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A Practical guide to **Cooperation actions:**

First steps of the craft

2026

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Table of **Content**

Welcome Message

1. How to chose the type of cooperation?

2. How to find the right partner?

3. How to plan and set up the cooperation actions?

4. How do I manage it once it runs?

5. How do I communicate a cooperation action?

6. What comes next?

Welcome

Message

Cooperation actions are one of the newer tools available to programmes under the Investment for Jobs and Growth goal, and one of the least written about. Article 22(3)(d)(vi) of the Common Provisions Regulation opened the door for regions to work with partners inside and outside their own Member State. What that door leads to, in practice, has depended on trial and error inside individual managing authorities working with the tool for the first time.

This guide collects that experience into one working document. It follows six practical questions: whether cooperation fits your programme, how to find a partner, how to plan and set up the action, how to manage it once it runs, how to communicate its value, and what comes next as attention turns to 2028-2034. Each part can stand alone, so start wherever your programme happens to be.

The checklists, templates and examples in these pages come from programmes that have already built cooperation actions, and from practitioners who shared what worked and what did not at a dedicated workshop. Where something has worked well, we say so. Where it has been consistently difficult, we say that too.

Treat this as a working document rather than a manual. Skip what you already have in place, and come back to the templates when you need them.

Part 1.
Is cooperation right for my programme?

Cooperation is not the right tool for every specific objective. Before choosing a model or drafting a call, work through three things: what the regulation requires, what your programme is ready for, and what cooperation is not. This chapter gives you the tools to answer that before committing time to design.

What the CPR actually requires

Article 22(3)(d)(vi) of the Common Provisions Regulation requires every programme to set out, for each specific objective, the interregional and transnational actions it plans to implement with beneficiaries located in at least one other Member State or outside the Union, where relevant.

What it leaves open:

- **How much to allocate.** Specifying a budget or a percentage for cooperation is planned at programming.
- **Which partner.** The article does not assign one; that is a search process, covered in Part 2 of this guide.
- **How to implement it.** There is no required procedure. Programmes can run their normal selection process, describe cooperation in an annex or implementing document, or fold it into the call package.
- **Which degree of cooperation to commit to.** Only the lightest form, naming a partner region, is required. Everything beyond that is a choice, set out in the next section.

Tip: Cooperation actions under Article 22(3)(d)(vi) are not a variant of Interreg. They can run between two regions in two different Member States with no shared border and no cooperation area, in service of your programme's own mainstream objectives.

The five degrees of cooperation

Cooperation is not a single choice. Once cooperation applies to a specific objective, five degrees describe how far you take it. Only the first is required if you use the provision at all; the rest describe how much further you go. Different specific objectives in the same programme can sit at different degrees at the same time.

Degree	What's agreed	In practice
1 - One-sided cooperation	The partner (WHO) is named in your programme document only	Your programme states an interest in region B; region B's own programme makes no reciprocal reference.
2 - Mirror cooperation	The partner (WHO) is named in both programme documents.	Region A names region B and region B names region A; reaching this needs a coordination process between the two.
3 - Agreed cooperation	Partner (WHO) and topic (WHAT) are named in both, with matching descriptions.	Both programmes describe the same thematic interest and specify it as a common, agreed priority.
4 - Joint informal cooperation	WHO, WHAT, and part of HOW: harmonised selection criteria or procedures.	Each programme still runs its own selection process, but the two may set up a joint selection committee to validate results on both sides.
5 - Joint formal cooperation	WHO, WHAT, and HOW fully agreed, including procedures and potentially joint finances.	A joint legal structure, such as an EGTC, or a single lead authority runs selection or management on behalf of both territories.

What cooperation actions are not

A few misreads come up often enough to name directly.

- **Not Interreg**. Cooperation actions serve your own programme's mainstream objectives; Interreg makes cooperation itself the objective. Neither a shared border nor a cooperation area is required, and the two are meant to complement each other, not substitute for one another.

- **Not two organisations working in parallel**. An applicant in your territory and a partner abroad each running their own activity, with no shared output, shared methodology, or real knowledge transfer, does not meet the bar. The call has to ask applicants to demonstrate how the joint activity would actually be organised.

