

On 2/10/2017, Claudia Guzzon joined the Interreg Sudoe Joint Secretariat. During her stay, this young Italian from Marano Lagunare (Friuli Venezia Giulia) will contribute to highlight the results of the approved projects during all the programme periods as well as to disseminate the benefits of transnational cooperation within the Sudoe area.



Through this section, Claudia will tell us about her experience within the programme. We wish you a nice journey with our new collaborator!

THIS IS INTERREG SUDOE!

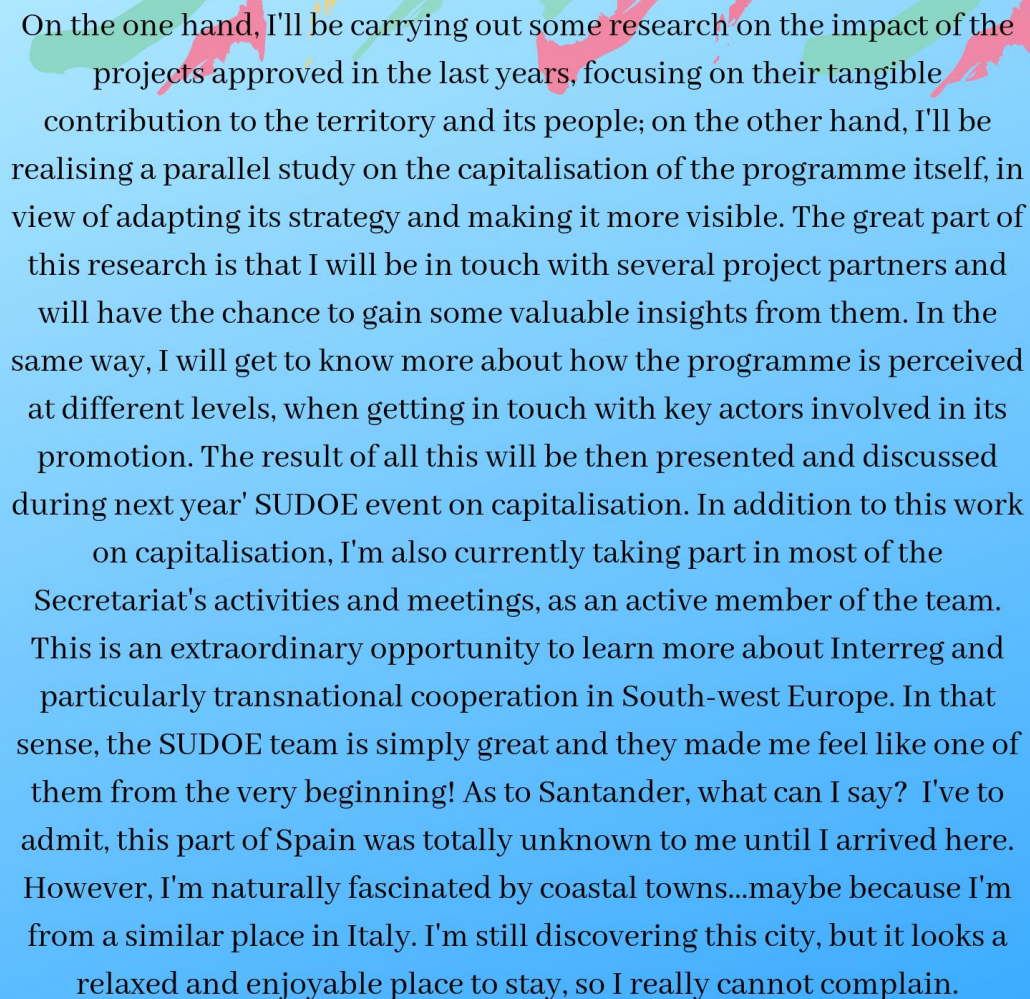
03/11/2017

These have been my first weeks as Interreg Reporter at the Joint Secretariat of the Interreg SUDOE Programme....and it's really time to write down some thoughts and impressions of this intense beginning. I say intense because two weeks ago I also participated in the "IVY (Interreg Volunteer Youth) Get Together" event in Brussels, which was indeed a great opportunity to meet other Interreg volunteers and organisations involved in this initiative.

...but let's start from the beginning...

Some months ago, when I decided to apply for IVY, what I really found super interesting of this initiative were two things, above all: the idea of promoting cooperation across borders at the local level and the recognition of a social/human dimension of Interreg. Now that I've started, I can certainly say that for the SUDOE Programme the people-centred approach truly matters. That's why my role for the next months is strongly linked to the need and will to show how the programme – and the projects funded through it – are positively improving people's lives. To raise awareness about the important achievements of Interreg SUDOE, I'll be mainly responsible for the capitalisation process of project results and the programme in general.





