

Workshop on the handbook: 'effective use of Interreg funding in cross border care'

Report:

The workshop on the effective use of Interreg funding in cross border care took place in Vienna, Austria on the 22nd of November 2010 at the University of Vienna. It had about 16 participants in attendance and there were a total of 10 presentations with 7 of them case studies from varying border regions across the European Union. This work shop was organized to bring together the state of the art information on working with Interreg funding in health care in border regions. This information is to be synthesized along with other materials and information so far collected into a handbook. The handbook is one of the core deliverables of the European Union funded project, EUREGIO II under the framework of the Public Health Programme (Grant Agreement No. 20077118, 12.2008 – 30.11.2011).

There were 2 sessions and then a plenary session on 'the added value of case studies on cross border health care in border regions to the current state of cross border cooperation in health care in border regions.' After a short opening by the project coordinator, Chibuzo Opara, the first session a brief overview on the current state of the Work package 4 was given by the Work package leader, Renate Burger. The group was briefed on the challenges and opportunities that arose during the past year and a half relating to the handbook. Furthermore, a preliminary draft of the index for the handbook was discussed during this overview. Following this, Martin Guillermo-Ramirez, gave a talk on the relevance of EU funding for cross border health activities in the European border regions. Here, he expounded the bottom up nature of most cross border cooperation in health care in border regions and how cross border cooperation was adding value to health care in border regions (see annex for full details). He also gave a detailed presentation into the different health financing mechanisms and tools operating in border regions in the European Union (see annex for full details). Gudula Ward then gave a presentation on the findings of the first Euregio project and their relevance to cross border initiatives in border regions. This project, a fore runner to Euregio II aimed to give an overview of cross-border activities in the field of health while evaluating existing cross-border health-related projects, identifying models of good practice, promoting and

hindering factors, give recommendations for actions and support co operation among project actors (see annex for full details).

After this session there was a short break and then the second session, which was dedicated to the case studies of cross border cooperation in varying border regions, was commenced with the case study on the cross border health care cooperation in the Hungarian Slovak border by Heanrietta Madarova. Below is the list of the presentation on the case studies on health care cooperations in border regions:

Hungary-Slovakia (Henrietta Madarova)

Euregio Rhine-Waal (Thea Remers)

Northern Ireland-Ireland (Sadie Bergin)

Basel-Lorrach (E Simoes, A Zumbunn, G Zisselsberger, FW Schmahl, A Faller
presented by Matt Commers)

Austria-Central Europe (Renate Burger)

Euregio Maas-Rhine (Chibuzo Opara)

Hungary-Ukraine (Marianna Péntzes, *presented by Chibuzo Opara*)

After these rich presentations by participants from the different border regions and fields of practice in cross border health care, there a short break and then the plenary session was commenced. This session, chaired by Matt Commers aimed at distilling the cross cutting issues which could add value to the field of cross border cooperation in health care in border regions. Some of the key issues raised were *projectism vs sustainability* of activities in cross border work; the effects of funding on the nature of activities carried out in border regions, how to translate content from the case studies into the handbook vis-à-vis models of good practice concerning cross border care and how to use and access Interreg funding in health care in border regions. The focus, structure and direction of the handbook were also conclusively discussed in regards to the target audience and intended impact of the handbook.

This workshop has been a huge success especially when the quality, content and nature of the presentations are considered. It could only have been made possible with the excellent work of the contributors and the wonderful hosting by the Gesundheitsmanagement in

Vienna, Austria. The presentations and slides are available in the annex of this document and final version of the handbook on ‘the effective use of Interreg funding in cross border care’ will be made available online.