- **Not a required funding line.** Nothing in the regulation obliges you to set aside a specific budget or percentage for cooperation. What is required is a description of intent at specific objective level.

- **Not preserved by vague language.** A generic statement that a specific objective ‘may involve cooperation’, with no partner region named, is read as no cooperation at all. To keep the option open without committing to a partner yet, write the milestone broadly enough that it still counts, rather than leaving it undefined.

Tip: Political will and staff commitment matter for any degree of cooperatiion, but they are not enough on their own. Moving past the simplest coopertion also needs a coordination process with the partner administration, agreed before the call is designed, not after.

Readiness self-check

Before choosing a degree, check where your programme actually stands. The four areas below cover most of what determines whether a cooperation action gets off the ground. Use the third column to note where you stand today: strong, developing, or not yet addressed.

Area	Question to answer	Where you stand
Political will	Do senior decision-makers see cooperation as delivering something the region needs, rather than a box in the programme template? Is there a named person who would defend a cooperation-flagged measure at the Monitoring Committee?	
Regulatory clarity	Have you identified which specific objective(s) cooperation falls under? Do you know whether partner expenditure outside the programme area will need control and audit arrangements documented in your management and control system?	
Partner appetite	Has a potential partner region already shown interest, a mirror signal, or would you be starting one-sided? Do you have a sense of what that partner would want in return?	
Internal capacity	Does your Managing Authority have staff free to manage monitoring, reporting, and an ongoing relationship with a partner administration, on top of standard project management? Have you budgeted time for partner search, consistently the slowest step?	

Decision map: where do you start?

Your starting position	Typical instrument	Go to
Another region has already solved a problem you have Degree 1-3	Call open to external partners, lead beneficiary in your own area	Part 3, 'You need knowledge or capacity that exists in another region'
Several programmes share the same challenge Degree 3-4	Coordinated call, joint selection committee, or virtual common pot	Part 3, 'Several programmes share the same challenge'
Your specialisation needs a complementary region Degree 2-4	Cooperation built through a thematic platform or macro-regional strategy channel	Part 3, complementary regions; Part 2, 'Where to look'
The investment cannot be delivered from one side Degree 5	Joint legal structure (e.g. EGTC), cross-border ITI, or joint body with shared governance	Part 3, 'The investment cannot be built from one side'

Tip: For early-stage and ongoing actions, pooling of resources and a common pot of funds are the usual choice; a coordinated call has high on impact but lower incentive on current application. Use this as a cross-check against the table above, not a substitute for it.

Part 2.
How do I find the right partner?

Partner search is consistently the step programmes underestimate. It takes longer than expected, and getting it right determines whether a cooperation action becomes a genuine partnership or two organisations filing separate paperwork. This chapter covers where to look, how to judge fit before committing, and what to cover on a first call.

Where to look:

- **Macro-regional strategy channels.** If your territory sits within the Baltic Sea, Danube, Adriatic-Ionian, or Alpine strategies, the existing Managing Authority networks, thematic coordinators, and 'embedding' processes already connect programmes working on shared priorities.
- **Interreg networks and the Policy Learning Platform.** Interreg Europe offers peer reviews and thematic events, build relationships between mainstream programmes over time: **https://www.interregeurope.eu/policy-learning-platform#**
- **Interact's interactive map tool.** Built specifically for this search, the map lets you filter by programme title, country, NUTS III region, topic of cooperation, and scope of partnership needed. It is the most direct route once you have a defined topic: **https://www.cooperationactions.eu/**
- **Regional Partnerships and existing agreements.** The European Week of Regions and Cities produces Regional Partnerships that can double as a cooperation channel.
- **Direct routes.** European Commission desk officers, Chambers of Commerce, and regional representations abroad can all make an introduction, particularly where no thematic platform or macro-regional structure exists yet.

Tip: Partner search takes longest when it starts from 'we should cooperate' rather than from a defined gap. Work through the readiness self-check in Part 1 first: knowing precisely what your programme is missing narrows the search from anywhere in Europe to a short list of plausible regions.

