

# Annual Report

## 2011



Sweden Emilia Romagna Network



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## The SERN Members in 2011

Aiccre Emilia-Romagna	Mjölby Municipality
Ass. of Municipalities Norrbotten	Mölnadal City
Ale Municipality	Norrköping Municipality
Arvidsjaur Municipality	Norrbotten County Council
Asp SudEst Parma (from Nov 2011)	Parma Province
Bertinoro Municipality	Piteå Municipality
Boden Municipality	Proges Cooperative
Borgo Val di Taro Municipality	Ravenna Municipality
Brisighella Municipality	Reggio Emilia Province
Canossa Municipality	Regional Development Norra Bohuslän (5 Mun.)
Cervia Municipality	Regional Development Council Östergötland (Östsam)
Collecchio Municipality	Rimini Municipality
Coompanion Skaraborg	Russi Municipality
Darvoce (from Nov 2011)	Sala Baganza Municipality
Falköping Municipality	Scandiano Municipality
Felino Municipality	Sinettica
Forlì Municipality	Smedjebacken Municipality
Imola Municipality	Skövde Municipality
Intur Fipe Scarl Rimini	Söderköping Municipality
Linköping Municipality	Traversetolo Municipality
Jokkmokk Municipality	Trollhättan Municipality
Coop Kara Bobowski	Uddevalla Municipality
Kalix Municipality	Vänersborg Municipality
Matproducenterna i Norr	Västra Götaland Region
Meldola Municipality	Unione "Terre Verdiane" (10 Mun.)
Montechiarugolo Municipality	Älvsbyn Municipality
Montecchio Emilia Municipality	Östgöta Coop Center
Motala Municipality	



# Introduction

The Sweden Emilia Romagna Network has undergone important changes during 2011. As the outlook at page 21 shows the network has been consolidating substantially its financial and economic situation setting the basis for a further growth.

The strategy identified in 2009 related to the creation of thematic networking processes within the network has proven successful and it is now showing important results.

The dynamics of cooperation set in motion through

- 1) the training project NTT+, MaNTT and PlaNet leading to the improvement of project planning and project management skills within the member organizations,
- 2) the establishment of long-term links with other countries and actors within the EU (Finland, Spain and Poland in particular),
- 3) the coordination of large processes of cooperation (such as CREANET and EUnet) which are now providing added value for the network

have led to the an unprecedented number of cooperation processes led by Swedish-Italian partnerships.

The combination of these elements has produced 11 thematic networks projects (all co-funded by the Europe for citizens programme) involving 84 local and regional authorities from 7 countries. Most projects started between mid 2009 and the end of 2011.


In 2011, 8 new projects proposals have been funded by the European Union for a total of 701.595 €.

The activities developed during 2011 are described in the following section and are put in relation to the two main driving themes of the network (1)sustainable local/regional growth and competitiveness and (2) social inclusion. The report provides an overview of how the activities developed in the five thematic areas have substantially converged towards the two driving themes of the strategy.

The Secretariat has been fostering the development of sub-networks providing support to the members in terms of capacity building both in the planning and management phase.

All the thematic networks are led by SERN members. This shows, on the one hand, the active and driving role played by the members and, on the other, the added value of the network as a whole vis-a-vis non-member organizations. The objective of this approach, which has been outlined in 2010 in occasion of the General Assembly, is to create a multiplier effect through the partnerships that these networks have set up. If implemented properly, each thematic network project can lead to the development of new project proposals and funded projects. This will have important effects, crucial for the long-term perspectives of SERN.

Despite the overall positive dynamics set in motion by the thematic networks, there are also some weaknesses that have emerged in the process: 1) the underestimation of the difficulties met in the context of the implementation of some projects 2) the insufficient attention given to the follow-up activities 3)a weak planning capacity in terms of local network building 4) too vaguely defined



intra-partnership communications setting and rules, 5) limited support at political level. Furthermore, the need of fostering processes of valorisation, already underlined in 2010, requires more centrality and resources both at network and member level. The amount of materials and information produced by the projects is remarkable. Only in 2010 and 2011 approximately 300 best practices have emerged from the projects. This knowledge should be shared and transferred to the other members of the network. As pointed out earlier on, being part of a network does not only mean to be partner in a project funded by the EU. It means also to be willing to share and take advantage of the opportunities offered by the results of the projects others have carried out.

