

Preparing 2028-2034 Interreg

*Directorate-General
Regional and Urban Policy*

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Legal architecture and process



Three blocks

Horizontal regulations

- **MFF Regulation**, accompanied by political communication
- **Performance Regulation**, covering:
 - MFF level common rules – do no significant harm, reporting
 - Environmental, climate adaptation and mitigation social tracking and gender scoring
 - Common intervention fields and indicators

The "Plan" Regulation

- Establishes the European Fund for economic, social and territorial cohesion, agriculture and rural, fisheries and maritime, prosperity and security
- Objectives and requirements for the NRPP
- Rule of law and Charter horizontal conditions
- Budget
- Financial rules
- Governance
- Audit and control

Funds-specific Regulations

- **ERDF/Cohesion Fund (including Interreg)**
- European Social Fund
- Common Market Organisation
- Common Agricultural Policy
- Common Fisheries Policy
- HOME affairs
- EU School Scheme



Interreg: state of play of the negotiations

Council – Structural Measures and Outermost Regions Working Party (SMOR)

- Several meetings on Interreg
- 30/3/26: 2nd Council proposal for the draft ERDF/CF Regulation
- mid-2026: Council position (planned)
 - Good progress on the NRPP and Performance Regulations in their working parties

European Parliament – REGI Committee

- December 2025 : 1st meeting on ERDF/CF Regulation, including Interreg
- December 2026: EP plenary vote on the NRPP Regulation (planned)
- March 2027: EP plenary vote for the ERDF/CF Regulation, including Interreg (planned)



Main features proposed in the draft legislation



Elements of continuity

- Funding levels
- Four strands
- Programming approach
- Interreg authorities
- Approach to co-financing

- Approach to technical assistance
- Integrated approach along the external borders
- Single audit system for Interreg
- PEACE PLUS



General and specific objectives proposed for Interreg

- Interreg to support **general objectives (a) and (b)** set out in NRPP Regulation
- 16 relevant **specific objectives + three Interreg-Specific Objectives**

General objectives (art.2 NRPP Regulation)

(a) Reduce regional imbalances, promote European territorial cooperation [ERDF/CF]

(b) Support social policies [ESF] and a socially fair transition

(c) Support the Implementation of the Common Agricultural Policy [CAP]

(d) Support the implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy [CFP]

(e) Protect and strengthen democracy, uphold Union values



Interreg in the context of the NRPP Regulation

- **NRPP Regulation** rules **apply** to the Interreg plan, *except* where more specific rules are set out in the **ERDF/CF** Regulation
- The Interreg Plan and its chapters guided by the same logic as the NRP Plans:
 - Performance-based approach – payments from the Commission based on achievements of milestones and targets
 - Reform dimension also applicable to Interreg
 - The Performance Regulation - the basis for indicator setting and monitoring and expenditure tracking
- Management, control and audit of the funds follow the approach of the NRPP
- Partnership principle of key importance



Interreg financial framework in the NRPP Regulation (bracketed, discussed in the MFF AHWP)

Draft NRPP Regulation: Articles from 10 to 20

- **Technical assistance:** flat rate of 8%, or 10% when supporting outermost cooperation and cooperation on external borders
- **Automatic decommitments:** n+1
- **Pre-financing:** 4% per year during the first three years and all pre-financing to be cleared at closure
- **Minimum national contribution to estimated costs:** 20% for Interreg or 15% for chapters supporting outermost cooperation and cross-border cooperation on external borders
- The **flexibility amount/mid-term review** *not applicable* to the Interreg Plan



Structure of the Interreg Plan (= the Implementing Act)

- The Interreg Plan to be composed of two main parts:
 - 1. general part** covering
 - (i) the list of Interreg Plan chapters, their geography and the indicative allocations and
 - (ii) the detailed implementation modalities (Article 9(1)) ERDF/CF) to ensure continuity in implementation; and
 - 2. the Interreg Plan chapters** - summaries of the most important elements of Interreg programmes, as defined in the template for the Interreg Plan chapter (annex of the NRPP Regulation).