On the one hand, I'll be carrying out some research on the impact of the projects approved in the last years, focusing on their tangible contribution to the territory and its people; on the other hand, I'll be realising a parallel study on the capitalisation of the programme itself, in view of adapting its strategy and making it more visible. The great part of this research is that I will be in touch with several project partners and will have the chance to gain some valuable insights from them. In the same way, I will get to know more about how the programme is perceived at different levels, when getting in touch with key actors involved in its promotion. The result of all this will be then presented and discussed during next year' SUDOE event on capitalisation. In addition to this work on capitalisation, I'm also currently taking part in most of the Secretariat's activities and meetings, as an active member of the team. This is an extraordinary opportunity to learn more about Interreg and particularly transnational cooperation in South-west Europe. In that sense, the SUDOE team is simply great and they made me feel like one of them from the very beginning! As to Santander, what can I say? I've to admit, this part of Spain was totally unknown to me until I arrived here. However, I'm naturally fascinated by coastal towns...maybe because I'm from a similar place in Italy. I'm still discovering this city, but it looks a relaxed and enjoyable place to stay, so I really cannot complain.

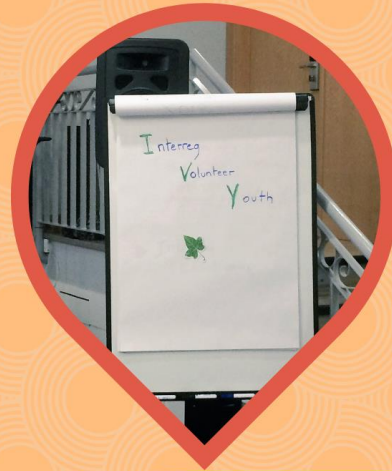
All in all, it has been a very positive beginning. I hope I'll make the most of this enriching experience! I'll keep you posted :-)

WORKING ON CAPITALIZATION

As mentioned in my last post, in the past few weeks I've been working on the design of the surveys in relation to the two studies on the impact of SUDOIE projects and on the needs of the Programme's key actors.

After careful internal analysis, the proposed questionnaires were sent to the National Authorities of the Programme for comments. To reach the largest number of people and make it easy for them to understand exactly the goal of the studies, the surveys will be launched in the three main languages of the Programme (Spanish, French and Portuguese). For this reason, it's key to take into account those comments and adapt the questions according to the specificities of each language. This is quite challenging and not always an easy task, but we are currently working on a final version for the two questionnaires to have them ready before Christmas, since we are planning to launch both surveys early January.

A part from the studies, in the last few weeks I was also involved in other communication activities, such as the making of a short promotional animated video about Interreg SUDOIE. It's my very first video! :-)

