



INTERact

Sharing Expertise

INTERACT Programme Joint Annual Work Plan 2009



INTERACT Programme Joint Annual Work Plan 2009

Contents

Introduction.....	2
INTERACT Objectives for the year 2009	2
Stakeholder Needs Analysis	3
INTERACT Point Turku	3
INTERACT Point Valencia.....	3
INTERACT Point Viborg	4
INTERACT Point Vienna.....	5
Main Themes for 2009.....	6
Audit and Control	6
Project Generation - Assessment and Management	8
Financial Management.....	9
Evaluation and monitoring.....	11
Capitalisation	13
Communication for programmes.....	15
Summary of INTERACT Activities	18
Annexes.....	21
Annexe 1 Ghost indicators	21
Annexe 2: Needs analysis	22
Annexe 3 Activities 2009	28
Annexe 4 Budget 2009.....	29



Introduction

The INTERACT Annual Work Plan 2009 is the first joint plan presented by INTERACT to the Monitoring Committee for a single decision. This second version has been adapted to take account of observations made by Monitoring Committee Members at the Meeting that took place in Ljubljana on 21st and 22nd November 2008. It is a result of various discussions among Coordinators of the INTERACT Points and the INTERACT Secretariat and is based on an analysis of needs of the Programme's stakeholders for the year ahead.

The Plan covers the Programme's Objectives, Needs Analysis, Main Themes to be covered and how these will be delivered across Europe. It also covers actions specific to each zone to be delivered by each IP.

The Output Indicators for 2009 have been adapted for planning purposes. Information on the rationalisation of the indicators and how they work together with the programme indicators can be found in Annex 1.

INTERACT Objectives for the year 2009

In 2009 the INTERACT Programme will contribute to the achievements of INTERACT 2007-2013 objectives described in the Multi Annual Work Programme (MAWP) by focusing on:

- Intensifying cooperation with the European Territorial Cooperation programmes and the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) CBC Programmes between Member States and Candidate and Potential Candidate Countries by supporting the programmes with standard and ad-hoc services to improve their effectiveness and efficiency;
- Providing a network platform for the programmes located in the four zones, with common challenges and issues, but also differences and responding to their requirements;
- Offering EU-wide services, to be provided by a single IP or in cooperation with other INTERACT Points, on issues of interest for the whole European Territorial Cooperation community (Financial Management, EGTC, Programme and Project Management etc);
- Establishing and maintaining a common knowledge & learning base through the capturing, documenting, processing and transferring of information into knowledge. This process will ensure quantity, quality and reliability of an inter-programme benchmarking which should in turn facilitate the start of a Capitalisation process;
- Maintaining privileged partnerships with the networking programmes ESPON, URBACT, INTERREG IV C, as well as to intensify networking links to other partners beyond the immediate target public, especially with European institutional networks;
- Contributing to the further development of the INTERACT Programme strategy, the strengthening of the management system, the quality of service delivery, the promotion of INTERACT towards external stakeholders etc (activities coordinated by the INTERACT Secretariat).



Stakeholder Needs Analysis

The INTERACT Programme seeks not only to be relevant but also highly responsive to identified needs of its stakeholders. Each INTERACT Point has therefore undertaken an analysis of the needs of its target groups within their respective zones. The results are central to the activity plan for the year ahead and underpin all content developed.

Different methods between each IP were used for the 2009 AWP and the rationale for these is explained in more detail below. It is expected that for 2010 the same methodology will be undertaken by all IPs.

INTERACT Point Turku

INTERACT Point Turku assessed the service needs of CBC programmes by a questionnaire at the end of September. The questionnaire listed 15 themes as topic areas, and the programmes could indicate the level of their interest by expressing whether it is high/medium/low or respond by stating no interest. It also inquired about the format: should the theme be dealt with in a training event, in the form of a seminar or workshop, or should it be general information or a tool. Several answers included all options, in particular for topics where the programmes had high interest. In principle the programmes returned one joint reply from all programme bodies, in some topics the MA and JTS had decided to respond for themselves.

Based on these results, IP Turku will respond to the needs by including all these elements where applicable and develop required tools together with the thematic groups of professionals. These groups are referred to as "pilot networks" in the detailed activity plan.

As the IP Turku operational zone is also covered by one transnational programme in particular, the Baltic Sea Programme was also addressed by the same questionnaire. The response from the BSR programme indicated quite contrary needs compared to CBC programmes, and where they expressed low interest or no need, we have not included their opinion. The topics where the BSR did express high interest concern communication and capitalisation and strategic project generation, and their needs are observed as well.

IP Turku operates with a limited number of programmes. Therefore the contacts to programmes will be very close, and each event can include elements that are adapted to programmes' needs. IP Turku will however also ensure that the events contain European exchange dimensions alongside regional dimensions.

INTERACT Point Valencia

The systematic needs assessment analysis of IP Valencia will take place in November 2008. IP Valencia is organising the first meeting of the South Network Conference of Stakeholders, which will dedicate specific working sessions to discuss the real needs of the Programmes in the geographical area. The late set up of this INTERACT Point has not made it possible to organise a specific event before.



However, informal contact (mainly by telephone) has been established with the structures of the various programmes in the area. They expressed the need to tailor the services to real needs and the specific contexts of the Programmes. Also, programmes have expressed an interest in having a draft of the services to be delivered so that discussions at the Conference can start from a real basis.

IP Valencia's contribution to the 2009 INTERACT Annual Work Plan is based on the current stage of the various programmes. It is to be highlighted that some of the programmes are well advanced while some others have not started their activities; as a result, services will deal both with basic European Territorial Cooperation issues and with more advanced themes.

IP Valencia's activities will be presented at the first meeting of the South Network Conference. These activities might be enlarged if the needs assessment analysis confirms the need to organise more events. The themes of each proposed event may become more precise should the programmes express a need for it.

INTERACT Point Viborg

INTERACT Point Viborg started an online survey in August 2008 with a follow-up to programmes that had not yet answered in September 2008. A final reminder was sent on 30 September. Of the 13 cross-border programmes in IP Viborg's zone, 12 provided at least one answer. Of the 13 transnational programmes, 12 answered.

