

**Minutes of SRN Network Progress meeting**

**Klaipeda, Lithuania**

**Friday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2006**

**Present**

Mr. Stasys Bielinis (Klaipeda)  
Ms. Olga Trckova (Hranice)  
Ms. Lucie Humplikova (Hranice)  
Ms. Ursula Perez (Tenerife)  
Ms. Gillian Elliott (Cumbria)  
Ms. Liz Watson (Cumbria)  
Ms. Minna Jalonen (Tampere)  
Mr. Jukka Jarvinen (Tampere)  
Mr. Josep Rodriguez Lopez (Barcelona)  
Mr. Paul Owens (Bristol)  
Mrs Krystyna Pitt (Bristol)  
Mr. Tomi Virkkunen (Turku)  
Ms. Helina Yli-Knuutila (Turku)  
Ms. Laura Carletti (SVIM Ancona)  
Mr. Mikis Moselt (SVIM Ancona)  
Mr. Francois Goarin (Lille)  
Mr. Richard Essex (Network Expert)  
Dr. Liz Mills (Network Expert)

Apologies: Mr. Ian Hill (Cumbria)  
Mr. Xavi Tiana (Barcelona)  
Ms Marta Ferrero (Langhe Monferrato Roero)  
Mr. Gianluca Baldoni (Modena)  
Ms. Irene Calzolari (Modena)  
Ms. Tiziana Osio (Modena)



## 1. Introduction

1.1 Stasys welcomed everyone to the Network Progress meeting.

## 2. Conclusions from the Thematic Workshops of 15<sup>th</sup> June 2006

2.1 A comment was made as to the high quality of presentations received during the Thematic Workshops on 15<sup>th</sup> June. There is now a need to draw out the good practice points from this workshop, and to identify the transferable parts. It was agreed in the workshops that all partners would consider two points of interest that came out from the presentations that could be transferable to their own regions. These do not have to be ideas that partners are sure to implement, but simply an initial prioritisation list.

2.2 To ensure the Network Experts are able to produce an accurate report, it was requested that partners expand on their good practice examples when offering this information. Partners need to explain further why a particular item is good practice for them. If there are any reports or other documentation produced to be used for supporting evidence, this will also be useful for the Network Experts. It was proposed that we may not be able to specifically define good practice, but we need to consider what we regard as good practice.

2.3 There was a discussion over the future cohesion fund. It was mentioned that at the moment, regional bodies were unable to have much influence over how this is spent as it is considered at national level. It was suggested that this may possibly change in the future. Stasys gave examples of his experience of cohesion funds so far. He said that all of the funds seem to be spent on national infrastructure, but for example, there is no money for local roads.

### 2.4 Agreed:

- **Partners that provided presentations in the workshop on 15<sup>th</sup> June, but did not have PowerPoint slides to accompany the presentation are to write a summary of their presentation and forward to the Network Experts.**
- **Partners will write down two points that they found interesting from the workshop session and reasons why. To be forwarded to Liz by 30 June.**

## 3. Minutes of 5<sup>th</sup> Network meeting in Barcelona, Spain, April 2006

3.1 The minutes were checked through for accuracy and any matters arising.



3.2 It was suggested that the change to a more thematic way of working was rewarding, and that although there were concerns raised, this was part of the overall discussion.

**3.3 Agreed:  
Minutes were agreed as accurate subject to the removal of one paragraph under the Discussions on future Thematic Workshops section which was felt to be misleading.**

#### 4. Introduction from Lead partner

4.1 The Network Coordinator explained that as a result of the discussions in Barcelona, an email group was set up using Google groups. It was explained that partners will need to set up an account with Google, and then they will be invited to join the SRNgroup email. Each partner would have received an email that will allow them to set up an account. This would include setting up a password protected area. From there, they would receive a second email from Pippin Sadler (Bristol City Council) on which they will need to click on the link to agree to join the group. If there are any problems, partners should contact the network coordinator.

4.2 Josep did not receive an email. Network Coordinator to arrange that this happens.

4.3 A question was asked over whether the lead partner was able to set all partners up onto the group. It was noted that this was not possible due to the need for password protection and the linking with each partners individual email address.

4.4 The finance report as prepared by the network finance officer was presented by the lead partner. Partners were advised that the deadline for all partner claims is 1<sup>st</sup> September. Partners were requested to complete the claim forms fully to include a short narrative where indicated on the forms. For example, partners should include details of any local publicity of the programme. The relevant small boxes should be completed by each partner. Any problems or queries should be addressed to the finance officer, Dee Harding.

4.5 The claim form has yet to be agreed by the JTS. When the lead partner receives the final version, this will promptly be forwarded to all partners.



