



***b-solutions*: Tackling cross-border challenges**

Interact - 6th Contact Point (NCP) network meeting

18 September 2025

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Context of b -solutions

- Highlight the **role of European border regions** in the political landscape;
- Represent their **common interests**;
- **Enhance cooperation** between border regions throughout Europe;
- **Promote exchanges** of experiences, information and solutions to common obstacles.

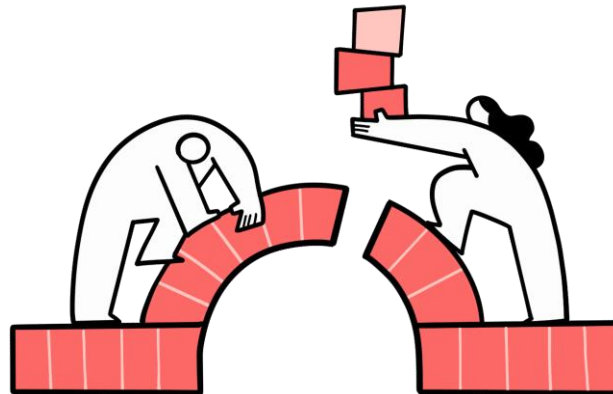
Origin of b-solutions

Interreg, the financing instrument, has had an enormous impact on CBC in Europe but there was a need for further analysis of cross border obstacles.



Goal of *b-solutions*

- Promoted by the European Commission's DG REGIO and managed by AEBR since 2018.
- The *b-solutions* initiative intends to **identify and promote sustainable methods of resolving legal and administrative obstacles that hinder cross-border cooperation.**
- Along EU internal land and maritime borders as well as EU-EFTA and EU-IPA borders.



*What does **b-solutions** offer*

- **Objective 1: legal support** through expert analysis of legal and administrative cross-border obstacles and their solutions.
 - * The [call for new *b-solutions* cases](#) is open until 27 February 2026.
- **Objective 2: additional support to advance the solution** as a follow-up to objective 1.
- **Objective 3: sub-grants** to develop chosen solutions via pilot actions as a follow-up to objective 1.



Objective 1: call for new cases

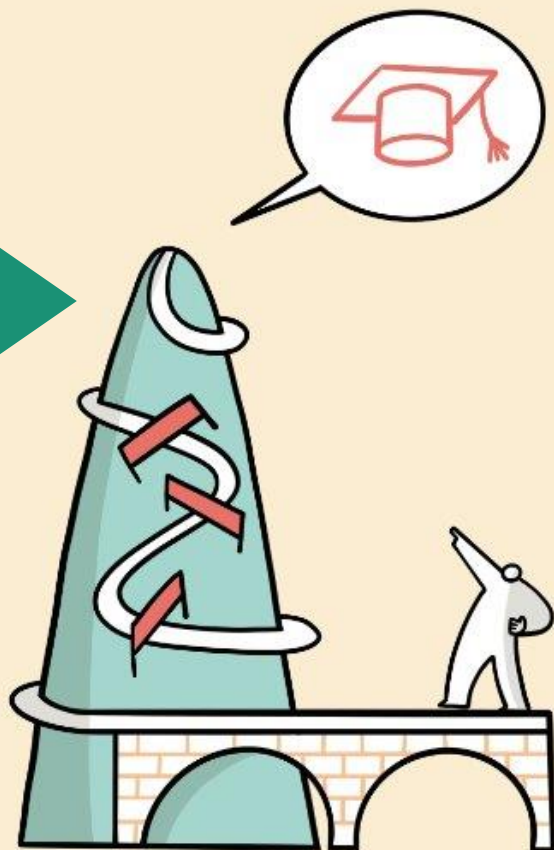
Call for new cases

Goal: Support 60 cases resolving border obstacles of a **legal** and/or **administrative** nature

Target: **Public bodies in border regions** (including public equivalent bodies); and **cross-border structures** (Euroregions, European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation -EGTCs)

Scope: Border regions along EU internal land and maritime borders and along EU borders with EFTA and IPA countries

Themes: Institutional cooperation, Public services, Labour markets and education and European Green Deal



Which kind of border obstacles do we look at?

Legal and **administrative** obstacles which arise because of:

- **lack of coherence** of legislation applicable on the different sides of the border
- inconsistencies, non-existence, or overlapping of **different administrative procedures**
- applicable European, national or regional legislation or administrative procedures do not take into account the **specificity of cross-border interaction**



What do participants obtain from *b-solutions*?