Each respondent will receive a report of the survey findings, outlining the INTERACT services already available to address some of the needs expressed and the actions expected in 2009 to cover other needs. Respondents will be asked to contact us again if they feel that their needs are still not being met by these proposals. We hope to repeat this survey next year when the work plan for 2010 is being prepared and also to carry out an evaluation exercise with some respondents to assess how the INTERACT services provided have met the needs expressed in the survey. In 2009 we also expect to complement survey results with a meeting of all programmes in north-western Europe where programmes would also be able to discuss progress and challenges after the first stage of implementation. For a follow-up survey, we would also hope to extend the number of respondents in each programme: Where different staff from the same programme answered this time, it was clear that answers could be very different. As such, the answers in the tables in Annexe 2 will be used as a general guide on the main interests rather than a set menu of services to be developed.

A small number of needs were flagged as urgent (for action in 2008) and we have adjusted our event and service plan for the rest of the year to cover these as well as possible.

Respondents were asked to signal their interest on a number of themes divided into financial management, project support and implementation, and programme content and project management. They also indicated the type of support required (training, discussions with other programmes, written information and/or meetings with experts) and the urgency of the support required.

As will be seen from the tables, there are considerable differences between CBC and transnational needs and only in very few cases is it possible to identify needs



and responses that will be supported by almost all programmes. The services developed by IP Viborg will therefore address similar needs from different directions in order to ensure that as many programmes as possible can find the service they are looking for.

INTERACT Point Vienna

The south-eastern European zone, for which INTERACT Point Vienna is responsible as first contact point, has its own peculiarities that need to be tackled through tailor-made services, besides challenges that are common to all other European Territorial Cooperation programmes. Specific features of this zone are:

- 1) The Territorial Cooperation programmes between old and new Member States, which joined the EU in 2004 (EU-10) and 2007 (Bulgaria and Romania). These programmes have gone through the transition from PHARE CBC-INTERREG to the integrated INTERREG III regulatory framework and can therefore provide good practice examples and solutions for the programmes and countries that are now facing this transition.
- 2) The Territorial Cooperation programmes involving Romania and Bulgaria, which joined the EU in 2007 and still need specific services, as well as a special focus.
- 3) The Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) cross-border cooperation programmes between Member States and Candidate and Potential Candidate Countries, either implemented under the integrated approach or implemented under the transitional approach (i.e. external aid rules).
- 4) Links and synergies between these programmes and programmes/countries covering the ENPI (European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument), for which INTERACT Point Vienna is not responsible but needs to take it into account when delivering special services in this area. Close coordination on this will take place with the INTERACT ENPI component in Turku and Florence.
- 5) Cross-border Programmes between old Member States, as well as 2 Transnational Programmes with an IPA component.

The 18 CBC programmes and the more than 10 IPA programmes assigned to INTERACT Point Vienna are very heterogeneous and have different structures and challenges. Because of these specific challenges, INTERACT Point Vienna decided to address these programmes in a structured and systematic way from the very beginning, by setting up a Regional Network of contact persons, enabling an easier communication flow between INTERACT and the different programmes bodies (MA, JTS, CA, AA, Regional Contact Points). One of the tasks of this Regional Network is to collect programme needs at least on a yearly basis, in order to set the priorities for IP Vienna services for the coming year.

On 29-30 September 2008 the network was successfully started in Vienna with a Kick-Off event. On this occasion a detailed needs analysis was carried out with participating stakeholders. Besides that, INTERACT Point Vienna collected needs and inputs via an online survey and prepared the needs assessment with a pre-meeting in Vienna on 20 June 2008.



Main Themes for 2009

Given the results of the needs analyses in all four zones, INTERACT has identified six key themes of intervention for the year 2009. These are:

- Audit and Control
- Project Generation - Assessment and Management
- Financial Management
- Evaluation
- Capitalisation
- Communication

The following sections deal with each of these key themes and describe the background or need for the theme, the strategic objective to be obtained and the joint as well as zone specific actions to be undertaken by the INTERACT Points or INTERACT Secretariat. These sections cast a spotlight on certain activities on the European level and within a zone - these are not exhaustive but serve to illustrate how INTERACT will meet its stakeholders needs.

Audit and Control

Background and identified needs

Control and eligibility top most programme needs lists. There are two specific needs:

- Capacity building - training and written material to programme staff and controllers on Territorial Cooperation control issues.
- Exchange among programmes and controllers and between programmes and controllers to compare systems and rules. and work together on addressing the grey areas not covered.

Control systems under INTERREG III have been criticised. We hope to ensure that with our assistance: all new systems address these concerns; detect and correct more errors; result in positive audit findings; control work therefore becoming smoother and more efficient.

Strategic objectives

- Allow exchange between staff working in control in order to fine-tune systems and rules and ensure that they are effectively reducing error rates.
- Capacity building for control by training on the regulatory framework and EC rules as well as basic control techniques and tools.
- Ensure that all controllers have access to high quality and reliable European Territorial Cooperation-specific knowledge required to do their work effectively.
- Ensure that the right checks are being carried out and that past problem areas have been fixed (eg audit trail. procurement. publicity) in view of a smooth programme financial management and to support the work of the Audit Authorities.

Please note! *There are requests for training on eligibility but national and/or programme rules are now the main source. There are limits to what INTERACT can*



do here and the national / programme level is a more appropriate provider of information on national details. We will not train controllers in basic accountancy and audit skills.

Joint actions/events

Training events for control capacity building

It is proposed that four of these events be delivered in the first two quarters of 2009 with the option to add further events if demand is still high. These events will be open to participants from across Europe.

Network workshops

Every zone will also address control and eligibility by establishing network workshops. In some cases a separate controllers' network is planned. In others (particularly where there are large numbers of controllers in decentralised systems or language could be a problem) this is not practical and discussion will instead be run through programme finance staff. These networks will hopefully include the national authorities responsible for control. It is envisioned that the staff attending these events act as multipliers of this knowledge to the controllers. These workshops will be based on programmes within the four INTERACT zones. INTERACT Points will cooperate in developing training/information modules to add to the basic seminar on an as needed basis (eg public procurement, control methods and tools)

Knowledge generated here will also be transferred to training materials: All written materials including presentations will be agreed between all INTERACT Points to ensure that the same messages are communicated to all zones. Presentation materials will be updated after every event to ensure continued improvement and consistency.

Advisory events on control will be available to eg individual Member States wishing to address large numbers of their own controllers at the same event.

Single specific actions

IP Vienna - Controller Training



Workshop with First Level Controllers with a specific module on International Audit Standards to be developed based on previous IP Vienna research. This event would be run for advanced staff.

