



SWARE News

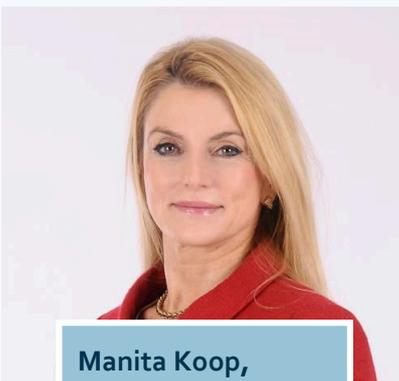
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SWARE stakeholder pool has grown

Often, we do not look beyond our borders, even though there is so much to share and learn. Therefore, the intensive knowledge transfer during the 3 Interregional Exchange Sessions in the SWARE project can surely be claimed as a success. "We have connected more than 300 stakeholders from 5 different European countries and shared ideas among them," I spoke in The Hague last October. And since then, even more have joined our community.

In March 2017 we started with an initial 17 good practices, shared on paper. Today, one year later, we have visited 20 and discussed even more. We have shared ideas, practices, experiences, dreams and plans and tools to build towards an action plan for the future.



Manita Koop,
Managing Director

From interregional we will now briefly turn regional again, when all five regions must build towards their regional action plan. In the coming months, the outcomes of the Interregional Exchange Sessions will form all partners' action plans. Ideas will finally take the shape of actions to further improve sustainable development of waterway regions and its heritage.

Inside this issue

- *2017 in focus: the lessons learnt after 3 Knowledge Exchange Sessions*
- *SWARE begins action planning*
- *The role of stakeholders*

Find all the actual information in SWARE website and social media accounts!

www.interregeurope.eu/sware





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Good practice transfer – the main ‘sailing route’ of the SWARE ship in 2017

The **interregional learning process** that is the fundamental principle of the SWARE project implementation is divided into 3 stages:

- ◆ **analysis**
- ◆ **good practice transfer**
- ◆ **action planning**

The first stage – **analysis** – was accomplished during the first year of the project by establishment of Stakeholder and Institutional learning Groups (SIG) in partner regions and by elaboration of **regional State of the Arts documents**, which reflect regional good practices on water related natural and cultural heritage policies from a governance and awareness-raising perspective. The documents also outline the main issues for improvements in the regions.

The second stage – **good practice transfer** – was the main sailing route of the SWARE ship in 2017 that took us to **3 partner regions preselected** as the most relevant **good practice donors**.

All partners and their selected relevant SIG members participated in **3 Interregional Knowledge Exchange Sessions (KESs)** to:

- ⇒ Tipperary County Council (Ireland)
- ⇒ Metropolitan City of Milan (Italy)
- ⇒ Province of Zuid-Holland (The Netherlands)

During these KESs project partners, joined by relevant stakeholders and national managing authorities, examined and discussed good practices and challenges regarding **3 different topics**:

- ◆ governance structures;
- ◆ connecting tourism with infrastructure and heritage;
- ◆ promotion, marketing and branding of destinations.

After this stage project partners have summed-up the lessons learnt to be incorporated in the action plans the elaboration whereof is on the agenda right now.

Scroll down for the lessons learnt in all 3 KESs!



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1st KES to Tipperary County Council in Ireland: public participation leads to balanced development



The KES in Ireland was devoted to **governance structures**. Initiatives of **networking and strong community stakeholder involvement** in local decision-making process were presented.

The main lessons learnt after this KES are the following:

- ⇒ A good structure for local involvement in decision making and data collection is important;
- ⇒ There is not one specific way in how to involve stakeholders/locals. They can differ widely – from public forums and questionnaires to individual meetings;
- ⇒ Better stakeholder involvement is not further institutionalising, but bringing together passion, energy, knowledge and all the different stakeholders;
- ⇒ It is necessary that the authorities facilitate the network by financing it (and other needs), but they don't interfere with the process and outcomes;
- ⇒ There is a need for efficient cooperation between municipalities and civil organizations regarding project planning considering various aspects of green/blue investments;
- ⇒ Public-private sectors engagement for the promotion and management of tourism in its region is essential.

Watch **an interview** with Tipperary County Council Heritage Officer **about the 1st KES!**



For more information read our [website](#).

