



SERN

Newsletter

13 June 2008
Volume 4 Issue 3
English Version

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SPECIAL EDITION “IV SERN GENERAL ASSEMBLY”

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The General Assembly 2008



The IV General Assembly took place in Norrköping on Friday 23rd May afternoon. After the welcome speech made by Li Teske, chairman of Norrköping Municipal Council, Kent Ogren, president of SERN Executive Board welcomed the members and the Italian ambassador in Sweden, H.E. Anna della Croce Brigante Colonna. He said that the process of creation and development of the Network began already in 2004 and since that moment the organisation has achieved numerous objectives through the creation of various working groups

but at the same time, the Network has different challenges in front of it. Indeed, during the next months and during the next general assembly, the subjects which have to be tackled will be: the revision of the SERN statute, the role of the executive board with the opportunity to reduce the members' number and the necessity to find new income sources for the development of the network.

The General Assembly approved the Annual Report 2007 in which three points have been underlined by Nicola Catellani: the increased number of members, the good results reached by the working groups and the importance to have a strategy to direct the network's activities. From the financial point of view, the Assembly approved both the balance sheet 2007 and the budget proposal 2008.

Two speeches took the attention of the assembly. The first one was held by the Italian Ambassador in Sweden, Anna della Croce Brigante Colonna, in which she highlighted how the two European countries can be seen as complementary: both of them can improve some of their policies thanks to the relation with the other country. The second one was held by County Governor of Östergötland, Bjorn Eriksson.

SERN acquired two new members, Regionförbundet Östsm and Övertorneå municipality, and gave a favourable decision to the Rinkeby-Kista, a Stockholm district, when its application will be formally submitted.

Moreover, the Assembly welcomed three new members of the Executive Board: Jan Owe-Larsson (Regionförbundet Östsm), Eva Andersson (Norrköpings Kommun) and Anna Hövenmark (Jokkmokk Kommun).

The next session of the general assembly will take place in Rimini from 16th to 19th April 2009, as decided by the Assembly after the proposed candidature made by the municipality of Rimini.

The decisions of the SERN Executive Board in Norrköping



At the SERN Executive Board meeting on the 22nd of May in Norrköping, the Board welcomed three new members to the Network; Östsm Regional Development Council, the Municipality of Övertorneå and the Municipal district Rinkeby-Kista of Stockholm City. During the Board meeting a followed up discussion from the meeting in Forli took place about how to deal with the

unpaid fees and the Secretariats role in EU application writing. The decisions that was made during the meeting where that the Secretariat would write a letter to the members that haven't paid their fees with an urge to pay and that the Secretariat will receive up to 10% of the EU grant that an approved application written by the Secretariat is given by the European Commission. The last session of the meeting took place together with the Board of Auditors, where they approved the budget over 2007 and it was decided that the Secretariat should provide the Board members quarterly updates about the incomes and the expenses of the Network on the platform. During the meeting the Executive Board accepted Rimini as proposed host for the General Assembly 2008 and suggested the event to take place in spring next year. The next Executive Board meeting was decided to be held on the 21st-22nd of November in Traversetolo.

Seminars

Seminar on Pre-school staff exchange project

The Pre-School Staff Exchange Project seminar gave opportunities for both Swedish and Italian members to be aware of the project and what it is about. The seminar focused on presentations of the SERN project and the organizational settings of Swedish pre-schools. During the seminar teachers from the spring exchange contributed and gave their impressions and experiences of the exchange. The seminar was followed up by a study visit at the pre-school Svanen in Norrköping and the event led to bigger interest of the Swedish curriculum for the Italian delegation. The SERN pre-school staff exchange will continue with exchange of teachers and organizations like Parmainfanzia and Meldola showed interest in developing contact with Swedish pre-schools.

