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A number of considerations arise from the European Parliament election in May.

First, democracy at EU level has grown in power and importance, as the UK’s prime minister has discovered to his cost. Under the Lisbon Treaty the EU’s member states gave the EU’s political parties and their MEPs the licence to develop greater authority.

They should not be surprised that this licence has been exercised. The Lisbon Treaty may not have prescribed the practice of choosing Spitzenkandidaten; but they derive from the spirit of the Treaty and few can be surprised that the EU’s political parties went down that route.

Second, though the decline in voter turnout has stabilised, democracy at EU level does not yet appear to have caught the public’s imagination. Parliament is more fractured than ever before, with the two major political parties mustering just 54% of the seats between them.

Yet the elections were not a triumph for the anti EU forces: though these command nearly a quarter of the seats in Parliament, they are a heterogeneous and very divided lot. They gained strongly in France and the UK but failed to live up to predictions of their success in many other member states.

Third, gender is still an issue. The number of women in Parliament is still below 40%. And among five definite and six likely candidates for the next College of European Commissioners there is not a single woman.

So expect a fight from Parliament – as we had last time – for more gender balance in Mr Juncker’s Commission. But expect it to be contested too. There are many more Godfrey Blooms in the House.

The European Peoples Party and the Party of European Socialists, with over half the MEPs between them, initially endeavoured to divide up the spoils. Yet with 412 MEPs and a regular absence rate of over 10% they soon saw they needed to buy in the Liberals to be sure of mustering 376 votes for a co-decision majority. As a result the Liberals will secure important committee posts.

So will it be business as usual? Not quite. Finding a majority for the measures necessary to fight climate change will be much harder. Big oil will have a field day.

In trade policy, where Parliament enjoys equal powers with the Council to amend Commission proposals, we may well see a less normative, more protectionist direction. TTIP has just become much harder.

Social Europe – the health and safety measures which accompany the free movement of labour – will enjoy less support from MEPs. And perhaps free movement itself will be challenged more robustly.

Which means that business will need to revise many previously safe assumptions and follow more closely the way in which the contours of the political landscape evolve.

In this edition of Government Gazette, we shall look in further detail into various aspects of the European Parliamentary elections, and at some of their possibly convoluted implications.

There are a variety of factors pulling at the fabric of the EU from various directions, whether economic, national or geo-political, and we shall look at some of these as well.

The differences as well as the commonalities in Europe’s complex tapestry of nationalities and regions have always been a source of strength for the European Union. We include a focus on a variety of projects and initiatives from around the continent’s regions, with a special emphasis in this edition on the Channel area covering Northern France and the South of England.

We are also very pleased to include a section celebrating a wide range of cultural projects currently underway. The sheer diversity of what people, towns and regions in the European Union engage in on a cultural level is staggering.

We do not intend to give anything approaching a comprehensive overview – such a task would indeed be Herculean.

But we do hope that we have managed to capture some of the flavours of the activities that people across the continent take such pride, satisfaction and enjoyment in organising for their fellow citizens, and for visitors from across the globe.
Energy Intelligent Cities of Tomorrow

By Nicola Vatthauer, Communications Director Eurocities 2014

EUROCITIES annual conference, Munich – Germany, 5 to 7 November 2014

Europe’s resilience to face the future will depend on its cities. How can we balance increasing energy demand with environmental, economic and social concerns? Meeting at this year’s EUROCITIES conference in Munich, representatives from Europe’s largest cities will debate the necessary steps to achieve cities’ visions beyond 2020.

Around the theme of ‘Energising cities – energy-intelligent cities of tomorrow’, we will explore how cities of the future can meet the everyday demands of living, working and leisure while driving down energy consumption. The EU has set clear goals on climate and energy through its Europe 2020 strategy, aiming to reduce CO2 emissions by 20% by 2020. And with 70% of energy consumed in cities, local authorities need to deliver.

Cities are determined to make a difference, with many already setting their own targets. Copenhagen, for example, aims to become carbon neutral by 2050, while Budapest is cutting energy consumption in municipal buildings by 25% by 2020. Or we can look at the numerous cities, large and small, committing through the Covenant of Mayors initiative to improve energy efficiency and increase energy uptake from sustainable sources beyond the Europe 2020 goals.

Large cities in particular provide the critical mass for economies of scale, and we must make the most of opportunities to lever their energy saving potential. The EUROCITIES conference in Munich will be an opportunity to discuss both at political level and around concrete challenges.

A debate between European mayors will focus on some of the core demands facing cities in this urban transformation, while a private political session will allow for a closed-door debate around pressing urban issues.

A series of on site workshops will let participants experience Munich’s efforts towards becoming a future fit, energy intelligent city [see inset/boxes for three examples]. City delegates will compare their own experiences and exchange on best practices throughout Europe.

Our annual conference is a step in the journey Europe’s major cities are making to becoming more energy intelligent. Over the coming decades, local authorities will have to actively transform the way they use and generate energy. The city of the future is capable of responding to climate change and delivering efficient natural resource management.

Energy intelligent cities of tomorrow are being created today.

www.eurocities2014.eu

Driving sustainability with interconnected mobility

Cities are using ICT to organise urban transport, creating intelligent mobility hubs that meet citizens’ needs while improving quality of life.

Pasing, a district in the west of Munich, has been transformed in recent years. Where once it was heavily congested – with up to 40,000 vehicles passing through each day – Pasing today has convenient public transport links, a new tram system, bike parking and a barrier-free rail terminal.

The workshop in Pasing will showcase how the area has been revitalised by encouraging citizens to make energy efficient transport choices. The historic centre is no longer congested and the district has attracted new economic activity. Discussions will focus on how an urban centre that has grown organically over time can be turned into an attractive and sustainable working, living and leisure space.

Successful multimodal transport systems are about more than just providing good public transport, bike and foot paths and vehicle sharing schemes. They are about bringing all these elements together and complementing them with integrated information, advertising and tariffs. Munich will launch its first fully multimodal ‘mobility station’ during the conference, where metro, bus and tram lines meet bike and car sharing facilities.
Regional Focus

Energy Intelligent Cities of Tomorrow (Cont’d)

Hydropower in the city – green electricity

Generating energy from natural sources — wind, water, sun, organic substances and geothermal heat — is already reality in Munich. Two municipally owned hydropower plants situated in central Munich on the Isar river are key to the city’s strategy to provide the whole city with green electricity by 2025. Workshop participants will visit the plants and explore how they are contributing to Munich’s Renewable Energies Expansion Plan, set up in 2008.

Both plants are overseen by Stadwerke München, the city’s utility company and service provider. One dates back to 1923, but was completely refurbished between 2008 and 2010. It now uses sophisticated technology to generate electricity from water. The second is one of Europe’s most modern small hydropower plants, using an underground turbine to generate enough electricity for 4,000 households, silently and in harmony with the nature around it.

Making sustainable urban development work in two different districts

Freiham and Neuaubing are neighbouring districts in Munich. But they pose very different challenges. New district Freiham is being developed to a modern sustainable energy concept, and is set to become a model of low carbon development. Neuaubing, meanwhile, is an older district, due to undergo a complete energy system modernisation - a common challenge for Europe’s cities, where the annual construction rate rarely exceeds 1%.

Participants in the workshop will consider sustainable and energy efficient urban development, exploring different approaches and taking into account social considerations. They will look at the use of geothermal energy for heat generation and efforts to reduce fuel poverty. The workshop will end with a visit to the local geothermal plant.
Leipzig 2020 – Strategic Aims and Priority Areas Up To 2020

By Stefan Heinig, Head of Urban Development Planning, Leipzig

The implementation of the Integrated Urban Development Concept (SEKo) into practice started in 2007 under the heading ‘Leipzig 2020 – Designing the Future’. Right from the start, the cooperation between the different municipal departments and activists from urban society, at eye level was accepted as an essential working principle.

Based on a spatially detailed analysis of demographic and social developments, SEKo highlights four strategic goals and nine development priority areas. The different municipal departments should focus on these areas in a co-ordinated, interdisciplinary way. The strategies and goals of SEKo will be realised in the neighbourhoods through concrete projects, i.e. in the priority area ‘Leipziger Westen’ with the arterial road ‘Georg-Schwarz-Straße’ and the Lindenau harbour area.

**Georg-Schwarz-Straße**

Until a few years ago, a significant proportion of shops and flats were vacant in this area. The city administration in cooperation with two citizens’ associations, several self-organised building groups, a large church hospital and a private development company are pressing ahead with the promotion and development of the ‘Georg-Schwarz-Straße’ and its environs. Recently, however, more life has returned to the area.

**Lindenau harbour**

After decades of planning, work is finally underway on the interconnection between the ‘Karl-Heine-canal’ and ‘Lindenau harbour’ in Leipzig West. It is the first project in Saxony to implement the financial engineering tool JESSICA as a revolving fund. The construction work will initially be financed through this fund. The later return flow of resources should be redeemed from the resources gained from the sale of the building land. It is expected that the value of land will have risen significantly over the course of the project.

**Further information:**

Leipzig – Integrierte Stadtentwicklung / Leipzig Integrated Urban Development

http://www.leipzig.de/stadtentwicklungskonzept

http://www.leipzig.de/bauen-und-wohnen/buergerbeteiligung-und-planinformation/publikationen/
Regional Focus

Heidelberg Bahnstadt: Forerunner in Climate Protection

By Dr Eckart Würzner, Mayor of Heidelberg

Concern for the environment and climate has a long history in Heidelberg. Over the decades, together with its many network partners, the city has established a reputation as a centre of environment and sustainability. In 1992, Heidelberg was one of the first cities in Germany to introduce a municipal climate protection concept. Currently, the world’s largest passive-house project is under development in “Bahnstadt”, Heidelberg’s youngest district.

Heidelberg is known for its rich history and undisputed visual and cultural beauty, for example the Ruperto Carola-University established in 1386 and the castle set above the Neckar River. A fifth of its 150,000 residents are students and 20,000 are non-German nationals, adding a cosmopolitan air to the idyllic setting. At the same time, Heidelberg invested a great deal of effort into preserving its own future by constantly underpinning its reputation as a European city of science and research-oriented business and always keeping to the motto: “Think globally – act locally”.

With this maxim in mind, Heidelberg has also set itself the grand target of becoming a forerunner in climate protection, with the ultimate, tangible goal being to achieve a 95 percent reduction in CO₂ emissions by 2050. Through this initiative, Heidelberg is acting as one of the model municipalities involved in the German environment ministry’s project “Master Plan for 100 Percent Climate Protection”. The city’s ongoing strategy to spread awareness and increase citizen engagement with Heidelberg’s conservation targets has been a long-term process, with a broad range of partners from all sectors of the economy and society being involved.

The latest and probably most pertinent example of Heidelberg’s successful public and private partnerships is the development of its youngest district “Bahnstadt”, one of Germany’s largest urban development and climate protection projects.

Heidelberg Bahnstadt

With a total area of 116 hectares (equal to roughly 200 football pitches), Bahnstadt is larger than the entire Heidelberg old town. It will create an abundance of employment opportunities, with 12,000 people able to live or work there (as well as a potential 7,000 additional jobs and 5,000 residents). The Bahnstadt project has a planned duration of 14 years, from 2008 to 2022. The first construction phase has already been completed and, due to the high level of demand, the “Living on the Promenade” sub-project is currently two years ahead of schedule with further construction having already started on three of the six other building areas.

In terms of handling environmental resources responsibly, Bahnstadt has set the course with an energy concept that is unique within Germany. The residents as well as the companies located there will make a sustainable contribution to climate protection and save energy costs. All buildings from residential houses, offices and laboratory buildings to schools and child day care centres are “passive houses”: environmentally conscious constructions that use far less energy than their traditional counterparts. This staggering decrease in energy consumption also results in lower heating costs. The annual quota for energy consumption in all passive houses is at 15 kilowatt hours per square metre. Using this benchmark, it is possible to reduce the energy requirement by 50 to 80 percent, with the remaining energy requirement being met using regenerative energy, all of which is generated at the Heidelberg municipal utility company’s wood-fired cogeneration plant.

To understand how this feat is made possible, one can compare it to the mechanism behind a flask of warm liquid. Using specially designed windows and thick insulation, passive houses retain heat incredibly well. This reliance on internal heat sources such as bodies and household appliances results in a significantly smaller amount of energy being required from external sources. Additionally, a modernistic filtration system helps maintain temperature whilst simultaneously ensuring that each room is filled with fresh air. To further maximise the positive contribution to the environment, two thirds of all buildings in Bahnstadt have green roofs which benefit species conservation, the microclimate and rainwater retention. The installation of over 5000 smart meters to record electricity expenditure leads to further reductions in consumption.

While Bahnstadt’s energy-efficient outlook at first glance seems like a common initiative that can be found all over Europe, it is actually highly unusual for an entire district to consist of passive buildings. As a consequence, the Bahnstadt district will be one of the world’s largest zero-emissions settlements.

Living in Bahnstadt

In Bahnstadt, the centuries-old approach of integrating “Living. Researching. Developing.” into a single quarter is made reality – echoing a tradition that has been
proven in the old towns of European university locations. Given the district’s developments, it comes as no surprise that the choice to live in Bahnstadt is becoming a popular one. At the beginning of 2014, the local population had already reached 1500 despite the fact that the area is still under construction. The demographics of this fledgling population are highly diverse; 58 percent of all property buyers, for example, are from outside of Heidelberg and 66 percent are under 50 years old. A socially balanced mix of families, students, researchers and senior citizens, and a combination of rented and owner-occupied homes help to ensure a varied way of life.

To further attract families to Bahnstadt, the city of Heidelberg has worked in partnership with the development company, Entwicklungsgesellschaft Heidelberg (EGH), to put together a programme designed especially for low- to middle-income families. All funding is granted according to income – both for tenants and buyers. The upper limit for the gross annual income of a family of four has therefore been set at around EUR 63,000 per year. A total of EUR 6 million has been earmarked for these subsidies. This means that around 20 percent of the housing in Bahnstadt will be subsidised.

Hotspot for research-oriented business and science

Apart from attracting such a diverse range of citizens, the area has also attracted a wealth of business investment. The total volume of private and public investment in the entire development project amounts to more than EUR 2 billion. This includes the creation of public infrastructure worth EUR 300 million that will become property of the city, such as day-care centres, a school, a civic centre, green areas, streets, paths and cycle bridges.

When it comes to investment in research and innovation, Bahnstadt is unashamedly ambitious. Like the rest of Heidelberg’s Technology Park, the Bahnstadt’s new campus is designed to support the entire value-added chain of innovative industries, including life sciences, biotechnology, engineering, information and communication technology as well as other science-related companies. Having officially opened in 2012, SkyLabs will continue to function as an essential pillar of the science community within Bahnstadt, whilst simultaneously tightening links with the business community. Indeed, the methodical arrangement of laboratories, technical and office spaces offers a great deal of flexibility and opportunity for productive co-operation and communication between everyone working there.

The long-term vision for Heidelberg and Bahnstadt is to become a vibrant “silicon valley” with courageous young researchers initiating their own ventures in the fields of life sciences, biotech, IT, or communication technology.

International recognition

Considering the broad measures that Heidelberg and Bahnstadt have taken to ensure a better future for the environment, others might find inspiration in the Bahnstadt model for their own urban development projects. Indeed, Bahnstadt’s low carbon emissions have already attracted the attention of delegates from many Asian cities who view our projects as potential blueprints for their own carbon-emission-reduction plans.

Additionally, the new district has received visits from urban planners hailing from North and South America. They too see Heidelberg and Bahnstadt as an excellent example to follow when conceiving their own plans for sustainable urban development. A further measure that has strengthened Heidelberg’s international links has been its membership in the C40 Climate Leadership Group. This network of global cities is thoroughly committed to the deceleration of the rate of climate change and has provided Heidelberg with many exciting opportunities to foster relationships with cities in every continent across the world.

Heidelberg has received the European Sustainable City Award twice, and recently its new district’s reputation as an environmental pioneer has been formally recognised, too. For example, the “Auroralia Award” jury bestowed Bahnstadt with a special prize in recognition of its outstanding sustainable urban lighting system, which reduces energy consumption and CO₂ emissions by 75 percent. The district was also the recipient of the “Passive House Region of the Year” award during the Passive House Awards 2014.

The city of Heidelberg fully supports the conception of Heidelberg Bahnstadt. The goal of the project is to demonstrate what is possible on a global level if the available technical possibilities are exploited intelligently. The “energy transition” means we have to bring strong concepts out of niche applications and into widespread use. We are implementing this approach by developing an entire district that illustrates how development and climate protection can be successfully combined.
Active Politics, a Personal Story

by Wobine J.L. Buijs-Glaudemans MBA, Mayor of Oss, the Netherlands

Active politics, literally meaning "fulfilling an elected position in democracy" is the privilege of the few. There is only a limited amount of political positions in a society. Mostly people are just busy living their lives, coming closest to participating in democracy by occasionally voting. Being Mayor I feel responsible for local democracy as the basis of public decision-making. By reflecting on my own path into active politics I discovered several stages and use those to find ways to involve citizens in society, in democracy, in politics.

An ordinary citizen

It has been 12 years since I have started my journey through active politics. At that time, being a mum, chairman of the children’s school-board, and teaching "Business and Organisation" at a professional university, I was busy juggling my daily responsibilities. In the mean time in our area the need for economic restructuring became clear after layoffs at Philips Electronics and DAF trucks hit many families. Apart from through voting, politics was only faintly in the background as "something to be part of... sometime ...maybe".

Inspiring moments

In 2000 I was teaching in China for a 2 week summer course to selected business students and also visited schools in the Czech Republic, which was preparing to become a full-fledged member of the EU at that time. Students in those countries had a zeal and I hardly noticed in Holland anymore. With the internet and the possibility of global connections coming up I realized I was experiencing globalization first hand.

Questions

Being a mum and a teacher, the question for me was: "How do we prepare our children, our students for the world to come?" I value money as a means of taking care of the family, of investing in society and of being able to make choices. Being a business person I asked myself how we in the West as a society could keep on earning money in the future in this global shift. Thinking and reading about this I found entrepreneurship to be a core competence. Asking these questions on a different level brought new opportunities.

Starting in the close environment taking it to the next level

At that time national government was decentralizing, making it hard for individual schools to cope with the policy questions involved. Schools merged and brought in professionals to replace the local school board. I found that to be the opposite movement of what was needed. I was asked to become chairman of the National Association of Independent Schools, working toward ownership of parents and teachers of the school environment for children and focusing on multi-talent to develop the spirit and talents of children. We support small schools to take their responsibilities on finance, HR and building investments so they could focus on pedagogical entrepreneurship and innovation.

At the same time at work I was asked to develop a curriculum for entrepreneurship. I wrote a European project proposal to build a transnational entrepreneur curriculum with professional universities in Breda (NL) and Antwerp (Be) together with the chambers of Commerce of both cities and the Benelux. It was partly financed by the Province of Noord-Brabant and the European Union. The project GO! ("Grensverleggend Ondernemen", which roughly translates to “Boundary breaking Entrepreneurship) led to a Bachelor Small Business curriculum in both countries.

Thinking about politics and government

Looking around in society and politics I had severe doubts that government (in my opinion having its institutions arranged around a non-financially viable 20th century ideal of "feasibility") could supply a solution for the century to come. I felt the new style politicians were addressing short-term problems and were busy negotiating short-term party programs in stead of strategic notions. But in my quest for answers I was proved wrong, noticing that the innovation policy of the EU addressed the same worries. This gave me a base to take the need for "Innovation and Entrepreneurship" to a political level.

My contacts with the Province of Noord-Brabant made me realize there was room for more economic policy on a regional scale. I chose to be an active part of the system after thinking deep and hard and concluding that if you want to take decisions in society, the democratic system we built is not too bad. (I only later learned about Churchill’s bemusement about democracy.)

A political party cannot "make society right", it always has to compromise in the end. A distinct parallel with society. It is like being in a family. You never get your way all the time, but mostly it provides for a nice relatively stable sub-environment where you literally feel at home, giving and taking.

Joining a political party

Although I had a basic knowledge of political parties and their principles, I usually voted assessing the election program and the candidates. Now I spent a month searching the internet and reading up on basic principles of political parties, reflecting on innovation and entrepreneurship and statements about the role of the government. I joined a political party, took courses in political strategy, fundamentals and debating and took part in regional and national party conferences.

Active politics

I was surprised to find how easy it was to become an active member. I joined the party’s internal education committee (more entrepreneurship in higher education!) and I filled out a form for provincial parliament and went through the scouting process. Innovation and entrepreneurship in economic policy was my goal. Within a year I was highest newcomer on the list that had to balance man-woman, old-new, east-west etc. (Invest in entrepreneurship and innovation in Small and Medium sized Enterprises!)

New opportunities

I noticed that my political involvement had broadened my view. At work I was promoted
Context

• The countries bordering the English Channel and the North Sea are really concerned by the emission of NOx and of SOx, originating from the transport sectors as well as from industrial activities, including the energy industry.

• No significant progress was made in the last 10-15 years to diminish these pollutant emissions.

CleanTech activities

• Development of a semi-industrial pilot procedure ‘In bed de-NOx’ in collaboration with industrial partners to decrease significantly NOx emissions of a sintering plant.

• Modelling of chemical reactions to choose the efficient additives for ‘In bed de-NOx’ procedure.

• Development of versatile and reliable sensors and detection techniques to ensure an efficient control of polluting emissions and understand the fundamental steps in pollutant reduction.

Main achievements

• New efficient additives for semi-industrial ‘In bed de-NOx’ procedure during sintering allow the polluting NOx emissions to be decreased by a factor of 3.

• Developed portable THz spectrometer, gas and chemical sensors appear to be reliable devices for pollutant detection and in situ monitoring.

• The principle and developed efficiency of an ‘In bed de-NOx’ process can be extended to other sectors, in particular to ground and maritime transport.

Partners

LP: Université du Littoral Côte d’Opale (F)
- LPCA (Laboratoire de Physico-Chimie de l’Atmosphère)

PP2: University of Kent (UK)
- FMG-UKC (Functional Material Group of University of Kent)

PP3: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (F)
- LRCS (Laboratoire de Réactivité et Chimie des Solides)
- LPCA

PP4: Delft University of Technology (NL)
- Delft Department of Chemical Technology (DelftChemTech)
to Dean of a new Faculty of Marketing and Business Management of Avans Professional University. This position gave me the leverage to start an entrepreneurial center where students worked on business cases from regional SMEs and to start an applied research group around a Lector of innovative entrepreneurship. We worked on scouting student entrepreneurs in all Bachelors, providing a Minor (ie voluntary/choice part of the curriculum) and coaching towards business plans and starting companies.

Luctor

Provincial Parliament next to my fulltime job was terrible and great at the same time. The mailbox had a daily load of policy texts. Once a van stopped and unloaded three boxes of zoning plans from the entire Province. I was literally buried in papers. Every Sunday morning with my family sound asleep I woke up at 6.30 am to do my reading up to noon. I really tried, but felt hopelessly inadequate. (Many members of city council feel this way the first year).

Et emergo

The party assigned my maiden speech to be about water management, a subject I hardly knew anything about. Instead of reading I started thinking about water from a civilian point of view. I came to the conclusion that water has to be clean to drink, to swim in, to water crops with; we cannot have shortage of water, but we also cannot have the opposite, especially in the Netherlands with many little villages and towns, Oss has a system of talking with citizens about plans, with a small budget for investments and a system of neighbour and village councils. Oss has been acquired by MSD and global reorganization centralized R&D in the US, leaving 1400 highly qualified people without a job. The Dutch MSD management and the City of Oss decided to join forces in setting up a pharmaceutical campus "Pivot Park". I was involved from provincial side. When the position of Mayor of Oss became vacant I was ready to take on the next level, feeling strongly committed to the families of the city.

A new view on politics

As a Mayor I have gradually come to realize that my goal of innovation and entrepreneurship is not only related to business, but is also directed to people taking ownership in life. With economics uncertain government in Holland has to cut down on paid public servant positions. "Society itself" has to take over a number of responsibilities, which in the days of the economic upswing were taken over by government. We call this "de Kanteling" (i.e. Tilt).

For me Active politics is not just "being part of the political system". It means becoming an active citizen, taking ownership and systematically working your part. It means at least committing to democracy by voting. It means getting out of your comfort zone, not copying someone else, but discovering what you can add to society by exploring your passion.

Activities to reconnect people with government and democracy

I found that local volunteerism is widely spread in Oss. Many people are involved in society. The city invests in active commitment of its citizens in society and politics. Being a cluster of an industrial city with many little villages and towns, Oss has a system of neighbour and village councils with a small budget for investments and a system of talking with citizens about plans, advising city council. The city won a prize for writing policy documents in "clear language", hoping to bridge the gap between government and citizens.

In November there will be local elections: to involve more citizens in local politics next week we start a local course in "Active Politics". I hope to reach out to people who are just living their lives, who are vaguely thinking about politics becoming part of their lives...maybe...sometime.

I hope this course may be their start to take their quest, their dream, to a different level, a journey into active politics.
An invasive non-native species (INS) is a species that has been moved outside of its natural range with the aid of humans, and is causing environmental or economic damage in its introduced range.

At a global level, INS are believed to be one of the most significant causes of biodiversity loss – second only to habitat destruction. Their economic impact is also significant. A recent study by the European Environment Agency (EEA) estimated that the cost of INS across Europe is at least 12 billion Euros a year.

Recognising the severity of the situation, the European Commission is currently legislating for a new Regulation on the prevention and management of the introduction and spread of INS.

While this new legislation is welcome, it will only be effective if the Governments of Member States, and stakeholders within those countries, collaborate closely with one another to shut off pathways of spread, share knowledge on the most effective approaches to managing established and novel INS and work across borders to deliver more strategically robust campaigns.

It is important to highlight that there is already a large amount of work being carried out on this issue across Europe. Engaging with the huge number of stakeholders acting ‘on the ground’ in every Member State will be key to ensuring the success of the Regulation. These stakeholders often work at a local level, with limited appreciation of the strategic context of their activities. However, there are already some examples of projects that have successfully brought stakeholders together from a larger region spanning a number of Member States to work together on problems that they have in common. This way of working has proven to be very effective, leading to a sharing of experiences and a tangible improvement in the situation ‘on the ground’. RINSE is one such project.

The RINSE Project

The RINSE (Reducing the Impacts of Non-native Species in Europe) project, funded through the Interreg Two Seas programme, aims to increase cooperation and share best practice between key organisations involved in the management of INS in the Two Seas area. This area encompasses the coastal region of southern England, northern France, Belgium and the Netherlands. The project brings together a partnership of nine diverse organisations. It is made up of both researchers and practitioners, with NGOs, research institutes, local authorities and national-level government agencies all being represented within the project.

The project is still ongoing but has already produced some useful results, such as:
- A comprehensive study by the University of Cambridge highlighting the most concerning species in the Two Seas area of Europe, and identifying species that are likely to be a problem in the future.
- A Smartphone ‘App’ to allow members of the public to report sightings of INS.
- A range of demonstration projects and field trials focussed on controlling and eradicating the most damaging INS in our area. This has lead to a reduction in the impacts of these INS, as well as disseminating and developing new best practice approaches to managing these species.
- A series of ‘Best Practice’ Workshops, bringing together experts from across the Two Seas area to exchange ideas and proven approaches to managing INS.

As you will appreciate, RINSE is an ambitious and wide ranging collaboration, with many diverse but interconnected components. If you would like to find out more about RINSE then please visit our website or contact us using the details below. You are also welcome to attend the RINSE Closing Conference. The Closing Conference is being held in Norwich, UK on 23rd September 2014, and is free to attend.

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http://www.rinse-europe.eu
New business emerges between two International Ports

Our municipality in the southern parts of the Netherlands, is situated along the highway A17 between the international ports of Rotterdam and Antwerp. The proximity of the international ports has brought us an international dynamic, which we are welcoming with open arms,” says mayor Jacques Niederer of Roosendaal. “Changes in European economic relationships are clearly noticeable. Several international companies have chosen the municipality of Roosendaal for establishment since 2010, as a result of revisions to their global supply chains. External economic circumstances are important factors to which we adjust municipal policy regarding education, the labor market, and business. The internationalization of the municipality has gained momentum, and we have set up the administrative framework through which we can offer our residents targeted education and challenging work opportunities. For the companies in our municipality, we created the basis for a modern international business environment and the availability of well-educated and motivated personnel.”

Adjusting to a New Kind of Business

From 2010 companies which centralized their activities in Europe, or were expanding in new geographical markets set up large distribution centers in the municipality of Roosendaal, aimed at Europe, the Middle East, and Africa (EMEA region). “At this moment, new interest is being generated from large international companies abroad, as a result of extensive expansion in global markets,” says the mayor. “In addition, the development of cross-border e-commerce activities is another reason why interest on the part of large international companies in establishing themselves in the business areas of Roosendaal is on the rise. We aim to the future, and are constantly coordinating with stakeholders in companies, the education system, and personnel organizations to make sure our policies remain current in the coming years. This is a common policy model in the Netherlands, called the ‘Folder-model’: we solve problems before they can take hold, and every year we gather to look ahead at future years, and adjust our perspective and policy where necessary. We have issues that need attention. These generally occur in the area of bridging the different perceptions of various stakeholders – in which we play an active role – and in deciding how to offer perspectives through which we can encourage the lower end of the labor market to find improved connections to job opportunities provided by companies.”

Rapidly Changing Economy

A number of companies use their distribution centers at the municipality of Roosendaal as a logistics access portal for a share of the 500 million consumers in Europe, 300 million in the Middle East, and 800 million consumers in Africa. The mayor: “As the importance of distances fades away, we observe the global economy changing at a rapid pace, providing us with strategic opportunities. On the one hand in Roosendaal, we create a warm and welcoming climate for existing entrepreneurs within the borders of our municipality. On the other hand - in the course of the past few years - we’ve also made room for attractive businesses, which can add value to our municipality. During these years, we have made sure Roosendaal is ready for the attractive European economy: we have a total of 200 hectares of construction ready sites available at the business areas in our municipality, for the establishment of new companies.”

Very Attractive to International Companies

Traffic in the area flows easily, and the municipality can be reached by rail, as well as by one of the six junctions at the highways A58 and A17 in Roosendaal. The Majoppeveld business area, with its own junction at the highway A58, provides an efficient connection to deep sea ports in Zeeland, and European inland areas, through to the Middle East. Business Areas Borchwerf I and Borchwerf II have two individual junctions at highway A17, and an excellent connection with Rotterdam and far beyond to northern Europe and into Africa. The mayor: “We also have our own international railway yard and an easily flowing direct highway connection to the deep sea ports and inland waterway terminals of Moerdijk, within 15 kilometers. Connections to transshipment terminals are so short in comparison to the scale of modern global developments, that companies describe them as ‘internal transport’ in their operations.

Centralized Location in the Logistics Network

The mayor indicates that Roosendaal has a centralized position in the international logistics network. “Within Europe, we offer many businesses the connecting link of added value activities between global production and producers on the one hand, and global products and consumers on the other. Echoing our own entrepreneurs, I also hear many positive comments from entrepreneurs from abroad. Orientation interviews take place in an atmosphere of enthusiasm and interest in the opportunities provided by Roosendaal as a business location – both from a European and a global perspective. As mayor of this city, as well as the residents of Roosendaal, this results in a feeling of tremendous pride,” says Mayor Niederer. “It is for good reason that we are able to attract important businesses to Majoppeveld and Business Areas Borchwerf I and Borchwerf II – which we developed in partnership with the Municipality of Halderberge – such as NYSE-listed US companies PVH (which includes Tommy Hilfiger and Calvin Klein).
Klein brands) and Terex AWP, and the US company Forever Direct EU for distribution to Europe, the Middle East and Africa (EMEAR), as well as other large international companies such as VOS Logistics and Colt Datacenter.

Connecting our Professional Population with New International Dynamics

“Our appeal is also determined by labor potential: 66,000 people who live in Roosendaal and its direct vicinity work in other parts of the Netherlands and would prefer a job closer to home,” says the mayor. “The people in this region are self-aware. They see their job as an opportunity for growth, and are interested in developments currently taking place at these companies and what that means for jobs that will become available. The Dutch are accustomed to living in an intensely regulated society and this is very closely related to the certified international work environment of current times. In addition, almost everybody here is multilingual. The professional population of our region provides a great number of employees who have the education and the practice skills for logistics implementation work, as well as value added activities.”

