

Harmonized approach to capture & highlight the added value of Interreg

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Interact



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Interreg

Agenda

01

Share and discuss best practices to understand how added value is perceived across Interreg programmes

02

Develop a common working definition of "added value"

03

Next steps

Objectives

- Exchanging different practices to understand how added value is perceived across various Interreg programmes
- Reach a consensus on a common working definition of added value

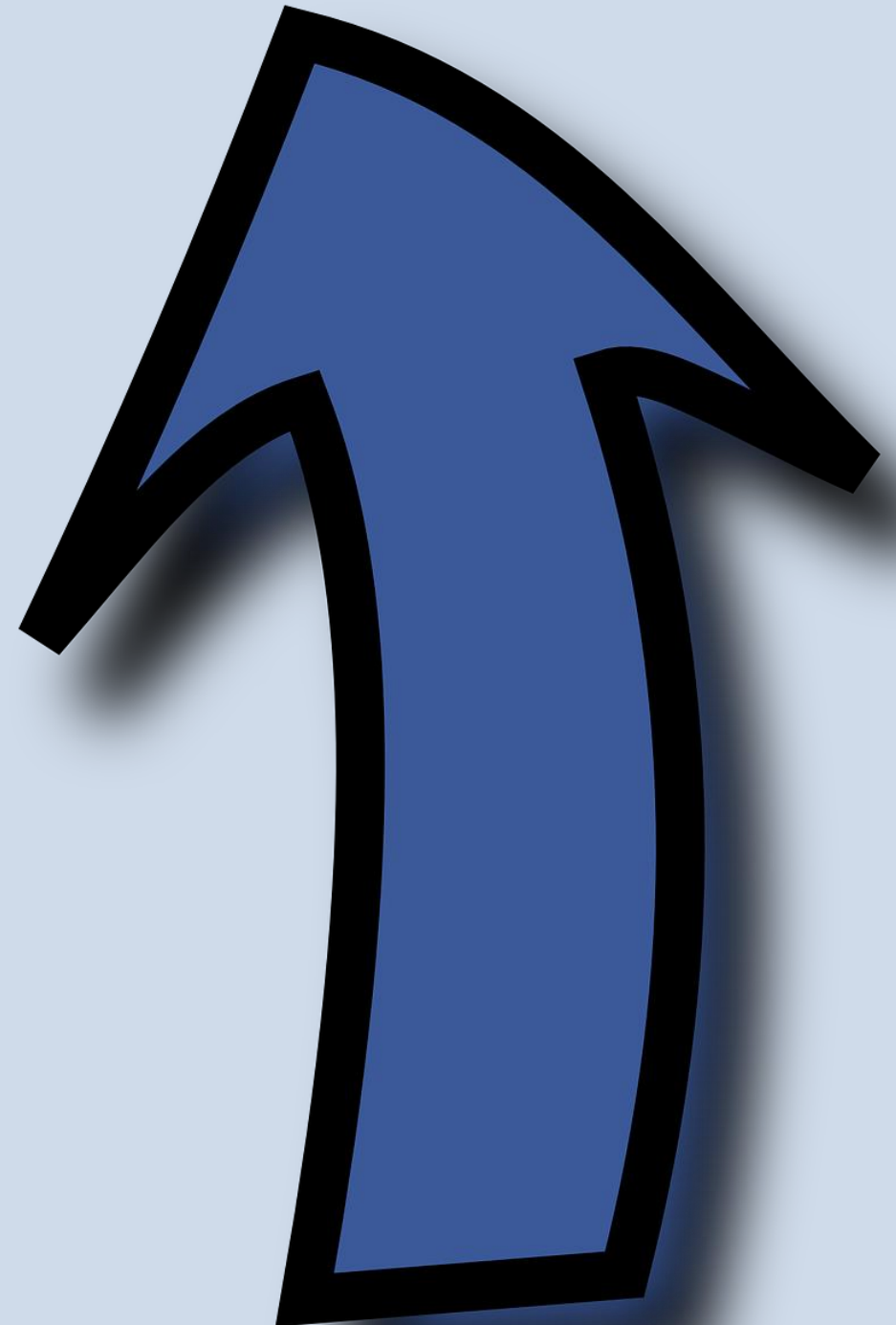


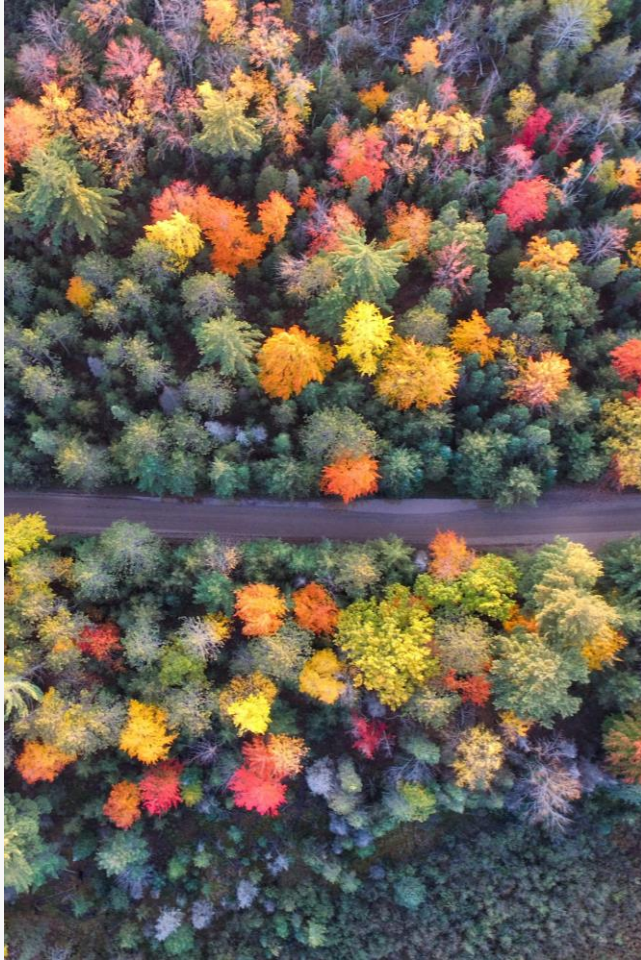
Main Principles

This exercise adopts a **bottom-up approach**, allowing participating Interreg programmes to collaboratively select topics for exchange, reflection, and development. It is tailored **to address the specific needs, relevance, and interests of each participating** programme, with multiple pilots running in parallel based on these interests.

Interact will facilitate exchanges within these pilots **and engage external experts to support the development of methodologies**, such as approaches and impact pathways.

Through our collective efforts, we hope to **achieve greater visibility and impact**.





Exchange on different practices to understand how added value is perceived across Interreg programmes