SERN as an organization is increasingly getting involved in EU funded projects as a partner/project coordinator. Beside the capacity building projects that the Secretariat has been leading in the past, the network has been asked to join partnerships due to its dissemination potential and for the management skills it can offer in the context of transnational projects. On the one hand, this shows the increasing added value of the network through its contacts and outreach capacity. On the other hand, this trend will require additional human resources in the Secretariat in order to match the increased amount of work that an effective participation in projects requires. In this light it is important to underline that in 2011 EU projects have reimbursed approx 25% of the Secretariat's staff costs.

As pointed out in the section of the activities, SERN has been taken the lead in the project EU Net (Network on the management of international relations) due to the strategic character for the network of the themes discussed and potential of the project as a forum for discussion on the quality and more in general on the management of international affairs at local and regional level.

In the field of education, the activities within the network have proved to be to a large extent focused on pre-school education: CREANET and the project proposals PECO (on pedagogical continuity between pre-schools and primary schools) and the TUMT (on the development of a toolkit for the valorisation of unusual materials). This is leading the network towards a specialization and expertise-building on Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) matters which should be taken into account.

The implementation of the GUT project (Comenius Regio on integration in schools) has also been delivering interesting results in the project consortia built in Östergötland and Emilia Romagna.

Finally it should be pointed out that the Network has achieved a reasonable degree of solidity and capacity to attract interest from outside the areas in Sweden and Italy participating. It is important that at political level a discussion about the long-term perspective of the network begins in order to provide, in occasion of the revision of the strategy, the necessary political direction by setting out a shared vision of the role of SERN in the European and bilateral context.

## Activities

The SERN Strategy 2010-2012, approved during the 2010 General Assembly, set out the following objectives:

- to identify the driving themes for the Network ;
- to define the general criteria of the working methods aiming at improving the bilateral dimension and opening up for collaboration with other EU partners;
- to frame the action of SERN according to most relevant EU strategies/strategic documents.

In this perspective, the strategy document served as a framework of reference for the members as well as the Secretariat in the development of the activities carried out in the context of the Network.

The members of SERN have been increasingly working in the perspective of the EU 2020 Strategy and in particular, the activities of the Network and its members have been unfolding within the two main driving themes identified by the strategy:

- **sustainable local/regional growth and competitiveness**, aiming mainly at improving innovation and transfer of knowledge and at increasing the quality and innovation in public services.;
- **social inclusion** with a strong emphasis on the challenges that local public authorities are facing in providing services to citizens, mainly for children, young people and elderly.

### SUSTAINABLE LOCAL/REGIONAL GROWTH AND COMPETITIVENESS



#### Organic food in public schools

The project partners met three times during 2011 in Croatia, Germany and Italy. The focus of the Croatian meeting was the promotion and branding of rural areas involved in the production of organic food; instead, German event was more dedicated on the organic food processing. In Laives, region Alto Adige, the participants discuss on the different best practices starting with the identification of some themes for further projects. In all project events, the three work groups met:

**WG 1 -ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT:** The general objective to increase the amount of organic food in the municipalities with the specific objective to reduce Co2 emissions by defining a common methodology and approach towards the environmental impact of the purchased food;

**WG 2 – EDUCATION:** The main long term actions are focused on the involvement of all parents and teachers in the raising awareness process in the perspective of increasing, with the agreement of all actors, the amount of organic food in schools to let all understand the importance of this.

**WG 3 - CREATION OF A LOCAL SUPPLY CHAIN:** The objectives of the group are:

- sharing knowledge

- valorisation and increase of local and organic products, even if low quantities;
- exploring options for the development of a shorter supply chain for (organic) products.



Through these three work groups, participants are trying to answer to the project objectives: 1. to increase the amount of local organic food in public schools through a process of raising awareness among the involved target groups (children, parents, kitchen staff, teachers and political representatives); 2. to develop solutions aimed at facilitating the matching between supply (producers/suppliers) and demand (municipalities) side; 3. to implement organic food by decreasing negative impacts on the environment, using less pesticide and reducing food transport.

