TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION AGREEMENT

Actualised with the Greek partners joining the cooperation

1 Description of project goals, main project activities (including relevant places and dates); beneficiaries of the operation and its state of progress

1.1 Project goals

The main objective of the project is to develop and apply recommendations and quality standards for different interpretive provisions, including interpretive trails, guided walks and exhibitions. These will contribute towards greater awareness of the natural and cultural heritage amongst tourists and local residents within the cooperating regions.

This objective is not an end in itself, but supports strategies of sustainable development of the cooperating partners. Greater professionalism in heritage interpretation contributes towards:

- increased competitiveness of sustainable tourism,
- greater appreciation of the natural and cultural heritage and more sensitive management of these resources,
- strengthening regional identity,
- marketing regional products.

Transinterpret will bring together and develop the existing know-how in the partner regions in a multilingual joint 'virtual centre'.

1.2 Main project activities including relevant places and dates (indicative timetable)

Where necessary international workshops will tailor the suggested timetable and list of measures to the specific demands of the project.

Place and time	Activities/ Measures	
15. 8 2003	Start of Transinterpret II in the LAG Südschwarzwald:	
LEADER area	Advice to potential project partners; development of the co-operation agreement;	
Südschwarzwald	selection of pilot projects by the Baden-Württemberg partners and start of local	
	advisory activities	
27./28. 2. 2004	Kick-off workshop:	
Hinterzarten,	Discussion and agreement of the Transinterpret methodology, the project timetable	
Südschwarzwald	and plan of measures; evaluation planning	

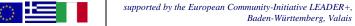
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Place and time	Activities/ Measures
Until September 2004	Approval of the project for the partners Appennino Genovese, Nordschwarzwald
partner areas	and Hohenlohe-Tauber by the competent managing authorities
From summer 2004	Application of the Transinterpret Checklists on local interpretive projects; proposals
all partners	on modifications of recommendations and standards are referred to the virtual
	Centre des Resources
78. and 17 18.	Information Workshops for interested LAGs in Greece
September 2004	
Chios & Epirus	
2223. October 2004	LEADER+ fair in Baden-Württemberg:
Hinterzarten: all	Active participation at the LEADER+ fair in Hinterzarten (Southern Black Forest,
partners and applicants	Germany); Presentation of the partner areas
November 2004	Information Workshop for interested LAGs in Tirol (Austria)
Ötz	
November 2004	Development of the structure and the corporate design for a new multi-lingual
Virtual Centre	website;
	Transinterpret recommendations for themed routes and guided tours updated
February 2005	Transinterpret Switzerland approved by the Swiss Managing Authority
FFHS/brain-tec	
February 2005	International training workshop for Regional Competence Centres:
Region Brig-Aletsch,	Fundamentals of heritage interpretation and how to make the best out of the
(CH)	Transinterpret resources for local interpretative projects (exemplified on a project in Switzerland)
March 2005 - June 2007	Development of a new internet interface for the Transinterpret database based on
FFHS	open-source software
March 2005	Participation at the LEADER+ exhibition in Calw
Calw,	•
Nordschwarzwald	
May 2005	Transinterpret information workshop in co-operation with the Krokus trail
Zavelstein,	
Nordschwarzwald	
May 2005	Transinterpret information workshop in co-operation with the Historical
Gersbach,	Entrenchment Project
Südschwarzwald	
June 2005	Further development of database structure to prepare internet access to the database;
Virtual Centre / FFHS	Establishment of project management for programming of the new database
June 2005	Presentation of Transinterpret as a case study during the European LEADER+
Brussels	Cooperation fair.
project management	
September 2005	Approval by the Swiss canton Wallis
FFHS/brain-tec	

