

Specific provisions for European territorial cooperation goal (Interreg) supported by European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and external financing instruments 2021–2027

2018/0199(COD) - 23/06/2021 - Text adopted by Parliament, 2nd reading

The European Parliament adopted a legislative resolution approving the Council position at first reading with a view to the adoption of a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on specific provisions for the European territorial cooperation goal (Interreg) supported by the European Regional Development Fund and external financing instruments.

The proposed regulation is part of the legislative package on cohesion policy for the period 2021-2027. It lays down specific provisions relating to the 'European territorial cooperation' objective (Interreg) supported by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the external financing instruments where one or more Member States and their regions, as well as one or more Member States and third countries and their regions, cooperate across borders.

Support objectives

As regards support from the **Union's external financing instruments** (Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA III) and the Instrument for Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation (NDICI) to Interreg programmes, the Regulation sets out additional specific objectives and rules for the integration of these funds into Interreg programmes. It also provides for the possibility for OCTs to participate in Interreg programmes.

As regards support from **Interreg funds** (the ERDF and the Union's external financing instruments) for Interreg programmes, the regulation defines the specific objectives of Interreg, the eligibility criteria for Member States, third countries, partner countries, OCTs and their regions, the financial resources and the criteria for their distribution

Interreg strands

Four Interreg strands will be supported: (1) cross-border cooperation, (2) transnational cooperation, (3) interregional cooperation and (4) cooperation involving the outermost regions. For cross-border cooperation, regions should in principle be located along land or sea borders separated by up to 150 km of sea.

The geographical coverage is defined in detail for each strand. The Regulation empowers the Commission to adopt implementing acts establishing the list of areas covered by the Interreg programme to be supported.

Interreg specific objectives and thematic concentration

In addition to the specific objectives of the ERDF, under Interreg programmes, the ERDF and, where appropriate, the Union's external financing instruments may also support the specific Interreg objectives 'better cooperation governance' and 'a safer and more secure Europe'.

At least 60 % of resources allocated for cross-border, transnational and outermost regions' cooperation should go to a maximum of three policy objectives, one of which has to be 'a greener, low-carbon Europe'.

Resources and co-financing rates

The ERDF resources allocated to Interreg amount to **EUR 8 050 000 000** at 2018 prices out of the total resources available for budgetary commitments from the ERDF, ESF+ and the Cohesion Fund for the programming period 2021-2027.

The resources are allocated as follows:

- 72.2% (i.e. a total of EUR 5 812 790 000) for land and maritime cross-border cooperation;
- 18.2% (i.e. a total of EUR 1 466 000 000) for transnational cooperation;
- 6.1% (i.e. a total of EUR 490 000 000) for interregional cooperation;
- 3.5% (i.e. a total of EUR 281 210 000) for cooperation involving the outermost regions.

The co-financing rate for each Interreg programme is up to 80 %, but it can reach up to 85% for outermost regions' cooperation.

Small project funds

The Council position ensures that small projects can be successfully implemented by simplifying the arrangements for their implementation and by incorporating clear rules on their governance. It also includes a flexible support package for technical assistance, tailored to the needs of each type of programme.

To ensure a consistent monitoring of performance, the agreement adapts the CPR rules to Interreg programmes and refines the common set of output indicators, while adding a common set of results indicators.

Specific rules for indirect management

The proposed Regulation provides for the possibility that Interreg programmes under cooperation with the outermost regions may be implemented under indirect management. Specific rules are set out on how to implement these programmes in whole or in part under indirect management.