



## Newsletter n°3 September 2013

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### Foreword

Dear reader,

In this newsletter, you will have the opportunity to take stock on the state of play of the EU Digital Agenda, to discover DANTE partnership's last achievements and good practices, and, last but not least, to find out what we are planning for the future.

Enjoy your reading!

### The digital agenda for Europe: how can it contribute to DANTE objectives?

Euromontana represented DANTE at the conference organised on July 2<sup>nd</sup> by the Committee of the Regions on the theme « Digital Agenda for Europe: what role for regions and cities? ». The event was a good opportunity to recall what is the digital agenda for Europe, to take stock on its state of play and to tackle various issues regarding the challenges and opportunities associated and how it could support economic recovery and growth.

The rural dimension was addressed on various occasions during the meeting, especially by participants who constantly recalled the need for greater investment in broadband infrastructure in most remote territories where markets are unlikely to provide it spontaneously due to lower profitability and sparsity of potential users.



INTERREG IVC  
INNOVATION IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT  
PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME



European Union

European Regional Development Fund

*DANTE is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund and by the INTERREG IVC programme.*



### DANTE activities

DANTE involves **13 project partners**, covering a wide geographic area of **10 regions in 8 Member States**. The partnership includes partners with ICT experience at regional level and with knowledge in developing tourism strategy of rural and mountain territories.

During the project, the partners **exchange on their experience** in running regional ICT projects for rural and mountain areas. The transferability of the good practices will be demonstrated in a **pilot action** (in the province of Torino). Based on this work, **in each region, an implementation plan will be developed** to address the local tourism challenges using ICT tools and methodologies.



Broadband was compared with roads or electricity: no territory can do without. Opportunities associated to ICT development were also analysed, and there rural territories have their full role to play. The need to improve digital literacy – particularly acute in rural areas – and to support businesses was also discussed. Several innovative support schemes were presented.

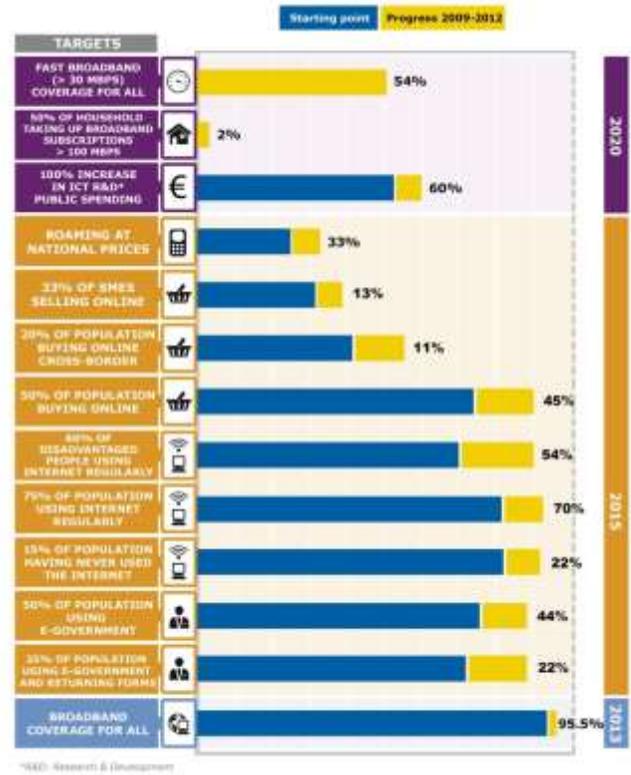
**But let's start with basics: what is the digital agenda for Europe?**

The [Digital Agenda for Europe](#) (DAE) is a flagship initiative which has been adopted by the European Union in 2010 to stimulate the digital economy and address societal challenges posed by ICT. It is aimed at speeding up the roll out of high-speed internet and reaping the benefits of a digital single market for the private and public sectors. The digital agenda is declined in 101 actions distributed over seven pillars:

1. the creation of a vibrant digital single market,
2. interoperability and standards
3. trust and security,
4. improving access to fast and ultra-fast internet access,
5. better coordination of research and support to innovation in ICT,
6. enhancing digital literacy, skills and inclusion,
7. developing new ICT applications providing benefits for society.

To achieve its results, the EU has defined 13 targets and it measures its progress yearly through the [Digital Agenda Scoreboard](#).

The latest release of the scoreboard show contrasted results. If we are roughly heading in the right direction, we are progressing too slowly on some important aspects. Moreover, the disparity between regions and, inside regions between rural and urban territories is still severe.