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Place and time	Activities/ Measures
October 2005	Development of a new Content Management system for www.transinterpret.net
brain-tec	
November 2005	Regional Transinterpret workshop for Baden-Württemberg: Writing interpretive
Hohenlohe-Tauber	texts
January 2006	International workshop, focusing on concrete interpretation projects;
Appennino Genovese	Presentation of the current state of the database and the website; training session for
	RCCs.
	(1 st international meeting)
Spring 2006	First local projects implemented and awarded with the Transinterpret quality label
Baden-Württemberg	
Spring 2006	Start of data collection for evaluation of success
Baden-Württemberg	
2006	Coaching of two local interpretive trail projects in Saas-Fee (Wallis)
Switzerland / virtual	
centre	
2006	Coaching of local interpretive trail projects, and rural museum projects in
Baden-Württemberg	Südschwarzwald, Nordschwarzwald and Hohenlohe-Tauber
May 2007	Approvals for Greek LAGs to participate in Transinterpret II and amendment of the
Greece	annex of co-operation agreement
Spring 2007	Translation of Transinterpret website into Greek language
Greek RCC	
June 2007, Chios	Training Workshop in Greece (in combination with first visit of international
Greece	management to Greek partner LAGs):
	Interregional Interpretive Strategy for Greek partners.
	(1 st meeting for Greek partners)
Spring 2007	Additional recommendations are developed for interpretive project management
virtual centre	and marketing
July 2007	Regional Transinterpret workshop for Baden-Württemberg
Nordschwarzwald	
Summer 2007	Additional recommendations on interpretation centres and interactive installations
virtual centre	to be developed
Summer 2007	Internet access to the Transinterpret database for the partners
FFHS	
Summer 2007	The tourism (end-user) targeted web-portal goes online
virtual centre	
Summer 2007	Finish of development phase:
virtual centre	Analysis of the evaluation data and further development of the certification criteria
	and procedures

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Place and time	Activities/ Measures
Summer 2007 –	Operational phase (indicative):
Summer 2008	Full application of Transinterpret by the partners
all partners	Additional adjustments and supplementations of the database (according to needs of
	local project initiatives)
	Focus on marketing and preparation of post-LEADER+ structures
	Evaluation
Autumn 2007	Foundation of a Transinterpret technical advisory group
project management	
Autumn 2007	Translation of Transinterpret database recommendations into Greek language
Greek RCC	
October 2007	Regional Transinterpret Workshop for Baden-Württemberg
Südschwarzwald	
October 2007, Xanthi	Regional Training Workshop for Greek partners.
(ANXA), Greece	(2 nd meeting for Greek partners)
Autumn 2007	Additional recommendations are developed for the internet and new media;
virtual centre	integration of text- and image-based examples to illustrate the recommendations
November 2007	Excursion to implemented projects in Baden-Württemberg and evaluation of lessons
Baden-Württemberg /	learnt
all partners	(2 nd international meeting)
Winter 2007/2008	Additional recommendations are developed for the target group "families with
virtual centre	children"
March 2008, Kozani	Regional Training Workshop for Greek partners.
(ANKO), Greece	(3 rd meeting for Greek partners)
Spring (May) 2008	International Transinterpret Workshop
Ioannina (EPIRUS SA),	(3 rd international meeting)
Greece	
Winter 2007/2008	Establishment of an international organisation (Interpret Europe) that will carry on
project management	Transinterpret beyond LEADER+
June 2008	Final report
Virtual Centre and	
all partner areas	

1.3 Beneficiaries of the operation

Because of the strategic significance of professional heritage interpretation in the sustainable development of rural regions, a number of different target groups can be identified.

Immediate beneficiaries include local and regional project teams responsible for developing new interpretive measures. Typical provisions include thematic routes, interpretive trails, exhibitions in rural museums or visitor centres, nature parks, open air museums or the professional training of

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local guides.

The **actual target group** however are the visitors to the region themselves. This includes all persons interested in finding out more about the region and its natural and cultural heritage in an entertaining, but informative way.

