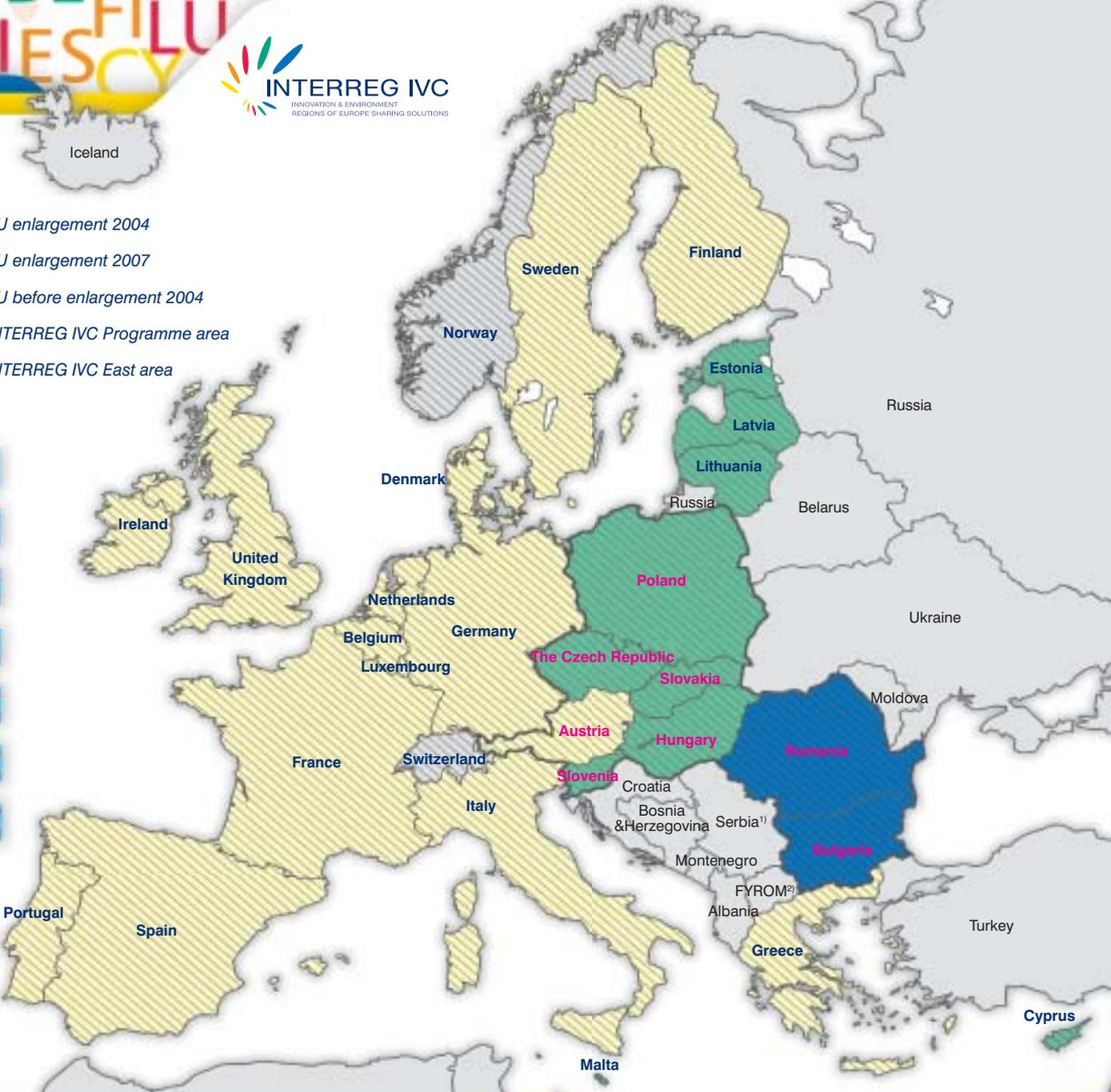




Iceland

- EU enlargement 2004
- EU enlargement 2007
- EU before enlargement 2004
- INTERREG IVC Programme area
- INTERREG IVC East area

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1) Serbia: including Kosovo, under the auspices of the United Nations, pursuant to UN Security Council Resolution 1244 of 10 June 1999  
 2) FYROM: Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia



## Overview of the INTERREG IVC East area partners' perspective

The enlargement of the European Union gave new opportunities to the European regions.

