

TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION

Building solidarity
Driving synergies
Delivering change



March 2025

Interreg



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the European Union



INTRODUCTION

TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION PROGRAMMES



TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION PROGRAMMES

Transnational cooperation programmes: a unique asset for the European Union

For over 25 years, Interreg transnational programmes have shown their ability to address complex socio-economic, environmental and societal issues at the European level. We firmly believe in the unique ability of transnational programmes to drive transformation and strengthen cohesion across Europe.

It also means supporting potential new member countries to comply with the *acquis communautaire* as they prepare for accession to the Union.

Through a wide range of project examples and stakeholder perspectives, this brochure illustrates this potential and the added-value of transnational

cooperation in three key messages: building solidarity beyond borders, achieving synergies for the benefit of all territories, and **delivering change** to support the green and digital transition of Europe.

It also aims to show how **shared governance mechanisms** engaging regions and cities - **the levels closest to the day-to-day concerns of citizens** - have consistently fostered **greater cohesion** and advanced the Union's core objectives.





TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION PROGRAMMES

Driving Multilevel Governance, Territorial approaches and Adaptability

What sets **transnational programmes** apart in the wider EU funding landscape is their emphasis on **promoting multilevel governance** and **territorial approaches**.

While they share this feature with other European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) programmes, **transnational cooperation programmes** stand out on account of the **width and impact of the solutions** they deliver through the projects they fund.

In addition, **transnational cooperation programmes** have, over the years, demonstrated their **flexibility and adaptability** to respond to evolving institutional, societal and stakeholder needs.

This adaptability has consistently **benefitted stakeholders and beneficiaries alike**, and we remain committed to embracing change to enhance programme effectiveness.





TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION PROGRAMMES

An invitation to engage further

This brochure is the result of **collaboration between all 13 transnational Interreg programmes** that have worked together, with the support of Interact.

As the EU prepares for legislative proposals and institutional debates on the future EU budget and policies, our **goal** is to **share insights** and **recommendations from a practitioner's point of view** on **key implementation** features of **transnational programmes**.

This brochure aims to show the potential of transnational cooperation and stimulate reflection on the future role and positioning of these Interreg programmes within the broader Interreg framework, Cohesion Policy and the EU.

We invite you to **explore this brochure**, and hope that you will find it **insightful and inspiring**.





TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION PROGRAMMES

Interreg transnational cooperation programmes foster collaboration across large territories and sea basins, addressing shared territorial, economic and social challenges that go beyond national borders. They bring together national, regional and local partners from EU Member States, as well as non-EU countries.

All 13 transnational programmes contributed to this paper, demonstrating their collective commitment to addressing regional disparities by strengthening integration and fostering cooperation, innovation and sustainable development.

With a combined budget of nearly €1.5 billion, the 13 transnational cooperation programmes for the 2021-2027 period are boosting strategic cooperation actions across large territories in Europe and beyond.

[Interreg Alpine Space](#)
[Interreg Baltic Sea Region](#)
[Interreg Central Europe](#)
[Interreg Danube Region](#)
[Interreg Euro-MED](#)
[Interreg North Sea](#)
[Interreg North-West Europe](#)
[Interreg Atlantic Area](#)
[Interreg Adriatic-Ionian \(IPA ADRION\)](#)
[Interreg NEXT Black Sea Basin](#)
[Interreg NEXT MED \(Mediterranean Sea Basin\)](#)
[Interreg Sudoe](#)
[Interreg Northern Periphery and Arctic \(NPA\)](#)



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[Inforegio - Interreg B - Transnational cooperation](#)

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Note to the reader

In 2024, the European Commission's Directorate General for Regional and Urban Policy launched a Europe-wide consultation, inviting all Interreg programmes to engage stakeholders in their regions.

The insights gathered are part of ongoing discussions on the post-2027 Cohesion Policy and Interreg, which will shape the future of the Interreg community.

The following pages present a selection of perspectives from stakeholders of transnational Interreg programmes.

Another takeaway from each of the Interreg programmes' consultations was a set of recommendations that incorporated stakeholders' feedback.

These recommendations, outlined on pages 28-30 under the three key messages, emphasize the main priorities to shape Interreg transnational cooperation beyond 2027.



