

# Stories of European cooperation

Interreg projects working on skills



# Introduction

‘Stories of European cooperation’ tell us about Interreg projects in different regions of Europe and beyond seen from the perspective of young volunteers. These are the stories about engagement, energy and cooperative action, about the willingness to change, together, things for better. I think that these stories bring us an immense power of optimism against the current background of crises, social polarisation and anxiety. They also exemplify the quest of younger generation for a faster and fairer transformation of our society, and for new forms of social and economic engagement.

And this is certainly good news for the EU cohesion policy. Our motto is to improve the lives of all European citizens notwithstanding where they live. We cannot achieve this goal without the active participation of our youth. That is why, since more than 3 years DG REGIO has been working with the young generation, in order to involve them in Interreg programmes and the EU macro regional strategies. The Interreg Youth Manifesto that has been worked out by young people themselves continues to provide us with guidelines in this work.

Last year’s successful flagship initiative ‘#Youth4Cooperation’ saw the creation of four Youth Councils in Interreg programmes and in the EU MRS, and many projects designed by and for young people were launched. This response has confirmed the readiness of our youth to take on the big challenges of the green and digital transition, bringing a breath of fresh air to European democracy.

This year is the European Year of Skills. That is why we focus on giving young people new skills through cooperation. Initiatives such as the Interreg Volunteer Youth (IVY) are essential for this purpose as they turn neighbours into friends across EU internal and external borders. The IVY has already benefitted 800 volunteers - and counting - who have contributed with their skills in communication matters and project management by joining the Interreg community. At the same time, they have also learned how to better cooperate with people from different countries and backgrounds.

I would like to thank the Association of European Border Regions and Interact for placing the focus on youth in this edition of the ‘Stories of European Cooperation’. I wish you good reading, hoping these stories will inspire other young people to join this adventure. After all, 86 Interreg programmes every year launch thousands of cooperation projects across the EU and its neighbouring countries. There is room for our youth to create even more inspiring stories and to shape the EU for the better future they are calling for.



**Slawomir Tokarski**

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# Employment opportunities for young graduates

The Employouth project helps youngsters find a job and build their skills in a cross-border area

*By Thanos Efthymiou*

This is the European Year of Skills but Interreg has been working on this matter for a long time. An example is the Employouth project, which creates employment opportunities for graduates in the cross-border area between Greece and the Republic of North Macedonia. The project aims to implement a comprehensive package of measures to favour entry to the employment of highly educated people in the area, allowing them to develop their skills and gain job experience.

Employouth, led by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Serres (Greece), is financed by the Interreg IPA programme Greece-North Macedonia, and has put in place innovative tools and practices such as the ‘Mentorship and training programme’, aimed at promoting the start-up ecosystem in the region.

The results are clearly visible: thanks to the use of the scientific capital of the two countries in the labour market, a real exchange of qualified personnel has taken place, improving the competitiveness of the two economies, promoting sustainable and viable development in the two intervention areas, and strengthening regional cohesion in the border region. What else?

## Main project objectives

- Creation of a dynamic entrepreneurship culture
- Investment on human capital as one of the most valuable resources of the cross-border area for promoting economic activities
- Development of entrepreneurship and conditions facilitating job creation
- Enhancement of skills and boost of human potential



## Training and skills activities: Testimonial

As part of the project, a series of training and skills sessions were conducted, which included an 80-hour ‘Accelerator Programme’ developed by the project partner Preda Plus Foundation. The training was held from February to March 2019 and had a notable impact on recent graduates, such as **Nikolce Anakievski**, who stated that his idea for starting his own business emerged “from the need for his son to consume organic food, in order to prevent the allergy problems he had been experiencing. This training has been crucial for me and helped me a great deal with my start-up”.

“Also, the Preda Plus Foundation was key in catalyzing my ideas precisely when I needed it the most. In my search for information and guidance from various institutions, I encountered discouragement instead of motivation and encouragement. However,

this project swiftly and practically became a source of revelation for me, enabling me to see the whole picture”. In this sense, he explains that he approached specific questions regarding the development of his business, and the network of experts provided concrete solutions that significantly facilitated the entire process of developing a business plan, making him a proactive player in his life’s adventure.



