



Hello everyone! That's Sara, the new IVY Volunteer of the Interreg Sudoe Programme 😊

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It's already more than 2 months I started to volunteer at the Joint Secretariat in Santander and lots of things were going on! First of all, why am I here?! Graduated from my Master's at the end of February, I thought this would have been the perfect time to volunteer while gaining experience. Thus, I decided to apply for this IVY project and... here I am! This IVY's project appealed to me because it focuses on communications and I wanted to know more about the transnational cooperation's world. My expectations have definitely been met! I am daily learning about transnational cooperation and seeing concrete results of European projects in the life of their users.



I was incorporated in the Communications Office and from day one, I felt completely comfortable with the tasks I was assigned and deeply involved in the communication activities of the Programme. In May, I went with my Andréa, my amazing mentor, to Brussels to join the Sustainable Energy Week, an event organised by the EU Commission to promote clean, secure and efficient energy. There, I could meet other Interreg Programme and join interesting presentations on circular economy and the future of energy. It was my first time in the Belgian capital and I could feel the European atmosphere from the inside while discovering a new city!

June brought another event. This time I went with all the Interreg Sudoe colleagues in Toulouse. There, I attended the Programme Committees and the annual event of the Programme. It was a remarkable experience to understand how the Sudoe Programme works and see the results of some projects while listening talks of different sectors' professionals.

Currently, I am working in the storytelling project "Humans of Sudoe", a project that collect testimonies of project users though which I am learning more about the projects and the work of Sudoe. It is very interesting to get in touch with beneficiaries of the projects and see the human side of the projects. We are also organising something special for the next months, I'll keep you updated!





Santander & the North of Spain

Moving to Santander was really surprising! I had the opportunity to discover a bit the area and I definitely can say it has lots to offer in terms of nature and panoramas! The first time I saw the bay of Santander it took my breath away! It is stunning to see the ocean and high mountains at the same time. However, if you move a bit in the interior of Cantabria, what stands out is the nature and the green of this land. Cantabria is very diverse and there is something for every taste, not just in terms of landscapes! Typical of the area are the “pinchos”, small delicious savoury snacks made with different tasting ingredients. This area is also rich of local festivals and during summer time, you have many opportunities to enjoy them. For instance, I had the chance to join the celebrations of “San Juan”, a festival during the night of the 24th June, on the beaches of the country Spanish people celebrate with bonfires, music and fireworks, a lovely way to welcome the summer time. These months have been full of discoveries and I’m looking forward to new adventures in the next months!



Hello everyone!

Long time passed since the beginning of my IVY experience and lot happened!
After summer I had very intense months, full of events and emotions that lead me to get firsthand involved in several activities.

At the beginning of October, I took part with my mentor in the European Week of Regions and Cities, the annual event in Brussels that promotes and show the work of European cities and regions. It was really interesting to attend to workshops and events during these days and meet people from different fields. Moreover, I could finally meet the IVY team and other Interreg volunteers! We had a precious time together exchanging opinions and experiences.



During the IV4 experience, the volunteers had the opportunity to organise an event to raise awareness on Cohesion Policy to local population. I was thrilled about organizing it! This was an important occasion for bringing closer citizens to the work of the European Union and I wanted to give my best. So, I decided to raise awareness among youngsters on what Europe does for Cantabria and also give them voice, debating on how to improve the communication of the Cohesion Policy.



I ended the month joining Giulia, another IV4 volunteer in Sevilla, and colleagues from the European Commission, Interact and the Joint Research Centre, in the Natural Space of Doñana, “the lung of Andalucía”, for a tree planting activity. This symbolic activity was really meaningful for Europe and for Spain, one of the country that experienced most wildfires in recent years. In fact, in 2017, the Natural Space of Doñana suffered a fire burning more than 8,000 hectares. In order to restore this area, the WWF promoted a plan of various actions and we took part of a replanting action, helping to plant 1000 trees in the area. We felt helpful to restore the diversity of vegetation but especially... we had a great time!



6 months have already passed and I can't be more grateful for the time spent at the Joint Secretary! Thanks to all the Interreg Sudoe and to the IV4 teams for making this experience possible, positive and enriching.