The partnership may agree on other documents helping programming/implementation in their specific context.



Main issues discussed with the Council working group (SMOR)



Member State allocations

- Methodology to calculate allocations for strands A, B and D per Member State (in Annex III NRPP) further clarified
- EUR 750 million for Strand C
- Mechanism to transfer parts of the allocation between strands A, B and D.

Social and climate targets

- The social target (14%) and climate targets apply to the Interreg Plan overall



Scope of Interreg: specific objectives and Interreg specific objectives

- The Interreg Plan chapters to contribute to the specific objectives 3(a) and 3(c)
 - to support the Union's sustainable prosperity across all regions [Article 3(a) NRPP proposal];
 - to strengthen social cohesion by supporting people and strengthening the Union's societies and the Union's social model [Article 3(c) NRPP proposal].
- Contribution to the Interreg specific objectives set *at the level of the Interreg Plan*
- Each Interreg chapter to choose one or more specific objective or Interreg-specific objective.



Interreg specific objective and external borders

- Interreg specific objective *"more resilient regions bordering Russia, Belarus and Ukraine"*
ISO3 - aims to:
 - foster regional economies and societies
 - increase safety and civil preparedness of these regions
 - tackle issues of concern, such as de-population or disinformation together
 - be able to measure the support provided to those regions.
- *"Cooperation on external borders"* refers to the external borders of the EU and the chapters covering cooperation with non-EU Member States



Eligibility

- Payments from the Commission to Member States to be made on the basis of fulfillment of milestones and targets agreed in the Interreg chapters – no longer reimbursement of costs
- The ERDF/CF proposal does *not* include specific eligibility rules for Interreg, in line with the approach taken under the NRPP proposal.
- The ERDF/CF proposal does *not* regulate the relations between the chapters' authorities and beneficiaries.



Cooperation with non-Member States

- Global Europe external funding can support all strands of Interreg
- Non-Member States receiving EU external funding to conclude Financing Agreements in the year following the chapter adoption, as is the case now.
- Non-Member States not entitled to receive EU funding (Switzerland, Norway,...) to participate in Interreg on the basis as currently (participation with own funding)



Partnership principle: requirements for each Interreg Plan Chapter

- Robust multi governance system based on the partnership principle, in line with the code of conduct
- Chapters to contain information about the programming process:
 - which stakeholders have been consulted, how they were selected, how their representativeness has been ensured, how their input is reflected in the Interreg Plan chapter, and
 - summary of the consultation process conducted for the preparation of the Interreg Plan chapter.



Interreg Plan/Implementing Act – planned content



1. Chapters, areas and indicative allocations

Basis for inclusion in the IA: Article 9(1) ERDF/CF proposal

- The list of Interreg Plan chapters
- The designation of the respective chapter areas
- The indicative allocation from the NRP Fund
- The indicative allocation from the Global Europe instrument (where applicable)



2. Detailed arrangements covering the specific implementation modalities of Interreg

Basis for inclusion in the IA: Article 9(1) ERDF/CF proposal

- Geographical coverage of the strands of cooperation and scope of the interregional cooperation strand
- Transfer of resources between strands
- Partnership within Interreg operations
- Territorial and local cooperation initiatives
- Group of auditors and audit of Interreg operations
- Recoveries
- Contribution to the implementation of macro-regional and sea-basin strategies



3. Requirements for bodies or persons responsible for management verifications

Basis for inclusion in the IA: Article 10(3) ERDF/CF proposal

4. Requirements for the monitoring committee and arrangements linked to its tasks

Basis for inclusion in the IA: Article 10(6) ERDF/CF proposal

- Setting up the monitoring committee
- Rules of procedure
- Composition of the monitoring committee
- Steering committee
- Selection of operations, including Small Project Funds