The ultimate beneficiaries include:

- SMEs in the tourism sector and related secondary branches,
- Districts and regions, through a strengthening of regional identity,
- Associations and authorities with responsibility for the protection of the natural and cultural heritage,
- Those engaged in producing and marketing regional products.

1.4 State of progress

The need for a transnational LEADER co-operation on recommendations and standards for professional heritage interpretation was first established in 1998 during a LEADER II seminar in Parma, Italy. In the period December 1999 to December 2001, Transinterpret I developed the basic structure of the database (English and German), with recommendations provided and successfully tested for self-guided trails and guided walks (see final report).

Following the establishment of fundamental structures, Transinterpret can now be developed more dynamically and involve more partners within LEADER+ (see indicative timetable and plan of measures). In 2003 the LAG Südschwarzwald received the project approval for Transinterpret, followed by LAGs Nordschwarzwald and Hohenlohe-Tauber and GAL Appennino Genovese in 2004. In 2005 the Swiss RegioPlus partners Fernfachhochschule der Schweiz (FFHS) – Swiss Distance University for Applied Sciences) – and brain-tec were approved to start Transinterpret Switzerland within the transnational co-operation.

With the nine Greek partners joining the transnational cooperation in May 2007 Transinterpret can be extended until end of 2008.

2 Description of anticipated results for beneficiaries of the operation and for the areas concerned

Immediate beneficiaries, i.e. **executing organisations** and **staff** tasked with developing new interpretive provisions, benefit by:

- actively using the planning and evaluation checklists to ensure their work meets current international recommendations and standards,
- sharing their experiences with others through active participation in developing the recommendations, whilst benefiting from others doing the same;

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- receiving international attention through Transinterpret and using their participation in Transinterpret in marketing,
- obtaining practical training through participation in the workshops.

The actual target group, i.e. **holiday makers, day visitors** and the **local recreational public,** benefit through greater satisfaction with interpretive provisions. Visitors are better able to identify with the natural and cultural heritage, the place and the region.

For the ultimate beneficiaries, i.e. the **tourism sector**, **communes** and **regions**, **regional marketing organisations** and **institutions tasked with protecting the cultural and natural heritage**, the qualitative improvements facilitated by Transinterpret lead to better and more effective implementation of their respective economic, social and ideational objectives.

3 Approach, methods and procedure for implementing the project for which financing is requested

3.1 Heritage Interpretation

Heritage interpretation is designed to raise awareness of the natural and cultural heritage in a recreational setting. As a comprehensive approach, it brings together different methods of communication with the specific objective of addressing a visiting public. Interpreters translate the language of nature and the cultural heritage, as well as the language of experts, into a language appreciated by holiday makers, day visitors or local people.

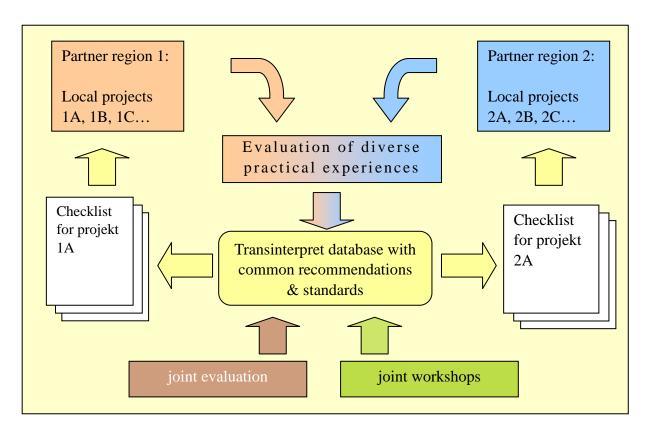
Methods of heritage interpretation transform existing material into stories that interest and actively engage visitors during their tour of exhibitions, thematic routes, guided walks etc. Special features of a place and the characteristics of a landscape are presented in such a way that visitors are engaged emotionally as well as intellectually.

