



SERN

Newsletter

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SERN Executive Board meeting in Mölndal



The SERN Executive met in Mölndal on February 28th. The meeting has been characterised by important decisions taken on the future of the network. First of all the Board as a result of a discussion that started last year has made a proposal to the Assembly concerning a number of changes to the statute of the organisation. The increasing number of projects with other partners in Europe has raised the need to establish strategic relations with some of them. As a result of this the Board has proposed to introduce and define in the statute the “partners” (with rights and obligations) of the network in order to make it possible for these organisation to be involved in the project group activities.

The increasing number of activities and the rapid development of the network has led also to the need of identifying a financially sustainable strategy of development of the network until 2012. The approved document foresees a strategy that combines an adjustment of the membership fess with a mix of other incomes deriving from SERN’s direct participation in EU projects, fees deriving from a dedicated support that the secretariat will provide to members upon request.

Finally the Board has approved the SERN annual report 2008. The document illustrates all the activities carried out in 2008 and provides a general evaluation of the activities as well as an evaluation through the indicators set out by the Strategy 2009-2011.

SERN meets the Swedish Royal Family



Roberta Mori, vice chairwoman of the Sweden Emilia Romagna Network, and the coordinator of the Network Nicola Catellani took part to a lunch on March 26th organised in the framework of the state visit of the King of Sweden Carl Gustav XVI and Queen Sylvia. The royals after having met the highest authorities in Rome stopped in Bologna with their delegation in order to know more about the links established between Italy, and in particular the Emilia Romagna area, and Sweden through the Sweden Emilia Romagna Network (SERN).

At the lunch participated also the Foreign Minister Carl Bildt and the Swedish Ambassador Anders Bjurner.

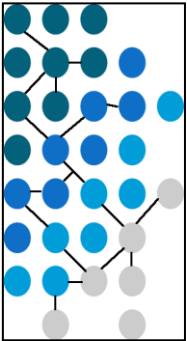
The meeting constituted an important recognition of the work carried out by the network and its potential in the context of the bilateral relations between the two countries.

Nicola Catellani and Roberta Mori showed to the majesties and the other participants the activities and the dynamics of cooperation that characterised the network. In particular, the attention was devoted to the five area of activities (welfare, environment, education, tourism, entrepreneurship) of the network in which the 55 members collaborate since 2005.

Matter of discussion were the projects of the networks and the perspectives of further development of the organisation, a unique context where European integration is fostered through concrete

cooperation developed from the needs or the best practices that each municipality or region participating expresses.

Training Programme: Transnational meeting in Rimini



After the regional training course which have been held at the beginning of March in Trollhättan and Linköping and in Forlì and Parma, numerous project proposals on thematic networks were proposed.

In particular, five on the nine proposals will be discussed during the first transnational event which will be held in Rimini on 16th -17th April. These one are:

- 2) Current and future skills in local health and social welfare ser-vices
- 3)Public procurement and climate implications
- 4) Towards 3x20: Reducing of CO2 Emissions and increasing energy efficiency renewable energy sources
- 5) Ecological food management in public schools

The Italian and Swedish representatives who participated in the regional training sessions should contact their twinned and partner European organisations to involve them in the transnational event in order to developed concrete networking projects.

All the information materials for twinned/partners towns are on the SERN platform and the deadline to inform the Secretariat on the European participants is **April 3rd**.

PROGRAMME of the ACTIVITIES

15th April 2009

Arrival of the participants in the SERN Training Programme

18.00-20.00 Registration

16th April 2009

9.30-10.45 Introduction Europe for citizens programme with particular focus on the action of thematic networking.

10.45-11.00 Coffee break

11.00-13.00 Focus on Thematic network project development and application writing

14.30-18.30 Working Groups on Thematic Networks together with Italian and Swedish participants

17th April 2009

9.00-12.30 Working Groups on Thematic Networks together with Italian and Swedish members

14.30-18.00 Presentation of the project group proposals

More information about the project at <http://training.sern.eu>

Information on the V SERN General Assembly

The 2009 SERN General Assembly will be held in Rimini from 16th to 18th April. As the last years, the general assembly meeting will be the occasion to discuss new issues concerning the future network activities and progress made during 2008. The registration will take place on Wednesday between 18.00 and 20.00(Hotel Sporting), on Thursday between 8.30 and 9.30 (Hotel Sporting) and on Saturday between 8.30 and 9.30 (at ITT Marco Polo).

PROGRAMME of the ACTIVITIES

16th April 2009

8.30-9.30 Registration

9.30-13.30 Seminar on urban safety policies to fight violence against women

14.30-17.30 Executive Board meeting

17.30-19.00 Guided tour of Rimini

20.30 Dinner

17th April 2009

9.30-12.30 Meeting of new SERN Working Groups

9.30-13.15 Seminar on strategic planning and local sustainable development

13.00-14.00 Lunch

14.30-17.30 Meeting of new SERN Working Groups

20.30 Gala Dinner

18th April 2009

9.30-13.30 SERN General Assembly

13.30-14.30 Lunch

14.30-16.00 Executive Board meeting with the new Chairperson and new political representatives

The proposed new SERN working groups are the following:

1. Young leaders in a changing Europe – proposal made by Norrköping municipality
2. Integrated coasts management – proposal made by Norra Bohuslän
3. Values and (moral) attitudes in sport activities – proposal made by Pitea municipality
4. Health for new generations – proposal made by Pitea municipality

Depending on the number of expressions of interest, the Secretariat will inform on the working groups that will be meeting in Rimini on 17th April 2009.