Sites Ready for Construction Available Now

The business areas in Roosendaal have individual profiles. Majoppeveld measures 190 hectares and Borchwerf I 180 hectares. Companies that attach importance to a fine appearance with which to reflect on their business image in addition to their business image will gravitate towards the Business Area Borchwerf II, which measures 275 hectares. 56% of this terrain is available in construction-ready sites, and the other 44% has been set aside for roads, water, and greenery. In other words, Borchwerf II offers a great deal of space, with broad roadsides and “green” water retention areas with a sustainable setup. More than 100 companies are already established at Business Area Borchwerf II. Another 70 hectares of construction-ready sites are direct available, ranging in size from 1.200 m2 to 12 hectares. Every company participates in the park management of the Business Area, so that the ambiance of best quality will be retained into the future. Management of public space as well as video monitoring of the public space is centrally organized. The sites at Business Park Borchwerf II are purchased for ownership. The necessary urban development plans have already been determined and have a flexible setup. A short-track procedure is in place for the application of building permits from the municipality, and Borchwerf II CV (Public Private Partnership), which sells the ground, will assist in the process. Hospitality and other facilities are available, including monitored truck parking (Security Level IV), and a gas station for trucks providing both CNG natural gas and bio-diesel. The Borchwerf II Business Area has been awarded the Keurmerk Veilig Ondernemen – Bedrijventerreinen (Certification for Safe Business – Business Parks). For additional information, visit www.roosendaal.nl or www.borchwerf2.com

Forever Direct EU Distributes to 93 Countries from Borchwerf II Business Park

Forever Living Products sells aloe vera-based health and beauty products in 160 countries around the world. Director Martin Zegers of Forever Direct EU: “From its location at Borchwerf II, Forever Direct EU also provides fulfillment for hundreds of thousands of distributors in 18 countries. Martin Zegers: “In the past, Forever Living Products had 11 distribution centers throughout the Benelux area, Scandinavia, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Italy, Spain, Portugal, England, Ireland and France. Now, we have one Forever Direct EU distribution center at the Borchwerf II Business Park. With the investments we are making here and the economy of scale, costs have been significantly reduced. Forever Direct’s supply zone represents one third of global turnover in the EMEA region. The Borchwerf II Business Park is located right between the ports of Rotterdam and Antwerp, just outside of highly congested areas, and provides excellent connections to the hinterland. In addition, at Business Park Borchwerf we have ownership of the land, which was also an important reason for us to establish our company here.”

Worldwide Terex AWP lifts People and Materials into the Air

For the past 35 years, Terex Aerial Work Platforms (AWP) has been committed to lifting people and materials into the air; from indoor use at construction sites, to rough terrain with wet and muddy surface conditions around the world, in any kind of climate zone. Terex AWP machines are used mainly, though not exclusively, at construction, maintenance and repair sites, where they take the place of traditional scaffolding, ladders and crane capacity.

Terex AWP Senior Director Operations and Aftermarket EMEAR, Sebastian Umbreit: “We assemble the best modular aerial work platforms to meet customer requirements. If needed, we develop different solutions together with our clients which enable new efficient working methods in challenging conditions. The market focus of Terex AWP is on the US, EMEAR and the Asia Pacific region. The Europe, Middle-East, Africa and Russia (EMEAR) region is the second largest, with an annual turnover of $350 to $380 million. The Distribution Center for Europe, Middle East, Africa and part of Russia is located at the Borchwerf II Business Park in the Netherlands.”
Heerlen gets its identity back with Maankwartier

By Katja Huijsmans and Francine Pelzers, Communications Maankwartier

With Maankwartier, the new and dynamic area surrounding Heerlen’s train station, the city gets its identity back. The design, created by local artist Michel Huisman, is one of a kind. It features architectural styles harking back to the city’s glorious past as a mining town and all the way to its Roman heritage, combined with a touch of southern warmth and romanticism. The result is truly exceptional, befitting an exceptional city.

Heerlen is located in the south of Limburg, the most southern of the twelve Dutch provinces. It was an important and prosperous town back in the days of the coalmining industry. But as the last mines closed some fifty years ago, the city not only lost its industry but also its identity.

In the period that followed many characteristic buildings were demolished and replaced with unattractive office buildings. However, today’s recession combined with an ageing population make for a time of change.

Although several ideas for the rearrangement of the train station’s surroundings were presented before the city council, not one managed to get enough support. This situation changed in 2003 when Michel Huisman walked into City Hall. The local artist presented a unique idea for a completely new train station area, vastly different from any proposal that came before. Featuring high arches, impressive facades, intimate streets, grand staircases and meeting squares. He named it Maankwartier, a white mountain of the future, destined to revitalize Heerlen and its inhabitants.

Connecting the city

A major advantage of Maankwartier is the fact that it reconnects parts of the city that for years were divided by the old train station. Up until now, a tunnel that gave access to the various platforms also functioned as the main connection for people to get from one part of town to the other. With the demolition of the old train station this tunnel has now disappeared from sight. Since Maankwartier is being built on top of the train station it merges two parts of the city back together again.

Maankwartier layout

The building process for Maankwartier is well underway by now and is expected to be fully finished in 2017. It is being built as three interlocking sections: South, North and the railway plateau. Here is a short impression of what is being built where:

North side (circa 44,370 square metres)

The north side will house offices, apartments and commercial spaces fronted by beautiful arcades and gateways. Situated in the heart of the north side is the maanplein, a romantic square full of atmosphere, featuring large mature trees and home to a very imposing work of art called the Heliostat. This artwork, also from the hand of Michel Huisman, captures light from the sun and the moon. Through ingenious construction, this light is transported fifty meters down into the building, providing the underground double deck parking lot with natural light. The north side is also home to a large supermarket, the already existing Hoppenhof and the bus station with its characteristic round arches covered in blue Wisteria.

Who is building Maankwartier?

Maankwartier is being built by multiple partners, all with their own assignments:

- City of Heerlen (platform and public spaces)
- Weller Vastgoedontwikkeling BV (office spaces, apartments, retail and hotel)
- Bouwontwikkeling Jongen (apartments, office spaces, parking garage and retail)
- ProRail (responsible for the railway network)
- Nederlandse Spoorwegen (train station and train station retail)

Main developers are the City of Heerlen and Weller.
Regional Focus

The honeypot effect

Maankwartier will be much more than just a connection over the railways. It will be a vibrant city heart where people live, work, meet, travel and shop.

Nine million people will be passing through per year. All with their own destination. It will have a positive impact on both Heerlen and the surrounding region. It will draw people to Heerlen to admire the design and to get a taste of the atmosphere.

Maankwartier will be a major contributor to both the positive transformation of Heerlen’s image and the reinforcement of the city’s economic structure. It offers a thriving city centre with new initiatives for large and small scale retail and catering. But most of all, it will at last provide Heerlen and the surrounding region with a fitting identity.

More information

www.maankwartier.nl
Facebook.com/Maankwartier
Twitter.com/MaankwartierNL

Platform (circa 9,144 square metres)

Walking from the Maanplein, the platform takes us to the southside of Maankwartier and straight into the heart of the city. A platform straight across the railway, connecting the north and south side of the complex. Situated on this platform are the train station building and square, with accompanying small retail, as well as office buildings and part of the Maanhotel. The platform will no doubt be a nonstop scene of activity, filled with rushed travellers trying to catch their respective train or bus and business men and women on their way to appointments.

South side (circa 29,154 square metres)

The south side seamlessly merges into the inner city. It has appropriately been nicknamed the gateway to Heerlen. A beautiful and inviting space featuring both a park and a square with cozy terraces and small shops. It will also have luxury apartments, stylish offices and the entrance to the Maanhotel. The hotel lobby will be situated at a square with a stylish water feature. Fitting details surrounding the gateway are the planets Mercurius, Mars, Venus, Saturn and Earth, also visible from the train platforms.
GIFS Project: How do we value the socio-economic and cultural importance of inshore fishing?

Inshore fishing is at a crossroads with an uncertain future. Pressures on quota species include increased regulation and restrictions, access to fish stocks alongside uncertain markets and concerns over environmental sustainability. However, alongside food provision and contributing economically to coastal communities, inshore fishing also provides a range of broad social and cultural values and benefits, such as cultural heritage, community identity and social cohesion. Identifying these values and capturing these often intangible benefits alongside the economic importance of fishing is crucial in order to make better and more informed policy and management decisions. The Geography of Inshore Fishing and Sustainability (GIFS) project was developed to address these issues.

GIFS is a project co-funded by the Interreg IVa 2 Seas programme, and ran from December 2011 to September 2014. It aims to understand the socio-economic and cultural importance of inshore fishing to better inform fisheries policy, coastal regeneration strategies and sustainable community development by:

• Identifying best practice in coastal zone governance and marine fishing
• Exploring the social and cultural values of fishing places and communities
• Valuing the economic benefits of inshore fishing
• Understanding grassroots perspectives of inshore fishing
• Creating a ‘snapshot’ of fishing life at the start of the 21st century

The GIFS team is an interdisciplinary partnership of six European institutions across Europe with a range of expertise: University of Greenwich, University of Brighton, Municipality of Middelburg, VLIZ (Flanders Marine Institute), Agrocampus Ouest, University of Brest. Dr Tim Acott and Dr Julie Urquhart of the University of Greenwich are leading the project, which brings together a team of over 30 researchers, practitioners and postgraduate students with a diverse range of backgrounds including geography, planning, social science and economics. The broader partnership of GIFS extends to the communities in which the partners worked along with national and regional decision makers in each country. This included a close relationship with the Hastings Fisheries Local Action Group (FLAG), whose members guided the project from the outset to ensure that it had real on-the-ground relevance, to partnership working between the Municipality of Middelburg and the residents of Arnemuiden to deliver a programme of economic regeneration and public realm enhancement.

There are two major outcomes of the GIFS project:

**GIFS Toolkit**

September 2014 will see the launch of a Toolkit for inshore fisheries which will provide both policy makers and fisheries community stakeholders with the practical steps to understand the contribution that inshore fisheries makes to coastal communities. The content spans a broad interdisciplinary spectrum from robust analyses of the economic contribution of inshore fishing to regional economies to photographic exhibitions highlighting the diverse cultural landscapes of fishing. Numerous case studies are included ranging from identification of best practice in local governance of inshore fisheries to the development of fisher-led educational materials. The Toolkit resource will enable users to take a holistic approach to understanding the socio-economic value of inshore fishing, together with its rich cultural identity and heritage.

**GIFS Wiki**

The second major output of GIFS is the production of a wiki, a geographic tool that captures the results of the GIFS project in an online interactive map. It will be organised around thematic tabs including: Education, Fishing Activity, Tourism, Governance etc. Each thematic tab will lead to the articles, images, maps and data that have been collected and used throughout the research as well as links to other related studies. It will be an important resource for anyone wanting to know more about inshore fishing in the southern North Sea and Channel area.

The GIFS Toolkit and Wiki will be launched at an event hosted by the University of Greenwich on Wednesday 3rd September 2014. To learn about more about this event or GIFS please visit our website www.gifsproject.eu or email S.Louail@gre.ac.uk.
Developing Cycling Transportation in Szczecin

By Tomasz Loga, Plenipotentiary of the Mayor of Szczecin

Although the number of cyclists on the streets of Szczecin is constantly rising, as well as in many other Polish cities, Szczecin is only just starting to develop this mode of transport. One could say that the citizens have re-discovered the use of a bicycle. In fact, more and more people choose bikes not only as a form of leisure, but also as a vehicle allowing them to go places (such as school, work, shops). There are around 100 kilometers of separated bicycle paths and almost five kilometers of bicycle lanes in Szczecin at the moment, however, works on a unified road network only began a few years ago. A number of its sections are still unfinished and full of communication gaps that are to be filled. The city center is surrounded by different parks and forests, which contributes to creating a ‘green passage’ connecting some of the city districts.

2014 is an important period in the development of bicycle transportation. It is planned to include launching of bicycle sharing system, a system consisting of 360 bicycles and 34 bicycle stations. In 2014 a few significant road investments, partly founded by the European Union, are going to be carried out. Their main goal is to improve coherence of the bicycle network system. In addition to building separated bicycle paths, a few kilometers of bicycle lanes will be designated. This way, their number throughout the city will double and this is the first big step to redistribute public space on the other streets.

While previous actions were one-off, and bicycle infrastructure was just an addition to major road investments, new solutions are targeted systemically. Obviously, the aim is to increase the number of cycle routes and, therefore, to make cycling more comfortable and intuitive.

One of the ideas which is being prepared this year, is the bicycle routes system, which will indicate the main corridors for bicycle traffic (links between districts) and as their complement, local routes. In the process of the development of cycling, parking lots are also an inseparable element of safe and functional infrastructure. As a result of actions taken by the city council of Szczecin, about 600 fully functional parking lots for bicycles have been constructed in the community area. In 2014 there will be 500 more of them. Nongovernmental organizations are of great significance in this issue, as they play an important role in the development of a bicycle-friendly city.

Since 2012 Szczecin has got the design and construction standards of implementation of the bicycle system. This document includes the best domestic and foreign experience of both the technical solutions in the field of road infrastructure and bicycle-friendly parking infrastructure.

Citizens can participate in the consultation process for road projects (construction and reconstruction of roads, changes in traffic management etc.) and submit their comments about the state of infrastructure on an ongoing basis. On the official website of the city council of Szczecin there is a form allowing the reporting of the demand for bicycle racks (parking infrastructure for bicycles).

With the implementation of new investments related to the construction of roads for bicycles, there will be new technical solutions, such as automated counters to measure cycle traffic. With it you can evaluate the actual effectiveness of an investment for road cycling promotion. Today we have two such devices, but it is planned to purchase more. It is not the only way to assess the level of cycle traffic. As the bicycle-friendly infrastructure develops, the City Council gets more and more requests for mounting bicycle racks.

Since Szczecin is fairly large (the third-largest city in Poland), which is very important from the point of view of efficiency of cycling, not without significance is the share of collective transport in passenger transportation, as well as its connection to bicycle transport. At the moment people using bikes can transport them in trams and buses at no extra charge.

In 2015 the Szczecin Fast Tram line, which will connect left and right parts of the city, is going to be put into service.

At the temporary final stop (in the right part of the city) the first ‘Bike and Ride’ parking will be constructed. Bicyclists will be able to leave their vehicles in special bicycle lockers.”
Towards Białystok 2020

By Tadeusz Truskolaski, Mayor of the City of Białystok

Białystok, with a population of almost 300,000, is the biggest city located in the north-eastern Poland, serving the function of the capital of Podlaskie province. It is the administrative, economic, and academic centre of the region which, due to its exceptional environmental assets, has been named the Green Lungs of Poland.

The most distinguishing feature of Białystok is its cleanliness, fresh air, parks and gardens. Relatively low levels of pollution, to a large extent, determine the living conditions of inhabitants in contemporary metropolitan areas. I want to emphasize the unique environmental qualities and friendliness of the public space of the City, which make it an attractive place for healthy and comfortable living.

Białystok is a city equipped with modern monitoring systems. A sense of security on the part of the inhabitants is a crucial issue as far as life quality is concerned. All the institutions which have an influence on social security are involved in undertaking measures related to crime prevention in Białystok. It is also important that social initiatives towards activities for safety improvement be continuously encouraged.

Short commuting time, and smooth travel at the times of highest traffic density are indicators of transport quality. Further improvements in transport solutions through new investments will decongest the most important municipal thoroughfares.

Białystok is an academic and scientific centre in the north-eastern part of Poland. Universities and colleges in Białystok offer high quality education in various specialties, in alignment with labour market demands. While enjoying many of the achievements of Białystok’s scientific environment which is widely popularized and promoted so that the City is ranked as a developing academic centre.

Białystok City Development Strategy for the next few years is to diagnose the most important developmental needs of the Capital of Podlasie, as well as to identify methods to meet these needs.

The document covers all areas relevant to the development of the city. Such a broad approach to the agglomeration, its problems and needs required large-scale consultations.

During the long-lasting process of drafting the document, every citizen of Białystok who wished to do so had the opportunity to speak about any issue. This fact seems to be extremely important since it means that the authorship of the Strategy cannot be attributed solely to the self-government, but actually (and encouragingly) the whole community of Białystok is responsible for its shape.

It is equally important to remember that the Strategy was not created in a vacuum. Ideas and plans raised in it constitute the natural continuation and development of actions undertaken in recent years. Without exaggeration it may be said that Białystok is definitely at a turning point in its development now – facing previously unknown problems of a modern metropolis on the one hand, whilst on the other using unprecedented opportunities associated with our country’s membership of the structures of the European Union. All this is reflected in the outcome of work on the Strategy.

I am convinced that the document is not merely a list of expectations for the future of Białystok, but also a specific and accurate road map containing both desired objectives and practical solutions to achieve them. The fact that the image of a city conjured up by the Strategy shows enormous potential and opportunities for development must be pleasing.

I strongly believe that the use of these opportunities will be easier with the help of the guidelines which are provided in the Białystok City Development Strategy for years the 2011-2020 plus.

What is Białystok 2020?

It is a metropolis, open to co-operation, and encompassing a territory closely interconnected with and having a direct influence on areas of high developmental potential. A metropolis with strong internal functional relations and a developed transport network.

The economic development of Białystok is founded on the priorities of a modern knowledge-based economy. Expenditure on research and development has increased, while public projects are drafted in such a manner as to encourage the entrepreneurs to make innovative investments. Białystok is focused on building its endogenous growth potential based on the R and D and scientific sectors. Białystok has a strong and competitive position in Eastern Poland.

A multicultural center with deeply rooted traditions is very important and significant for the identity of the City. The inhabitants have access to various sports facilities, as well as attractive cultural products and services. The City organizes many events promoting local cultural heritage, which are an attraction for visitors to the City.

Białystok of 2020 is a city where life is good and safe and it is connected with the world and frequently visited by tourists. Clean air and environment are favourable to the health of its inhabitants. Modern knowledge-based economy and implemented investments generate new high-quality jobs. The inhabitants benefit from advanced social infrastructure and, thanks to a wide participation in cultural, sports and leisure activities, pursue their hobbies and interests. Numerous newly constructed roads, beltways, flyovers and collision-free crossings improve safety and shorten the travel time across the City. Long stretches of cycle paths encourage involvement in sports and promote a healthy, ecological lifestyle. High aesthetic value of Białystok’s urban space encourages collective leisure, mutual kindness and joy of life. Welcome to Białystok!
Zamość, also referred to as ‘an ideal town, ‘the Padua of the North’ and ‘the town of arcades’, is famed for its unique Old Town complex, which has been inscribed on the UNESCO World Cultural Heritage List. However, Zamość is also a friendly town, open to innovations.

The economic offer of Zamość and its economic potential are determined, among other things, by the economic potential of the entire Lublin Region. The Province of Lubelskie belongs to the largest and the most important agricultural regions in Poland. Valuable resources of ecologically clean food create favourable conditions for development of food industry – Zamość has well-established tradition of wood and furniture industry.

**Zamoska Economic Sub-Zone**

Special economic zones were set up pursuant to the act of 20 October 1994. A special economic zone is an administratively separate area designated for conducting business activities on more favourable conditions than elsewhere. The zones have been set up to provide a possibility of:

- development of specific lines of business,
- development of new technological and technical solutions and their use in national economy,
- development of export,
- creating new workplaces,
- improving competitiveness of manufactured products and provided services.

There are a total of 14 special economic zones in Poland. Zamość Sub-zone was set up in 2009 as part of The “EURO-PARK” Mielec Special Economic Zone.

**Why is it worthwhile to invest in the Zamoska Sub-Zone?**

Successful implementation of large projects co-funded by external funds show that Zamość challenges the prevailing stereotype of “a town in eastern Poland”. Between 2004 and 2012 Zamość spent almost PLN 400 M on renovation of historical facilities and investments in infrastructure and the environment. For a few years now private entrepreneurs have been implementing projects connected with trade and hotel services.

Modernity, innovation, enterprise and unique history are harmoniously combined in Zamość. The town is ready for new residents, with its well-developed infrastructure and employment rate of core creative class higher than average in Poland.

Originally, Zamość Sub-zone of The “EURO-PARK” Mielec Special Economic Zone comprised over 50 ha of fully developed investment land consisting of two sets of plots in Starowiejska and Szczepierska Streets. At present about 40 ha is still available for investment in Szczepierska Street.

Investors who want to conduct their business activity in Zamość Sub-zone may count on regional public assistance, such as exemption from a tax on the cost of implementation of a new project or creating new workplaces. Only in eastern Poland, including the “EURO-PARK” Mielec Special Economic Zone, tax reductions amount to 50% for big investors, 60% for medium investors and 70% for small investors; additionally, investors are granted exemption from a tax on fixed property and assistance in training of future staff.

The potential of the renovated Zamość Old Town complex in attracting over 250 thousand visitors a year provides excellent conditions for doing business and development of the sectors of services and innovations as well as environmentally friendly technologies.

Entrepreneurs who want to locate their business activities in The “EURO-PARK” Mielec Special Economic Zone Zamość Sub-zone will be granted regional investment assistance, which consists of exemptions on account of new investments and exemption from taxes on fixed property, buildings and structures or their parts in which business activity is conducted, amounting to at least EUR 100 thousand for a term of:

- 12 months – if at least 10 new workplaces are created,
- 24 months - if at least 15 new workplaces are created,
- 36 months - if at least 20 new workplaces are created,
- 48 months - if at least 25 new workplaces are created.

The investment assistance provided to entrepreneurs also includes exemption from income tax; this relief is granted on account of costs of new investments and creating new workplaces.

Tax exemption due to costs of new investments amounts to 50% of incurred investment costs for big investors, 60% for medium investors and 70% for small investors. The exemption applies to investment costs incurred during the exemption term for:

- purchase of land or a right of perpetual usufruct of land,
- purchase of or expenditures incurred for internally generated fixed assets,
- extension and modernisation of existing fixed assets,
- purchase of non-tangible and legal assets connected with transfer of technologies and purchase of patent rights, licences, know-how or non-patented technical knowledge; the cost of these investments may be increased by 50% at the most in the case of investors other than small and medium.

Obtaining the assistance is conditioned by conducting business activities and maintaining fixed assets for 5 years – big investors or 3 years – small and medium investors.

By Karol Garbula, Secretary of The Town of Zamość
By the Colourful Danube
Linz Transforms the Danube – and Vice Versa

By Georg Steiner, Tourism Director, Linz

As the city’s full name expresses so succinctly, Linz lies on the Danube as few other Austrian cities do.

In 2014 and 2015, the European Capital of Culture invites both its inhabitants and visitors to discover the city on all levels, from the water.

In Linz, the Danube curves and changes direction – here, it changes its face. Is it just chance that at exactly this point on the river, a city has emerged that has experienced many changes? “Lentos” and “Lentia” are the Celtic and Roman names for Linz.

Both refer to the river’s change of course, both also tell the story of Linz’s transformations. For the moment, the last of these is that of the booming industrial city to the European Capital of Culture.

More than just a landscape

Especially in Austria, the Danube is far more than the fascinatingly beautiful river landscape that stretches from the bend known as the Schlögener Schlinge to Grein, via the Linz Basin and the picturesque Strudengau region. Like a leitmotif, it runs through Linz’s past and onwards into its future. The churches, castles, fortresses and bridges on the Danube are steel and stone witnesses to better, eventful and also more terrible times.

Route of kings

The Danube was no less than the “Route of Emperors and Kings”. The Nibelungs, Roman emperors, and crusaders travelled it, as did King Louis VII of France and Emperor Friedrich Barbarossa with their entourage.

In addition, this was the bridal journey of the Bavarian princess Sisi led from Straubing to Passau, Linz and Vienna, at the end of the 19th century. There, she became Empress Elisabeth of the Habsburgs’ multinational state, also known as the Danube Monarchy, the hymn of which was sung in 11 languages.

Border …

Over centuries, the river was alternately a dividing line and connecting link between the cultures and regions on its banks. As the “limes”, it already served as a boundary between the Roman Empire and the lands of the “barbarians” to the north of the Danube more than 2,000 years ago. Roman emperors from Vespasian to Marcus Aurelius created that which was unimaginable for the simple rural population at the time: the stone frontier fortifications right down to the Black Sea. Even in the 20th century, the borders of the occupation zones after the Second World War ran along the Danube and made Linz a divided city. Later, during the Cold War, parts of the Iron Curtain fell along the Danube.

… and connecting link

And yet the Danube was always more than just an embankment of water. Time and again, it made possible trans-regional
Regional Focus

Linz has many historical reasons for being a city of peace – and a historical obligation. Linz was the city of Hitler’s youth, for which he is known to have had great plans as a cultural city of the Reich. It is another stroke of fate in the city’s history that, for the most part, these plans did not materialise.

In Linz, the experience of the Danube fits into the wonderful resolution of numerous centuries-old conflicts. Here, the fascination that is Europe lives on, through the tolerant acceptance of cultural differences. People are highly valued in Linz. And also in the successful economy, which concerns itself not only with satisfactory profits and capital, but also with the human aspect.

In Linz, the innovative spirit of the founders of culture has stayed alive. Today, prime examples of companies are situated on the Danube, such as voestalpine, which also ships its steel beyond the Danube and all over the world, the shipyard, which is rich in tradition, and many software developers. Numerous leading and internationally successful businesses are based in Linz. Today, the city is the centre of the recently founded European Danube-Vltava region. The Danube’s role here goes far beyond that of a namesake.

Linz demonstrates to the rest of Europe that the Danube stands for dynamism and contact in culture and the economy. As a trade route, the Danube has remained indispensable since early times. For example, in everyday Linz it now conveys a sense of Europe. If you watch the ships from many different countries on their passage through Linz, often bearing Cyrillic lettering, the concept of Europe will become tangible.

Anniversary year 2014

2014 is the anniversary of two great historical events that have been etched deep into the history of the Danube area: With the First World War, the collapse of the Danube Monarchy began in 1914, with all its dramatic consequences. The more hopeful anniversary in 2014 relates to 1989, when the Iron Curtain was lifted and many borders on the Danube opened again. In 1989, a quarter of a century will have passed. Since then, the people on the Danube have become closer to one another than ever before. Linz, the city of peace, has also tried to contribute to this through international commitment.

Linz has many historical reasons for being a city of peace – and a historical obligation. Linz was the city of Hitler’s youth, for which he is known to have had great plans as a cultural city of the Reich. It is another stroke of fate in the city’s history that, for the most part, these plans did not materialise.

To be human …

In Linz, the experience of the Danube fits into the wonderful resolution of numerous centuries-old conflicts. Here, the fascination that is Europe lives on, through the tolerant acceptance of cultural differences. People are highly valued in Linz. And also in the successful economy, which concerns itself not only with satisfactory profits and capital, but also with the human aspect.

... Vitality

Linz cultivates vitality and culture, and particularly on the Danube, this comes to obvious fruition. The Danube is a stage for life in Linz, on which relaxation and gentle excursions are given pride of place. A good 40,000 travellers on river cruise ships make a stop in Linz every year, and 70,000 touring cyclists travel to the city on the Danube Cycle Path, which will celebrate its 30th anniversary in 2014.

In Linz, you experience a historical awareness with your senses, since the local dining and drinking culture owes a lot to the history of the Danube. That includes the
coffee tradition and the Linzer Torte, which both have strong Ottoman links. It also includes the wine and the Wiener Schnitzel.

The colourful Danube

The river is the best place to discover how ambitiously Linz has spread out in recent years, particularly towards the Danube. For a long time, the Danube has not been blue here, as the popular Strauss waltz suggests, but colourful.

And not only at night, when the sensuous illuminations reflect the distinctive outlines of the cultural buildings – the Brucknerhaus, the Lentos Kunstmuseum Linz and the Ars Electronica Center – in the water. Linz’s cityscape also leaves a lasting impression during the day.

Space for art on the river

The Danube in Linz is a space for art – an open-air museum where world-class artworks of steel are presented between striking buildings such as the Lentos Kunstmuseum Linz, the Brucknerhaus and the Tabakfabrik.

They are works by artists like David Rabinowitch, Mathias Goeritz and Herbert Bayer, and are testimony to the epoch-making “forum metal” in 1977. In Linz, you can also experience how the Danube fused many different artistic movements, which consequently underwent a revival – be it the Donauschule in the 15th century or the Bauhaus movement in the 20th century.

Make discoveries

Visitors to Linz are invited to discover something new. To explore historical, cultural and other connections in a way that excites all the senses enriches your stay with meaning.

Linz uses the reflections of the past on the Danube to look towards the future. The successful and liveable city on the Danube helps the potential and connections of this European river of history and culture to be seen from a new perspective, and to be continued.
What is “COOL” tourism?
European funded initiative, the ‘COOL’ tourism project will use the environment as an asset to promote experiential tourism, unlocking the potential of rural destinations and helping the Transmanche region to compete effectively in the global tourism market.

Aims of the project
• To develop rural tourism in the Transmanche area thanks to a better knowledge of the offer and an innovative promotion.
• To create low impact, environmentally-friendly sustainable tourism solutions that cherish, not destroy and which minimise impact and builds environmental awareness.

Shared Assets
• Beautiful countryside
• Cultural and rural heritage
• Natural resources
• Proximity to major urban areas (Paris, London and Brussels)

Facts and Figures
11 partners in 2 countries, France and UK. 6 tourism destinations in the Transmanche area.

France
• 80% of national territory is classed as ‘rural’
• 35% of the national tourism visitors have ‘rural’ breaks
• 50% of the national accommodation capacity is rural
• 21% of tourism consumption is rural

What will the COOL project deliver?
• A comprehensive research study to identify new opportunities for rural tourism
• Support for rural business networks
• Development of a best practice business toolkit

France : the assets of Pas-de-Calais…
www.pas-de-calais-tourisme.com www.visit-pas-de-calais.com
Conveniently close, deliciously different… All the ingredients of an authentic French fix are right there on your doorstep, in Pas-de-Calais. Forget any ideas of Northern France being flat, industrial or uninteresting, it is surprisingly rural, gorgeously undulating and overflowing with culture. Whether you are coming over for shopping, gastronomy, coastal activities, wartime history or just to relax and enjoy a taste of France.

Shoppers and foodies alike will enjoy the French atmosphere, so many of our towns have to offer. For an authentic foodie experience, Pas-de-Calais offers a variety of local produce: cheeses, traditionally brewed beers, Saint-Omer whetlands are UNESCO worldwide heritage which produces an amazing array of delicious veg and fresh fish abounds in Boulogne, France’s premier fishing port.

An extensive choice of museums, including the new Louvre-lens, guided tours, wartime history sites and trails will help you to uncover the region’s cultural secrets and history. Nature-lovers will be enchanted by the classified sites and nature parks. The Grand Site des Caps, one of just 10 locations awarded Grand Site de France status, is definitely not to be missed. If you’re looking for thrills and excitement, the Opal Coast is the perfect playground for you: sand yachting, kite surfing, speed-sailing are just a few examples of what awaits you. Pas-de-Calais is also great for the whole family as there are many indoor and outdoor child friendly attractions.

UK
• Rural areas account for over 80% of land area
• 20% of the UK population live in rural areas
• Visit England predicts 5% growth in rural tourism over the next three years

What will the COOL project deliver?
• Creation of an image and video library
• Themed rural marketing campaigns
• Volume and value research data
• ICT training workshops for rural businesses

www.visit-pas-de-calais.com
EU Funding Provides New Opportunities and Initiatives to Medway

By Frances Toomey, Head of Regeneration and Economic Development, Medway Council

Since 1999, Medway Council has delivered over 100 European funded projects, enabling residents and businesses to directly benefit from a variety of initiatives to the value of £20 million. Medway Council’s Portfolio Holder for Strategic Development and Economic Growth, Cllr Jane Chitty, has supported the development and implementation of these projects since 2001. She has been a key enabler and she remains committed to our effective use of external funding. Cllr Chitty said: “In today’s economic climate, our residents and businesses need more support than ever. EU funded programmes are not just giving us the opportunity to develop our skills and share our expertise and experience as organisations, they are also giving us an opportunity to make a real difference to the way we provide services within Medway. EU funding provides us with opportunities to implement innovative activities and to pilot new initiatives that would otherwise be unattainable.”

Although the exchange of best practice and the learning from each other is very interesting, it is the shared actions and outputs between organisations from different countries that provide the most added value to our residents and businesses. The Interreg programmes have been one of our most important sources of funding, part-financing a total of 23 projects over the last six years. We believe that our involvement in European projects has significantly enhanced the quality of life for those living and working in Medway.

Some of our most successful projects have been developed under the Interreg IVA Channel programme, which is particularly interesting because of the bilateral and tangible nature of the activities.

Medway Council is lead partner in six of the ten projects under the Interreg IVA Channel programme, demonstrating our high level of achievement in project development and management. We have carefully selected European partners that will meet our objectives and achieve high results. The total ERDF funding across these ten projects amounts to over £3.2 million, which is to be spent in Medway towards specific strategic priorities.

The RECREATE and ICR projects focus on the creative industries and arts development. While the ICR project provides the opportunity to set up a film festival and audience development activities in Medway, the RECREATE project’s objectives are orientated towards the business side of the creative sector by creating and developing workspaces in vacant commercial premises, initiating a business start-up and growth scheme for creative industry businesses, graduates and artists and encouraging a virtual network of artists across the RECREATE partnership.

The RECREATE project (www.recreateproject.eu) has already supported the refurbishment and launch of Sun Pier House gallery and tearoom (http://www.sunpierhouse.co.uk), Bespok: a brand new Designer-Maker fair for Medway, and the launch and ongoing management of POP (a creative space for artistic installations, exhibitions, workshops, training and retail).

The IMPRESS project takes an innovative approach to supporting both businesses and employees in providing in-work support. Since the start of the project, IMPRESS has supported 212 businesses and 547 employee beneficiaries in Medway. The fantastic results of IMPRESS can be demonstrated in the fact that it gave 463 local people jobs. This is a retention rate of 84%, which is 15% higher than last years figure, before the IMPRESS project was launched.

The Cyber Youth Connection develops a youth development programme:

- to attract disaffected young people and engage them in community development activities
- to raise aspirations among young people and encourage them to acquire skills and career development
- to develop mobility as a skill for young people.