IPA programme managers will be involved also in the First Level Control activities, as a very similar control system of the structural funds applies to the IPA CBC programmes and knowledge transfer should be therefore encouraged. Specific procurement rules will be addressed in separate workshops.

IP Turku - Workshop



Targeted to controllers working on CBC programmes in the IP Turku zone; the event builds the content on good practises and problems identified during the first rounds of payment requests from projects.



Project Generation - Assessment and Management

Background and identified needs

Project development usually seems the least problematic issue in the context of the overall management of Programmes. However, it is the basis for a smooth implementation of the Programmes and for the obtaining of good concrete results.

Currently, the Territorial Cooperation stakeholders of the fourth programming period are very concerned about the strategic dimension of projects and strategic projects. Many Programmes wish to develop this kind of projects but very few have an outline of what they need. On the other hand, strategic projects have to live together with the bottom-up projects and a good balance between the two types is to be found.

Strategic objective

- To go over all phases in project development, from project generation strategies to application packs development to assessment techniques to general issues on project management.
- To promote exchange but also some training, as staff involved in all these phases has different levels of knowledge.
- The different types of Territorial Cooperation Programmes are born in mind.

Objectives can be listed as follows:

- To provide an overview on all issues concerning project management
- To promote the exchange on the various possibilities of project generation
- To deliver specific support services for project assessment techniques in order to optimise all the involved resources
- To deal with some mandatory specific issues, like the lead partner principle and partnership agreements

Joint actions/events

General project management seminars, covering all aspects of project management will be delivered. All IPs are offering this service together with at least one other IP.

A project generation seminar (including strategic projects) will be offered. All IPs offer this service and there is one joint event planned between IP Vienna and IP Valencia, one with IP Vienna and IP Viborg. The latter event will contain a module on (Strategic) Project generation for advanced staff. One single joint event between all INTERACT Points may be held in the second quarter of 2009.

Single specific actions

INTERACT Point Viborg: Application pack survey



This activity will comprise surveys of the application forms in use in the CBC programmes in the zone and in the transnational programmes. There are requests for training and discussion between programmes on application assessment but previous discussions on this subject have made limited progress because of the differences in procedures and documentations in the different programmes. This survey will therefore provide a better starting



point for future discussion by asking how different the programmes' approaches are and why these differences exist. We feel that gaining this level of insight into what programmes are addressing in the application is the best possible starting point for training on assessing the project proposals. We will of course take account of previous INTERACT studies on this subject.

Zone specific project assessment workshops/seminars/laboratory groups



All IPs have included activities on this topic within the work plan. For example, a new seminar will be delivered on project application assessment.

INTERACT Point Vienna: Project Management Seminar



This is an updated repeat of the successful INTERACT Seminar on project management, which covers all project management phases, from development to closure. In 2009, IP Vienna will offer this training again with a distinction in terms of target groups, if needed (beginners vs advanced), in order to adapt to specific needs of different stakeholders. INTERACT will also offer a series of optional modules to be selected by interested participants, according to their needs. These optional modules correspond to the main needs identified during the needs assessment exercise of September 2008:

- *Lead Partner Principle (incl. subsidy contract + partnership agreement)*
- *Project generation, development and assessment*
- *IPA specific content, taking into account IPA CBC specificities*

Financial Management

Background and identified needs

As highlighted in the needs analyses, programmes are interested in sharing knowledge on Financial Management in order to identify effective methods and approaches to enhance good management. New joint programme management structures in implementation have brought with them the need to update a shared knowledge base and the need for assessing existing practices. Flow of information between all bodies involved and management of national co-financing create additional complications in some programmes.

Strategic objective

Services on Financial Management contribute to successful completion of programmes and lay foundation for future development of joint structures

- To address the structures of management and the information flows on financial reporting and monitoring
- To ensure new management bodies and/or new task setting in joint management combining several administrative cultures obtain a firm understanding between programme bodies
- To address parties and partners
- To address the challenges of adopting Article 71 descriptions in operational functions. monitoring
- To ensure that the great interest shown regarding N+2/N+3 rules and information flows within projects up to programme level are adequately addressed.



Joint actions/events


Financial Management seminars will be organised jointly by all IPs. Each quarter one Financial Management seminar will be delivered that is open to participants from all CBC programmes. As specific training on several aspects of management and control complement these events the number of events overall will be kept to minimum. Programmes will be encouraged to use the opportunity to take part in these seminars when provided. Following the programme life cycle the seminars will focus on needs in early cycle management needs and preparatory measures for later phases.

The seminar on financial management for projects, developed by IP Viborg, will be delivered also this year jointly by different IPs in their zones.


IP Vienna together with IP Viborg will develop a paper and a workshop for certifying authorities, focused on the specific role and tasks of this programme body and including the management of irregularities and recoveries.

Single specific actions


IP Turku - Advisory services on financial management

 *In addition to joint seminars IP Turku will provide further services for Financial Management of programmes through programme specific advisory. Such advisory is foreseen for programmes adopting LP principle for the first time and for programmes that are starting as new, without having former structures where to draw from. In addition IP Turku will have the network of financial managers meeting at suitable occasions to exchange on experiences gained.*


IP Valencia - financial managers zone network

 *IP Valencia will open its service provision in Financial Management services by organising seminars together with other IPs and by building a financial managers network for South European CBC programmes.*

IP Viborg - financial management seminars


 *IP Viborg builds on experience gained from several earlier Financial Management seminars and continues to contribute in producing materials in both general financial management and theme specific topics.*

IP Vienna - TA management

 *IP Vienna will continue its services on Financial Management by joint seminars and networks of specialists engaged in financial management. In addition IP Vienna will contribute in production of financial management support materials. Tools and information: Workshops on TA management including human resources, N+2 etc.*

A specific financial management content for IPA CBC programmes will be developed.

Secretariat - e-tool on eligibility update

 *The project management of the new e-tool will be overseen by the IS, the INTERACT E-learning tool will be re-designed and partly re-programmed for improved user-friendliness.*



Evaluation and monitoring

Background and identified needs

Programmes are required to monitor - evaluate how far the goals set in their OPs have been achieved during the programme life cycle. In fact, the Regulation (EC) 1083/2006 (Articles 47 - 49) and the European Commission Guidelines provide guidance on what the evaluation exercise implies but programmes are free to decide on how to set up their monitoring systems and evaluate the achievements (on-going or mid-term evaluation).

