

Interreg Slam: 10th Anniversary

Interreg's favorite performance contest

Background

Launched in 2015, the Interreg Slam emerged as an innovative communication tool designed to amplify the real-world impact of Interreg-funded projects. It started with a simple concept: tell compelling stories about cooperation across the border and make the technical and often obscure work of Interreg visible and relatable. Over the past decade, it has grown into a high-profile event, central to the visibility and communication strategy of the Interreg community. By showcasing personal narratives, concrete results, and community transformation, the Interreg Slam has not only informed, but also inspired new partnerships and public interest.

2025 marks the 10th anniversary of this initiative, coinciding with the 35th anniversary of Interreg itself. The Slam has evolved from a niche contest to a core platform of project and programme visibility, always held in partnership with the European Commission, in the format of the European Week of Regions and Cities, the Interreg Annual Event, the InterregGO!, etc., attracting applications from dozens of Interreg programmes and viewed by millions across Europe.

Thematic Focus

The Interreg Slam emerges integrated with many European initiatives, communication themes and campaigns, such as the European year initiative of the Council of Europe. This allows for a seamless alignment with common actions and effect of scale.

The 2024–2025 edition was explicitly anchored in the theme: **“Stories of Inclusion and Empowerment,”** directly aligning with the six foundational European values: human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, rule of law, and human rights. All applications were required to demonstrate a tangible connection to one or more of these values.

The approach by Interact - of not only accepting any European initiative, but rendering it through the lens of Interreg, making it appropriated by the Interreg community and its “spirit”, serves as an incentive to apply and showcase good projects results, recognizing the Interreg Slam, as a well-accepted initiative by many stakeholders.

This strong thematic alignment positions the Interreg Slam not merely as a communications contest, but as a platform for value-driven advocacy.

Target Audience

The Interreg Slam speaks to multiple audiences simultaneously:

- **EU citizens**, especially in border regions, who benefit directly or indirectly from Interreg-funded initiatives.
- **Policy makers and regional authorities**, who see in these stories the broader policy relevance of cooperation.
- **Young people and students**, for whom these narratives offer concrete illustrations of EU solidarity and opportunities.
- **The Interreg community itself**, including programme managers and project partners, who gain motivation and visibility.
- **General public and media**, who are reached primarily via social media campaigns and public voting mechanisms.

By combining accessibility with authenticity, the Slam manages to transcend the traditional limitations of policy communication.

Timeline

- **2015** – Interreg Slam concept introduced by Interact as part of efforts to boost project visibility.
- **2019** – Integration into the European Week of Regions and Cities, allowing the Interreg Slam to go out of the Interreg world and achieve wider recognition.
- **2020–2022** – Pandemic-driven digital expansion; massive increase in online engagement. Allowing for external video production and partnership with projects.
- **2023** – High estimated partnership with the Interreg Annual Event in Santiago de Compostela, 28 October 2023. This was the edition with all videos produced centrally to ensure quality and consistency.
- **2024–2025** – 10th anniversary edition launched under the theme of inclusion and empowerment; finalist videos released in March 2025; final awards at InterregGO! in Gorizia/Nova Gorica on March 27, 2025.

The formula of success

The Interreg Slam is an ever-evolving concept. Through the years, it first incorporated the storytelling approach, allowing for Interreg projects to improve in terms of communication message and showcasing of good results.

In time, the concept also involved dedicated training on storytelling and video making. Interreg Slam's storytelling training plays a vital capacity-building role for Interreg project teams by equipping them with concrete communication tools and techniques to effectively translate complex, technical results into relatable, human-centered narratives. Through a structured mix of workshops, one-on-one

coaching, peer exchanges, and media literacy sessions, participants learn how to craft compelling stories that connect emotionally with broader audiences. This hands-on training emphasizes clarity, authenticity, and impact, teaching participants how to frame their projects in a way that resonates across cultures and sectors.

The components of the training go beyond performance skills — they build long-term communication capacity within institutions. Projects gain access to storytelling frameworks, presentation techniques, and narrative strategies that enhance not only their Interreg Slam performance, but also their broader outreach, policy advocacy, and public engagement efforts.

In essence, the storytelling training transforms communication from an afterthought into a core strength, enabling Interreg projects to amplify their value and visibility across the EU and to leave a lasting narrative legacy.

The following scheme sums up the **Interreg Slam's success formula**:



Key Achievements

- **Capacity building in communication skills:** More than 200 people trained in Storytelling skills
- **Massive Engagement:** Over 12 million people reached in recent editions.
- **Diversity of Participation:** Entries from across Europe, including more recent Interreg programmes like NEXT Romania-Ukraine.
- **Professional Storytelling:** High-quality video production has boosted clarity, emotional impact, and shareability.
- **Policy Relevance:** Themes increasingly aligned with EU priorities—green transition, digitalisation, social inclusion, youth, etc.
- **Repository of high quality Interreg projects:** The Slam grows more and more recognised as a source of information and reference for Interreg projects with excellence, showcasing the best outcomes of European territorial cooperation.

- **Visibility for Finalists:** Past finalists have used the exposure to scale projects, forge new partnerships, and secure outstanding recognition.
- **Sustained Institutional Support:** Backed by Interact, DG REGIO, and hosted within flagship Interreg events.

Publicity

Publicity for Interreg Slam is both grassroots and institutional:

- **Social Media Voting Campaigns:** Videos of finalists are posted on the Interreg Facebook page, where public likes count as votes—maximizing organic reach.
- **EU-Level Events:** The award ceremony is embedded in the Interreg Annual Event, 2025: InterregGO! in Gorizia/Nova Gorica, etc.
- **Increasing visibility trend:** During the post-pandemic years, the approach of Slam consolidated in improved video-making and storytelling exercises, which contributed to increasing reach - 1 million people in 2022, 3.1 million in 2023, growing to 8.4 million in 2025.
- **Cross-Promotion:** Interact and Interreg programme websites, newsletters, and events actively promote the Slam.
- **Video Production:** Centralized video creation ensures visual consistency and storytelling impact—these are promoted across platforms including YouTube and Vimeo.
- **Press and Media:** Local and regional media often cover national finalists, amplifying the reach further.
- **Dedicated Interreg Slam webspace:** at <https://interreg.eu/>

Contact

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