In 2004 the public authorities as well as other bodies dealing with the regional issues were able to begin interregional cooperation in a wider dimension. Partners coming from ten new Member States (NMS) for the very first time could act as full partners in the INTERREG IIC programmes' projects. Many of the partners decided to continue cooperation in the new programming period. In 2007, having welcomed Bulgaria and Romania among the EU countries, the INTERREG IVC programme was launched. Thus, the circle of bodies interested in interregional cooperation has been significantly extended in Europe.

### **Starting point of the cooperation (INTERREG IIC programmes)**

According to the information provided in the questionnaires, it is noticeable that for many institutions from NMS, previously existing cooperation (e.g. bilateral cooperation, twinning etc.) constituted a basis for the IIC projects. In some cases the cooperation was initiated by a foreign partner, in other instances the working solutions observed while on visits in other regions were an inspiration. Furthermore, there were some major factors connected with the European Union enlargement, which influenced the decisions about getting involved in interregional projects. It was especially the new perspective for development which attracted NMS, as indicate the surveyed bodies. On the other hand, also the access to new sources of funding as well as the availability of new measures and types of cooperation were pointed as main factors regarding the establishment of interregional cooperation. Asked about the major motivation for getting involved in such operations, the prevailing majority indicated the common problems shared with other regions and/or other European institutions. In addition, the awareness that there were some fields that needed improvement made partners look for good solutions.

As for the IIC projects' results, the main benefit for partners was the possibility of learning from others and building on results achieved by others. The IIC projects turned out to be important in terms of strengthening the capacity of the participating institutions. The opportunity to work with experts and human resources development is very important from the partners' point of view. Apart from it, these joint operations are associated with promotion of the regions as well as extension of foreign cooperation. In some regions there have been measurable effects (establishment of cluster), in others long-term influence on shaping regional or local policies is expected. Last but not least, the partners from the NMS appreciated the old Member States' (old MS) willingness to share knowledge and benefited from cross-cultural working environment.



### Capitalising on the results (INTERREG IVC programme)

Although challenging, the INTERREG IIIC projects were perceived as a good tool for exchanging experience among European regions. The “Interregional Cooperation Programme INTERREG IVC”, built upon the achievements of IIIC programmes, allows for making use of many good practices. Thus, the old MS, NMS and the newcomers from Bulgaria and Romania have the possibility to jointly deal with specific issues, which contemporary Europe is facing.

Protecting nature and biodiversity, climate change, energy strategies, technology development etc. are now subjects of common projects. Nowadays, partners from the NMS are much more familiar with this type of “soft” cooperation and feel more comfortable undertaking the role of the lead partner. Taking advantage of the experience already gained and being better prepared for the possibilities



offered by the programme, partners implement either classical Regional Initiative Projects or Capitalisation Projects. INTERREG IVC, modified in comparison with IIIC, enables synergy building between the EU Structural Funds programmes (i.e. Convergence, Regional Competitiveness and Employment and other European Territorial Cooperation programmes). The more demanding type of operation – capitalisation project, enjoys popularity and regions are willing to cooperate in order to enhance implementation of e.g. regional or even national operational programmes.

The INTERREG IVC cooperation area covers the entire territory of the EU with its 27 Member States, including insular and outermost areas. Norway and Switzerland are also full members of the programme. In this respect it is true that interregional cooperation is the only ‘type’ of cooperation where all the EU regions can work together.

So far two calls for proposals were already launched under the INTERREG IVC. Both attracted great interest and nearly 500 applications were submitted in each. Applicants from the East area demonstrated high activity in the programme, and what was noticeable was the growing recognition of the benefits of the interregional cooperation. Under the first call 41 projects were approved. Within the approved operations there are 120 project partners coming from the East area. Since the partners began implementing the first approved operations in 2008, the results will be visible in a longer perspective. The expectations are that the interregional cooperation will affect the regional policies and will considerably contribute to their improvement.





