Growing through challenges: achievements of EU external border cooperation 2007-2013
Editorial

In case you didn’t know, it's official: the INTERACT ENPI project will close on 30 June 2015. But there are so many things happening at the moment that we’ve hardly had time to realise this.

In fact, 2014 has been a year full of events, bringing us mixed feelings. On one hand, during summer 2014 the missing pieces of the legislative package for 2014-2020 were approved, making them available much more rapidly than in the previous programming round, which undoubtedly represents a major positive milestone. On the other hand, a number of participating countries are going through periods of turmoil; whether such turmoil is ongoing from previous years or new this year, programme and project implementation are naturally affected. And on a personal note, as you may be aware the INTERACT ENPI team experienced this summer the sad loss of the Project Director, Ms Riitta Ahdan.

In such an environment, what could we possibly write about? Well, 2014 was also the first year in which both programming periods clearly overlapped. This has required additional efforts from all stakeholders in terms of putting the future programming period on a solid footing, while at the same time making sure that the current programme is being correctly implemented, especially at project level. When a newborn comes home we sometimes think that the elder children will manage alone, but we all know that it doesn’t quite work like that. In the same way, projects up and running still require due attention. In this newsletter you will find news about the achievements of approved projects in specific geographic areas such as the Caucasus and the Middle-East (the areas newest to cross-border cooperation). Bringing a little twist to the previous issues of the newsletter, this time we have privileged articles written first-hand by stakeholders, sharing their views about what ENPI CBC really means to them.

By now you also know that we are instinctively curious about anyone and anything new in the neighbourhood. So we are introducing you here to the new Managing Authority of the Poland-Belarus-Ukraine and Lithuania-Poland-Russia programmes, and we’re reporting on how one of the new programmes, the Mid-Atlantic, is gathering the views of local and regional actors in Morocco in order to build the programme strategy.

And we’ve never made a secret about how satisfied we are with the involvement of ENPI CBC programmes in European Cooperation Day. With the sounds and images of the 2014 edition still vivid, we provide you with an extensive overview of all that you’ve delivered to promote cooperation along the external borders of the European Union. And this year there was an important innovation: we’ve done our homework and have contributed directly with initiatives of our own, which we outline in one of the articles in this issue. By the way, while working on this editorial, we’ve received news that the documentary L’infidèle we screened in a few different Tunisian cities has been awarded the jury prize at the Via Emilia Doc Fest 2014. Our compliments to director Angelo Loy and to our very special CBC ambassador Touhami Garnaoui!

So, yes: we now have a closing deadline. But it’s not quite time to say goodbye yet!

On behalf of the INTERACT ENPI Team

Carlos Bolaños
Team Leader
Becoming neighbours: from ENPI CBC to ENI CBC

“We become neighbours when we are willing to cross the road for one another. (...) There is a lot of road crossing to do. We are all very busy in our own circles. We have our own people to go to and our own affairs to take care of. But if we could cross the road once in a while and pay attention to what is happening on the other side, we might indeed become neighbours.”

Henri J.M. Nouwen, Bread for the Journey: A Daybook of Wisdom and Faith

More than six years have passed since the thirteen ENPI CBC programmes began implementing projects to benefit both Member States and neighbouring countries. During these years project participants “crossed the road for each other” countless times; taking care of their joint affairs has certainly made them better neighbours.

Based on the four objectives defined in the 2007-2013 strategy, programmes have been implementing projects which foster social and economic development, deal with common challenges, establish efficient and secure borders and promote local cross-border people-to-people actions. More than 900 projects supported by the programmes have either been already completed or are still running.

Strategies for the new ENI CBC programmes are currently in development. The European Commission has defined a different approach for the 2014-2020 period, requiring that the programmes concentrate on a limited number of concrete thematic objectives to ensure that financing is more targeted. Draft programme strategies currently available show that the programmes will build on what has been initiated and achieved in 2007-2013.

