



***20 Years of Improving the Quality of
Structural Funds Programme Management
through Exchange of Experience***

Celebrating 20 years of exchange experience on Structural Funds implementation



IQ-Net (Improving the Quality of Structural Funds Programme Management) is one of the longest running European knowledge-exchange networks devoted to Cohesion Policy. Founded in February 1996, and managed by the European Policies Research Centre (University of Strathclyde, Glasgow), IQ-Net is celebrating its 20th anniversary, with a history of 40 conferences held over the past two decades on different aspects of programme management.

The idea of creating a network originated with the Western Scotland ERDF. It was picked up enthusiastically by other 'Objective 2' (old-industrial) regions in the EU15 as well as those in the 1995 accession countries. Over the years, IQ-Net has expanded to encompass 18 managing authorities and intermediate bodies from 16 Member States in Less-Developed, Transition and More-Developed Regions.

The underlying rationale for IQ-Net is that the exchange of practical experience among programme managers is a powerful form of learning and contributes to improved personal knowledge and skills and the capacity to implement Structural Funds more effectively. A distinctive feature of IQ-Net is that knowledge exchange is based on detailed, comparative research on how different countries and regions manage EU programmes in practice, and the identification of good practice and innovative approaches.

The longevity and success of the network are attributable to the willingness of practitioners in national and regional authorities and the EU institutions to be open about their experiences and share knowledge, and we owe partners – past and present – many thanks for their commitment. Over the past two decades, IQ-Net has adapted constantly to meet new programme challenges. With no shortage of issues for future exchange of experience, we are looking forward to IQ-Net helping to promote effective learning for many years to come!

Professor John Bachtler, IQ-Net Director



1996: 1st IQ-Net meeting in Ross Priory, Scotland, UK



2016: 40th IQ-Net meeting in Prague, Czech Republic

20 years of IQ-Net research and debate

Since 1996, IQ-Net research has explored all aspects of Structural Funds implementation. Recent research and discussion at IQ-Net conferences have covered the following:

Programme preparation

- **Programming** (Preparing for 2014-20: Programming, Concentration and Performance, 2013)
- **Strategic planning** (Ideas and Options for Cohesion Policy Post-2020, 2016)

Selected aspects of the programme cycle

- **Project selection** (Project Generation and Selection in Cohesion Policy in 2014-20: Between Results-orientation and Micro-management, 2014)
- **Evaluation** (The Monitoring and Evaluation of 2014-20 EU Cohesion Policy Programmes, 2015)

Specific instruments for delivery

- **Territorial instruments** (A First Stock Take: Integrated Territorial Approaches in Cohesion Policy 2014-20, 2014)
- **Financial instruments** (Between Scylla and Charybdis: Navigating Financial Engineering Instruments through Structural Funds and State Aid Requirements, 2011)

Practical challenges of programme implementation

- **Results-orientation** (The Promise and Perils of the Performance Turn in Cohesion Policy, 2012)
- **Simplification** (Is Simplification Simply a Fiction?, 2015)

All IQ-Net reports are available for download on the IQ-Net website:

<http://www.eprc.strath.ac.uk/iqnet/reports.php>

IQ-Net in their own words – past and present network members



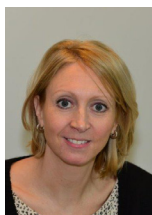
Setting up the network 20 years ago was one of the best ideas in terms of improving transparency and implementation of Structural Funds

Jack Engwegen, DG Regional and Urban Policy



IQ-Net makes us realise we are not alone - it's good to know we share common experiences and can count on our partners' support and advice

Evita Papakonstantinou, Management Organisation Unit (MOU) SA, Greece



Exchanging and learning in a very open and informal way about the good and the bad stuff you encounter while implementing Cohesion policy

Heidi Minner, Flanders Innovation & Entrepreneurship, Belgium



IQ-Net = probably the best multinational, multicultural and multilevel knowledge exchange platform on public policy management in the world!

Radomir Matczak, Marshal Office of the Pomorskie Region, Poland



IQ-Net enables sharing knowledge and experiences with colleagues from other EU regions, helping European regions growing together

Norbert Heller, Ministry of Finance, Saxony-Anhalt, Germany



IQ-Net has provided us with a very useful space to explain and discuss new initiatives with the people on the ground implementing Cohesion policy

Veronica Gaffey, DG Regional and Urban Policy



A+B=C meaning academia plus bureaucrats equals better competences! This is the idea of IQ-Net for us

Jukka Alasentie, Council of Tampere Region, Finland



IQ-Net was always a lighthouse in the rough sea of Structural Funds, which helped us guiding our ship through rough seas

Gerd Gratzner, Office of the State Government of Styria, Austria



IQ-Net is like an annual family reunion, meeting your relatives, enjoying time, sharing past experiences and ideas for the future with them

Andrej Engelman, Government Office for Development and European Cohesion Policy, Slovenia



IQ-Net was extremely valuable for programme management and network building when there was only little experience with a new policy approach

Herbert Jakoby, Ministry of Economic Affairs, Energy, Industry, SMEs and Crafts of North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany



IQ-Net gives access to EPRC's highly regarded team and thorough research papers. Meetings allow sharing and discussing best practice and to network

