August 2026

TLDR | What everyone needs to know

Interreg programmes are replaced by **chapters** within a single **Interreg Plan**, funded through a **delivery-based payment model** (sometimes referred to as a performance-based approach), where **milestones and targets trigger reimbursements** from the Commission, rather than expenditure declarations.

Most of what managing authorities, joint secretariats and controllers do today is **structurally redesigned**. Some core rules that currently sit in the regulation move to a Commission implementing act.

GOVERNANCE

CHANGED

No more individual programme approval decisions. All chapters are approved through a Commission implementing act covering all Interreg chapters simultaneously (the Interreg Plan). A separate Commission decision approves each chapter (ERDF/Interreg Art.9, 29 June). Amendments need a new implementing act.

CHANGED

The implementing act sets binding common modalities for all chapters: lead partner tasks, SPF rules, management verifications, SCO modalities, controller requirements. These can change without legislative co-decision. In the current period they are in the ETC Regulation itself.

**** NEW ****

National Authority introduced (ERDF/Interreg Art.3(6), 29 June): a public body in each Member State supporting the MA on its territory. Not fully defined in the draft — further detail in the implementing act.

GONE

Programme-level joint eligibility rule-making (ETC Art.37(2), 2021/1059): MC could adopt additional eligibility rules binding across all partner countries. No equivalent exists in the draft. For operations using real costs, fallback is national law of the country where expenditure occurs.

Disclaimer
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PROGRAMMING

CHANGED

The chapter replaces the programme. Core programming unit shifts from priority/specific objective to measure, which must include milestones, targets based on output indicators and total estimated costs at submission. Cost plausibility is assessed by the Commission at approval.

CHANGED

Submission deadline (ERDF/Interreg Art.8(2), 29 June): 9 months after entry into force, Presidency position. Current period allowed 12 months. The new chapter template requires full cost estimates with methodology at submission.

**** NEW ****

Transnational chapters covering macro-regional or sea-basin strategies must take into account the thematic priorities of those strategies and consult relevant actors from the start of the programming period (ERDF/Interreg Art.8(1b), 29 June). Not required under current ETC Reg.

GONE

Thematic concentration (ETC Art.15, 2021/1059): minimum 60% to PO2, PO limits, 80% macro-regional strategy rule. No equivalent in the draft. Climate contribution required in the strategy narrative but no percentage floor per chapter. Aggregate 35% climate earmarking (Perf. Reg. Art.4(2), 13 May 2026) applies at MFF budget level (still in brackets). Note: NRPP Art.10 (not excluded from Interreg per Art.1a) requires at least 14% of the Fund's financial envelope to be dedicated to social objectives (still in brackets); how this interacts with the Interreg Plan at chapter level is not specified in the text and requires clarification.

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MONEY AND FINANCIAL

CHANGED

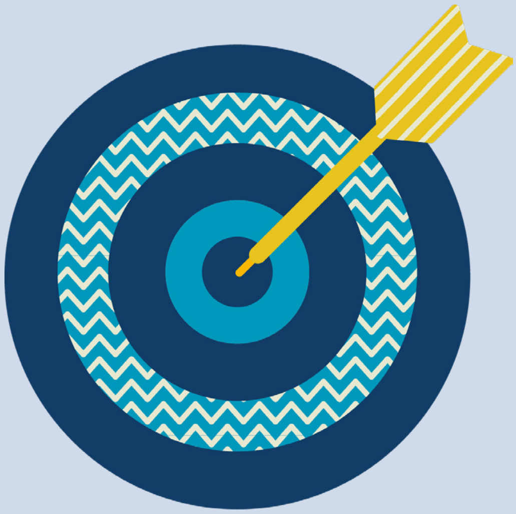
Payment model between Commission and programme: changed from cost-based to performance-based — Commission pays the MA only when chapter-level milestones or targets are achieved, not when costs are certified. Payment model between programme and beneficiaries: both options remain possible — cost-based payments and/ or payments based on fulfilment of milestones and targets at operation level. MA pays beneficiaries within 80 days. ERDF/Interreg Art.12b (29 June): MA may submit up to ten payment applications per calendar year.

CHANGED

Technical assistance: current flat rates (7%/8%/10% by strand, ETC Art.27(3)) replaced by up to 8% per chapter (general) and up to 10% for external border, Strand D and eastern border resilience chapters. TA paid on top of milestone payouts, outside the measure costing table.

**** NEW ****

Annual decommitment applies to Interreg chapters: amounts for which no payment application is submitted by 31 October of the following year are decommitted (NRPP Art.15(1), 11 June, still in brackets). The current period uses n+3 for commitment years 2021–2026 and n+2 for 2027 (CPR Art.105).



CHANGED

Pre-financing: NRPP Art.17 (11 June, still in brackets) proposes [12]% of the Union financial contribution to each Interreg chapter, paid in [three] equal tranches of [4]% over three consecutive years. The implementing decision (ERDF/Interreg Art.9(5)(d), 29 June) sets whether pre-financing is paid in full in the year of approval or in tranches. Current period: 1%–3% of ERDF contribution (ETC Art.50), paid annually between 2021 and 2026.

GONE

Accounting-year-based certification cycle: in the current period, eligible expenditure is declared per accounting year and subject to annual accounts. In the new framework, the accounting year as a certification mechanism is replaced by payment applications tied to milestones and target achievements and annual assurance packages (NRPP Art.59, 11 June, financial year basis).