Project website: [www.organicfoodinschools.eu](http://www.organicfoodinschools.eu)



Project co-financed under 'Europe for Citizens' Programme



### ***3x20 Network. A European approach towards CO2 emissions reduction through awareness raising actions***



The project partners continued developing their activities and achieving their objectives during 2011 with two thematic seminars, one in Poland and one in Germany, and the follow up meeting which took place in Rimini. The project results led to the agreement among partners to continue to work together mainly in

the school framework for raising awareness among children, parents and teachers on the importance of energy efficiency. The achieved results are:

A common and widespread knowledge about EU policies on energy efficiency

A sharing framework for setting efficient communication tools in order to find new solutions to environmental problems

The submission of a Comenius project among the pre-schools based on one of the best practices presented.

Project website: [www.3x20net.eu](http://www.3x20net.eu)



Project co-financed under 'Europe for Citizens' Programme





### **GO GREEN NOW project**



During 2011, the partners had meetings in Spain and Italy targeting political representatives and schools actors in order to create awareness of energy related environmental issues, to understand local realities in different countries, to increase knowledge of aims, tools and methods for

involving local citizens in the planning process in order to go from simple raising awareness actions to concrete ones and to promote networking among different actors (target groups) at local level and in the European partnership.

Political representatives had the main tasks to analyse the different decision making processes in order to share best, and also bad, practices. During the event dedicated to schools representatives, teachers had the opportunity to work together to plan small projects for pre-school children on exploring nature, for 7-10 years old students on the importance of recycling and for 12-15 years old students on the “white gold”, that is to say water.



The project will last in 2013 with the evaluation and follow –up meeting.  
Project website: [www.gogreen-now.eu](http://www.gogreen-now.eu)



Project co-financed under 'Europe for Citizens' Programme



### **PEAC - Personnel exchange among cooperatives**



The participants in the exchange (job-shadowing) belong to cooperatives members of the trade associations of Italy and Sweden working mainly in particular the following sectors: Social A: educational; Social B: job placement and recovery of disadvantaged people. Representatives of Companion Skaraborg and Legacoop cooperatives

participated in two job shadowing round in Parma and Falköping in order to exchange best practices through a unique opportunity for





the inclusion and support of disadvantaged people in vulnerable situations.

Thanks to the job shadowing experiences, participants were able to:

- Improve their knowledge about the way in which cooperatives work in Italy and Sweden
- Develop a method for the exchange among cooperatives based observation and discussion through job shadowing,
- Develop follow-up actions during the final event which took place in October in Parma

Project website: [www.peacproject.eu](http://www.peacproject.eu)



Project co-financed under 'Europe for Citizens' Programme



**Young People and Development (YPAD project)**

This project, approved by EACEA in February 2011, moved its first steps in September with the first coordination meeting. The partnership, composed of Italian, Finnish, Spanish and Swedish Municipalities and their local youth associations, has as main objective to bring people from local communities across Europe together to share and exchange experiences, opinions and values within the field of young people development opportunities. The project points out three problems of common interest to be approached in the transnational meetings:

1. Lack of right competencies to be employed (employability opportunities)
2. Marginalization of young people in the civil society
3. Lack of competencies of public authorities to interact and to communicate effectively with young people.

The project will last until the end of 2013 with five thematic seminars focused on the analysis of the stated problems with a joint team composed of experts, young people, politicians and representatives of private companies.

More information on:  
[www.ypadnetwork.eu](http://www.ypadnetwork.eu)

Project co-financed under



*First YPAD seminar in Piteå 21/24 November 2011*

## SOCIAL INCLUSION



### ***Current and future skills in the health and social welfare sector***

The project entered the second year of activity with two thematic seminars, one in Spain and the other in Denmark, aiming to reaching the objectives shared at the beginning of the project: 1. Explore more suitable relations between labour market and education by exchanging knowledge and experience; 2. Create innovative ways of cooperation between labour market and educational sector; 3. Create a transnational management group in this field.

The activities for 2011 were dedicated to identify transnational areas that could be experimental pilot projects in each country following a common strategy defined during 2010 and to share experiences of the experimental projects and give each country feedback on the work so far.