- 4.6 Stasys apologised for not submitting a claim as yet, but explained that this was because the audit costs were very high and would be more than the amount claimed. He will submit this time.
- 4.7 The lead partner mentioned that at the last meeting in Barcelona the issue of re-profiling the budget was explored. Partners were asked to submit their 'dream budget' within the finances agreed for each individual partner. Within this dream budget partners could change particular budget lines. Bristol has not received many responses to this and therefore have been unable to analyse the results. Bristol requires the full information from partners. Realistically there needs to be feedback from most of the partners to enable any changes to go ahead. Each individual partner has an increased budget to spend and Bristol would like to know where the partner wishes this to be added.
- 4.8 Payments were made to partners approximately two months ago. Most partners were paid electronically, two partners were paid by cheque. It is cheaper to pay partners electronically.
- 4.9 A point was made that there is more money available through the West Zone to programmes meeting certain criteria who want to apply for additional funds. The lead partner said that they are aware of this, however as at the Barcelona meeting, the programme was about 40% behind budget. This was partly due to claims not being received, and the late appointment of the network expert. The INTERREG IIIC west zone had also not invited the SRN network to apply. We would also need to find match funding, and as we are so far behind on budget spend, we are not in a position to apply for further funding, however after the next claim round, this can be reviewed.
- 4.10 The Spanish partners had recently been to a meeting with the Spanish secretariat who advised them that they need more information from the lead partner on core costs as an auditor will ask for copies of bills etc.
- 4.10.1 Paul advised that when the claims arrive from the JTS, Bristol add the core cost to claim and when the money is received, this is taken out and the cheques are sent to each partner. Extra information is currently being produced for the Italian partners, as was described in the finance meeting in Barcelona.
- 4.10.2 The Italian partners have not yet received full information from Dee as there has been a misunderstanding and they still require a hard copy of the original. Paul advised that they will need to continue to liaise with Dee on this point.
- 4.11 **Agreed:**
- **Claims need to be completed and returned to the lead partner by 1<sup>st</sup> September 2006.**



- **Bristol to send out a prompt to enable partners to complete the narrative on the claim forms.**
- **Dream budget re-profiling – partners to submit their response to the lead partner by 30<sup>th</sup> June 2006**

## **5. Review of Network Progress**

- 5.1 It was noted that despite requests for clarifications on the Identifying Good Practice report from the Barcelona event, there has been limited response from the partners. The Network Experts require this information as for an accurate final report they rely on this information. There has also been a request from Liz that partners send through amendments with necessary accents due to a technical hitch. Clarification is needed from Turku, and Barcelona. It was also noted again that if there were any supplementary reports or leaflets in English that would help to demonstrate any of the projects or topics then this would also be a good source of information for the Network Experts.
- 5.2 The question of what form the Good Practice Guide might take was put to the Network Experts. Liz replied that this had not yet fully been discussed, however it would probably include an introduction, and then each chapter relating to the themes with good case studies from each partner. The length of was not intended to be long as it aims to be an accessible, easily accessible tool for future regeneration practitioners. It was suggested that the interests are different for the reader depending on whether they are public or private sector. This diversity of partners has been reflected in the Early Finding report. The network Experts reminded the partners of the need to present papers in a timely manner.
- 5.4 The Lead Partner advised that apart from the spend profile, the programme is more or less on target with the outputs. As a crude indicator, the programme has held the target number of events, and had approximately the correct number of partners attending each event.
- 5.5 It was proposed that the partners need to get to the nitty gritty of their good practice examples. It was suggested that this may be done by visiting the projects. The lead partner pointed out that this was discussed at the Barcelona event, and agreed that the project was focusing on delivery mechanisms rather than visiting the actual projects. It again was proposed that this should be left to the host partner to decide if necessary as it is not an aim of the network. The Network Experts views are that site visits are invaluable to learn more about a place, and in this way, it is also good to get local speakers involved.



5.6 Questions were asked as to whether the programme will have enough practice examples. The Network Expert advised that we need more detailed information on the practices rather than more projects. It has been a challenge to get information from all partners on the management and how each partner works. It was pointed out that it is important to concentrate on management structures and mechanisms rather than specific projects.

**5.7 Agreed:**

- **Comments and clarification over the Identifying good practice examples and also the S3 event report, to be received by Liz by 30<sup>th</sup> June 2006**
- **That host partners may include a site visit if they feel it is necessary to reinforce and illustrate, but this is in addition and not compulsory**

## **6. The Future of Thematic Workshops**

6.1 The lead partner explained that the workshops held in Klaipeda were the first attempt at a slightly different way of working as agreed in Barcelona. The partners need to decide whether this way of working is effective and whether there could be some improvements. It was suggested that the workshops were useful as so many people interacted, although it wasn't clear whether it was due to thematic working or not. People were more involved. It was added however that there were lots of presentations and not much time for much discussion on the topics. It was put forward that there should be a broader debate and discussion as the programme is time limited.

6.2 It was suggested that the programme needs to explore in more detail the examples given from each partner. It was discussed that the partners may like to follow the lifeline of a project – how it might start, and how it fits in with the operational objective, how it is done, and why, the process and decision, how it is funded, monitored and reported etc. but this is very similar to the previous way of working (not thematic). The participation at the thematic workshop was positive.

6.3 Not all parts of the system will be transferable, but parts can be identified and focussed on. Partners need to look at their own processes and identify what works and what doesn't work so well. It may be a good exercise to identify the poor practice at local/ regional/ and national levels to be able to identify which parts are not as well implemented as hoped.



