



Lithuania, Poland and Kaliningrad Region of Russian Federation Neighbourhood Programme

Part-financed by the European Union

E-LETTER

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SPECIAL EDITION – MOST POPULAR PROJECT OF THE YEAR

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Periodic edition disseminated to the members of the Joint Monitoring and Steering Committee, the Managing Authority, the National Authority, European Commission Delegation to Russia, Joint Technical Secretariat, Polish Regional Contact Points, regional and local authorities, international organisations, public institutions, similar organisations and bodies in other INTERREG and Neighbourhood programmes, journalists, potential applicants and final beneficiaries.



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MPP 2007

RESULTS OF THE COMPETITION

The Most Popular Project competition for the year 2007 is over. The **Most Popular Project** of the Lithuania, Poland and Russian Federation Neighbourhood Programme in 2007 is the project “**Thematic village: new opportunities for business, culture and tourism of border regions**”!

The project is implemented by two partners from Lithuania and Poland. The lead partner of the project is the **municipality administration of Varėna district** (Alytus county) and the financial partner of the project is the **municipal administration (*gmina*) of Szemud** (Pomorskie voivodeship).

The Most Popular Project of the year 2007 has received **90 votes**! It was selected the Most Popular Project of November.

The **second most popular project** of the year 2007 is the project “**Equipping of emergency room in county hospital in Bartoszyce**”, implemented by the **John Paul II memorial district hospital in Bartoszyce** (Warmińsko-Mazurskie voivodeship). The project received 77

votes and had been selected the Most Popular Project of June!



The **third most popular project** of the year 2007 is the project “**Opening of water tourism route in Curonian Lagoon: Klaipėda-Kaliningrad (Rybachy)**”, implemented by the **municipality administration of Klaipėda city, municipality administration of Kaliningrad, the municipality administration of Neringa and Klaipėda tourism and culture information centre**. The project received 45 votes and had been selected the Most Popular Project of July!



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INTERVIEW WITH THE WINNER

Algirdas Juškevičius
Director of Varėna tourism and business information centre

Village can astonish with innovation

How have you come up with the idea of thematic villages in Varėna?

I have got the idea of developing „thematic villages“ in Lithuania after reading a book by the Polish professor „Vaclaw Idzek“. I was surprised that thematic villages are already present in Poland since 2004. In one of them, Sierakowo Sławieńskie people „sell“ good emotions. They are playing hobbits under the stories of G. R. Tolkien. I had also just finished reading one of Tolkien's books by then, which I enjoyed a lot. So I got interested, how it can be possible to implement such illusionary ideas in a village. Even more, creating 20 new employment positions and providing possibilities of additional revenue for many people. Just imagine: a shop seller is acting Golum during his spare time, and a farmer is pretending to be the elf-princess Galabriel.

I started studying this phenomenon of thematic villages more thoroughly. I got to know that the idea of thematic villages is a very viable means of reviving villages not only in Poland, but also in Austria and other countries of Europe. The idea awakens tourism and business in countryside communities. All one has to do is convincing village

people that they have something valuable, which they should share with others. This might be handicrafts, culinary heritage, songs, dances, etc. Now I strongly believe it is feasible to get the virus of this innovative business, which, not to mention, also brings psychological benefit by provoking the self-esteem of village people.



Hence, when we had realised there was a possibility of receiving the funds of the European Union for co-operation with our partners from Poland, we decided to make the idea of thematic villages live in Lithuania.

How did people in villages of your district accept your idea? Did you offer them playing hobbits as well?

Well, you know... At first they were like: „we are not going to be your clowns“! But I managed to persuade them to “sell” their traditional values. This way the Senoji Varėna village, where our famous artist and composer M. K. Čiurlionis had been born, became the village of this great person, Subartony, a birth-place of our famous writer V. Mickevičius-Krėvė, became



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the village of this famous man, and Dargužiai, which are famous for their cheese-production long since, have started calling themselves the “cheese village”.



Surely, we are only trying to kick-off in the meantime. People still lack business skills. So for now we are teaching people how to advertise and sell. We are telling them they have to conduct their activities regularly if they want to start successful business. For example, sell their cheese in the same place every Saturday.

Have you already foreseen further development of thematic villages?

Yes, we have already realised that if we want the results of this project to be sustainable, we should enter another level. Dargužiai now must establish a “cheese room”, where they could demonstrate to the tourists the process of cheese-making and teach them to make cheese by themselves. There have to be refrigerators, sewage, everything they need in this room. An authentic stove must be installed in Subartonys, where people could bake bread and pies. They would use the stove in their plays by V. Mickevičius-Krėvė to the tourists. And our polish colleagues are planning establishing the kashubian gallery in Szemud. As you can see we are already confident enough to implement small-scale investment projects.