Partnership health check

Before a conversation turns into a commitment, check it against five indicators. None requires a written agreement at this stage. All five are things you can assess from an early conversation.

Indicator	Strong signal	Weak signal
Shared objectives	Both sides can state, in one sentence each, what the cooperation should deliver for their own territory, and the two sentences are compatible.	One side talks about ‘strengthening ties’ in general terms, with no output either side could name.
Contribution	Each partner brings something the other cannot get domestically: a tested practice, a specialisation, funding, or capacity.	The partner is interested in the relationship but cannot say what it specifically contributes.
Decisions	There is at least an informal sense of how a disagreement would be resolved: a lead partner, a joint committee, or escalation to the Managing Authorities.	No one has discussed what happens if the two sides want different things.
Alignment	Timelines, thematic priorities, and programme cycles are close enough to act within the same period.	Calls or specific objectives are years apart, or cover only loosely connected themes.
Trust	Some prior contact already exists, through a network, an event, or an earlier agreement.	This would be a genuinely cold introduction, with no track record either way.

Red flags

A few signals are worth treating as a stop, or at least a pause, rather than something to work around later.

- **The partner cannot commit any financial contribution** and has no fallback, such as an in-kind contribution, if funds are not available. This can stall a project entirely if it is not addressed before contracting.

- **The partner's legal and administrative framework differs from yours with no bridging mechanism discussed.** Differing rules and procedures, and even working language, are named recurrently as structural barriers, alongside political sensitivities that can be harder to see in advance.

- **No one senior on the partner's side is willing, or able, to defend the cooperation politically within their own institution.**

- **The partner speaks about wanting to 'cooperate' in general terms but cannot name a specific thematic objective or measure the cooperation would attach to.** This is the same test applied to programme documents: a vague statement of interest is not cooperation.

- **The knowledge or practice you want to bring in has nowhere to land internally.** This is the gap between transfer and uptake: information arrives, but nobody in the organisation is positioned to absorb or apply it.

First contact: the scoping call

A few signals are worth treating as a stop, or at least a pause, rather than something to work around later.

1. **The gap.** What does each side's programme lack, and what could the other plausibly bring? Keep this concrete, not aspirational.
2. **Specific objectives.** Which specific objective(s) on each side would this sit under?
3. **Degree of cooperation.** Which of the five degrees is realistic for each side right now, given political will, capacity, and timeline (see Part 1)?
4. **Cost and location.** A rough sense of what expenditure would fall outside each partner's own programme area, and who is expected to carry or verify it.
5. **Contact points.** Who coordinates day to day, and who decides if the two sides disagree, even provisionally.
6. **Internal sign-off.** What each side still needs before it can commit: political sign-off, Monitoring Committee awareness, or budget confirmation.
7. **Timeline.** A realistic date by which both sides will confirm, one way or the other.

Tip: Treat the scoping call as a two-way readiness check. The partner should be running something close to the self-check in Part 1 on their own side. If they have not thought about their own political will, capacity, or regulatory position, that is worth surfacing before either side invests more time.

Part 3.
How to plan and set up the cooperation actions?

Define the need

Before choosing a model, a degree of cooperation or a call design, identify what your programme cannot achieve on its own and where a cross-border partner adds something your territory does not have. This is the starting point for everything that follows in this chapter.

Choose the starting point

Programmes setting up cooperation actions generally fall into one of four situations: a gap that another region has already addressed, a challenge shared with other programmes, a value chain that requires complementary regions, or an investment that can only be delivered jointly across a border. This chapter introduces examples of how to design a cooperation action that meets your programme's needs in practice.

The planned action has to benefit the programme area

Whatever the cooperation delivers, e.g., knowledge, infrastructure, innovation capacity, jobs, it must benefit the programme area. This is stressed in Art. 63(4) CPR and Art. 3(4)(c) of the ERDF Regulation. It also provides the basis for a stronger argument to the Monitoring Committee and to political decision-makers justifying the need for cooperation. Answering the question of what the cooperation action will bring to the programme area is therefore the starting point.