### EU citizens' perspective

For the purpose of illustrating the attitude towards the EU enlargement from a wider perspective, we publish samples of opinion polls conducted among the EU citizens in 2008. Respondents expressed their opinion on the EU enlargement and membership as well as on regional policy. Based on the findings, it appears that all the countries, which joined the EU in 2004 and 2007 are of the opinion that the membership of the European Union is a good thing. Also the old Member States shared this view by expressing their positive attitude. Even though among both NMS and old MS respondents there was a noticeable percentage of the undecided, the majority appreciate being a part of the EU. The EU enlargement from 15 to 27 countries contributed to the EU strengthening according to all NMS. In some old MS not the whole society supports this opinion, however, taking into account the overall data from all 27 EU countries, the most are in favour of the both enlargements. The respective charts demonstrate also the level of awareness of support received in the framework of the EU Regional Policy among the NMS and the newcomers. In this group dominate the countries where the citizens are aware that their regions and cities receive support, however, still there are some countries in which the level of awareness is not satisfactory. A significant number of the respondents admitted that the support is perceptible.



Thanks to the partners' contribution we are able to provide you with examples of projects which, we believe, are a good illustration of the opportunities offered by the INTERREG IVC programme and will make you interested in interregional cooperation.

### INTERREG IVC Information Point East team

*Agnieszka Błasiak*  
*Agnieszka Kmieciak-Mikusek*  
*Anna Stol*  
*Zornitsa Tsoneva*





## First steps in interregional cooperation

Olomouc Regional Authority got involved in the INTERREG IIIC project **BRISE** – Boosting Regional Information Society Expertise (Network) focused on the promotion of Information and Communications Technology clusters and the way they attract business, investments and technology transfer. The Olomouc Authority benefited from staff exchanges, thematic workshops and contributed to the Working Groups operation in the following areas: eGovernment, Broadband, Inward Investment, eLearning and eBusiness. The Region also organized an international conference “i2010 for

*“We think that all information we have gained thanks to the participation in the projects BRISE and PIKE is very useful for future decisions in this field and we hope that we’ll never be forced ‘to reinvent the wheel’.”*

Cities and Regions”, with the participation of European Commission representatives. During the conference the existing innovation in regional and local government, as well as achievements funded by the European Commission and by national and regional programmes were presented. In the long term, BRISE is contributing to job creation, improved broadband capacity and the development of specialised ICT clusters.

## Involvement in INTERREG IVC

Five of the BRISE partners, including Olomouc Region, inspired by the good practices, decided to give new perspective to their cooperation and extended their partnership by inviting new partners with different socio-economic background. This new initiative is now supported by INTERREG IVC. **PIKE** project builds upon the achievements of the partners and aims at improving regional and local Innovation & Knowledge Economy policies through the exchange, sharing and transfer of good practices. For the Region this also entails the integration of these good practices into the Regional Competitiveness and Employment policies mainstream programmes. Olomouc has already begun its participation in a series of study visits to get first-hand experience of 4 good practices: Online Planning Services, Strategic Plan eLocal, Integrated Aid System (better relations between citizens and administrations) and Wireless City (based on the broadband technology). The Czech partner will work for the improvement of its regional eGovernment and wireless broadband policies and instruments. To this end Olomouc Region will develop an Action Plan which will address the national Integrated Operational Programme in which the ICT theme is included. PIKE is labelled a *Fast Track* project by the European Commission.



### INTERREG IVC Project – PIKE

Title	Promoting Innovation and the Knowledge Economy
Type of operation	Capitalisation Project
Priority 1	Innovation and the knowledge economy
Subtheme	the Information Society
Total budget	1,665,523.00 EUR
ERDF Funding	1,284,668.87 EUR
Lead Partner	ERNACT European Economic Interest Grouping, IE
Partnership	IE, CZ, UK, ES, SE, IT, BG, EL





*“The new Member State partners tended to see the project work as a capacity-building effort, because they were hoping to gain from the more experienced partners. This was probably the case in most INTERREG IIIC projects. However, with time it is clear that the new Member States are gaining confidence and valuable experience in the EU policies and programmes, and they have plenty to offer to cooperation projects.”*