- We **match** the **case applicant** with a **legal expert**
- The expert **conducts a legal analysis** of the obstacle and makes a **visit on site**
- The expert writes a **report**, including a **detailed description of the specific obstacle** faced, and **proposals for concrete solutions**
- **Participation in a compendium** illustrating a variety of obstacles and possible solutions to enhance cross-border cooperation

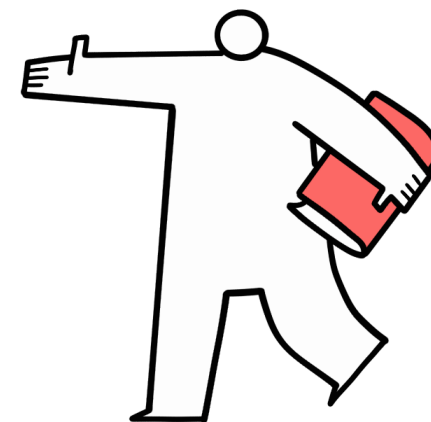


What do participants obtain from *b-solutions*?



Support to:

- **Evidence:** Demonstrate the cross-border obstacles they face
- **Progress:** Move towards solutions
- **Capacity building:** Raise awareness of cross-border cooperation
- **Knowledge:** Be part of a European project to bring European integration forward



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Examples of cases selected

CICERO – Croatia Italy Civil Protection collaboration

Advised entity: Unione dei comuni pratiarcati – IT-HR

Obstacle:

The Union of Pratiarcati Municipalities (Veneto, Italy) and the municipality of Labin, Croatia, aim to collaborate on civil protection through the Interreg CICERO project. Within the project an analyses of the legal and administrative framework in case of natural disaster and identification of obstacles has been conducted.

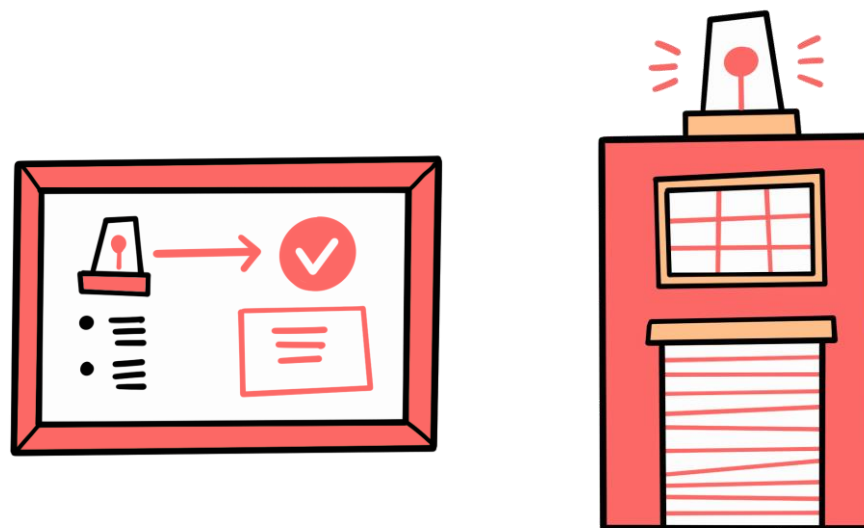
- **Legal barriers** prevent local civil protection groups from cross-border interventions.
 - Joint interventions can only be carried out within the framework of the European Civil Protection Mechanism, which is activated at the Member State level rather than the regional or even municipal level.
 - The timing and procedures for obtaining permits are often long and complex due to bureaucracy.

CICERO – Croatia Italy Civil Protection collaboration

The *b-solutions* report further investigated the identified legal and administrative obstacles and proposed possible solutions.

Proposed solution:

- Definition of an agreement for joint intervention after the example of the Interreg project *Crossit-safer* at the Slovenian – Italian border.



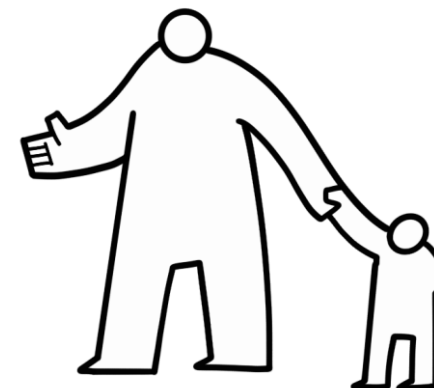
Shared cross-border public services: French-German crèches

Advised entity: Eurodistrict SaarMoselle EGTC – DE-FR

Obstacle:

The Eurodistrict SaarMoselle EGTC is partner of an Interreg project co-financing the development and construction of two cross-border crèches (nurseries) – one in Germany and one in France.

- The obstacles identified are multiple and lie within the **diverging national legal frameworks** in the field of:
 - Co-financing of running costs;
 - tax implications (property tax, VAT);
 - staff qualifications;
 - safety rules, as different standards apply.