3.2 The Transinterpret approach for joint development of quality

- Expert knowledge, literature and research results on aspects of interpretation are translated into practical recommendations.
- These recommendations are collated in a database and made available to local projects in the partner regions in form of planning checklists.
- Using the practical experiences gained by local projects, the shared know-how continues to be improved and expanded.
- Projects of the partners meeting the Transinterpret criteria will receive permission to use the Transinterpret quality label for marketing.

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- Regional and international workshops test the recommendations and standards using concrete projects as a test bed.
- Evaluation forms an important part of Transinterpret; its results feed back into optimising the recommendations and standards.



3.3 Methods and procedure for implementing the project

- Integration of local interpretation projects through regional advisory centres and a joint "virtual centre":
 - Experience in LEADER II has shown that although know-how needs to be brought together centrally, local places of contact are important for supporting local project teams. For this reason, Transinterpret II provides regional advisory centres to supplement the work of the "virtual centre" run by project management.
- Local project teams and regional advisory centre:
 Transinterpret local advisory centres make available the current planning checklist for specific project types and provide all necessary explanations.

 Project teams report back to the advisory centre with recommendations and standards met and

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explanations for possible deviations. Reasons for not meeting standards could be a basis for optimising the respective recommendations.

• The virtual Centre of Resources:

In order to enable quick access to the rapidly growing increase in knowledge and experience in professional interpretation, knowledge needs to be collated and continuously updated in a central database. To maintain consistency of recommendations and standards, this database is maintained by project management using consistent criteria.

Direct access to the database by internet will be made available for the Regional Advisory Centres.

The virtual centre also comprises:

- the joint website, promoting the Transinterpret system of quality as well as the partner regions' local interpretation projects;
- the international workshops in different partner regions, which will use concrete projects as
 a case studies and whose results will influence the development of recommendations and
 standards;
- the analysis of regional data collected for evaluation.

• Development of new recommendations and standards:

Any local Transinterpret project or advisory centre can suggest new recommendations. Project management also develops suggestions for new recommendations. If no objections are voiced, new recommendations are added to the central database and translated into the local languages by the respective advisory centres. A review group comprising external experts then assesses the recommendations and puts forward which recommendations should be considered international, national or regional standards.

• Methods of evaluation:

Evaluation uses a mix of methods, including:

- random testing using the Transinterpret evaluation checklists,
- Expert interviews;
- Visitor questionnaires and observations.

Decision-making

The transnational Steering Group, comprising representatives of the advisory centres and project management, will strive for maximum consensus in decision-making. If consensus cannot be achieved, project management (Leader + Action Group Baden Wurttemberg) consults the review group and then presents the different positions and statements of review group experts to the Chair of the lead LEADER Action Group. The Chairperson then takes a final decision in view of the objectives of the overall project.

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• During the implementation phase an international organisation shall be launched, which pursues the aim of enhancing professionalism in Heritage Interpretation on the European continent. This European association for Interpretation shall take over the Transinterpret approach of quality management and further develop it for use on a European scale.

4 Period of implementation of the project

The development phase of Transinterpret II began on 15 August 2003 in the LEADER+ area Südschwarzwald and will be completed on 31st July 2007. The following implementation phase will last latest until 31st December 2008. This is the deadline for administrative completion of Transinterpret Switzerland.

5 Role of each partner in relation to main activities

5.1 The role of all partner groups

All partner groups develop and implement local interpretive projects within their LEADER areas (e.g. within LEADER+ financed by Action 1), during which they apply Transinterpret recommendations. For this purpose, they appoint persons or institutions to constitute a regional Transinterpret advisory centre (see also chapter 7.2).

Minimum tasks of the advisory centres include:

- Translation of materials into the local language and into English respectively;
- Making available current Transinterpret recommendations to local interpretation projects and providing explanations where necessary;
- passing back experiences in applying the existing recommendations or suggestions for new recommendations to project management;
- participation in international workshops and possibly organising an international workshop in the respective region;
- short descriptions of the local projects applying Transinterpret for publication on the joint website (in English and local language);
- collecting and passing on data for evaluation; evaluation is not obligatory in local conditions where collecting such data is not feasible due to financial, logistical or other limitations.