However priorities will be better focused in order to address the specific needs of the participating regions.

Since the consequences of the global economic crisis are still affecting recovery in Europe, programmes are very much focused on improving the business environment, and have selected either thematic objective 1 (on business and SME development) or thematic objective 2 (on support to education, research, technology development and innovation). Most programmes are also opting for thematic objective 6 (on environmental protection, climate change mitigation and adaptation) addressing the sustainable use of available joint natural resources.

Land border programmes will look to improve border management and security on the external EU borders, focusing on further developing border-crossing procedures and infrastructure. Many programmes also consider the promotion of local culture and historical heritage as an important priority.

So the second generation of CBC programmes is enabling the continuation of established partnerships and the creation of new ones.

An old saying goes ‘When enough people take the same path many times, it becomes a road’ - to all countries participating in the programmes, we hope that these paths you’re taking together will eventually become paved two-way streets!
When David Bujiashvili arrived in Europe for the first time and saw Brussels, he decided to take part of Europe back with him to Georgia. However, he didn’t go for any of the famous Brussels souvenirs from the Grand Place, or for Belgian chocolates or even Kriek beer. What David wanted to bring back was European values.

“I remember my first foreign trip was to Brussels. It was actually a main incentive and I realised what the European Union is for me: the way our country should go.”

Eight years on, David comes to Brussels every few months to attend meetings of the cross border cooperation (CBC) programmes. He is now the deputy head of the EU assistance programmes department at the Ministry for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration of Georgia, which is the national authority for CBC. David has been responsible for implementing many EU and Euro-Atlantic programmes/projects in Georgia but, as he says, the Black Sea Basin ENPI CBC is one of the few programmes that support the participation of NGOs and municipalities at a regional level. Georgian organisations cooperate in projects with partners mostly from Armenia, Ukraine, Republic of Moldova, Romania and Bulgaria. David says: “In CBC projects it is not important where you come from or what are the cultural or political differences between you. The key word is “cooperation” - this brings, glues and keeps everything and everybody together within, and sometimes beyond, the project”.

So far, Georgia has participated in two calls for proposals, where local stakeholders (NGOs and regional organisations) were invited to come up with ideas for projects to develop within the limited budget and strict deadlines. The response was enthusiastic and through the CBC component of the ENPI, 35 projects have now been financed and developed involving Georgian organisations. For David, some of the most inspiring projects are those with an environmental focus looking to develop agro, eco and wine tourism. Thanks to CBC, these sectors are becoming more and more popular in the Georgian Kakhetia region.

“We don’t have a sufficient budget to support big infrastructural projects like building roads or bridges, but we build people-to–people cooperation, and that’s another important type of bridge”.

David is confident that the CBC programmes and cooperation with regional and European partners has brought Georgian NGOs, and Georgia itself, a step closer to Europe. CBC projects support the main goal of the country which is to get closer to the EU through intensifying cooperation at the level of civil society, of municipalities, and even of state organisations.
to get others to visit. For the past two years he has done this through the Black Sea-Silk Road Corridor project. The western part of the route historically known as the Silk Road, passing through Greece, Turkey, Georgia and Armenia, is now a unique 3000 kilometres of cooperation between those four countries.

The project partners have followed the traditional trail to create a modern touristic route, where the historical-cultural sites are clearly marked, with information panels, and signs on the monuments. A smartphone application for a virtual tour is now in development.

Richard says, “We share the same vision as our Georgian partners: these are incredibly beautiful and compelling places to visit, but people do not know about them. However many people have come to the South Caucasus so far, it’s just a fraction of those who could come”.

In the space of 24 months, 192 historical sites were marked, not only on the real but also the virtual roads in Armenia, Georgia, Greece and Turkey. Project implementation will be completed by 7 January 2015.

For Richard: “Cross border effort is particularly important because this is a difficult part of the world. Armenia and Georgia are going in different political directions right now, but at the fundamental, humanistic level, people love to meet people, people love to cooperate, and people prefer not to fight. That is why when you cross borders, you cross cultures”.