Project website: [www.socialwelfareskills.eu](http://www.socialwelfareskills.eu)



Project co-financed under 'Europe for Citizens' Programme



### ***Quality of life for Seniors in Europe***

The QLSE project ended in December 2011 with the follow-up event where the partners found out five potential themes on which developing new projects:

1. Voluntary work - The aims here are to give people the chance to take more responsibility for the society, and to help them by training, feed-back and concrete aid.
2. Preparation for retirement - The idea is to prepare, engage and inform persons to give them the opportunity to plan their future lives and to be more active in their retirement.
3. Health education and improving muscle strength - This topics puts the focus on physical and mental health which are the most important factors for a good quality of life.
4. Housing and Living - This topic, necessarily linked to all others, focused on providing caregivers with a toolbox of guidelines and knowledge about the needs of people who are getting older, and with knowledge of alternatives and different solutions to facilitate information and the development of new solutions.

5. “Design for all” - One key issue are new and innovative products – and the empowerment of elder and disabled people to take part in the process of new techniques and innovations. Therefore WHO methods and indicators can be used, and Universities should be involved to facilitate an active dialogue between research and target group.

Project website [www.qlse.eu](http://www.qlse.eu)



Project co-financed under 'Europe for Citizens' Programme



### ***Network on family support in elderly care policies***



The project developed its first year activities with five events (four thematic seminars and the first coordination meeting) held in Italy, Spain and Finland.

After the opening conference, the four work groups began developing its activities pursuing their main objectives. The four thematic work groups are: 1. home services for elderly; 2. Education; 3. ICT possibilities; 4. activation and prevention.

All the partners agreed this project is an opportunity to make more effective, more efficient, better quality and affordable services for elderly people and for families with disabled or disadvantaged seniors at home.

Project website: [www.elcanetproject.eu](http://www.elcanetproject.eu)



Project co-financed under 'Europe for Citizens' Programme



### ***Growing up together – GUT project***

The project approved in September 2010 saw as partners the Emilia Romagna region and the region Östergötland in an exchange of best practices on the question of integration in the educational contexts.

During 2011, the partners met three times in order to deepen the main issues of the project through study visits, work groups activities and conferences. The main themes are:

Identify and highlight existing good practices in order to improve the introduction of immigrant pupils in all school levels;

2. Experiment innovative methodologies aiming at easing learning and leading to educational success of the pupils;

3. Spread among all students an intercultural dimension aimed at civil coexistence;

4. Promote the national language learning in immigrant pupils;

5. Promote the creation of a bridge from school to work.

Project website [www.gutproject.eu](http://www.gutproject.eu)



Project co-financed under



***Young Flow – Network on dialogue between young people and public institutions***

**The project, approved in June 2011,** aims at establishing a thematic and long-lasting cooperation between towns, in the frame of youth policies and, particularly, at improving communication and relationship between young people and public authorities, both at local and European level.

The main specific objectives are:

- promoting an interactive and constructive dialogue between young people and public authorities at local and European level, developing more attractive and inclusive communication channels, tools, methods and contents;
- promoting a better knowledge of administrative systems and organization at local and European level;
- developing a sense of belonging of youngsters in the public institutions at local and European level as well as promoting an active participation in the civil society and public life.

Project website: [www.flow4yu.eu](http://www.flow4yu.eu)



Project co-financed under

"Europe for Citizens" Programme





### ***Thematic Networks Planning Process***

The 2012 training project sees SERN as project coordinator and La Coruna Province, Association of Municipalities of Norrbotten, Association of Polish Cities and ALD from Croatia as partners. The project started from the experiences developed in 2010 and 2011 with the NTT and MaNTT projects. The objectives are: 1) to enhance the skills of civil servants to meet more complex and demanding challenges in terms of strategic project planning; 2) to provide the participating municipalities with a common methodology for planning (NTT) projects ensuring consistency between objectives and achieved results; 3) to create a platform for networking in order to further develop the exchange and contacts at multiple institutional levels.

The project foresees three training seminar focused on the first three phases of the PCM (project cycle management) with three thematic seminars: in February in Poland on the indicative programming, in March in Italy on identification and in June in Spain on programming.

The 5 themes on which specific work groups work are: 1. Active ageing; 2. Local Rural development strategies; 3. Local urban development policies; 4. Cultural policies as driver for local development; 5. Waste management strategies.