## First steps in interregional cooperation

The Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe (REC) saw great opportunities in the INTERREG IIIC programme when it joined the **GRDP** – Greening Regional Development programmes project (Network). Like most of the environmental bodies in NMS the REC was generally overwhelmed with the responsibility of managing resources from the Structural and the Cohesion Funds, in addition to the implementation of the environmental *acquis*. Therefore, checking the notes with more experienced old Member States was important. The major objective of GRDP project was to develop a common European methodology for integrating environmental sustainability within regional development programmes across Europe. The Hungarian partner gave its input by sharing its extensive expertise in environment preservation and by being actively involved in the preparation of project deliverables. The REC was also responsible for dissemination of the project results in Central and Eastern

Europe regions thus interacting with all new Member States. In the end, the GRDP project put emphasis on the concept of environmental “integration” across all types of regional development programmes, not just those governed by the EU environmental policy.

The REC team admits that this horizontal approach to regional development programmes, which affected institutional arrangements, programme set-ups, human resource capacity and many other issues, was new for most NMS, and the exposure to this type of thinking was very valuable. GRDP project results were acknowledged by many EU Member States and the European Commission.

## Involvement in INTERREG IVC

GRDP project partners decided to continue working together in the INTERREG IVC project **RSC** – Regions for Sustainable Change, building upon the previous successful cooperation.

This time it is the Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe that acts as Lead Partner. The main aim of the op-

eration is to promote an EU-wide shift to climate-friendly economies by developing the potential of regional development programmes to stimulate mitigation and adaptation to climate change. The project will carry out a macro-economic analysis of three partners’ carbon economies to identify opportunities for and the costs and effects of moving to a low carbon economy. The project will also investigate and compare Strategic Environmental Analysis and sustainability assessment approaches across the partnership. In addition, the partners will have the chance to carry out pilot actions, such as the preparation of a carbon footprint of regional development programmes. The partnership will jointly develop a methodological handbook with guidelines for integration of climate change issues into regional policies and for moving towards low carbon economy in their economic development programmes.



### INTERREG IVC Project - RSC

Title	Regions for Sustainable Change
Type of operation	Regional Initiative Project
Priority 2	Environment and the risk prevention
Subtheme	Natural and technological risks (including climate change)
Total budget	2,099,980.64 EUR
ERDF Funding	1,661,380.72 EUR
Lead Partner	The Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe, HU
Partnership	UK, HU, AT, ES, BG, IT, MT, PL





*“The exchange of experiences from different contexts and knowledge transfer appear to give the most added value of working in partnership.”*

## First steps in interregional cooperation

The Marshal Office of the Malopolska Region was invited by the Lead Partner of the INTERREG IIC project **GROW** – Choosing to grow and to deliver a joint implementation of the Lisbon and Gothenburg Agenda (Regional Framework Operation) to join four other European high growth regions sharing the same vision of “Smart Growth” instead of “growth at all cost”. The overall objective of the GROW project was to establish a framework of cooperation encouraging multinational projects in order to overcome common problems: transport congestion, pressure on land and resources, skills shortages, an uneven rate of development and to balance social, environmental and economic constraints to achieve sustaina-

ble growth. Within the GROW project 2 calls were organised and 16 interregional sub-projects under the 3 overall themes were realised. The sub-projects enabled the cooperation of many institutions coming from each participating region. The Polish partner succeeded in catalysing certain regional changes by bringing together organisations from social, business and environmental backgrounds in a joint effort and it strengthened its staff capacity in European Territorial Cooperation. Based on the experience the Region prepared one of the specifications for the Malopolska Regional Operational Programme 2007-2013.

## Involvement in INTERREG IVC

The Malopolska Region decided to continue the form of cooperation including sub-projects in the IVC project **PEOPLE**, which focuses on how long-term policy actions (in different areas) can be transferred and applied by regions to enhance productivity, employment and cohesion in the context of demographic and societal changes. The other example of the Region’s interregional engagement is **B3 Regions** project which intends to match less experienced regions with more advanced ones, with regard to broadband implementation in remote and rural areas. It involves 16 partners from 8 EU countries aiming at the improvement of their innovation policies by transferring best practices related to regional implementation of ICT connections into 2007-2013 Structural Funds programmes.