Seminar on Healthy lifestyle and food: Best practices and awareness rising policies at local and regional level

The starting point of this seminar is that food education creates an important link among economy, environment, health, agriculture and food sector. Therefore it is necessary to build a network of projects on nutrition and promote an established relationship between public institutions and the private sector in order to enhance quality and coherence in the offer of training and information services. Both Parma and Reggio Emilia Provinces introduced their projects in which particular attention is given to the education aspect. Concrete experiences to approach young people to a healthy lifestyle can be seen in the organisation of the didactical farms and vegetable garden at schools where children have to take care of different types of vegetables and fruits in order to really understand the importance to eat healthy food. Moreover, these experiences have an important social aim letting different generations meet and exchange their way of life.

Workshop on Equal opportunity policies in Sweden

The workshop on Equal Opportunities consisted of a presentation made by Swedish Equal opportunities Ombudsman Office that talked about the Swedish equal opportunities policies with focus on working-life and family balances. After the presentation the audience had the opportunity to meet and ask practical question to a family with small children concerning how equal opportunities works in practice. A representative from the County Administrative Board of Östergötland talked about the fourth goal in equal opportunity; freedom from violence. A

presentation about the main issues pertaining equal opportunities in the Emilia-Romagna area was made by an Italian representative. The Seminar had a follow up the day after for a visit in a women's refuge where the theme was honor related violence. Interest for further development in the question has been showed particularly from the Municipalities of Ravenna and Forlì.

Study visit, Recycling and bio-fuels: Norrköping industrial eco park

The environmental subject has been tackled concretely with a study visit to the Norrköping industrial eco park. The main idea of the eco park is the ability to link different companies in order to let them take advantage of the recycling system of different types of materials.

The participants had the opportunity to visit Svenska Returpack, the nationwide deposit centre for aluminium cans and PET bottles, understanding how it is possible to re-use more than 80% of aluminium and plastic through a good recycling system. Afterwards, the participants visited a site for the production of biogas understanding how the production of these resources is closely linked to other two companies that pass their waste to Svensk Biogas with the aim of producing energy.

Seminar on Innovation and new technologies in the field of education

The Seminar on Innovation and New Technologies in the Field of Education consisted of several presentations about how the different projects in primary/ lower, upper and adult education level were implemented and which motivation that was put in. The seminar mentioned new technologies in learning, best practices in implementation of e-learning, support to digital literacy, ICT as a tool for support of students with specific needs and experiments of new forms of communication and learning. In the field of adult education a presentation about Grundtvig an in-service training course for teachers that gives an opportunity to acquire knowledge on how to develop own teaching modules was made and hopefully this can lead to further development between the Swedish and Italian actors.

Seminar on EU funding opportunities

The seminar on EU funding opportunities consisted of two speakers from Region Västra Götaland EU programme unit and from the West Sweden Office. From West Sweden Office the representative talked about different methods and approaches for successful development of EU-projects within the sector programmes. The presentation consisted of a view of the process from idea to application and the different key words between. From Västra Götaland EU programme unit the representative talked about Interreg IVC possibilities for EU funding projects.

Information seminar on SERN for observers

The aim of this seminar was the presentation of the activities of SERN to those Swedish organizations interested in participating in the network. Kent Ögren and Nicola Catellani made an introduction on the objectives, features and activities of the different project areas. In particular, two projects have been presented: on the one hand, the project on the policies to support parenthood (Vänernsberg municipality as leading partner) and on the other hand the project on sustainable tourism (Traversetolo municipality as leading partner).

Project Group Meetings

Project groups on Youth Policies

The working group discussion began with the presentation of a project of the Reggio Emilia municipality (organization which proposed this project group) called “Leva giovani” where young people become active actors in the participation processes of the local society. This project was considered by the Swedish organizations participating in the discussion a peculiar way to introduce young people in the local society and agreed to organize a study visit in the Reggio Emilia area in Fall 2008. Particular attention was given to the project developed by Pitea municipality called “Papp – Bag of money project” in which people from 13 to 20 years old can receive a grant in order to implement cultural and music activities.

The agreed study visit will be a first step in the development of future partnerships and exchange.