Shared cross-border public services: French-German crèches

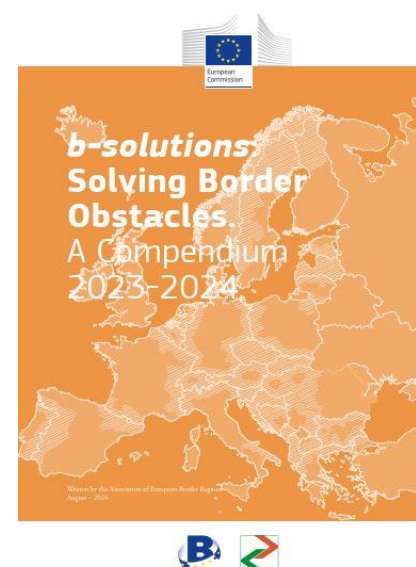
Examples of proposed solutions:

- Introduction of a special regime for cross-border institutions regarding the payment of the French operating aid to crèches to the crèche in Saarbrücken.
- VAT exemption for the French partner on the basis of the Franco-German Treaty of Aachen.
- Consultation with local medical/public health authorities on the differences about childhood vaccination to discuss whether the co-existence of both regulations is possible.
- Cooperation with the local fire department is considered essential and it is suggested that the local standards on fire protection be applied.

Other examples of 7 years of b-solutions

Outputs: 6 calls for proposals since 2018 leading to 165 cases showcased in:

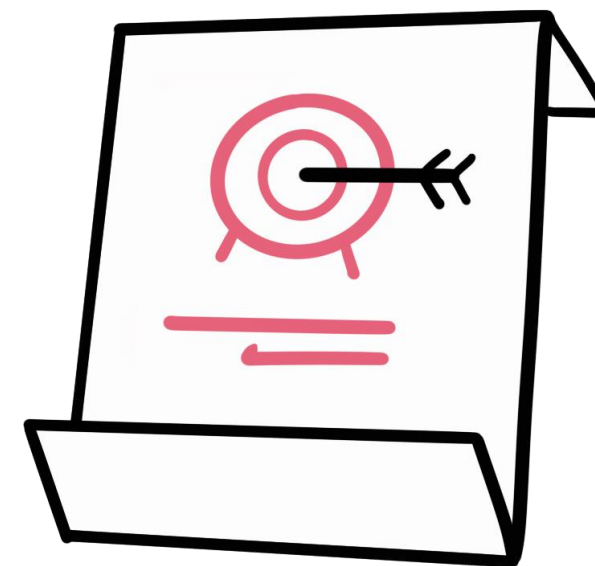
- 4 compendiums of reports
- 3 thematic booklets
- 2 illustrated storytelling booklets




Lessons learnt after 7 years of b-solutions

Solutions to border obstacles of legal and administrative nature:

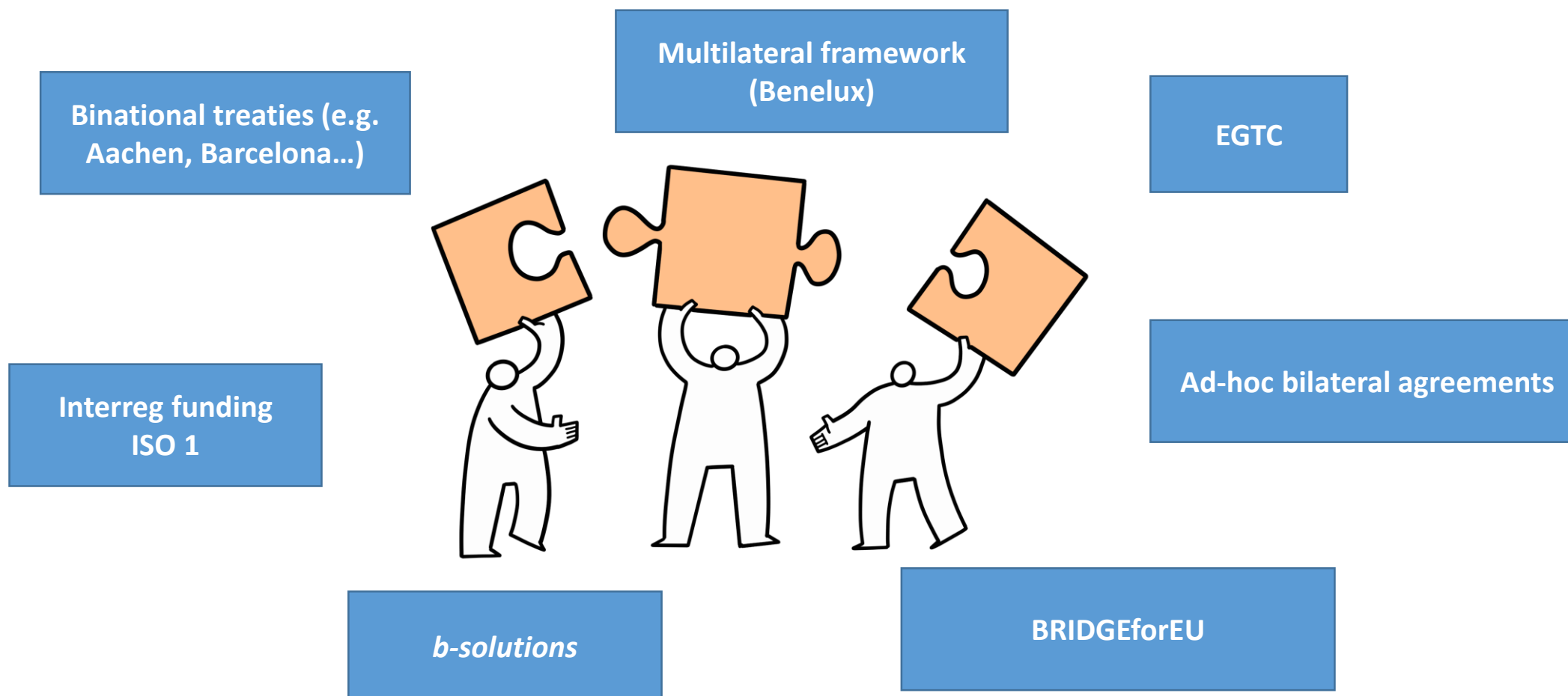
- **Must be tailored** to the specific legal, social and economic framework of the territory;
- **Should be supported by political leaders** willing to implement the measures necessary to remove or at least reduce these obstacles;
- Depending on the scope of the obstacle, could **engage authorities at the national level** in the countries involved;
- **Can include multiple stages and types of solutions**, from amending or creating new legal frameworks to enabling the operational set-up of the final solution.