B3 Regions project has given Malopolska impetus to their international cooperation in a new field, and it supports with know-how their breakthrough information society project called “Malopolska Broadband Network” (MBN). The MBN, when implemented, will assure access to broadband services for 90,5% of households and 100% of public institutions and businesses in the Malopolska region. The contribution of B3 Regions is vital, hence it is planned to be transferred into the Malopolska Regional Operational Programme. According to the Region, INTERREG IVC gives a chance to cooperate and learn from European leaders. B3 Regions is labelled a *Fast Track* project by the European Commission.



### INTERREG IVC Project - B3Regions

Title	Regions for Better Broadband connection
Type of operation	Capitalisation Project
Priority 1	Innovation and the knowledge economy
Subtheme	The Information Society
Total budget	3,495,380.69 EUR
ERDF Funding	2,826,181.94 EUR
Lead Partner	Piedmont Region, IT
Partnership	IT, UK, HU, EL, BG, ES, CY, PL



*“INTERREG IVC programme is an excellent opportunity to exchange experiences with other European regions and to learn from them about their policies, experiences, successes.”*



## First steps in interregional cooperation

Banska Bystrica Self-Governing Region was involved in the INTERREG III C **CLOE** – Clusters Linked over Europe (Individual project). The regional authorities participated in several good practice workshops dedicated to cluster initiatives and were able to get first-hand experience in developing clusters by visiting more advanced partner regions. The direct benefits gained were the knowledge on cluster management and cluster processes (establishment and development of clusters) and how clusters are supported by the public bodies in other European regions. Based on the know-how acquired through the CLOE cooperation the first Slovak Engineering Cluster has been established and other similar initiatives in wood-processing, IT and tourism are currently on the way.



Event held within CLOE Project

## Involvement in INTERREG IVC

Banska Bystrica Self-Governing Region is now participating in the **ERIK ACTION** project. The operation aims at upgrading the innovation capacity of businesses through regional innovation support services. Every partner region will develop its own regional action plan which will be signed by the managing authority responsible for relevant Regional Operational Programmes (ROPs). The Slovakian region has selected 4 good practices to be prepared for implementation under the national mainstream programmes: “Innovation in wood sector” (Greece), “Trainee in time” (Sweden), “Innovation assistant” (Austria) and “HeliceNet” (Spain). The expected result will be an action plan for transferring of these practices in several Operational Programmes – OP Competitiveness and economic growth, OP Employment and social inclusion and OP Transport. ERIK ACTION is labelled a *Fast Track* project by the European Commission. Now the Commission provides the partners with guidance in the process of action plan development.



### INTERREG IVC Project - ERIK ACTION

Title	ERIK ACTION - Upgrading the innovation capacity of existing firms
Type of operation	Capitalisation Project
Priority 1	Innovation and the knowledge economy
Subtheme	Innovation, research and technology development
Total budget	1,893,784.00 EUR
ERDF Funding	1,464,640.00 EUR
Lead Partner	Regional Government of Tuscany, IT
Partnership	AT, IT, PT, ES, SK, FR, BE, RO, SE, EL





## First steps in interregional cooperation

Municipality of Maribor cooperated with the City of Graz in drafting its Local Agenda 21. These contacts encouraged the municipality to take part in the IIC project **ÖKOPROFIT** international – Private – Public Partnership Networks for a Sustainable Development of Policies and Society (Individual type). The operation’s main purpose was to transfer knowledge on sustainable urban development to partner regions, especially from NMS, and thus increase eco-efficiency of small and medium-sized companies. The ÖKOPROFIT model has been consequently widely spread in Europe, including the Slovenian partner from Maribor. Thanks to the experience

*“The implementation [of the INTERREG IIC project] enabled the local community to establish dialogue with companies on environmental protection and public services. Cooperation and experience exchange with other project cities was also very important and useful.”*

gained in the project the municipality created a network between the businesses, authorities and universities on its territory. Also special programmes were implemented for many companies based in Maribor, their problems were included in municipal legislation and reflected in local environmental projects. The implementation of specific policy measures already resulted in more efficient production, lower costs and in a reduction in the emissions of pollutants.