**Can digital development bring regional growth?**

According to speakers at the conference, the digital economy represents a great potential for the European economy. Indeed it is growing at seven times the rate of the rest of the economy. The EU's ICT sector accounts for 6% of GDP and is responsible for one fifth of business spending on research and development. Recent evidence shows that a 10% increase in the broadband penetration rate increases annual per-capita GDP growth by some 1 to 1.5%. Goals such as universal broadband coverage, the development of cloud computing and the improvement of digital skills and literacy are of paramount importance in today's modern world and are key in the development of jobs and achievement of growth. If the potential is there, there are still obstacles: in terms of jobs, up to one million digital jobs risk going unfilled by 2015 without pan-European action while 1.2 million jobs could be created through infrastructure construction. This would rise to 3.8 million new jobs in the long term.



### What is the EU doing now?

First, the European Commission has adopted in December 2012 a [communication](#) including [seven new priorities](#) or the “Digital to do list” to be delivered in 2013-2014. These priorities aim at enabling increased investment in Broadband infrastructure and in digital services and a new Grand coalition for skills and jobs. Moreover, the Director General of DG CONNECT Robert Madelin was in capacity to announce that ICT and broadband, including investments, now formed part of the concentration axis of the future cohesion policy: they were not initially in the European Commission proposals. Investment in infrastructure should also be eligible in all regions he replied to a question asked by Euromontana. This is excellent news for mountain and rural areas, for which lack of adequate infrastructure is still the first obstacle on the route to a fully developed digital economy.

Beyond the tools and vision proposed by the European Union, the role of the regional and local authorities is very important. They indeed implement one third of public investments in the EU and many are now incorporating a local digital agenda in their initiatives. The case of the Digital agenda for Extremadura, one of the regions participating in DANTE with Fundecyt, was quoted as a best practice, as well as virtual buses and digital coaches bringing skills and services to people and businesses in Cyprus and Auvergne, areas with many rural and mountain regions. Several innovation voucher scheme were also presented.

Overall the conference brought some concerns and a lot of hope: if the position of ICT in regional policies changes to be put at the forefront, economy will benefit, especially tourism strategies of rural and remote territories. Let’s make the best use possible of the new funding tools.

More information: [background note](#) and [conference proceedings](#).





## ICT for Tourism: Decisional Support Tools

6<sup>th</sup> project workshop, Torino, Italy 23<sup>rd</sup> of May 2013



During the seminar, some examples of good practices from Piedmont were shared with the audience. Here is a brief summary about what DANTE partners found about!

### *Tag it! Let's find small alpine ski resorts*



The Microsoft Tag technology, based on barcoding solutions, offer the opportunity to connect the physical world to the digital world. This makes it possible for tourists to access digital information and emotional content, from their homes or directly on site, as long as they have an internet connection. The "Mobile Tagging" project for small alpine ski resorts was developed for the Province of Turin by the "Turismo Torino e provincia" Local Tourism Agency. 13 areas are involved in the project.

The project is articulated in four phases: generation and creation of 2D TAG/QR codes, setting up mobile pages to which the tags will link (content/images/video), communication and mobile marketing campaigns.

Tags make it possible to disseminate information on the tourism offer of the area. After having installed for free an ad hoc application on their smartphones, tourists that are interested in knowing better and visiting the small Alpine ski resorts can immediately access websites, video clips, detailed information or reviews, simply taking a picture or scanning a two-dimension TAG/QR code. Tags and contents are managed through the dimediaki.it ThinkTag platform that makes it possible to generate 2D Tags, manage contents connected to the different tags, and update the Web Mobile site, which is linked by the different tags. Moreover, the tags will also be reproduced on totems installed in well-known places, so that a big number of people may see them.



**Digital maps and journey planner**

Today, more and more, the hiking has become an important component of the regional economy in mountain and rural areas. The hiker is not only seen as a person walking in the mountains, but also as a tourist who can also bring & spend money here. To give an example, since 2010, the Piedmont Region approved a Regional Law (No 12/2010 "Recovery and Enhancement of the hiking heritage of Piedmont") which officially recognized the existing network of hiking heritage as a tool for regional planning.

To facilitate the preparation of tourists before going on site, technicians digitalize the physical characteristics of the hiking trails with GPS devices and following a standardized procedure at the regional level. The hiking network in the Province of Turin extends over about 3,000 km and it is divided into three areas and twenty-three sectors. Among the routes described there we can find hiking and walking tracks on paved streets or trails at high altitude, at the head of the valleys or on the hills foothills, suitable for summer months or half seasons.