Choosing your starting point

Another region has a tested solution

Your programme is investing in, e.g., skills, innovation capacity, a sector, a public service etc., and you know that a region elsewhere has further developed experience or a tested approach. Bringing that knowledge in through a cooperation requirement in your call is faster and cheaper than reinventing it in your own region.

Several programmes are tackling the same problem and it beneficial to act together

Your programme shares a policy challenge with neighbouring or thematically aligned programmes, e.g., SME internationalisation, green transition, labour market integration. Acting in parallel under a joint call produces results none of you would reach alone, and it satisfies a macro-regional strategy priority at the same time (if relevant for your programme area).

Your specialisation needs a complementary region to deliver results

Your S3 specialisation covers part of an industrial or innovation value chain. Another region covers a different part. Neither investment reaches its potential without the other. Coordinating with the right partner regions produces a more viable and impactful solution.

The investment cannot be built from one side

The investment concerns physical infrastructure that serves both sides of a border, e.g., a rail connection, a shared logistics hub, a cross-border public facility. It cannot be split between two separate projects. It requires joint governance, funding from both programmes, and is often motivated by a political decision acknowledging the need for a coordinated investment.

The following pages outline examples of how to build each type of cooperation action in practice.

You need knowledge or capacity that exists in another region

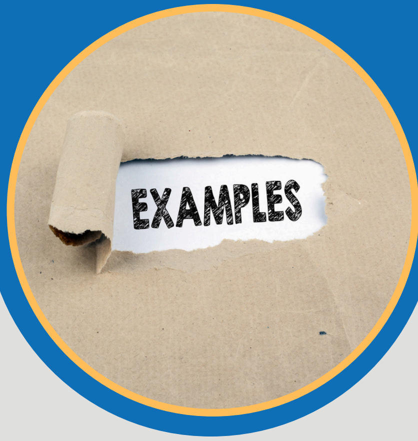
General principles

Your programme can open its call to projects that include partners from another Member State or outside the EU. This is grounded in Art. 22(3)(d)(vi) CPR.
Expenditure incurred by partners outside your programme area is eligible, provided it contributes to your programme's objectives. The 15% geographic cap from the 2014–2020 period no longer applies (Art. 63(4) CPR).
The lead beneficiary must be located in your programme area. External partners participate and receive funding through the lead partner or participate on own costs.
You apply your own selection procedures. No new legal structure is required.
Simplified Cost Options are available for external partner costs and substantially reduce the verification burden (Art. 53–56 CPR).

How to build cooperation

- Define specifically what your programme territory lacks and what kind of external organisation would fill that gap. Based on this analysis, set partnership requirements in the call documentation.
- Decide whether cross-border partnership is mandatory or bonus-scored in the call.
- Build partner search support into the call providing, e.g., a matchmaking event, a partner database, a pre-application exchange, or partner up with Interreg programmes operating in your region. Partner search is the most time-consuming step for applicants.
- Agree control arrangements for external partner expenditure, if applicable. Reflect this in your management and control system description.
- Include fields in the application that require applicants to demonstrate how the joint activities with partners will be organised, e.g., co-developed outputs, shared methodology, knowledge transfer. Parallel work by two organisations is not cooperation.

Several programmes share the same challenge or hold complementary strengths



General principles

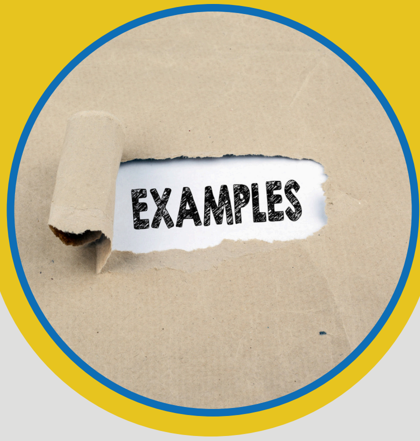
Each programme applies its own selection procedures. No single joint procedure is mandated. What can be shared is the call design, e.g., topic, timeline, criteria, application requirements.
A joint selection committee can be set up, e.g., advisory or formally binding, with each programme validating the outcome separately.
Each programme funds its own beneficiaries. No fund transfer between programmes takes place. Each euro remains within the programme that committed it.
A coordinated call and virtual pot approach requires alignment of timelines, a joint ranking, with each programme funding its share of the results.

