

# Citizen's summary

## Interact III 2014-2020 programme annual report 2020

### What is the Interact III cooperation programme (Interact III) about?

The European Union cohesion policy has made substantial amounts of financial support available in the 2014-2020 programming period, most of which is used to finance national and regional programmes under the Investment for Growth and Jobs goal. In addition, a smaller amount is available for the second goal of the cohesion policy; namely, European Territorial Cooperation (ETC, also called Interreg).

Interreg is a key instrument in addressing the common challenges and obstacles existing at border regions, transnational and interregional cooperation areas, in sharing experiences, and in elaborating common development strategies within the EU cohesion policy. Interact III is one of these Interreg programmes.

Compared to national or regional programmes, Interreg programmes operate in a more complex multi-national environment. Furthermore, their budget is usually smaller that make their results less tangible and visible. In order to enhance their effectiveness and efficiency, new and simplified programme management approaches are necessary and there is a great deal of lessons that Interreg programmes can learn from each other.

And this is exactly where Interact III supports the other Interreg programmes. The overall objective of our programme is therefore to exchange experience and identify and transfer good practises in implementing territorial cooperation. In doing so, we focus on improving three specific areas:

- The management and control capacity of Interreg programmes;
- Interreg's capacity in capturing and communicating programme results;
- The capacity to implement innovative approaches to cooperation (e.g. through European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation, macro-regional strategies and cooperation with national or regional programmes).

Interact has four decentralised offices around Europe in Turku (Finland), Valencia (Spain), Viborg (Denmark) and Vienna (Austria) that are in charge of providing the above-mentioned support to our target groups. Our management bodies (Managing Authority and interact Secretariat, Certifying Authority and Audit Authority) are based in Bratislava, Slovakia.

## What did we do in 2020?

In 2020 we delivered to our target groups – the bodies responsible for managing Interreg programmes:

- 154 events (from tailor-made advisory services on specific issues through trainings, seminars, workshops and network meetings). Because of the Europe-wide effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, we switched to online events from March onwards, instead the mainly physical events in the previous years.
- 84 tools (such as handbooks, studies, document templates, online information, databases, training videos, EU-wide promotional campaigns, etc.).

We also operate a number of online communities where Interreg programme managers can seek answers for their operational or strategic issues, share their experiences and good practises.

## Some examples

Here are some examples of our outputs from 2020:

- [“This is Europe” podcasts](#). Sometimes a whisper can cut through the noise and bring powerful messages and using the power of that whisper has been the aim of the ‘This is Europe’, the Interreg podcast since we launched it in mid-March 2020. After March's first episode on "A Green Europe", we published three more in May ("Neighbours"), June ("The next generation of Europeans") and October ("What next for Europe", a special edition for the European Week of Regions and Cities).
- [Interreg highlights blog](#): we have been operating a web portal that presents information of all Interreg programmes at one place, a ‘one-stop-shop’ for potential beneficiaries and the general public since 2017. This portal comes with a continuously updated blog called ‘Interreg highlights’ to showcase success stories of Interreg projects from all over Europe.
- [European Cooperation Day](#): 2020 saw the ninth edition of our annual communication campaign that aims at introducing what Interreg programmes do and what impact European cooperation has on the life of citizens by means of local promotional events all over Europe. Interact coordinated the campaign and supported cooperation programmes organising in total 76 events all over Europe. Interact itself organised local events in Valencia, Vienna and online. Please have a look at the [evaluation report](#) of the 2020 campaign for more highlights.
- [keep.eu](#): A huge, constantly updated, searchable database of territorial cooperation projects and beneficiaries that is freely accessible online for everyone. Apart from extending the database with new projects over the year we also implemented changes improving the usability of the system.

To learn more, check out our [Events calendar](#) where you can learn about our past and future events as well as our easily searchable [Library](#) with all our publications, event reports, presentations and videos.

### **What about spending?**

The total expenditure of the programme certified until the end of 2020 amounts to EUR 25,506,719.41 (i.e. 55% of our total budget).

### **Do you need further information?**

Should you need further information about Interact III, please don't hesitate to visit our [website](#) or get in touch with us at [interact@interact-eu.net](mailto:interact@interact-eu.net).