The website is available for the moment in Italian, but soon will have different other linguistic versions to encourage the arrival of other EU citizens.

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In addition to the existing trails available, tourists can use SENTGIS, a geographic system of trails on the web that makes it possible to locate services such as accommodations, roads and public means of transport.



### What's the weather like up the mountains?

The Piedmont Region has an on-line snow and meteorological information system, which informs tourists, hikers, and skiers about the real time weather conditions up in the mountains in order to raise awareness of the risks associated with weather conditions or other natural events.

**Il servizio Meteovetta**

1. Servizio in tempo reale 15 h
2. Mappe meteorologiche 24 h
3. Meteo-video 1 a week
4. Meteo-testo 1 a week

This project is co-financed by the ERDF and made possible by the INTERREG IVC programme

INTERREG IVC European Union European Regional Development Fund

The [Meteo Vetta](#) involves a serie of mountain huts that actively participate in surveys through the webcam installed on the outside of their structures. Data is accessible via the website, on Twitter; furthermore, an application is being currently prepared.



Picture : Logarska Dolina, Slovenia





- Newsletter
- Net sentiment
- Component to enable the creation of a community for tourists and operators (JomSocial)

In the pilot stage, the platform will be tested in the mountain communities of the Province Torino, Italy. The selected mountain communities are:



- Alto Canavese
- Chiusella Valley, Sacra Valley and Dora Baltea Canavesana
- Susa Valley and Sangone Valley
- Mountain Community of the Pinerolo area
- Lanzo, Ceronda and Casternone Valleys
- Orco and Soana Valleys

**If you are a tourism actor from this area, make sure your business will appear on our map, that you register in our community & that your coordinates are available to tourists around Europe, by contacting us: [communication@danteproject.eu](mailto:communication@danteproject.eu).**

The pilot platform to be produced will be presented to the large public in the mid-term conference of the project to be held in Torino, on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2013. This event is free of charge, but accommodation & travel costs are at the charge of participants.

### **DANTE mid-term conference -2<sup>nd</sup> of October 2013**

#### **How to increase the uptake of ICTs by the tourism industry in rural & mountain areas? Tools and strategies identified by partners**

Our project is holding its mid-term conference on 2<sup>nd</sup> of October in Torino, Italy. **The aim of this conference is to raise awareness on the opportunities ICTs represent for boosting the attractiveness of rural tourism. Different solutions identified by the partnership will be shared with the audience and in particular our pilot project to be implemented in Province of Torino.** Input from the audience on the content and use of this pilot project in Torino and other European regions will be collected. **So come at the conference and have your say!**

As one will have no doubts, the tourism sector, generating many direct or indirect positive impacts, is a very important driver of economy. **But how can we foster even more the sustainable development of tourism in mountain territories, thanks to the new information and communication technologies (ICTs), said to “grow at seven times the rate of the rest of the economy”?** Well, this issue will be addressed during the event! Particular solutions existing and regional strategies exploiting at best the Digital Agenda will be shown.

Visit our [website](#) and register now!



## The DANTE project in short

### Dates and figures

**13 partners** from 8 countries

**3 years** from January 2012 to December 2014

**Final conference:** June 2014, Brussels, Belgium

### The project will produce

**1 Good practices catalogue** presenting the good practices analysed

**1 Pilot action** and **guidelines**

**8 Implementation plans** for developing information society and tourism

### Expected results

**Shared and Improved Knowledge** regarding how ICT can help the competitiveness of the tourism sector in the participant regions.

**Improved Competences and Capacities** of the stakeholders in charge of the tourism sector at regional level

**Integration of Digital and Tourism Agendas** at regional level through the elaboration of 8 regional implementation plans

**General improvement of regional policy instruments** and better use of Funds.

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## Imprint

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- 2 Euromontana, BE
- 3 University of Crete, GR
- 4 Decentralised administration of Crete, GR
- 5 Fundecyt PCTEX, ES
- 6 CSI Piemonte, IT
- 7 Cybermassif, FR

- 8 Inknowcom, NL
- 9 Bauernhofferien, DE
- 10 Development centre of the Heart of Slovenia, SI
- 11 University of Ljubljana, SI
- 12 Regional Development Agency Bielsko-Biala, PL
- 13 Metropoli, IT