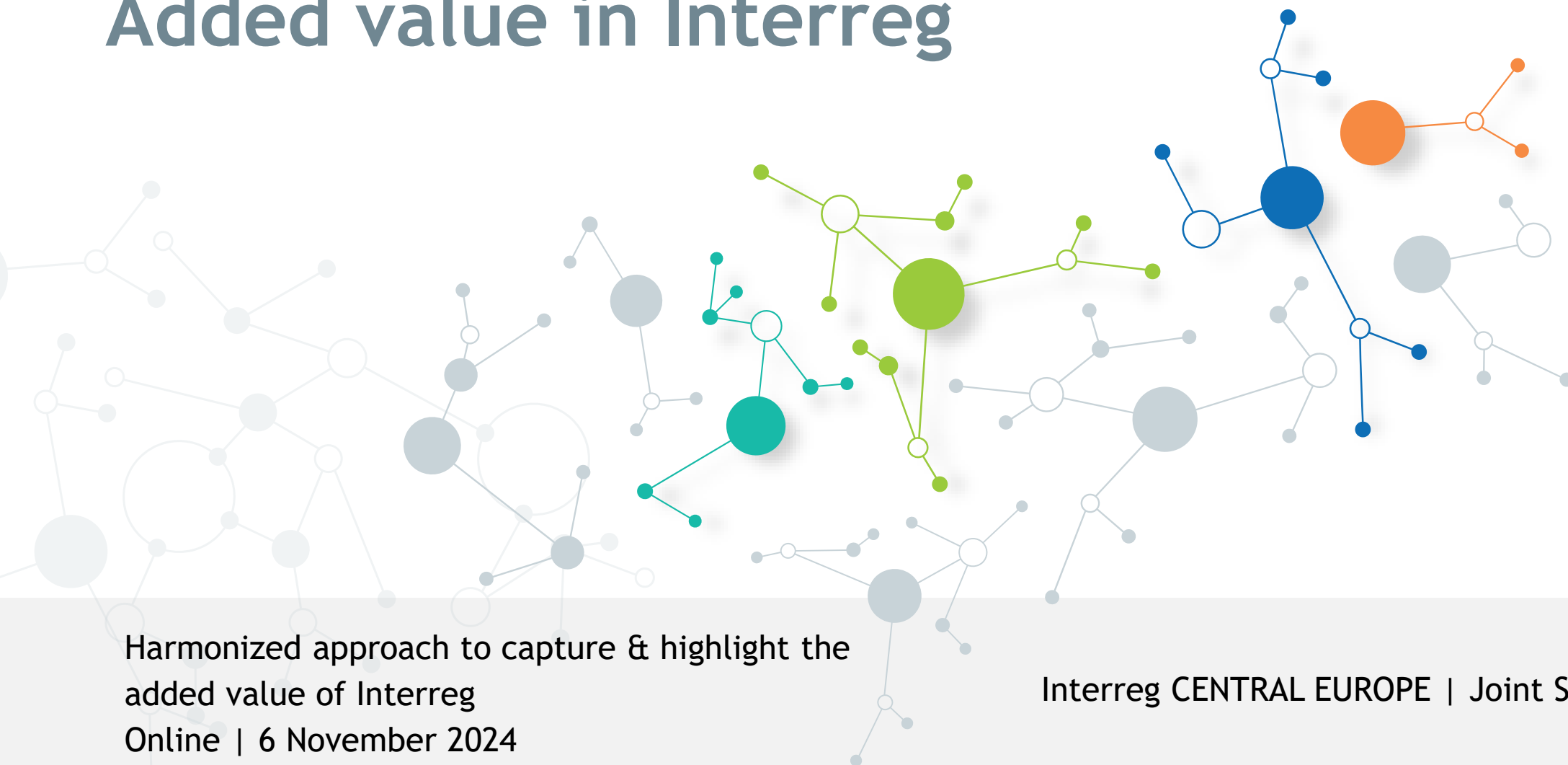
Questions to exchange



- What does "added value of cooperation" mean in your programme?
- Have you evaluated it in any previous programming periods? If so, how?
- How do you plan to evaluate it this period?
- What is your main challenge related to the added value criterion?



Added value in Interreg



Harmonized approach to capture & highlight the
added value of Interreg
Online | 6 November 2024

Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE | Joint Secretariat

Added value in Interreg CE

Impact evaluation 14-20

Impact evaluation (2021 - 2023) looked in particular into:

- **Added value of transnational cooperation**
 - A mapping of project beneficiaries, to identify geographic patterns of TNC
 - An analysis of the nature, extent and effects of the identified patterns to determine the added value of such transnational cooperation in producing outputs and achieving results, including achievements beyond expectations
- **Added value for specific target groups**
 - A detailed analysis of the impacts at the level of the beneficiaries, i.e. investigating whether certain groups are benefitting more than others
- **Added value for specific territories**
 - A detailed analysis of the impacts along different types of territories, such as urban and rural areas, densely and scarcely populated areas, mountainous areas and flatlands, industrial areas, touristic areas, agricultural areas, economically or demographically growing and shrinking regions

- **Multidirectional sharing of knowledge** and experiences, thereby helping to achieve more harmonised and more efficient approaches within CE territorial units
- Regional stakeholders overcome their rivalries and competitive states of mind that sometimes prevail in a national cooperation context and let them **think ‘in a broader way’**
- Possibility offered by the programme to **‘pilot’ and ‘trial’ solutions in an international environment**
- **Experimental dimension** - developing and testing new, innovative solutions gives a visionary perspective to the projects
- **Building trust** across stakeholders and territories beyond the former Iron Curtain
- **Interpersonal relationships and lasting cooperation structures**
- **New partnerships or cooperation opportunities**

Focus on added value of transnational cooperation

Results from CE impact evaluation 14-20

Added value in Interreg CE

Impact evaluation 21-27

Impact evaluation of Interreg CE 21-27 aims to answer the main questions:

1. What change can be observed in relation to the objectives of the programme? - *identifying changes*
2. To what extent can the observed changes be attributed to the implementation of the programme? - *estimating impacts*
3. What mechanisms of programme implementation have delivered the observed impact? - *understanding impacts and showing what works best in terms of effectiveness and efficiency*

Furthermore, specific attention will be paid to underlining added value of the programme at the territorial level (added value of TNC for the CE territory, specific target groups, usability and transferability of produced results).