All INTERACT Points have detected a strong need for further guidance on this topic for the programmes of their area. Evaluating the INTERREG programmes has proved to be very challenging: - Very often the ex-ante evaluation did not succeed to provide a complete baseline (socio-economic data missing). - Mid-term evaluation exercises were not effective because the relevant - consistent data was not collected through the monitoring systems on time. The bulk of data was too general inconsistent and it measured only quantitative financial aspects and not qualitative results. Evaluate the whole programme lead often to unusable generalisations. - The indicators set were not able to measure the programme achievements. On the other hand also projects achievements could not be successfully monitored either. Project indicators and reports were not able to contribute to the evaluation on programme performance, mainly because they were not or not sufficiently linked to programme objectives and the beneficiaries had not set indicators able to efficiently measure their results and show the added value for the programme area.

Another important aspect that deserves further attention is that evaluation is an outsourced activity and needs expert as well as European Commission input and guidance to define its realistic limits and how to approach this.

This exercise would also increase the efficiency of the INTERACT effort on the capitalisation and knowledge management

Strategic objective

- To increase efficiency in the Territorial Cooperation programme monitoring and evaluation.

This will be achieved by

- Setting up a whole EU-network of interested programme officers responsible for the monitoring systems;
- Defining objectives for the programme evaluation exercise and identifying how project results could efficiently feed into the programme evaluation.

Joint actions-events

For this activity no single events are being delivered as this will be an INTERACT wide effort for the whole of Europe as follows:

Pilot network on Monitoring and Evaluation

This thematic network will be established by all IPs and will include interested programme managers (from different programme bodies and regions. according to the specific programme structure) dealing with indicators, monitoring and programme evaluation. Relevant staff from the European Commission will be



involved too. The inputs and participation of the programmes in the network will be on a voluntary basis and according to their availability. The network members will be nominated invited to workshops and seminars involved in the content development and kept informed about new approaches and the INTERACT activities on the topic. The involvement of programmes in this early stage is important in order to set up efficient monitoring systems and improved the systems which have just been set up. It is possible to have different thematic sub-networks (monitoring - evaluation etc.). These may be developed into zone specific networks.

1 to 4 Workshops - laboratory group on Monitoring and Evaluation

All IPs will be involved in this process. The workshops will be run in form of a laboratory group involving the members of the pilot network. It will mainly focus on mapping concerns and needs related to monitoring and evaluation and feedback on materials developed by INTERACT on the topic. Common approaches and good practices in setting project indicators and monitoring project activities will be investigated with the objective of making the collected data useful for the programme evaluation. The members of the networks will be involved in one or possibly more workshops to set up the network and the objectives as well as practical actions. The programme indicators of some programmes will be compared in order to investigate possible harmonisation. Expected outputs are: Recommendations, template and papers, terms of reference, or action lists for the external evaluators useful for a more effective monitoring as well as programme evaluation. The outcomes will be integrated in the Seminar content.

EU-wide Seminar on Programme Monitoring and Evaluation

This Seminar will propose a common approach and understanding on monitoring. As well as outlining possible tools and methods aiming at increasing the efficiency of programme monitoring including the relevance for the programme evaluation of data collected through the monitoring system. During this Seminar the content discussed and developed within the pilot network will be presented and participants will be able to exchange on methods for monitoring systems in use reports on indicators. A first Seminar will be run together by all Points. The Seminar content will be used for a series of further Seminars to be developed and run all over Europe during 2009-2010. Suitable external expertise will be searched where necessary. As the subject is large the seminar may as be longer than the standard or divided into shorter modules.

EU-wide Paper on effective Programme monitoring and evaluation

As a result of the content development in preparing for and during the workshop and seminar a document will be drafted and constantly updated, which will build on the existing studies and papers on the topics by INTERACT and other stakeholders. Practical templates and recommendations will be included.



When developing the content of the workshops and written material, each INTERACT Point will focus on different aspects of this broad theme, such as indicators analysis and possible harmonisation, monitoring systems, terms of references for the programme evaluation, IPA programmes evaluation, etc. Nevertheless the coordination will be ensured by the INTERACT Content Development and Coordinator groups and the overall content will be integrated in a coherent package to be presented in the EU-wide Seminar.



Capitalisation

Background and identified needs

The 2007-2013 programming period provides for a significant increase in territorial cooperation within cohesion policy, by mainstreaming the INTERREG Community initiative as a first rank political objective of EU cohesion policy with a stronger orientation of territorial cooperation initiatives to achieving the Lisbon and Gothenburg objectives.

INTERREG programmes have helped to deepen shared knowledge and bring different cultures and know-how closer together. The possibility of taking action at several levels - cross-border, transnational, inter-regional - and in networks reinforces the benefits of thinking globally and acting on the ground or on the relevant networks, cutting across borders. Moreover, the cooperation programmes have not yet demonstrated in a sufficient way a Community added value that lives up to expectations, notably with a view to implementing the concept of territorial cohesion.

There is a need for the European Territorial Cooperation programmes to play a more decisive role in the future of EU cohesion and other Community policies through the cross-linkage with other EU thematic policies but as the actions of the different European, national and regional level are overlapped. a minimum coordination is needed through the enhancement of a Capitalisation process by creating the articulation and coordination of different instruments at all national, regional and Community levels and by creating synergies between the different actors in a vertically integrated (multi-level governance) and horizontally integrated (cross-sector) approach.

In order to face this challenge INTERACT is now launching an inter-programme initiative (KEEP: Knowledge and Expertise in European Programmes) that involves the establishment and maintenance of a common knowledge & learning base through the capturing, documenting, processing and transferring of information into knowledge. This process must ensure quantity, quality and reliability of an inter-programme benchmarking allowing the start of a Capitalisation process.

Strategic objective

The INTERACT Capitalisation strategy will raise awareness of what is going on in the different cooperation areas, allowing programmes to work through the wealth of existing experience and to identify links to other EU programmes and policies increasing of the visibility and tangibility of EU actions and projects through more efficient and streamlined dissemination and communication activities.

The capitalisation activities will enhance the importance of European Territorial Cooperation. in terms of added value and local visibility, for all dimensions of cohesion policy and will encourage and strengthen the implementation of a territorialised strategic approach within each of the ETC OPs and looking beyond 2013.