Hrachya believes that any kind of cooperation with Europe has a positive effect, although Caucasian countries are not yet used to the particularity of the rules governing the EU programmes. But through cooperation they hope to enrich their technical skills and increase their degree of professionalism. “Caucasian diligence fits well with the European experience” says Hrachya.

The Armenian Ministry of Economy has been the national coordinator for ENPI instruments in Armenia since 2006. As chief specialist, Marina Minasyan states that the implementation of the Black Sea Basin programme has been particularly challenging. It has involved raising public awareness in Armenia about the advantages of cooperating across borders. Young, passionate people at the department of EU affairs have carried out the main work.

She recalls, “There was a fear that we might fail after all. But now we’re happy to see that even after the project has been implemented, finalised and closed, countries continue to cooperate - we have become like friends or family”.

Another CBC project in Armenia is aimed at enhancing economic competitiveness in the Black Sea region countries. The Local/Regional Economic Development Network (LRED net) project facilitates Armenia’s cooperation with partners in Greece, Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Bulgaria.

Project manager Hrachya Zakoyan says: “Both enhancing export-oriented sectors and decreasing uneven development among the regions are priorities for the Armenian economy. We expect that implementing the LRED-Net project will have a positive influence on Armenia as well as on other partner countries.”

Sometimes the local organisations implementing the projects weren’t even aware of how difficult and challenging it was to launch the programme and to make the cooperation happen through overcoming bureaucratic, legislative, cultural, and indeed actual, borders. But, once a year, ENPI CBC participants and programme partners gather to discuss plans and results, and to admire just how big the CBC family has grown.

by Elina Chilingaryan, journalist
Cross-border cooperation in the Middle East: bringing people together to address common challenges

By Martin Heibel, communication officer, ENPI CBC MED Programme

Improving water efficiency in irrigated agriculture, developing cutting-edge technologies to bring new life to millenary cultural heritage, turning micro-algae into new fuel for cars, making hotels greener and using traditional plants to create new medicine - cross-border cooperation in the Middle East under the Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme is thriving and varied. Behind this apparent diversity, projects are driven by one common goal: to use neighbourhood cooperation to share solutions which impact people on the ground.

In a region characterised by significant political, economic, social and cultural differences, cooperation can’t be taken for granted. If we add to this the recent historical changes which have transformed the whole Mediterranean area, cooperation may even seem out of reach.

However, the huge response to the Mediterranean Sea Basin programme suggests a continuing, and indeed increased, appetite for partnership. Almost 2000 proposals have been submitted under the three calls launched respectively in 2009 and 2011. To specify: the overall request of funds - 3 billion € - amounts to a quarter of the entire EU budget dedicated to the Neighbourhood Policy. All in all, based on the available budget (182 mio €), 95 projects have been funded in thematic fields ranging from socioeconomic development, environmental sustainability, investment in human capital, enhancement of cultural heritage and diversification of tourism.

Addressing common challenges by developing joint solutions is not only an objective, it’s a necessity: many issues in the Mediterranean area, like pollution, water management or biodiversity conservation, know no borders.

Let’s take a closer look at some of the achievements of ENPI CBC Med projects in the Middle East.

Jordan: saving water, saving money, saving the environment while improving crop productivity

“Water availability is an issue in this region, where we have limited water resources but high demand. Improving efficiency in irrigation is a top priority since agricultural needs account for 80% of the total water consumed”, says Dr. Nabeel Bani Hani, ENSIAP project national coordinator for Jordan, “What we’re trying to develop is a simple and cost-effective system to help farmers use water wisely, at the same time increasing crop productivity”.

Overall, the ENSIAP project has provided twenty pilot farms with improved irrigation systems - based on sand and disk filtration units and a drip irrigation network. In addition - as enhanced agricultural efficiency/soil conservation will be achieved thanks to a fertilization process known as “fertigation”, which works directly through the water irrigation system. Finally, sixteen of these systems have been upgraded by the ENSIAP project with a simple photovoltaic plant which feeds the required energy through renewable, clean solar power.
Lebanon: could algae fuel the future?