## Involvement in INTERREG IVC

The Municipality of Maribor is a partner in the INTERREG IVC project **CITEAIR II**, which is a successor of the INTERREG IIC CITEAIR operation (Individual Project). The main aim of CITEAIR II is to jointly identify, test and transfer good practices through exchange of experiences and to improve regional policies in the area of air quality protection, sustainable transport and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. The Maribor Municipality intends to contribute to the exchange of know-how and the compilation of three good practice guides related to sustainable traffic/congestion indicator (TCI), integrated emission inventories for pollutants and CO<sub>2</sub>, as well as urban air quality forecast with three levels of complexity. The Slovenian partner will be one of the partner regions where the good practices identified in the operation will be tested. The final effect that Maribor seeks is the acquired practical experience on urban air quality, sustainable transport, emission reduction, climate change and mitigation measures, which will enable the development of relevant policy instruments.



INTERREG IVC Project - CITEAIR II	
Title	Common Information to European Air
Type of operation	Regional Initiative Project
Priority 2	Environment and the risk prevention
Subtheme	Biodiversity and preservation of natural heritage (including air quality)
Total budget	1,986,697.00 EUR
ERDF Funding	1,517,395.45 EUR
Lead Partner	Airparif, FR
Partnership	NL, IT, FR, BE, CZ, BG, SI, ES



*“The European programme for interregional cooperation is a chance for the regions to get together, work together and have a common success to the benefit of the people.”*



## First steps in interregional cooperation

Vratsa Regional Administration acknowledges that interregional cooperation is a special tool for mutual learning and finding solutions to regional development problems. Project **CENTURIO** – Exchanging experiences, fostering interregional cooperation and strengthening Regions’ self-development (Network) was supported by the INTERREG IIIC programme. The project gave the Bulgarian partner the opportunity for staff exchange with the Italian partner from the Autonomous Province of Trento which resulted in enhanced knowledge of the EU funded environmental projects. Later on Vratsa hosted a study visit and a seminar related to environment preservation policies.

Within the framework of **MEDITERRITAGE** Regional Framework Operation, Vratsa Regional Administration acquired know-how in promotion and preservation of cultural heritage and mountainous areas. The institution participated in three sub-projects: WINOLIVE aimed at promotion of local products and tourist areas; NEST focused on supporting tourist activities in the field of vocational tourism, based on the tradition and preserving the environment; and PASSAME dealing with the balanced socio-economic development of partner regions through the promotion of local aromas and flavours.



## Involvement in INTERREG IVC

The new programming period brought about the need for sustainability of results previously achieved in interregional cooperation. At present Vratsa Region is a partner in the **EuroPROC** project. The project focuses on the increase of competitiveness of the EU regions and facilitation of the participation of SMEs in the EU public procurement (including Structural Funds). The new policy measures and approaches developed as a result of the project will have immediate impact on the updated Vratsa Strategy for Regional Development.



### INTERREG IVC Project - EuroPROC

Title	EU Regional Cooperation for SMEs access to Public Procurement
Type of operation	Regional Initiative Project
Priority 1	Innovation and the knowledge economy
Subtheme	Entrepreneurship and SMEs
Total budget	1,513,780.10 EUR
ERDF Funding	1,198,516.51 EUR
Lead Partner	Consortium for the Trade Promotion of Catalonia (COPCA), ES
Partnership	FR, DK, IT, RO, PT, PL, CZ, BG, HU





## First steps in interregional cooperation

The local authority of Maramures was one of the partners in the INTERREG IIIC project **CENTURIO** – Exchanging experiences, fostering interregional cooperation and strengthening Regions' self-development (Network). The project's goal was the exchange of experiences in three major fields of sustainable development: environment, economic development and tourism. The CENTURIO partnership involved both regions from old Member States, as well as from new Member States (2004 enlargement) and then candidate countries (Romania and Bulgaria). Coming from a candidate country, Maramures did not have access to programme funding but, nevertheless, the County Council benefited from the cooperation, especially from the study visits and the workshops. Maramures was presented with a recognition award for its exemplary advertising campaign as part of CENTURIO project. Still the Romanian partner claims that most important are the cooperation relations established between the project partners.