The approach will involve the key sectoral decision-makers at European, national and regional levels via a capitalisation strategy that will include different specific objectives such as:

- Providing a flexible method for coordination within each cooperation area and in connection with the covered transnational, interregional and cross-border areas likely to improve the quality of strategies and of projects to be implemented;
- Strengthening the operational links and synergies between the European Territorial Cooperation programmes and the regional OPs, cohesion policy and the other sectoral policies of the EU to help reflections targeted to the identification of mechanisms and instruments of good governance;
- Improving the methodologies for the identification of a set of concrete major ETC projects and tools for the transfer. Listing and pooling of the good governance practices into the mainstream Structural Funds programmes (i.e. 'Convergence', 'Competitiveness and Employment' and other 'Territorial Cooperation' programmes) speeding up progress on territorial development in some major issues for cooperation;
- Promoting organising regular "territorial conferences" among the relevant stakeholders at all territorial levels for the sharing and benchmarking of relevant methods and forward studies based notably on the capitalisation activities undertaken.

Joint actions-events

Organisation and implementation of the annual EU wide conference focused on Knowledge Management/Capitalisation/Communication INTERACT activities.

Organisation and implementation of an annual meeting of a Working Group (including all the stakeholders involved INTERACT, Commission, European Territorial Cooperation Programmes, other relevant EU institutions as well as Member States) on the Capitalisation activities.

Setting up and implementation of a Laboratory Group aiming at the integration of the European Territorial Cooperation Programmes with other Member State instruments funded by Structural Funds (particularly the National / Operational Programmes) in order to fully understand the added value of INTERREG programmes and projects on EU sectoral policies, mainstream programmes as well as European neighbourhood policy/programmes.

Setting up and implementation of a Thematic Network (composed of representatives from the Commission, INTERACT, Programmes and Member States as well as National Contact Persons) in order to analyse and evaluate the on-going activities/results of European Territorial Cooperation projects funded by Cooperation Programmes following the thematic and integrated approach.



Communication for programmes

Background and identified needs

In the new programming period a strong emphasis is put on the need to communicate more and better: submission of an elaborated Communication Plan, nomination of a communication responsible in each programme, development of communication indicators, obligation to organise at least one major information activity each year, etc., as well as various obligations on the side of final beneficiaries. There is a widespread feeling in the programmes that communication activities are not fully meeting objectives but considerable doubts about how to address this situation. The issue has become particularly urgent because of the need for yearly evaluation of communication activities.

In particular, communication is now to be seen in a larger framework, which relates to the need to increase transparency, visibility and impact of territorial cooperation in the regions and also at the meta-level of the European Union's territory. Programmes therefore need to tackle these challenges in a coordinated way, in order to maximise their communication efforts.

INTERACT is well aware of these new challenges for the European Territorial Cooperation programmes and projects, and has already developed a series of three training and networking events in 2007, with a main focus on the development of the communication plan and a coverage of most aspects of communication (internal and external, communication objectives, tools, activities, monitoring etc).

Based on the success of these first events, as well as on the needs expressed by the programmes for further and more targeted communication services, the year ahead will see new INTERACT services developed, to address more specific objectives.

Strategic objective

The first main objective for INTERACT in 2009 is to create a network of communication managers from all European Territorial Cooperation programmes and to set the ground for demand-responsive services. The identification of the members of the network will lead to the organisation of one or more networking meetings among these members as well as training seminars. INTERACT will also complete the collection of programme communication plans through this target group and or via the European Commission.

This setting up of this network will have a sustainable character, so that the network and its members remain active throughout the programming period. This does not exclude participation of other stakeholders in INTERACT communication services, even though the primary target group is composed of the programme communication managers, who should act as disseminators within their programme structures and also towards final beneficiaries.

The target group is rather heterogeneous, e.g. most transnational programmes have one or more communication managers/officers, whereas in most cross-border programmes communication tasks are fulfilled by staff members of the Joint Technical Secretariat, with staff often not specialised and lacking time and



resources for communication activities. This dichotomy will be taken into account in the development of services.

Communication services to be delivered by INTERACT in 2009 will operate along two lines:

- Communication by the programmes and by the projects: internal communication, use of new technologies (web etc), communicate to the general public (events, flyers etc), communicating with key-stakeholders (MSC, potential applicants, EU institutions, the media also), management of communication (monitoring and evaluation, logistical aspects, technical aspects) etc.
- Networking and joint promotion of ETC programmes: here is a clear link with the capitalisation activities, and for this the March Conference appears as the best place to set up this joint strategy.

Internal coordination:

- There is a clear link between communication and capitalisation, and one of the main objectives for INTERACT will be to act in a coordinated way on these two fronts, by a close coordination between the corresponding working groups.
- The INTERACT Communications Group will work on two complementary types of activities: INTERACT communication activities (coordinated by the INTERACT Programme Secretariat) and INTERACT communication services for European Territorial Cooperation stakeholders, whose delivery will be ensured by the four INTERACT Points.

Joint actions-events

- Identification of the target group - communication managers in each programme.
- Identification, in each programme, of the specific needs
- Collection and dissemination on the INTERACT Website of programme communication plans (selection of good practice communication plans)
- EU-wide network meeting for communication staff, in parallel or back-to-back with the KEEP Conference of 23-24 March. This meeting can include e.g. strand-specific working groups. The meeting will aim at presenting the outcomes of main needs identified and of a series of services to be developed as a result of this needs assessment (fine-tune the service development with participants). It will also serve as platform for exchange of good practices between programmes.
- Training events to be organised by two or more IPs together, on a general or specific topic of interest (e.g. how to work with the media? How to support final beneficiaries in communication tasks? Etc); depending on the topic, INTERACT will recourse to external expertise and support documentation.
- Development of information material to be coordinated within the Communications Group (guidance, list of relevant media etc - check with programmes what they need)? Make use of existing documentation/guides by EC, by Pinnacle (for IIIC and SUDOE) etc.
- Development of training/seminars for programmes to advice their projects partners on promoting their activities and results.



Single specific actions

Each single INTERACT Point will have to focus some communication activities on specificities of its zone and on specific needs expressed by the communication officers of its own programmes. Nevertheless these special focus will be integrated and coordinated efficiently within the INTERACT working groups, avoiding redundancies and providing specialised content on different programme communication tasks.