Are we heading to a green revolution at the gas station? Yes, say the scientists involved in MED-ALGAE project. Optimism is high at the laboratory of the American University of Beirut where the Lebanese team of MED-ALGAE is studying the potential as biodiesel of various species of micro-algae found along the Lebanese coast. “Unlike other crops used for producing biofuels, microalgae do not compete with conventional agricultural production” notes Professor Abou Jawdah. While trying to produce fuel from the algae, Professor Abou Jawdah came across an interesting “side effect:” some of the algae under study proved to be excellent sources of protein and of other food supplements. The composition of a species in Byblos, in powder form, showed a 20 percent protein content, which is considered high. “By way of comparison, red meat has about 20 percent protein,” says Abou Jawdah.

Growing microalgae in a laboratory. Photo courtesy of the MED-ALGAE project.

Egypt: see ancient heritage under new eyes

“Alexandria in Egypt is full of valuable heritage sites” highlights Yasser G. Aref, head of the Architectural Studies Unit at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina. “However, because of the pressing and severe economic situation, heritage is not on the top list of priorities for local officials”. Based on the use of innovative technologies - namely 3D video mapping and augmented reality - I AM project aims to present cultural sites at their best, offering visitors a fascinating interactive experience. Reactions to the performance held on the façade of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina were positive: “It allows you to quickly understand the history of the town and to memorise it”, says an older Alexandria resident.

The I AM project in action. Photo AFP © EU/Neighbourhood Info Centre.

Israel: plants put politics aside

The quest for native plants of the Mediterranean which can be turned into commercially valuable compounds such as herbal medicines, cosmetics, or food supplements has united Israeli and Palestinian scientists. In a region where conflict tends to get in the way of joint development initiatives, Bio-Xplore bets on scientific cooperation to overcome differences. “We found that local trees which are very common in Israel actually have medicinal activity. These are trees that anyone can find outside their home, and pick the leaves to use in their tea” says Dr. Gili Baruch, Bio-Xplore project manager. Thousands of plant extracts have already been taken by Bio-Xplore. The Israeli and Palestinian teams are also examining the possibility of expanding the project in the future to include neighbouring Jordan. “Bio-Xplore gives us the skills and experience to work in the field we want after graduation”, concludes Hadil Ibrahim, a Palestinian student involved in the project.

Working with plant extracts in the Bio-Xplore project. Photo AFP © EU/Neighbourhood Info Centre.

The Mediterranean area is ready to cooperate further in the period 2014-2020. Stay tuned!
Our adventure with ENPI CBC programmes started on 27 June 2013, when the implementation of two such programmes (Poland-Belarus-Ukraine and Lithuania-Poland-Russia) was taken over by the Department of Certification and Designation in the Ministry of Infrastructure and Development of Poland\(^1\). A lot has happened since then.

By the end of December 2013, 177 grant contracts were signed - 117 within the Poland-Belarus-Ukraine programme and 60 within the Lithuania-Poland-Russia programme. The thematic scope of the contracted projects is very wide and includes entrepreneurship and tourism development, improving regional access, natural environment protection, developing more efficient border infrastructure, and improving cooperation between the public services of the participating countries.

In total over 308 mio€ was allocated for projects in both programmes (over 174 mio€ of EU contribution for the Poland-Belarus-Ukraine programme, and over 112,5 mio€ of EU and 21,6 mio€ of Russian Federation contribution for Lithuania-Poland-Russia).

Currently both programmes have progressed to the project implementation phase. As the joint managing authority of both programmes, we are making efforts to streamline this phase. Since 28 projects (17 within Poland-Belarus-Ukraine and 11 within Lithuania-Poland-Russia) have already completed all activities, the beneficiaries, target groups and final beneficiaries can take advantage of the positive outcomes, which include: new medical infrastructure, renovated educational centres, specialised cars for emergency management systems, new tourist products and increased border crossing capacities on the EU external border.

