What is new about the programme

Interreg Europe is the successor of the INTERREG IVC programme 2007-2013. The new programme has a number of new features. See what they are.

# New rationale – improve Structural Funds programmes

One of the new missions of Interreg Europe is to improve the Structural Funds programmes with its two actions – cooperation projects and policy learning platforms. It is an objective set by the ETC Regulation - Article 2(3)(a).

For the projects, it means that they need to focus on the improvement of Goal 1 – Investment for Growth and Jobs programmes or Goal 2 – European Territorial Cooperation programmes**. At least half of the policy instruments** addressed by the EU regions in the projects need to be Structural Funds programmes. Managing authorities or intermediary bodies of these programmes should be involved directly in the partnership.

# A stronger thematic focus

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Research and innovation icon | Competitiveness of SMEs icon | Low Carbon Economy icon | Environment and resource efficiency icon |
| [Research and innovation](http://www.interregeurope.eu/policy-learning-platform/research-and-innovation/) | [SME Competitiveness](http://www.interregeurope.eu/policy-learning-platform/sme-competitiveness/)  | [Low-carbon economy](http://www.interregeurope.eu/policy-learning-platform/low-carbon-economy/) | [Environment and resource efficiency](http://www.interregeurope.eu/policy-learning-platform/environment-and-resource-efficiency/) |

The theme of information and communication technologies is considered as cross-cutting, relevant to all the selected thematic objectives. And the Digital Agenda for Europe has been introduced as a new horizontal principle.

# New action – policy learning platforms

Interreg Europe added a new element to its actions – platforms for policy learning. All those interested in regional development, even without being a partner in a project, can engage in knowledge sharing and policy learning facilitated by experts in the four programme topics.

The platforms will:

* Contribute to EU-wide capacity building and policy learning among all interested relevant organisations via networking and the exchange of experience;
* Exploit and disseminate the results of interregional cooperation projects; and
* Improve the quality of the programme content

# New project features

The programme keeps the interregional cooperation projects as the key action for improvement of the Structural Funds programmes. Many features have developed in comparison to the previous funding period.

# Two-phase projects

The project partners are expected to spend 1-3 years learning from each other’s experience, preparing action plans for policy improvement. This phase is then followed by two years of monitoring how the action plans are being implemented.

# Action plans

The project partners will develop an action plan for each policy instrument addressed in the project. This plan provides details on how the lessons learnt from the cooperation will be implemented in order to improve the policy instrument that is addressed within a specific region. It specifies for example:

* the nature of the actions to be implemented
* timeframe of the actions
* the players involved
* the costs (if any) and funding sources (if any)

# New eligible partners – private non-profit bodies

Interreg Europe opens the projects for public authorities, bodies governed by public law and private non-profit bodies. From now on also representatives of private bodies such as chambers of commerce, clusters, trade unions, employers’ associations or NGOs can take part in the programme. However, they cannot lead a project.

The legal status of partner organisations is a country-specific element to be checked with the [national points of contact](http://www.interregeurope.eu/in-my-region).

# New co-financing rates

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| --- | --- |
| Co-financing rates | According to legal status or location |
| 85% ERDF | Public or public equivalent from EU |
| 75% ERDF | Private non-profit from EU |
| 50% Norwegian funding | Public, public equivalent and private non-profit from NO |
| Swiss funding | Public, public equivalent and private non-profit from CH |

Co-financing is no longer linked to the status of the project partner’s region (convergence, transitory or competitiveness).

# Stakeholder groups

In order to make the improvement of policy instruments more likely, the projects have to set up stakeholder groups for the policy instruments they address. The project partners need to engage their stakeholders - organisations competent in the field tackled by the project and those in charge of the policy instrument addressed – in the interregional learning process.

# New simplifications

* Online application form
* No financial reporting per component - more budget flexibility
* No reconfirmation of partnership costs at the lead partner level

# **Recommendations for project applicants**

* Read the [programme manual](http://www.interregeurope.eu/help/programme-manual/)
* Think first about what needs to be changed in your region
* Give yourself enough time to develop the project with the aid of our [online assistance](http://www.interregeurope.eu/help/support-for-applicants/) tools
* Be specific and consistent
* Describe well the policy instruments addressed and the partners’ capacity to influence them
* Take the policy learning process seriously
* First activities, then budget planning
* Communication serves your project objective
* Check the assessment criteria

**For more information go to:** [**www.interregeurope.eu**](http://www.interregeurope.eu)