The co-operation partners from Baden-Württemberg run a joint regional advisory centre under the lead of the LAG Südschwarzwald.

The Greek partners will develop Regional Advisory Centres in each LAG. For the operation of the

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Regional Advisory Centres and training of local stakeholders in the partner areas, each national partner (Greek LAG) will co-operate with the Greek Regional Competence Center (RCC) (University of the Aegean, Dep. of Business Affairs) under the coordination of Dorothea Papathanassiou-Zuhrt, who has proofed competence in Heritage Interpretation on local and international levels and has been trained by the Virtual Centre.

Transinterpret Switzerland (FFHS/brain-tec/Region Brig-Aletsch) will implement the enlarged database structure and the CMS-based web-interface. In co-operation with the Region Brig-Aletsch and the FFHS Sebstian Bellwald and PLANVAL will operate the Swiss Advisory Centre.

Each cooperation partner is responsible for EU-conformity of the implementation and the financial procedures concerning the not jointly implemented measures (see 7.2). The LAG Südschwarzwald ensures accordance with the legal regulations concerning the implementation and financing of the joint regional advisory centre for Baden-Württemberg.

Controlling concerning all measures carried out by the Swiss partners will follow the procedures laid down by the RegioPlus programme; responsible management authority in Switzerland is the Staatssekretariat für Wirtschaft (SECO).

Accordance with the legal regulations concerning the implementation and financing of the joint regional advisory centre for Baden-Württemberg is laid down by the contracts of the LAG Südschwarzwald with Lehnes Landschaftsinterpretation and Albert-Ludwig-University Freiburg.

Accordance with the legal regulations concerning the implementation and financing of the Regional Competence Centre for Greece (RCC/University of the Aegean, Dep. of Business Administration) will be laid down by contracts of each Greek partner with the University of the Aegean.

Each partner takes the responsibility for the actions which he is carrying out. The implementation and financing of these individual measures (see 7.2) will be controlled according to the procedures and responsibilities as described in the EU-partners' LEADER+ programmes and the Swiss RegioPlus programme respectively.

5.2 Additional role of the lead partner:

As the lead partner, the LAG Südschwarzwald is responsible for the implementation of joint measures (see 7.1), i.e.:

- Project management, and
- Establishing and maintaining the virtual centre (database, development of new

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recommendations, website, conceptualisation of international workshops, coordination of data processing and evaluation).

• Transnational project management will give directions for the implementation of the database and the web-interface by the Swiss Partner.

Accordance with the legal regulations concerning the implementation and financing of these joint measures is laid down by the contracts of the LAG Südschwarzwald with Lehnes Landschaftsinterpretation and Albert-Ludwigs-University Freiburg.

The implementation and financing of the joint measures (see 7.1) will be controlled according to the LEADER+ programme of Baden-Württemberg. The responsible authority for controlling is the Ministerium für Ernährung und Ländlichen Raum of Baden-Württemberg.

5.3 Contribution to overall costs

All partner groups contribute to the overall co-ordination costs and measures of the joint virtual centre and project management as follows:

LAGs Südschwarzwald, Nordschwarzwald, Hohenlohe-Tauber and Appennino Genovese by 45.000 €each, and the Greek partners by 23.442 €each.

The technical implementation of the database and the web-interface by the Swiss Partners is considered equivalent to 50 000 €and includes:

- transfer of the existing database from MS Access to an Open Source software (e.g. MySQL)
 or another software that allows easy internet access to the database and extension of the
 database structure;
- Development of a new user-interface by a CMS allowing different user groups to administer their data directly.

Instalments of the overall amount are usually transferred to a separate account held by the leading LEADER Action group.

30 % on entering the cooperation,

30 % in October 2007

30 % in March 2008

10 % after submission of the final report.