Undoubtedly, our preparation of these new programmes will benefit from the experience and lessons learned from the current programming period. We are doing our best to ensure that the programmes reflect the current needs and challenges in the border regions; at the same time we hope that the new programmes will open new possibilities for cross-border cooperation on the Eastern border of the European Union.

\(^1\) The tasks of the JMA were previously executed by a different department (Territorial Cooperation Department) located in the same ministry.
Beyond the Pillars of Hercules

With the inclusion of the Mid-Atlantic Programme in the ENI CBC Programming Document, concrete and consistent efforts are being made to extend cross border cooperation under the European Neighborhood Instrument to the Atlantic shores of Portugal, Morocco and Spain. Such extension would bring new features to the ENPI/ENI world: the involvement of Morocco and the participation of ultra peripheral regions of the EU such as the Canary Islands and Madeira. In this article we take a closer look at the views of Moroccan stakeholders, stemming from the national consultations held in September 2014.

According to Roman sources, while on his way to the garden of the Hesperides, Hercules had to cross Mount Atlas, but instead of climbing it he used his superhuman strength to smash through it and opened a way towards the Atlantic Ocean. Flanking the newly created passage stood the pillars that bear the hero’s name.

During the 2007-2013 programming round, attempts were made to go ‘beyond the Pillars of Hercules’ but didn’t succeed. Initiatives to bring an Atlantic dimension to ENI CBC are now well underway - and so far no-one has had to smash through any mountain. The new Mid-Atlantic programme involves regions from Spain, Portugal and Morocco, and the importance given to this cooperation area is signified by the budget, which amounts to 100 mio€. As the only Partner Country, Morocco will play a key role. Though not involved in ENPI CBC, Moroccan institutions have experience in cross-border cooperation through their participation in the European Territorial Cooperation POCTEFEX Programme, where they partnered with counterparts from Andalusia and the Canaries. But there are significant differences between the two programmes and, while the Moroccan project promoters are not totally new to the exercise, the degree of responsibility intrinsic to ENI CBC represents a new challenge for them.

In this context, the priority has been to collect the views of stakeholders from the eligible Moroccan regions about which thematic fields should be covered by the new programme. Organised by the DG DEVCO-funded Support to Programme Preparation Project, national consultations were held in three different Moroccan cities (Tangier in the north, Casablanca in the centre and Agadir in the south) during the third week of September 2014. All in all, nearly 200 participants attended the meetings and participation across the three was highly balanced, showing a uniform interest throughout the country. Nearly 70 percent of the attendees were public administrations, either at central or regional/local level; at this stage, participation of NGOs can be objectively considered as low (4 percent). Although economic situations differ - with Members States only slowly stepping out of recession and Morocco currently at a 2,3 percent GDP growth after years of even higher growth - business development and support to SMEs is the clear priority for stakeholders in all three participating countries. Environmental issues and social inclusion and fight against poverty shared the second spot. These results will be matched with consultations in Spain and Portugal with a view to elaborating the programme’s full strategy.

The real significance of the consultations goes beyond this data: for the Moroccan local and regional stakeholders what counted most was being consulted on the programme, and having an input into strategy. They are looking forward to acting on equal terms and sharing rights and duties with their Portuguese and Spanish partners. The direct management of funds is perceived as a sign of real ownership, and a significant step up from POCTEFEX. Expectations are certainly high!