Training organised by the project partner PREDA in Bitola.



## OTHER TESTIMONIALS

“Mentoring and networking events were both very useful as business plan development tools.”

Project beneficiary from Kilkis

“Everything I heard and learned was all-embracing and even helped to refine and make my idea more realistic with real data and of course to be proved profitable through financial data.”

Project beneficiary from Edessa

“The program was excellent and the knowledge I gained is valuable.”

Project beneficiary from Edessa

“Through the process of developing the business idea my mentors and coaches from Preda Plus helped me to fill my gaps in knowledge and skills and motivate me to be more confident and to succeed. In addition, they have helped to anticipate the risk, showing me the real market situation and encouraging me to make solid market research before establishing my business idea.”

Project beneficiary from Bitola

## So, what’s my overall experience?

As an IVY reporter, I have been able to see the impact of Employouth. It has proven to enhance the lives of graduates by providing training opportunities and promoting entrepreneurship. The European Union has demonstrated its commitment to keeping up with digital advancements by supporting such initiatives and I’m very happy that I could be part of this.



Beneficiaries of the training in Bitola.



Participants asking questions.

## Impact of the project

- **140 beneficiaries** took part in the training sessions organized within the Employouth project.
- Citizens from **four regions** were involved: Serres, Kilkis and Edessa in Greece, Bitola in North Macedonia.
- **330 hours of educational activities** were organised, with content spanning from many fields: graphic design, PR, branding, risk capital fund, project management, financial management, corporate innovation and investments, development of human resources, laws for start-up companies in Macedonia, intellectual property and storytelling.
- **30 beneficiaries** were selected to participate in the **‘Pre-incubation stage’** to further develop their business ideas.

More information:

<https://employouth.eu/>



Athanasios Efthymiou

- **Age:** 21
- **Nationality:** Greek/Cypriot
- **Region where you are deployed:** Central Macedonia (Greece)
- **Write three words that define ‘European cooperation’ for you:** Solidarity, opportunity, unity



# Opportunities for young Caribbean artists to develop their skills

The project Richès Karayib reveals Caribbean talents and connects artists with professionals in various artistic and cultural fields

*By Adriana Tramullas De Nys*

The song challenge ‘[Richès Karayib Voices](#)’ is an initiative of the project with the same name (Richès Karayib), which means ‘Caribbean richness’ in creole. This joint initiative, created by three local organisations, promotes the development of a business environment in the cultural sector of the Greater Caribbean. Within the framework of the Interreg-Caraïbes programme, the project aims to develop a permanent space for meetings and exchanges, to federate the Caribbean population and diaspora as well as the international population around the Caribbean cultural richness through a digital platform and a series of events.

## Voices of the Caribbean

One of the many fascinating aspects of Caribbean culture is its music. Beyond the very well-known Reggae and Dancehall music, you can also hear

Zouk, Konpa, Calypso, Soca, Spouge and Bouyon rhythms, just to name a few.



The mentor and contestants of Richès Karayib Voices #1 Martinique.





Behind the scenes of the mentorship session in Martinique.

The importance of music in local culture and its potential for wealth creation and professional development was the belief upon which was created the song challenge Richès Karayib Voices. This specific activity of the aforementioned project aims to unveil the talent of young vocal artists living in the Caribbean by providing them with a platform to express their music and connecting them with the right people.

Richès Karayib Voices is a competition addressed to young people between the ages of 18 to 35 who have an original song. The challenge unfolds in three phases:

- A competition by country where up to 8 final contestants perform on stage and benefit from mentorship from a local music professional. One winner is elected to represent their country in the next phase.
- A week-long event at the end of the challenge gathering all winners in a 3-day workshop programme with international executives.
- The release of a compilation album with every winner' song.

## Binding together different territories

This first edition of the challenge itinerates across 8 territories in the Caribbean. Indeed, a key aspect of this activity is its international character: while it creates a bridge between territories, it expands the artists' reach beyond their shores.

