

Provinciebus
Westerbrink 1
Assen

Postbus 122
9400 AC Assen

Telefoon
(0592) 36 55 55
Telefax
(0592) 36 57 77

Aan:
Provinciale Staten van Drenthe
Commissie Bestuur, Financiën en Economie
Postbus 112
9400 AC Assen

Assen, 27 juli 2004

Behandeld door de heer Herrie Caspers (0592) 36 56 62

Onderwerp: "Hanse Passage project: Best practices for regional parliaments"

Geachte leden,

De Commissaris van de Koningin van de provincie Flevoland deelt in bijgaand schrijven mee dat de provincie Flevoland het projectleiderschap op zich heeft genomen van het nog in te dienen Hanse Passage project "Best practices for regional parliaments". Dit besluit hangt samen met het feit dat de beoogd projectleider, de Duitse deelstaat Niedersachsen, zich als zodanig heeft teruggetrokken. Het project is het resultaat van een conferentie die op 4 en 5 december 2003 op initiatief van de Commissaris van de Koningin in de provincie Drenthe werd gehouden. Bij deze conferentie waren 10 van de 15 Hanse Passage regio's vertegenwoordigd door parlementariërs. Provinciale staten van Drenthe was in deze conferentie vertegenwoordigd door de heren Baas en Reukema. In de conferentie werd het besluit genomen in het Hanse Passage Programma een projectvoorstel in te dienen dat beoogt onderling kennis en ervaring uit te wisselen omtrent regionale parlementen, hun taken en bevoegdheden en hun werkwijze. Vervolgens zal worden gezien welke "best practices" geëigend zijn om te worden toegepast in het eigen regionale parlement. De resultaten van het project zullen in een van de jaarconferenties die gepland zijn in het Hanse Passage Programma worden gepresenteerd.

De provincie Flevoland heeft het project inmiddels indieningsgereed gemaakt met als voornaamste consequentie dat de bijdrage van de deelnemers aanzienlijk is gereduceerd. Inhoudelijk is het project verder niet ingrijpend gewijzigd. De Commissaris van Flevoland verzoekt ons vriendelijk om voor 20 september 2004 uit te spreken of Provinciale Staten van Drenthe bereid is onder de in de brief geschetste condities aan het project deel te nemen. Flevoland zal het project vervolgens voor subsidie indienen bij de stuurgroep Hanse Passage.



Teneinde tijdig een beslissing te kunnen nemen over de Drentse cofinanciering van dit project, stellen wij u voor in de commissievergadering van 8 september aanstaande een positief advies aan de staten uit te brengen, luidende:

"Provinciale Staten van Drenthe wordt voorgesteld in te stemmen met deelname aan het project 'Best practice models for regional parliaments' en gedeputeerde staten te verzoeken om de gevraagde bijdrage van circa € 15.600,- (inclusief ambtelijke ondersteuning) beschikbaar te stellen uit het budget cofinanciering Hanse Passage Programma".

In een brief aan de Commissaris van de Koningin in Flevoland kan vervolgens tijdig dit positieve advies worden meegedeeld en de verwachting worden uitgesproken dat Provinciale Staten daarmee op 22 september formeel zullen instemmen.

Hoogachtend,

de Drentse leden van het parlementariërsforum van de Nieuwe Hanze Interregio

p.o.

H. Baas
M.J. Kaal



PROV. BESTUUR VAN DRENTH	
No.:	2004007577
Ingek.:	16 JUL 2004
Class nr.:	
TE BEH. DOOR: EC Caspers	

Commissaris der Koningin			
in de provincie Drenthe			
Afd. Kabinet nr.			
Ingekomen		16 JUL 2004	
d.d.			
gezien	C.d.K.	chef	Dhr./Mevr.
ter afhandeling naar			

To the president of the Drenthe regional parliament
 The Queen's Commissioner in the Province of Drenthe
 Mr. A.L. ter Beek
 P.O. Box 122
 9400 AC ASSEN

Date
 July 14, 2004

Enclosures

Your reference

Our reference
 GS/04.012177/B

ontvangstbevestiging
Ja / Nee

Dear Mr. ter Beek,

by letter dated February 4th of this year, you were informed about the project initiative „Best practice models for regional parliaments“. This initiative has been developed by regional parliamentarians within the framework of the INTERREG IIIC programme „Hanse Passage“.