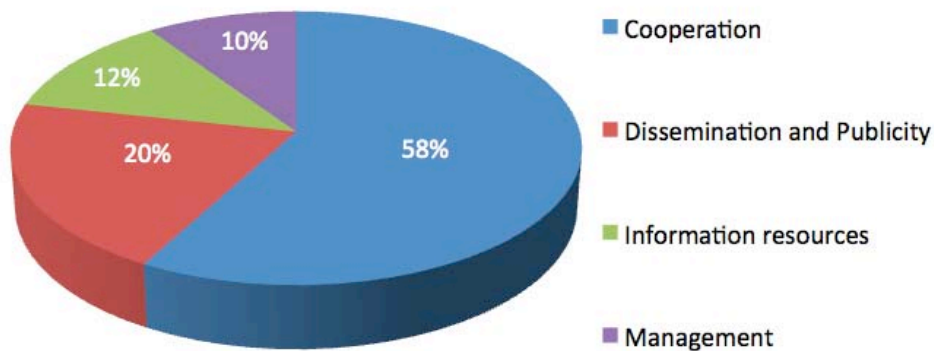
INTERACT Point Turku serving a compact area with limited number of programmes is in a position to have such close relations to programmes and to join programmes together into a pilot network that it is taking a special approach to programme communication. Working together with two distinct communication cultures, the one of Nordic countries and the one of Member States of 2004, IP Turku will aim in forming approaches that enable overcoming such modes of media relations that can be seen complicated and even barrier builders from the point of common European identity generation. The work packages created for and created in this pilot network will be shared European wide after pilot tests in this smaller regional and cultural diversity context.



Summary of INTERACT Activities

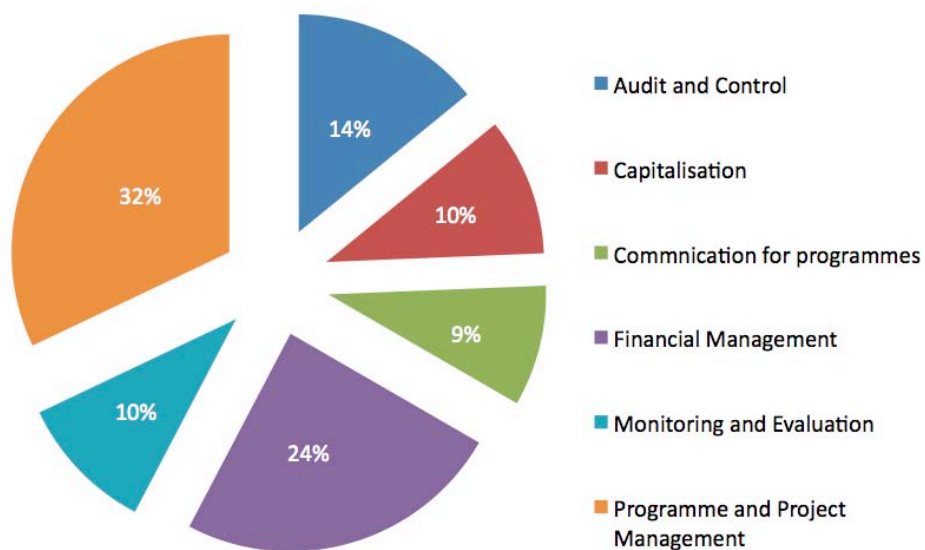
In the following graphs we summarise the activities to be undertaken by the INTERACT Programme according to the indicators, themes, services and their type as described in the INTERACT delivery model of the MAWP 2007 -2013.

As can be seen in the first graph, 58% of all activities are within Cooperation:



The following graph - which describes the breakdown of activities per theme - shows the broad coverage of the themes to be addressed:

The following tables indicate in each of the main themes what main type of services and products will be delivered during 2009:




INTERACT Joint Annual Work Plan 2009

PROGRAMME AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT						FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT				
STUDIES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Guide on Good Governance • 4 Surveys 	UPDATED STUDIES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Handbook 	INFORMATION SERVICES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services provided by e-mail • Services provided by telephone 	EVENTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 Workshops • 11 Seminars • 1 Conference • 1 Joint Event 	ADVISORY SERVICES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Workshop 	THEMATIC NETWORK <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 Laboratory Groups • 4 Pilot Networks 	STUDIES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 Handbook 	UPDATED STUDIES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 Handbook 	NEW TOOLS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Document for Programmes • 1 System developed 	EVENTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 Workshop • 13 Seminars • 2 Joint Event 	ADVISORY SERVICES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Workshop
MONITORING AND EVALUATION					AUDIT AND CONTROL					
STUDIES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 survey 	THEMATIC NETWORK <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 Pilot Networks 	NEW TOOLS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Document for Programmes 	EVENTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Workshop • 4 Seminars 	ADVISORY SERVICES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Workshop 	NEW TOOLS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 Manuals for standardised practices • 1 System developed 	EVENTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 Seminars • 2 Workshops • 1 Joint Event 	ADVISORY SERVICES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 Workshops 	THEMATIC NETWORK <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Laboratory Group • 2 Pilot Networks 		
COMMUNICATIONS FOR INTERACT				COMMUNICATIONS FOR PROGRAMMES						
WEB PORTAL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 INTERACT Website • 1 KM Website • 1 Searchable Database • 1 Management System • 1 Video Conferencing System 	PUBLICITY MATERIAL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Posters • Flyers/brochures • Display/Wall & Pop Ups 	PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mailing • 2 Events including promotional aspects 	EVENTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Wide conference • 3 Workshops • 2 Joint Events 	WEB PORTAL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 KMWebsite 	THEMATIC NETWORK <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 Pilot Networks 	UPDATED STUDIES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Handbook 				
NETWORK COORDINATION				CAPITALISATION						
THEMATIC NETWORK <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 Pilot Networks 	THEMATIC NETWORK <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Laboratory Group • 7 Pilot Networks 	EVENTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 Workshops • 1 Seminar 	COORDINATION OF 2-TIER NETWORK <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 Regional Networks 	STUDIES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Dossier on Good Governance 	NEW TOOLS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 Manuals for standardised practices 	EVENTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Conference • 3 Workshops • 2 Joint Events 	THEMATIC NETWORKS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Laboratory Group • 2 Pilot Networks 			



Cooperation within INTERACT

The coordination of the Programme will continue to be undertaken in 2009 by the INTERACT Secretariat through the use of the Managing System intranet (Confluence), regular Coordinator Group Meetings (4) as well as conference calls, Communication Group meetings (3).