Where is it happening?

- Martinique, Saint Lucia, Anguilla, Barbados, Trinidad & Tobago, Saint Martin, Guadeloupe and Dominica

## Mentorship and network

The core of this activity is providing young artists with the tools and knowledge to develop their skills. How is that done? By connecting these 'artists in the making' with the right people. Richès Karayib Voices provides a space for exchange with professionals ranging from different aspects of the music business: professional singers, distributors, tour producers, experts in copyright and other music executives.



The mentor and winners of Richès Karayib Voices #2 Saint Lucia.

These experts play a key role in passing on their knowledge. From a motivational talk to an expert session on the music business, every insight is helpful to young artists and can be a catalyst for their development.

In the end, every person's own personal and professional development depends on both internal and external factors, and it is the right combination of both that can be determining to

one's success. And that is what this song challenge is about, finding the right talent and providing the necessary tools for its successful development.

## Impact and results

In the framework of the music workshop to be held in Martinique in October 2023, these will be the main achievements:

- 8 direct beneficiaries, the winners of each of the challenge's stops
- 7 Caribbean territories represented
- 7 international executives in the music industry
- 3 days of educational and practical workshops
- A final show with the best talents of the Caribbean performing on stage in a unique gathering
- The first compilation album of young Caribbean voices



The top 3 winners of Richès Karayib Voices #1 Martinique.



Samuel Thompson - winner of Richès Karayib Voices #4 Barbados.



Mentorship session with the contestants of Anguilla.

## TESTIMONIAL



**Don Lucien**  
Winner of Richès Karayib  
Voices #2 (Saint Lucia)

This 30-year-old man, also known as ‘Donaton Legend’ (his artistic name), participated in the second stop of the Richès Karayib Voices challenge, held in Saint Lucia at the end of January 2023.

Coming from Soufrière, a small city south of the island, he had a long journey to reach the venue where the challenge was happening, but it ended up being worth every effort as he claimed himself as the winner of the Saint Lucia edition. He delivered a touching performance with a song written and composed by himself filled with inspirational words and critical of a system he sees unfair.

He shares that he decided to participate in this contest with the hope to find better opportunities in his career, “to move on,

a higher step, a higher level”. Thankful to everyone who motivated him to be there today, and especially to the mentor of the challenge in Saint Lucia, renowned singer Taj Weekes.

Music has proved to be a deliverance to his personal experiences. In his own words: “Music has a lot of influence, I believe that with the right persons, the right talent, the right connections, it will make a difference”. Don continues to spread an inspirational message in his social media and uses music to elevate himself and maybe encourage others to follow his path.

The next step is Martinique, where he will get the chance to represent his country, Saint Lucia, and learn from top music executives that will coach him and provide him with the necessary skills and tools to develop a successful career in the music industry. He will also have the opportunity to record an original song that will be included in the first album featuring the winners of Edition #1 of the challenge Richès Karayib Voices.

More information:

<https://richeskarayib.com/>



Adriana Tramullas De Nys

- **Age:** 28
- **Nationality:** Spanish and Belgian
- **Region where you are deployed:** Martinique, France
- **Write three words that define ‘European cooperation’ for you:** opportunity, growth, sustainability

# Italy and Croatia foster the preservation of their shared wetlands

The cross-border regions of both countries have implemented a coordinated methodology for wetlands management

By Sara Battini

## Wetlands: what are they?

Wetlands are the areas where water and land meet, for this reason, they can be found in all climatic zones and at different altitudes.

Wetlands, for instance, may include marshes and peatlands, but also deltas, floodplains, mangroves, rice fields and even coral reefs.

Despite covering a small portion of the global surface, these areas, and the biodiversity which they host, are not only vital for the numerous natural landscapes to which they provide a wide variety of resources, but also for the sustainment of human life.