A dissemination seminar takes place in Brussels in October to spread information on the project process and achieved results.

Project website [www.planetefc.eu](http://www.planetefc.eu)



*PlaNet international seminar in Poznan*



### ***Network on the role of volunteers in welfare policies***

**PARTNERS:** Fontevivo Municipality (lead partner); Molndal Municipality; Trollhattan Municipality; association Oltradige-Bassa Atesina; Province of La Coruna; Region South Ostrobothnia.

**OBJECTIVES:** Considering the difficulties for public local authorities to provide all the welfare services for citizens, the role of volunteering is essential. The project analyses and aims at:

- Changing the strategies for addressing and managing the public services
- Increasing the communication towards citizens
- Changing the cultural attitude
- Bridging the gap between resources and needs
- Involving the new generations



- Prompting the citizens' participation
- Studying and implementing of a new model for cooperation and participation

ACTIVITIES: The working structure is based on six events:

- A coordination meeting
- A presentation meeting on the structure of local systems, presence of Volunteering Organizations, legal framework and rules, the experiences of integration, cooperation, welfare and an analysis of the weak points through the knowledge of all the network actors
- A seminar for the analysis of the possible improving actions
- A seminar for detailing the actions and comparing methods and contents
- A seminar to share and measure results
- A final event to put the basis for future cooperation and new projects

LENGHT: 2012-2013



Project co-financed under "Europe for Citizens" Programme



### ***EUNet – Network on the management of international relations and town twinnings***

PARTNERS: SERN (lead partner), Vänersborg Municipality, Scandiano Municipality; Enzkreis Province, Reggio Emilia Province, Buje Municipality; Emilia Romagna Region; Västra Götaland Region; County Council Norrbotten; Östsm region; La Coruna Province; Almansa Municipality; Cooperative Kara Bobowski, Bydgoszcs Municipality.


OBJECTIVES: The project aims at creating a long-term framework of cooperation centred on the promotion, development and management of Town Twinning and IR at local and regional level with the involvement of political representatives, civil servants and town twinning committees.

ACTIVITIES: The process of network building will be developed in 24 months through the following events:  
EVENT 1 - A meeting aimed at producing a coordination and monitoring strategy for the network.

EVENT 2– First Thematic Seminar for political representatives (mayors and opposition leaders), top management, officers. Objectives and themes: outlining, discussing and exchanging models and approaches to IR and town twinning at local and regional level.



*EUNet coordination meeting in Reggio Emilia,*



EVENT 3 - Second thematic seminar for sector managers and EU/Town twinning Officers , civil servants (Focus areas education and welfare). Objectives and theme: share experiences about the international strategies and best practices in the two policy areas (common to all partners)

EVENT 4 - Third Thematic Seminar for NGOs and EU/town twinning officers. Objectives and themes: discuss and share ways through which involving actively civil society actors in transnational processes and projects;

EVENT 5 - Final conference. Objective and themes: to discuss the results of the thematic seminars and how to link the emerged best practices among the target groups in a sustainable follow-up plan.

**LENGTH:** 2012-2013



Project co-financed under: 'Europe for Citizens' Programme

### ***Active Citizenship and intercultural dialogue with migrant people***

**PARTNERS:** Unione Terre Verdiane (lead partner); Ravenna Municipality; Kotka Municipality; Jyväskylä Municipality; Puerto Lumbreras Municipality; Ciudad Real Municipality; Vänersborg Municipality and Xaghre Municipality.

**OBJECTIVES:** The project aims at studying a shared methodology and at implementing actions able to improve the integration of migrant people. Particular focus will be given to:

- Education and Training: raising the education level of migrants;
- Work: qualifying the workers, developing skills fit to the labour market demands, increasing employment according to Europe 2020 strategy;
- Socialization: fostering the insertion of migrants in the life of the community
- Second generation migrants: understanding the dimension and the social impact of the issue.