N+2

17,66 MLN. EUROS SPENDINGS DECLARED BY PARTNERS

The project partners from Lithuania and Poland of the Lithuania, Poland and Kaliningrad Region Neighbourhood programme declared to have spent 17.657.007,86 euros in INTERREG projects in 2007. This exceeds the foreseen spendings (15.726.828 euros) by almost 2 mln. euros. Hence, the

Programme has more than fulfilled the target set by the N+2 rule of the European Commission! The project partners will be refunded 75% of their spendings by the European Regional Development Fund. This constitutes 13.164.512,40 euros.



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Lietuva-Polska 2007-2013

LITHUANIA-POLAND CBC PROGRAMME APPROVED

The European Commission approved the Lithuania-Poland cross border co-operation programme for the period of 2007-2013 on the 20th of December, 2007. The decision number is C(2007)6530. You can read the programme document here: [Lietuva-Polska](#).

territories will be welcome to apply for funding soon.



The eligible territory of the programme contains Alytus and Marijampolė counties in Lithuania and Bialostocko-Suwalski and Elcki subregions in Poland, as well as adjacent areas of Tauragė, Kaunas and Vilnius counties (excluding Vilnius city) in Lithuania and Lomżyński and Olszynski subregions in Poland.

The overall funding from the European Regional Development Fund is 71.688.850 euro. 39.428.867,50 euro will be spent on priority 1 projects, aiming at competitiveness and productivity growth in the Programme territory. 27.958.651,50 euro will be spent on priority 2 projects, aiming at cross-border cohesion and enhanced overall quality of the cross-border area. The European Union shall cover up to 85% of a project's budget.

All non-profit organisations and institutions from the above mentioned

WWW.LIETUVA-POLSKA.EU LAUNCHED

The web site of the Lithuania-Poland cross border co-operation programme for the period of 2007-2013 has been

launched. Please, visit www.lietuva-polska.eu.



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PARTNERSHIP PROPOSALS

As far as the Lithuania-Poland cross border co-operation programme for the period of 2007-2013 is about to start collecting project applications, some partners from Lithuania and Poland start looking for partners. INTERREG JTS offers assistance for those potential applicants who find partner search difficult. Please, send your partnership proposals, describing your organisation, project idea and the type of partner you need in English to giedrius.surplys@interreg3a.org and your partnership proposals will be spread in the Programme territory.

Partnership proposal N° 1:

Organisation: Pisz county

Contact: Andrzej Nowicki;
secretariat@powiat.pisz.pl; Tel. 00 48 87 42 33 505.

Project idea: development of road infrastructure of international importance.

Partner sought: local government institution in Lithuania.

Partnership proposal N° 2:

Organisation: Pisz county

Contact: Andrzej Nowicki;
secretariat@powiat.pisz.pl; Tel. 00 48 87 42 33 505.

Project idea: development of sports and tourism infrastructure of international importance.

Partner sought: local government institution in Lithuania, public sports centre or club.

YOUR OPINION IS IMPORTANT!

Please, take part and express your opinion regarding the frequency of reporting on project activities in the new CBC programme Lithuania-Poland. The poll is available at www.lietuva-polska.eu and www.interreg3a.org.





Lithuania, Poland and Kaliningrad Region of Russian Federation Neighbourhood Programme

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MPP November

RESULTS

Project N° 2006/361 “Thematic village: new opportunities for business, culture and tourism of border regions” became the most popular project of November, 2007 with 90 votes!

The project is implemented by the municipality administration of Varėna district (Alytus county) and the

municipal administration (*gmina*) of Szemud (Pomorskie voivodeship).

Out of those who voted for the project, 3 winners of the Neighbourhood programme prizes were selected randomly: Sima Puodžiūtė, Marius Galinis and Jonas Urbaitis. Congratulations!

MPP December

RESULTS

Project N° 2005/053 „Improvement of industrial-zones infrastructure in Lithuanian-Polish cross-border“ became the most popular project of December, 2007 with 9 votes! The project is implemented by Alytus city municipality administration, City of Suwalki and Alytus county governor’s administration.

Out of those who voted for the project, 3 winners of the Neighbourhood programme prizes were selected randomly: Loreta Baigienė, Austėja Dimšaitė and Antanas Butkevičius. Congratulations!





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MPP January

CANDIDATE PROJECTS

INTERREG Joint Technical Secretariat continues organising the Most Popular Project (MPP) competition in 2008!

Each month you will find 9 photos from the activities of the Lithuania, Poland and Kaliningrad Region of Russian Federation Neighbourhood Programme projects on www.interreg3a.org (banner "Most popular project").

If you recognise a photo of a project that was organised in your town or even you took part in the project activities, please vote.

Dear project implementers and participants, if you want your project to

become the MPP, please agitate for your project and try to get as many people as possible to vote for it! One person can only vote up to 5 times.

WINNERS AND PRIZES!

Each month the MPP of the month will be selected! It will be awarded Neighbourhood programme tokens. 3 fans out of those who sent in e-mails voting for the winner-project will be selected and awarded with Neighbourhood Programme souvenirs.

In the end of the year, the project, which will have collected the biggest number of votes will be announced the MPP!

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