Wetlands are a source of:

- Drinking and Process Water
- Food

- Rich biodiversity
- Protection from natural disasters
- Carbon Storage
- Hydroelectricity



## The decrease in wetlands

In the past 100 years, almost two-thirds of European wetlands were lost as they have been subjected to the pressures of land use and pollution and have also been severely affected by climate change. These, along with other factors, could threaten to alter the conditions of these habitats thus leading to the loss of its biodiversity. Like any other natural area, wetlands may not always respect national borders. In view of this, a cross-border approach to their management could be beneficial for two main reasons: firstly, it could allow a coordinated management of the areas which cross national borders. Secondly, it could provide the chance to exchange practices,



skills and knowledge among stakeholders operating in different countries.

### How to restore them? The CREW project

Bearing in mind the urgent need to restore these areas and the added value of cross-border cooperation, the Interreg programme Italy-Croatia has financed the CREW (Coordinated Wetland Management in Italy-Croatia Cross Border Region) project. The final goal of this project is to attain positive effects on the coastal wetland ecosystems of the Adriatic Sea by encouraging coordination and thus fostering their development and preservation.



Improving public awareness of stakeholders through a visit to the island of Lazzaretto Nuovo.

### Main results of the CREW Project:

- ① The set-up of a cross-border Observatory of coastal wetlands.
- ② The protection of the biodiversity in Italian and Croatian coastal wetlands thanks to the subscription of a Wetland Contract involving 148 signatories.
- ③ The sharing of a cross border strategy strengthening synergies among Italian and Croatian coastal wetlands.
- ④ Improved public awareness regarding the value of wetlands ecosystems among policy-makers, professionals and the general public and strengthened their active engagement in territorial governance, with about 500 stakeholders involved in participatory activities.

All these results were aimed at creating connections among people as the partnership wanted to bet on local people who, with their specific skills and interests, could be the main drivers of tangible change.



The Barene, natural element which will be protected and promoted by locals thanks to the Wetland contract.

## INTERVIEW - Marta De Marchi, working on the CREW project

### Question: Why were local stakeholders involved in the Wetland Contract?

**Marta De Marchi:** One of the main achievements of the CREW Project is the subscription of a Wetland Contract. What we have tried to do as the lead partner is to involve as many local stakeholders as possible in this process because the skills and knowledge of locals are extremely valuable to foster the restoration of wetlands and manage them in the best way possible.

Their competencies are rooted in the local traditions, which were often passed down from generation to generation and are considerate of the needs of the local environment and more mindful of its changes.

### How do you think the project has enhanced the skills of locals and built on them?

Within the CREW project and especially thanks to the subscription of the Wetland Contract,

we have created a community of local stakeholders who could pass-down their skills and knowledge to the wider local communities, raising awareness on biodiversity loss and the role that each person can play in ensuring the balance between human activities and restoration.

Only by bringing together different skills, knowledge, and experiences and by sharing them not only with other local, regional and national actors, but also with the general public will it be possible to create an informed community that knows how crucial wetlands are and how to preserve these areas and the biodiversity that they host.

In particular, regarding the Wetland Contract of the Northern Lagoon of Venice, this lagoon is so diverse that it is necessary to put together different kinds of skills in order to adequately deal with its specific needs and to foster the well-being of the entire ecosystems which rely on it.



A view of the Dolomites from the Island of Lazzaretto Nuovo, Venice.



Guided visit of the nature walk of the island of Lazzaretto Nuovo.



Cavallino Treponti, Venice, Low tide in the Lagoon.

More information:

<https://programming14-20.italy-croatia.eu/web/crew>



Sara Battini

- **Age:** 24
- **Nationality:** Italian
- **Region where you are deployed:** Venice, Italy
- **Write three words that define 'European cooperation' for you:** solidarity, opportunities, people

# Enhancing governance to respond to climate change

The project MPA Engage developed adaptation plans in seven Mediterranean countries: Albania, Croatia, France, Greece, Italy, Malta and Spain

*By Silvia Guastella*

With a temperature rise three times higher than in other seas, different invasions of exotic species and the collapse of biodiversity, climate change is dramatically affecting the Mediterranean Sea, which is warming at a rate 20% faster than the world's average.

Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), despite the nature-based solutions they offer to support efforts towards climate change adaptation and mitigation, are the first ones to feel the climate change effects. Several Mediterranean MPAs are already facing major biodiversity and functional alterations due to climate change, whereas others will likely face them in the next few decades. There is, therefore, an urgency to mitigate these risks and to consider adaptation options in partnership with local communities, decision-makers, civil society organizations research bodies, and other socio-economic actors at a local, national, and regional level.



## MPA Engage: mitigating the climate change effects

This is the main purpose of MPA Engage, a project funded by the Interreg MED programme and carried out over a period of three years, from November 2019 to June 2022. The project, with a budget of about 3 million euros, supported Mediterranean MPAs to adapt to and mitigate the ongoing climate change effects in the Mediterranean Sea. Through a participatory approach, MPA Engage monitored the impacts of climate change at sea in a harmonized way, developed socio-ecological vulnerability assessments and realized adaptation plans in seven MPAs located in seven Mediterranean countries, namely Albania, Croatia, France, Greece, Italy, Malta, Spain.





## The Calanques National Park: a natural and cultural jewel in the Mediterranean

Among the partners, the well-known Calanques National Park of Marseille was one of the seven pilot sites of the project. The park is located at the center of the Aix-Marseille-Provence metropolis and represents today the heart of the identity of the city of Marseille. For the occasion, I had the opportunity to interview Pauline Vouriot, Marine biodiversity officer and climate change adaptation plan coordinator in the MPA Engage project.



### INTERVIEW - Pauline Vouriot - Marine biodiversity officer and climate change adaptation plan coordinator - MPA Engage

#### Question: What was the role of the Calanques National Park in MPA Engage?

**Pauline Vouriot:** In the project, the Calanques National Park participated as a test MPA. As a pilot site, our main objective was to design our adaptation plan, following a methodology divided into five parts, each corresponding to a particular Work Package.

#### How did the Calanques National Park contribute to the project?

As a pilot site, we took part in all the test activities necessary for the preparation of the adaptation plan (field monitoring, vulnerability assessment, participatory approaches, and citizen science). The capacity-building sessions

aimed to strengthen the capacities of partners through exercises, webinars and small questionnaires to be completed.

#### What were the main lines of the project?

The main lines of the project were the engagement of local communities, small-scale fisheries, and citizens in monitoring the impacts of climate change; secondly, the promotion of the role of MPAs as nature-based solutions for climate change adaptation; and thirdly, the animation of a Mediterranean policy dialogue between scientists, MPA managers, decision-makers (local authorities), environmental NGOs and socio-economic actors.



© Personal photo. Calanques National Park.



© Personal photo. Calanques National Park at sunset.

## The impact of the project

Through a participatory approach, MPA Engage monitored the impacts of climate change at sea in a harmonized way, developed socio-ecological vulnerability assessments and realized adaptation plans **located in seven Mediterranean countries**, namely Albania, Croatia, France, Greece, Italy, Malta, Spain.

### The National Park of Calanques (France)

- **The vulnerability assessment**

The user groups selected for this assessment were picked from a list of the most common activities that take place in all the MPAs involved in the project. There are three main sources of data for the vulnerability assessment: 1) secondary data collected from the literature; 2) data collected by the MPA for the assessment, and 3) stakeholder

questionnaire data. Online questionnaires (with about 20 to 40 questions) targeted 4 groups of stakeholders' representatives:

- ✓ 8 diving clubs
- ✓ 23 nautical activities companies
- ✓ 3 institutional actors including tourist offices
- ✓ 3 representatives of recreational fishermen (one in each prud'homies: Marseille, Cassis, La Ciotat)

- **Citizen Science and capacity building**

Citizen Science (CS) is one of the main pillars of the project MPA Engage and it is defined as the involvement of citizens in the realization of research projects and production of scientific data. This priority wanted to strengthen the capacities of MPAs and involve citizens. It sensitized people through a

participatory science approach to the protocols learned during the Mediterranean observatory and the effects of climate change.