**ACTIVITIES:** The project schedules six transnational events:

- 1 – coordination meeting
- 2 – opening conference presenting the various local welfare systems and the national and regional laws on the integration issue;
- 3 – thematic seminar sharing a common changing model and studying the possible positive impact both at local and European level, making a panel on the Volunteers activities in favour of the integration of the migrant people;
- 4 – a monothematic seminar on the issue of the second generation migrants;
- 5 – an event to share the first results of the changing actions, their evaluation and the possible implementation and/or corrections of the strategies used.
- 6 – a final event to illustrate the results of the projects, to detail the methodology used and to share new project expansions.

**LENGTH:** 2012-2013





## **Creativity in Pre-school Education - CREANET project**

*The Comenius Multilateral Network on Creativity in pre-school education (CREANET) aims at developing a European forum for discussion, research, exchange of best practices on creativity in pre-school education from a multidisciplinary and cross-institutional perspective. The wide partnership is composed of various European Universities and research centres and public local authorities. The Municipality of Scandiano is the legal applicant and SERN is the project coordinator.*

The project approved in late 2010, entered its first year of activity with many meetings, conferences, work groups and dissemination events. Particular important and challenging was the first CREANET Conference took place in Beja (Portugal) between May 5th and 7th. The conference was attended by over 150 participants 78 of which coming from the partners of the consortium. The event was the first large event aimed at presenting the work done by the researchers in the first 6 months of activity and at starting off cooperation in the context of the CREANET working groups.

The national groups met during 2011 for specific meetings and work groups to achieve the objectives planned in the CREANET conference and to disseminate results at local level.

20 October 2011

Dissemination Seminar in Lithuania - Klaipeda

24-26 October 2011

Working Group Meeting Creativity and Expressive Languages - Norrköping (Sweden)

26 October 2011

Dissemination Seminar in Sweden- Norrköping

12 November 2011

Dissemination Seminar 2011 in Italy- Reggio Emilia

16 November 2011

Dissemination Seminar 2011 in Croatia- Verteneglio

14-16 December 2011

Coordination Group meeting and Research meeting- Jyväskylä (Finland)

Project Website: [www.creativityinpreschool.eu](http://www.creativityinpreschool.eu)

The project is co-financed under



*Creanet dissemination event in Reggio Emilia 5 November 2011*



**Facing the challenges in the implementation of networks:  
from improved management skills to increased political commitment**

The 2011 training programme coordinated by SERN with Finnish, Swedish, Croatian and Spanish partners was focused on the development and improvement of technical skills to manage EFC projects and on the tools to increase political commitment in EU projects.

The objectives of the project, based on the previous experiences that SERN acquired in training projects, are:

- 1) the enhancement of the skills of town twinning officers to meet more complex challenges posed by town twinning networks which are more demanding in terms of strategic planning with the partners and management of the project;
- 2) the involvement and the active engagement of the managers of policy area(s) within the municipality covered by the thematic networking activities in order to make them active players in the projects;
- 3) the development of monitoring and quality management tools designed specifically for the networks of twinned towns allowing a more effective implementation of the projects and more consistency between planned objectives and results achieved in practice.



The project was carried out through 5 events:

- A coordination meeting held in Bologna (Italy) among the representatives of the 5 partners involved in the project in order to define the main organisation, evaluation, communication and financial tools of the activities.
- Two thematic seminars, one in La Coruna (Spain) and the other in Lulea (Sweden) addressed to managers and civil servants involved in on going or just approved projects according to the Project Cycle Management theory. The attention was paid mainly to the relational aspects among the partners and with the local actors, to the effective promotion and dissemination and to the evaluation of the activities and valorization of the results. These issues were approached through a guided discussion in plenary sessions and work group facilitated by an expert.
- One thematic seminar for political representatives in Bertinoro (Italy). The main issue that was addressed was the importance of the political support in the project cycle and the political valorization locally of the NTT and their impact on local policies.
- An evaluation meeting held in Verteneglio (Croatia) among the partners' representatives and the moderator of the thematic seminars to discuss the results and outcomes of the project, to proceed with the implementation of the communication and dissemination



tools and to analyse the project follow up.

As defined at the beginning of the project, the guidelines for managing networks of twinned towns represent the most tangible and enjoyable outcomes of the lectures, moderated work group activities and discussions. The publication is centered on five elements of the project management:

- establishing partnership rules, agreements and contracts;
- promoting and building the local network;
- establishing a functional communication setting and rules;
- managing the first coordination meeting;
- orienting towards evaluation, dissemination and follow-up.