In order to achieve these aims, the INTERACT Secretariat is committed to:

- Ensuring that communication flows between all offices are as efficient and smoothly functioning as possible.
- Initiate and manage a knowledge flow from and to each IP to ensure that information is effectively spread across the whole organisation (through setting up all appropriate tools)
- Management of activities schedule for the whole programme, identification of synergies and leading initiation of joint actions (e.g. development of joint work packages)
- Overseeing the creation of pools of thematic expertise (innovation, SME development, accessibility etc.) in each office as a resource available to all other offices
- Creating within the IS pools of thematic expertise (knowledge management, quality, communications, programme management tools) to be made available throughout the Managing System
- Identifying relevant themes of cooperation in terms of content research and delivery
- Setting up a rigorous system of analysis of results and impacts and steer the Managing System for possible adjustment of activities to ensure that objectives are met
- Filtering cooperation requests from external networks/organisations/associations and define parameters for such cooperation.



Annexes

Annexe 1 Ghost indicators

These ghost indicators are an amalgamation of indicators from the INTERACT Operational Programme, indicators from the INTERACT Communications Plan, as well as additional indicators which have been deemed necessary by the Coordinators Group. Please see the separate excel file.



Annexe 2: Needs analysis

IP Turku

Topic area	High interest	Medium interest	Low interest	Form of service preferred
Training for newly recruited staff on ETC	4	3	4	General information + training
Programme priorities; Lisbon and Gothenburg agendas	1	5	3	General information and conference
Programme and Project Management	7	3	2	Learning event, studies, guides
Financial Management	9	1	2	Learning events, advisory, studies, guides and e-tools
Financial Control	6	2	3	Learning events, advisory, studies, guides and e-tools
Eligibility, State Aid, Procurement	8	4		Learning events, advisory, studies, guides and e-tools
Communication	3	7	1	Learning event, guides, e-tools, evaluation tools; in coordination with Infor
Capitalisation	6	3	1	Learning event, advisory, guides, e-tools, evaluation tools
Knowledge Management	3	5	2	Learning event, advisory, guides, studies, e-tools, evaluation tools
Monitoring, Indicators	6	4	1	Learning event, advisory, guides, studies, e-tools, evaluation tools
Strategic Project Generation	2	8		Learning event, conference, guides, studies, e-tools, evaluation tools
Project Assessment, Evaluation	6	4	1	Learning event, guides, studies, e-tools, evaluation tools
Stakeholder cooperation	2	3	1	General information, conference, learning event, guides and tools
EGTC	2	2	5	General information, conference



10% and 20% rules 5 5 1 Learning event, conference, advisory, guides, studies

Other interests expressed as additional suggestions with high interest:
Professional networks ENPI Training in negotiation skills

The detailed activity plan reflects the timing preference indicated by programmes. IP Turku will be in close contact to programmes in order to ensure that the level of content corresponds to the level of participants and their expertise as programme body members.

IP Viborg

CBC programmes

Includes all answers over 50%. Programmes could express more than one preferred response for each subject.

Issue /	Response	Training	Programme discussion	Written information	Expert input
Role of programme authorities				50%	
First level control			56%		
Eligibility		69%	62%	50%	
Irregularities		50%	56%		
State Aid		56%	50%	50%	50%
Technical Assistance				50%	
Monitoring systems		50%	56%		
Evaluation			50%		
Quality / strategic projects			56%		
Programme communication		50%	50%		
Capitalisation of project results			50%		
Project finances		56%	50%		
Risk management		50%			
Small projects			50%		



Transnational programmes

Includes all responses over 46%. Issues highlighted as interesting for CBC programmes but not transnational are included to emphasise areas where there is a need for a different approach. Issues highlighted by transnational programmes but not CBC programmes are marked in italics.

Issue / Response	Training	Programme discussion	Written information	Expert input
Role of programme authorities	-	-	-	-
First level control	46%	53%		
Eligibility	53%			
Irregularities			61%	
State Aid	-	-	-	-
Public procurement			46%	
Technical Assistance	-	-	-	-
N+2/N+3			46%	
Monitoring systems	-	-		
Reporting		61%		
Evaluation		61%		
Quality / strategic projects		46%		
Project development	46%	46%		
Project assessment	53%	53%		
Programme communication	53%	77%		46%
Capitalisation of project results	53%	46%		
Project management	53%	46%	46%	
Project finances	61%			
Innovation		53%	53%	53%
Environment			46%	
Transport			46%	
Risk management	-			
Small projects				


CBC + transnational combined - all issues

Issue /	Response	Training	Programme discussion	Written information	Expert input
Role of authorities programme	31%	38%		34%	14%
EGTC	0%	10%		17%	3%
First level control	41%	55%		38%	24%
Eligibility	62%	48%		45%	34%
Audit / second level control	17%	20%		27%	24%
Irregularities	38%	48%		52%	34%
State Aid	48%	41%		41%	34%
Public procurement	38%	10%		45%	24%
Article 71	24%	34%		34%	20%
Technical Assistance	17%	27%		45%	17%
N+2/N+3	27%	41%		38%	24%
Closure INTERREG III	24%	27%		41%	17%
Monitoring systems	45%	48%		38%	20%
Reporting	38%	52%		41%	24%
Indicators	34%	38%		41%	31%
Evaluation	41%	55%		31%	27%
Quality / strategic projects	24%	52%		20%	24%
Project development	41%	41%		24%	20%
Project assessment	48%	45%		24%	14%
Programme communication	52%	62%		41%	41%
Capitalisation of project results	41%	48%		27%	27%
Project management	45%	34%		34%	27%
Lead Beneficiary Principle	20%	20%		31%	14%
Project finances	58%	45%		31%	24%
Partnership agreements	27%	34%		41%	24%
Economic development	14%	24%		20%	10%
Risk management	31%	24%		20%	24%
Urban-rural links	14%	17%		27%	17%
Connectivity (ICT)	10%	20%		10%	10%
Cross-border integration	17%	20%		20%	14%
Innovation	31%	31%		38%	31%
Environment	20%	20%		31%	14%
Sustainable development urban	10%	14%		24%	7%
Transport	17%	14%		31%	10%
Small projects	17%	31%		20%	17%



The Work Plan for 2009 is structured around a strategy to provide strong input on the most common needs before the end of the year. Programme starting points and their needs relating to a specific theme are however not the same and the provision of a service on one theme will not completely cover the need. We therefore still leave room in the work plan for individual programme requirements and can also use these advisory opportunities to cover some issues that were only identified by a smaller number of programmes. It is not possible to cover all needs for all programmes using the preferred method (this would require hundreds of events and documents next year) and we have therefore prioritise according to how many programmes expressed the same need.