- ✓ The National Park of Calanques organized **19** trainings
- ✓ They sensitized a total of **55** citizens to two main protocols

### • The adaptation plan

In total **36** adaptation responses and **78** measures have been developed based on our knowledge of climate change in the Calanques National Park.

The results of the five-fold MPA Engage approach (participatory approaches, vulnerability assessments, harmonized monitoring, citizen science and action plans) have generated 5 fundamental recommendations for fast tracking climate change actions for achieving effective management and enhanced resilience in a changing ocean:

- ✓ **RECOMMENDATION #1** - Plan and support comprehensive and well-articulated participatory processes through all stages of the adaptive management cycle and build a strong base for community action against climate change in Mediterranean MPAs.

- ✓ **RECOMMENDATION #2** - Deploy tailor-made decision support tools such as vulnerability assessments for enhanced adaptive management, strengthened dialogue and effective climate change adaptation strategies.
- ✓ **RECOMMENDATION #3** - Promote Mediterranean MPAs as sentinel sites to monitor climate change impacts and adopt at Mediterranean level a harmonized and robust monitoring approach that can address the local socio-ecological needs and conditions.
- ✓ **RECOMMENDATION #4** - Invest in and promote citizen science and community-based research and monitoring on climate change in Mediterranean MPAs via developing an enabling policy environment for open science.
- ✓ **RECOMMENDATION #5** - Enhance the resilience and effectiveness of Mediterranean MPAs through the elaboration of science-based climate change adaptation and mitigation action plans tailor-made to the MPAs specific context.



Participation of the Calanques National Parc to the workshop “Coastal biodiversity and small Mediterranean islands facing climate change”.

Website of the project:  
[\*\*MPA Engage \(interreg-med.eu\)\*\*](http://MPA Engage (interreg-med.eu))



Silvia Guastella

- **Age:** 24
- **Nationality:** Italian
- **Region where you are deployed:** Marseille, France, Provence-Alpes-Cote d’Azur
- **Write three words that define ‘European cooperation’ for you:** solidarity, support, dialogue



# Cooperation is central to developing soft skills for migrants

The project 'Social Innovation for Refugees' provides migrants with new tools that are essential for their inclusion in society

*By Clara Kiess*

Conflicts, crises, wars - all this is still happening in the 21st century. To escape those points of conflict, people are fleeing their home countries to look for a better and more secure future in Europe. However, regions struggle to successfully integrate migrants and allow them to take an active part in our societies. Especially when it comes to finding employment, migrants are facing many challenges due to their lack of language skills, cultural knowledge, and biases from employers.

The SiforREF ('Social Innovation for Refugees') project, financed by the cooperation programme Interreg Central Europe, addressed these challenges in an innovative way. By working beyond borders, the project partners were able to contribute to the common challenge of providing migrants with new tools and resources essential to their inclusion in the job market and society in general.

SiforREF project activities were focused on the migrants' time after their arrival in European countries and therefore ranged from inclusion in the neighbourhood, job search and training programmes to becoming volunteers.

## Enhancing soft skills such as communication and teamwork

Another key aspect to strengthen the migrants' agency and employability in the SiforREF project was also the development of skills. Whereas hard skills were often already part of local integration policies, SiforREF's innovative approach lay in enhancing soft skills. Soft skills like communication, teamwork, and problem-solving are important for success in any job. But they are particularly crucial for migrants who face linguistic and cultural barriers in the workplace.



The partners from four countries therefore developed, assessed, and evaluated training programs, workshops, and counselling programmes that helped migrants to improve these skills. For the design and implementation of the tools the project actively involved migrants, employers, and other stakeholders to ensure that the approaches were responsive to the needs and interests of everybody involved.

### Real impact on the ground

Soft skills can have a significant impact on the agency and employability of migrants. Migrants who have participated in the project have reported increased confidence, improved communication skills, and a better understanding of the job market. They have also been able to secure employment in a variety of sectors, including hospitality, healthcare, and IT.