UNRESOLVED

Co-financing rate: no operative provision exists. The current 80%/85% rates are in ETC Art.13 (2021/1059). ERDF/Interreg Art.7e (29 June) is a bracketed placeholder. NRPP Art.20(3) (11 June) proposing the current rates is also bracketed. Chapter financial design cannot be completed until this is resolved.

CONTROLS AND AUDIT

CHANGED

Controllers no longer verify costs. Their mandate shifts to: (1) compliance with applicable law (e.g. procurement, State aid); (2) verification that milestones and targets have been achieved. Cost documents may be reviewed as e.g. compliance with procurement rules, not for cost eligibility.

CHANGED

Audit authority mandate changes from cost legality to milestone/target achievement and applicable law. AA shall not verify underlying costs (NRPP Art.53(4), 11 June). Different audit evidence, different standards, different skills needed.

CHANGED

ETC Arts 38–44 (2021/1059) cost categories and the hierarchy of eligibility rules (ETC Art.37, 2021/1059) have no direct successor in the draft legal framework. The mandatory SCO threshold from CPR Art.53(2) (EUR 200,000 in 2021–2027) is not carried forward. NRPP Art.78 (11 June) removes the mandatory threshold and replaces it with a permissive rule: Member States may use SCOs except where not appropriate to the nature of the operation. ERDF/Interreg Art.9(1)(b) (29 June) delegates to the implementing act modalities for costing including the use of simplified cost options*; whether this covers the Art.38–44 eligibility framework or refers to measure-level costing methodology is not specified and requires clarification.**

GONE

Cooperation criteria (ETC Art.23(4), 2021/1059): joint development and implementation mandatory, plus staffing or financing. No equivalent in the draft. Programmes must embed them in the MC-approved operation selection methodology.

* To be followed: what does this mean in practice — SCOs and eligibility rules?

** To be followed: what does this mean in practice for SCO set-up — programme-specific methodologies, off-the-shelf SCOs or both?

THE SINGLE MOST CONSEQUENTIAL CHANGE OPERATIONALLY

Programme management authorities today build systems around certifying eligible expenditure.

From 2028 they must build systems around **evidencing and documenting milestone and target achievement**. These are different competencies, different audit trails and different risk profiles.

A programme that starts designing its chapter in 2027 with expenditure-based logic will not fit the future legal framework.

SELECTED NEW PROVISIONS

EXCLUDED

NRPP Art.3(1) point (b) objectives (11 June) — defence capabilities, resilience, preparedness, civil protection, security — are not accessible to Interreg chapters via ERDF/Interreg Art.7(4) (29 June). The 2 June draft had included point (b); the 29 June text cross-references only points (a), (c) and (e). Security cooperation under ISO2 (""safer and more secure Europe"") remains available but is narrower than point (b)'s defence industrial base and military mobility scope.

**** NEW ****

Eastern border resilience objective (ERDF/Interreg Art.7(4), 29 June): ""more resilient regions bordering Russia, Belarus and/or Ukraine."" Third Interreg-specific objective, no current equivalent, no indicators defined yet. Linked to COM(2026)82. 10% TA rate applies.

CHANGED

ERDF/Interreg Art.10e (29 June): dedicated SPF article preserving the core structure of ETC Art.25 — 20% ceiling per chapter, same beneficiary type requirements (cross-border legal body, EGTC or body with legal personality), same six beneficiary obligations (non-discriminatory selection, objective criteria, assessment, selection and fixing amounts, audit trail, publication of recipients), and the non-delegation rule. New in earlier drafts (2 June): these modalities had been delegated to the implementing act; Art.10e now places them in primary law. Not carried forward from ETC Art.25: the management cost 20% cap at beneficiary level (ETC Art.25(5)) and the EUR 100,000 mandatory SCO threshold for small projects (ETC Art.25(6)) are absent from Art.10e.

CHANGED

Minor target adjustments without Commission decision: threshold raised from earlier drafts to less than 15% of a target (ERDF/Interreg Art.9(4a), 29 June). Applicable only once per target per amendment cycle.

CO-FINANCING RATE

ERDF/Interreg Art.7e (29 June): bracketed placeholder. NRPP Art.20(3) (11 June, bracketed) proposes min national contribution [20]% per Interreg chapter (max 80% EU), reduced for Strand D and external borders (max 85% EU). Neither provision agreed. Current 80%/85% rates from ETC Art.13 (2021/1059) do not carry over automatically.

SUBMISSION DEADLINE

ERDF/Interreg Art.8(2) (29 June): 9 months after entry into force, Presidency position (six months struck through).

SCO MODALITIES FOR INTERREG

NRPP Art.78 (11 June) removes mandatory threshold, makes SCO use permissive. Modalities for costing including SCOs delegated to implementing act (ERDF/Interreg Art.9(1)(b), 29 June). Relationship to ETC Arts 38–44 eligibility framework requires clarification.

CLIMATE AND SOCIAL EARMARKING

Perf. Reg. Art.4(2) (13 May 2026) 35% climate target still in brackets. NRPP Art.10 (11 June) 14% social earmarking (not excluded from Interreg per Art.1a) still in brackets; application to Interreg chapters requires clarification.

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Please note, all texts are under negotiation. Provisions in [brackets] excluded from the 29 June partial general approach.

ETC Reg. 2021/1059 • CPR 2021/1060
ERDF/CF/Interreg PGA 11259/26 (29 June 2026)
NRPP COREPER/GAC (11 June 2026)
Perf. Reg. PRES III 9171/26 • Texts not final