Participants: Municipality of Reggio Emilia, municipality of Ravenna, municipality of Scandiano, city of Molndal, Vänersborg municipality, many municipalities of the Norrbotten area (Kalix, Jokkmokk, Arvidsjaur, Pitea and Lulea municipalities).

Sustainable mobility in city centers

The project group was proposed by Parma municipality given the attention they put in the re-organisation of the city mobility.

The participants were: Parma and Scandiano municipalities, from the Italian side, and Trollhättan, Mölndal, Vänersborg and Falköping from the Swedish side.

The representative of Parma, Chiara Spaggiari, introduced the Parma model on sustainable mobility. In particular she focused her attention on the infrastructural works, the transformation of individual transport, the new collective transport, the explanation of the urban freight area and the dissemination and promotion of the meaning of sustainable mobility among citizens. Then, the discussion among the participants has been focused on the **homework transfer** which represents an important part in the planning of the city mobility.

Chiara Spaggiari and Stina Haglund from Mölndal municipality, who are the people in charge of mobility policies in their municipalities, agreed to taking contacts in order to see possible developments and exchanges.

Quality of life for 60+

At the meeting for the project Quality of life for 60+ the Swedish delegation consisted of the municipalities of Skövde, Norrköping, Trollhättan, Coompanion Fyrbodal and Hälsans nya verktyg. From the Italian side the representative was APindustria. The group kept working on an existing project idea that aims to encourage and empower the 60+ to become an active subject in participating and increase their influence and responsibility on decision making how to form the daily life as a senior. During the meeting it appeared that Sweden and Italy has a lot to learn from each other and possibilities for exchange in the fields of business, experience and trade. The group is currently working on the idea, searching for partners and for financial funding.

Sustainable Tourism

The representatives of the municipalities of Jokkmokk, Norra Bohuslan and Traversetolo met in Norrköping in order to discuss the development of the future events which will take place in September 2008 and March 2009 after the approval of the project by the European Commission.

The focus of the next meetings will be the **eco tourism** and the way to adapt this broad concept to the different territories in Sweden and Italy.

The first event will be in Val d'Enza area in September 2008 and the second event in Norra Bohuslan in late March 2009.

Young Entrepreneurs

The project group of young entrepreneurs met and approved the project proposal that was written during their last meeting. The group decided that the project proposal should be presented to the Executive Board and search for an EU funding in the terms of Interreg IVC.

Young Cultural Network

The working group consisted of musicians from the municipalities Scandiano, Meldola and Russi met together with a representative from the Municipal Association Norrbotten and discussed the possibilities for a future EU project. The group decided for two subjects Youth and Culture and will try to write a project proposal.

Developments of ports

The working group on development of ports met for a meeting and for a discussion about further collaboration in the subject. The group unified for four areas were a future exchange and collaboration would be interesting. The areas are intermodality, container development, environment and industrial safety. The group decided that the representative from Ravenna will take the proposal with her and present it to Ravenna direction and then wait for a feedback. The group aim to found out the possibilities for an EU financed project.

Emilia-Romagna Days

Workshop on Tourism

Friday 23rd and Saturday 24th were two days dedicated to the promotion of the Emilia-Romagna region in all its peculiarities.

The first approach for some Swedish representatives of tourist agencies was a seminar with the introduction of the different areas from the tourism point of view. In order to complete the picture of the regional excellencies, the participant had a "guided tour" in the food and wine delicacies of the promoted areas, namely Parma, Reggio Emilia, Ravenna, Forlì and Rimini.

Market

People living in Norrköping had the opportunity to taste typical food of the region during the two days market held at Knäppingsborg where some Italian companies could expose and sell some of their products such as Parma ham, Parmigiano Reggiano cheese, Balsamic vinegar, piadina and tigelle. The market had a great success and numerous products finished long before the end of the market time.

From the cultural point of view, Italian music and cinema were present in Norrköping with two young bands called Khorakhanè and YCN Orkestra and movie show with the screening of the film "Cinema Paradiso".