Peter Smith, formerly Government Office for North East England, United Kingdom



Good overview of what is happening elsewhere in ESIF, informal discussion with colleagues from other Member States and expertise on demand

Vladimír Kváča, formerly Ministry of Regional Development, Czech Republic

Austria
ÖROK Secretariat - Austrian Conference on Spatial Planning

Belgium
Vlaanderen - Flanders Innovation & Entrepreneurship

Croatia
Ministry of Regional Development & EU Funds

Czech Republic
Ministry of Regional Development

Denmark
Danish Business Authority

Finland
South and West Finland

France
General Commission for Territorial Equality (CGET)

Germany
Nordrhein-Westfalen - Ministry for Business, Energy, Industry, SMEs & the Craft Sector

Greece
Management Organisation Unit of Development Programmes S.A.

Poland
Marshal Office of the Pomorskie Region

Portugal
Agency for Development and Cohesion

Slovakia
Central Coordination Body, Government Office

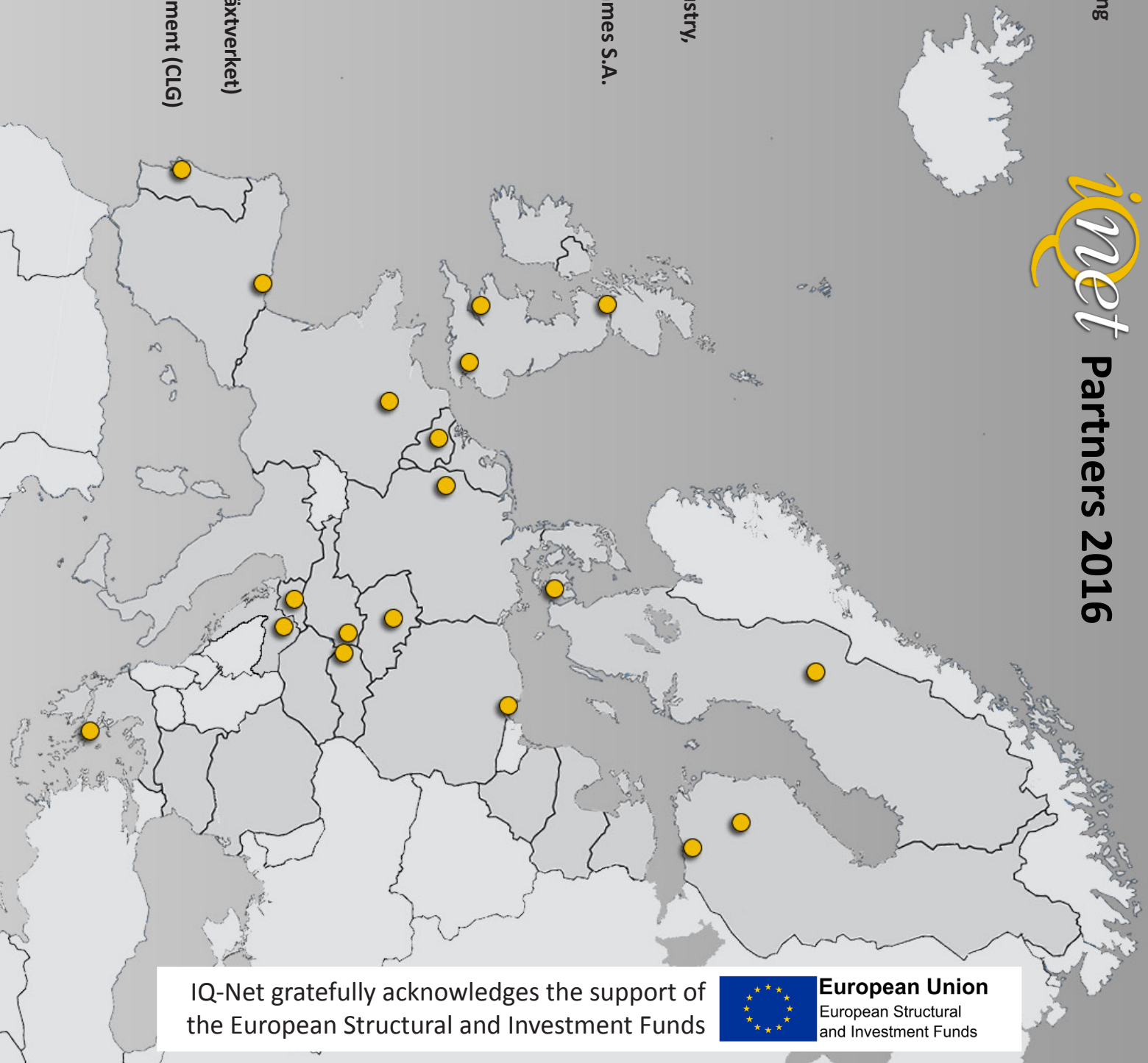
Slovenia
Government Office for Development and European Cohesion Policy

Spain
País Vasco - Provincial Council of Bizkaia

Sweden
Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth (Tillväxtverket)

UK
England - Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG)
Wales - Welsh European Funding Office
Scotland - Scottish Government

DG Regio of the European Commission



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