

# Citizen's summary

## Interact III 2014-2020 programme annual report 2021

### 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 2021?

In 2021 we delivered to our target groups – the bodies responsible for managing Interreg programmes:

- 178 events (from tailor-made advisory services on specific issues through trainings, seminars, workshops and network meetings). Except for 10, all events in 2021 were delivered online, due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.
- 55 tools (such as handbooks, studies, document templates, software, 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 2021:

**Joint Electronic Monitoring System (Jems):** The new Interact Monitoring System for the 2021-2027 period was deployed in March 2021. Jems provides a purpose built monitoring system, which is a requirement for EU funding, on a free-license basis for Interreg programmes. Interact developing and delivering this software on behalf of Interreg saves individual programmes time and financial resources to develop their own system responding to the same legal requirements.

**Interreg Project Slam:** The challenges of the online only environment of Autumn 2021 offered an opportunity for the Interreg Project Slam. The Slam functions like a poetry slam but with projects producing videos for a social media contest, and then performing live to a voting audience. Originally planned for in-person, the online only environment helped the Slam reach over 400,000 people and create over 27,000 engagements.

**Interreg Harmonised Brand:** From many brand identities, to one. Interact has supported work to create an identity for Interreg and develop the cornerstone of a Brand Manual for all Interreg programmes in the 2021-2027 period, building on the previous manual which re-imagined the Interreg identity. The common guidelines and framework enables programmes to work together and work with the same interpretation of EU rules on visibility and communication of EU funding.

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 from 2016 until the end of 2021 amounts to EUR 34,416,553 (74% of our total budget of EUR 46,344,229).

### **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).