The deadline to register for the general assembly is **Monday 30th March** and the registration is only on-line on the public page of the SERN platform.

All the practical information on the 2009 General Assembly are on the SERN platform under the folder "General Assembly 2009".

Developed Projects with the EU grants (January-March 2009)

SECOND MEETING ON QUALITY IN PUBLIC SERVICES (Almansa, Spain)



The second conference in the framework of the Euroquality project took place in Almansa (Spain) from 16th to 19th February. The main objective of this meeting was the analysis of the results that the participating organisations (Scandiano, Fidenza, Blansko and Trollhättan municipalities) obtained between the June 2008 event and this one, in particular the introduction (for the pre-school group) and the joint development (for the elderly care group) of new customer orientation tools. The Almansa seminar set out the objectives for the coming months and in particular the definition of common “European” indicators of performance and satisfaction (pre-school services) and a common charter of services (elderly care sector).

The added value of this project is the ability to create a new method to work inside a network with a long distance collaboration and this will bring a fruitful starting point for the next meeting that will be held in Trollhättan in October 2009.

SECOND MEETING ON PARENTHOOD POLICY (Ravenna, Italy)



From 25th to 27th February 2009 delegations from Sweden (Vänernsberg municipality), from Norway (Holmestrand municipality) and Spain (Almansa municipality) participated in the second conference discussing on policies to support parenthood.

After the first meeting held in Vänernsberg in 2008, the focus of this event was on the cooperation between pedagogists, school operators and families in the framework of the support of children and families towards school policies. Particular attention was put on welcome and integration of foreign and disabled children and on the conciliation system for the support of parents.

SECOND MEETING ON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM (Norra Bohuslan, Sweden)



The second conference within the project on sustainable tourism was held in the five municipalities of the Norra Bohuslan area from 12th to 15th March 2009.

The participants represented a good and productive mix of public (political representatives and civil servants of the Italian and Swedish municipalities) and private (high quality food producers and representatives of tourist organisations) actors. This cooperation helped in approaching the concept of sustainable tourism under

different but complementary points of view.

After an opening plenary session focused on the Swedish approach, in particular the Västra Götaland region and Norra Bohuslan ones, the discussion passed in three working groups defined according to the participant's target.

The political representative and the civil servants focused their attention on the main strategies to promote or improve the practice of a tourism which has on the one hand, to preserve the local tradition and the indigenous natural environment, and on the other hand to promote the economic and social development of the involved areas.

The producers' group made a productive discussion starting from the Italian experience, of Parma and Reggio Emilia in particular, on how to certify their high quality food products and transform this high quality in a tool supporting the local economy. Moreover, particular attention was paid to the cooperatives' structure and how the Swedish reality can welcome it.



The tourist organisations representatives discussed on the opportunity to increase the level of tourism flow according to the Italian and Swedish territorial peculiarities.

A way to let people know the Italian territories was a common Emilia and Norra Bohuslan market where the local products were mixed and promote to the public.

The representatives of the involved municipalities will meet during the SERN general assembly in order to plan future steps and development of the project.

Pre-School Staff Exchange Project: meeting of the coordinating group



The coordination group of the project held its third meeting in Mölndal on 12-13 March. The group took several decisions related to the organisation of the exchange and to the topics on which the job shadowing activities will focus during the year 2009.

In particular:

- Outdoor Education** How is it provided and by what means?;
- Documentation** - How is it conducted? For what purpose?;
- Level of Interaction with the Family** - Written and oral information/formal and informal approaches; How are they provided?;

Autonomy/Independence of the Child; How is it promoted/observed/measured?;

Creativity and Innovation - What are the most creative or innovative approaches observed? What makes them innovative/creative?).

Each participant is expected to focus the attention on two of the issues through the tools for the evaluation of the job-shadowing that group has established. In 2009 there are at present 18 teachers that have asked to participate in the activities. The dates for the exchanges are:

Spring session 2009: 3rd May – 16th May in Italy; 24th May – 06th June in Sweden

Autumn session 2009: 4th October – 17th Oct. in Sweden; 25th October – 07th Nov. in Italy

The evaluation and dissemination seminar 2009 will take place in Mölndal or its vicinity between 25-27 November 2009.

Approved projects under the Programme “Europe for Citizens”



The European Commission has approved two new projects where SERN members are involved.

The first one is concerning the **energy efficiency and territorial planning** and the SERN members participating are the Boden municipality (applicant organisation), Jokkmokk, Norrköping, Trollhättan, Vänersborg, Falköping and Mölndal municipalities and Forlì, Parma, Russi and Traversetolo municipalities together with the Peterborough municipality (UK), Tampere (Finland) and Karlsruhe municipality (Germany).

The project foreseen two meetings, one in Forlì from 24th to 26th June and one in Boden in 2010.

The second approved project is the follow-up of the **Euroquality project** which sees the participation of the municipality of Scandiano (applicant organisation), the Terre Verdiene Union, the municipality of Trollhättan and the Scandiano's twinned towns. The first event will be held in Trollhättan in October 2009.

Some important deadlines for SERN members

- 30th MARCH** Registration for the SERN General Assembly
- 3rd APRIL** Registration of the twinned/partners representatives for the transnational event in Rimini within the training programme on thematic networking
- 16th-18th APRIL** V SERN General Assembly
- 30th APRIL** Individual Grants LLP Programme
- 24th MAY-6th JUNE** Pre-school staff Exchange
- 1st JUNE** Registration of the Italian, Swedish and twinned/partners representatives for the transnational event in Salsomaggiore Terme within the training programme on thematic networking.