



Minutes of 5th SRN Network Steering Group meeting

Barcelona, Spain

Thursday 20th April 2006

Present

Mr. Josep Rodriguez Lopez (Barcelona)
Mr. Paul Owens (Bristol) - Chair
Ms. Gillian Elliott (Cumbria)
Ms Liz Watson (Cumbria)
Ms. Olga Trckova (Hranice)
Ms. Martina Majerova (Hranice)
Ms. Marta Ferrero (Langhe Monferrato)
Ms. Sabine Germe (Lille)
Mr. Gianluca Baldoni (Modena)
Ms Tiziana Osio (Modena)
Mr. Mikis Moselt (Ancona)
Ms. Laura Carleiti (Ancona)
Ms. Ibaya Perez Sanz (Tenerife)
Mr. Xavi Tiana (Barcelona)
Ms. Maria Teresa Manescau (Tenerife)
Miss Dee Harding (Bristol)
Mrs Krystyna Pitt (Bristol)
Ms Outi Laikko (Turku)
Mr Tomi Virkkunen (Turku)
Ms. Minna Jalonen (Tampere)
Mr. Jukka Alasentie (Tampere)
Dr Liz Mills (Network Expert)
Mr. Richard Essex (Network Expert)

Apologies: Mr. Ian Hill (Cumbria)
Mr. Stasys Bielinis (Klaipeda)
Mr. Francois Goarin (Lille)

Introduction

Paul Owens Welcomed everyone, and all those present briefly introduced themselves.

Minutes of 4th Network meeting in Santa Cruz, Tenerife, December 2005

The minutes were checked through for accuracy and any matters arising. Financial matters had already been resolved at the finance meeting on Wednesday 19th April. The minutes were approved.

Progress Report

Paul Owens explained that overall the network was developing well, being half the way through the programme, despite the late appointment of the Network Expert. He outlined that the four main phases, Phase 1 has been completed and this session in Barcelona was the first meeting of the second phase of the programme on Good Practice. This phase was designed to explore, share, and exchange information. Phase three will follow, and the programme will be concluded with a dissemination session. The programme is now coming up to speed. The draft Early Findings Report is now on the website.

After the finance meeting, the method on which to base any budget changes was agreed by the partners. (See minutes for Finance Meeting)

Presentation on the Draft 'Early Findings Report'

Richard Essex explained that in the Tenerife meeting the initial draft of the Early Findings Report was introduced. After that workshop, further work had been completed. A copy can now be found on the website. More work needs to be done on the sub regional management and delivery. Richard sees the Early Findings Report as a stand alone document to move forward.

Richard presented on the Early Findings report saying that the Network Experts need more information from the Partners to enable them to produce a good report. It is useful to know what each Partner's involvement is in the particular funds and information on the stakeholders. They need clarity and a detailed understanding of what all Partners are doing so as not to provide a biased view.

Liz Mills mentioned that the draft report was circulated, however only Cumbria replied. The Network Experts want to make sure that the information on each Partner is correct. As this programme has a range of different Partners, they want to show that everyone's good practice can be represented in the final document. All Partners have a contribution to make.

Paul mentioned that if anyone needed any clarification, to speak to Liz or Richard. The report is on the website at the moment and this needs to be brought to a close as soon as possible.

Different Partners have a different focus and this needs to be shown. Some partners appear to have a fairly strong regional structure, whereas in other areas this does not exist.

Gianluca asked whether we are looking for the best level for delivery, or the best model for each level. The Network Experts pointed out that we could almost pick and choose as to each Partner's particular circumstance.

Paul mentioned that in Tenerife the Partners discussed the best level of delivery as different Partners have different capacity to work at a different level. The picture will vary greatly across Europe.

Paul explained that there are three main target areas, and since the start of the project the EC draft Structural Funds Regulations have changed to provide clearer support for sub-regional delivery. It is an important stage. It is impossible to come up with concrete evidence on the best ways to deliver our programmes. It is necessary to respond to the Network Experts. Member States will not be taking the same approach, and we need to be in a position to inform our national governments of our findings.