EVALUATION CRITERIA TO BE APPLIED IN THE IMPACT EVALUATION 21-27

Evaluation criteria	Interpretation of evaluation criteria based on SWD	Elements to be covered in the impact evaluation
Effectiveness	Effectiveness analysis assesses how successful the programme is in achieving or progressing towards its objectives. The evaluation should provide evidence on the progress made and the role of the intervention in delivering the observed changes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Effectiveness in achieving programme specific objectives ▪ Detecting programme proximal effects, and wherever possible also long-term (distal) effects ▪ Effectiveness in achieving territorial change ▪ Detecting unintended effects ▪ Detecting synergetic and multiplication effects ▪ Detecting fruitful types of interventions ▪ Detecting success factors and barriers ▪ Analysing sustainability and durability of produced results and effects
Efficiency	Efficiency criteria looks into the relationship between the resources used and the changes generated by an intervention.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cost efficiency
Relevance	Relevance looks at the relationship between the needs and problems in society and the objectives of the intervention and hence touches on aspects of design.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Relevance to the specific needs of the territories ▪ Relevance to the specific needs of the target groups
Coherence	The evaluation of coherence involves looking at how well or not different actions work together with other actions and policies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Coherence with policy frameworks across governance levels ▪ Contribution to policy frameworks and better governance ▪ Contribution to horizontal principles and environmental sustainability ▪ Analysing internal coherence of programme interventions
EU added value	The assessment of an EU added values looks for changes that can reasonably be attributed to the EU intervention, over and above what could reasonably have been expected from national actions by the Member States.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Added value of transnational cooperation ▪ Added value of coordination with other funding instruments ▪ Transferability of produced results

Questions to exchange



- What does "added value of cooperation" mean in your programme?
- Have you evaluated it in any previous programming periods? If so, how?
- How do you plan to evaluate it this period?
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Inputs from the registration of the first meeting



How would you define the added value for your programme? What factors do you consider when determining added value? (1/4)

Added value is a concept which is mixed with impact : added value is to be measured with indicators, and counterfactual evaluations to have a real knowledge of the added value. In the Upper Rhine region, there are many cross-border funding tools, Interreg comes in addition. Therefore, **it is important to isolate the impact of Interreg alone on the territory**, and perhaps of Interreg as a tool in all of Europe ?

The benefits that the programme brings to the Atlantic region and would be difficult to achieve **without this policy instrument**, for example, promoting transnational collaboration between stakeholders following a quadruple helix approach and supporting pilots with the potential to be scaled up.

How would you define the added value for your programme? What factors do you consider when determining added value? (2/4)

The added value of our programme can be defined as the **unique benefits and improvements it brings to participants, stakeholders, and the wider community that go beyond the standard expectations**. This includes enhancements in skills, knowledge, employability, and personal development that participants gain, as well as positive impacts on social and economic factors. This also includes increased engagement, higher success rates, innovative methodologies, and a more thoughtful impact on participants' future opportunities and overall well-being as well the creation of lasting positive changes within the community.

How would you define the added value for your programme? What factors do you consider when determining added value? (3/4)

Added value for the territory (impact) and the target groups, added value in terms of improved governance and policy framework, contribution to relevant EU strategies and policies by **producing impact at territorial level**, specific added value of TNC in terms of **building trust, creating sustainable linkages, knowledge transfer and overall cohesion in the territory.**

Considering Interreg TN programme like ours: building trust & resilience of the region; building on synergies and avoiding reinventing the wheel to share best practices across governance levels; driver for change in green & resilient transition.

Strengthening regional cooperation, building and solidifying **knowledge in the themes** of the Programme, improving governance and **institutional capacity, building capacity** and improving processes such as planning, testing, implementing innovative solutions

Capacity building, **support for enlargement**, joint solutions to common challenges.

How would you define the added value for your programme? What factors do you consider when determining added value? (4/4)

In general, that it benefits the region and helps to tackle the challenges intended (like those discussed in Programme document).

However, this is very wide and unless the intervention field is very narrow or specific, this could be hard to achieve (like improve employment situation of persons or to decrease CO2 emissions, to large extent) thus it would be good **to have an understanding how realistically we could think of added value and impact** (would terminology using words like contributing to be sufficient?).

IE: How added value is perceived across Interreg programmes...

- **Enhancing partnership maturity:** Developing long-lasting cross-border collaborations that would not have occurred without Interreg support.
- **Solving common cross-border and transnational (CBC/TN) problems:** Tackling issues that cannot be effectively addressed by individual countries, requiring collective solutions.
- **Building capacity and promoting innovation:** Enabling local stakeholders to access new knowledge, tools, and skills while fostering innovation across borders.
- **Economic and regional synergies:** Stimulating regional growth, economic synergies, and sustainable development through collaborative efforts.
- **Strengthening long-term cooperation:** Establishing a foundation for sustained cross-border ties and improving governance and institutional capacities.