How to build cooperation

- Ensure partner managing authorities are committed before call design begins. Agree on the main coordination principles: meeting frequency, coordination mechanism, who publishes what, who runs matchmaking, who coordinates evaluation.
- Decide how much alignment your programmes can realistically achieve and which existing funding programmes and calls will serve as the basis for coordination.
- Map each programme's internal approval timeline.
- Decide whether a shared application interface is needed.
- Run a matchmaking event before the call deadline.

Note: Each applicant is assessed against their own programme's eligibility requirements. Partner reporting follows each programme's own rules. Cooperating programmes can agree on shared elements, for example, a joint application interface covering the cooperation elements of the project.

The investment requires coordination across borders.



General principles

ERDF from two or more programmes can be combined on a single operation, alongside national budgets, CEF, municipal funding or other instruments.

An existing legal structure, e.g., an EGTC or equivalent, can be designated as an intermediate body, managing procurement and reimbursement across jurisdictions (Art. 71(3) CPR).

A cross-border Integrated Territorial Investment can link programmes under joint governance, with a single body responsible for implementation across the border area (Art. 30 CPR).

A joint body can perform management verifications across all territories involved.

Each programme retains its own audit obligations. These must be clearly assigned and documented before contracting begins.

How to build cooperation

- Following an agreement to build a shared investment, build the needed coordination mechanisms.
- Identify the joint legal structure. An EGTC is the most established option for cross-border contracting. If none exists, a designated lead authority with a formal agreement covering the other territory is the alternative.
- Map the funding contributions. Each programme identifies which component of the project it covers, e.g., by territory, activity type, or instrument. Agree the funding map before design begins.
- Set up unified governance and reporting, if helpful.
- Build in realistic time frame and risk management approach.

Cooperation design checklist

Work through these six questions before call design begins. Each answer either confirms you can proceed or identifies what needs to be resolved first.

1

The gap

What does the programme area lack, and what must the partner bring that is not available domestically?

2

Programme basis

Which specific objective covers this action? Is cooperation mentioned in section 4(d)(vi)?

3

Partnership requirements

Is cross-border partnership mandatory for eligibility, or scored as a quality criterion? Will the call include costs outside the programme area

4

Costs verification

If costs outside programme area foreseen, are arrangements for verifying expenditure outside the programme area documented in the management and control system?

5

Monitoring Committee

Check whether the cooperation requirement falls within selection criteria the MC has already approved.

6

Benefit to the programme area

What will the cooperation deliver to the programme area? This is the argument for the MC and for political sign-off (Art. 63(4) CPR).

With the need defined and the programme basis confirmed, practical preparatory steps follow: identify the partner, assess existing calls or design a new one to support cooperation actions, secure internal approval, and map the timeline before call design begins.

Part 4.
How do I manage it once it runs?

Start with a practical question: What should I focus on once the cooperation action is up and running?

Launching a cooperation action is only the first step. Once implementation starts, the focus shifts from setting up the cooperation to keeping it active and delivering results.
Unlike traditional projects implemented within one programme area, cooperation actions involve different programme environments, administrative procedures and partners. This requires regular coordination, clear communication and a proactive approach to solving issues.

Set the coordination rhythm early

A successful cooperation action needs a clear way of working together from the beginning.

Before implementation starts, agree with your partner programme(s):

- Who coordinates the cooperation action and acts as the main contact point?
- Who is responsible for specific tasks?
- How often will partners meet and exchange information?
- How will progress be monitored and reported?
- How will decisions be taken if partners have different views or priorities?

A simple and transparent coordination structure helps partners understand their role and reduces the risk of misunderstandings later.

Coordination template

Agree this with your partner programme(s) before the first project starts. One page, filled in jointly, revisited at each Monitoring Committee.

Who talks to whom

Role	Our programme	Partner programme
Coordination contact (day-to-day)		
Decision-maker (escalation point)		
Monitoring / reporting lead		
Financial control / audit contact		

A useful approach is to establish:

Regular coordination meetings

- Operational meetings to follow progress and address practical issues;
- Strategic meetings to review achievements and take decisions;
- Technical exchanges when specific questions arise.