Renaissance tradition says that the Pillars of Hercules bore the caveat Nec plus ultra ("nothing further beyond"), serving as a warning to sailors and navigators to turn back. ENI CBC joins the ranks of those that, through the centuries, have dared to actually go beyond - but not in a foolhardy way. With careful navigation, precise steering, and sufficient, targeted resources, the ENPI CBC Mid-Atlantic programme has all the elements for success!
EC Day is a communication campaign coordinated by the INTERACT programme and the INTERACT ENPI project. The overall aim of the campaign is to make the results of cross border and territorial cooperation more visible not only to immediate stakeholders but to the general public and the media. This is done by organising all associated events in and around the same date using the common brand and visual identity that INTERACT provides. All ENPI CBC, European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) and Instrument for Pre-Accession CBC (IPA CBC) programmes are invited to participate by or -ganising local events, which usually involve a large number of projects funded under these programmes. Many events are even led by the projects themselves, which inform and entertain as well as demonstrating the projects' local relevance.

ENPI CBC Contribution

This year, 9 out of the 13 ENPI CBC programmes took part - they accounted for over a fifth of the total participation. 31 events - over a third of the total number - took place, ensuring that ENPI CBC participation remained at the same high level as in previous EC Days! These events ranged from activities related to art, music and culture to exhibitions and environmental actions in all three geographical zones.

Northern Events

In Finland, the three programmes cooperating with Russia jointly organised a picture competition divided into two categories: entries for children under 13 years of age and a general category. The competition encouraged creative, imaginative and insightful pictures that depicted cooperation with people of other countries.

Also in Finland, the Karelia programme held three project fairs to mark EC Day 2014 in Oulu, Kajaani and Joensuu. These fairs showcased the work of projects funded under the programme and also featured interactive activities for the participants including games for children, storytelling, health checks and live music and dancing. In Joensuu, a disco with Finnish-Russian music for schoolchildren was organised.

The Latvia-Lithuania-Belarus ENPI CBC programme and Lithuania-Poland ETC programme joined forces to produce an “Anthem of Europe (Cooperation Remix)” Projects of both programmes in Lithuania, Latvia, Poland and Belarus filmed their own interpretations of the “Anthem of Europe” in their respective countries at project venues (manors, town squares, concert halls) using equipment and tools purchased by the projects. The “Anthem of Europe” was performed by orchestras, choirs, folk bands etc. and culminated in a unified international video clip of the “Anthem of Europe (Cooperation Remix)” being presented as the final product. To watch please go to the following link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jLa4H4IF1AY&feature=youtu.be

The two latter programmes cooperated once again to work with the Post Office of Lithuania in creating an official stamp and envelope for European Cooperation Day. Many letters sent from Lithuania at the end of September used the official EC Day envelopes and had the official stamp.

The Estonia-Latvia-Russia programme put emphasis on the environment and education in many of their events this year. For example, in Pskov, Russia, the People with Nature project organised EC Day activities at the opening of the International Schoolchildren’s Contest of Creative Works Exhibition. In Saint Petersburg, the LogOnTrain project organised a quiz on the EU and European cooperation for students and professors of the State Transport University. A similar event was led by the T&L project in Malnava college in Latvia.

Clean-up activities were organised by the same programme in Sangaste, Estonia; in Dedovichi, Russia and in Balvi, Latvia. These activities were combined with the opening of either a cultural centre or digital expositions in the respective locations.

In Nida, Lithuania, the Lithuania-Poland-Russia programme organised the European Cooperation Run as part of the 15th semi-marathon there. The 5.4 km race was open to all and highlighted the promotion of a healthy lifestyle and the creation of sports opportunities through projects for inhabitants of the border region between Lithuania, Poland and Russia. At the marathon, participants, together with friends and relatives, could learn more about these and other projects funded by the programme.
Eastern Events

In Pinsk, Belarus, the Poland-Belarus-Ukraine programme organised a visibility event aimed at journalists. One element of the event was an elevator pitch activity where cross border cooperation projects compete for journalists’ attention in giving cross border news stories. The event also included a boat tour for journalists and project representatives and historical information on two famous figures from the region.