5. Requirements for pre-financing in case of contributions from the Global Europe Instrument

Basis for inclusion in the IA: Article 17(2) NRPP proposal



Performance-based framework



Requirements linked to supported measures

General requirement: Each Interreg Plan chapter must provide the list, description and estimated costs of measures, including the specific objective that each of them primarily pursues and the list of envisaged milestones and targets (based on common indicators)

1. Chapters

Intervention strategy based on a clear analysis of territorial needs and gaps

Identification of the measures for cooperation and their contribution to the specific and/or the Interreg-specific objectives

2. Measures

Description of each measure including its intended objective, and for each measure:

- Identification and description of the milestones and targets and indicative timeline of achievement
- Identification and description of the intervention field, output indicator and associated payout value

3. Costing

Indicative breakdown of the total cost of each measure by intervention field, including the applied methodology and supporting justification



Programming – summary of the main steps

1. Ex ante determination of the costs, EU contribution and intervention fields

An ex-ante cost estimate for each of the measures included in the chapter, together with an indication of:

- the associated level of EU contribution, (taking into consideration the minimum contribution rate for Interreg set out in Article 20 NRPP)
- the corresponding intervention field(s) and result indicator based on Annex I of the Performance Regulation .

2. Definition of milestones, targets, outputs and pay-out values

Individual milestone(s) and target(s) associated to each measure, along with their indicative timeline for completion.

- The list of output indicators provided in Annex I of the Performance Regulation for the corresponding intervention field(s) should be used as reference for the final targets or may also serve for the definition of interim targets.
- The pay-out values will be defined based on the EU financial contribution to the underlying measure

3. Verification mechanisms

- for each milestone and target : description of the document(s)/system that will be used to verify their achievement, how management verifications will be carried out and how the audit trail will be ensured.



Performance Regulation

Expenditure tracking and performance monitoring [*Article 14(2): NRP Plan*]

Annex I of the Performance Regulation is a pre-defined catalogue from which relevant performance indicators should be selected

Output indicators:

- These monitor what is directly produced or supported by the implementation of an activity
- will be used to define a final target or milestone under the Interreg Plan chapter that serves two purposes:
(1) triggering payments; and (2) reporting on performance.
- Requirement: Only one output indicator per intervention field. No additional output indicators will have to be reported on.

Result indicators:

- Plan and report on one or more result indicators from Annex I per intervention field, in addition to the output indicator.
- Performance reporting:
 - Non-achievement of estimated values has no impact on actual payments.
 - once a year by 15 February until 2037 in SFC.



Programming of 2028-2034 Interreg



Programming

Preparing for Post-2027

- For each Interreg partnership to decide how to prepare their future cooperation
- Usual approach: a task force/programming committee is established by the current Monitoring Committee
- Input and preparations can be requested from current programme authorities, from national and regional authorities, from technical assistance contracts
- Commission providing input for many programmes via border profiles and transnational profiles, with the support of ESPON and TESIM



Programming

Commission inputs

- Input will be prepared by the Commission for all Interreg chapters
- Intention is to provide a short, focused document with suggestions in relation to content and governance
- Not formal negotiating positions – support and a starting point for a dialogue with the Commission
- Important to recognise that Interreg does not operate in isolation and needs to take account of wider political contexts:
 - the overall EU budget;
 - EU priorities;
 - geopolitics;
 - internal market limitations;
 - lessons to be learned from 21-27 implementation
- Commission will participate in task forces/programming committees as much as HR resources and travel budgets allow



Programming

Next Steps

- Commission expects all chapter authorities to have established task force/programming committee structure in 2026
- Early key decisions to be taken:
 - Preparation of input work/possible contracting out
 - Reflections on programme area geography
 - Internal management arrangements
- Maintain close monitoring of regulatory process in European Parliament and Council
- Maintain close contact with your desk officer



Thank you!



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