And have a glimpse in the [photo gallery!](#)



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2nd KES to Metropolitan City of Milan in Italy: involvement of stakeholders is crucial



The KES in Italy was devoted to challenges in **connecting tourism with infrastructure and heritage**. In the course of the visit, the practical aspects of **different collaboration forms** – consortiums, agricultural clusters, associations, networks, metropolitan regions – were shared and discussed.

The main lessons learnt after this KES are the following:

- ⇒ Locals should be more involved in using their waterways to experience their own heritage;
- ⇒ It is critically important to involve stakeholders/actors of all types in policy-making structures in order to produce effective solutions for complex situations;
- ⇒ There is a challenge of collaboration between the different actors/stakeholders/volunteers involved;
- ⇒ In the management of waterway areas and the adjacent natural and cultural heritage it is important to combine different functions: e.g. tourism and energy, education, economy and sustainability;
- ⇒ *Ecomuseo*: all actors are involved in creating a network which open their activities in favour of revitalizing all aspects of heritage;
- ⇒ Regular contact with stakeholders is needed;
- ⇒ Involvement of the young generation could bring in new ideas, a look from different perspectives;
- ⇒ Good practices should be communicated to policy makers to stimulate the release of financial resources;
- ⇒ It is important to combine multiple usages of the natural and cultural heritage resources along inland waterways (cultural, sports, arts, navigation, education, etc.).

Watch **an interview** with the Project SWARE Manager in Metropolitan City of Milan **about the 2nd KES!**



For more information read our [website](#).

And have a glimpse in the 2nd KES through this [video](#) and the [photo gallery!](#)



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3rd KES to the Province of Zuid-Holland in the Netherlands: sharing of good practices plants seeds for new good practices in all the partner regions



The KES in the Netherlands was devoted to **promotion, marketing and branding of destinations**. The participants were introduced with how PZH together with stakeholders promotes its water-related natural and cultural heritage, how this leads to economic results and employment growth and with the importance of marketing and public relations involving public-private partnerships.

The main lessons learnt after this KES are the following:

- ⇒ Many initiatives/projects take place because of a shared vision among many different stakeholders. It is important that there is collaboration at every level;
- ⇒ The key elements of attracting tourists (foreign or native) is a good marketing (built upon the true authenticity of your region) strategy and management;
- ⇒ The waterways and their surrounding areas have many purposes/functionalities;
- ⇒ Branding is much more than communication, it also includes spatial planning and development. It starts with a vision and ambition, and knowing your identity. There have to be stakeholders that take responsibility with endurance and governmental involvement is essential;
- ⇒ Visionary entrepreneurs and volunteers are a key factor in the sustainable development and management of economical/touristic areas. They should be valued as such and thus receive the necessary support from regional planning authorities.

Watch **an interview** with the Project SWARE Manager in Province of Zuid-Holland **about the 3rd KES!**



For more information read our [website](#).

And have a glimpse in the [photo gallery!](#)



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On the SWARE Agenda now: elaboration of regional Action Plans



The **lessons learnt** during the Knowledge Exchange Sessions will be **integrated into the action plans**.

Although the situation is different in each partner region, there are common challenges:

- ⇒ how to foster interinstitutional cooperation,
- ⇒ how to involve stakeholders and at the same time ensure sustainable management of natural and cultural heritage,
- ⇒ how to improve involvement of society (volunteers) and facilitate a bottom-up approach.

The **importance of multilevel stakeholder involvement and consultation** is one of the main conclusions drawn by partners – a multi-stakeholder environment with shared goals should be created for interaction and cooperation to trigger the change.

As the Managing Director of the SWARE project, Manita Koop (Association Regio Water), pointed out in her concluding speech of the 3rd Interregional Exchange Session: *“At the beginning we were a small group, but now 200-300 stakeholders are involved internationally within this project. It is very important that the awareness of the importance of this project is growing, and it is raising on the policy agenda of decision makers. That is a very good achievement of this project just in one year.”*

The role of stakeholders is also very important in the action planning phase as they are invited to take part in stakeholder meetings and share opinion about the policy changes needed, as well as later understand the role attributed to each stakeholder group in the Action Plan and incorporate the recommendations into practice.



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The project **SWARE** keywords

dialogue among
stakeholders



interregional
policy learning

policy
improvements
sought related
to heritage
management

lessons learnt
incorporated into
action plans

valorisation of
heritage potential

How to become an active part of SWARE?

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