It was agreed that the changes to the Early Findings Report will be kept to a minimum and limited to minor amendments and clarification of facts. No significant changes needed to be made. It was decided that two weeks be given to Partners to make any final changes or comments about the Early Findings Report. This document has been in draft form since November 2005 so there needs to be some agreement to be able to adopt this document for the network.

Initial results of the National Strategic Reference Framework Questionnaire

Liz introduced this section on the results of the National Strategic Reference Framework Questionnaire.

Tomi mentioned that the framework for Finland is being drafted with a timetable for completion for the end of the autumn. When will we have the Good Practice guidelines? The end of the programme would be too late for Finland.

Liz mentioned that the timeframe for the network did not fit as the Good Practice Guide would not be ready until mid 2007, however it may be an option for the partners to get together at a different date to discuss the issues.

Sabine made the point that it is important for feedback from the Commission and that one of the purposes of the programme was for lobbying to ensure that urban issues are high on the European agenda as well as at national level. It is very important that we lobby as this project is very well focussed.

Xavi would like to see lobbying on two different levels; both European and national. He suggested that for Spain this will be a very relevant report, but suggested that he would need to work on a brief summary of the findings and post it on the SRN website.

Tiziana suggested that the Partners need a summary and recommendations put forward by the Partners. The Partners agreed and it was decided that

within two weeks, Barcelona would draft a 2 page statement from the programme to enable the influence at a European and national level.

Paul had discovered that the forthcoming event in Klaipeda clashes with another important event in Barcelona. There were discussions as to whether this date should be changed. All Partners agreed that the date should be changed, but it will need to take place sometime in June. If the date change is ok with Klaipeda, then there will be an email consultation and we will go for the most popular option. It was proposed that the event would need to be at the beginning or the end of the week to include a weekend.

It was decided that Sunday travel is not easy and it would be best to be held at the end of the week. Bristol to liaise with Klaipeda and decide when it is going to be.

Discussions on future Thematic Work Shops

It was decided that the Thematic working was the best way forward for the network.

Liz presented some slides on organising work around themes. She mentioned that the Network Experts need more detailed evidence from Partners. Liz proposed that the Partners should try to work out the way forward, which topics are most and least important for the network, and what will happen at the next meeting in Klaipeda. Liz also put forward some examples of topics, and the Partner who would possibly be best to present the topic. She proposed that the Partners decide on what topics the network would concentrate on, who would be the lead Partner for each topic, and who will chair.

Liz proposed that the lead Partner would chair the workshops and the Network Experts would give a brief introduction, the Partners presentation would follow, and then a wider discussion.

Jukka agreed that Liz has a point, in that it would make it easier for the network experts to write the good practice guide. Is it practical however that the lead (host) partner also chairs the event as some partners do not have the staff.

Liz confirmed that other networks work in this way.

Tiziana agreed to the proposed approach and pointed out that the more structured the workshops, the more it will help the Network Experts and the Partners in clarifying experiences to the other partners and also to make conclusions.

Liz suggested that the partners with the most experience in the topics can lead. Each partner should use their own experience and provide examples, bring in local people, or even provide a tour. It is interesting to find out how

money is being spent on a local level. The partners could also brainstorm with the Network Experts to ensure that the topic is covered appropriately. It is important that all Partners contribute and that topics are chosen so that Partners can get involved.

Josep suggested that workshops should be focussed and the number of topics limited due to the number of meetings left, and also to find a balance / connection between the topics.

Tomi proposed that the host Partner is the lead partner and that the presentation would be on local themes.

Sabine put forward the suggestion that the topics that are chosen for each meeting should complement each other.

Richard said that it was important that there was an agreement in principle so that it can be implemented at the next meeting in Klaipeda, and if it is successful there, then this structure can continue.

The network agreed that they wanted to pursue the thematic approach as proposed by Liz.

Partners were asked to identify from a list of themes the three that would most interest them. There are three different events planned for the future. It was suggested that for each event two or three topics be discussed.

It was agreed that it is only fair that the Host Partners are the lead for the workshops in their countries.

A table was drawn out identifying the topics Partners are interested in, coupling up themes that complement each other so that they take place at the same event, and identifying the Partners who would take the lead and those who will support the lead for each topic. (see following table).