This project started in March 2013 and will finish in June 2015 and it has already seen some fantastic outputs. In Medway, we have delivered 86 cookery sessions, 112 music sessions, and 45 mechanic sessions, benefiting 385 young people. The final event will take place in Medway on the 21st of February 2015. It will include activities such as a music/dance cross border show and a presentation of the ‘build a vehicle challenge’. Young people involved in the project will cook the evening meal.

The Ecotec 21 and Greenfit projects are contributing towards a more efficient and greener Medway by providing supply chain and green technology assessments for specific buildings, as well as supporting the implementation of green technologies. As an example, the Ecotec 21 project is financially contributing towards the installation of a CHP engine running on glycerol at the University of Greenwich campus. It will be the first of its kind and will provide important data for future developments in the area.

The Bridge and New Deal For Innovation projects are both complementing these two initiatives by providing direct support to businesses who want to be more innovative, competitive, greener and more sustainable. Medway Council has launched an innovation voucher scheme for SMEs and one of the companies benefiting from this scheme is looking to develop a low energy-heating product. The voucher is enabling them to carry out some valuable R&D work, with the help of the University of Greenwich.

The Norman Connection project gathered key Norman sites in the South East of England and Normandy to promote their joint history and explore common cultures, traditions and characteristics, enabling the installation of Rochester castle internal and external floodlighting.

The AGIR project also aims to strengthen ethnic minority organisations, by sharing good practice on engagement and communication. Our general objective in Medway is to enable migrants and hosting communities to interact better together and to improve the understanding between communities.

These projects demonstrate just some of the European funded initiatives that are being implemented in Medway. We truly value the partnerships that we have developed through our projects and we are looking forward to the new programming period, when we hope to be able to strengthen our relationships with partners that we already know, but to also develop new ones, bringing further new commercial opportunities for Medway.

We have started to develop new project ideas and will be sharing these with all of our contacts in the very near future. europeannprojects@medway.gov.uk
Local residents make for better Final Conferences

DNA’s Final Conference on Tuesday 23 September to be partially directed by local residents

Local resident community actions make for better neighbourhoods. Creating ownership is the overall vision behind the DNA (Deprived Neighbourhood Approach) project that was rolled out in neighbourhoods in Antwerp, Kortrijk, Medway and Breda. As the concluding cross-border activity of the project, a Final Conference has been scheduled in Antwerp (lead partner) where everyone with an interest in bottom-up and participation processes are welcome to learn from our experiences.

DNA is an Interreg IVA 2 Seas project which is, after 3 years, now coming to an end. The partners involved are the City of Antwerp, OCMW Kortrijk, Medway Council and the City of Breda, which are all confronted with similar problems in their deprived neighbourhoods. Changes in these areas will only be sustainable when they are supported by local residents, workers and visitors and ultimately taken over by the neighbourhood community itself.

The strengths, opportunities and weaknesses of this highly dynamic and often surprisingly creative road to social regeneration will be discussed during the Final Conference in Antwerp on 23 September 2014. One of the items on the agenda is a debate on the pros and cons of bottom-up work with Ruben Degryse (DNA Project Manager Kortrijk), and the academic experts Dirk Geldof, Rik Pinxten and Eric Corijn, who published extensively on the debated topic.

But even more importantly, the bottom-up approach we promoted and stimulated throughout the project will also make its mark on the Final Conference. Many residents from local communities in the four partner cities will present their own projects, often in an appropriately creative way. For each partner city, a resident and a coaching professional will present a project they are particularly proud of.

The winning local residents of the European Ownership Award competition, which invited residents to submit ideas to improve their neighbourhood in terms of community safety, health, well-being and public space, will present their award-winning project and its progress. The winning ideas are very diverse: the composition of an anthem for the local square, with the collaboration of local senior residents and school children (Antwerp), the transformation of a neglected area into a green meeting area or an educational walking tour highlighting local landmarks and personalities (Kortrijk), the purchase of playground equipment for an infant school and nursery (Chatham/Medway), a community garden managed by residents supplying the local community house with vegetables (Breda) …

During the Final Conference, the experience of 3 years DNA in the partner cities will be presented and exchanged, thus offering residents, professionals and local governments useful insight in what works and what does not. Individual stories, methods used by professionals, (local) government attitudes regarding bottom-up initiatives, expert background and overall conclusions will be presented in a publication that covers the project on a transnational level.

The importance of the DNA project cannot be overstated in an era where local governments tend to hand over initiatives to local resident community actions. With a sustainable character and involving a maximum of residents, these actions really can make a difference in creating ownership and restoring social cohesion, thus leading to better, safer, cleaner, healthier – in short: more liveable neighbourhoods. You are kindly invited to discover that story during our Final DNA conference!

If you are interested to attend DNA’s Final Conference, you can register for this event by visiting: www.permeke.org/formulieren/dna-final-conference.
Cross-border Co-operation in East Sussex

By Veronique Poutrel, External Funding Manager, East Sussex County Council

With just the English Channel between us, East Sussex and France have had long links, both hostile and peaceful. Some of those connections, like the Battle of Hastings and the Norman Conquest, are famous. Others – such as regular peace-time trade, sheltering of religious refugees, piracy and smuggling, the exchange of ideas and the growth of the cross channel tourist industry – are less well known. East Sussex County Council, together with Seine-Maritime General Council have been working together on an INTERREG funded project to explore and celebrate the links between the two regions.

This is one example of where East Sussex County Council has been involved in cross-border co-operation. East Sussex has been actively involved with using INTERREG funding since 1999. Three waves of the funding have taken place, bringing in various opportunities and challenges. INTERREG II only involved East Sussex on this side of the Channel and Seine-Maritime and Somme on the French side. INTERREG III saw the merger of our programme with the Kent and Nord and Pas de Calais one, which meant a bigger area on both sides. INTERREG IV saw the extension of the eligible area to southern and eastern England and Northern France and another programme, the ‘Two Seas’ with Northern Belgium and Netherlands.

East Sussex County Council has been involved in all the programmes, so it is refreshing to see that processes have improved and that these are now more accessible to applicants. However there is a lot more that could be done to make this funding more attractive to them.

We are now entering a new Programming Period which will see yet more changes, but also reassuringly some similarities. The good thing is that what we know the new programme should remain the same until 2020, which will help us plan our involvement in the future.

The eligible area will not change and the eligibility criteria remain more or less the same, but there will still be a need to have at least one other partner on the other side of the Channel working on one project with a single budget. Details such as intervention rates, appraisal process, etc are still being discussed and it is hoped that both programmes should be open for business early 2015.

Both programmes were until recently managed by French Local Authorities and the Channel Programme will now be managed by Norfolk County Council, which will bring in different ways of working.

The role of the External Funding Team within East Sussex County Council is to support internal colleagues and external organisations in accessing funding. Raising awareness of opportunities available to them and providing the support required to help generate successful bids. Being able to translate what can sometime be quite difficult documents and process is important, especially for smaller organisations that sometime find it difficult to navigate their way around these programmes.

No doubt as programmes open for business we will be faced with more challenges. One of them is Local Government Reform on the French side, which will potentially see the merging of the Regions - and Departments disappearing. Our Programme Partners in the future might be different.

English Local Authorities are also going through changes and budget cuts, so will they see European Funding as an opportunity, or as a burden they can do without?

Under previous programmes, East Sussex County Council applied for some key projects around waste management and rights of way. Always bearing in mind, who we are and what we are here to deliver will remain key elements when deciding whether we should be involved in a project or not.

We have been selective and have not taken on some projects where we felt the benefits to our residents or the Council were limited. We have ensured that we have used our limited resources efficiently. That will always be our priority.

We are keen to explore potential partnerships in areas that are key to us and to our residents, as stated in the East Sussex County Council Plan:

• Building resilience
• Driving economic growth
• Making best use of our resources
• Keeping vulnerable people safe

We recently had a European staff intern join us to help our work in raising awareness of EU funding opportunities. Her support has been invaluable to us, as she was able to spend 100% of her time doing just this. She wrote a Guide on EU Funding Opportunities and a she will continue when she leaves. This contains lots of good practice and tips for project applicants.

We are already looking at areas where we can make a difference and will be sharing best practice and experience with colleagues here and abroad. We will also decide the best way to support external organisations, so that they can also benefit from the funding.
Crossing borders, crossing disciplines:
New approaches to preventing waterborne disease transmission in Europe

Changing weather patterns in Europe are challenging our assumptions about the risks to human health posed by water-related disease. Intense storms may lead to contaminated floodwaters, which in turn can contaminate our sources of drinking water, as well as our recreational waters and shellfisheries.

With support from the Interreg IVA programme, a cross-Channel team of scientists, engineers and social scientists from seven institutions in England and France is therefore collaborating to produce new tools that can be used to chart and predict the environmental transmission of waterborne pathogens in northwest Europe. It is hoped that these tools will enable environmental protection agencies and water companies to improve measures to protect our coastal bathing waters and shellfisheries, so that human diseases associated with bathing and consumption of contaminated shellfish can be minimised. The project therefore has important implications for coastal economies on both sides of the English Channel.

In recent years, with previous Interreg programme support, a cross-border network of experts in the emerging science of quantitative microbial source tracking (QMST) has emerged in the France (Channel) – England region. This new approach to understanding pollution dynamics underlies all the activities of the RiskManche project. In addition, the team is for the first time investigating the conditions that may lead to contamination of coastal shellfisheries with specific pathogens. The team has developed a toolbox of new QMST methods that can be used to distinguish whether pollution of our rivers and coasts derives from municipal sewers or from agricultural run-off – an essential first step in designing appropriate ways to eliminate the problem. The information obtained using the toolbox is then used in combination with hydrological models to demonstrate how the water environment might respond to future storm events.

Social scientists involved in RiskManche are working on two fronts. First, to improve our understanding of the issues that influence shellfish consumption, through research into peoples’ perceptions of the benefits and risks of eating shellfish. Secondly, and in collaboration with microbiologists in the RiskManche team, they are engaging recreational users with scientific research findings emerging from the project so as to better understand the types of knowledge and public debates which are generated by the forecasting technologies and risk management strategies available for water-based pollution. As a result, a wide variety of stakeholders have become actively engaged in the river catchment areas covered by RiskManche.

RiskManche project leader, Professor Huw Taylor of the University of Brighton, said “Interreg IVA funding has helped us to focus our research on an area of great strategic importance to the economic development of the France (Channel) England region. It has also encouraged us to recognise the benefits of both cross-disciplinary and cross-border partnerships. It has become increasingly obvious in recent years that integrating expertise from several institutions and several disciplines on both the English and French sides of the Channel can provide imaginative solutions to environmental and public health problems. It is therefore very gratifying to see these approaches starting to have a very positive impact on the region’s economy”.

The RiskManche project culminates with a flagship dissemination event at Portsmouth Harbour, England, on the 17th and 18th February 2015. For further information on the project, or if you would like to attend the event in Portsmouth, please contact the project manager Diane Larribeau (d.larribeau@brighton.ac.uk).

http://about.brighton.ac.uk/riskmanche
Kent County Council and the county as a whole, have a long tradition of working with organisations and colleagues in Northern France. A formal co-operation agreement was signed between Kent and Nord-Pas de Calais prior to the opening of the Channel Tunnel to encourage links and connections on a range of areas including economic development, tourism, education and the environment.

Kent is just 30km from mainland Europe and shares a direct connection to France via the Channel Tunnel. The main ferry ports and high speed rail connections mean that France is within easy access opening up a range of possibilities for cross-border co-operation across many different fields.

The EU Interreg cross-border programmes have played a key role in facilitating contacts between organisations on both sides of the Channel and have led to concrete projects and results for more than 20 years since the first programme involving England and France was launched in 1991.

As the Interreg programme areas have expanded geographically over the years, so have the range of projects in which Kent has been involved and whilst Nord-Pas de Calais remains a strategically important partner region for Kent, projects have involved other French ‘départements’ and regions in the Channel area.

Kent organisations have participated in around 30 projects under the Interreg 4A France – Channel – England programme since 2008. These projects, coupled with those developed under the Interreg Iva 2 Seas programme covering parts of Northern France, Flanders (Belgium) and the Netherlands have enabled Kent to take forward a number of strategic projects with partner organisations from these areas.

- “Cool Tourism” was the latest in a series of joint projects focusing on developing the visitor economy in SE England and Northern France recognising that significant visitor numbers are made up from cross-Channel visits. Tourism authorities on both sides of the Channel worked together to develop the rural tourism offer on both sides of the Channel with a view to analysing the sector, identifying and tackling barriers to growth and boosting visitor numbers on both sides of the Channel.
- The main objective of the “Recreate” project was regeneration through developing the creative industries sector. The project developed innovative new work-spaces in town centre environments as hubs for creative sector business start-ups. This project led by Medway Council brought together a range of local authorities, universities and specialists in promoting and developing the creative sector.
- The “Channel Innovation Network” project (Chain 2) involved Kent Science Park and aimed to support small businesses wishing to make connections with firms in the Brittany and Normandy regions of France. The project focused on key industry sectors which were strategic priorities for support and development on both sides of the Channel. The project ran a number of events to bring businesses from the food and drink, maritime and ICT sectors together to make contacts, discuss potential collaborations and to identify business opportunities on the other side of the Channel.
- The “Adafor” project focused on protecting natural landscapes with an emphasis on the sustainable development of woodlands and forest areas on both sides of the Channel. The project partners, including a range of bodies in charge of managing protected landscapes, worked on management plans which will ensure that commercial (wood fuel and biomass) and recreational uses of these natural resources take into account the long-term protection of the environment.
- Finally, the FLIP project brought together a range of partner organisations to look at the joint development of several smaller ports in the Channel area with a view to increasing their capacity, competitiveness and complementarity.

The joint nature of these cross-border projects and the ability to combine expertise and ideas from both countries was a key strength of these initiatives and the outcomes and results would not have been achieved by partner organisations working alone.

Looking to the future, Kent remains outward-focused and will continue to develop a range of mutually beneficial co-operation projects with partners in Northern France, particularly when the new Interreg 5 programmes are up and running from 2015. Potential areas for cross-border co-operation will focus on economic development and business support, shared environmental challenges and jointly tackling and working together on a range of issues linked to the Channel such as managing transport flows and integrated coastal zone management.

Mark Dance, Kent County Council’s Cabinet Member for Economic Development said: “Our partnerships in Northern France have contributed to developing Kent’s economy and enabled us to deliver a range of projects which build on the best we in Kent and our French partners have to offer. From boosting our tourism sector and enhancing the use of our natural environment to facilitating trade links between local businesses, our French connections will continue to play a key role in helping us to make Kent a great place to live, work and visit.”
S.M.S Project
Supporting Mobility and Skills Development for Young People

PARTNERS
Centre Social Jean Ferrat, Arques, FR
Maison Pour Tous – Centre Social de Rivery, FR
All Saints Community Project Trust, Chatham, UK

The S.M.S Project is a European Initiative to Support Mobility and Skills development for young people. Its main objective is to promote mutual learning of language and culture between young people with fewer possibilities living on both side of the Channel. Partners are targeting all young people from 14 to 25 years’ old, living in France and England, belonging to disadvantaged social groups and having difficulties at school or for finding a job.

"the SMS project “ was selected under the European Cross Border Cooperation Programme INTERREG IV A France (Channel) – England, co-funded by the ERDF.

French and British partners of the project have agreed on creating a cross-border youth development programme encouraging young people to act as stakeholders of the European society. During the eighteen months duration of the overall project, the young participants are working closely with youth professionals through diverse activities made for raising their awareness on national and European history, giving them a sense of EU citizenship, informing them on the right to go with it and the opportunities that are available to them.

The SMS project focuses on youth engagement in working with youth players. The project adopts an approach to two arms:
• The training to develop knowledge of the different actors (youth leaders, decisions makers, etc.)
• Encouraging supports for projects to focus on developing life skills such as self-confidence, the ability to make decisions and stress management.

The pedagogical approach is based essentially on:
• The participation of young people;
• Intercultural learning;
• Support of personal and collective projects that allow them to acquire the necessary skills;
• Support for mobility.

Since the launch of the S.M.S project last October in Chatham (UK), this European initiative has entered in the second phase of its implementation: each partner organization (i.e. Centre Social Jean Ferrat in Arques; Maison Pour Tous – Centre Social de Rivery; and the All Saints Community Project Trust in Chatham) is currently setting up workshops sessions dedicated to the development of skills of young participants. These activities are covering several objectives (called ‘work packages’) set by the partner organizations of the project:
• Engaging young people from disadvantaged background to support them in discovering the meaning of citizenship (Work package 3) through:
  • Discovering and learning about the history of their area so they learn about the EU (Action 1);
  • Understanding the meaning of European Citizenship and their role in the EU (Action 2);
• Improving, understanding and raising awareness of opportunities for young people (WP4) through:
  • Up skilling young people so they can develop their own projects in the future (Action 1);
  • Raising awareness among youth professionals and decision makers about youth empowerment (Action 2);
• Involving young participants in communication and dissemination activities of the project (WP5-Action1)
Programmes de coopération transfrontalière

Philippe Rycek, Responsable de mission, Mission Europe, Conseil général de la Somme


Ces programmes sont découpés en 3 volets ; transfrontalier, transnational et interrégional. Le volet transfrontalier concentre l’essentiel des moyens et ont conservé jusqu’en 2013 un caractère généraliste. Il offrent un cadre à la mise en œuvre de projets de coopération de toute nature. Les projets retenus au titre de ces programmes peuvent bénéficier d’un cofinancement incitatif de l’Union européenne s’élevant à 50% du coût total du projet (pour les dépenses de fonctionnement). Se voulant financièrement attractifs leur accès demeure difficile. Cette situation s’explique par un faisceau de causes :

- un manque d’information autour de ces dispositifs ;
- une animation et une assistance technique aux porteurs de projets souvent insuffisante ;
- la complexité croissante de la gestion des fonds européens.

Il s’agit dès lors de disposer de solides capacités administratives pour mener un projet de coopération avec un ou plusieurs partenaires européens.

Confirmons et renforcés ces programmes de coopération connaissent trois évolutions majeures entre la période 2007-2013 et 2014-2020 :

- l’élargissement des périmètres de coopération par l’intégration des zones dites adjacentes en 2007-2013 ;
- l’augmentation sensible de leur budget ;


De même, le budget du programme Interreg V A France Manche Angleterre s’élève entre 2014-2020 à 223 M€ (contre 178 M€ sur la période 2007-2013) soit le deuxième programme le plus doté pour la France.

Le département de la Somme, qui héberge la capitale régionale – Amiens, tient au sein la Picardie une position particulière en terme de coopération transfrontalière. Depuis 1996 et l’intégration des frontières maritimes dans les programmes de coopération le Département s’implique dans des coopérations avec le Sud Est de l’Angleterre.

Pour autant, la perception de l’Angleterre, liée précisément à la frontière maritime, oscille entre un sentiment d’admiration et de circonspection reflétant de la complexité de la relation franco-britannique. La dimension transfrontalière reste dans la Somme très éloignée des préoccupations quotidiennes des habitants du département à la différence de départements disposant de frontières terrestres où la dimension « transfrontalière » est réelle, parfois vécue au quotidien notamment par les travailleurs circulant régulièrement de part et d’autres de la frontière.

Sur la période 2014-2020, de nouvelles capacités et opportunités de coopération se font jour alors même que les programmes Interreg constituent souvent un premier niveau de coopération européenne. Ainsi la Somme sera le seul département en France avec le Pas de Calais à être pleinement éligible à trois programmes de coopération transfrontalière : soit les programmes INTERREG VA France Manche Angleterre, 2 Mers et France Wallonie Flandres.

Au titre des programmes de coopération transfrontalière franco-britannique Interreg France-Manche-Angleterre et 2 Mers de nombreux projets ont été soutenus par le...
Le projet Great War

Description :

Le projet « Grande Guerre entre les lignes » vise à améliorer l’accès au patrimoine de la Grande Guerre grâce à une offre touristique améliorée dans les pays partenaires impliqués. Il apportera des retombées économiques fortes dans la zone des 2 Mers et ce par : l’utilisation de ce patrimoine comme un héritage social et culturel de la Grande Guerre et la coopération transfrontalière. Les partenaires se sont réunis pour participer à la réalisation des objectifs suivants :

- Développer un réseau d’intervenants ayant des connaissances complémentaires sur la Grande Guerre et établir des liens et de la coordination entre les sites et musées de la Grande Guerre (ressources, programmes),
- Développer et soutenir le tourisme de mémoire,
- Échanger les bonnes pratiques et les expériences dans le champ du tourisme patrimonial,
- Améliorer l’accessibilité au patrimoine et aux sites patrimoniaux. Offrir aux touristes et aux visiteurs des sites et des services de qualité,
- Préparer ensemble les commémorations et le Centenaire du commencement de la Grande Guerre,

Chef de file : Conseil général du Pas de Calais

Autres partenaires :

- LP (Lead partner): Conseil général du Pas-de-Calais (CG62)
- Pas-de-Calais Tourism (ADRT62)
- Ville de Montreuil (Pas de Calais)
- Ville d’Etaples (Pas-de-Calais)
- Province de Flandre Occidentale (PFO) (the part of the city of Poperinge has been incorporated in the proposal of the PFO)
- Westtoer

CDT Somme (CDT80)
- Historial de Péronne (Somme)
- Conseil général de la Somme
- Conseil général du Nord (CG59)
- Comité départemental du tourisme du Nord (CDT59)
- Conseil général de l’Aisne (CG02)
- Agence de développement et de réservation touristique de l’Aisne (ADRT02)
- Musée de Brighton
- Cambridgeshire County council (CCC)
- Province d’Anvers

Lieux de réalisation : Nord, Pas de Calais, Somme, Province de Flandre occidentale, Brighton, Cambridgeshire, Anvers

Date de début du projet : 1.02.2010 Date de fin : 30.09.2014

Montant total budget : 6 326 052 €
Montant FEDER : 3 163 026 €

Contact : Hélène Blanc
Chargée de développement culturel
Territoire Montreuillois et Terrois
Chargée du tourisme de mémoire
Direction de la Culture
Conseil général du Pas-de-Calais
03.21.21.47.22 (ligne directe)
07.62.69.65.88 (portable)

Le projet 1914 FACES 2014

Description :

A travers une approche transdisciplinaire et transfrontalière, le projet SCAR-FACE a pour but de valoriser les connaissances relatives aux mutilés de la Grande Guerre pour diffuser cette mémoire au public, notamment aux jeunes, et ainsi favoriser l’intégration et la compréhension du handicap de la défiguration.

Chef de file : Institut Faire Faces

Autres partenaires :

- Historical de la Grande Guerre/ Centre de Recherche de l'Historial
- Université de Picardie - Jules Verne
- Conseil général de la Somme
- University of Exeter

Lieux de réalisation : Picardie, Devon

Date de début du projet : 02 11 2012 Date de fin : 30 06 15

Montant total budget : 1 905 482,61 €
Montant FEDER : 952 741,30 €

Contact: Philippe Duprat
Institut Faire Faces
CHU Amiens-Picardie
p.duprat@metispartners.fr
CYCLE WEST : Côte à côte à vélo

Hélène Marlot, Affaires européennes et coopération territoriale, Basse-Normandie

Le projet CYCLE WEST : c'est plus de 1 000 kilomètres de vélos routes sûres et agréables traversant la Bretagne, la Normandie et le Sud-Ouest de l'Angleterre. Ce projet touristique européen destiné aux amateurs de cyclisme et piloté par le Comité régional du Tourisme de Bretagne (CRT), comporte 17 partenaires français et anglais.

Lancé en 2010, CYCLE WEST – pour Cycling channel landscapes easily – a pour but d'unir la Bretagne et la Normandie au Sud-Ouest de l'Angleterre grâce à un réseau cyclable continu.

Trois itinéraires sur mesure sont proposés aux amateurs de tourisme à vélo et de paysages.

Le « Tour de Manche », long de 635 km de Roscoff à Cherbourg, s'adresse avant tout aux cyclistes sportifs. Empruntant l’itinéraire cyclable européen EV4 (France - Ukraine) le long du littoral français, il s'étend sur l'ensemble des territoires des partenaires et offre une perspective unique sur les paysages maritimes. Il traverse des sites naturels comme la baie de Morlaix, la côte de Granit Rose, la baie du Mont Saint Michel du côté français et la côte jurassique du côté britannique.

Plus court, la boucle « Petit Tour de Manche » présente deux sites classés au patrimoine mondial de l’UNESCO : le Mont Saint-Michel et la côte jurassique du Dorset. L’itinéraire traverse des sites naturels tel que les dunes et les marécages protégés du parc naturel régional du Cotentin et du Bessin et propose une escale à Jersey. Le Petit Tour de Manche peut être parcouru sur une dizaine de jour dans son intégralité.

Enfin, le parcours « la Velodyssee » , longue de 438 kilomètres emprunte l’itinéraire cyclable européen EV1 (Portugal/Norvège). Le projet a participé à au prolongement de la Velodysée pour la partie bretonne : depuis Redon, elle longe le Canal de Nantes à Brest avant de remonter vers Roscoff.

CYCLE, c’est aussi la sensibilisation et la mobilisation des professionnels du tourisme (prestataires, organismes locaux, offices de tourisme…). Des éductours leur sont proposés afin de faire connaître les destinations des territoires concernés et les attentes spécifiques du tourisme à vélo. Des séminaires techniques leurs permettent aussi d'échanger des informations entre techniciens sur les méthodes et matériaux de construction utilisés de part et d'autre de la Manche.

Le coût du projet a été de 8 millions d'euros sur 3 ans, comprenant tant la coordination que l’investissement, la coordination et la communication. Ce projet INTERREG IV A France (Manche)-Angleterre a été financé à 50% par le fonds européen de développement régional (FEDER). 5 millions d’euros d’investissement ont été nécessaires pour aménager les routes et voies cyclables parmi lesquelles la rénovation du viaduc « Parfond du Gouët » franchissant la vallée du Gouët entre Plérin et Pordic, la création d’une voie verte en baie du Mont st Michel, la mise en sécurité de la traversée de Josselin, par la création d’un chemin de halage et l’aménagement d’une voie existante et bien d’autre. Du côté anglais, le plus gros investissement a été la construction du Pont Gwent entre Plymouth et Ilfracombe.

Pour plus d’informations et d’illustrations sur le projet : http://www.cycle-west.com/fr

Témoignage de Jennifer CHICOTYNEAU de LAVALETTE, Région Basse-Normandie, partenaire du projet CYCLE WEST

“CYCLE WEST est un projet fédérateur. C’est un enrichissement pour tous les partenaires de se confronter à d’autres méthodes de travail et de construire ensemble. Travailler à 17 partenaires ce n’est pas toujours facile mais c’est ce qui rend le projet intéressant. Nous avons su trouver des intérêts et des objectifs en commun : c’est ce qui conditionne la réussite d’un projet. S’insérer dans un projet d’une période d’au moins 3 ans c’est instaurer des liens : de partenaire à partenaire, de technicien à technicien…. La coordination peut être très lourde, il ne faut pas la sous-estimer. Mais l’apport des fonds européens nous a permis de nous doter de moyens pour assurer la coordination.

Au bout de 3 années, le projet CYCLE WEST a donc réussi à faire émerger 3 grands itinéraires. Le projet se termine mais ce n’est que le début pour ces parcours : le cyclo tourisme est en plein essor. C’est un réel enjeu pour les territoires tant sur le plan économique (un cycliste dépense environ 69 euros par jour) que sur le plan du développement durable.”
Wetlands matter for several reasons. Apart from being areas of great natural beauty and wonderful places for wildlife, wetlands can also help to protect people and property from the effects of increased rainfall and sea level rise by storing flood waters and slowing the rate at which flood water flows; they help to filter and clean our water supplies and – especially peat bogs – are increasingly appreciated as vital carbon stores, locking up greenhouse gas emissions which contribute to climate change.

The effects of wetland fragmentation and external pressures are felt by wetlands and their communities on both sides of the Channel. French and English wetlands face similar issues, have common issues and goals, and will need to look for similar solutions. A lack of recognition of the economic value of wetlands, coupled with a lack of understanding and engagement from communities with the natural environment, is leading to loss of habitat and ecosystems, and a lost opportunity to fully develop an appropriate economy around these natural assets. Supporting farmers in developing skills and opportunities to benefit their businesses, wetland wildlife and the rural economy will thereby help maintain and restore the natural functions of wetlands, and enable them to continue to deliver these services at a time when demand for them is ever increasing.

The WOW partnership brings together large amounts of experience, and the English and French partners provide complementary skills to the project. The groups also have connections either directly or indirectly with research organisations that can assist in developing and supporting wetland farming expertise to create the conditions for sustainable wetland management, and the project includes the direct participation of the “grassland ecology” team of the University of Caen.

The main aim of the project is to achieve a step-change in understanding and collaboration between the land, water and nature management sectors and the people who live in, work in, and visit the area, to help deliver long-term and sustainable solutions to the management of wetlands. Partners from both sides of the channel are pooling the efforts of their staff and funding on this project to provide solutions and methodologies that have application beyond the remit of any single partner or group of partners in any one country.

Through joint working and collaboration, and exchange of best practice, the project will:

* Engage with landowners to develop economically sound businesses that best combine commercial practices with wetland farming.
* Help establish wetland conservation as a respected, cost-effective tool that can be used to provide society with a range of benefits such as cleaner water, better protection from the effects of drought and floods, carbon storage and food supply.
* Provide a sound monitoring and evaluation network which will allow the effects of landscape-scale interventions to be recorded, analysed and improved.
* Increase the local communities and visitors understanding of the benefits of wetland conservation.

This will lead to:

* Better understanding of how to deliver economically and environmentally sustainable farming businesses in the wetlands
* Increases in biodiversity, in tandem with increases in the rural affluence and economic sustainability of rural communities.
* Joint programme of events
* Creation of long term partnerships

http://www.valueofworkingwetlands.com
Insertion sociale et économique par le biais de l’emploi

Hélène Marlot, Affaires européennes et coopération territoriale, Basse-Normandie

IMPRESS est un projet européen franco-britannique œuvrant pour offrir un accompagnement post-emploi efficace en développant des compétences à la fois pour les employés et les employeurs.

IMPRESS, pour Innovative and Meaningful Post Recruitment Employment Support Services, est né dans un contexte où les enjeux de performance individuelle et collective sont croissants et où l’intégration durable dans l’entreprise est un élément clé de sécurisation tant pour l’employeur que pour le salarié.

Il existe déjà des organismes qui fournissent un soutien aux personnes sans emploi pour leur permettre de réintégrer le marché du travail, cependant, ces personnes peuvent avoir également des difficultés pour faire face aux changements multiples de leur vie et ainsi maintenir l’emploi qu’ils auraient récemment trouvé. C’est pourquoi, en 2012 des organismes anglais et français, dans le cadre du programme européen INTERREG IV A France (Manche) – Angleterre, se sont réunis afin de rassembler leurs expériences, leurs forces et leurs expertises pour fournir un soutien à l’employé et à l’employeur.

Du côté salarié, le projet s’est traduit par de nombreuses actions dont la création d’un réseau d’intégration durable réunissant des acteurs de l’accompagnement sur la base du volontariat, par l’échange de personnels et de développement des compétences à un niveau transnational, par l’accompagnement renforcé dans l’emploi de salariés (jusqu’à 9 mois), la réalisation et diffusion d’un guide de la « bonne intégration » à destinations des salariés…

Du coté des employeurs, des organisations d’ateliers collectifs ont eu lieu mais aussi la réalisation et la diffusion d’un guide de la « bonne intégration » pour les employeurs ou encore l’accompagnement méthodologique d’entreprises de tous les secteurs…

Pour financer ces actions, le projet a été à 50 % par le Fonds Européens de Développement Régional (FEDER) soit 2,5 millions d’euros pour un coût total d’environ 5 millions.

Témoignage de salarié :

Ce fut d’abord une surprise de découvrir cette approche et il est vrai que je n’avais jamais rencontré cela chez mes précédents employeurs.

Nouvelle et seule sur la fonction que j’occupe, j’ai pu ainsi être accompagnée dans l’affirmation de mon statut. J’ai apprécié ces temps d’écoute qui, en plus de valoriser la place et le rôle de chaque salarié dans notre équipe, nous permettent de prendre du recul, d’analyser nos pratiques professionnelles et de mettre en place des réponses individuelles au service du collectif.

Cela a également permis de développer une dynamique de structure qui permet de désamorcer et d’anticiper des conflits potentiellement naissants dans l’équipe.”

Témoignage des dirigeants :
“La démarche d’accompagnement à l’intégration nous a paru très intéressante dans le cadre de l’ouverture de notre structure : une crèche d’entreprise aux horaires atypiques 06h00-22h00.

Le fait que l’intervenant en charge de cette démarche comprenne nos valeurs et attentes nous a incités à nous lancer dans cette expérimentation. La fréquence et le rythme adaptés, des interventions, ainsi que le respect de notre organisation nous a totalement séduits. Aujourd’hui, nous souhaitons poursuivre l’expérimentation et modéliser cette pratique qui, nous en sommes convaincus, apporte une valorisation importante à chacun de nos salariés.”

Hélène Marlot, Affaires européennes et coopération territoriale, Basse-Normandie
ACADEMY-INDUSTRY COOPERATION ON BOTH SIDES OF THE CHANNEL

CONTEXT

Molecular Chemistry is an underpinning discipline that is crucial for the rapid development of many applied high technology commercial sectors (medicines, new materials, cosmetics…). The AI-Chem channel project affords many benefits to academic and industrial researchers on both sides of the Channel.