Clear communication channels

- Operational meetings to follow progress and address practical issues;
- Strategic meetings to review achievements and take decisions;
- Technical exchanges when specific questions arise.

Tip: Do not wait until a problem appears to define coordination arrangements. It is much easier to agree ways of working at the beginning than to adjust them when implementation is already ongoing.
For example, the Basilicata Region assigned named roles within the Managing Authority for monitoring and reporting. Decide this early — it is harder to fix once projects are running.

How often we communicate

Agree this with your partner programme(s) before the first project starts. One page, filled in jointly, revisited at each Monitoring Committee.

Type of contact	Each programme decides alone	Format
Coordination check-in		
Joint progress review		
Reporting exchange (financial / physical progress)		
Joint selection committee (if applicable)		

Keep supporting beneficiaries after the call closes

The role of the programme does not end with project selection. One of the most common challenges during implementation is maintaining partner engagement and supporting cooperation as projects progress.
For many beneficiaries, cooperation with partners from another programme or country may be new. They may face challenges related to communication, coordination, reporting, or understanding different administrative requirements that were not apparent during the application stage.

The experience of the Basilicata Region illustrates this well. In its assessment of the cooperation action, the Region identified partner search as one of the most time-consuming tasks for beneficiaries and recognised that additional support could have been provided beyond the application phase.

Consider providing support throughout implementation by:

- keeping a contact point available for partnership-related questions;
- facilitating exchanges between beneficiaries and partner programmes;
- sharing practical guidance and examples;
- helping partners address issues before they affect delivery.

Tip: Experience shows that maintaining partner engagement over time is often one of the biggest challenges. Regular communication and continued support can make the difference between a cooperation action that simply runs and one that delivers meaningful results.

Identify challenges early and address them together

Implementation problems are easier to solve when they are identified early. Some common warning signs include:

What you may notice	What it may mean	What you can do
Partners participate less actively	Roles or expectations may not be clear	Reconfirm responsibilities and objectives
Activities are delayed	Coordination or capacity issues	Discuss the causes and agree corrective actions
Different interpretations of rules	Partners may apply procedures differently	Provide clarification and agree a common approach

Know where the friction usually is

Two main recurring problem areas, both documented in practice.

First, verifying and controlling expenditure incurred outside the programme area takes longer and needs clear documentation rules agreed in advance.

Tip: The Basilicata Region addressed this through detailed reimbursement procedures and cash-flow advances for partners.

Second, financial contribution from foreign partners can stall a project if the partner lacks funds

Tip: The Basilicata Region resolved this by allowing in-kind contributions instead of requiring cash co-financing from the foreign partner.

- ## Build on lessons from former cooperation actions

Although experience with cooperation actions under the 2021–2027 period is still developing, early implementation already provides useful lessons.
Programmes highlight the importance of:

- ### Keeping arrangements simple

Avoid creating unnecessary complexity. Cooperation actions work best when governance, procedures and reporting requirements are clear and proportionate.

- ### Agreeing rules before implementation starts

Clarify eligibility, expenditure categories, reporting requirements and responsibilities before launching calls or selecting projects.

- ### Considering coordination capacity

Lead Partners need sufficient capacity to manage monitoring, reporting, communication, and relationships between partners.

- ### Focusing on joint results

The purpose of cooperation is not only to bring partners together but to create something that could not have been achieved separately.

Lessons from documented experience

Former cooperation actions highlight a few practical lessons that can make implementation smoother:

- **Keep the project structure simple**. Avoid unnecessary complexity and use a flexible project structure that supports delivery, rather than imposing a rigid work package approach.
- **Consider the coordination capacity of Lead Partners**. Avoid assigning too many cooperation projects to the same Lead Partner, as this may affect the quality of coordination and implementation.
- **Provide clarity from the start.** Define eligible expenditure, thematic scope and other eligibility conditions before launching the call. Clear rules at the outset reduce uncertainty and minimise questions during implementation.

Know where to ask for support

Cooperation actions are new for many programmes. Seeking support and learning from others is part of successful implementation.

