

MFF and a vision for Interreg

Interreg Knowledge Fair session report | November 2025

Overview

The plenary focused on the future of Interreg within the proposed Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2028-2034, the evolution of cooperation policy, and the implications of recent regulatory developments.

Moray Gilland, Head of Unit D1, Jean-Pierre Halkin, retiring Head of Unit D2 shared reflections based on their longstanding engagement with Interreg and talked about what has worked well in the past and what changes we can expect in the next programming period.

Methodology

The session followed a moderated discussion format combining short introductory remarks, personal reflections, and structured Q&A. The moderator set the context and asked themed questions to two speakers about the evolution of Interreg, the legal proposal presented in July 2025, and broader policy developments influencing Interreg. The plenary set the scene for two days of discussion in which participants were highly involved.

Key discussion points

- **Evolution and resilience of Interreg:** The Interreg's 35-year journey - from a Community initiative to a dedicated MFF budget line - was emphasised, along with its strong ability to adapt during major policy transitions.
- **Strength of the Interreg community:** The shared values, long-term partnerships, and commitment of programmes' teams were emphasised as key assets in facing new challenges.
- **Importance of cooperation:** In a context of geopolitical tensions, climate pressures, and digital transitions, cooperation was viewed as more relevant than ever for building integrated and resilient territories.
- **Status of the legal proposal:** The current proposal has generated strong stakeholder interest. Its next steps depend on interinstitutional negotiations, including the EP and Council, with timelines still evolving.
- **BRIDGEforEU Regulation:** This development was recognised as an important milestone in addressing legal and administrative barriers at borders, with potential to significantly strengthen cooperation.
- **Key legal changes:** Speakers outlined elements such as performance-based approaches (P-BA), reform dimensions, a single Interreg Plan, and the updated adoption procedures.
- **Messages to programmes:** Teams were encouraged to prepare early, build on continuity, and take advantage of existing tools (Interact tools), synergies, and initiatives.

Regulations and articles of particular significance

- **New MFF proposal** – introducing an Interreg plan and chapters and the implementation of performance-based approaches.
- **BRIDGEforEU Regulation** – addressing cross-border administrative obstacles and expected to influence project design and governance across programmes.

Conclusions, plans for followed up

The session reaffirmed the strategic value of Interreg and the collective readiness of the community to face upcoming changes with the support of the Interact programme. While the legislative framework is still under negotiation, the direction is clear: simplification, a focus on performance, and stronger territorial cooperation. Programmes are encouraged to stay engaged, use available tools, and prepare for the next financial period with a forward-looking approach.

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