The A-I Chem Channel project has been selected in the context of the INTERREG IVA France (Channel) – England European cross-border co-operation programme, which is co-financed by the ERDF.

OBJECTIVES

The A-I Chem Channel project aims to create a unique international scientific environment based on university-industry partnerships in molecular chemistry leading to knowledge development and transfer. It creates new opportunities for collaboration either side of the Channel, giving unparalleled access to highly trained personnel equipped with a range of skills and expertise.

ACTIONS

The project will be implemented through three main actions:

• Action 1: Stimulate cross-channel Public-Private cooperation supported by innovation agencies
• Action 2: Research and training in cooperation with industrialists
• Action 3: Explore the prospect of creating new start-up companies supported by local ‘incubators’.

MESSAGE

The A-I Chem Channel project, which associates establishments of higher education, innovation agencies, incubators, technopôles and enterprises, was launched on the 25th of October 2013 in Rouen. The project aims at creating a unique international scientific environment based on university-industry partnerships in molecular chemistry leading to knowledge development and transfer.

One of the main actions of the project aims at stimulating cross-channel Public-Private cooperation, supported by innovation agencies. This action has been realized through the setting up of gateways and seminars between enterprises and universities. They are a good opportunity for the project laboratories and industrialists to meet and discuss further collaboration. A first gateway took place in Caen in October 2013 on 2 topics: “How to improve synthetic methodologies ?” and “Promising technologies for the manufacture and synthesis of active molecules.” And a second gateway was organized in Norwich on the 2nd and 3rd of July 2014 on two different topics: “New Scaffolds for drug discovery, diagnostics and beyond” and “Analysis, Biolabelling technologies and biomaterials”.

Furthermore, courses and lectures were organized in July 2013, October 2013 and June 2014, as well as internal seminars for the students funded by the project. These autumn and spring schools emphasize on training for innovation and creation of start-ups through conferences given by industrialists. The students also have the opportunity to present their research work through micro-talks and poster sessions.

Finally, the research and training activities include the recruitment of young researchers on short or long-term scientific projects, as well as the placement of Master students in companies and laboratories of the partner country. About a hundred Master’s students, PhD, PhD+ and PDRAs altogether are funded or partly funded by the project within the consortium. This enables them to have access to the equipment they need and proceed efficiently in their research work. Today, the A-I CHem Channel has enabled PDRAs to collaborate with industrialists in the frame of their research, and open the way into creating their own company.

NEXT EVENTS:

• A-I CHem Channel Autumn school : 15/16th of September 2014 in Southampton (UK)
• Closing event : February 2015 in Caen (France)
Programme franco-britannique en Bretagne

Pierre Karleskind, Vice-Président du Conseil régional de Bretagne chargé de l’Europe, de la mer et du littoral

Depuis 2007 la Bretagne est impliquée dans la coopération transfrontalière européenne. Elle a ainsi développé et pérennisé des relations fructueuses avec les territoires du sud de l’Angleterre, ses plus proches voisins européens à travers la frontière maritime que constitue la Manche. Fin 2013, la Bretagne se place au premier rang des régions françaises éligibles, tant en montant FEDER attribué qu’en nombre de structures bénéficiaires du programme.

La dimension maritime a constitué un enjeu particulier pour ce dispositif. Entre les zones littorales françaises et britanniques, la relation transfrontalière n’apparaît pas aussi facilement qu’entre des territoires séparés par une frontière terrestre. Le rapprochement des initiatives et des dynamiques locales doit dépasser non seulement les différences organisationnelles et culturelles, mais également les contraintes d’accessibilité engendrées par la géographie.

Composantes incontournables des dynamiques territoriales bretonnes, les problématiques maritimes et littorales, élargies aux régions françaises et anglaises bordant la même mer, offrent la possibilité de développer des réponses concertées et plus efficaces à certains défis communs. Ces territoires ont pu ainsi mettre en pratique le slogan adopté par le programme franco-britannique, qui présente la Manche comme un trait d’union plutôt qu’une séparation territoriales bretonnes, les problématiques maritimes et littorales, élargies aux régions françaises et anglaises bordant la même mer, offrent la possibilité de développer des réponses concertées et plus efficaces à certains défis communs. Ces territoires ont pu ainsi mettre en pratique le slogan adopté par le programme franco-britannique, qui présente la Manche comme un trait d’union plutôt qu’une séparation.

Dans le champ maritime, les partenaires bretons se sont impliqués dans des initiatives portant sur des sujets très divers, mais majoritairement orientés vers la gestion de l’environnement marin et littoral, dont les dynamiques ne s’arrêtent pas aux frontières administratives, et pour lequel une approche commune présente une valeur ajoutée évidente.

Le projet MARINEUS pilote par la station biologique de Roscoff a ainsi permis l’élaboration de programmes et d’outils conjoints de recherche et de diffusion de la culture scientifique sur l’environnement marin, fournissant aux gestionnaires, au grand public et aux scolaires une information actualisée sur l’état des écosystèmes ainsi que sur l’impact des activités humaines sur les ressources naturelles de la Manche.

Cette initiative associe des organismes de recherche maritime de Bretagne et du Devon, des établissements de vulgarisation scientifique, ainsi que des opérateurs de transport maritime (Brittany Ferries), pour diffuser des connaissances et sensibiliser différents publics.

Dans un autre registre, le développement des énergies marines renouvelables est à l’origine de différentes initiatives, et notamment le projet MERIFIC, impliquant un partenariat breton élargi : Conseil général du Finistère, Parc marin d’Iroise, Pôle de compétitivité Mer, technopole de Brest, IFREMER, Bretagne Développement Innovation. Associant des partenaires de Cornouailles et du Devon, le projet a identifié les opportunités et problèmes spécifiques auxquels sont confrontés les territoires insulaires et périphériques en matière énergétique, proposant des outils conjoints facilitant l’exploitation du potentiel de ces zones (évaluation de l’impact environnemental, acceptabilité sociale, bonnes pratiques en matière d’achat pour les entreprises, cartographie des infrastructures et sites d’essais, annuaire des organisations du secteur).

La sensibilisation et la formation aux métiers de la mer sont également des sujets de travail franco-britannique, notamment au travers du projet Channel Marine Academy. Celui-ci vise à améliorer l’employabilité des jeunes résidant dans les zones littorales, en développant l’information sur les opportunités offertes par les professions maritimes, notamment dans le secteur du nautisme. Cette initiative associe des structures d’accompagnement en matière de formation professionnelle et d’emploi, des acteurs de la filière nautique et des entreprises dans la création d’un réseau transfrontalier permettant une plus grande coopération entre les intervenants du secteur, notamment entre employeurs et établissements de formation.

En dehors de la dimension maritime, les territoires bretons se sont saisis avec nos voisins d’outre-Manche d’autres opportunités de coopération.

On peut citer, parmi les projets emblématiques, l’initiative CYCLE West, rassemblant une quinzaine de partenaires de Bretagne, Basse-Normandie, Cornouailles, Devon et Dorset, sous le pilotage du Comité régional du Tourisme de Bretagne. Le projet a permis de développer et promouvoir un réseau de routes cyclables et voies vertes reliant les territoires français et britanniques grâce à l’aménagement de sections manquantes ou dangereuses, l’amélioration de l’intermodalité lors des liaisons transmanche, ainsi que la création et la promotion de véritables produits touristiques transfrontaliers (« Tours de Manche » notamment).

On pourrait évoquer de nombreuses autres initiatives d’acteurs bretons, notamment dans les domaines de la culture et du patrimoine, développés de façon active à travers des projets conjoints de création artistique, de technologies numériques pour le cinéma, ou encore de valorisation du patrimoine archéologique sous-marin.

A l’heure où la démarche européenne est parfois jugée éloignée des réalités locales, l’implication active de la Bretagne dans le programme transfrontalier illustre bien les bénéfices de la coopération et la valeur ajoutée d’une approche plus intégrée des espaces européens, dépassant les limites et les barrières formées par les frontières nationales et même les obstacles naturels.

La préparation du dispositif transfrontalier 2014-2020 actuellement en cours identifie à nouveau des enjeux communs justifiant la poursuite de cette coopération sur des sujets tels que l’innovation, l’énergie et l’économie bas-carbone, l’environnement, le patrimoine ou l’inclusion sociale. La Bretagne entend bien s’investir de façon tout aussi dynamique dans ce nouveau programme.
A common territory for fast-tracking MRE projects

The European project Channel MOR seeks to support businesses in accessing MRE markets and to provide the Channel area with greater networking opportunities. This project, involving 12 French and English partners, is being developed under the Interreg IV A programme France (Channel) – England.

The regions of the Channel area have many strengths in common that can be harnessed to produce a valuable MRE hub. There is a large potential market (e.g. Channel and North & Ireland Sea), and the quality of natural resources (strong currents, high waves, strong and regular winds, long coastline…) provides an ecosystem ideal for developing MRE.

Channel MOR aims to identify and share knowledge regarding the requirements of businesses, the obstacles encountered and facilitate meetings and exchanges.

The partners’ roles involve:
• Pooling and strategically analysing the data, knowledge, and tools developed by the constituent projects and identifying any significant gaps
• Agreeing the common database set that combines the knowledge and expertise of the project’s constituent MRE projects (usability by MRE stakeholders)
• Developing a set of decision tools that will help decision makers to commit more in MRE sector

Length of project: The project started in January 2014 and will end in January 2015.

Forthcoming events: Channel MOR will have a stand at the Sea Tech Week in Brest (France) on 15th and 16th October and will organise a workshop and international B2B meetings.

Contact: Hélène Morin
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European Project Manager
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The partners of the CHANNEL MOR project
The Atlantic salmon is widely distributed within the EU, ranging from Portugal in the south to Sweden and Finland in the north. In the early 20th century they were so abundant that servants who worked on country estates had a clause written into their contract that they would not be forced to eat salmon more than three times a week. Today, the numbers of Atlantic salmon returning to our rivers have declined by some 70% since the 1980s and are designated as in need of protection under Annex II of the EU Habitat Directive. They also form the basis of many EU designated Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)’s. Angling for salmon supports a multi-million euro tourism industry throughout Northern Europe and they are an important biological indicator of the health of rivers and streams.

The salmon’s life cycle is complex, they spawn in rivers and streams and the young fish commonly spend between one to four years living in freshwater until they migrate to sea as ‘smolts’ weighing between 13–30g (depending on Latitude). The young fish migrate to feeding grounds in the north Atlantic around Greenland and the Faroe Islands, before returning as mature adults to spawn in their natal river weighing between 3–14kg after spending between one and three years in the sea respectively.

The reason for the Atlantic salmon decline is unclear. Some suggest that climatic changes have moved or reduced the quality of their Atlantic feeding grounds and affected their survival in freshwater. Agricultural intensification and urban development, freshwater pollution, and dam construction (that restricts their access to spawning areas), afforestation (that limits freshwater primary production by shading) and their by-catch in commercial fisheries have all been mentioned as potential causes of their decline. To better understand the drivers of these changes requires the collection of long-term data of both adult and juvenile stages of salmon.

MorFish is a collaborative project between the Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust (GWCT) a private UK based research charity and the Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique’s (INRA) a French Government research agency. The project is part-funded by the EU Interreg IVA Channel programme area.

The project aims to better understand the reasons for the decline in numbers of Atlantic salmon and improve monitoring of their populations on the rivers Frome in Dorset UK, Scorff in Brittany and Oir in Normandy. Understanding the reasons for Atlantic salmon population declines involves modelling of up to 40 years of data on adult salmon abundance in these rivers held by the GWCT and INRA and up to 20 years of migrating juvenile salmon data. These models compare a number of explanatory variables that are affected by climate, such as river flow and temperature. In addition, the project is investigating reasons for changes in salmon growth and survival at sea.

To improve monitoring of salmon populations, the project enables the purchase of sophisticated scientific equipment for monitoring salmon using Passive Integrated Transponder tags (PIT). These tags are around the size of a grain of rice and are inserted into juvenile salmon. The tags provide an individual code for each fish which can be read by a hand held scanner or PIT tag readers positioned in the river when fish swim past. This technology is being installed in all three rivers to improve and harmonise the data collected.

The work undertaken by the GWCT and INRA feeds into a network of ‘Index’ rivers around Europe which report to their respective Governments and then to the International Council for the Exploration of the Seas (ICES), which advises the Government on the current status of Atlantic salmon stocks and their management.

For further information about the MorFish project please go to www.morfish.org.uk or email us at morfish@gwct.org.uk
The concept of co-operation between Member States’ governments in civil justice matters was established over 50 years ago. Prior to EU legislation, cross-border co-operation was achieved through a network of multi- and bilateral agreements between Member States. In 1968 the European Economic Community Member States agreed the Brussels Convention providing for mutual recognition and enforcement of civil and commercial judgments.

In 1971, the signatory States to the Brussels Convention agreed a Protocol providing for the European Court of Justice (ECJ) to have jurisdiction to interpret the Convention. In 1980, the Member States also signed the Rome Convention on contractual choice of law. A Protocol to this Convention also conferred limited jurisdiction on the ECJ and was eventually signed by all acceding Member States.

In 1992, Member States agreed the Treaty on European Union (TEU), also known as the Treaty of Maastricht. The TEU provided that civil judicial co-operation was in the Member States’ “common interest” in helping to achieve the “free movement of persons” in the new EU (Article K.1).

Title VI of the TEU “Provisions on Co-operation in the Fields of Justice and Home Affairs” encompassing civil judicial co-operation was placed in the so-called “third pillar” which established co-operation in certain fields. Title VI allowed the Council for example, to adopt “joint actions” and draw up conventions which it could recommend to Member States.

But the institutions of the EU did not yet have competence to legislate in this field. Measures in the field of civil judicial co-operation therefore remained largely a matter for intergovernmental co-operation agreement between Member States.

The Treaty of Amsterdam was agreed by Member States in 1997 and entered into force in 1999 and it gave the European Community the competence to legislate in the field of civil judicial co-operation by inserting a new provision, Article 65, into the Treaty Establishing the European Community (TEC). The Treaty of Amsterdam also provided that legislative measures taken under Article 65 were subject to adjudication by the ECJ, subject to certain limitations (Article 68(1)).

The European Council held a special meeting in Tampere on the creation of an area of freedom, security and justice in the EU. The results of that meeting the Tampere Conclusions stated that the European Council was determined to develop the EU as an area of freedom, security and justice by making full use of the possibilities offered by the Treaty of Amsterdam.

They stated that individuals should be able to approach courts and authorities in any EU country as easily as in their own and that the principle of mutual recognition should become the cornerstone of judicial co-operation in both civil and criminal matters.

Since Tampere, the objective has been that the closer co-operation between the courts and authorities of EU countries should help to eliminate any obstacles caused by different legal systems in each Member State.

Since the entry into force of the Treaty of Amsterdam, the European Union has adopted several instruments in the field of judicial co-operation in civil and commercial matters. This is attributable to a desire by both the Member States and the institutions of the European Union to work on an area that is particularly important in the area of justice, with implications for the everyday life of citizens and businesses in Europe.

The Treaty of Lisbon amended the TEU and replaced the TEC with Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU). It entered into force on 1 December 2009. These Treaties set out the way in which the EU functions and provide the legal basis and competence for the EU to take action and propose legislation at a European level.

The European Union has set itself the objective of maintaining and developing an area of freedom, security and justice, inter alia, by facilitating access to justice, in particular through the principle of mutual trust and mutual recognition. In order to establish progressively such an area, the European Union should adopt, amongst other things, the measures relating to judicial co-operation in civil matters having cross-border implications which are necessary for the sound operation of the internal market. Civil judicial co-operation provides a framework to help relevant parties, legal representatives and national courts know which Member State’s jurisdiction is responsible for determining cases, know which Member State’s law applies, have effective mechanisms to allow judgments from one Member State to be recognised and enforced in another and ensure effective co-operation between courts in different Member States.

The EU’s competence to legislate in the field of civil and judicial co-operation is established in, and essentially defined by, Article 81 of the TFEU. As we can read in article 81 of the TFEU, the Union shall develop judicial co-operation in civil matters having cross-border implications, based on the principle of mutual recognition of judgments and of decisions in extrajudicial cases.

Such co-operation may include the adoption of measures for the approximation of the laws and regulations of the Member States. For the purposes of this paragraph, the European Parliament and the Council, acting in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure, shall adopt measures, particularly when necessary for the proper functioning of the internal market, aimed at ensuring:

1. the mutual recognition and enforcement between Member States of judgments and of decisions in extrajudicial cases;
2. the cross-border service of judicial and extrajudicial documents;
3. the compatibility of the rules applicable in the Member States concerning conflict of laws and of jurisdiction;
4. co-operation in the taking of evidence;
5. effective access to justice;
6. the elimination of obstacles to the proper functioning of civil proceedings, if necessary by promoting the compatibility of
Judicial Co-operation in Civil and Commercial Matters in the EU (Cont’d)

of the rules on civil procedure applicable in the Member States;
7. the development of alternative methods of dispute settlement;
8. support for the training of the judiciary and judicial staff.

Measures concerning family law with cross-border implications shall be established by the Council, acting in accordance with a special legislative procedure. The Council shall act unanimously after consulting the European Parliament.

Two protocols annexed to the treaties relate to the extent of the territorial scope for instruments.

The first is the Protocol on the position of the United Kingdom and Ireland. In accordance with that protocol, those Member States do not participate in the adoption of acts relating to judicial co-operation in civil matters except where, within a period of 3 months, one or other of those Member States notifies the President of the Council in writing that it wishes to take part in the adoption and application of any such proposed measure.

If this notification is not given, one or other of these Member States may, at any time after the adoption of a measure, notify its intention to the Council and the Commission that it wishes to accept that measure. Experience has shown that both the United Kingdom and Ireland have decided to be involved in a significant number of instruments in the field of judicial co-operation in civil matters.

The second protocol concerns the position of Denmark. In accordance with that protocol, Denmark does not take part in the adoption of measures relating to judicial co-operation in civil matters. However, Denmark may at any time, in accordance with its constitutional requirements, notify the other Member States that it wishes to apply in full all relevant measures then in force in the area of judicial co-operation in civil and commercial matters.

In view of this particular situation, two bilateral agreements have been concluded between the European Union and Denmark, one regarding the matters covered by the regulation on jurisdiction and the recognition and enforcement of judgments in civil and commercial matters and the other regarding matters covered by the regulation on the service of judicial and extrajudicial documents in civil or commercial matters.

The European Union has adopted a range of acts in the area of civil judicial co-operation relating to family and commercial law. These are:

- Regulation (EC) No 593/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 2008 on the law applicable to contractual obligations (Rome I);
- Council Regulation (EU) No 1259/2010 of 20 December 2010 implementing enhanced co-operation in the area of the law applicable to divorce and legal separation;
- Regulation (EC) No 1393/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 November 2007 on the service in the Member States of judicial and extrajudicial documents in civil or commercial matters (service of documents);
- Council Regulation (EC) No 1206/2001 of 28 May 2001 on co-operation between the courts of the Member States in the taking of evidence in civil or commercial matters;
- Council regulation (EC) No 1346/2000 of 29 May 2000 on insolvency proceedings;
Why Felipe VI’s Behaviour will be Crucial for Spain’s Foreign Affairs

By Alejandro Barón, Researcher, FRIDE

Last month, Spain witnessed one of the most significant and unexpected changes in its political arena since Franco’s death: the abdication of (now former) King Juan Carlos I and the subsequent succession process which brought his son, now Felipe VI, to the throne.

In the eyes of the international media, this was mostly seen as a direct consequence of the weakening position of the former King due to corruption cases and lingering health problems, however bearing no relevant political implications. Is this last statement accurate? If not, how will this change affect Spanish Foreign Policy with some regions and countries of the world?

A preliminary reading of the Constitution suggests that the succession process is mandated to be a mere transfer of formal powers from the departing King to the new one. However, this refers not only to internal political affairs, but is also recurrent in all Spanish foreign policy-related issues. Furthermore, article 56 of the 1978 Spanish Constitution declares that “the King (...) assumes the highest representation of the Spanish State in international relations, especially with the nations of its historical community”. This article builds on the long-standing tradition in Spanish politics where the figure of the King is perceived as a symbolic actor in diplomatic and external affairs. This is especially true since the end of the Francoist dictatorship and its nationalistic isolationism.

Beyond the scrutiny of legal formulas, other points should also be welcomed. Symbolic functions can be completed with proactive positions. A disengaged diplomat may fulfill his symbolic duties without bringing any added value to his action, and vice versa. Therefore, in the legal framework attributed to the Spanish King, personal skills make a great difference.

Thus, for the new King, maximizing his function as first diplomat of the country is a synonym for becoming the best possible middleman between Spain and other countries. In this ever-changing world where harsh realism rules across the board, being a good intermediary requires outstanding social skills and top-level reliable friends at hand in the five continents.

For more than 35 years, Juan Carlos has proved that his main asset was his well-stocked agenda of contacts, which he himself partially built, and a sharp quality for tying up diplomacy with political and economic interests. For most observers, both were a perfect fit to the strategic foreign policy priorities set up during the late Francoist era (tardofranquismo), which were kept mostly unchanged during Spain’s renewed democracy.

Back then, key concerns were the convergence with the European Community; Atlanticism; and increasing the diplomatic and commercial presence in Latin America and the MENA region. However, Juan Carlos opened new paths, such as Central Asia and Far East Asia in the early 90s.

Recently, budgetary cuts in the Spanish diplomacy and foreign affairs departments have down-scaled Spanish diplomatic and political presence in the international sphere, and fostered a more business-oriented foreign policy agenda. The MENA and Central Asian regions still offer great potential to grow in this perspective, and both regions indeed appear to be a good test for the new King.
More concretely, Morocco and Kazakhstan will be sizable yardsticks to evaluate at first hand the action of the new King, beside recurrent objections to having such friends from a growing within the Spanish society.

Morocco and Spain are long life partners. Hassan II and Juan Carlos I even called each other “brothers”. After Spain’s shameful episode of the belated decolonization in the Western Sahara, mutual relations were based on a set of shared security concerns and a rhetoric sense of neighbourhood, but not without tensions. In the last 20 years, illegal immigration and jihadist terrorism have topped the concerns of both countries, while Ceuta and Melilla were always in the spotlight as potential sources of dissent.

However, in recent years, Spain and Morocco have deepened their commercial ties. Between 1995 and 2012, Spanish exports to Morocco grew six fold. In 2012, Spain was Morocco’s second destination of exports (16.5% of all Spanish exports) and overcame France as its first import provider (with 13.2% of Moroccan imports). Although remaining strong, the concerns of both countries, while Ceuta and Melilla were always in the spotlight as potential sources of dissent.

This rising commercial interdependency was symbolised in political terms in July 2013. A summit between both kings was accompanied by the biggest Spanish delegation ever travelling to a foreign country: nine ministers and more than thirty CEOs of the larger Spanish corporations attending.

Spain’s foreign affairs minister José Manuel García-Margallo even praised Mohammed VI as “the Juan Carlos of Morocco”, referring to the Bourbon’s track record as promoter of democracy in its own fiefdom. That said, the blossom of mutual trade and bilateral relations was not a consequence of the friendship between the two Kings, but rather a consequence of increased trade and other factors on both sides.

Spain’s foreign affairs minister José Manuel García-Margallo even praised Mohammed VI as “the Juan Carlos of Morocco”, referring to the Bourbon’s track record as promoter of democracy in its own fiefdom. That said, the blossom of mutual trade and bilateral relations was not a consequence of the friendship between the two Kings, but rather a consequence of increased trade and other factors on both sides.

This is similar to other cases, such as Algeria, and more distantly with Russia and Brazil. Morocco will be Felipe VI’s second official destination (after the Vatican), proving again its capital importance for Spain.

On the other side of the ring is Kazakhstan. Spain was one of the first European countries to recognize the former Soviet Republic and establish diplomatic relations with it in 1992. Embassies in both countries were opened in 1999. In the new century, during its presidency of the OSCE in 2007 Spain has promoted Kazakhstan’s bid to chair the organization; it praised Kazakhstan’s accession to the Human Rights Council of the UN in 2012; and openly tried to influence Latin American nations to vote for Astana as seat of the World Expo in 2017. Kazakhstan was also listed as key partner in the strategic documents Plan Asia 1, 2 and 3 of the Spanish MFA.

Leaders of both countries have repeatedly paid visits to each other, with the last meetings being hosted by Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy in February 2013 in Madrid, and by Kazakh president Nursultan Nazarbayev in Astana in October in the same year.

Why all this support from the Spanish side to the Central Asian Republic? The numbers tell us that trade is not yet the fundamental motive behind this love story, nor is FDI. Rather, it is the prospect of growing commercial relationships between Spain and Central Asia as a whole, making Kazakhstan so attractive to Spanish eyes.

The main motor behind this Spanish interest in Kazakhstan is the personal link between Nazarbayev and Juan Carlos, who personally fostered meetings between diplomats and businessmen on both sides.

One could even say that the relations between Spain and Kazakhstan have grown in parallel with the friendship between Nazarbayev and Juan Carlos.

Felipe VI’s main challenge in the coming years lies precisely in cultivating nascent friendships with key partners. They are the most valuable seed of human capital that could eventually trigger a growth of Spanish diplomatic and commercial relations everywhere in the world.

The new King should start by bolstering bilateral contacts with Asia (notably Indonesia and other ASEAN countries) and Africa (deepening existing ties with Nigeria and Angola). A King must represent a country; but on top of that, he must serve it actively.
EU Strategic Power in Ukraine

By Dr Kristi Raik, Senior Research Fellow at the Finnish Institute of International Affairs (FIIA)

The Ukraine crisis pushes the EU to acknowledge its strategic power in the neighbourhood

Ever since its creation in 2009, the EU’s Eastern Partnership was on a collision course with Russia’s goals in the ‘common neighbourhood’. Yet for many years, the EU pretended to ignore the Russian perspective on the region, while Russia pretended to ignore the EU agenda and pursued its own competing integration project, the Eurasian Union.

Perhaps Moscow was confident all along that it could eventually block the Eastern Partnership - which it did in Armenia. However, the crash came over Ukraine and continues to simmer, if not boil.

For the EU, this is not a struggle over who controls the common neighbourhood. The EU never had a shared geopolitical agenda for the Eastern neighbourhood. For some, above all Eastern member states, the geopolitical motivation to prevent Ukraine’s fall under Russian domination has played an important role, whereas others have been keen to highlight that Ukraine somehow naturally belongs to the Russian sphere of interest.

In spite of many attempts, the EU never managed to agree on granting Ukraine a prospect of membership, and such an agreement is unlikely to emerge in the foreseeable future. Although Moscow seems to build its Ukraine policy (including the annexation of Crimea) on the assumption of expansionism of the EU and NATO, neither of the two organisations is actually willing to enlarge to Ukraine.

Nevertheless, the Ukraine crisis has pushed the EU to defend its core principles and values. That is more compelling than the need to defend Ukraine, a country that has badly mismanaged its affairs since it became independent in 1991.

The EU and Russia continue to hold fundamentally different perspectives on Europe and on international order: in essence, it is about norms-based integration versus zero-sum competition; and about respect for national self-determination versus the rule of the strong. They also represent fundamentally different political systems, democracy and authoritarianism. The Ukrainians have proven that they are ready to risk their lives to defend their right to choose Europe, not merely as a foreign policy orientation but above all as a model for domestic development. The EU has had no choice but to support them, or else it would abandon its core ideals.

At the same time, the EU needs to become more aware of the (geo)strategic implications of its neighbourhood policy, and become more capable to deal with them. The core idea of Eastern Partnership is to extend the EU’s norms-based integration model to the neighbourhood. If successful, it will make the EU a more powerful actor in the region and even globally.

The EU has been at pains to underline that the policy is not directed against Russia. However, the Eastern Partnership policy, with its benign intentions and policies that respond to the expectations of the partner countries, provoked the worst confrontation between Russia and the West since the end of the Cold War.

No matter how many times the EU repeats that the Eastern Partnership does not harm Russia’s interests in the region, this is not how Moscow sees it. During the past years, the EU was seriously underestimating the determination of Russia to defend what it sees as its sphere of influence. The EU does not agree with the Russian viewpoint, and cannot accept it, but it should at least acknowledge that Russia defines its own national interests and it is not the EU’s job to define them.

The lesson to be learned is not to go back to Russia first policy or to abandon the Eastern neighbourhood, but to acknowledge that there is a conflict of interests, and to be ready to address it.

The EU has to keep aiming at a more cooperative agenda with Russia, but it also needs to be prepared to defend its partners in the region against further Russian retaliatory measures that are expected to follow the signature of Association Agreements with the EU, such as economic sanctions, problems with energy delivery, and support for separatism.

Another lesson to be learned is that the EU needs to be consistent in placing values at the top of its strategy. What happened during the last autumn, prior to the infamous Vilnius Summit, was that the EU was putting geopolitics above its declared goal to support democratic reforms in the Eastern neighbourhood. It was well known that president Viktor Yanukovych was destroying the democratic system of Ukraine (which was fragile to begin with). The horrendous scale of misuse of public funds, even by Ukrainian standards, was also known to the EU.

Nevertheless, the EU appeared eager to sign the association agreement with Yanukovych. It is hard after that to convince Russia or anybody else that the EU does not do geopolitics. It does, and that is unavoidable. But the crucial condition is that the motivations and instruments of the EU in extending its sphere of influence are qualitatively different from the Russian approach.
Reforming European Economic Policy

By Dr Peter Becker, Senior Associate, SWP

Today it seems that the public debt crisis in Europe is entering a new phase. The years of endless emergency summits deciding on substantial rescue packages have been replaced by preventive measures to stabilise the eurozone and to fight unemployment.

Financial markets calmed down after the famous announcement by Mario Draghi in London and the ECB’s bond-buying programme, and the danger of a crash of the eurozone has vanished. Without the ECB’s policy the speculations of global markets on the disintegration of the eurozone probably would have continued. The EU and the Euro area had to decide under heavy pressure and showed their strong commitment to rescuing the eurozone and the common currency.

But now growth is slowly returning in the European Union and economic recovery from recession is underway. The European Commission’s spring forecast estimates a real growth in GDP of 1.6% in the EU and 1.2% in the euro area in 2014 which will increase further in 2015 to 2.0% and 1.7% respectively. The countries in crisis exited their financial support programmes and returned to the sovereign bond markets at relatively low yields.

However, beside all debates about the reasons and the sources of the deep public debt crisis of the last years, macroeconomic imbalances in the eurozone still prevail and the competitiveness of some European economies is still not prepared to resist the challenges of globalisation.

The European economies have still not achieved pre-crisis level and it is obvious that the crisis made Europe much more divided than before. With regard to the member states, the national budgets are still not consolidated and public debts are still not acceptable.

And above all, one can argue that also in the future, financial markets will still tend to overshoot and to inflate new investment bubbles. In a nutshell, the European Union has to prepare now for the next crisis to come.

Since 2010 the EU and the eurozone have developed under conditions and pressure from the crisis a new architecture for economic and monetary union. The measures included new mechanisms like the permanent rescue fund, the European Stability Mechanism, the strengthening of the Stability and Growth Pact, the Fiscal Compact, the Macroeconomic Imbalance Procedure and finally the Banking Union.

First, the countries have to correct their macroeconomic imbalances. The Macroeconomic Imbalance Procedure and the in-depth reviews showed that current account deficits have been reduced significantly and structural reforms are slowly beginning to work and produce effects.

What is needed mostly is to stabilise economies and to improve economic policy co-ordination in the EU. Not only do the member states have to get their budgets in order, they also have to reform their national economies so that they become competitive again. However, this should not become a decision between austerity versus growth or between demand-side versus supply-side economics. It is obvious that Europe needs both, sustainable fiscal policies in all member states, which go hand in hand with incentives for sustainable growth. We need structural reforms to strengthen member states’ growth potential and the recovery of domestic demand which should facilitate economic recovery with the help of more robust labour markets and income stability.

The task for European reform policy is hence to develop a real European economic policy to tackle weaknesses in some economies and to generate more and better jobs, to create a mechanism that could function as an automatic stabilizer in the eurozone against economic shocks and to guarantee the coherence of the European Union as a whole and the democratic legitimacy of these reform measures.

The Commission has already has proposed bilateral contractual arrangements to ensure structural reforms in the member states. However, the member states will have to reform first and foremost policies within their national sovereignty and legislative competence. The legislative powers of the European Union in policies, like social policy, employment and labor market regulation or education policy are very limited. Hence, there is obviously a difference in pressure and commitment to reform and then to bear the economic and political costs of reforms.

While the European Union can only ask the national governments and recommend reform of labor markets, pension systems or education policies, the political costs of losing the next national elections will stay with the national governments. Therefore and to provide an incentive for reform, these contracts shall be combined with a so-called solidarity mechanism to assist the member states’ efforts by providing financial assistance. The European Union shall grant financial support for well-defined reforms.

However, the basic task of all these efforts is still to convince national governments and parliaments of the necessity for structural reforms. The Member States have to regard their economic policies as a matter of common concern, as it is written in the treaty of Lisbon.