Different actors can support different needs:

If you need support with...	**Contact**
Interpretation of CPR provisions, programme amendments or regulatory questions	European Commission
Practical guidance, tools, templates and exchange with other programmes	Interact
Experiences, solutions and examples from practice	Peer programmes implementing cooperation actions

Tip: Do not wait until challenges become critical. Early exchange with others can help identify solutions and avoid repeating mistakes.

Part 5.

How do I communicate a cooperation action?

Cooperation actions are more than a regulatory requirement. They are an opportunity to create added value through **stronger partnerships**, **joint solutions** and **more effective use of public investment**.

Focus on the added value of cooperation

When communicating about cooperation actions with policy-makers, stakeholders and citizens, focus on the difference they make.

Show how they:

- help solve common challenges together;
- connect organisations that can learn from each other;
- create better solutions by working across sectors, regions and countries;
- build lasting partnerships and stronger institutions;
- make public investment more effective and deliver greater benefits for citizens.

Tip: Move beyond communicating activities and focus on the results and benefits created.

Instead of: *“Partner programmes organised several coordination meetings.”*

Communicate: *“Partner programmes worked together to develop a common approach and improve responses to a shared challenge.”*

Part 6.
What comes next?

Once the cooperation action is complete, three steps follow.

Record what was delivered: which cooperation criteria were met, what the governance arrangement was, and what the action delivered to the programme area. This documentation can not only support the replication of the call experience, but also serves as the basis for post-2027 preparations.

Use the record as the evidence base for setting up future cooperation. Under the post-2027 performance-based approach, milestones, targets and pay-out values for cooperation-flagged measures have to be set and costed before the Plan is approved.

Promote the experience. Although cooperation has been possible in ERDF programmes for decades, building cooperation actions remains challenging. Sharing the experience via the European Commission or through Interact supports other managing authorities and contributes to the evidence base that shapes the next framework.

Preparing for post-2027

The 2028-2034 framework is under negotiation. The draft regulatory framework recognises the importance of support to cooperation beyond Interreg. However, implementation of the future programmes will be performance-based. This requires adjustment to how cooperation is planned and supported in future National and Regional Partnership Plans. Cooperation has to be reflected in three linked fields of the NRP Plan template:

- A per-measure tick-box, marking whether the measure supports cross-border, transnational or multi-country projects (currently the Single Market objectives table, Annex V section 2.5).
- A Plan-level summary table, listing which measures carry that flag and giving a short justification for each, roughly 1,000 characters (currently Annex V section 1.4).
- A free-text measure description, where the cooperation logic, partners, geography and rationale can be developed in more detail than the tick and the short justification allow (currently Annex V section 2.2).

How to plan cooperation in the National and Regional Partnership Plans

In practice the proposed legal framework shifts planning of the cooperation actions per specific objective (Article 22(3)(d)(vi) CPR), to identifying measures that will support cooperation. Therefore, the first step Managing Authorities have to identify is which measures are relevant for cooperation beyond Interreg and mark them in the NRPP. Only measures that actually have a cross-border, transnational or multi-country dimension are flagged.

How to plan a measure

- **Where cooperation is known** (already existing cooperation, support to eastern border regions, macro-regional strategy work, structured partnerships under Article 4a): write the milestone and target around the cooperation output itself (e.g., a joint strategy, a formalised governance structure, a confirmed partnership). Tick the box in the Single Market objective table, name the measure in the summary table, and use the free-text field to describe partners and geography.
- **Where cooperation is beneficial but no partner is yet identified**: write the milestone in output terms broad enough to absorb a cross-border element later. Avoid locking in single-territory delivery figures where the measure could plausibly extend beyond the programme area.
- Where the territory is already covered by an Interreg Plan chapter, make sure the **planned cooperation actions complement** the measures planned in that chapter, rather than duplicating them.

Thank You

Disclaimer:
Cooperation can be complex, and while Interact's job is to make it easier, Interact cannot assure the accuracy of our pan-European information in any specific context. Furthermore, understanding and knowledge evolves throughout the programming period. If you spot an error, inaccuracy or inconsistency, please contact the author, or communication@interact.eu

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