## Involvement in INTERREG IVC

The good partner relations from the IIIC project proved beneficial for the Maramures County Council, which at present participates in two INTERREG IVC projects. **MINI EUROPE** focuses on the elaboration of innovative instruments for SMEs development and on promoting a strategy for supporting SMEs' capacity for innovation and tech-

*"A lot of new opportunities are opened for us: Structural Funds, financial schemes and mechanisms that could help us solve our problems. The interregional cooperation is a means to have access to these funds and to participate in common projects."*



nological transfer from the scientific sector. The cooperation in the framework of **MORE4NRG** will lead to strengthening the delivery of regional strategies for renewable energy sources and energy efficiency. This aim will be achieved by exchanging best practices on sustainable energy policies and jointly developing an integrated monitoring tool for measuring the effect of regional sustainable energy strategies. Thanks to its involvement in the INTERREG IIIC and IVC, Maramures has adopted a new approach to energy management policies and continues to enrich its know-how in sustainable energy instruments.

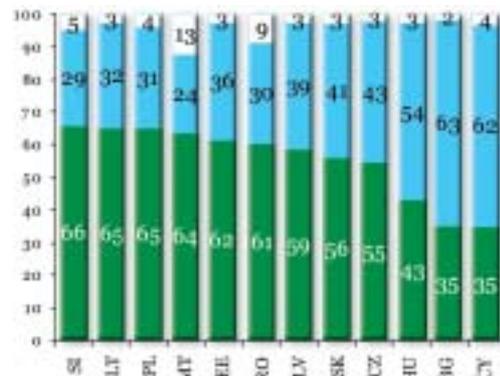


**INTERREG IVC Project - MORE4NRG**

Title	MORE4NRG
Type of operation	Regional Initiative Project
Priority 2	Environment and the risk prevention
Subtheme	Energy and sustainable transport
Total budget	1,326,559.00 EUR
ERDF Funding	1,032,084.05 EUR
Lead Partner	Province of Flevoland, NL
Partnership	SE, RO, IT, ES, FR, EL, BG, NL



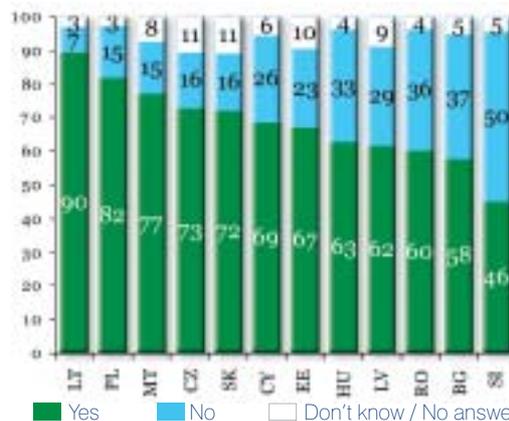
## Awareness of support received in the framework of EU Regional Policy



■ Yes, aware ■ No, not aware □ Don't know / No answer

Europe supports its regions and cities through EU Regional Policy. Are you aware that your city or region receives support from the EU Regional Policy?  
%, Base: all respondents, by country

## Benefiting from the support



■ Yes ■ No □ Don't know / No answer

Do you feel that your city or region benefits from this support?  
%, Base: who are aware that their city or region receives support, by country

*“In the new Europe, with fewer borders, cooperation in European programmes is one of the ways to directly show our citizens the benefit of the European Union.”*



## Experience in interregional cooperation

The local authority of Graz commenced interregional cooperation with INTERREG IIIC project **PIMMS** – Partner Initiatives for the Development of Mobility Management Services (Network). PIMMS offered a possibility for thematic study visits to other project partners, focused on urban congestion and traffic planning. These visits attracted 70% of key decision-makers from the partner regions and presented an excellent opportunity for exchange of experience and sharing knowledge. New Member States (BG, HU, PL, SK, EE) had the chance to participate in some of the project events and benefit from the partner pool of know-how as well. The main project result was the issuing of a transfer methodology comprising 200 good practice examples in mobility management, accompanied by a ‘self-benchmarking’ tool.