Now, the programme secretariat of the Hanse Passage programme has informed me, that the president of the Lower Saxony parliament feels unable to accept the role of lead partner for this project. The Board of the Bremen parliament indicated that for financial reasons it had to reject participation as well. However, other regions involved have given their written support (Flevoland, Groningen, Haute-Normandie), whereas the remaining 7 regions have indicated so.

The Hanse Passage programme manager subsequently asked the Province of Flevoland to consider taking the lead partnership of this project initiative.

My region will gladly accept this request if there is sufficient support from the other partner regions involved. We can on one hand imagine very well the financial problems indicated by some regions. But on the other hand, we support the positive signals from several other regions and the unanimously positive outcome of the meeting of parliamentarians in Assen of December, 2003.

For that reason, I propose that the Province of Flevoland takes a larger part (33 %) of the total costs, and that we minimise the total costs by considering English as the working language during the workshops, without offering simultaneous interpretation facilities.

Moreover, we now propose that summary translation into English of key-documents for the comparing analysis will be done by civil servants of the partner regions themselves (3 working days per region).

As a result of these measures, the total costs for the other participating regions would then be € 15.600. (with 12 regions participating) which is considerably lower than the € 23.700 discussed in the previous proposal.

In this new proposal for the financial set-up of the project, the Polish partner regions can cover their own contribution (€ 3.900, see annex) completely by internal staff hours; their other costs (e.g. travel & accommodation and contribution in project management and external expertise) would be reimbursed from the Interreg contribution. For the other partner regions, the own contribution (€ 7.800, see annex) can be covered to 70 % by working hours of their staff.

In separate letters, I have requested the presidents of the Parliaments of Lower Saxony and Bremen to reconsider their negative decision on participation in this project, especially because it would be very valuable



to discuss together with our partner regional parliamentarians from the relatively young democracies in the new EU countries (i.c. Poland) how much variation there is in the role and organisation of regional parliaments in the „old“ EU member states (i.c. Germany, France and the Netherlands).

As the project proposal on „Best practice models for regional parliaments“ must be submitted by October 8th, 2004 you are kindly requested to inform me by writing on the participation of your parliament under those new financial conditions before September 20th, 2004.

For your information, in a separate annex the description of the project concept with the new finance plan is added.

With kind regards

M.J.E.M. Jager
The Queen's Commissioner in the Province Flevoland

Interreg III C

Regional Framework Operation

Hanse Passage

"Best practice models for regional parliaments"

Description of the Project proposal.

Version 08.07.04

I. Introduction

Regions within the European Union have on historical grounds developed in many different ways. Furthermore, they show considerable differences in their competences. The 15 parliaments of the partner regions participating in the ***Hanse Passage*** programme want to exchange experiences as to the challenges posed to regions as a result of developments within the EU.

That was the impetus for the approach used in this Interreg III C programme: compare how the partner regions, - as the level of government between national governments and municipalities – play their roles and use their competences. By discussing the differences and best practice examples, those regions want to learn from each other.

This particular project within the ***Hanse Passage*** programme primarily addresses the regional parliaments. It is intended to allow the representatives of the regional parliaments to discuss their roles and responsibilities by comparing the different systems in general and through selected thematic cases. This shall lead to conclusions and recommendations on "best practice" to the own parliamentary institutions.

II. Results of the preparatory conference in Assen (Netherlands) on December 4th - 5th 2003

During the discussion of 17 parliamentarians from 10 ***Hanse Passage*** regions in Assen, this common thought has been brought into vision. It is found desirable for the elected representatives of the ***Hanse Passage*** partner regions to exchange ideas and experiences, in order to learn from one another.