**TRANSNATIONAL
COOPERATION
PROGRAMMES**

Building solidarity

Interreg Transnational Cooperation

increases trust beyond borders for a stronger Europe

We actively accomplish the vision of a united Europe by bringing people together in our transnational projects. Our cooperation benefits everyone and makes sure that no region is left behind.

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Shaping the future of Cohesion Policy and Interreg Transnational Cooperation

“Transnational cooperation is essential to support institutional dialogue at cross-border and transnational level and the development of innovative pilot actions that have the power to influence policy makers to take up a solution in regular planning.”

European Economic Interest Grouping, Italy, from Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE stakeholder consultation

“The value for Møre and Romsdal County by engaging in projects is to collaborate with regions that excel in certain areas. We can leverage their expertise, learn from their experiences, and adapt successful strategies to our local context. This approach not only accelerates progress but also fosters a culture of continuous improvement and innovation.”

Regional public authority, Norway, from Interreg Baltic Sea Region stakeholder consultation

“Cooperation can be of enormous benefit to local projects as it opens up alternative and new opportunities for actors to identify and solve problems in innovative ways. Cooperation projects can contribute to value creation in many ways.”

from Interreg Alpine Space stakeholder consultation

“Integrating activities aimed at promoting social innovation, circular business models and community development could address societal challenges and contribute to more inclusive and sustainable development in cross-border regions. This could involve initiatives such as social entrepreneurship projects, community-led development programs and projects focused on new circular economy business models.”

Technology Innovation Centre, Croatia, from Interreg Danube Region stakeholder consultation

Enhancing the Resilience of Alpine Space Snow Tourism Destinations and Communities to Climate Change

Tourism - Resilience - Solidarity

Due to climate change, snow coverage in the Alps is very likely to continue decreasing in the future. In addition to the ecological impacts, small medium-altitude snow tourism destinations and their communities in particular must also consider the socio-economic consequences of the reduction of snow coverage.

The project BeyondSnow aims to increase the socio-ecological climate resilience of snow tourism destinations, to enable them to retain or even increase their attractiveness for residents and tourists. During the project, new sustainable development paths, transition processes and implementable solutions will be collectively devised.

Thanks to trainings and awareness-raising activities, citizens and decision-makers at different technical and political levels will be involved in this process.

WEBSITE



2.720.730



11/2022 - 10/2025



Austria, France,
Germany, Italy,
Slovenia, Switzerland



13 partners

Atlantic InnoBlue Communities - ATLIC

Youth - Entrepreneurs - Community

The main goal is to create the Atlantic Innovation Blue Community network. Groups of youth, teachers, small businesses and public and private entities meet in innovation labs.

Together they select a top-of-priority blue economy challenge and work on a new business idea. Each group considers opportunities for creating jobs, avoiding migration from the area, creating tourist resources, and improving the maritime landscape and environment.

ATLIC is also setting up the Atlantic Area Open InnoBlue Academy, a key resource to ensure its transferability.

WEBSITE



3.500.000



09/2023 — 08/2026



France, Ireland,
Portugal and Spain



10 partners
6 associated partners



YEP MED - Youth employment in ports of the Mediterranean

Youth - Skills - Job

Ports play a vital role in international trade and the Blue Economy, offering significant job opportunities, particularly through larger companies with higher job-absorption capacity.

To harness this potential, YEP MED enhances Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) with targeted job placement schemes for NEETs in the Mediterranean, focusing on foreign trade, sustainability, digitization and port logistics.

Through innovative training for youth, women and NEETs, the project supported 4,650 individuals and secured over 850 internships and job placements in 514 companies, fostering inclusivity and social equity in the Mediterranean port ecosystem.

[WEBSITE](#)