- 6.4 It was suggested that the presentations at the thematic workshops did not focus on the supplied briefs as lots of things were talked about, but it is missing depth. To get the most out of thematic working, it needs to be defined very clearly. Partners have all had difficulty to identify good practice. The network experts explained that they rely heavily on the workshops, but this is such a sort time to discuss the issues and it may be useful for partners to circulate presentations before the meetings so that partners can get a chance to prepare.
- 6.5 It was put forward that there should be some discussion before the workshops by those partners working together and presenting to ensure a coordinated response to the workshop topic. This will give for complementary presentations and less duplication. It was suggested that events should be longer as there is not enough time to fully discuss the workshop issues.
- 6.6 **Agreed:**
- **Bristol to propose the next agenda in conjunction with the Finnish hosts.**
  - **Network Experts and the Lead Partner to work out a workshop template for the next meeting and circulate to partners using the email group. When organising the next agenda, the lead partner will ensure that more time is given for discussion.**
  - **Partners that will give presentations will email the Network Coordinator a synopsis of their presentation for circulation to the partners before the event.**
  - **Any partners (not leading or supporting on topics) who wish to include a short presentation of their experiences should inform the network coordinator so that time can be provided when preparing the agenda.**

## 7. The SRN Network Position Statement

- 7.1 The Barcelona Partners produced a draft position statement on behalf of the network. It was agreed that this statement was very good, and partners thanked Josep and Xavi for producing it. It was agreed that this should be seen as a position statement on behalf of the network rather than individual partners.
- 7.2 There were further discussions over dissemination of the statement. It was proposed that the Lead Partner coordinates the dissemination on behalf of the network, but that each partner would be best placed to disseminate to their individual national and regional governments. A few ideas of potential contacts for the dissemination of the statement were discussed. These included: Mrs Helander of the European



commission, and copies to head of units, informally to Morray Gilland, chairs of EU parliament, chairs of Urban programmes, individual Brussels office to identify and assist with targets, Felix Lutz – EU Urban Policy Officer, and the other networks that partners are involved in such as S3 and IQ.

- 7.3 The Lead Partner has no problem in principle for the statement being used for other funds.



## 7.4 Agreed:

- **Position statement agreed subject to two minor amendments:**
  - **Addition of ‘...or coordinating...’ in the first of the conclusions to read *‘Five SRN members have been delegated responsibility for managing or coordinating programmes in their regions’***
  - **Addition of ‘...and the national government structures.’ in the second conclusion to read *‘...taking into account such factors as territorial identity and the relations between different government levels and the national government structures.’***
- **Position statement to be posted onto the SRN website.**
- **Lead partner to produce an initial mailing list for the dissemination of the position statement. This list will be distributed to partners using the e-group for any additions from the partners.**
- **Lead partner to organise the dissemination of the position statement, and produce a covering letter. Partners to arrange dissemination to their own regional and national governments.**

## 8. Dates for Future Events

- 8.1 The possibility of a longer event in Finland was discussed as there will be two partners involved. The main expense is the cost and time of travelling. Four days was considered to be too much by some partners, and a compromise of 3 ½ days was agreed.
- 8.2 There were three suggestions of dates for the Finland event as follows: Weeks of 18<sup>th</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> September, 2<sup>nd</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> October, and 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> September. These dates were discussed as to which most partners would be able to attend. The dates of 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> of September were found to be most suitable for most partners, with only the Hranice partner unable to attend on this week. This week would be prioritised and the Network Coordinator would contact the Langhe Monferrato and Modena partners to check that these dates would suit them. It was proposed that the dates for the meeting in Langhe Monferrato would be explored also.
- 8.3 **Agreed:**
- **That the dates of 5<sup>th</sup> September – 8<sup>th</sup> September would be prioritised.**



- **Network Coordinator to contact Langhe Monferrato and Modena partners to check availability on those prioritised dates.**

## **9. Any Other Business**

- 9.1 The Interregional Cooperation Framework issue was discussed. The Barcelona partner agreed to coordinate a response on behalf of the network. There are sensitivities to this, and it is an informal gathering of ideas.
- 9.2 One partner brought up their concern over the double auditing that must take place. The partners audit their records, and then the lead partner also audits all partner claims. It was suggested that this is not necessary. The Lead Partner agreed with the comments, and has spoken to the auditor about this duplication, however this is the way that it must be done. The Network Expert informed the partners of an INTERACT-funded study on auditing and first level controls which may be making relevant recommendations.
- 9.3 Liz Mills attended the Urban Futures conference in Stockholm in May. This included a workshop presentation of a new URBACT network on urban regeneration called CIVITAS in which Catalunya is a partner. At the workshop it was apparent that the partners in this network were unaware of SRN. Barcelona agreed to make contact with this project. It was suggested that other SRN partners should check to see whether other networking projects on regeneration/Structural Funds are taking place in their localities.
- 9.4 **Agreed:**
- **Partners who wish to contribute comments regarding the Interregional Cooperation Framework should forward them to the Barcelona partner by Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> June.**
  - **Barcelona to coordinate a response on the Interregional Cooperation Framework on behalf of the network.**