The Mediterranean Sea Basin programme event in Madaba, Jordan, featured the opening of the lodging site of an eco-village by the T-Net project. Planting trees, a mini-football match, Jordanian folklore and traditional food were all part of the opening. This programme also partnered in organising the European Film Festival in Valencia as part of the INTERACT programme’s EC Day celebrations.

Southern Events

In Lviv, Ukraine, the same programme led an event with competitions and prizes for all age groups from two year olds to adults. Project representatives were also present at the event where music was played and various demonstrations from fire and ambulance to medical consultations were given. Also in Ukraine but this time in the city of Svalyava, the Poland-Belarus-Ukraine programme organised an event led by the Creation of Polish-Ukrainian Centre of Breeding and Promotion of Hucul Horse project which centred on a horse demonstration together with Polish and Ukrainian folk group performances and culinary dishes.

The Romania-Ukraine-Moldova programme counted an impressive seven events in the framework of the campaign. In Iasi, Romania, there was an EC Day 2014 culture event composed of a theatre and film workshop, a writing workshop and a cross border photo art fair. In Bucovina Museum in Suceava (Romania), a painting workshop on illustrating the values and principles of the EU was held. Also in Romania, a television show for children with music and dance dedicated to EC Day was broadcast twice during the month of September. In Chernivtsi, Ukraine, there were project fairs and artistic performances organised as well as a pet festival for owners and children.

This is a general overview of the ENPI CBC contribution to European Cooperation Day 2014. The breadth, diversity and quality of events ensured that the Day was both a qualitative and quantitative success in demonstrating to relevant stakeholders and the wider public the benefits and results of ENPI CBC projects. We take this opportunity as INTERACT ENPI to say congratulations to all the participating programmes!
Upcoming INTERACT ENPI activities

As the INTERACT ENPI project enters its last six months, take a look at what is happening in the near future!

The last six months of the INTERACT ENPI project coincide with the last phase of the programming exercise for the ENI CBC programmes 2014-2020. Therefore, we are concentrating our final efforts in efficiently supporting them using different means.

As a start, the 7th Audit and Finance Network will take place on 5-6 February 2015 in Brussels. This time we will devote the meeting to issues rather related to the future period. The meeting will thus focus on how to set up the management and control systems of ENI CBC programmes, the roles and responsibilities within these systems, what information needs to be provided in the joint operational programme and how to use the experience that has been gained during the current programming period. Programme bodies and national authorities from both Member States and Partner Countries have been encouraged to attend, and the meeting will count with nearly 100 participants.

As a complement to the meeting, a number of support tools are being developed. This mainly refers to the fourth and last working fiche of the INTERACT ENPI Programming Guide, developing contents related to the structures and appointment of the competent authorities and management bodies. Due to its novelty and the challenging aspect they represent, a separate working paper on Control Contact Points will likewise be issued. Moreover, guidance on the contents of the monitoring and evaluation plans and well as the communication guide (including how to build efficient communication strategies and plans) will be made available. INTERACT ENPI will of course be fully available for any individual assistance required by the programmes and will ensure a presence at Joint Programming Committee meetings over the next months.

INTERACT ENPI will still support the running programmes. Not only will we continue to attend the meetings of the Joint Monitoring Committees but we will also address specific needs of some of our regular target groups. The 6th ENI CBC Communication Managers Network meeting will take place on 22-23 April 2015, also in Brussels. The focus will be on communicating in an effective and modern way right from the start of the new ENI CBC programmes and will also deepen the already-gained knowledge on storytelling.

Finally, we are working hard in rendering fully operational two tools that will be available to our clientele beyond project closure. On one hand, our newly re-styled and re-structured INTERACT ENPI website is now available! Please go to www.enpi.interact-eu.net for further information and documentation; the website will serve as storage of all the products elaborated by our project since 2008. Last but not least, a review and full update of KEEP is currently being carried out and we will be in touch for your cooperation on this in the coming months.

We hope that all these activities will be of use to you! Should you need any specific assistance on top of this, please do not hesitate to address us and we will do everything possible to meet your needs.