If we want a stable monetary union, it will not be enough to eliminate the problems at national level alone. We also have to improve the architecture of monetary union. The Stability and Growth Pact and the no bail-out clause could not safeguard the eurozone and prevent the crisis. The ESM and the ECB’s policy rescued the common currency but at the same time weakened the principle of member states’ fiscal responsibility by mutualising liabilities. But the basic principle of the European Economic and Currency Union is still the no bail-out principle. Taking this rule seriously means thinking about a back stop of mutalisation, that means the possibility of sovereign default as the ultimate national responsibility. Sovereign defaults have to be possible without destabilising the eurozone as a whole.

The current respite in the crisis has to be used to start these reforms, although success may only come in the long run.
Poland’s Engagement in Global WMD Non-Proliferation Efforts

By Łukasz Kulesa, Polish Institute of International Affairs

While Poland does not aspire to play a leading role in the global efforts to fight the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), it is determined to behave like a “good international citizen”, being a party in to virtually all the treaties and regimes in the field. In some areas, for example engagement in the Proliferation Security Initiative or support for the Non-Proliferation Treaty, Warsaw has been prepared to commit extra energy and resources. As far as nuclear weapons are concerned, Poland has been since 1999 in a schizophrenic position, being a NATO member and relying on the extended nuclear deterrence provided by the US, but at the same time also promoting nuclear reductions and disarmament initiatives.

Looking at the pre-1989 history, after the end of the Second World War Poland found itself as a part of the Soviet camp. Its independence in conducting foreign policy was severely limited, and Poland had to accept the presence of the Soviet troops and weapons (including tactical nuclear weapons) on its territory. The leadership knew also that Poland would certainly suffer from a devastating nuclear attack if war had broken out between NATO and the Warsaw Pact. Therefore, even during the Communist times, Poland showed keen interest in non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament, including proposing plans for creating a Central European zone free of nuclear weapons (the Rapacki Plan of the 1950s – which became a model for other nuclear-weapon-free zones proposals worldwide, and the Jaruzelski Plan of the 1980s).

After re-gaining independence, Poland increased its engagement in the WMD non-proliferation system. Support for non-proliferation and arms control regimes has been present in all Polish strategic documents adopted since 1989. Poland has been a party to all major multilateral treaties (NPT, BTWC, CWC, CTBT), arms control regimes (NSG, Zangger Committee, Australia Group, MTCR), and less formal co-operation arrangements such as Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism or Proliferation Security Initiative. Poland is also a member of the Geneva-based Conference on Disarmament, which remains the only multilateral body with a mandate to negotiate WMD-related treaties.

Poland engages in the work of these bodies not as a routine activity, but because it considers a possible collapse of the global WMD non-proliferation system as threatening for Polish security either directly (possibility of an arms race involving Europe or WMD blackmail or attack) or indirectly (threat to international order as such, impact on economic development). Poland plays an active role when possible, but remains realistic about its limited potential, so does not get engaged in solving Iranian or North Korean crises, the Syrian chemical weapons issue or the Middle East WMD Free zone conundrum.

Poland’s assets as regards non-proliferation start of course with its own credentials: it is a country which never attempted to acquire its own WMD. It can also use its status as a middle-power country, which can team up with similar players worldwide and act as a mediator between different groups inside non-proliferation regimes. For example, in 2009 Poland was instrumental in obtaining an agreement from the Conference on Disarmament members on a programme of work, which was not an easy task for this permanently deadlocked body. Poland is also not a one-issue country: apart from the interest in nuclear non-proliferation it also plays a role in the chemical disarmament regime. Finally, Poland has a dedicated team of non-proliferation specialists at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, other parts of the administration, and a small non-proliferation expert community.

Poland is especially interested in the following issues:

- Acting as one of the leaders of the Proliferation Security Initiative.
- Strengthening the NPT through the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative

Poland has been one of the countries which were frustrated with the state of the NPT regime and the constant disputes between the Nuclear weapon states and the non-aligned movement, which threatened to destroy the whole system. Therefore, Poland joined Australia and Japan when they proposed an initiative to work across the NPT “camps” to implement the outcomes of the 2010 NPT Review Conference. The NPDI group includes: Australia, Japan, Canada, Germany, the Netherlands, Poland, Turkey, Chile, Mexico, Nigeria, the Philippines, and the United Arab Emirates. It focuses on issues such as the need for greater transparency of nuclear arsenals, reduction of all categories of nuclear weapons and disarmament education. Poland has been hoping to work through the NPDI to assure a successful outcome of the next, 2015 NPT Review Conference.

In conclusion, it is worth noticing that Poland has been actively participating in the Nuclear Security Summits process, initiated by the Obama administration with the aim of securing all vulnerable nuclear materials worldwide. Poland was invited to the 2010 Washington D.C. Summit, and has used its membership in the process to speed up the conversion of its research reactor “Maria” from high- to low-enriched uranium and to strengthen the protection of its borders against nuclear smuggling.
Today, the Netherlands is more multicultural than ever. More than 21 per cent of the total Dutch population consists of migrants or children of migrant parents. In 2013, people with a non-Western background made up about 11 per cent of the total population while Western migrants accounted for 9 per cent of the total population. Migration to the Netherlands has increased, intensified and diversified in terms of migrants’ countries of origin, background characteristics and migration motivations leading to the establishment of numerous migrant groups. Has the Dutch integration policy evolved in a way to capture and respond to the needs of such a multicultural society? And, is the current understanding of integration compatible with the new ways of living of migrants? To answer these questions, it is worthwhile observing how the integration policies in the Netherlands have evolved over time, and looking at what academic research suggests about the ways in which migrants manage their lives in the Netherlands. Therefore, after explaining how the Netherlands distanced itself from multicultural policies over the years, I will challenge the validity of this approach by giving reference to some of the most unique migrant groups in the Netherlands, namely, the Afghans, Burundians, Ethiopians and Moroccans.

**Disengagement from a multiculturalist approach in the Netherlands**

The Netherlands saw immigration as a source of economic and cultural richness for many years and represented itself as a tolerant country towards foreigners with different cultures and religions. The Netherlands has been considered for many years as one of the first European countries to be called “multiculturalist” due to a set of multiculturalist policies introduced in the early 1970s. The history of “Verzuiling” (Pillarisation) in the Netherlands paved the way for multiculturalism and offered a wide scope of opportunities for migrants to organize themselves. Dutch multiculturalism encouraged migrants to maintain their cultural heritage, gave easy access to citizenship and did not enforce “assimilation” into the native Dutch population.

Migration scholars state that the lack of enforcement for adopting Dutch culture also owed to the conception that many of the migrants, particularly those who came for work, were to eventually return to their home country. Although returns did occur at the beginning, as history has shown, starting with the early 1980s it was evident that most immigrants would not return, and this new phenomenon of permanent settlement of migrants in the Netherlands demanded a shift in the focus of the government’s integration policy.

In the phase of permanent settlement and “controlled integration”, the Dutch government developed policies to encourage the emancipation and participation of ethnic minorities in Dutch society, to prevent discrimination and to diminish inequality within the society by advancing the socioeconomic position of ethnic minorities. The government was particularly occupied with ensuring equal access to the benefits of the welfare state and focused on specific measures for ethnic minorities.

However, these policies did not generate the anticipated consequences in terms of the socioeconomic integration of migrants. That is to say, primarily labour migrants, but also to a lesser extent migrants from former colonies, were observed to be doing poorly in the economic domain compared to the native Dutch population, and were considered to be marginalized. Considering that the socioeconomic background characteristics of the individuals could not explain the difference between the migrants and the natives fully, a debate on the failure of the integration policies emerged.

It was soon granted that the policies aimed at improving migrants’ economic position did not lead to significant improvement. This coincided with other developments in the Netherlands as well as around the world, as a result of which migrant groups were put in a distinctively undesirable position. Namely, a more negative attitude towards multiculturalism emerged in the Dutch society especially with the turbulent first years of the new millennium, following the international and national events surrounding 9/11; and within the Netherlands, the rise of the anti-immigration politician Pim Fortuyn and the murder of the filmmaker Theo van Gogh. Consequently, in the Netherlands today, immigrant integration through multiculturalist policies is regarded almost as a failed project.

The Netherlands has become more and more rigid and restrictive regarding its immigration and integration policy. Not only has naturalisation become more difficult, but also cultural diversity is seen as an obstacle towards integration into Dutch society to a greater extent. The government stresses the importance of learning Dutch and full integration in the labour market. The cornerstone of this new approach was the 1998 Newcomer Integration Law (Wet Inburgering Nieuwkomers (WIN)). The underlying implication of the new integration policies is the view that integration is not simply about employment and civic engagement but is also based heavily on the individual’s commitment to the society, loyalty to national citizenship and knowledge of social values of the society as well as language proficiency.

**Time to reconsider the definition of integration**

“Everyone who settles in the Netherlands must integrate into Dutch society. Newcomers need to learn Dutch and familiarise themselves with Dutch society.” This is the first sentence of the section on migrant integration in the website of the Government of the Netherlands. At a
first glance, one may not see big problems with this statement. However, in a second thought, it is not difficult to question what integration actually entails. In a context where anti-immigration sentiments are on the rise and migrants are accused of not assimilating into the Dutch society due to their strong attachment to their home countries and lack of effort and commitment to integrate, it is time to look at migrants’ daily lives and experiences in a more comprehensive way. It is a must to challenge the definition of integration, and to reconsider our understanding of integration based on the real life experiences of migrants.

This reconsideration certainly does not need to negate the importance of Dutch language proficiency, intercultural dialogue, and migrants’ effort to participate in economic, sociocultural and political domains of life. But, it is primordial to take into consideration migrants’ lives as a whole and acknowledge the significance that their culture and contact with their family and friends back in their home country for their well-being. Integration is not simply assimilation to the receiving society; it is about migrants’ well-being as a whole and having the means to be able to make a life that you can call your own and be content with.

**Hear the evidence: Migrants simultaneously embedded in the Netherlands and their home country**

My doctoral research investigated the experiences of Afghan, Burundian, Ethiopian and Moroccan migrants living in the Netherlands. This research is part of the IS Academy Migration and Development: A World in Motion project initiated and funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and executed by the Maastricht Graduate School of Governance. The data for the project consists of 1022 household surveys were conducted in Noord Holland and Zuid Holland where the largest cities of the Netherlands Amsterdam, Rotterdam and The Hague are located. The project aimed at contributing to the Netherlands’ long tradition of evidence based policy making and has given the unique opportunity of presenting the experiences of migrants in the Netherlands.

The underlying assumption that I sought to keep all throughout the research was that it is not realistic to bound people to a single space and to expect singular loyalties and uniform cultural belongings. In line with the conceptualisation of transnational migration, what this project showed is that a big majority of the migrants do not have intentions to return permanently back to their home country, they nevertheless maintain relatively frequent and intense economic and sociocultural contacts with their home country.

The research showed in a consistent way that migrants maintain strong connections with their family and friends in their home country through visits, Skype calls, emails and other social media even if they are in frequent contact with the Dutch society. On a descriptive level, almost 90 per cent of migrants have contact with their family and friends in the home country and about three quarters of all migrants have frequent social contact with the native Dutch. This means that migrants are able to make time for both contexts depending on their wishes. And, being more oriented towards the home country, they nevertheless maintain relatively frequent and intense economic and sociocultural contacts with their home country.

With regard to association membership and media and art consumption, I concluded that engagement in these aspects of life in both the home and host countries are positively related to each other. This means that those who are more involved in the sociocultural life of their home country are also likely to be more involved in these dimensions of life in the Netherlands. Therefore, if migrants seem to be less involved in civic life or to participate less in cultural activities in the Netherlands, this cannot directly be interpreted as “little interest of integration” as discussed in the public discourse. It is important to emphasize that migrants transfer different levels of cultural capital from one context to the other, and more support may be need to encourage engaging migrants’ in civic life in general.

Plus, it is a misconception that involvement in home country while being abroad is a sign of powerlessness, poverty and lack of integration. The current picture shows that those who are active and perform well in the Dutch labour market are in fact the ones who are more involved in their home country. In this regard, the main conclusion to be drawn is that economic integration and economic homeland engagement are not alternatives to each other, but can complement each other.

In conclusion, the contacts migrants keep with their home country are a part of their life in the Netherlands, and migrants’ lives are defined both in relation to their contacts in their home country and in the Netherlands. Perhaps it is time to recognize that more and more people live their lives simultaneously here and there, and integration succeeds as long as migrants have the ability to choose the way they make their lives. Especially in a context of such a globalised world, integration does not need to deny migrants’ right to maintain their cultures and continuous economic, cultural and social relations with their home country. When the experiences of diverse migrant groups’ transnational linkages seem to go hand-in-hand with successful integration into the Netherlands, why not opt for more inclusive and cohesive integration policies?

**“I read the newspapers online. When I go to work every morning, I read the Dutch newspapers and after that also the Moroccan newspapers.” (Moroccan, F, 31)**

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Evidence in the EU Migration Debates

By Tess Hellgren, Analyst, RAND Europe

The recent European elections brought striking success for populist parties across the continent, with strong turnouts in countries from France and the UK to Denmark and Greece. Alongside growing Euroscepticism, these results reflect an unsubstantiated perception that migration is having negative consequences for EU nations. Nigel Farage, whose UK Independence Party gained significantly in the British elections, has claimed that the UK is being “taken over” by migrants; in France, Front National leader Marine Le Pen has labelled her country as “plagued” by large-scale migration. The victories of their parties suggest that these views are resonating with portions of the European public.

The realities of EU migration, however, are much more complex than the headlines would indicate. Heated discussion of migrants in the media is too often supported by anecdotal examples or strongly worded beliefs. What is lacking too often in the public debate is evidence – including the voices of migrants themselves.

European migration trends will not be understood – and effective policies will not be crafted – without a more nuanced public understanding of the full migration picture, shaped by evidence rather than opinion and informed by migrants as well as national interest. Speaking of migration as a ‘wave,’ ‘tide’ or ‘invasion’ obscures the reality of the phenomenon, which is determined by the diversity of individual migrants. Consideration of the variation within migration ‘flows’ is necessary to public understanding of the drivers and impacts of migration and to crafting policy that balances state concerns with the human element at the heart of this phenomenon.

Public critique of migration tends to assume that migrants are a unified group with shared motivations. Yet there is no ‘typical’ reason for migration. Many migrants move in order to seek an improved quality of life, whether this is measured in terms of education, employment, civil liberties, social mobility or human rights. Some migrants are pursuing individual opportunities while others are seeking to follow existing social networks, join family members or support relatives and communities in their home countries. Some migrants are hoping to settle permanently in their new country, but others plan to return to their country of origin. Still others are not seeking mobility at all: involuntary migration occurs regularly in response to conflict or environmental disaster or at the hands of human traffickers.

Just as migration motivations are more diverse than the headlines would suggest, evidence on the impacts of migration also yields more nuanced conclusions. When existing evidence is considered, the tenure and substance of the public debate may shift. While the picture is painted frequently of migrants as ‘benefits scroungers’; for example, actual data on the existence and extent of this trend is highly limited. Indeed, recent studies suggest that migrants have a neutral if not positive impact on their countries of residence, with benefits received balanced by contributions made through taxes. Research about the impact of diversity on social cohesion has also had mixed results, with some evidence suggesting that income inequality in Europe may be a more important factor in determining cohesion than cultural or racial characteristics.

To infuse more evidence into migration debates, it is important that ongoing research efforts are communicated and strengthened. Researchers must take responsibility to ensure that their findings are made accessible in a publically available and policy relevant format, as is already occurring at organisations like the Migration Policy Institute and Oxford’s Migration Observatory. At the same time, the media and policymakers should make the effort to learn from these resources and ensure that their discussions are informed by facts as well as opinions. Efforts should also continue to strengthen the existing evidence base. Migration research is challenged by the complexity of the phenomenon: quantitative assessment is often made difficult by a lack of robust data, with international comparisons challenged by inconsistencies in national methods of data collection and definitions of ‘migrant’ status; and some qualitative assessments yield findings that are limited to specific case studies and therefore hard to apply to migrants more broadly.

What is certain from the available evidence is that the impact of ‘migration’ must be considered separately from that of individual migrants. Migrants vary greatly in their education, skills and cultural background – all of which influence their ability to integrate and to contribute to their adopted society. Awareness of these divergences is reflected to an extent in policymakers’ attempts to classify migrants into such categories as ‘skilled’ or ‘unskilled’ workers, asylum seekers, students and entrepreneurs. Implicit in these categories – and the restrictions that accompany them – is a consideration of the costs or benefits that different migrant ‘types’ may bring. The emergence of so-called ‘golden visas’, in which European countries offer residence permits to migrants willing to make large-scale investments in their new country, is a stark example of this position.

In determining which migrants are allowed to enter a given country, however, there must be a balanced consideration of evidence from both sides of the issue. There is no question that state management of migration will continue to be driven by a mix of economic, social, political, security and humanitarian concerns. In making migration decisions, however, countries must actively seek out more robust evidence that takes into account not only national concerns but also migrants’ own rights and interests. Migrant voices are notably lacking from the mainstream discourses that dominate recent European debates – there must be an increased effort to include these perspectives in the evidence base.

Populist calls to ‘fight the wave’, ‘stem the tide’ or ‘halt the invasion’ of migrants are largely unsubstantiated by an evidence base and turn a blind eye to the diverse human reality of the migration phenomenon itself. To recognise and respond to the balance of opportunities and challenges that EU migration presents, policymakers must strive to make decisions that are grounded in reality rather than reacting to public discourse that may not be informed by facts. Achieving a sustainable and fair migration regime will require efforts to understand the evidence behind migration trends and anecdotes. This includes recognising migrants as more than statistics and weighing their human interests alongside national concerns. Only through consideration of a balanced and rigorous evidence base will effective and ethical responses be found in the current and future debates over EU migration.
The Celtic and European Union Jigsaw Puzzle

By Dr John Coulter, Political Columnist with the Irish Daily Star and Tribune magazine

The hand of history once more stretched over Ireland as the European and local government elections delivered another seismic shift which could send ripples not just across politics in the British Isles, but right through the European Union.

Sinn Fein, once the political apologists for the Provisional IRA, pulled off electoral gains not witnessed since the famous 1918 Westminster General Election immediately after the Great War which saw the fledgling republican party capture 73 of the 105 Commons seats when Ireland when then entirely part of the British Empire.

Sinn Fein chalked up successes on both sides of what is increasingly becoming an irrelevant Irish border and boosted its European Parliamentary team from one to four MEPs, making it the largest nationalist movement in the British Isles ahead of the Scottish National Party (SNP) and Plaid Cymru (PC) in Wales.

In spite of the looming summer recess, the Northern Ireland Assembly is becoming steadily unstable. The political starting gun has now been fired, triggering a chain of events which were deemed unthinkable when the Irish peace process began with the 1998 Good Friday Agreement.

In Northern Ireland, Sinn Fein is already poised to become the largest party at Stormont in the next Assembly poll in 2016 – the centenary of the doomed republican Easter Rising in Dublin. Sinn Fein has continued its electoral battering of the moderate nationalist Social Democratic and Labour Party, and is also boosted with a fragmented pro-Union vote, as well as apathy among Protestant voters.

However, Sinn Fein has recognised that a united Ireland will never be achieved by the hand of history once more stretched over Ireland as the European and local government elections delivered another seismic shift which could send ripples not just across politics in the British Isles, but right through the European Union.

Sinn Fein must take a massive gamble because of the rapid rise of the Euro-skeptic United Kingdom Independence Party (UKip) fronted by MEP Nigel Farage. Tory British Prime Minister David Cameron must recognise that his coalition with Nick Clegg’s Liberal Democrats is doomed.

A clear ‘In/Out’ referendum on EU membership may not be enough to halt the Ukip bandwagon, especially if Farage’s outfit starts winning Westminster seats, or causes the Conservatives to lose seats to other parties – especially Labour.

The solution is brutally simple for Cameron – merge with Ukip and the latter holding a place in the new Conservative movement once held by the Right-wing National Monday Club pressure group. If Cameron cannot swallow this exceptionally bitter pill to save his Conservative Party in the coalition, would a dream team of Nigel Farage and Tory London Mayor Boris Johnston do the trick?

Likewise, if neither of these possibilities is a runner, Cameron will simply have to find himself another potential coalition partner, especially if next year’s expected General Election produces a hung parliament with no party boasting an overall majority.

Could another Nigel be the ace card? In this case, Nigel Dodds, the North Belfast MP and deputy leader of the DUP. The DUP presently has eight MPs. A ninth MP in the pack is North Down’s Independent MP Lady Sylvia Hermon, a former Ulster Unionist. In a hung Commons chamber, these eight or nine votes could keep Cameron in power, even with a horns’ nest of Ukip, Labour and what’s left of the Lib Dems buzzing around the fringes.

Sinn Fein may be building a Celtic Front at the EP, but its outdated abstentionist policy is certainly preventing it from constructing a similar voting movement in the Commons chamber. In reality, if the SNP – which wants to take Scotland out of the Union – can take its seats, why can’t Sinn Fein MPs – who want to take Northern Ireland out of the Union – take theirs?

Sinn Fein must also keep looking over its shoulder at the level of support for the so-called dissident republican movement, comprised of hardline working class republicans who do not agree with Sinn Fein’s peace strategy. Strong co-operation between the Republic’s and Northern Ireland’s security forces have kept dissident republican terrorist activity to a minimum compared to the intensive campaign unleashed during the Troubles by the Provisional IRA.

If Sinn Fein is to become a significant contender for coalition partner in the next Dail, it must truly convince Southern voters that it is more than a protest party against austerity and the IRA itself has been confined to the dustbin of history.

While Sinn Fein will be able to successfully ‘spin’ the Easter Rising centenary to its electoral advantage, the party still faces a huge public relations nightmare over the
The Celtic and European Union Jigsaw Puzzle (Cont’d)

centenary commemorations of the Irish Civil War, which raged between June 1922 and May 1923.

That civil war saw republicans commit atrocities on fellow republicans more brutal that in the previous War of Independence against the British which began in 1919. Indeed, more IRA members were executed by the new Free State forces in partitioned Ireland during the Civil War than were killed by the notorious Black and Tans British militia during the War of Independence.

The bitter pill which Sinn Fein may have to swallow is that it must ditch abstentionism, and take some kind of oath to enable its MPs to sit in the Commons Chamber.

With Unionist disunity, and the collapse of moderate political nationalism, Sinn Fein could even be poised to take as many as eight Northern Ireland Westminster seats next year.

Taken in this light, Sinn Fein could be in pole position to form its Celtic Front right in the very heart of the British establishment – the House of Commons Chamber. With Unionist disunity, and the collapse of moderate political nationalism, Sinn Fein could even be poised to take as many as eight Northern Ireland Westminster seats next year.

That Commons Celtic Front could include Sinn Fein, the SNP, Plaid Cymru, George Galloway’s Respect party, and anti-monarchist or pro-republican Labour MPs on the hard Left of the party.

Could the Celtic Front headed by Sinn Fein then be the bloc which holds the balance of power in deciding the make-up and policies of the next Westminster Government, no matter if Scotland opts for independence or the so-called Devo-Max, or maximum devolution, route?

Would Cameron be brave enough to do a deal with any future Celtic Front to create an unholy alliance in the Commons between pro-Union Tories and republicans? Irish politics is the art of ‘never saying never’. After all, the current crisis in the Middle East has seen new alliances formed between old enemies, such as Iran and Iraq, as new Islamic even more radical groups like ISIS emerge.

Look at Stormont. In 2007, firebrand DUP leader and Christian fundamentalist preacher Ian Paisley senior, now Lord Bannside, formed a power-sharing Executive with Sinn Fein with former IRA commander Martin McGuinness as deputy First Minister. Such was the political success of that partnership, it was dubbed ‘The Chuckle Brothers’ after the children’s TV programme of the same name.

If Cameron will not deal with the Celtic Front or Ukip, might Labour boss Ed Miliband be handed the keys to Number 10 Downing Street by jumping into bed politically with the Celtic Front to form a Labour/Celtic Front coalition Government, with the Tories, Ukip and DUP comprising the Official Opposition?

It’s at this point that the strong Euro-skeptics enter the political mix. The Ukip success pulled voters from all the main traditional Big Three parties. Ukip was not simply a Tory rebellion over EU membership. That rebellion could become a coup by 2017 if the UK votes to leave the EU.

In this scenario, no matter if Scotland is in the Union or not, the UK will have to be a member of an influential global alliance capable of competing with an EU, still comprising more than two dozen states. Like a political witches’ brew, it’s at this stage the increasingly powerful Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) – formed in 1911 as the Empire Parliamentary Association – enters the melting pot.

The CPA now comprises more than 50 national and regional parliaments, not all of them former members of the old British Empire. Only the Commonwealth has the political and economic clout to compete with the EU, especially if the CPA can do financial deals with the rapidly expanding economies of China, India and Brazil.

So where does this leave Ireland? Crudely, Unionists may be placated with the notion after September – dump the Scots and take back the Irish into the Commonwealth! Could Sinn Fein deliver a united Ireland within the CPA? Would Northern Ireland’s pro-Union community be happy with the old 26-county Irish Republic back under the British Throne?

If McGuinness can attend a royal banquet at Buckingham Palace, and the Queen can lay a wreath at Dublin’s Garden of Remembrance which commemorates those who died fighting the British, then Sinn Fein can return to its founding roots in 1905 as a purely separatist – not a fully-blown republican – movement.

Sinn Fein founder Arthur Griffith really wanted the dominion status option, or dual monarchy, for Ireland, whereby Britain and Ireland shared the monarch, but had separate governments. Ireland back in the CPA is a carbon copy of what Griffith envisaged. In this scenario, another role for Sinn Fein would be to persuade the Irish Republic to quit the EU along with the UK and re-introduce sterling as the common currency.

Given the significant role of the Southern Irish in the volatile journey of the Lisbon Treaty, Sinn Fein cultivating a vibrant Euro-skeptical tradition in the Republic is not such a far-fetched agenda. In 2009, Irish voters strongly endorsed the Lisbon Treaty - 16 months after their first vote rejecting it plunged EU reforms into deadlock.

A fascinating jigsaw puzzle is beginning to emerge with Ireland at its core. It’s a puzzle that will have serious ramifications for the future composition of Europe. What should concern Euro-federalists is if the UK and Ireland leave the EU for the CPA, is it possible a reinvigorated CPA could persuade other EU member states with solid Euro-skeptics support to also quit the EU and join the CPA?

Indeed, could the federalists’ dream of a United States of Europe find itself the victim of a new pincer movement – the CPA on one side, with Vladimir Putin’s new-look Russian Empire on the other? After World War Two, Britain’s legendary Prime Minister Winston Churchill warned about an iron curtain descending over Europe.

But the Europe of 2014 may be witnessing the first stages in a new iron bandwagon travelling across the continent, this time powered by an Anglo-Russian convergence of impact. It is somewhat ironic that this alliance was conceived by Irish republicans in Dublin working class houses almost a century ago.

The years 1918 and 1945 saw a re-modelling of European states and borders. The maxim, ‘Get out of the Union!’ is being sung equally fervently by republicans and Unionists alike.
Various National Trends in European Parliamentary Elections

By Professor Astrid Lorenz and Professor Dorothee Riese, University of Leipzig

The results of the European Parliamentary elections are mainly the sum of heterogeneous national traditions and constellations. The elections took place within national publics while a European public is still lacking, and the vague framework of European electoral ruling favoured a predominance of a national perspective on European politics. However, slight changes are observable.

The recent European Parliamentary Elections varied remarkably across EU Member States concerning voter turnout and vote shares of the candidate parties. How can these variations be explained?

Voter turnout affected by national mobilization traditions

The EU average in voter turnout in the 2014 elections was about 43 percent, but there are huge differences between countries: While Luxembourg and Belgium top the list with 90 percent voter turnout, Slovakia brings up the rear with only 13 percent. In the first mentioned countries, voting is compulsory as it is in national parliamentary elections. This is a stimulus for a higher electoral participation although the 58 per cent turnout in Greece and 44 per cent in Cyprus show that compulsory voting alone is not sufficient to guarantee mobilization.

The inclination to take part in elections at the domestic level varies traditionally across countries. The scheme of established or non-established voting routines has a clear effect on the national voter turnovers in European elections.

Generally the voter turnout in European elections is lower in all countries than the turnout in national elections. But where the turnout is high in national elections, there people tend to be more willing to participate in European elections as well.

Denmark, for instance, has comparatively high national turnout rates (87.7 percent in the last national elections) and likewise above-average turnout in European elections (56.4 percent). As in post-socialist countries the voting routines are still less strong, the turnout is lower or susceptible to ups and downs. Poland, for example, had a turnout of only 48.5 percent in the last national elections and achieved also a very low turnout in European Parliamentary elections (22.7 percent).

The stark differences across countries are therefore relatively persistent. Belgium, at the top of the list, for example attained 90.8 percent in 2004, 90.4 percent in 2009 and 90 percent in 2014. The differences in turnout were minimal. In Spain which has always been close to the EU average, the turnout varied from 45.1 percent (2009) through 44.9 percent (2009) to 46 percent (2014), also showing only small changes in a range of one percent. Slovakia at the bottom of the turnout rates, has shown slightly more variation from 17 percent (2009) through 19.6 percent (2014) to 13 percent (2014).

Stronger differences can be found in the Baltic states (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania) and Cyprus. Additionally to institutional and behavioural factors, rational motives may have had an effect on the turnout. Is seems that belonging to the Eurozone has fostered the interest in voting in 2014.

The Euro countries and their citizens were strongly affected by the financial crisis both in the countries of the south and in the countries which paid more for the diverse Euro crisis emergency measures.

Whereas the countries which do not have the Euro as their currency had an average turnout of about 35 percent, the Eurozone members feature 48 percent voter turnout. Six of the ten EU member states where the electoral turnout increased compared to 2009 belong to the Eurozone. Obviously, the more is at stake in European Politics, the stronger the interest for participation.

Varying party constellations

There were also strong variations in the election results for different party groups. The first main trend is the fragmentation of party politics which we also observe for national elections.

Compared to the outgoing parliament, the European People’s Party, the Socialists and Democrats, the liberal ALDE as well as the Greens lost seats in parliament. Especially the EPP saw a distinct decrease, thus drawing nearer the second-biggest faction of the Socialists & Democrats (S&D). Whereas the S&D received about one fourth of the votes both in 2009 and 2014, the EPP fell from 35.8 per cent to now 29.4 per cent of the seats.

In 13 countries, the two biggest political groups combined won less than 50 percent of the vote. This was a mixture of bigger and smaller countries, older and young democracies quite representative for all EU countries with Poland (~ 48.4 percent), Ireland (46 percent), Sweden (49.3 percent), Czech Republic (~ 40 percent), Belgium (~ 36 percent), Greece (~ 37.3 percent), Finland (34.9 percent), France (~ 34.8 percent), Lithuania (~ 34.7 percent), Denmark (~ 28 percent), Estonia (27.5 percent), United Kingdom (~ 24.7 percent) and Netherlands (~ 24.6 percent).

In nine member states, the leading parties at EU level, EPP and S&D, did not get the highest share of votes: In Estonia, Lithuania, the Netherlands and Finland members of the liberal ALDE won the elections, in Belgium a party of the Green faction, in Greece the leftist GUE/NGL and in France, the UK and Denmark Eurosceptic or right wing parties. Obviously, fragmentation of party politics is an all-embracing trend.

However, the leading party groups at EU level still won the elections in 19 out of the 28 EU member states. The conservative European People’s Party was the strongest party in 14 countries.

Especially in Poland (38.9 percent, 2 parties), Slovenia (41.4 percent, 2 parties), Hungary (51.5 percent), Latvia (46.2 percent), Croatia (41.4), EPP member parties had much higher voter shares than the next following parties. In five countries, the Social Democrats won the biggest share of the vote.
The vote shares of right wing, populist and Eurosceptic parties increased dramatically but this general increase did not follow a clear pattern. Instead, this increase concentrated on a good half of the EU members.

Only in three countries the electoratea favoured Eurosceptic or right-wing parties: France’s Front National won the elections with about 25 percent, Denmark’s Dansk Folkeparti with 26.6 % and the British UKIP with about 26.8 percent of the vote. In some other European countries right-wing and Eurosceptic parties increased their shares of the vote and thus got parliamentary seats. This group includes for example Finland, Germany, Poland, Hungary, Italy and Austria.

However, in twelve countries, Eurosceptic or right-wing parties got a more or less irrelevant vote share and could not win a seat in parliament (for example Spain and Romania). In two countries formerly established Eurosceptic or right-wing parties slightly lost votes and seats (Belgium and Bulgaria).

All in all, there is no coherent picture of political preferences of the European electorates. Moreover, the low turnout in many EU member states makes it impossible to detect whether these preferences are really representative for the societies.

When compared to the Eurobarometer data, there is no definite connection of electoral results to public opinion. The generally low trust in the European Parliament (34 percent in 2014) does not always translate into votes for eurosceptic parties, as the examples of Spain and Portugal show: Both score very low on trust in the European Parliament (less than 30 percent) but still did not see eurosceptic parties gain seats in the elections.

Finally, it is even unclear whether the voters really knew what they voted for. Indeed, there was no considerable European campaigning. The awareness of European parliamentary elections depended heavily on how strongly and via which topics European politics were discussed by the national public.

While the parties agreed upon common European manifestos of sister organizations at EU level, they often also adopted national manifestos for the European elections. On the websites, some did not explicitly refer to a manifesto at all. The European manifestos thus were not more than umbrellas for national interpretations and demands.