These results show that the tools and resources provided by the SIforREF project were essential to break down barriers and promote inclusive integration in central Europe. Only by sharing

their knowledge, resources, and experience the project partners were able to develop a common Memorandum of Understanding and guidelines that can help local communities all over Europe to innovate their integration policies. This proves that cooperation is central to addressing common challenges, developing skills, and promoting integration in central Europe.

### Results of the project

- 1 toolbox with socially innovative approaches on refugee integration has been created.
- 7 pilot actions have been conducted and evaluated, where around 250 migrants have participated in the project activities: training programmes, workshops, counselling... They have reported an increase in their soft skills.
- 1 comprehensive transnational strategy has been developed to provide policy-makers and local communities with concrete tools to improve the integration of refugees.

## PILOT ACTIONS

The SiforREF Pilots are concrete actions for the inclusion of refugees into society and labour market. They are designed and implemented building on extensive research and stakeholder cooperation within the project. Each pilot addresses a specific challenge, a specific target group, and a specific goal with respect to refugee inclusion.

The pilots were conducted in the 5 partner regions of Parma, Ljubljana, Berlin, Vienna, and Bologna. They will be evaluated with respect to the question of effectiveness and transferability. Key findings will contribute to enhancing local and international policy measures.

- **Self-employment and me**

‘Selbstständigkeit und Ich’ (self-employment and me) is a pilot programme aimed to support Arabic and Farsi speaking women (35+years) with a refugee background to explore self-employment to meaningfully access the labour market and secure self-sufficiency.



- **Work for refugees**

The pilot Work for Refugees was an advisory service for refugee women between March and September 2021 intended to facilitate greater integration into the German labour market. In addition, barriers to the labour market for refugee women should be understood and the needs of the target group transparently communicated to stakeholders and institutions in the labour market in order to be able to offer refugee women suitable entry opportunities and working conditions.



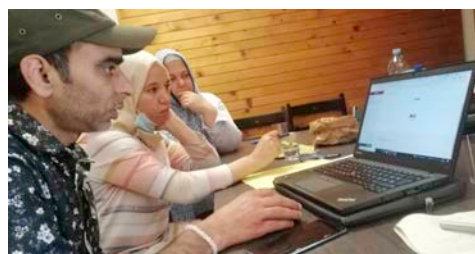
- **Welfare community management**

The aim of the pilot in Bologna ‘Connettiamoci! Coltivare Comunità’ was to contribute - through Community Labs activities and social inclusion laboratories - to the growth of a culture of relationship and participation among citizens, asylum seekers and refugees living in the metropolitan City of Bologna.



- **Connecting refugees with the labour market, education and craft**

The aim of the pilot was to scrutinize the needs and skills of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants regarding an aspired inclusion in the labour market in Slovenia. Based on the skills and experiences the participant has from both, their country of origin and the new country of residence, a common project should be co-created and pursued.



- **Social caretakers**

After legal recognition and institutional reception, many refugees find it difficult to rent a house and have access to full social integration in the local community. The Pilot aimed to give an answer to both these problems, at the same time showing to the natives that refugees can be a resource to the community, counteracting racism/ discrimination.



- **Non-formal education for apprentices**

This pilot aimed for long-term integration of soft skill education for apprentices of magdas hotel- a social business in which young refugees or people with migration backgrounds take part in an apprenticeship programme. Besides the formal education magdas aimed to provide nonformal education to their apprentices within the format of workshops in order to raise chances on the general job market as well as to support them on daily

issues and active long term integration in society. Further, the pilot aims to include diverse trainers in the coaching team. Therefore new trainers with migration backgrounds where educated and could try out their newly gained skills in the workshops for magdas.



- **Volunteers for volunteers**

The aim of the pilot action was to train 12 new volunteers (mostly with migrant or refugee backgrounds) and to provide information on 'Labour market integration of refugees and migrants' during five training workshops organised by former volunteers.