IP Vienna

Results of online needs assessment

	Staff Training	Discussion with other programmes	Written information	Meeting with experts
First Level Control	91.7%	45.5%	54.5%	9.1%
Eligibility of expenditures	66.7%	33.3%	58.3%	25.0%
Irregularities and recoveries	69.2%	46.2%	46.2%	46.2%
State Aid	61.5%	53.8%	53.8%	46.2 %
Public procurement (incl. PRAG rules)	70.0%	40.0%	50.0%	50.0%
Project budgeting and financial management	66.7%	41.7%	8.3%	16.7%
Closure INTERREG III	16.7%	50.0%	25.0%	8.3%
Programme financial planning (incl. TA)	45.5%	63.6%	45.5%	18.2%
Audit	18.2%	36.4%	27.3%	27.3%
Article 71 description	9.1%	45.5%	54.5%	9.1%
Programme set up	0%	20.0%	30.0%	20.0%
Project generation. development and support	63.6%	72.7%	36.4%	9.1%
Developing quality strategic projects	41.7%	58.3%	41.7%	25.0%
Small projects/people to people	18.2%	63.6%	36.4%	27.3%
LPP	33.3 %	58.3 %	58.3 %	16.7 %
Project application assessment	72.7 %	45.5 %	54.5 %	36.4 %
Monitoring systems	60.0 %	50.0 %	30.0 %	0 %
Indicators	50.0 %	33.3 %	58.3 %	25.0 %
Programme evaluation	54.5 %	9.1 %	63.6 %	27.3 %
Project evaluation	81.8 %	27.3 %	63.6 %	18.2 %
EGTC for project	27.3 %	9.1 %	36.4 %	27.3 %
EGTC for programme management	0 %	30.0 %	20.0 %	30.0 %



INTERACT Joint Annual Work Plan 2009

HR (programme management)	36.4 %	27.3 %	18.2 %	36.4 %
Subcontracting and partnership agreements	30.0 %	30.0 %	50.0 %	20.0 %
Programme communication and promotion of ETC *	81.8 %			
Future of ETC (2013+) *			66.7 %	
Contribution of programmes to Lisbon and Gothenburg agendas *			61.5 %	
Capitalisation on project results *			41.7 %	
Thematic support in general *			40.0 %	
Cross-border integration/Capacity building etc. *	44.4 %			
Sustainable urban development *			40.0 %	
Connectivity *			44.4 %	

* only results above 40% are included

Combined results of online assessment and needs assessment at the Regional Network Kick off Meeting

Financial themes

First Level Control	91.7
Public Procurement (incl. PRAG)	88
Irregularities and recoveries	69.2
Eligibility of expenditure	66.7
Project budgeting and project financial management	66.7
State Aid	61.5
Programme financial planning	60

Technical management issues

Project generation/management	91
Project and programme evaluation	92
Strategic projects generation/management	90
Indicators	80
Monitoring system	80
Contracts/Partnerships agreements/LPP	70
Small projects	60
EGTC	70
Human Resources	70

Throughout all steps of the needs analysis strong needs and requirements of the IPA programmes have been highlighted and collected. Specific services as well as a particular focus on IPA in all INTERACT Point Vienna activities will be ensured.



Annexe 3 Activities 2009

The activities for 2009 can be seen in detail, with their corresponding indicators in the attached excel file.



Annexe 4 Budget 2009

Workplan year	2009
INTERACT SECRETARIAT	BRATISLAVA
<i>Costs by item</i>	
- Staff (5.5 FTE)	320.070
- Overheads	70.014
- Travel and accomodation	60.000
subtotal	450.084
- Knowledge Management	32.400
- ICT	191.280
- Events (Fixed Activity Budget)	10.420
- Events (Flexible Activity Budget)	79.580
- Publications	53.400
subtotal	367.080
Total Costs	817.164

Flexible Activity Costs cover costs for the Knowledge Management Conference Bratislava, 22-23 March 2009)

Workplan year	2009
INTERACT POINT	TURKU
<i>Costs by item</i>	
- Staff (4 FTE)	280.000
- Overheads	81.000
- Travel and accomodation	98.000
subtotal	459.000
- Events (Fixed Activity Budget)	163.164
- Events (Flexible Activity Budget) Lab groups	70.000
subtotal	233.164
Total Costs	692.164

Overheads include ICT

Events include external expert costs

Flexible Activity Costs cover costs for three new Laboratory Groups:
Baltic Sea strategy, project Assessment and Coordination of
Programme Management Databases

Costs for surveys will be carried forward from 2008 as they can not be contracted and carried out by the end of 2008



Workplan year	2009
INTERACT POINT	VALENCIA
Costs by item	
- Staff (6 FTE)	370.238
- Overheads	68.200
- Travel and accomodation	98.400
subtotal	536.838
- Activities (Fixed activity budget)*	200.000
- Activities (Flexible Activity Budget)	40.000
subtotal	240.000
Total Costs	776.838

*this budget line includes all expenditure related to events, external experts, ICT and publications

Workplan year	2009
INTERACT POINT	VIBORG
Costs by item	
- Staff (6 FTE + maternity cover)	574000
- Overheads	68000
- Travel and accomodation	100000
subtotal	742000
- Events (Fixed Activity Budget)	211503
- Events (Flexible Activity Budget)	68497
subtotal	280000
Total Costs	1022000

Events include external expert and publication costs

Flexible Activity Costs cover costs for advisory services
 Approx EUR 10.000 of the carry over from 2008 is assigned to the fixed activity budget. The rest of the carry over is assigned to staff costs and will be used to cover the extra expenditure arising from maternity cover



Workplan year	2009
INTERACT POINT	VIENNA
Costs by item	
- Staff (6 FTE)	495.245
- Overheads	123.793
- Travel and accomodation	143.622
subtotal*	762.660
- Events (Fixed activity budget)*	320.930
- Events (Flexible Activity Budget)*	3.136
subtotal*	324.066
Total Costs	1.086.726

These figures were calculated as follows:

- * 1,5% adaptation to real inflation rate (3,5%) from flexible activity budget
- * 25% estimated carry forward from 2008 budget, due to delays in the recruitment , which delayed several activities
- * 10% budget shift from Staff/travel to Activity