The above described deadlines and procedures do not apply for those partners who already submitted their portion of the shared costs.

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The budget for the Regional Competent Centre for Greece (RCC) (University of the Aegean, Dep. of Business Administration) is shared only among the Greek partner LAGs, according to the regulations laid down in the Greek Transinterpret cooperation.

6 Additional agreements: Rights of use

The Transinterpret database and checklists are copyrighted. Partner groups are granted the following rights of use:

Rights to the database

Every Transinterpret partner will be granted unlimited access to the database by internet, as soon as the internet interface allows secure log-in until completion of Transinterpret II. In the meantime the Regional Advisory Centres work with copies of the current Access version of the database in order to generate up-date checklists.

On demand, partner group offices receive a current copy of the new database from the FFHS. The copy of the database can only be submitted as programmed by FFHS staff without any warranties or liability. Any support in setting up a local version of the database and an appropriate software environment is not included. The partner group is allowed to use its local copy of the database only for projects in their LEADER+ region beyond completion of the Transinterpret project.

The continued development of Transinterpret recommendations and standards always refers back to the central database which is maintained by the transnational virtual centre.

User rights to the checklists

All persons involved in local interpretation projects in the partner areas may freely use the planning and evaluation checklists. This also includes local interpretation projects not directly funded by LEADER. In return, managers of local projects agree to ensure that checklists are filled in and passed back to the relevant regional advisory centre. However, it is highly recommended to use the checklists in the course of personal coaching by trained consultants or staff of the Regional Advisory Centres (sentence added, because of experience during project coaching in 2005 and 2006).

In order to test the transferability of the Transinterpret approach, those counties, provinces or comparable administrative authorities (according to **Nuts III**) involved in the partner LAG and contributing to co-financing Transinterpret may also use the Transinterpret checklists in those parts of their district that are outside the actual partner area. Such tests of transferability however can only be carried out if the checklists are carefully filled in and passed back, and the project executing organisation agrees to contribute to the evaluation. Due to the fact that the RegioPlus

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project Transinterpret Switzerland is working all over the country the Swiss advisory centre is allowed to use the database and the checklists in territory of Switzerland.

Other than these beneficiaries, project partners and Regional Advisory Centres must not make checklists available to third parties outside the partner regions, except for scientific purposes and for members of the technical advisory group.

Rights to the brand

The **Trans**interpret lettering and logo is trademarked. Pending agreement of their regional advisory centre, all interpretive provisions within the areas of the co-operating partners who have actively contributed to Transinterpret and meet agreed minimum Transinterpret standards may freely use the Transinterpret letter and logo. In case of misuse, the respective institution will be responsible for removing the lettering and logo and required to desist from any advertising using the Transinterpret brand.

Commercial utilisation

The commercial utilisation of the brand, the database or the Transinterpret checklists is excluded.

Rights during the implementation phase and following the completion of the project

Local copies of the database may continue to be used only in the project partner areas in order to assist local projects within that (former) LEADER area after the completion of Transinterpret II.

With the foundation of the European Association for Heritage Interpretation (Interpret Europe) as a result of Transinterpret II, the rights to the database and brand will be transferred to this organisation. For the time between the foundation of Interpret Europe and the completion of Transinterpret II both – the Transinterpret partners and Interpret Europe are allowed to use the database and the brand simultaneously in order to ensure a smooth transition. Interpret Europe will need to agree in writing to maintain and develop both database and brand to further quality in heritage interpretation throughout Europe. A suitable non-profit organisation will be agreed upon by the partners. Should agreement not be possible, the final decision will be taken by the lead partner.

If by 31st December 2008, when the implementation of LEADER+ officially comes to an end, no suitable non-profit organisation has provided written agreement to continue Transinterpret, all rights to the database and the brand go back to the original author of the database.

There are no obligations for the author, the project management, FFHS or any other institution implementing the database to administer and correct the database beyond 2008.

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