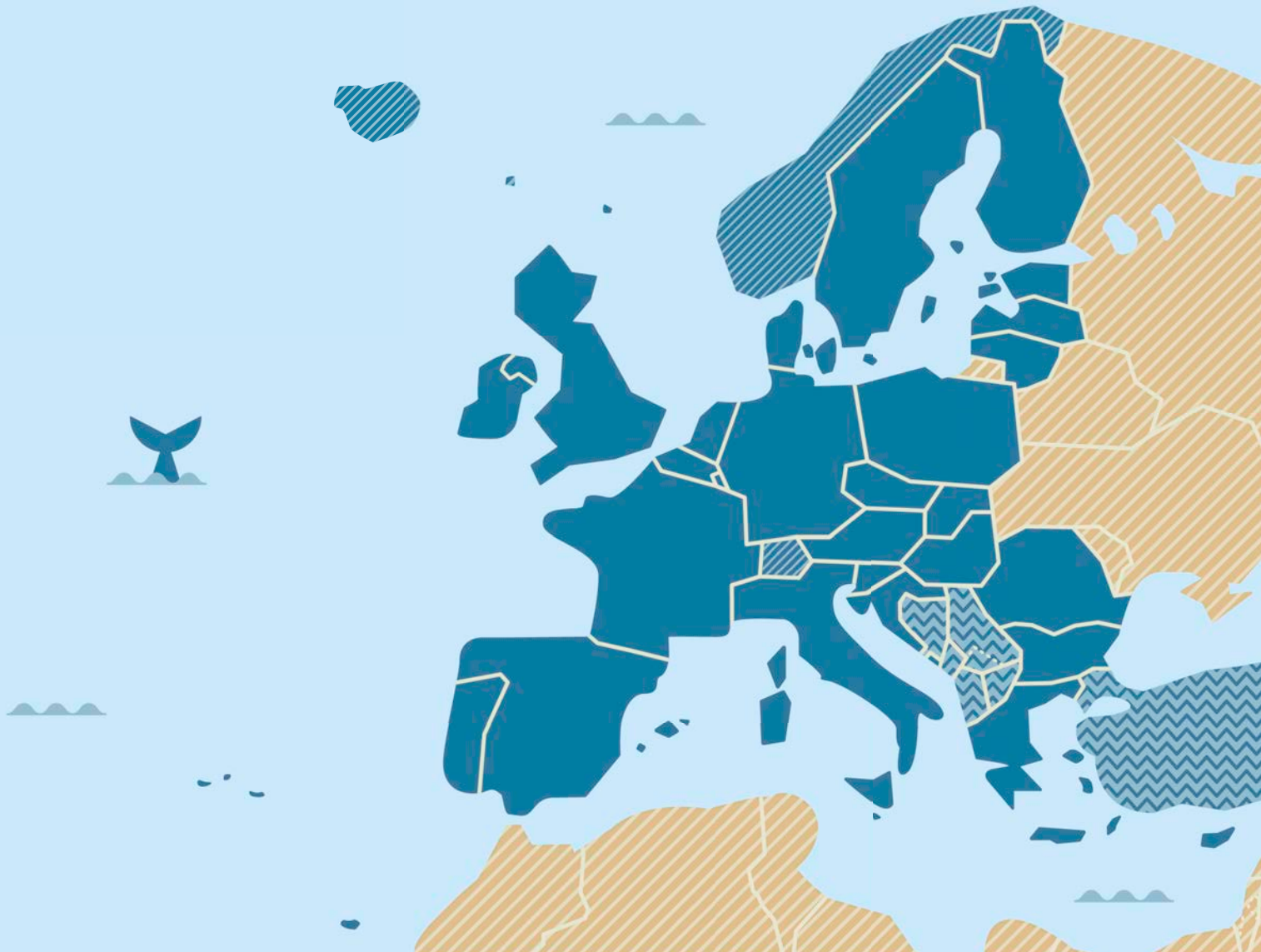
Website of the project:

<https://programme2014-20.interreg-central.eu/Content.Node/SiforREF.html>



Clara Kiess

- **Age:** 23
- **Nationality:** German
- **Region where you are deployed:** Vienna (Austria)
- **Write three words that define 'European cooperation' for you:** Trust, development, peace



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is benefiting people all over Europe?  
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<https://interreg.eu/interreg-highlights/>