## Involvement in INTERREG IVC

Developing the INTERREG IVC **PIMMS TRANSFER** project (a continuation of PIMMS) the city of Graz welcomed several partners from the new Member States (SK, LT, SI, CY, PL, BG, RO) into the new operation. Cooperation on a wider European scale gives a new dimension to the exchange of experience for the Graz authorities who are aware that new Member States use this possibility in a similar way. PIMMS TRANSFER exemplifies the above mentioned, as it involves 7 ‘Progression Regions’ (old MS), as well as 7 ‘Initiation Regions’ (NMS), which now jointly work on the extension, deepening and promotion of the PIMMS transfer methodology on sustainable transport planning. The knowledge exchange under the IVC project will eventually result in the development of action plans allowing



the direct transfer of the methodology, especially to “regions under development”, and contributing to the improvement of regional transport policies, as well as future actions funded by the Structural Funds. The city of Graz points out that a most successful tool for exchange of experience are the “Master classes” which are meetings of project partners who exchange examples of good practices and share knowledge, pooling on the more experienced partners.

### INTERREG IVC Project - PIMMS TRANSFER

Title	TTransferring Actions iN Sustainable mobility For European Regions
Type of operation	Regional Initiative Project
Priority 2	Environment and the risk prevention
Subtheme	Energy and sustainable transport
Total budget	3,296,955.76 EUR
ERDF Funding	2,610,135.08 EUR
Lead Partner	London Councils, UK
Partnership	AT, SE, IT, PT, DE, NL, EL, SK, LT, SI, CY, PL, BG, RO



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**IVC, PIMMS TRANSFER**  
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 Aneta Widak  
**IVC, B3 Regions**  
 Piotr Kaczor



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IIIC, Meditteritage  
**IVC, EuroPROC**  
 Elena Stoylova



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**IVC, More4NRG**  
 Mihaela Lite



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IIIC, GRDP  
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 Venelina Varbova  
 Ruslan Zhechkov



### SLOVENIA – Municipality of Maribor

IIIC, ÖKOPROFIT  
**IVC, CITEAIR II**  
 Suzana Prajnc



**TREATY**

**BETWEEN**

**THE KINGDOM OF BELGIUM, THE KINGDOM OF DENMARK, THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY, THE HELLENIC REPUBLIC, THE KINGDOM OF SPAIN, THE FRENCH REPUBLIC, IRELAND, THE ITALIAN REPUBLIC, THE GRAND DUCHY OF LUXEMBOURG, THE KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS, THE REPUBLIC OF AUSTRIA, THE PORTUGUESE REPUBLIC, THE REPUBLIC OF FINLAND, THE KINGDOM OF SWEDEN, THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND  
(MEMBER STATES OF THE EUROPEAN UNION)**

**AND**

**THE CZECH REPUBLIC, THE REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA, THE REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS, THE REPUBLIC OF LATVIA, THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA, THE REPUBLIC OF HUNGARY, THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA, THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND, THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA, THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC,**

**CONCERNING THE ACCESSION OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC, THE REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA, THE REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS, THE REPUBLIC OF LATVIA, THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA, THE REPUBLIC OF HUNGARY, THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA, THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND, THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA AND THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC TO THE EUROPEAN UNION**

*Article 1*

1. The Czech Republic, the Republic of Estonia, the Republic of Cyprus, the Republic of Latvia, the Republic of Lithuania, the Republic of Hungary, the Republic of Malta, the Republic of Poland, the Republic of Slovenia and the Slovak Republic hereby become members of the European Union and Parties to the Treaties on which the Union is founded as amended or supplemented.



# EXPERIENCE – COOPERATION – DEVELOPMENT

## Regions of Enlarged Europe Sharing Solutions



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