It was pointed out that Partners will need the support of the Network Experts as this is a new proposal. After some discussion, it was agreed that the Network Experts would provide a framework for the partners to focus on which will include practical suggestions on how to prepare for the workshops so that they are made the most of. It was agreed that guidelines would be circulated before the meetings.

Liz suggested that there should be more communication between the Lead partner, the Network Experts, the lead for the workshop, and the network coordinator. Partners must do some homework.

Josep suggested that we always hear from the same partners, and maybe the possibility of bringing extra guest speakers in to give a different perspective could be explored.

Liz suggested that local visits would be useful. This idea was suggested to only take place if completely necessary due to the restrictions of time and budget. It was also thought that this would be an added extra as the Networks priorities were predominately to discuss mechanisms of good practice.

Partners were asked to identify the topics that they were most interested in (see below table 1.2) and from this, it was discussed what themes would be attributed to which partners, and at which future workshop (see table 1.1).

TABLE 1.1

Location	Theme	Items	Lead Partner	Support Partner
Klaipeda	TERRITORIAL	Structural Funds in Urban Development	Bristol	Barcelona
		Structural Funds in Rural Development	Cumbria	X
		Territorial Cooperation	Klaipeda	Lille
Turku/Tampere	PARTNERSHIP	Regions and Sub-regions working together	Turku	Modena
		Stakeholders and Citizens	Monferrato	Hranice
		Using Different Funds	Tampere	Tenerife/ Lille
Monferrato	QUALITY	Lisbon and Gothenburg	SVIM Ancona	<i>To be determined</i>
		High Quality Projects	<i>To be determined</i>	<i>To be determined</i>
Ancona	TRANSFERRABILITY	Draft of Project Report	<i>To be determined</i>	<i>To be determined</i>

TABLE 1.2

Regions and Sub-regions Working Together	Structural Funds in Urban Development	Structural Funds in Rural Development	Focus on Deprived Areas	High Quality Projects	Stakeholder and Citizens	Lisbon and Gothenburg Agenda	Territorial Cooperation	Partnership Working	Using Different Funds
Lille	Lille	Cumbria		Tampere	Modena	SVIM	Lille		Tampere
Modena	Tampere			Turku	Turku	Barcelona	SVIM		Cumbria
SVIM	Turku				Tenerife	Bristol	Cumbria		Hranice
Hranice	Hranice				Bristol		Tenerife		Modena
Barcelona	Barcelona								Tenerife
	Bristol								Turku

Brainstorming on Network matters

Richard believed that some good messages were coming out of the Early Findings Report, however it is not so clear what the network wants. In Tenerife Partners wanted to organize some advice provision for decision makers, however we do not yet have enough evidence within the Early Findings report to put onto paper.

It was agreed that although the evidence is not yet robust enough, the feeling of the network is that local level is best. There are two options, either to do nothing and wait until the Good practice guide is finished, but this will be too late, or to make a statement from the network on our findings to date.

Liz proposed that the partners needed to do this as it is difficult to provide robust advice with no evidence from partners.

The Partners agreed that there should be a statement produced from the network.

Different ways in which to push the networks message were discussed. Sabine suggested that it is good if we can provide speakers for the events. She also suggested interacting with the Urbact programme, and participating with other European network events. Perhaps we could issue a press release or newsletter to highlight the activities of SRN to partners across Europe.

The Barcelona Partner agreed and confirmed that they would be happy to draft a statement on behalf of the network ready for the next network meeting in Klaipeda. This will be forwarded to each partner prior to the meeting.

Any Other Business

Are partner contact details correct? Liz suggested that as Krystyna had had difficulty in communicating with some of the partners, perhaps there should be a separate password protected section of the website so that there can be free communication between the network partners. There is a danger that people who are not involved with the network may turn up to the event after seeing the meeting agenda on the website.

One partner suggested that all updates of documents on the website, are identified as new updated documents either by putting an update date or by identifying with a number.

Paul explained that the network had spent the website budget and this did not incorporate a private password protected area. We could set up a private email discussion forum which it is likely would be cheaper.

Laura agreed that partners needed more communication and proposed that we set up an email discussion list.