## The 2011 session of the General Assembly



The 2011 General Assembly took place in Bertinoro between 14th and 16th April 2011 in conjunction with the MaNTT event dedicated to political representatives and on the improving and increasing their commitment in developing EFC and EU projects.

The meeting was also the occasion to spread information on different on-going projects within the SERN Network and to discuss two main issues interesting for both Italian and Swedish members:

- **Seminar on Tourism:** digital eco-system to support Territorial Marketing and exchange of best practices and experiences
- **Seminar on Innovation and New Technologies**

Particular attention was paid to the presentation of the CREANET project to the Network's members.

The members met on Saturday 16th in the morning for annual general assembly. This year, after the discussion and approval of the annual report 2010 based on the three key words "Learning", "Networking" and "Valorisation" and of the financial report 2010 with the approval of the Board of auditors, members were asked to express their vote on two main issues:

- The SERN Communication Strategy, emphasizing the importance of the dissemination of the Networks' results also using new tools such as social networks,
- The election of members of the Executive Board for the period 2011-2011 and of the Board of auditors. For the Executive Board, four new Municipalities are represented, Skövde, Motala, Piteå and Borgo Val di Taro.

The four members of the Board of auditors have been confirmed.

The members accepted the invitation of the Region Västra Götaland and of the Vänersborg Municipality to host the 2012 General Assembly in Vänersborg from 19th to 21st April 2012.

## The SERN Executive Board



The members of the Executive Board met three times during 2011: in February in Norrköping, in April in Bertinoro and in November in Collecchio.

The main discussion themes for the Executive Board was the setting up and development of a communication strategy for SERN and a long-medium term SERN Strategy to develop the Network.

Following the proposal of the Secretariat the Board has approved the Financial Report 2010 and the proposal for 2011. The Board has also approved the membership of : Dar Voce (IT), Sinettica(IT) and Asp Sud Est Parma(IT).

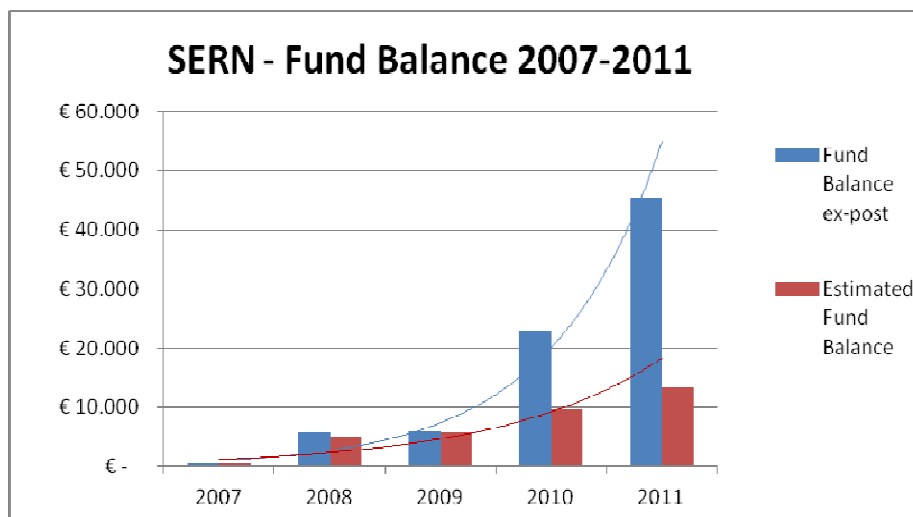
Concerning the communication strategy:

- a new interactive newsletter has been launched;
- a new contact database has been uploaded on the main page of the electronic platform;
- The secretariat has started to develop a standardisation model to be able to follow the different projects in a more organised way
- SERN has developed a profile on social networks.

As far as the long term SERN Strategy to be adopted as from 2013, a work group composed of four members of the Executive board has been created at the Board meeting in Collecchio with the task to analyze the issues sustainability of the Network in a long-medium term perspective and update the network priorities identified in the current strategy and guidelines.

## Economic and Financial outlook

The 2011 financial report of SERN shows a positive result with an increase of the fund balance from 22.871 € at the end of 2010 to more 45.464 €.