**Thank you
for sharing
your
documents**

Interreg Upper Rhine: impact evaluations
related to their different SOs

Interreg Estonia – Latvia: impact
evaluation

Interreg Flanders - Netherland

Floor is open for discussion



- Do you agree with the key aspects mentioned above?
- What else would you include?
- How did/will you try to show the added value of your programme?



Common working definition of added value



What could be a common working definition of added value?

Added value refers to the unique contributions that cross-border and transnational/interregional cooperation initiatives deliver, which would not have been possible without the programme's support. This includes strengthening cross-border partnerships, fostering innovation and knowledge exchange, building capacity for sustainable development, addressing shared challenges jointly, and generating long-lasting socio-economic and environmental impacts that go beyond the scope of individual, local, regional, national or interregional actions.

What could be a common working definition of added value?

*Added value refers to the unique contributions that cross-border and transnational/interregional cooperation initiatives deliver, which would not have been possible without the programme's support. This includes strengthening cross-border partnerships, fostering innovation and knowledge exchange, building capacity for sustainable development, addressing shared challenges jointly, and generating long-lasting socio-economic and environmental impacts that go beyond the scope of individual, local, regional, national or interregional actions. **Because cross-border, transnational and interregional cooperation projects by definition stimulate meaningful cross-border contacts and interactions, people and professionals discover opportunities across the border and thereby break down the mental barrier that borders to a large extent still are, becoming less dependent on just their nation's central regions. (proposal: Brams De Kort, Interreg Flanders-Netherlands)***

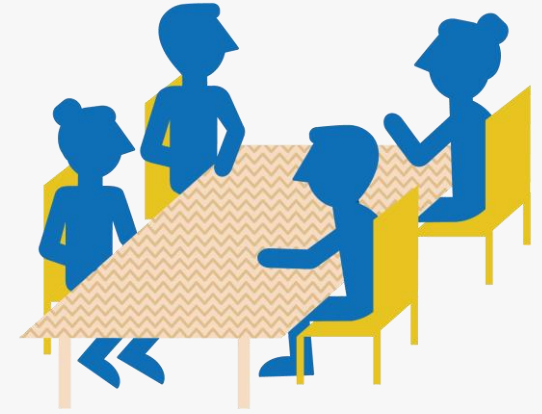
What could be a common working definition of added value?

“The added value of cooperation in Interreg programmes lies in their ability to overcome national boundaries, fostering collaboration across regions to tackle shared challenges and capitalise on common opportunities. By connecting regions both within and outside the EU, Interreg facilitates the exchange of knowledge, innovation, and best practices that enhance regional development, often in ways that would not be achievable through isolated efforts.

Interreg programmes directly contribute to the EU’s cohesion policy by addressing economic, social, and territorial disparities, promoting sustainable development and strengthening European integration. Interreg programmes create platforms for joint projects in areas such as environmental sustainability, innovation, and infrastructure, fostering not only cross-border cooperation but also a sense of shared responsibility for solving regional issues. This cooperation also helps regions tap into broader networks, expanding access to new markets, resources, and expertise.

Moreover, the collaboration supported by Interreg strengthens institutional capacities, improves public services, and enhances the competitiveness of regions. It fosters social and economic cohesion by bringing regions closer together, which is especially valuable in peripheral or less-developed areas. Ultimately, the programme's added value lies in its ability to generate solutions that benefit entire regions, create lasting partnerships, and address EU-wide goals like sustainability, economic growth, and territorial cohesion.”

Floor is open for discussion



- Do you agree with the definitions?
- What would you change?
- Is there something missing?
- Do we need two definitions?

Next steps:

- Do you need more programme examples how added value is perceived across Interreg programmes?
- Do you want to start with the exchange of evaluation questions related to the added value?
- When do you want to meet again?



Agreements

- The group found the list of key elements and the proposed working definition of "added value" to be very useful.
- It was agreed that a single working definition is sufficient.
- Interact will update both the key elements and the working definition. Participating programmes of the pilot will then have the opportunity to provide further input on these in a shared document.
- The next meeting is scheduled for mid-December or early January (exact date to be decided via Doodle). Agenda items will include finalising the list and definition, as well as preparing for the next discussion on evaluation questions.

Thank you for being here!

Your opinion matters to us.

Please take a few minutes to provide us with feedback to help us improve our services.



Cooperation works

All materials will be available on:

Interact connections / Interact library / Harmonized approach to capture & highlight the added value of Interreg