

Interact III annual implementation report 2018
Annexe 8 – Citizen’s summary

Citizen’s summary of the 2018 annual implementation report of the Interact III 2014-2020 programme

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 2018?

In 2018 we delivered to our target groups – the bodies responsible for managing Interreg programmes:

- 98 events (from tailor-made advisory services on specific issues through trainings, seminars, workshops and network meetings);
- 66 tools (such as handbooks, studies, document and calculation spreadsheet templates, online information, databases, monitoring system software, 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 experiences and good practises.

Some examples

Here are some examples of our outputs from 2018:

- [Training and network events](#): Organising seminars, workshops, trainings and other events represents the core of our work. In 2018 we organised a large number of events, addressing a wide range of areas and issues relevant for the Interreg community, e.g. on management verifications (21-22 February, Zagreb and 8-9 May, Dubrovnik), on annual reporting and how to prepare for the 2019 performance review exercise (6-7 March, Lisbon), on the fundamentals of programme management for beginners (24-25 April, Budapest) or a training camp on project communication (20-21 November Lyon) and of course network meetings for programme managers to facilitate exchange of experiences and good practises (e.g. for communication managers, audit authorities and certifying authorities) as well as meetings of the thematic capitalisation networks managed by Interact (Climate change and risks, Sustainable transport, Knowledge of the seas, Inclusive growth, Interreg response to migration-related challenges and institutional capacity).
- [Online learning](#): we launched our online learning tool at the end of 2017 and made available a number of online courses in 2018, both on practical skills like presentation and facilitation skills and on programme management related topics including programme evaluation and inter-programme capacity and competence. These courses are available for everyone free of charge.
- [Interreg highlights blog](#): we created a new portal that presents information of all Interreg programmes at one place, a true 'one-stop-shop' for potential beneficiaries and the general public in 2017. In 2018, we extended the portal with a blog called 'Interreg highlights' to showcase success stories of Interreg projects from all over Europe.
- [European Cooperation Day](#): we repeated the 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. This was the seventh edition of the campaign since 2012. Interact coordinated the campaign and supported other 60 cooperation programmes organising in total 120 events in 30 European countries. Interact itself organised local events in Valencia and Bratislava.

- [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.

What about spending?

The total expenditure of the programme certified until the end of 2018 amounts to EUR 13,249,987.27 (i.e. 28.6% of the 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.