2.900.000



09/2020 - 12/2023



Spain, Italy, Lebanon, Egypt, Tunisia, France, Jordan



11 partners

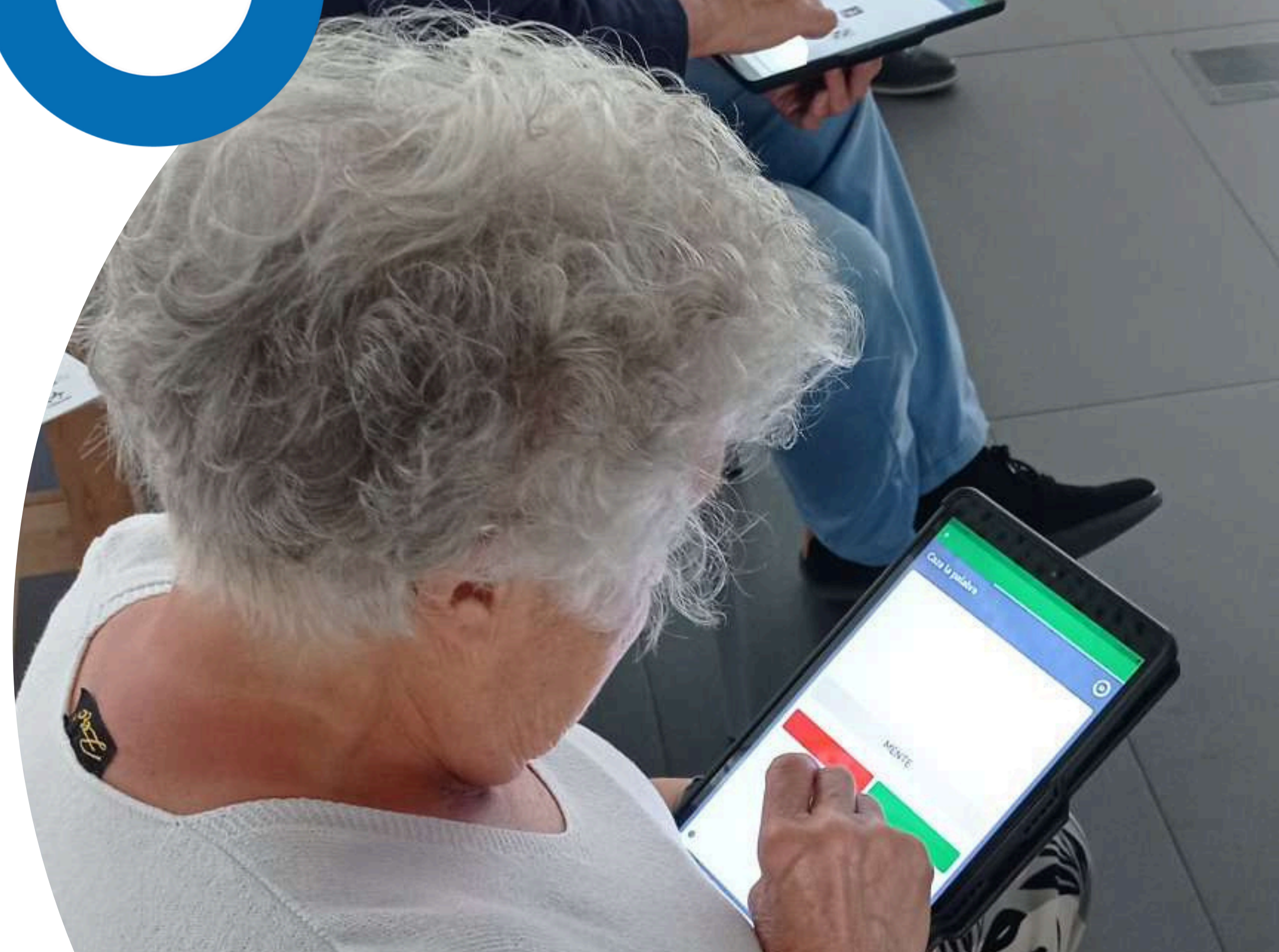
Collective Intelligence and Social and Health Technology Labs to combat isolation and loneliness among the elderly

Senior citizens - Mental health - Empowerment

The reality of aging in the European Union presents a sobering statistic: 31.1% of older adults face their final years in solitude. This figure not only represents a significant humanitarian concern, but also highlights a growing social challenge as Europe's population continues to age.

MOAI LABS, a European R&D&I laboratory fighting unwanted loneliness and social isolation, has focused on the theoretical and empirical study of loneliness and the co-design, co-development and adaptation of technological solutions to the needs of the elderly that can somehow change their situation of unwanted loneliness and assess their impact on local and national policies.

WEBSITE



1.472.122,23



11/2020 - 01/2023



Spain, France, Portugal



9 partners



TRANSNATIONAL
COOPERATION
PROGRAMMES

Achieving synergies

Interreg Transnational Cooperation

creates solutions that efficiently increase our resilience

We address shared challenges with a long-term perspective. We work together beyond borders to find the most fitting solutions to regional challenges and arising opportunities. We help cities and regions to test and roll out new solutions, and to adapt and benefit from existing ones.