How do Interreg and b-solutions complement each other?

A comprehensive toolbox to tackle border obstacles and build Europe together



What **b-solutions** can offer to the NCPs

- ***b-solutions*** increases the effectiveness of Interreg:
providing expert support **analysis** to follow up on the implementation of Interreg projects that stalled because of legal and/or administrative obstacles
- ***b-solutions*** expands the potential of Interreg:
offering a first step towards approaching legal and administrative obstacles to cross-border cooperation which can be developed as Interreg projects under ISO 1
- ***b-solutions*** supports regional development and promotes cooperation:
removing 1/5 of border obstacles could lead to GDP +2% in border regions and 1 million new jobs and promoting European integration

How to apply to the call?



b-solutions website

→ Call « New cases »

<https://www.b-solutionsproject.com/call-for-proposals>

Applications are reviewed on a rolling basis with immediate implementation and can be submitted in any European language.

Deadline: 27 February 2026



Required information in the application

- Title of the case to be advised
- Information on the applicant and co-applicants if any
- Thematic of the advised case



Criteria 1: Description of the obstacle



Criteria 2: Potential increase in cross-border cooperation

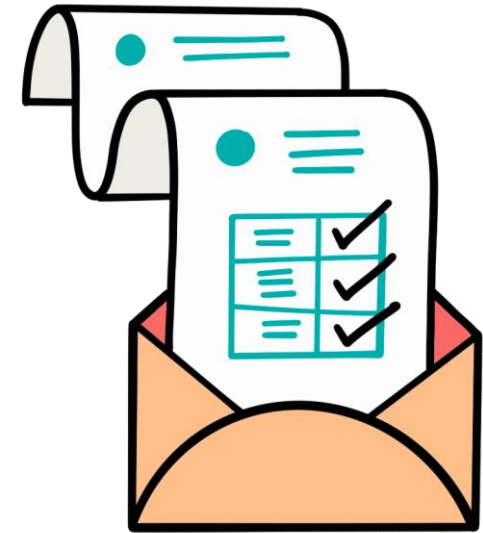


Criteria 3: Applicant or co-applicant's mandate to devise solutions



Criteria 4: Replicability

- Information on the border area that is subject of the application
- Possibility to upload documents in support of the application



b-solutions 3.0 **info session**

Call for *new cases*



DATE

2 October, 2025



TIME

11:00 - 12:00 CEST



LOCATION

Online



Registration link:

<https://forms.office.com/e/MMyqgbRXmy?origin=lpLink>

To promote the call

SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLKIT FOR STAKEHOLDERS

Promote *b-solutions* among
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b-solutions website

→ Discover more

→ Outreach





“There are two major outcomes: one, for the specific border, we get the solution for the specific case – and this may be a game-changer. Secondly, from a macro-perspective, looking at the whole Europe, we get knowledge on obstacles – and this helps us shape policies”

Ricardo Ferreira, European Commission



Contact us

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Book a slot for an individual call: <https://calendly.com/b-solutionsaebr/30min>