Member parties of the Party of European Socialists, for example, had different positions concerning the welfare state model. Member parties of the European People’s Party took different positions on the role of the EU and not all member parties supported their common front-runner Juncker, who for example demanded a European minimum wage.

**Persisting national traditions but slight changes**

Aside from these still persisting national differences there are changes visible in the 2014 election. Arguably the most important change is the nomination of the parties’ common European front-runners for the European Parliamentary Elections.

The parliament had claimed the parliamentary front-runners to also be the candidates for Commission President and tried to establish the correspondent interpretation of the treaties. After heavy controversies within the European Council as well as between Parliament and European Council, the heads of government nominated the election winner Jean-Claude Juncker as the Parliament had demanded.

Thus the Parliament prevailed in the institutional conflict and seems to have strengthened its position. But the nomination is likely to perpetuate tensions between the member states.

The most striking example is the debate on the negotiations of a Free Trade Agreement with the United States called TTIP which qualifies as an instance of a European public as defined. Both questions of procedure as well as the impacts of the envisioned agreement were debated in EU countries. Another example is the Ukrainian-Russian Conflict and the role of European foreign policy. But this kind of European public is still very topic- and audience-specific and thus rather punctual.

Media coverage before the European elections was still dominated by national perspectives on European politics as well as by national topics.

All in all, when we talk about European Parliamentary Elections, the term “European” is still partly misleading. European electoral law leaves room for the various national traditions and preferences.

The elections are dominated by national topics and perspectives and national electorates vote for national representatives. However, some rudimentary European features can be identified: From common front-runners through common European party manifestos to common topics these are mainly based on voluntary co-operation among the national parties.
Independent Election Observation of the May 2014 Elections in the UK

By Nina Corradini, Electoral Network Coordinator, ICPS

In 2006 the United Kingdom introduced the possibility for groups or individuals to observe elections and referenda in the United Kingdom and Scotland. It is now possible for private individuals or groups from international institutions to become official electoral observers of UK elections. All observers participate and operate independently from the country they are coming from, and they have to apply for an official accreditation with the Electoral Commission of the United Kingdom. Once approved, an official accreditation is issued, which is valid for up to one year.

Of course, electoral observers in the UK have to stick to a strict set of rules regarding behaviour, duties and responsibilities that apply as soon as they enter a polling station or attend the verification and counting of the votes. The United Kingdom has signed the International Declaration of Principles for International Electoral Observation and Code of Conduct for International Electoral Observers in 2005.

Electoral observers in the United Kingdom are allowed to observe the proceedings regarding the issue and receipt of postal ballot papers, the taking of the poll and the verification and counting of the votes.

On 22nd May 2014 all 32 boroughs of London held local elections and elections to the European Parliament. Five of the 32 boroughs also held mayoral elections on the same day.

The East London Borough of Hackney was one of the locations where three elections were held at the same time. I visited seven different polling stations and the verification and counting of the votes. Overall, I have not observed any issues that could have delegitimised the elections. However, several observations I made could have led to problems as explained in the following.

1. Voting without proof of ID – One peculiarity of the UK voting system is that every registered voter can come to the polling station and vote without proof of ID. Although this gives room for personation fraud it is not widespread in the UK and very few cases have been reported to the Electoral Commission. The UK electoral system is highly trust based, still a significant proportion of voters are concerned that the system might be exploited and object to fraud.

2. Three different ballot papers – Three different ways of voting: Holding multiple elections on one day is always a great challenge. In fact, in the 2004 mayoral and assembly elections more than 500,000 ballot papers were spoiled due the complexity of the voting process. In the recent elections polling staff paid great attention to explain the three different ballot papers and voting modalities. This was very time consuming and at busier times of the day could have led to long queues outside the polling stations. Moreover, voters had to leave the polling booth to seek advice on the voting process or spent a very long time in the polling both to cast their vote.

3. The secrecy of the vote – During my observation, mobile phones have been a recurring problem in almost all seven visited polling stations. Many voters, where on their phone or answering calls while casting their vote. Despite being rebuked by polling staff, several voters would not stop their phone calls. Moreover, I have observed that in some cases two people entered the polling booth, which is against the mandated voting procedure in the UK. Both observations undermine the secrecy of the vote and threaten the principle of free and fair elections.

Although certain critical issues were observed during the 2014 local, mayoral and European Parliament elections, the results have been widely accepted by all political parties. The elections have been carried out in line with international standards. However, insecurity and confusion on the part of voters might lead to mistrust in the system and result in even lower voter turnout. The UK election commission has already addressed many issues to improve the electoral process and to make it more voter friendly and less vulnerable to fraud.

Currently the Electoral Commission of the UK together with UK Law Commission are working to reform the UK electoral law. The process was initiated in 2012 and will enter the consultation phase in late 2014. The final report and bill will be expected in early 2017. This gives enough time to implement the changes before the General Elections in 2020.
Where Are the Ethnic Minorities?

By Didier Ruedin, University of Neuchâtel

The representation of citizens in their legislature lies at the core of liberal democracy. It is widely recognized that all citizens are of equal worth and therefore have the same right to be present in legislatures and institutions of decision-making.

There have been significant advances towards greater equality and inclusiveness in the last century, but ideals of inclusiveness are far from accomplished: In many places members from ethnic minorities remain systematically marginalized.

There are reasons to insist on demographic representation, especially since it does not contradict the representation of issues and preferences. For instance, legislatures that reflect the make-up of the population are widely considered more legitimate. More inclusive legislatures are also associated with lower alienation from the political system, and a lower likelihood of ethnic conflict.

Improved political communication and more inclusive policy outcomes are sometimes cited, but they are difficult to measure. The present study covers 101 countries with competitive elections, comparing the different ethnic groups in national legislatures with their size in the population.

It is frequently assumed that all minorities of power – women, ethnic minorities, immigrants, homosexuals – are disadvantaged in the same way. The focus on ethnic groups demonstrates that this view is not warranted.

For example, while the electoral system seems to play an important role for the inclusion of women, the same is not the case for ethnic groups. On average countries with proportional representation systems do not include ethnic groups in a more proportionate manner than countries with other electoral systems.

By contrast, a strong association can be determined between attitudes towards marginalized groups in society and the inclusion of ethnic minorities. Differences in attitudes were approximated using world regions – a common proxy in the literature – and measured directly using questions from the World Value Survey.

The idea is to capture attitudes reminiscent of sociological liberalism: the view that different religions, lifestyles, practices, and beliefs are as valid as one’s own. Attitudes towards marginalized groups in society are the strongest predictor of the extent to which different ethnic groups are included in national legislatures.

Perhaps more troubling is the finding that on average, the presence of quotas is not associated with legislatures resembling the ethnic make-up of society a greater extent. This is even more surprising given that reserved seats are the most common form of quotas for ethnic minority groups.

Reserved seats mean separate electoral rolls, and by design they cannot be influenced by preferences in the population or the elite. A more careful look at the implementation of quotas in individual cases reveals that these measures are not always implemented in a diligent manner.

For example, they may exist only for a single minority group in a country where there are many ethnic groups, or the number of seats reserved may be disproportionately low given the size of the ethnic group in the population. While quotas appear ineffective for reasons of implementation, they may work well in individual cases and for particular groups.

Trying to understand why quota measures are often not implemented in a diligent manner, it is worth considering the incentives of the elite. Assuming that the majority of the elite are interested in being re-elected, it makes sense for members of the elite not to be too much out of touch with the attitudes of the population.

Applied to the inclusion of ethnic minority groups in legislatures, this means that a member of the elite would expose him or herself a great deal when calling for strict quotas to include more minorities in a place where the population is not supportive of such a move.

It follows that quotas are implemented in a way that do not contradict the prevailing attitudes in the population to a great extent, which may mean quotas that do not reflect the size or composition of the minority population.

The incentives to water down measures to include ethnic minority groups in a more proportional manner are reminiscent of those regarding the inclusion of more women in legislatures. It is wrong, however, to conclude from this that the reasons for numerical under-representation are the same for women and minority groups.

As we have seen, for the inclusion of ethnic minorities in a proportional manner, there are no real differences between electoral systems. This contrasts the situation for women and may be the case because the elites can adjust to the institutional reality: minority legislators can be included in mainstream parties, or indeed quotas and other measures ostensibly to include more legislators from minorities may be implemented in a way that reduces their effectiveness.

It is important to bear in mind that where ethnic divisions are not politicized or where the population is largely supportive of more minorities in the legislature, quotas can be considered as a means to increase political representation.

Where the population is not supportive of more minorities in the legislature, hard measures that cannot be sidestepped by the different political actors would be a possibility, but they pose a serious electoral risk to the elite introducing such measures. Electoral engineering is probably only sustainable if accompanied by attitudinal changes.

References


In June this year the International Centre for Parliamentary Studies together with the Chairman of the Independent Electoral And Boundaries Commission of Kenya (IEBC) hosted the 8th International Electoral Affairs Symposium at Lake Naivasha, Kenya.

The format of the event traditionally combines:

- the delivery of highly relevant electoral content by international electoral experts and electoral commissioners
- an opportunity for all participants to discuss and to share experiences and best practices in a stimulating environment
- an introduction to the newest state-of-the-art electoral technology
- and exciting side events to foster networking in an informal ambiance

This year, the 8th International Electoral Affairs Symposium spanned over two days thematically focussed on building confidence and trust in the electoral process.

During the course of the event Electoral Commissioners from Guyana, Kenya, Nepal, Pakistan, South Africa, Uganda, the United Arab Emirates and the United Kingdom presented their case studies. The presentations gave insights about electoral integrity, electoral justice and transparency and accountability.

The case studies from the perspective of senior electoral officials were complemented by speeches from representatives from International Institutions such as the International Federation of Electoral Systems (IFES) and the International Centre for Electoral Psychology (ICEP).

The diverse agenda also included presentations about EMB relationships with the Media, managing elections during a peace process, and voter confidence building measures.

Furthermore, delegates had the chance to learn more about the latest developments in the field of electronic voting and registration and how electoral technology is used in different countries.

Interactive workshops and presentations encouraged all delegates to critically discuss different voting technologies and directly interact with specialists to get their questions answered first-hand.

Traditionally, the International Electoral Affairs Symposium combines the classic conference format with exciting side events, which give the opportunity for informal meetings and the strengthening of relationships.

This year, the participants at the Symposium were invited on a Safari to the Crescent Island Game Park, which is considered to be one of the most beautiful nature and wildlife parks in Kenya.

The ICPS Electoral Affairs Symposium has become an essential fixture in the calendar of many electoral officials around the globe. The combination of high-quality content, networking possibilities and updates on the newest technology developments is unique and highly appreciated by all participants.

The 8th International Electoral Affairs Symposium was attended by participants from more than 35 different countries. The three day event has facilitated the closer connection between different electoral stakeholders worldwide in order to share best practices and experiences, and to learn more about recent developments and pressing challenges in their respective areas of competence and activity.
Technology and the World of Elections

By Samira Saba, Integrated Communications Director, Smartmatic

Technology is revolutionising the way elections are run. From phone apps designed to engage voters and disseminate information, to advanced electronic voting machines and Internet voting platforms, electoral commissions around the world are turning to automation to improve election administration.

Last May alone, the world saw its biggest democracy expedite the experience of more than 540 million voters through technology. The Indian Electoral Commission (IEC), one of the early adopters of voting technology, processed the votes in one day using some 1.8 million electronic voting machines. Also, on May 7, South African voters’ smartphones received all the general information necessary surrounding the national elections. Although there are stark contrasts in the magnitudes and types of deployments these elections implied, the common interest in technology of such different countries is a clear signal of the times to come.

Now, this varied and pervasive use of technology in elections should not come as a surprise to anyone. In this digital age of ours, it is only logical for those in charge of such a sensitive endeavor, to adopt the innovations sprouting in all corners of the world, and benefit from the speed, accuracy, transparency and overall efficiency only modern technology can offer.

Europe, one of the main catalysts of the enormous technology-driven transformations we are experiencing, is also adopting election administration technologies in varying degrees. Although there are plenty of examples to illustrate how the Continent is using election technology, I would like to focus your attention on three countries that will be useful to shed light on three clear tendencies in the elections world:

**Estonia: The Internet voting pioneer**

Electronic voting is sometimes taken to mean voting using the Web. In fact, Estonia has been pioneering Internet voting since 2005. In the recent EU parliamentary elections, 11.4% of voters chose to cast their ballot this way. The data shows that Internet voting in this country has slashed costs and improved efficiency, making voting easier for many. Estonia is the only country that has conducted national elections allowing its citizens to decide whether to vote online, or to cast a ballot in person.

According to a study conducted by the ONG Freedom House, Estonia ranked first in the world for Internet Freedom. Such recognition is not a mere accident. It is the result of a systematic and comprehensive approach to e-Government that has taken this 1.3 million people nation to lead the digital government revolution worldwide.

To further improve its i-voting platform, and to begin offering to other nations wishing to provide such services to its citizens, Cybernetica, the Estonian R&D lab that built the original Internet voting system used in Estonia, has partnered with Smartmatic to form the Smartmatic-Cybernetica Centre for Excellence for Internet Voting. This multidisciplinary centre of research and development is focused on improving Internet voting by approaching it from a wide assortment of viewpoints: user friendliness and convenience, ergonomics and accessibility, security and auditability among the most important.

**Belgium: Europe’s first parliamentary election with voter-verified paper audit trail**

On May 25, Belgian voters became the first to cast their ballot in an EU parliament elections using a 100% automated and fully-verifiable electronic voting solution. In this election turnout reached 90%, the highest in the EU together with Luxemburg. Although such a remarkable level of participation cannot be attributed exclusively to technology, it certainly denotes the trust like a major breakthrough to some, but it represents an important step for e-voting as it regains steam in the continent.

Remember that during the last decade, flawed technology gave automated voting a bad reputation in Europe. The VVPAT, now a de facto standard in the industry, makes an auditor out of each individual voter. It also creates a perfect means for post electoral audits, and an ideal way to increase trust and participation.

**Bulgaria: Piloting a more transparent and more efficient system**

India and Belgium began their processes to adopt e-voting decades ago. Their current status as world references are the consequence of years of testing and piloting. Bulgaria just began transiting that very same road.

After a long campaign to change its laws, Bulgaria piloted a fully-verifiable voting system in the EU elections in May 2014. In four cities, including the capital, Sofia, it offered voters visiting 100 polling locations the opportunity to use Smartmatic’s touchscreen voting machines to cast ballots. Our e-voting platform performed successfully, paving the way for a possible implementation in binding processes in the near future.

These successful experiences in Estonia, Belgium and Bulgaria signal three tendencies likely to change the landscape of elections in the near future, not only in Europe, but globally. Piloting new technologies, enhancing auditability via a Voter-Verified-Paper-Audit-Trail, and Internet voting will be hot topics in the years to come.
Combating Cybercrime: The International Perspective

By Tessa Yang, Editorial Researcher, Government Gazette

When it comes to cybercrime, there is little universal agreement. The far-reaching scope of criminal activity conducted over the Internet ensures a vast number of stakeholders who often differ on their definitions of cybercrime and the appropriate strategies to combat it. Where opinions do tend to coalesce, however, is on the gravity of the problem and the need for stronger international co-operation on the issue.

Challenges

The Norton Cybercrime Report estimates that in the year 2012, the total cost of cybercrime among 24 countries reached $388 billion—more than the global black market in marijuana, cocaine, and heroin combined. Those footing this immense bill include private corporations and state-run institutions, but also everyday individuals who fall victim to such scams as “scareware,” which uses fear tactics to convince users to download harmful software onto their computers, or “phishing,” through which hackers attempt to acquire sensitive information like passwords and credit card details.

The sheer scope of cybercrime coupled with its borderless nature renders international co-operation absolutely essential. Indeed, in GCHQ’s “The UK Cyber Security Strategy: Protecting and Promoting the UK in a Digital World,” there is great emphasis on creating internationally agreed-upon “rules of the road” for the Internet. The report claims that the UK’s strong international alliances make it easier to implement these rules. At the same time, it acknowledges that many other countries lack the appropriate legislation to adequately detect and prosecute cybercrime, let alone prevent it.

The challenge alluded to here is a legal one. According to the “dual criminality” principle, an individual can be extradited to another state to face prosecution only when his / her actions constitute a crime in both countries—the one requesting the extradition and the one receiving the request. Even a state with stringent anti-cybercrime policies may therefore struggle to hold offenders accountable if they are located in a state where cybercrime laws are vague, relaxed, or nonexistent. International tensions like the crisis brewing in Ukraine further hamper efforts at interstate co-operation.

A second challenge pertains to the fact that cybercrime engenders a culture of intrastate mistrust. Following the recent revelation of the Heartbleed bug, for example, the US National Security Agency quickly came under fire, with accusers claiming the NSA and the White House had either known about or exploited the security vulnerabilities.

There is, further, a known lack of co-operation and trust between public and private institutions over instances of cybercrime. State-run cybercrime centres face criticism for overemphasizing the protection of critical infrastructure, at the expense of excluding the private sector. Information sharing becomes stalled at both ends; the government is naturally concerned over leaking sensitive security information, while private businesses seek to protect their intellectual property.

Third, it is difficult for national governments to take a firm stance against cybercrime when state-sponsored cyber attacks have become a viable strategy in national intelligence and security. Stuxnet is one well-publicised example. The joint US-Israeli computer worm reportedly destroyed 1/5 of Iran’s nuclear centrifuges, demonstrating the potential for actions initiated in cyberspace to create tangible effects in the physical world. Subsequent attacks on US financial websites by the Izz ad-Din Al-Qassam Cyber Fighters in 2012 were interpreted by some to be Iran’s retribution, though Iran denied the hackers had received any state backing. Allegations of state-sponsored cyber attacks also abound between the US and China, North Korea and South Korea, and India and Pakistan. Proven or not, these alleged incidents drastically intensify the stakes in the cybercrime landscape and once more impede the pursuit of a unified international solution.

Current Projects

The UN has not proven inactive in addressing cybercrime, though the extent to which it can carry out its initiatives is subject to some question. The General Assembly Resolution 65/230, adopted in April 2011, was most significant for requesting the establishment of “an open-ended intergovernmental expert group” to assess the problem of cybercrime and member states’ approaches to tackling it. The UN Office on Drugs and Crime subsequently released its “Comprehensive Study on Cybercrime” in February 2013. Data was obtained through questionnaires from 69 member states, 40 private sector organizations, 16 academic organizations, and 11 intergovernmental organizations.

The study’s key findings pertain to some of the issues already addressed—namely, the impact of international “fragmentation” and a lack of co-operation between public and private sectors. Recommendations included creating clear international standards on gathering extraterritorial data, strengthening technical assistance to police, and developing an “expedited mechanism” to streamline the prosecution of cybercrime.

Various UN sub-groups, including the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, have also passed their own resolutions on specific cyber-related issues, such as the use of the Internet for the exploitation of children.

These efforts are important in initiating a crucial dialogue on cybercrime and bringing attention to the magnitude of the problem. They can additionally establish a legal structure for member states to follow when launching or updating their own anti-cybercrime programmes.

UN Resolutions, however, are generally non-binding. More successful in creating compulsory standards are regional alliances and frameworks. The Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime calls itself “the only binding international instrument on this issue.” The treaty was ratified by 36 European states, as well as 6 non-European states including the US, Japan, and Australia. It works to reduce jurisdictional disputes by establishing common minimum standards for cyber-related crimes and provisions for transnational access to certain kinds of data.

Widely praised by many governments and industry groups, the treaty found its critics primarily in civil rights organizations. The San Francisco-based Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF) was particularly vocal, calling the Convention “dangerous” and “invasive.” One concern was that by creating universal standards, it would bind the US to carrying out policies inconsistent with its own national commitment to free speech.
Combating Cybercrime: The International Perspective (Cont’d)

This is not an uncommon reaction to anti-cybercrime projects, which must always tread the line between keeping up with tech-savvy criminals and inappropriately amplifying state control.

Promising initiatives also exist between certain public and private entities. The London Action Plan, founded in 2004, brings together state and private agencies from 27 countries to promote international spam enforcement co-operation. The National Cyber-Forensics and Training Alliance (NCFTA) links private companies, government agencies, and academic organisations to neutralize cybercrime in the U.S.

The Future of Anti-Cybercrime

This is only a small selection of the efforts states are taking to create a safer cyberspace. Anti-cybercrime processes remain imperfect, but they have matured over the years as the problem attracts international attention. Future developments therefore can and should focus on strengthening these existing projects.

At the same time, the speed with which technology and cyber criminals evolve necessitates newer, more creative approaches. Whereas large companies can find themselves trapped in a bureaucratic mire, unable to bypass strict hierarchical structures to make quick decisions, cyber criminals are known for their ability to swiftly adapt. Changing this imbalance requires a fundamental change in police procedures—a steering away from traditional crime-fighting in favour of cybercrime and the creation of a safer cyberspace generally. But there is the possibility of an even greater impact. As the UN’s comprehensive study notes, an increasing amount of crimes, whether conducted over the Internet or not, involve geo-distributed electronic evidence. Overcoming jurisdictional disputes, forming international partnerships, and reshaping our own understanding of cyberspace are therefore integral steps in preventing and prosecuting all kinds of crime in the 21st century.

Sources


C ulture lies at the heart of all human endeavours and meaning making, framing, for instance, economic systems, science, law, and ideas of governance as well as theology.

It is one of the most complex things to understand. And it provides the context of everything that happens in society – through education, identity, art, social relations and all forms of representation as well as the production of knowledge. Culture is both the tangible and intangible fabric that binds us.

Understanding culture might be the most active solution we require in solving the crisis of human co-existence. For nations, peoples, individuals to live together without war, environmental catastrophe, poverty or forms of social exclusion, the answer may lie in cultural solutions. The Catalan philosopher and human rights theorist Raimundo Panikkar says, ‘cultural translations are more delicate than heart transplants.’ This points to the value of being culturally astute and aware if we wish to understand and change the world to be a much better place.

The core institutions of society (which are value laden) are not free floating but have secured their position and power through language and culture. Although it is often assumed that political change or legal, economic and social policy is the remit of government, culture itself lies at the bedrock of all human interactions and activity. And as we can see, the world of the twenty first century is marked by complex interdependencies and everyday encounters with difference that characterise how culture works and expresses itself.

Eminent sociologist Zygmunt Bauman has shown how culture is profoundly paradoxical. It is the traditional as well as the innovative, the old and the new, the conservative and the radical. It can be parochial or cosmopolitan, fundamentalist or open and transcendent.

Recognising the importance of culture as a key (and binding) pillar of society means that having cultural understanding is regarded as crucial for interpreting and negotiating the world. As recently appointed Governor-General of Australia (and retired General) Peter Cosgrove remarks, ‘Both in their scale, and their cultural significance, the proliferation of linkages among nations is without precedence. It is a phenomenon that is inexorable. Language skills and cultural sensitivity will be the new currency of this world order.’

In this regard, the discipline of cultural studies has emerged as the discipline par excellence for this age. Graeme Turner suggests that what cultural studies has importantly done is to make everyday life central to the humanities. This approach to knowledge brings new and crucial opportunities to negotiate and understand the complexity of the world we live in.

Cultural studies ‘activates knowledge’, as the late pre-eminent scholar Stuart Hall put it. It provides the intellectual space and means to get inside culture and read it with sensitivity and acumen.

These considerations form the background of the European Conference on Cultural Studies being hosted by the International Academic Forum (IAFOR) in Brighton this July. This year’s conference theme is focused on the Borderlands of Becoming and Belonging. Borders are ubiquitous to human society. They are physical but also social, theological, psychological, political, economic, but always deeply cultural. Like culture, borders are paradoxical in their effect. They can be enabling as well as prison making. They produce the ‘us’ and ‘them’.

We live defined by borders, and cross them in our everyday life, in numerous ways. Borderland theory is about exploring the idea that identity, however, is always in process, multiple, and shifting. The borderlands show two things: that culture is not static and that no single culture has a lock on truth.

As we know, local, national and global cultures are being transformed by the intensification of human migration, mobility and an internationally networked society like never before. Claims of home, identity and belonging have become universal across nations, regions and communities where cultural globalisation is characterised by multicultural, multi-religious, multi-racial, multi-sexual and multi-ethnic everyday realities.

The world of the twenty first century, however, is not turning out to be so much about a clash of civilizations as Samuel Huntington predicted, but more about the tensions within civilizations and societies themselves as struggles for sovereignty, cultural survival and political participation become the catchphrases of the age.

The ideas for this conference are inspired by the work of Gloria Evangelina Anzaldúa who was a feminist scholar of Chicana culture. Her idea of the borderland, which she explored as a person living on the Mexican-US border, has become a critical conceptual framework used by cultural researchers as a way of understanding, explaining and articulating the in-determined, vague, ambiguous nature of everyday life and the cultural politics of border-knowledge, border crossings, transgression, living in-between and multiple belongings.

These are known as the borderlands and represent the possibility of democratisation and cross-fertilisation of thought from different cultures. Borderlands offer social, artistic and educational space where people of diverse backgrounds and identities meet and share a space in which the politics of co-existence are experienced and lived in mundane ways.

What could be more relevant to understand at a time when the UNHCR estimate that there are now more than sixty millions refugees and asylum seekers? What could be more relevant to think about when the International Migration Organisation predicts that there will be between 25 million and 1 billion people displaced by 2050 due to climate change?

The IAFOR conference, which focuses on the borderlands of becoming, belonging and sharing, is therefore about examining how the culture of everyday life is regulated and contested across diverse political, economic and social contexts, and whether and how it creates spaces of belonging with others.

The event’s website can be visited at http://iafor.org/iafor/conferences/eccs2014/

Dr Baden Offord is Professor of Cultural Studies and Human Rights, Southern Cross University; Co-chair of the 2014 European Conference on Cultural Studies

By Dr Baden Offord, Professor of Cultural Studies and Human Rights, Southern Cross University

In the Borderlands of Belonging
Hot Town – Summer in the City!

By Doris Hecker and Annette Herschelmann, Kultursommer, Mainz

The festival “Summer in the City” in Mainz has been established as one of the most magnificent ones in all of the German republic. The organisers are justifiably very proud of what they have achieved.

Every year from June to August, the festival turns the city into a big open-air-arena, with concerts at the Zollhafen, Zitadelle, Volkspark and the Domplatz of Mainz.

Starting in 1997 as “Mainzer Zeltfestival” with a huge circus tent located at the Volkspark, it changed with a new concept in 2008 to “Summer in the City”:

International stars like Carlos Santana, Bob Dylan, ZZ Top, Green Day etc. turn the city of Mainz into one big stage!

This year we will invite you to attend the following concerts:

19.07.2014 Elton John - Greatest Hits-Live,
Nordmole/Zollhafen, Mainz
Sir Elton Hercules John is one of the most highly acclaimed and successful solo artists of all time.
He has achieved 35 gold and 25 platinum albums, has sold more than 250 million records worldwide, and holds the record for the biggest selling single of all time.
Over the five decades since his career began in 1969, Elton has played more than 3,500 concerts worldwide.
(www.eltonjohn.com)

28.07.2014 Neil Young & Crazy Horse,
Nordmole/Zollhafen, Mainz
Neil Young is one of the most respected and prolific rock/folk guitarists of the late 20th century. Raised in Canada, he first became well-known as a guitarist and occasional vocalist for the band Buffalo Springfield. After the band's breakup, Young became a solo performer. However, he also has spent more than 30 years performing with the super-group Crosby Stills Nash & Young, as well as with the band Crazy Horse. (www.imdb.com)

11.08.2014 Patti Smith and her band,
Zitadelle, Mainz
Punk rock's poet laureate, Patti Smith ranks among the most influential female rock & rollers of all time. Ambitious, unconventional, and challenging, Smith's music was hailed as the most exciting fusion of rock and poetry since Bob Dylan's heyday.
(www.primarytalent.com)

More concerts:
17.07.14, Katzenjammer
18.07.14, Ludovico Einaudi & Ensemble
20.07.14, Unheilig & Special Guests
25.07.14, Till Brönner & Quintet
26.07.14, Buika
01.08.14, Max Herre & Kahedi Radio Orchestra
03.08.14, Niedeckens Bap
09.08.14, Dieter Thomas Kuhn & Band
17.08.14, Nabucco - Die Große Freiheitsoper Von Giuseppe Verdi
23.08.14, Sportfreunde Stiller
29.08.14, Eric Burdon

Further information can be found at: www.frankfurter-hof-mainz.de, ticket-hotline: 06131- 242 888
From choir games to utopian city

This year Riga is a European Capital of Culture. Implementing the European Capital of Culture programme has been by far the most ambitious event in the history of Latvian culture as it includes several hundred activities specially created for the year of culture, each embodying the spirit of creativity and exploration. The preparation and implementation of the European Capital of Culture programme has involved more than 12 000 people throughout 2014. They come from nearly one hundred different cultural institutions, national and municipal cultural bodies and non-government cultural organisations.

Although European Capitals of Culture have been nominated since 1985, the next opportunity for a Latvian city to gain this status will only be in 2027. This European Commission initiative has provided a powerful impetus to the development of designated cities by increasing numbers of tourists, developing hospitality sectors, and initiating cultural processes and networks that have borne long-term fruit. Riga is no exception, as the Capital of Culture title gives the city a wonderful opportunity to draw international attention to itself, even before Latvia’s upcoming presidency of the Council of the European Union in 2015.

The European Capital of Culture programme was named Force Majeure with the aim of demonstrating, through events in different genres and through a variety of disciplines, that culture is an irresistible force, so strengthening the belief that culture can change people’s lives and cities for the better.

Riga has always had a vibrant and diverse cultural life. Thanks to Latvia’s rich choral tradition and the 2014 European Capital of Culture year, Riga has been designated as the venue for the World Choir Games in July. Competitions, friendship concerts, world-class musicians leading master classes and the World Choir Council meeting make Riga the world’s choir capital for two weeks. World colours, world sounds, Riga full of so many different and diverse singers from 73 countries! Song uniting nations.

This very year, when Riga is a European Capital of Culture, is the 100th anniversary of the start of World War I, about which it is said that it was the time that Europe went crazy. The ensuing confusion continued in Riga and Latvia until 1991, when we regained our national independence.

One of the most notable projects in the European Capital of Culture programme is the exhibition Stūra māja. File No 1914/2014 (open until 19 October) in the building once occupied by the USSR’s State Security Committee. Stūra māja, the former KGB building, is a symbol of an era, but for a number of reasons, was left abandoned. For almost ten years, no one knew what to do with it. The current occupant, the Stūra māja. File No 1914/2014 exhibition could be likened to a history of 20th century European memories. The ambitious exhibition features five different themed expositions revealing the relationships between people and authority and what power can do to people.

Since the beginning of July, the new National Library of Latvia building Gaismas pils (Castle of Light, from an epic Latvian poem) has seen a number of significant Riga 2014 projects in the fields of contemporary art and book publishing, including an exhibition and lecture series The Book, 1514-2014, and Centre for Contemporary Art exhibition Visionary Structures, From Johansons to Johansons, an excursion through Latvian avant-garde art of the 20th and 21st centuries.

Visitors to the library will also be delighted by early Christian mosaics, high-quality copies of Byzantine masterpieces from Ravenna, and reading-room bookshelves will feature book mosaics (biblio mosaico) by contemporary artists.

The European Capital of Culture programme is adorned with an extensive and ambitious series of exhibitions. From August, the Arsenāls exhibition hall will host Gustavs Klucis (1895-1938), Anatomy of an Experiment, the most extensive yet exhibition of this world-renowned Constructivist in his homeland, with more than 200 exhibits from Latvian and other European museums.

In September, the premiere screening of Force Majeure. Riga, by seven classic contemporary documentary filmmakers, will make us look at ourselves and Riga differently, neither the city itself nor its residents having really seen what is around us.

In September, the Survival Kit 6 international contemporary art festival will give everyone a good starting point in the search for the utopian city, guided by artists. Seeking, finding and imagining ourselves in our vision of the utopian city – a city that does not exist. But then again ... See you in Riga – European Capital of Culture!
Romantic vision turns to reality as sculpture show thrills large crowds

It all began as a romantic vision drawn up in an art studio in a converted barn in leafy Buckinghamshire.

But Andrew Sinclair and Diane Coates’ dreams of restoring the glorious traditions of UK sculpture are suddenly coming true in a very big way.

The pair are currently curating the Great British Sculpture Show in the gardens of Hatfield House, the magnificent Hertfordshire country home of Lord and Lady Salisbury.

And, within the space of two months, the show has proved a runaway success. Huge crowds have simply poured into Hatfield to see the array of magnificent art-work, which ranges from beautiful classical figures, to an incredible assortment of wildlife sculptures, to fantastical dinosaurs and dancing skeletons.

Hatfield House has been thrilled by the public’s appetite for the work, reporting a 19% year-on-year increase in attendances.

Andrew and Diane, who run a prestigious sculpture school from their studio in Bucks, assembled an impressive cast list of 23 of the country’s top sculptors, along with more than 80 exhibits - in the gardens of the home where Queen Elizabeth I spent much of her childhood.

Their mission is a dual one: they hope to sell the majority of the work to an adoring public – while at the same time, helping to rejuvenate public appreciation for figurative art.