- One of the strong points of this co-operation is that indeed different opinions and experiences and a different history can lead to new insights about problems which are of specific interest to the regions. In regard to the principle of subsidiarity it is important to state what common interest of the regions is in respect to the EU and the national governments.
- In order to do this, it is necessary to get to know one another's parliamentary and administrative structures in direct get-togethers and discussions. The structures show major differences and ought to be described clearly beforehand. Because of these differences it is especially instructive to receive information about the way in which democratic systems in the partner-regions are functioning.
- Polish regions can benefit from the knowledge and experience of regions in Germany, the Netherlands and France about the ways in which regionalization and co-operation between political parties can be realized. Even if the solutions of other regions cannot be

copied, the newer democracies can still learn from the older ones.

On the other hand the parliaments from regions from the "old" member states of the EU can learn from the new ones, by becoming aware that the democratic system has to be continually justified and legitimized.

- The project will be restricted to those topics on which the regional parliaments have their own decision-making power. The result of this project therefore will have to be of influence on the way the regional parliaments function, so that the programme will have added value in form of "best practices".

III. Goals and approach of the project

The aim is to progressively achieve the following phases in the process:

- a) Provide each other with information about structures, competences and roles of the regional institutions, especially the regional parliaments; determine differences
- b) Exchange thoughts about various approaches.
- c) Document how we can learn from the other partner regions through "best practice" examples for individual regions

The discussion in Assen resulted in the following approach for the project:

1. mutual exchange of experiences between regional parliamentary representatives within the **Hanse Passage** programme, focusing on decision-making procedures in the regional parliaments, by discussing a comparative analysis of those procedures.
2. A number of cases will be selected for the comparative analysis and discussion, related to the fields in which the regional parliaments are authorized to take decisions. Examples can be sought in agricultural problems or strategies for rural areas or the way in which regional parliaments deal with European legislation and issuing of rules. Within each single case a comparison will be made of the way in which the partner regions deal with their own role, with internal proceedings of decision-making, with the topic of subsidiarity, with the discussion about the national distribution of competences, about the involvement of the citizens, NGO's etcetera.
3. Conclusions and recommendations will be directed towards effective functioning of the regional parliaments involved, so that the programme has added value in form of "best practices" documentations.

IV. The implementation of the project goals

The implementation of these goals will be as follows:

- I. In the initial phase, the differences in decision-making procedures in the regional parliaments will be documented by means of a comparative analysis. To this end the different administrative structures, assignments and responsibilities will be documented. Here, it will also be illustrated where possible how roles and responsibilities are perceived.
The analysis will be carried out by an external expert institution (university) with the help of civil servants from the participating regions.
The results of the analysis will be discussed in the first transnational workshop of the parliamentarians.
This phase will end with the selection of a number of cases that each will be worked out by several regions.
- II. In the main phase, the parliamentary representatives will go into further detail on the results from the comparative analysis by discussing the worked out cases in a second workshop. They will discuss aspects such as subsidiarity, involvement of citizens and

NGO's etc. in relation to the cases.

- III. In a third workshop, potential best practice models from the comparative analysis and the selected cases will be discussed. At this workshop, the regional participants will be invited to define models that they would like to adopt for their own regions. If possible, this will be documented in joint recommendations to the regional parliaments participating in this project.

The results of the entire project will be presented in an annual conference of the **Hanse Passage** programme.

The implementation of the proposed best practice models will have to be covered in future projects. From experience gained with the NHI Parliamentary Representative Forum, it is expected that getting to know each other and developing an understanding of the different roles and structures of the regions will require a significant amount of time. Therefore, the adaptation of structures and procedures from one region to other partner regions is not possible within the framework of this project due to its relatively short duration.

V. Financial aspects

adapted July 2004:

total costs reduced and Flevoland as Lead Partner takes 33 % of the total costs.

The calculated financial consequences for each individual partner region are summarized in the table below (see next page).

The basis for this calculation is that 12 regions participate and that Flevoland as Lead Partner takes 33 % of the total costs.

There will be one single working language, English, during the 3 workshops.

Key-documents which are needed for the comparative analysis, will be summarised in English by civil servants from the partner regions as an additional „in hours contribution“ to the project budget.