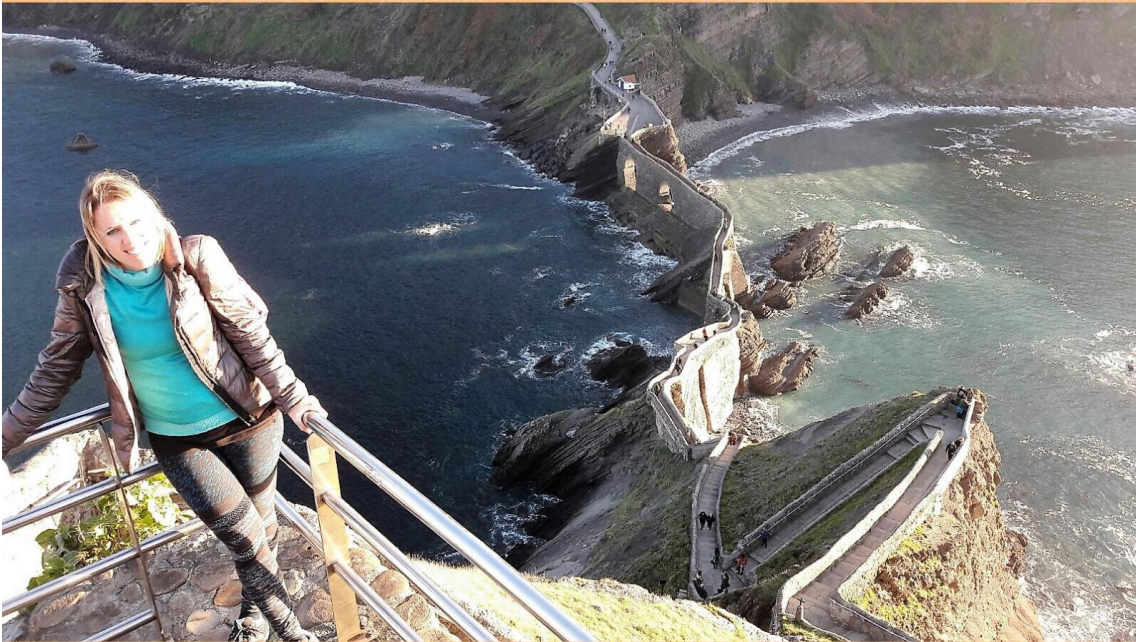


Junto con Andréa, responsable de Comunicación en la Secretaría Conjunta, también participé en el segundo Taller Cap&Com, organizado en Bilbao el mes pasado por INTERRACT. El evento reunió a compañeros de varios Programas Interreg y fue una importante ocasión para intercambiar ideas sobre cómo mejorar la comunicación y la capitalización de los resultados de Interreg.

Entre otros temas, las diversas sesiones se centraron en cómo vincular los resultados de Interreg con el cambio de políticas y en el "storytelling" como herramienta clave para crear conciencia sobre el potencial de Interreg. Agnes Monfret, Jefe de Comunicación de la DG REGIO también estuvo allí para dar una presentación sobre la estrategia de comunicación y el plan de acción de la DG. Acabó su discurso mencionando la iniciativa Interreg Youth y animando a los participantes a recibir voluntarios en sus respectivas organizaciones, lo que de hecho fue una gran promoción para IVY.



In the past month I also had the opportunity to discover some nice places in Cantabria and Basque Country: the wonderful beach of Arnía, the historic town of Santillana del Mar, the beautiful Gaudi's early work "El Capricho" in Comillas, the hermitage of San Juan de Gaztelugatxe on the coast of Biscay. This area has indeed so much to offer! I'm soon leaving Santander to spend Christmas in Italy with my family and friends but will be back early January to give you some updates about our surveys and other interesting stuff! :-)





Discovering amazing SUDOE project results!

27/02/2018

This was my fifth month as Interreg Reporter at the SUDOE Joint Secretariat....it's been quite hectic lately and time really flies.

In the last weeks we got a lot going on in the office. The results of the second call for proposals are finally out and the preparation for the next one has already started. But most importantly, we have finally launched the two capitalisation surveys I worked on during these months. The launch was a little bit delayed but I'm pretty satisfied with the responses we have received. Indeed, I can clearly see now how Interreg SUDOE supported great project ideas throughout the years. I discovered, among other things, that the project REPPARP, funded during the first SUDOE programming period, led to the recognition of a European Cultural Route by the Council of Europe for the prehistoric sites in the region. I also got to know that a lot of networks and partnerships promoted through the programme in the territory kept on developing. Moreover, I had the chance to interview some enthusiastic project leaders who explained to me in detail the major achievements of their respective projects. In parallel, the survey addressed to the key actors of the SUDOE area, revealed that most respondents are clearly interested in knowing and making good use of the results achieved by the programme during these years.

Apart from the launch of the surveys, another remarkable moment of the last few weeks was certainly the webinar on the IVY initiative, organised in collaboration with the communication team and Interreg Reporter of the POCTEFA Secretariat, Sophie. The webinar - actually the two webinars, one in French and the other in Spanish - counted on the participation of around 50 attendants, including both young people interested in joining the initiative and potential IVY hosting organisations. The two webinars also saw the participations of Gianluca Comuniello, from the European Commission (DG REGIO), and Martín Guillermo Ramírez, from the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR), who gave two interesting presentations on the initiative. Following their speeches and the presentations of the two programmes, POCTEFA and SUDOE, Sophie and I had the opportunity to give our insights into our personal experience as Interreg Reporters. The event raised a lot of interest on IVY and Interreg; we got several questions from the audience and at the SUDOE Secretariat we also received some further requests for information straight after the end of the webinars. Following this, the team of the project "SUDOE Stop CO2" has also decided to get a young European through IVY! :)



It has been an outstanding experience!

My dear readers, I have more news for you: this is going to be my very last post for the Diary section. My experience at the Interreg SUDOEE Secretariat is coming to an end in a few days, a little bit earlier than what planned, and I'm indeed very sad to leave this great team and place. The good news is that I will continue my adventure in the Interreg world, since I'm soon starting to work as Project Manager at the Secretariat of another programme, the Interreg Italy-France Maritime! :)

I cannot express how thankful I am to the amazing people I met during these months here in Santander, who helped me grow and supported my personal and professional development throughout my IVY. It would have not been the same without them, and my future path – whatever it will be – will deeply benefit from this incredible experience.

I wish any young European interested in cooperation across borders had a similar opportunity in order to really understand what the added value of all this is!