“We went for an extremely high standard of selected work with the principal objective of attracting serious art collectors and buyers.

“But we also wanted to bring in some unusual quirky and humorous work alongside more traditional pieces. We have pretty much achieved that and we are pleased to see that the sales are now beginning to come in.”

The pair launched the six-month show at the beginning of April with a private viewing opened by the comedian Rory Bremner.

But another star turned up unannounced among the selected audience. Actor Colin Baker, famed as playing Doctor Who in the 1980s and for a recent appearance on the hit TV show ‘I’m A Celebrity’, joined the crowds viewing the trail of sculptures.

Colin, who also lives in Buckinghamshire, had a special connection with Andrew. The previous year, the sculptor had made him a...
magnificent bronze resin bust as part of a publicity campaign, and the actor responded by turning up to the show’s opening salvo.

But Colin Baker’s gratitude turned to awe as he toured the gardens for the first time.

“This will be the stuff that will be remembered 200 years from now,” he said. “What we do in our lives will be forgotten. But every single one of these sculptures will leave an enduring memory somewhere – they will last longer than we do. What human beings create defines humanity – not what we conquer.”

Rory Bremner, who rushed down from a matinee performance in London’s West End to open the private viewing, told assembled guests to ‘spread the word’ about the show and said: “This is a wonderful thing. Can I congratulate all of the artists on the fantastic work they have done.”

For those interested in investing in some of the work, prices range from £600 to £250,000. The quarter-of-a-million tag is for the show’s centre-piece, a vast 1.5-tonne bronze peregrine falcon made by the highly-acclaimed artist Geoffrey Dashwood.

Renowned artists David Goode, Tessa Campbell Fraser, Hamish Mackie, and Etienne Millner, President of the Society of Portrait Sculptors are among those exhibiting their work.

The Great British Sculpture Show, which runs until September 30, is open from 10am-5pm every day except Mondays at no extra charge beyond normal garden admission. [www.hatfieldhouse.co.uk](http://www.hatfieldhouse.co.uk).

The artists taking part in The Great British Sculpture Show 2014 are:

Judy Boyt, Dorothy Brook, Tessa Campbell Fraser, Diane Coates, Martin Cook, Dido Crosby, Geoffrey Dashwood, Nick Davis, Paul Day, Jeni Fairey, David Goode, David Harber, Brendan Hesmondhalgh, Annika Hellgren, John Joyce, Hamish Mackie, David Meredith, Etienne Milner, Carl Payne, Wilfred Pritchard, Andrew Sinclair, Rudy Weller, Cliff Wright.

Anyone interested in buying the art should contact Diane Coates at info@thegreatbritishsculptureshow.com or on 07810 480884.

Andrew is also displaying some of his finest work – including a massive dinosaur, ridden by a sculpture of a naked fat lady, and a life-size bronze resin recreation of Durer’s Rhinoceros wood-block print from the 16th century.

Diane’s ‘naughty angels’ – a series of cheeky evocative sensual heavenly bodies – can also be found as you wander the lush gardens.

“The variety of the work on show is immense. There is simply something for everyone,” she said. “We have at least four sculptors who were at Chelsea Flower Show and their work is highly collected. My personal favourites (other than Andy’s of course!) are David Meredith’s giant Greek-style horse and Carl Payne’s figurative ‘Three Graces’. But by singling out these, I may well be doing a dis-service to the others because there are so many great pieces of work here.”

Andrew and Diane own The Sculpture School Ltd in Wendover, Bucks, an internationally-renowned sculpture school and studio teaching all aspects of figurative sculpture. Students come from all over the UK and Europe to be taught the finest traditions of art there.

The school is still as busy as ever, despite Andrew and Diane’s constant dashes to Hatfield to oversee their show.

“It’s very hectic, but it’s been worth it,” said Andrew. “We hope to make this show a permanent fixture in the UK calendar, and more importantly, we hope it will help turn the tide in favour of figurative sculpture so future generations can enjoy and appreciate a continuation of the finest traditions of this country’s art.”

All photographs © Hatfield House
Liverpool Biennial 2014

By the Liverpool Biennial Team

The UK Biennial of Contemporary Art, 5 July – 26 October

International contemporary art that unfolds across Liverpool’s spaces, places and galleries.

Join us this summer for four months of free exhibitions, events and performances by leading contemporary artists, including the 8th Biennial Exhibition *A Needle Walks into a Haystack*, curated by Mai Abu ElDahab and Anthony Huberman.

At the heart of The Biennial Exhibition is a group show that continues Liverpool Biennial’s commitment to producing new work. This year, the commissioned artists are also invited to show some of their previous projects, providing more extensive introductions to a selection of artistic languages and practices. The show features work by artists Uri Aran (IL), Marc Bauer (CH), Bonnie Camplin (UK), Chris Evans (UK), Rana Hamadeh (LB), Louise Hervé (FR) and Chloé Maillet (FR), Judith Hopf (DE), Aaron Flint Jamison (US), Norma Jeane (US), Nicola L. (FR), William Leavitt (US), Christina Ramberg (US), Michael Stevenson (NZ), STRAUTCHEREPNIN (AT/US), Peter Wächtler (DE), and Amelie von Wulffen (DE).

The Liverpool School for the Blind was founded by Edward Rushton in 1791, and was the first such school in the country. In 1932 a modern extension was added, complete with art-deco designs by the sculptor John Skeaping illustrating the life and work of the school, including students reading Braille. The building was then used by the Merseyside Police and in 1983 became The Trades Union Centre, which included the music venue and studio The Picket and launched the careers of many local bands.

Alongside the group show, *A Needle Walks into a Haystack* will feature four solo presentations. At FACT, Sharon Lockhart (US) brings together ideas about childhood, philosophical inquiry, and the politics of the voice, anchored by works that refer to a young Polish girl named Milena.

In the months prior to Liverpool Biennial, the artist organised an educational residency in Poland for Milena and a group of twelve adolescent classmates (all girls aged 12–16). Together, they worked with a key philosophical text for children by Bartosz Przybyl-Ołowski. In the company of the author himself, along with the artist and her film crew, the girls performed exercises and activities designed to empower the authority of their own voices, emphasising the specific ways in which they choose to articulate their own perspectives about the world.

The outcome includes photographs, a sculptural installation of text works, and a new film, co-commissioned by the Biennial and FACT, that premieres in October 2014 at FACT.

Liverpool’s centre for the contemporary arts, the Bluecoat is the oldest building in the city centre and showcases talent across visual art, music, dance, live art and literature. For the Biennial Exhibition, the gallery displays work from the painter James McNeill Whistler (US, 1834–1903). Whistler cultivated a charismatic public persona that challenged the art community and elicited the mocking attention of the popular press. One of the most influential figures in the arts of the nineteenth-century, he played an important role in paving the way for abstract painting, but was also the first to consider the exhibition space as a total environment. More than 100 years after his death, Whistler takes part in *A Needle Walks into a Haystack* because his attitude, motivations and commitment are as resonant now as they ever were.

Tate Liverpool presents a new commission by prominent architect Claude Parent (FR), who for the last forty years has been taking his profession to its most avant-garde limits. Parent’s work, while considered part of the revolutionary utopian architecture discourse, is focused on meticulously shifting daily experience through subtle yet dramatic changes in the lived environment. He has built, lived, worked and taught in the constructions he devised according to his Fonction Oblique methodology. For *A Needle Walks into a Haystack*, he has re-designed the Wolfson Gallery, incorporating slanted floors and ramps to ensure that the audience experiences the museum anew. Works from...
Art and Culture

the Tate collection by Anni Albers (DE/US), Babette Mangolte (FR), Gustav Metzger (DE), Francis Picabia (FR), Gillian Wise (UK), Mark Leckey (UK) among others, are presented here to complement Parent’s ongoing passion for challenging conformity.

Upstairs at Tate, works from the Tate collection link the institutional space of the museum to the familiar space of the home, in the manner of a domestic environment. The broad range of works selected, together with their staging, alludes to the central role of the intimate and familiar space and the way in which it has been represented by artists throughout history – as well as being a tendency within the Tate Collection.

Pieces presented from the Tate Collection include work by Ivor Abrahams (UK), Helena Almeida (PO), Richard Artschwager (US), Francis Bacon (UK), Rut Blees Luxemburg (DE/UK), Claude Cahun (FR), Patrick Caulfield (UK), Marc Camille Chaimowicz (FR/UK), Saloua Raouda Choucair (LB), Giorgio de Chirico (IT), Joseph Cornell (US), Keren Cytter (IL), André Derain (FR), Sam Durant (US), André Fougeron (FR), Naum Gabo (RU/US), Henri Gaudier-Brzeska (FR), Robert Gober (US), Nan Goldin (US), Spencer Gore (UK), Philip Guston (US), Richard Hamilton (UK), Vilhelm Hammershøi (DK), Susan Hiller (UK), David Hockney (UK), Sanja Ivekovic (HR), George Jones (UK), R.B. Kitaj (US), Sherrie Levine (US), Linder (UK), Andrew Lord (UK), Lucy McKenzie (UK), Sylvia Melland (UK), Rodrigo Moynihan (UK), Paul Nash (UK), Gabriel Orozco (MX), Blinky Palermo (DE), Blinky Palermo and Gerhard Richter (DE), Claude Parent (FR), Thomas Schütte (DE), Kurt Schwitters (DE), Thomas Struth (DE), Andy Warhol (US) and Rachel Whiteread (UK).

Finally, an exhibition at St. Andrew’s Gardens as part of A Needle Walks into a Haystack explores the work of filmmaker Jef Cornelis (BE). Over the course of three decades (1963 – 1998), many Belgians turned on VRT, the Dutch-language Belgian public-broadcast channel, and encountered programmes conceived by Cornelis, introducing mass audiences to contemporary art and culture. Eschewing traditional TV formats, the programmes made use of the language of art itself – sudden juxtapositions, abstract compositions, or conceptual mise-en-abyme. For A Needle Walks into a Haystack, Koen Brams (BE) has selected films by Cornelis for viewers to watch on televisions, not only introducing a UK audience to this important and recalcitrant figure, but also serving as a place for conversations about what television can be and how this medium can be used to document and represent art.

Also featured in Liverpool Biennial 2014 are Bloomberg New contemporaries, the John Moores Painting Prize, a group show at Open Eye Gallery and Adrian Henri at LJMU’s Exhibition Research Centre.

There will also be a free programme of music events, talks, screenings and family workshops throughout the festival.

And don’t forget to visit the Liverpool Waterfront to see Dazzle Ship. Using the pilot ship Edmund Gardner as his canvas, Venezuelan artist Carlos Cruz-Diez has responded to the practice of Dazzle painting in a new work co-commissioned by Liverpool Biennial, 14-18 NOW WW1 Centenary Art Commissions and Tate Liverpool, in partnership with Merseyside Maritime Museum.

To find out more, visit www.biennial.com
The 14th International Architecture Exhibition, entitled *Fundamentals*, directed by Rem Koolhaas and organized by La Biennale di Venezia, chaired by Paolo Baratta, this year will be open to the public for 6 months from June 7 through November 23, 2014, in the Giardini and the Arsenale.

66 National Participations will be exhibiting in the historic pavilions of the Giardini, the Arsenale, and the city of Venice. Among these, 10 countries will be participating in the Exhibition for the first time: Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, United Arab Emirates, Indonesia, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Morocco, Mozambique, New Zealand, and Turkey.

Paolo Baratta states: "with Rem Koolhaas our aim is to create an exceptional, research-centered Architecture Biennale. A project that involves the entire Biennale, which fully exploits its potential. Never before has the entire Biennale been inside la Biennale. La Biennale embraces various disciplines beyond Art and Architecture (Dance, Music, Theatre, and Cinema), and here too Koolhaas didn’t miss the opportunity. In the Monditalia section of the Exhibition, Dance, Music, Theatre and Cinema will be incorporated to epitomize the articulated and living contexts in which architecture may be conceived or imagined."

This time the role taken on by our director differs greatly from arranging a stage for the works and ideas of the invited architects. The Exhibition is the result of research carried out under the guidance of the director and exhibited in alignment with his project. And here Koolhaas goes straight to the point. With great courage and ambition, after having traced the history of modernity over the past 100 years to the present, he identifies and presents the elements that should act as references for a generated relationship between us and architecture (*Elements of Architecture*).

The specific goal for the Monditalia section of the Exhibition, at the Corderie, is to gather and illustrate significant dimensions of Italy by means of ad-hoc studies. The result aims to remind us of the complex Italian reality, which is a paradigm of not just local but global complexities that must not be denied or concealed. By revealing these realities we are able to access references that are also able to inspire new architecture.”

Rem Koolhaas describes his Biennale: *Fundamentals* consists of three interlocking exhibitions – *Absorbing Modernity 1914-2014*, *Elements of Architecture*, *Monditalia* – that together illuminate the past, present and future of our discipline. After several architecture Biennales dedicated to the celebration of the contemporary, Fundamentals will look at histories, try to reconstruct how architecture finds itself in its current situation, and speculate on its future.

*Elements of Architecture* will pay close attention to the fundamentals of our buildings, used by any architect, anywhere, anytime: the floor, the wall, the ceiling, the roof, the door, the window, the façade, the balcony, the corridor, the fireplace, the toilet, the stair, the escalator, the elevator, the ramp...

Under near-microscopic attention, the apparently mundane elements of architecture are revealed as unstable compounds of cultural preferences, forgotten symbolism, technological advances, mutations spawned by intensifying global exchange, climatic considerations, fluctuating thresholds of comfort, mythical desires, political calculations, regulatory requirements, neoliberal economics, new digital regimes, and, somewhere in the mix, the ideas of the architect.

Traditional architectural elements – the ceiling and the window, but also even the façade – now belong to advanced technological domains, yet the fundamental elements of architecture endure, albeit in sometimes radically different forms. By looking at the evolution of architectural elements shared by all cultures, the exhibition will expand the architectural discourse beyond its normal parameters, and include a broad public in an exploration of the familiar, the erased, and the visionary dimensions of architecture.

*Absorbing Modernity: 1914-2014*. In 1914, it made sense to talk about a “Chinese” architecture, a “Swiss” architecture, an “Indian” architecture… One hundred years later, under the influence of wars, diverse political regimes, different states of development, national and international architectural movements, individual talents, friendships, random personal trajectories, and technological developments, architectures that were once specific and local have become seemingly
interchangeable and global. Has national identity been sacrificed to modernity?

Participating countries will engage a single theme – Absorbing Modernity: 1914-2014 – and will show, each in their own way, the process of the erasure of national characteristics in favor of the almost universal adoption of a single modern language and a single repertoire of typologies. But the transition to what seems like a universal architectural language is a more complex process than we typically recognize, involving significant encounters between cultures, technical inventions, and hidden ways of remaining “national.” In a time of ubiquitous google research and the flattening of cultural memory, it is crucial for the future of architecture to resurrect and expose these narratives.

By telling the history of the last 100 years cumulatively, the exhibitions in the National Pavilions will generate a global overview of architecture’s evolution into a single, modern aesthetic, and at the same time uncover within globalization the survival of unique national features and mentalities that continue to exist and flourish even as international collaboration and exchange intensify...

**Monditalia.** The physical presence of the Arsenale is interpreted as an ideal set. Rather than a sequence of individual episodes that typically do not connect to form a single narrative, we propose to dedicate the Arsenale to a single theme – Italy – and to mobilize other festivals of la Biennale di Venezia – Film, Dance, Music, Theatre – to collectively represent a comprehensive portrait of the host country.

In a moment of crucial political transformation, we decided to look at Italy as a “fundamental” country, completely unique but showing certain features – particularly the coexistence of immense riches, creativity, competences, and potential combined with political turbulence – that also make it a prototype of the current moment.

Throughout the Corderie, exhibitions and a series of theatrical productions and events will unfold, engaging architecture, politics, economics, religion, technology, industry… Each one could leave a physical trace in the form of sets, objects, written material, projections, or the extended presence of people. The Corderie would be imagined as a multidisciplinary work in progress, constantly evolving and on permanent display, with varying degrees of activity and varying scales of productions taking place in its different sections.

Together, these episodes represent a scan of the entire country, represented by the Tabula Peutingeriana, a 5th Century map of Italy as the core of the Roman empire, that is still entirely relevant...

**Collateral Events**

21 Collateral Events are scheduled for the 14th International Architecture Exhibition (they were 18 in 2012). The Collateral Events, selected by Rem Koolhass and promoted by non-profit national and international bodies and institutions, take place in several locations; they offer a wide range of contributions and participations that enrich the diversity of voices that characterize the Biennale Architettura.

**“Biennale Sessions” programme for universities**

The “Biennale Sessions” project is taking place for the fifth consecutive year. After the extraordinary success of the previous editions, la Biennale offers for the 14th edition the “Biennale Sessions” programme directed at universities, fine arts academies, and research and educational institutions in the fields of architecture, visual arts and other associations. The goal of the “Biennale Sessions” is to encourage visits to the exhibition by groups of at least 50 students and teachers who will be assisted in the organization of their journey and stay. They will be able to organize seminars in a space made available to them free of charge by la Biennale. As of today, 70 international universities have already signed up for the “Biennale Sessions”.

**“Meetings on Architecture”**

This year the “Meetings on Architecture”, organized by la Biennale, will be enriched by the Weekend Specials programme, conceived as an essential part of the section Monditalia: conferences, workshops, performances and debates will run during the six months of the Exhibition. The 3rd International Conference “Archives and Exhibitions” will take place in October.

Educational activities are addressed to individuals and groups of students from schools of all grades, universities and architecture schools, professionals, companies, experts, fans and families. The activities, conducted by selected staff trained by la Biennale di Venezia, are aimed at actively involving participants in both guided itineraries and workshop activities.
Over the past ten years, the European Cultural Foundation (ECF) has supported more than 1,800 trips across 59 countries through our STEP Beyond Travel Grants programme. The acronym in the name stands for ‘Supporting Travel for European Projects’, while ‘Beyond’ refers to the cross-border nature of ECF’s work. The fund was established in 2003 with the aim of enabling artists, cultural operators, journalists, translators and researchers to cooperate and exchange across borders between the EU at that time, the countries that were to join in 2004 and neighbouring countries of the soon-to-be enlarged EU (Albania, Belarus, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Kosovo, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Russia, Serbia and Ukraine).

As of 2005-2006, with the financial help of Open Society Foundations, the fund’s scope was broadened to cover Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey. And after nearly a decade supporting travels to/from the Arab-Mediterranean regions through Roberto Cimetta Fund, ECF included these regions in its own eligible country-list as of 2010.

By prioritising exploration eastwards, STEP Beyond aimed to avoid new divisions in Europe and to emphasise the fact that Europe did not stop at the eastern borders of the EU.

Mobility is important to our foundation, as it contributes to our goal of supporting cultural exchange and creative expression across wider Europe. In fact, ECF’s commitment to supporting and stimulatting the mobility of artists and cultural operators dates back to a time long before STEP Beyond came into existence.

The origins of our organisation, which celebrates its 60th anniversary this year, lie in the idea of culture connecting Europe and providing a solid basis for its future – which is also why the Foundation played a pivotal role in setting up the well-known Erasmus Programme in 1987.

For decades we have been advocating for mobility to take a prominent place on the EU political agenda, as we believe that travel is essential for challenging stereotypes and gaining understanding of the value of European diversity. Simply meeting other people face-to-face, sharing knowledge and finding others whose talents complement yours can truly kick-start a project and set a chain of transformative ideas in motion.

As one of our grantees put it, it is all about planting a seed from which something can grow. We believe that giving those seeds the opportunity to disperse and take root plays an important role in building societies that are more democratic, open and inclusive.

In developing its mobility schemes, ECF has always been sensitive to the current European socio-political context, investing where cultural mobility can make the most difference.

Aligning with trends and needs has led ECF to carry out various reviews of its grant processes and to develop an advocacy agenda on mobility. One of the process-changes we made is launching the STEP Beyond Lab in early autumn 2012.

Next to being a digital tool to administer and manage the grant-making process, the Lab gathers an online community of like-minded cultural practitioners who have applied for a STEP Beyond Travel Grant.

By inviting our applicants to join the STEP Beyond Lab at the time of submitting their application, we aim to provide the applicants – regardless of whether their application is successful or not – the possibility of learning from and feeding back to each other, easily sharing their content on this and other platforms (e.g. Facebook and Twitter), promoting their projects and finding project partners.

Therefore the Lab is much more than a grant administration tool: it is a space for creation, collaboration and knowledge exchange among peers.

Although the primary mission is to connect the artists and cultural operators of wider Europe, ECF also regards the travel grants scheme as an ‘antenna’ whereby firsthand experience and information can be gathered on the latest developments, as well as on the emerging players within the European cultural scene.

In other words, however small the grants awarded to STEP Beyond travellers might be (travel grants range from €250 to €700, depending on travel directions) – the information on where, why and how people travel to different places in wider Europe is extremely valuable for our foundation as it can influence our policies.

[This article is an excerpt of a soon-to-be published online multi-media publication featuring former STEP Beyonders, the past, present and future of STEP Beyond. For more info: www.culturalfoudnation.eu]
SALT – A Nomadic Initiative for Art, Culture and Environment in the Arctic

by Helga-Marie Nordby, Initiator of SALT and curator of SALT Art

SALT is a unique cultural platform – creative, historical, environmental and communal – that brings together art, architecture, music and food in the Arctic landscape. SALT opens in August 2014, starting out in Norway before, over the coming years, travelling across the northernmost part of our planet, making a home in Greenland, Iceland, the Faroe Islands, Ireland, Scotland, Spitsbergen, Alaska and Russia. SALT is an ambitious and inspiring concept designed to stir the imagination using the nature and history of the Arctic as the framework for strong arts and cultural experiences.

The Arctic

For thousands of years people have followed the movement of animals and the seasonal rhythms in the Arctic landscape. Footprints are few. SALT is inspired by and moves in that same Arctic landscape with care and respect.

The world is watching the Arctic, where climate changes are currently manifesting themselves twice as fast as in the rest of the world. This is where an estimated 22 percent of the world’s currently unexploited oil reserves are to be found but is, at the same time, one of the world’s most fragile areas. What will happen when the Arctic becomes even more ice-free and nations and global corporations start seriously demanding the extraction of oil and minerals?

Mankind has inhabited the Arctic landscape for ten thousand years. Arctic nomads wandered with the ice, taking advantage of available resources from coastal areas and mountainous countryside but leaving behind few traces. Their concern for – and close relationship to – nature means archaeologists are able to see few remnants of their culture. This is the essence of the Arctic indigenous people’s philosophy and the guideline for SALT’s eight year long journey, which will be a cultural platform focusing on our common future, lifestyle and on environment and climate changes.

Fish racks

Northern Norway has been the uninterrupted abode of more people than anywhere else in the Arctic region. This has been possible due to the abundance of fish at the outskirts of the Gulf Stream as well as the inventiveness and stubbornness of its inhabitants. To endure long winters, all kinds of food preservation methods had to be invented. Two of the most successful were the salting and drying of fish on rocks (clipfish) and the drying of fish (stockfish) on special constructions called fiskehjell (fish rack). For thousands of years, such fish racks have been seen along the northern coast, on exposed headlands and small islands, where winds are strong and fish dries fast. Today, in many places, these are in the process of being torn down and forgotten.

The fish rack has a form that reflects the coastal mountains. It has solid, strong poles that allow gusts of wind to slip through; it is a steep, slender and tall structure with an inherent Arctic flexibility; its lightness effectively enables it to be erected and taken down in a day in case people need to move along the coast. Since the poles float, they can also be dragged behind a boat when people look for new land, new seas and a new life. SALT has an equally flexible and fundamental function, albeit using art as the primary means of support.
SALT art

SALT is centred round an architectural structure inspired by the fish rack – developed by the Finish architect Sami Rintala. This structure functions as a physical and conceptual framework for site-specific art projects, geared to initiate a dialogue that connects with the landscape and nature – past and present – surrounding it. SALT’s core art programme SALT Art, consists of two major new art works, created by internationally acclaimed artists for every destination. Reflecting our contemporary existence in poetic and tactile ways, there is one project for the dark season, and one for the light season – SALT Night and SALT Day.

The very first SALT artist is Yang Fudong, one of China’s best-known contemporary artists and filmmakers. He is producing for SALT Night an outdoor, site-specific film installation for the beautiful and ever-changing landscape. His films are mostly black and white, plotless and fragmented, but at the same time hypnotic and epic in expression. “I think about how to tell a narrative by using not people speaking so much, but how the wind tells a narrative, or how trees tell a narrative”, he says. Silence is an important part of his work, inspired by an Eastern tradition where meaning cannot be spoken but is understood by the heart.

SALT represents a physical memory bank enabling different ways of seeing and managing the Arctic region’s culture, nature and resources through art. SALT makes things visible in ways that incite commentary and discussion, illuminating the reality of the Arctic by creating a situation where past, present and future collide.

SALT architecture

“...if you want to create something new, you have to look for that which is ancient.” Juhani Pallasmaa

SALT also includes a specialised programme for architecture called SALT Siida. Near the SALT fish rack, architects, artists and students will conceive and build lodgings for SALT’s guests, through a research and workshop programme inspired by Arctic nomadic construction methods, designed for a simple and functional life in both rough and friendly climates.

SALT Siida takes its name from the Northern Sami language. Siida means family, home or community. SALT’s first Siida is inspired by the Sami-nomadic building tradition.

SALT Siida does not seek to create new visual representations of Sami culture or architecture. The aim is instead to search for new architectural potential within the wealth of Sami building traditions. The use of local materials and an understanding of the landscape, are examples of the themes explored.
Nomadism

Nomadism refers to a lifestyle in which people have no permanent domicile, but move from place to place. Anthropologically speaking, the concept is associated with traditional communities who travel along fixed routes between seasonal pastures and landscapes. The concept is also used in a more modern sense to describe a mobile and international lifestyle largely linked with Western individualism and freedom.

In both the traditional and the contemporary sense, the nature of mobility means that people must adopt an attitude of sparse minimalism regarding material possessions. With the help of new architecture, SALT Siida explores the possibilities inherent in minimalist and essentialist forms of housing. By exploring locally-rooted, cultural-historical knowledge, and at the same time designing housing that can accommodate ever-accelerating global mobility, SALT Siida aims to be an architectural laboratory for experimentation and discussion about the nomadic way of living practiced by communities in arctic, weather-beaten landscapes.

Sauna, arctic bathing and food

SALT Siida will also provide a home for a bar and restaurant championing locally sourced food – its menu regularly changing with the seasons – as well as a spacious sauna designed by Sami Rintala, functioning both as a spa and as a heated indoor stage for intimate concerts, readings and performances.

SALT offers a year round cultural programme curated by the SALT Team and invited co-curators from different cultural fields, festivals and institutions nationally and internationally. The programme will be spread out through the year, but also organized in intensive and thematically focused weekend programmes.

As an integral part of SALT Art and the ongoing artistic programme SALT will offer an education programme for children and young people with focus on learning through storytelling and performance. SALT want to create dialogue around our shared heritage; the sea, nomadic culture and issues related to Arctic history and development whilst considering the changes and challenges faced in this environment. Storytelling forms a common basis and a collective understanding and reference point of our existence. Throughout history and in all societies, storytelling has been a vital element for unity, community and a source of both knowledge and entertainment. This project focuses on human beings as narrative beings; on how storytelling has been the transfer of knowledge.

As SALT is an Arctic collaboration, it builds a strong Arctic cultural network in places that historically were connected through the trade in fish, hides and grain. The SALT Journey will create unique new networks and opportunities for collaboration, sharing of knowledge and cultural experiences.

SALT goals

- Through art and place unite history, present and future in an imaginative and inspiring way
- Be a unique platform for a public, high quality art programme
- Increase the awareness and knowledge of the Arctic
- Few footprints: moving in the Arctic landscape with care and respect
- Make visible nomadic values and life
- Existing as a physical memory bank, enabling different ways of seeing and managing the Arctic region's culture, nature and resources
- Be a reminder of values greater than the extraction and exploitation of natural resources
- Connecting people and culture in the Arctic region
- Create international, national, regional and local interest and engagement
- A strong focus on local and regional development
It was an unbroken path that the staff from Umeå 2014 – European Capital of Culture – set out on, when they decided to work with the key word co-creation. Has it been worth it so far? And what effects can they see already? A hint: think fireworks.

Fredrik Lindegren, Artistic Director of Umeå2014, and also Head of Cultural Affairs, tells us all about Umeå’s road from nowhere to dramatically increased numbers of visitors, and reaching 700 million unique readers in the first three months.

“We almost didn’t believe our eyes, when the communication analysis company Mediapilot presented the figures from their evaluation of our PR activities. 700 million people in Europe and China have read about Umeå in just a couple of months. Some of the world’s biggest media have published stories from Umeå in 2014. We’re on the map now. We have also contributed to spreading knowledge about the Sami population and their culture, which is very important.”

Mediapilot says that Umeå is mentioned as a modern and accessible destination, in media such as The New York Times, The Telegraph, The Times, Der Spiegel, La Repubblica, Bild and El Mundo. They also believe this could be a very good first step in building long term relations with people from Europe and the rest of the world.

But the increasing articles and programmes about Umeå are not the only numbers that went skyrocketing in 2014; the cultural activities and the numbers of visitors at the cultural institutions show the same growth. The opera, NorrlandsOperan confirms an increase in visitors and a significant increase in ticket sales. The arts museum Bildmuseet has had 41,868 visitors so far this year (January to April), which is 13348 more visitors than the same period last year. The regional museum Västerbottens Museum has doubled their visitors so far.

So, it’s all days of wine and roses in Umeå during the year? Not really. The concept of co-creation has been difficult to communicate, and with the large amount of financially supported projects, there are still a lot of people who wish they could have received funding, or been funded even more. Others again think that the municipality spends too much. The obvious upside is that a lot of local artists, theatres, bands and etcetera have been able to create bigger and better events, learn more and reach a larger number of people.

The general public has had a lot more and better events to choose from, and they have “consumed” more culture. The Umeå2014 administration believe that the long-term effects will be more culturally conscious, skilled and enthusiastic inhabitants in the Umeå region, which in its turn could lead to a more attractive and continuously growing region.

“It’s certainly been a challenge,” says Lindegren, “but it’s well worth the effort. Co-creation is what we’re all about here in Umeå, and the concept is now a model for future European Capitals of Culture. As of April 2014, we have supported 197 projects financially. The city has geared up, and with events like Elektra, Blanche & Marie, The Contemporary Circus Festival and the inauguration of the new cultural platform and meeting point Väven, maybe the best is yet to come.”

Read more about Umeå2014 and the programme for the rest of the year:

http://umea2014.se/en/

Elektra
http://www.norrlandsoperan.se/eng/events/0814-elektra/5820

Blanche & Marie
http://www.norrlandsoperan.se/eng/events/1010-blanche-marie/5953

Väven
http://www.korta.nu/vaven

The Contemporary Circus Festival
http://www.umeateaterforening.se/default.asp?ML=40
ImPulsTanz 2014 – Vienna International Dance Festival

By Maria Schneeweiss, Press & Public Relations, ImPulsTanz, Vienna International Dance Festival

With an annual programme of about 50 productions staged at Vienna’s most distinguished venues and more than 230 workshops for beginners, advanced and professional dancers of all ages, ImPulsTanz has developed into one of the most important festivals for contemporary dance and performance and the largest workshop festival worldwide.

A festival is born

In 1984, director Karl Regensburger and artistic advisor Ismael Ivo founded the festival – formerly called Wiener Tanzwochen – in an attempt to further contemporary dance in Austria. ImPulsTanz has since become a conglomerate of workshops, performances as well as research projects for professional dancers with visitors and renowned artists coming to Vienna from all over the world.

Ever since its beginnings, ImPulsTanz has been committed to contemporary dance as an art form, to its leading choreographers and emerging artists, as well as to dance as a social and popular practice. With a programme that ranges from epochal trendsetting creations to ground breaking, cutting edge works, ImPulsTanz stands for diversity and intensity, experience and contrast, exchange and debate. Through its artistic residencies, ImPulsTanz offers a quality environment for artistic exchange and research and fosters individual development and personal appropriation of this art form through dance practice in (integrative) workshops and research projects. ImPulsTanz provides an open access to dance with its festival lounge at Burghtheater Vestibül and legendary parties.

A pulsating social life

Social life in Vienna would not be the same every summer if it weren’t for ImPulsTanz and all the guests and locals that make the city pulsate 24/7. A great part of this extraordinary atmosphere is created by the 65 danceWEB grant holders – young dancers coming from more than 40 countries all around the globe this year. danceWEB is an organization within the scope of ImPulsTanz that is part of the newly created network Life Long Burning. LLB is a project supported by the Cultural Programme of the European Union, dedicated to the sustainable support of contemporary dance and performance in Europe as well as the enlargement of its audience.

Another source of this pulsating social life ImPulsTanz is known for would be Biblioteca do Corpo, the international education project by ImPulsTanz co-founder and choreographer Ismael Ivo, which is having its second manifestation this year. 30 young dancers from all over the world were selected to participate in this programme,
ImPulsTanz 2014 – Vienna International Dance Festival (Cont’d)

giving them the opportunity to work with highly acclaimed choreographers such as Ismael Ivo, Francesca Harper, the ballet advisor for the movie Black Swan, or Jose Agudo. As a result of six weeks of intense work, the young ensemble will present the fruit of their labour in a performance at the Volkstheater in Vienna.