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Shaping the future of Cohesion Policy and Interreg Transnational Cooperation

“Interreg North-West Europe has successfully facilitated transnational collaboration on various projects. These partnerships foster knowledge-sharing and resource-pooling, which should be maintained and expanded.”

**Regional development organisation, Germany
from Interreg North-West Europe stakeholder consultation**

“A key benefit offered by transnational cooperation is the possibility to combine different approaches to solve shared challenges in different regions. Each country has its specifics, and the challenges vary to some extent, but they are complementary. Solving these challenges in the frame of transnational cooperation gives the opportunity to develop joint solutions that can be applied in various countries and regions.”

**Research and technological institute, Poland, from Interreg
CENTRAL EUROPE’s stakeholder consultation**

“The benefit of collaborating transnationally is of course the possibility of building a critical mass of expertise in addressing the remote and rural challenges that people within the area experience on a daily basis.”

**Regional public authority, Sweden
from Interreg Northern Periphery and Arctic (NPA)
stakeholder consultation**

“ISO1 objective should be maintained to ensure the capitalisation of the projects and their contribution to transnational strategies.”

**Executive Secretary of the Atlantic Arc Commission, from
Interreg Atlantic Area stakeholder consultation**

BorderLabs CE

Participatory cross-border governance for transition management in central European cross-border regions

Border obstacles - Participatory governance - Resilience

The BorderLabs CE project transforms border regions into places of cooperation to address shared challenges together. It creates synergies and enhances resilience by integrating diverse cross-border initiatives into a cohesive transnational framework. By piloting innovative governance models across central Europe, it unites public authorities, researchers and citizens to develop long-term solutions that anticipate future risks. In the border area of Germany, Poland and Czechia, it creates a joint framework for transitioning regional economies to sustainable, low-carbon sectors. In the Italian-Slovenian border region, it fosters cross-border cooperation to promote sustainable tourism, while in the Hungarian-Slovak border area, it strengthens local supply chains through cooperative networks.

WEBSITE



1.710.000



06/2024 - 11/2026



Germany, Hungary, Poland, Czechia, Italy, Austria



9 partners

Sustainable, Integrated Transnational Sediment Management in the Danube River Basin

Transnational river basin - Sediment management -
Integrated territorial approach

Disrupted sediment transport and changes in the Danube River's hydromorphology are creating significant challenges. These include increased flood risks, declining groundwater levels, damaged ecosystems and difficulties for shipping and hydropower.

The DanubeSediment_Q2 project is addressing these issues by improving sediment management across the entire Danube River Basin (DRB). It has developed the first-ever Integrated Sediment Management Plan and Sediment Improvement Strategy. Effective sediment management in the DRB depends on transnational cooperation. With 14 countries sharing the river's key waterways, solutions require coordinated efforts from both upstream and downstream regions.

WEBSITE



2.893.187,47



01/2024 - 06/2026



Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina,
Bulgaria, Germany, Hungary, Croatia,
Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, Slovakia



14 partners
39 associated partners

Cooperation for wildfires community resilience capacity building and early warning in the Black Sea Basin

Climate change – Wildfires – Community resilience

The Black Sea region is vulnerable to wildfires due to its diverse climate, topography and vegetation. Climate change is a key driver of wildfire intensification.

Capitalizing on the previous achievements of the project Co-Prevent, financed under the ENI CBC Black Sea Basin Programme, the Co-Resilience project aims to enhance community resilience, improve coordination and mitigate wildfire impacts.

Project partners aim to protect communities and ecosystems, promote sustainable management practices and reduce vulnerability to wildfires.

[WEBSITE](#)



1.481.672



06/2024 - 06/2026



Türkiye, Bulgaria, Republic of Moldova, Ukraine



5 partners

STORM_SAFE

Interreg
North Sea



Co-funded by
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Digital resilience to withstand the perfect storm

Flood infrastructure - Digital resilience -
Climate change

STORM_SAFE strengthens the digital backbone of critical flood and storm infrastructure.

Water control systems - such as storm surge barriers, locks and sluices - rely very much on digital technologies.

Outdated and unstable software can create serious safety risks. Failures in digital infrastructure could even lead to catastrophic consequences.

That is why STORM_SAFE supports operators to build digital resilience. Pilots in five countries can be scaled up, helping communities across Europe to withstand extreme weather events.