The income statement 2011 shows a net income from operations which is in line with the one of 2010 and which has led to a substantial increase of the fund balance as shown in the graph. This result has been achieved thanks to the incomes derived by

the projects in terms of reimbursement of staff costs travel and general costs. A lower expenditure took also place on some of the items in particular general expenses and travel expenses and the electronic platform.

Furthermore the participation in EU projects (MANTT, CREANET and GUT) has permitted a rationalisation of the travel expenses. As far as the projects MANTT, CREANET and GUT are concerned.

In general the payment of the fees has been reflecting the trend of last year in terms of punctuality. Some of the members tend to pay their fees later during the year due to some late approval of their budget or as a result of administrative bottlenecks.

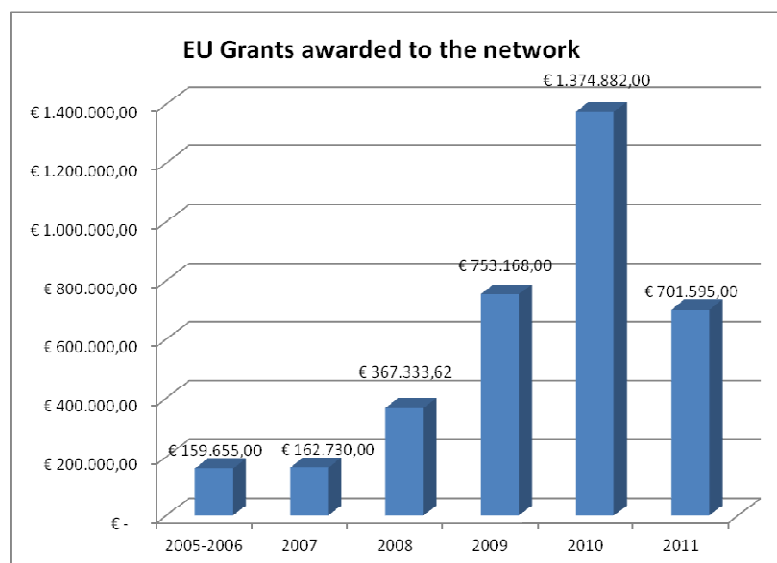
The incomes derived from the new members has lower than expected due also to the fact that the fees of two organisations that joined SERN in late November 2011 (Dar Voce and ASP Sud-Est) have been allocated mainly to 2012. The Secretariat has also been providing services to the members through dedicated support in project management or in the organisation of study visits.

The network has acquired a more stable situation from the financial point of view. The increased number of projects in which SERN has been taken part as a partner have played a key role in providing a financial basis granting a sufficient basis and the possibility to increase the amount of human resources at the Secretariat. However, in a long-term perspective, it will be increasingly important to identify a sustainable balance between incomes derived from the membership fees and incomes derived from EU projects. This in order to avoid an excessive reliance on external sources of funding.



# Indicators

The guidelines approved by the SERN Executive Board included a process of reporting and follow-up to be established in the context of the Network. Such tools do constitute an important instrument to evaluate progress in the areas of cooperation covered by the Network since they will add a qualitative character to the evaluation of the outcomes of the different project groups. The guidelines include also some quantitative indicators concerning the activities started or implemented in 2011.



The number of projects submitted has been lower than the previous year (14) however, most of the submitted projects have been approved. This has also been possible thanks to good results and effects of the training activities.

Special attention has been given by the Executive Board to the electronic platform. The number of visitors to public pages has increased while the

number of users logging into the platform is in line with the previous year. To note also that the MANTT platform has been set up and it has been attracting a substantial number of users of the SERN platform. The MaNTT platform it is currently used for the management of many of the ongoing projects.

INDICATORS	
Number of EU projects submitted at EU level in 2011(2 still under evaluation)	11
EU grants for projects approved in 2011*	8
LLP Individual mobility grants submitted in 2011	9
LLP Individual mobility grants approved in 2011	7
EU grants awarded in 2011	€ 701.595,00
Number of members involved in activities	41
Number of logins to the platform in 2011	2.626
Number of members that logged in 2011	112 out of 284
Visits (unique visitors)to the public pages in 2011	9.121





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