A kaleidoscope of contemporary choreography

This year’s ImPulsTanz – Vienna International Dance Festival will show a kaleidoscope of international choreography from 17 July to 17 August 2014 in 16 venues all over the city: the grand Belgian choreographer Alain Platel will inaugurate the festival with his successful production tauberbach, South Africa’s rising star Dada Masilo will show a humoristic contemporary interpretation of Swan Lake, Lloyd Newson and his highly acclaimed DV8 Physical Theatre will show the world premiere of John, the great Meg Stuart will present Sketches/Notebook and further outstanding artists will participate in the festival.

A very strong local scene will complete the top class performance programme: internationally renowned Austrian choreographer Chris Haring will resume his classic Talking Head and show his latest production Deep Dish, Amanda Piña & Daniel Zimmermann will explore the origins of the war dance ‘hoko’, Akemi Takeya, Georg Blaschke, shooting star Florentina Holzinger and many more are bound to perform at their best.

Next to the main programme featuring internationally renowned companies, the [8:tension] – Young Choreographers’ Series shows the state of the art of young choreography by 8 to 14 emerging artists invited each year. In 2014, for the first time, the public can seize the chance to grant the most interesting, charming or most evil, meanest or maybe grumpiest [8:tension] performance video clip with the newly created Fan Award. The voting will take place online at www.lifelongburning.eu, where all the [8:tension] artists’ clips are available. For the grand finale, the Prix Jardin d’Europe – the highest prize given to young choreographers in Europe – will be awarded in a festive award ceremony.

Financial support

Thanks to the support of the Culture Programme of the European Union, the city of Vienna, the Austrian Federal Ministry of Culture and several private sponsors and international institutions, ImPulsTanz has managed to expand and survive over a rather impressive course of time. Budget cuts and the current standing of the economy make it difficult, however, to maintain such high standards and have forced the festival to cut down on international productions...

For more detailed information about the festival programme, visit our website: www.impulstanz.com
A Backpack (full of) Culture

By Maja Zrnčić, Ministry of Culture, Zagreb

Art and Culture in kindergartens and schools

2013 Pilot programme

2013 – 2020 Development programme

A Backpack (full of) culture is part of the Government policy for kindergartens, elementary and high schools, meaning that the beneficiaries of this programme are three-year old children and pupils from 6 to 18 years of age.

The programme is a joint initiative of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Croatia and the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports of the Republic of Croatia and a joint investment by the area of education and the area of culture at state level.

A Backpack (full of) culture is a national complementary programme of support to the elementary and high school curriculum related to art and culture which will be implemented in Croatian schools by experts (writers, fine artists as well as theatre, music and dance artists).

The programme provides children and youth with access and brings them closer to art and culture, develops their aesthetic culture and in general makes children and youth sensitive to the field of art and culture. The pupils will be trained for a positive approach to all types of art and culture.

In its development the project will be adapted to the needs of counties and local self-government units while the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports will give basic recommendations as to the programme implementation.

Organisational model:

The programme is based on cooperation at national, regional and local level.

Partnership between two political sectors/two ministries is novelty in itself.

The programme provides the pupils with the possibility of familiarising themselves with artistic and cultural works/expression of high quality and professional standards, covering the broad area of the following:

- Performing arts (theatre, dance)
- Fine arts
- Film arts
- Music art
- Literature
- Cultural heritage

The specificity of the Backpack is in the co-operation with Art academies and Art Academy students that will take part to the workshops for children and youth with the programmes they have created in cooperation with their professors. Given their age, students can develop a good rapport with children and youth and can be motivators and the ones who will make children and youth sensitive to the field of art and culture and a positive approach to all types of art and culture.

A Backpack (full of) culture is a joint investment by the area of education and the area of culture at national and local level involving all counties and municipalities.

The programme aims at:

- Making possible for children and youth in kindergartens and elementary and high schools to participate in cultural programmes conducted by professionals
- Enabling availability of access to the broad field of cultural expressions and the possibility of development and understanding of culture in all its forms
- Assisting kindergartens and schools in engaging into various forms of cultural programmes.

A Backpack (full of) culture will be developed continuously and evaluated based on the following principles:

- Permanence (constancy, sustainability) of the programme: A Backpack (full of) culture will be a constant programme for children and pupils.
- Programme for pupils: A Backpack (full of) culture is intended for children and pupils regardless of their social or economic status, ethnic or religious affiliation and type of kindergarten or school they attend.
- Achievements of the national curriculum objectives: The content must be aligned with the objectives of the national curriculum, including its specific areas.
- High level: The art and culture programme offers children and pupils a high level of artistic quality and professional standards.
- Programme authors and implementors: Experts/professionals in various artistic practices (writers, fine artists, theatre, music, dance and other artists, as well as art academy students).
- Diversity: A Backpack (full of) culture includes various forms of artistic and cultural expression from various cultural and historical periods.
- Programme comprehensiveness: Music, theatre, visual and reproductive/performing arts, film, literature and cultural heritage; they all need to be included in the programme and presented in all the forms.
- Regularity of programme implementation: The programme must be implemented regularly in each class and each school year.
- Culture – school cooperation: The schools and the cultural sector at all levels must cooperate closely on the Backpack (full of) culture. Schools must be included in the programmes and must be given a plan of foreseen activities.
- “Division of roles”: Between the schools and the cultural sector.
- Local level responsibility and involvement: Individual school responsibility, responsibility of the counties and municipalities included in the programme to strengthen the sense of inclusion of all parties and enable local variants of the Backpack (full of) culture.
- Financing: A Backpack (full of) culture is financed by the state budget.

In the first phase the Backpack is intended for kindergartens and schools further away from city centres to which culture and art programmes are less accessible.

In March 2014 A Backpack (full of) culture embarks on a new journey.
Professional Certificate in Strategic Education Planning

20th–24th October 2014
London, UK

For more information, visit: http://education.parlicentre.org
TPP Can Make or Break Asia’s Outlook

By Shihoko Goto, Northeast Asia Associate, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars

Endless rounds of negotiations and clinching eleventh-hour deals are the rule, rather than the exception, to the fine art of trade talks. But even by those global standards, the ongoing debate to conclude the Trans Pacific Partnership deal to integrate the economies of the Asia-Pacific region which has been in the works since 2010, has been frustrating.

What’s more, speculation that the talks face hurdles that simply cannot be overcome continues to grow as numerous deadlines continue to be extended. Such a failure, however, would have far-reaching security as well as economic consequences, given that Asia remains the driving force of global growth.

Describing TPP as a game-changing pact would hardly be an exaggeration, given that the 12 member countries account for nearly 40 percent of global GDP. Moreover, TPP goes beyond simply reducing tariffs among member nations, and will encourage greater co-operation on establishing labor standards, environmental protection rules, and intellectual property rights, among other issues critical for economic development.

According to the Peterson Institute for International Economics in Washington DC, a successful deal could lead to annual global income gains of $295 billion, including $78 billion for the United States alone. A successful TPP could also lead more countries such as South Korea to join the group as well, and it could also encourage other trade pacts in the region to be established.

Such economic integration is key to the future growth of the region which is facing increasingly troublesome political relations. In addition to fears about China’s rapid militarization and North Korea’s nuclear aspiration, Japan’s adverse relations with South Korea as well as China are particularly worrisome.

For now, the spillover effect of such rising hostilities in East Asia have been limited economically, but encouraging greater economic co-operation is expected to enhance much-needed dialogue between the region’s biggest powers.

The positive impact of TPP is not, however, limited to enhancing trade relations between nations that are currently facing diplomatic difficulties. By joining the trade pact, member countries are forced to abide to higher trading standards which in turn will push them to pursue domestic reform. That actually gives an excuse to the government to blame external pressure to push forward sweeping changes that would face public opposition. In Japan, for instance, TPP is expected to break down the small but incredibly powerful agricultural lobbying groups and liberalize the country’s agriculture market.

Without the pressure of TPP, such changes would face formidable opposition despite the fact that without them, Japan’s global competitiveness would suffer in the longer term.

For the United States, meanwhile, moving forward with TPP is a key part of Washington’s plans for an economic rebalance to Asia. While there are a number of alternative trade deals among Asian nations currently underway, TPP is the only one that includes the United States.

So TPP is in effect the one shot that the United States has in taking on a leading role in setting the economic agenda across the Pacific, and hold on to its established position as an economic power in the region, and not simply a military force.

Yet there are numerous issues that still have yet to be addressed that will ensure TPP’s safe passage within the next few months. For one, the Obama administration is facing tremendous opposition from within the ranks of his own Democratic Party and high-profile liberals, who are worried about the potential job losses that such a sweeping trade deal will bring.

Nobel Prize-winning economist Joseph Stiglitz, for instance, recently stated in the New York Times that “there is a real risk that it will benefit the wealthiest sliver of the American and global elite at the expense of everyone else. The fact that such a plan is under consideration at all is testament to how deeply inequality reverberates through our economic policies.” Stiglitz added that TPP would only lead to more jobs leaving the United States, and that it would only lead to a “race to the bottom” for those already struggling to make ends meet at their livelihoods are exported.

Meanwhile, lawmakers on Capitol Hill on both sides of the political aisle have made clear that the White House will need to secure Trade Promotion Authority to successfully conclude TPP, so that Congress votes either for or against the deal in its entirety.

The chairman of the powerful House Ways and Means Committee Dave Camp said in June that TPA would need to be agreed upon before TPP is concluded, adding that he would not support TPP if a deal was reached before a fast track for Obama was approved. Given that the United States will be holding midterm elections in November, it is highly unlikely that TPA would be agreed upon before then, if at all.

The United States, however, is hardly alone in confronting stumbling blocks to TPP at home.

In Japan, the second-largest economy among TPP members, there is growing unrest not just from the agricultural sector that would be the hardest hit by open market access. There is fear among voters that joining TPP will lead to an erosion of its own national identity and values.

Even in a country that remains geared toward export-oriented growth, public worries about opening the floodgates to foreign products that could lead to unhealthy diets and more migrant workers is becoming ever stronger.

To be sure, changes in the status quo brought forward by TPP will lead to changes in consumer trends as well as legislation. The risk of failing to embrace such changes, however, is greater political, as well as economic, uncertainty that will hurt Asia.
Deciphering India’s New Foreign Policy Agenda

By Jason Miklian, Researcher, PRIO

It’s a new dawn in India. The landslide May victory for Narendra Modi’s Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has injected a contagious sense of optimism throughout the country that robust economic growth will return and that the stifling bureaucracy and corruption pervasive throughout society will be slashed. The victory also emboldens India’s belief that it can be the great counterweight to China’s 21st century rise. Understanding how India sees its global role gives us a unique chance to explore how new leadership will shape India’s regional and international position.

So what is the ‘Indian Worldview’? In truth, it is both muddy and in flux. Over the previous decade, security (including terrorism), energy (water, natural resources), economy (trade and investment, corporate social responsibility), climate change, and normative activities (humanitarian and foreign aid) have all been used to attempt to define what India stands for. India’s regional role is now enmeshed within global ambitions, while bilateral agendas in South Asia are complicated by natural resource competition, environmental degradation, and securitized interactions between Muslim and non-Muslim communities. As South Asia’s preeminent power, India is in a unique position to set regional parameters for the development of order, justice and economic change.

The BJP’s electoral mandate encourages bold visions for India as both a provider of regional security and gateway to global prosperity. But rapid ideological change is easier said than done when working with entrenched bureaucracies – and India has one of the world’s largest. To decipher the challenges, I suggest three major foreign policy changes that Modi may make – and also offer five areas where he is more likely to stay the course.

What’s new?

1) India is open for business.

We could see the clearest shift in India’s relations coming even before elections were completed. Modi campaigned heavily on not only improving India’s domestic economy which has dipped to what some pundits have called a ‘disastrous’ 5% annual GDP growth rate, but also in what he called ‘restoring India’s prestige abroad’. Labeling outgoing Prime Minister Manmohan Singh’s tenure as a disaster is too harsh. Still, the many scandals in Singh’s cabinet combined with his failure to the rural poor who voted him into office and to the business community which hoped that his previous liberalization streak would continue ultimately led to the Indian Congress Party’s worst electoral showing in its history.

Under Modi, foreign direct investment rules will likely be substantially loosened, and large trade pacts will be pursued. Modi has also promised to reduce red tape as he did in the state of Gujarat, which he led as Chief Minister during a time of significant economic expansion. The inviting business environment for foreign firms is obvious, but it remains to be seen exactly how Modi can insulate newcomers from the systemic corruption that marks nearly all big business dealings in India.

2) India will finally break from Russia in favor of the USA and EU.

For all of its celebration as the world’s largest democracy, India has traditionally had an uneasy relationship with other large democracies. Recent low points include the testy political exchange in 2008 over a proposed US-India nuclear deal, and public support for Russia this year after it annexed Crimea. While the BJP’s pro-USA roots were well established during the party’s last administration, personal animosity between the USA and Modi (the former denied the latter a visa for a decade for his role in deadly Hindu-Muslim riots) looked unpromising on the surface.

However, the businessman within Modi – perhaps rooted in mutual fears over China – has so far won the day. Modi’s early statements have encouraged the USA, which for its part recalled Ambassador Nancy Powell to encourage a fresh start. At the same time, Russian overtures to China after the international backlash in the Ukraine have encouraged a re-think on international alliances. This turn would likely mean not a reduction of India-Russia trade, but instead a more targeted expansion for other actors, and EU-based businesses should benefit substantially. For example, India is the world’s largest arms importer, spending 20 billion Euro in 2013 alone. Although 75% of purchases come from Russia, other major producers like the USA have begun to make significant inroads. The 70 billion Euro in

2013 EU-India trade tripled the previous decade’s sum, and will continue to multiply – especially if the long-delayed India-EU Free Trade Agreement comes to pass. If so, the EU might be the biggest economic beneficiary of a Modi government.

3) India’s foreign policy apparatus – and those trying to influence it – will grow dramatically.

Today, India employs just over one foreign service officer for every million citizens. India’s Foreign Ministry will likely become much more robust after years of stasis. Piggybacking upon the arguments made by former Minister of External Affairs Shashi Tharoor, Modi has promised to develop a bigger diplomatic apparatus and push an expanded diplomatic core to better support ‘Indian interests’. While building embassies and recruiting and training foreign service officers takes time, the development of a more youthful and worldly foreign desk at a time when most countries are looking to deepen engagement with India would pay substantial dividends.

India’s growth has also emboldened new actors. Foreign policy-oriented lobbying groups in New Delhi are likely to proliferate during the next decade, especially as Indian firms become more entrenched in overseas operations. Public and private research and policy institutes have also multiplied, and many are connected to business elites that have their own distinct foreign policy interests. The rise of regional and sectarian political parties with cross-national constituencies or interests complicates matters further, as India’s foreign policy establishment is much less insulated from domestic influences than before.

What will stay the same?

1) Indian foreign policy will remain neo-realist, and its economic actions neo-liberal.

Traditionally, India has been known for the policies of non-alignment and anti-colonialism. Since 1991, the ‘Nehruvian Consensus’ model has crumbled from nationalist political forces and ‘vote bank’ electoral politics based on caste, religion and language identities. Liberalization and globalization radically transformed the Indian economy but also gave rise to local opposition. Today, ‘Strategizing’ of India’s economic and policy agendas abroad has
become a popular lens for analyzing and evaluating India’s perceptions of power, foreign policy agenda and the constraints to forwarding great power aspirations. While non-alignment and anti-colonialism have become irrelevant to India’s place in the international system, given Modi’s alignment with Hindu fundamentalist groups, some are concerned that this ideology will carry over into foreign policy. However, Modi is more likely to follow in the footsteps of Atal Bihari Vajpayee.India’s last BJP Prime Minister, who left a broad legacy of foreign policy pragmatism despite similar ties. With the possible exception of a more robust Israel relationship, Modi’s Hindu background will likely mean little in terms of foreign policy.

2) Ill-treatment of Indian citizens abroad will carry diplomatic consequences.

While the uproar over alleged mistreatment against Indian consular officer Devyani Khobragade attracted the most attention (and headaches for the USA), the affair was merely one in a growing list of perceived slights of citizens abroad that have inflamed passions at home in India. From Norwegian social services taking away the children of Indian guardians to protests resulting from the assault on an Indian student in Australia, what happens to individual Indian citizens abroad is increasingly interpreted as a lack of respect for India itself by nationalists, and this will likely continue to be a source of uncomfortable diplomatic dinners under Modi. This trend is exacerbated by the wild west-style rush to grab market share by 24-hour news channels in India as they project a regional vision nor underwritten major regional initiatives (such as the Mekong-Ganga Cooperation and Bay of Bengal Initiative) have emerged as potential important institutions in regulating region-specific issues.

3) Commitments to the United Nations in the far abroad will grow, but South Asian multilateralism will be a distant dream.

Indian foreign policy towards institutions remains rough around the edges. After the G77 and ‘Third World’ collapsed in relevance, India has cautiously began to dip back into the realm of UN politics. But in its Council seat and providing manpower for peacekeeping missions. But in its exercise of soft power to obtain compliance and produce order, cooperation and development, India remains rudderless.

This is nowhere more true than in South Asia, especially as India continues to define its own national interest and ‘the common good’ of its neighbors as one in the same. The lack of Indian interest in driving regional organizations has led to the breakdown of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) as a constructive political forum. By contrast, South Asian initiatives (such as the Mekong-Ganga Cooperation and Bay of Bengal Initiative) have emerged as potential important institutions in regulating region-specific issues.

4) Regional rhetoric was titillating, but regional relations will prove exasperating.

Perhaps the most surprising foreign policy statement that Modi made on the campaign trail was a suggestion that the Ministry of External Affairs be split in two departments, with an international division and a regional division where policy might be decided by those Indian states bordering their foreign counterparts. Although this is unlikely, as India becomes a more active global leader the links between India’s interests and activities at the regional and global levels will grow increasingly entangled.

To paraphrase scholar Varun Sahni, while most emerging powers use their region as a launching pad for global success, South Asia is India’s drag anchor. The region is rife with ongoing conflict, fragile post-conflict peace processes, inter-state squabbles, and broad insecurity. India has neither projected a regional vision nor undertaken it with significant investment, accentuating neighbors’ sense of insecurity. Pakistan and Afghanistan remain intractably unstable, but India’s other neighbors may be where normative understandings of regional relationships are truly put to the test. This includes India’s attention to the impacts of climate change (Bangladesh and Nepal), humanitarian responsibilities in relation to massive internal human rights violations (Sri Lanka), and engagement with a country transiting to democratization and political liberalization (Myanmar).

5) International engagements will still be all about China.

China has firmly supplanted Pakistan in New Delhi as India’s primary rival, and this shift brings the need to play catch-up. India has recently engaged in a range of global issues with regional ramifications: natural resources, polar regions, outer space, sea lanes, and international monetary and trade regimes. In non-traditional areas like humanitarian aid, India is embracing international ambitions even as its own record in upholding these norms is weak. Engagement on all of these issues is conducted with one eye on what China does, and how India can maintain primacy in its sphere of influence. Also, the laser-like focus on India’s ‘territorial integrity’ on its periphery, particularly to the north (Nepal) and east (Bangladesh, Myanmar), is deeply related to fears over growing Chinese influence in South Asia.

What does it all mean?

While it is entertaining to speculate about new opportunities, the elephant in the room that can dramatically alter any of the above is the relationship with Pakistan. The outgoing government was criticized for appearing to prefer the stability of a Cold War-style stasis between the two countries, and Modi’s tenure began with a splash when he invited Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to his inauguration. Political theatrics aside, Modi is well aware that India’s shortest path back to 8% growth lies to trade normalization with its cultural cousin. It is admittedly an audacious suggestion given the nearly 70 years of animosity, but a normalized India-Pakistan relationship carries precedent given the BIP’s forays into the option before, and the immense benefits it would bring to both countries. It would also represent Modi’s best chance to bring deeper stability to South Asia, recognizing that ‘economy’ and ‘security’ are merely two sides of the same coin. More importantly, while heads of state often try to bring peace as a legacy project, a big reason why such ventures fail is the fact that they are conducted at the very moment when a leader’s political capital to see it through is weakest. If Modi tries early, he would be better able to weather the inevitable bumps on the road to normalization. Should he fail, he has the benefit of being haled all the proof he needs for a hard-line anti-Pakistan policy for the rest of his tenure. Regardless, Modi’s strong mandate means that we will be able to view India’s South Asia policies with a clarity and sense of purpose not seen in decades.
A ll eyes have been on Brazil this summer and the 2014 World Cup, yet Brazilians are adamant to point out that the country is more than the stereotype of ‘samba and football’. They are right. Over a decade of economic transformation, progressive domestic policy and thoughtful international orientation has seen Brazil radically improve its lot at home, and quietly assert itself on the global stage as an international power with a twist. Yet much like Brazil itself, these changes are laden with contradictions and challenges, reflecting the growing pains that accompany the rise to global status.

Discussions of global power shifts in recent years have focused attention on newcomers like Brazil to the fields of peacekeeping and mediation. The so-called ‘rising powers’, Brazil, Russia, India, China, were first grouped together in 2003 under the acronym BRICs, with South Africa subsequently included. While a heterogeneous group, these countries together have reinvigorated multilateralism. In their quest for influence, the BRICs have sought to reshape the global agenda in fields as different as trade negotiations, development aid, and international peace and security.

In this latter area, Brazil is well placed to potentially make meaningful contributions from a Global South perspective. Brazil’s position is unique in that it has adopted a stance that challenges traditional Western norms, yet without confronting the Western paradigm as a whole. Placing itself at the boundary between North and South, its reformist ideas may well help Brazil to play a bridging role between different conceptions of global governance. Brazil has sided more with established powers, seeking to advance ‘middle power diplomacy’ and multilateral solutions, endorse compromise positions in disputes, and embrace notions of ‘good international citizenship’ in diplomacy. Such actions make Brazil an attractive partner for established powers.

However, this shift in economic and political influence from North to South presents the international community with a number of challenges in terms of international order and stability. Illustrative of this are the recent divisions over necessary responses to intervention in Libya and Syria, and the non-interventionist stand taken by Russia and China. In such a situation, however, Brazil has sided more with established powers, seeking to advance ‘middle power diplomacy’ and multilateral solutions, endorse compromise positions in disputes, and embrace notions of ‘good international citizenship’ in diplomacy. Such actions make Brazil an emerging humanitarian actor.

Brazil as an emerging humanitarian actor

Fernando Henrique Cardoso’s economic policies of the 1990s laid the foundation for Brazil’s economic take-off, which allowed the country to enhance its focus on social projects. Since the beginning of the Presidency of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva in 2003, the reduction of poverty and inequality within Brazil has been a priority. The main social legacies of the Lula era are the Bolsa Família (‘Family Stipend’), which provides low-income families with a monthly stipend, and Fome Zero (‘Zero Hunger’), which aims to eradicate hunger and extreme poverty. The result has been to lift more than 30 million people out of poverty in the last decade, and significantly reduce income inequality across the country.

Brazil is seeking to further this social engagement abroad, making it a central element of its foreign policy agenda. Brazil has become an important humanitarian donor, with a foreign aid budget skyrocketing from USD 3 million in 2007 to over 95 million in 2010. A major part of Brazil’s aid goes to countries in the Latin American and Caribbean region, notably Haiti, Paraguay and Guatemala, as well as Lusophone countries beyond the region. Yet beyond traditional regional and cultural ties, Brazilian aid is increasingly disbursed to other countries in North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, and Central and South Asia. Particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, aid disbursements have been complemented by a greater diplomatic presence, increasing support for African multilateral institutions, and a focus on ‘non-oppressive’ cooperation.

Both in expanding its international development assistance in this manner, and in their broader humanitarian engagement, Brazil has been eager to demonstrate an alternative perspective on humanitarianism. Indicatively, Brazil abstained from the US and European-led military partnership against Libya in 2011 calling instead for a reshaping of the international protection of civilians agenda by proposing an alternative to the norm of ‘responsibility to protect’.
namely the ‘responsibility while protecting’. The concept was formally presented by the Brazilian government to the UN Secretary General in November 2011, but has yet to gain significant traction.

Therefore, Brazil’s particular model of engagement appears to be inspired both by Western norms of moral needs to ‘do something’ when faced with human suffering elsewhere, and by emerging powers’ commitments to the concept of state sovereignty. Brazil’s stance is neither fully challenging traditional norms, yet not entirely assimilating to them either.

Brazil as an emerging peacekeeping actor

Brazil has been a longstanding contributor to multilateral international peacekeeping operations (PKOs), committing troops to 46 of 65 UN IPKOs since 1956. While active, Brazil has tended to provide small numbers of troops to Chapter VI ‘peacekeeping’ missions which do not mandate the use of force. These missions have primarily been in Latin America and Lusophone countries. In recent years, however, Brazil has shifted to a more active and forceful role in its IPKOs. This has most notably been seen in Brazil’s command of the United Nations Stabilisation Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) since 2004, and more recently its lead role in the United Nations Interim Force In Lebanon (UNIFIL). Particularly since Lula’s presidency, Brazil has begun to participate in Chapter VII ‘peace enforcement’ missions, which in their mandate allow the use of force in PKOs.

This has been an important shift that should be understood in relation to Brazil’s 1988 constitutional commitments to non-intervention, respect for human rights, and the sovereign right to self-determination. In engaging in Chapter VII missions and using force for stabilisation and peacekeeping, Brazilian engagement in UN PKOs has broken with its previously staunch stand against interventionism. Yet this positional change has been an important and considered aspect of the country’s emergence on to the global stage, being both consciously (and contentiously) a part of the realignment of Brazilian foreign policy interests since the late 1990s.

This has had two important effects. First, it reflects Brazil’s recognition that engaging as an emerging power may require taking uncomfortable positions on issues of global importance. Second, despite this need for ‘normative flexibility’, Brazil still remains a crucial alternative voice regarding current practices in peacekeeping and intervention.

However, in attempting to instrumentalise both humanitarian engagement and peacekeeping operations to serve its foreign policy aspirations, Brazil’s position often appears unclear. Despite its vision of multilateral, non-interventionist, South-South approaches to stabilisation and development, Brazil has for over a decade led a Chapter VII Mission which falls squarely in a traditional mould of Great Power peace enforcement. Therefore, it is unclear whether the strategic direction of Brazilian humanitarianism and peacekeeping is to challenge existing Western approaches, or to accede to them.

The challenges of domestic politics

Despite emerging as a global actor, Brazil is often scrutinised on account of its domestic affairs. Despite the gains of the Lula period, present day Brazil struggles with internal challenges such as corruption, urban violence, poor infrastructure and income disparities. Despite a steadily improving economy over the past decade, figures by Oxfam (in 2011) noted that the richest 1% of the population (less than 2 million people) held 13 percent of all household income, equalling that of the poorest 50% (80 million). Moreover, since the summer of 2013, mass demonstrations and strikes bear witness to public discontent over the government’s spending priorities and the poor public services available to ordinary Brazilians.

Yet with features of Brazil’s domestic socio-economic policies figuring strongly in its foreign policy agenda, it is worth asking the extent to which a state can legitimately act as a donor or peacemaker internationally while being unable to provide prosperity or security in its domestic territory. Aware of how their international influence may be directly or indirectly undermined by domestic challenges, Brazil appears to be sensibly taking steps to resolve these issues. Redistributive policies have addressed poverty and inequality; tougher stances have been taken on institutionalised corruption in the wake of the Mensalão vote-buying scandal; and several states have also implemented security policies which have reduced violence markedly.

Moreover, current approaches to security are increasingly employing lessons from Brazilian participation in PKOs to address urban violence domestically, an evolution that is incorporating potentially more accountable forms of policing and the establishment of positive state presence in marginal urban areas.

Concluding remarks

Beyond concrete engagement in humanitarian and peacekeeping realms, Brazil has sought to build its own soft power with a view to remaking and renegotiating structures of global governance. In particular, Brazil’s interests lie in the reinvigoration of multilateralism as a means to solve conflicts; negotiating the use of force and respect for Human Rights; underscoring values of sovereignty, self-determination and non-intervention; and reinvigorating the role of regionalism and South-South cooperation in international relations. This is not without contradictions or challenges, both in Brazil’s own foreign policy choices and domestic socio-economic issues. In its increasingly significant international engagement, however, Brazil is traversing a path which sees it ‘speak truth to power’ by voicing complementary yet nuanced views about current approaches adopted by great powers; and acting as a representative of the interests of emerging players on the global stage.

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Professional Certificate in Policy Skills

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Towed Back or Locked Up: Australia’s Refugee Policy

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In September 2013 Australia’s Department of Immigration and Citizenship was renamed the Department of Immigration and Border Protection. Visitors to the Department’s website can now see a picture of a small wooden fishing boat adrift on a rough sea, captioned: ‘NO WAY: You Will Not Make Australia Home.’

This picture symbolises the focus on deterrence that characterises the Australian government’s approach to refugee policy. This policy is spearheaded by ‘Operation Sovereign Borders’, a military-led taskforce combining Australia’s Defence, Customs and Immigration departments, under which asylum seekers are intercepted at sea, loaded into enclosed lifeboats and towed back and left near Indonesia’s territorial waters. Most recently, asylum seekers fleeing persecution in Sri Lanka have been intercepted and handed directly to Sri Lankan authorities. Before the ‘tow-back’ policy began in December 2013, asylum seekers were intercepted and transferred to offshore processing centres in two neighbouring Pacific nations: Nauru, and Manus Island in Papua New Guinea. The 2,500 men, women and children currently detained on Nauru or Manus Island have been denied resettlement in Australia regardless of whether or not they are found to be refugees. The Australian government is now looking to formalise a deal with Cambodia to resettle asylum seekers from the Nauruan camp in that country.

Australia’s current policies toward asylum seekers have been found to violate international law on several counts. In the past year, UNHCR and Amnesty International both reported that conditions at the detention centres on Nauru and Manus Island constituted arbitrary and mandatory detention, and in some cases amounted to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. Asylum seekers in these centres have lacked recourse to fair, efficient and expeditious systems for the assessment of their refugee claims. At the time of writing, only a few dozen refugee status determinations have been handed down and evidence has emerged that Australian Immigration officials have sought to encourage the voluntary repatriation of Syrian asylum seekers detained on Manus Island. Such conditions have fuelled unrest within the camps, and in February 2014 a riot at the Manus Island detention centre led to violence between detainees, guards and local police in which one asylum seeker was killed and others seriously injured.

For the past two decades the Australian Government has maintained a policy of detaining all asylum seekers that arrive irregularly in Australia, without any right to a substantive review by a court or tribunal of the decision to detain, and without a maximum time limit on their detention. The possibility of indefinite detention is now being realised in a number of cases, including in cases where people have been recognised as refugees. For example, there are currently about 50 recognised refugees who have been held in closed detention for up to five years. Among this group are parents with very young children. The refugees received adverse security assessments by the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation, even though none were excluded from refugee status pursuant to Article 1F of the Refugee Convention. The reasons for these adverse assessments have never been disclosed, the refugees are unable to challenge their detention in the Australian courts, and the Australian Government has accepted that it is unlikely these refugees could ever be returned. The United Nations Human Rights Committee ruled in August 2013 that the cumulative effect of this detention amounted to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, and violated Articles 7 and 9 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The Committee directed that the refugees should be released under appropriate conditions, compensated and rehabilitated. At the time of writing the Australian government has not officially responded. Instead, on 14 May 2014 the Australian Parliament amended the Migration Act 1958 to mandate that recognised refugees who receive an adverse security assessment will never be eligible for a protection visa in Australia, effectively ensuring indefinite detention for future refugees in a similar situation.

The ultimate purpose of the Australian government’s policy toward asylum seekers is to deter asylum seekers from coming to Australia without a valid visa, whether by air or by plane. Indeed, asylum seekers who arrive without a valid visa are now officially described as ‘illegal’ in government publications and media statements, which misrepresents the nature of refugee flight that is recognised in Article 31 of the Refugees Convention. The recent militarisation of policy through Operation Sovereign Borders was spurred by the arrival of around 50,000 asylum seekers between 2008 and 2013. This unprecedented number was labelled a ‘national emergency’ by the current government, yet it pales in comparison to the large numbers of asylum seekers that are received every year by nations in Europe, the Middle East or Africa.

In direct contrast to the policies discussed above, Australia has a very proud history of refugee resettlement. Since 1945 more than 700,000 refugees have been welcomed into the Australian community. Many of these arrivals were part of discretionary intakes from Displaced Persons camps or Cold War Europe, but since the late 1970s the Australian government has maintained a permanent refugee programme that resettles 13,750 humanitarian entrants every year, including 6,000 Convention refugees selected from around the world. The success of this programme is underpinned by high quality resettlement resources within the government and the community sector.

Australia’s clear administrative, social and economic capacity for successful refugee resettlement renders the current approach to asylum seekers all the more disheartening. The irony is that the permanent refugee programme was largely developed as a result of Australia’s first wave of boat arrivals, the Vietnamese. These asylum seekers were received with equanimity because the Australian government recognised the need to share the burden of an international humanitarian crisis and the need to honour Australia’s obligations under international law. In so doing the government demonstrated political leadership and ensured long-term reputational, cultural, economic and demographic benefits for Australia. While asylum flows have changed in the intervening three decades, the scope for political leadership within Australia on this policy issue remains the same.
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