WEBSITE



7.409.302



01/2024 - 12/2027



The Netherlands, Belgium,
Denmark, France, Germany,
Sweden



10 partners

Blue Circular Nets

Circular economy - Marine plastics - Fisheries

When fishing nets are approaching their end-of-life (EOL), the nets should be collected and disposed of appropriately.

Setting up a collection network in the demanding NPA circumstances requires extra efforts from all of those involved. On the other hand, this offers an opportunity to recycle and eventually reuse the collected materials.

The main outcome of the project is a Blueprint for collection, treatment and reuse of EOL fishing gear for the NPA region. In delivering this, CIRCNETS also prepares stakeholders involved in the fishing business for implementing legislative changes.

[WEBSITE](#)



1.499.969,46 01/2023 - 12/2025

Finland, Norway, Ireland, Iceland, Sweden 6 partners



TRANSNATIONAL
COOPERATION
PROGRAMMES

Delivering change

Interreg Transnational Cooperation

incubates the transition to a green and digital Europe

**We are incubators for change and inspire sustainable solutions that work.
We improve services on the ground and trigger policy change for a better future.**

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Shaping the future of Cohesion Policy and Interreg Transnational Cooperation

“Transnational cooperation helps us to develop solutions to the common challenges on the green transition, digitalisation and resilience of the Mediterranean destinations, in line with the European Tourism Transition Pathway and the Glasgow Declaration on tourism and climate change.”

Public administrative organisation, Barcelona area, from Interreg Euro-MED stakeholder consultation

“The cooperation works well and should be strengthened because Interreg (and Erasmus) is more focused on creating change in participating organizations than the larger research projects that focus more on journal publishing.”

Academic Institution, Norway, from Interreg North Sea’s stakeholder consultation

“Over the decades, HELCOM has managed to agree and implement action plans with measures that reduce pressures on the Baltic Sea marine environment. Interreg BSR is important for HELCOM, covering the whole sea basin and catchment. The programme's thematic scope is well in line with HELCOM's needs, and the approach to solutions fits well with HELCOM's way of working with management objectives of the action plans.”

International organisation on protecting and managing the marine environment in the Baltic Sea Region, from Interreg Baltic Sea Region stakeholder consultation

“Cooperation across sea borders and maritime basins is crucial due to shared environmental concerns, cross-border trade dependencies, security needs and the necessity for scientific collaboration and knowledge-sharing.”

from Interreg Adriatic-Ionian's (IPA ADRION) stakeholder consultation



Creating resilient rural communities in BSR based on the opportunities of digital bio businesses

Digitalisation - Business support - Bioeconomy

The project eRural Resilience empowers local authorities and business support organisations to drive e-bio-business growth in their communities. The project helps equip local producers of bio-products with digital literacy skills in e-marketing, enabling them to seize new business opportunities.

By strengthening rural bioeconomies, eRural Resilience counters depopulation and demonstrates how Interreg promotes sustainable growth while enhancing the competitiveness of rural e-bio producers.

WEBSITE



2.920.000



10/2023 - 10/2026



Estonia, Denmark,
Germany, Finland, Latvia,
Lithuania, Poland



10 partners

Blue Growth Smart Adriatic Ionian S3

S3 - Blue Growth - Economic development

The Adriatic-Ionian maritime area lacked a shared approach to blue growth. The BLUEAIR project addressed this gap. It developed the first transnational Smart Specialization Strategy (S3) for Blue Growth. Through workshops and matchmaking events, BLUEAIR has fostered synergies among policymakers, researchers and industry experts, creating a collaborative community dedicated to driving innovation in the sector.

The project identified best practices and investment opportunities, creating tools to support a more integrated approach to Blue Growth and improve governance models for national and regional administration.

WEBSITE 



 **2.440.000**
 **12/2020 - 05/2023**

 **Italy, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Slovenia, Greece, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania**
 **11 partners**



BAUHAUS4MED

Interreg
Euro-MED



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Testing New European Bauhaus Solutions for Deep Green Transformation of Cities and Regions in Euro-MED area

Urban - Green - Digital

Picture a city where green living isn't just a task but a pleasure. That's what the BAUHAUS4MED project is all about.

Inspired by the New European Bauhaus (NEB), we're transforming urban spaces by blending eye-catching design, community input and eco-friendly practices.

Picture vibrant neighbourhoods where digital innovation meets beautiful, sustainable architecture, making everyday life more enjoyable and sustainable. Project Bauhaus4MED tests innovative NEB solutions integrating sustainability, inclusion and aesthetic aspects into the decision-making process, for improvement of green living areas.

WEBSITE



2.350.140



01/2024 - 09/2026



Slovenia, Belgium, Bulgaria,
Bosnia and Herzegovina,
Croatia, Italy, Greece, Spain



10 partners

Smart Carbon Farming

Smart Carbon Farming

**Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions
sustainable agriculture - smart technologies**

Smart Carbon Farming aims at reducing agricultural greenhouse gas emissions, revitalising farmland and countering soil erosion by enhancing the carbon sequestration capacity of soils.

The project supports farmers in customising carbon monitoring and management systems for diverse regional conditions, such as varying soils, farm sizes and technological capacities. By working with 15 pilot farms in five NWE countries (BE, DE, FR, IE, NL), it shows how data-driven carbon farming improves sustainability.

In addition, 50 farmers will be trained and equipped to adopt these practices, unlocking new revenue streams. This approach not only advances the technological and business readiness of carbon farming innovations for a more sustainable agriculture in North-West Europe. It also fuels the transition to a more sustainable and resilient agriculture in the long run.

WEBSITE



4.600.000



01/2023 - 12/2027



Belgium, France, Germany,
Ireland, The Netherlands



11 partners

RECOMMENDATIONS




TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION PROGRAMMES

1. BUILDING SOLIDARITY

Interreg transnational cooperation increases trust beyond borders for a stronger Europe

We actively accomplish the vision of a united Europe by bringing together people and organisations in our transnational projects. Our cooperation benefits everyone – both developed and less-developed regions - and makes sure that no region is left behind. There is a need for transnational programmes to remain able to address the current and long-term needs of different territories within their areas. This calls for the ability to tailor their strategies to the unique and specific challenges of their respective regions.



To achieve this goal, it is recommended that the new regulations incorporate the necessary flexibility to enhance the impact and inclusivity of transnational cooperation, and enable programmes to respond effectively to the (evolving) needs of the territories. Building on this, it is also recommended that the new regulations maintain the possibility to include and test emerging cooperation topics and allow the building of institutional capacity for dealing with them.

To conclude, it is also important that a future programme works to make it easier for SMEs and smaller organisations to participate in transnational Interreg projects.

Their contributions are valuable, and the more diverse actors there are in a project partnership, the stronger the potential outcome of the project.

2. ACHIEVING SYNERGIES

Interreg transnational cooperation makes the most of our resources, capacities and skills for a resilient Europe

We address shared challenges with a long-term perspective. We work together beyond borders to find the most fitting solutions to regional challenges and arising opportunities. We help cities and regions to test and roll out new solutions, and to adapt and benefit from existing ones.



In post 27, the role of Interreg transnational programmes should be further acknowledged and strengthened as a unique platform that brings together expertise and know-how from different countries and sectors to work effectively on multifaceted common challenges of the involved territories.

The efficient use of Interreg and other EU funds could be enhanced through better synergies across different funding programmes and a more systematic capitalisation of project results at local, regional, national and EU levels.

To achieve this, it is necessary to harmonise programme rules, ensuring mutual coordination mechanisms across Interreg programmes and other EU initiatives. More resources and strengthened capacity for authorities managing the programmes at all levels are also needed.

3. DELIVERING CHANGE

Interreg Transnational Cooperation incubates the transition to a green and digital Europe

We are incubators for change and inspire sustainable solutions that work. We improve services on the ground and trigger policy change for a better future.



Transnational Interreg programmes should be strengthened in their role as pivotal instruments for piloting innovative solutions within future thematic objectives and empowering regions and cities to deliver them.

Transnational cooperation is essential for the long-term viability of joint responses to major societal EU challenges.

Transnational Interreg programmes should therefore be recognised as central instruments for helping regions adapt and respond to major socio-economic-environmental and geopolitical challenges that await Europe.

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This brochure does not represent or pre-empt the positions of Member States or Monitoring Committees of our programmes on the future of EU Cohesion Policy and does not seek to advocate specific thematic priorities for future Interreg programmes.

TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION - BUILDING SOLIDARITY, DRIVING SYNERGIES, DELIVERING CHANGE
MARCH 2025