



## Interreg Europe Annual Implementation Report 2016

# CITIZEN SUMMARY

**This is a brief summary of a report on the programme implementation for 2016. It presents an insight into how European funds are being spent, whether the programme is on track to reach its objectives, and how the actions funded are benefitting the population at large.**

### Background

The European Union works to reduce differences in the levels of development, growth and quality of life among European regions. It promotes actions to make the European territory more innovative, more sustainable and more inclusive. Large majority of the funds designated to reduce regional disparities are managed nationally. Yet regional development can be improved also through cooperation and exchange of experience and good practice with funds managed by European territorial cooperation programmes.

Interreg Europe is one of the programmes which helps regional and local governments across Europe develop and deliver better policy. Financed by the European Regional Development Fund to the tune of €359 million from 2014-2020, it supports regional policymakers through cooperation projects and policy learning platforms.

### What we do

The Interreg Europe programme is designed to support policy learning among public authorities to improve the performance of policies and programmes for regional development. It allows public authorities across Europe to exchange practices and ideas on the way public policies work. It helps policymakers in finding solutions for improvement of strategies for their own citizens. Regions from 30 countries are involved (EU28, Norway and Switzerland).





Four topics were selected in order to make the best use of limited funds.



Interreg Europe finances two actions:

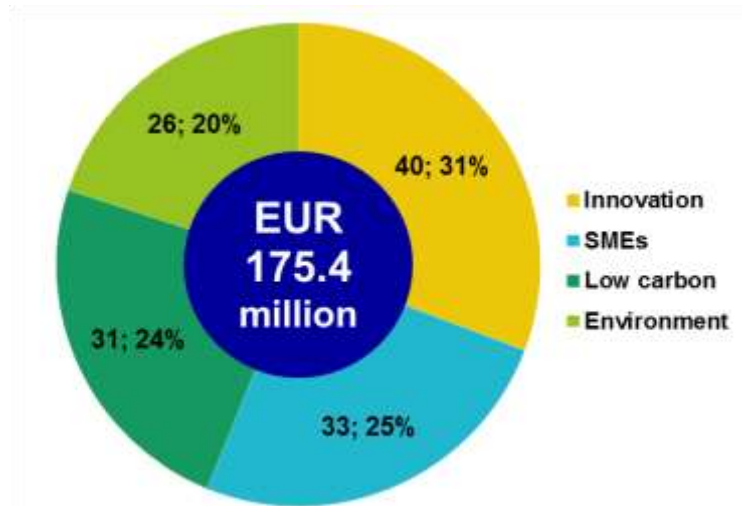
**1. Interregional cooperation projects** gather public organisations from different European regions to work together for 3 to 5 years on a shared policy issue. They prepare an action plan, specific for each region, to ensure that the lessons learnt from the cooperation are put into action. Regional partners monitor how far the action plans are implemented. The programme selects projects during calls for project proposals, launched throughout the programming period.

**2. Policy learning platform** opens up the programme's knowledge for the benefit of all project partners and the whole community of regional policymakers in the four topics covered by Interreg Europe. The main aim is to provide a space for continuous learning and for improvement of regional development policies in Europe also for those outside the cooperation projects. A community of peers can benefit from a knowledge bank, networking and partnering opportunities, and expert support.



## 2016 highlights

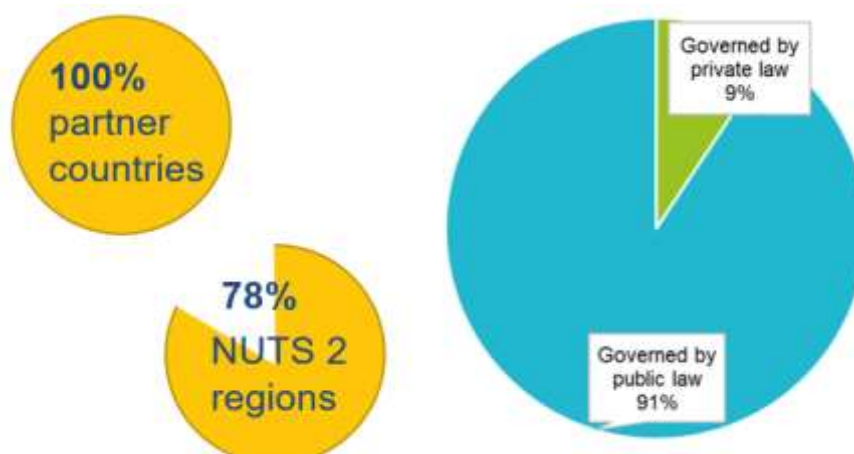
In 2016, first two calls for project proposals were closed. The programme received 472 applications and approved 130 projects in the four topics of the programme. The largest share of projects works on research and innovation.



More than half of the budget (54.4%) available for projects was allocated during the first two calls.



Partners in approved projects come from all the partner states of the programme and represent 78% of the EU NUTS2 regions. The project partners are in large majority (91%) public authorities or institutions governed by public law, but private non-profit organisations are present too.





Examples of topics our projects started working on:

<p>Research and innovation</p> <p><b>40</b></p> <p>PROJECTS</p>	<b>RIS3 - sector/ governance</b>	<u>P2L2</u> works on innovation in advanced materials <u>HIGHER</u> works on smart specialisation and models of public private partnerships
	<b>Social innovation</b>	<u>OSIRIS</u> works on design, delivery & implementation of open and social innovation policies
	<b>Innovation in health sector</b>	<u>HELIUM</u> works on health, wellbeing and life sciences as smart specialisation sectors <u>TITTAN</u> works on healthcare systems and ageing
<p>SME competitiveness</p> <p><b>33</b></p> <p>PROJECTS</p>	<b>Microfinancing</b>	<u>ATM for SMEs</u> works on innovative solutions to access to microfinance
	<b>Internationalisation</b>	<u>SIE</u> works on SME support mechanisms increasing their internationalisation capacity
	<b>Social enterprises</b>	<u>SOCIAL SEEDS</u> works on stimulation of growth and employment in social enterprises <u>RaiSE</u> works on social enterprise business support
<p>Low-carbon economy</p> <p><b>31</b></p> <p>PROJECTS</p>	<b>Energy efficiency in social housing</b>	<u>Social Green</u> works on greening the social housing sector
	<b>Near zero CO2 emission buildings</b>	<u>ZEROCO2</u> works on near zero CO2 emission buildings due to energy use
	<b>Low carbon strategy in urban areas</b>	<u>MOLOC</u> works on innovative ways to achieve low carbon cities
<p>Environment and resource efficiency</p> <p><b>26</b></p> <p>PROJECTS</p>	<b>Biodiversity information management</b>	<u>BID-REX</u> works on effective biodiversity conservation strategies backed up with biodiversity data
	<b>Circular economy</b>	<u>RETRACE</u> works on sustainable productive systems preventing waste with well-designed material and energy flows
	<b>Waste management in heritage cities</b>	<u>INTHERWASTE</u> works on efficient and sustainable management of municipal waste

The policy learning platform was launched in October 2016. 36 articles and policy briefs were published by the expert team on the programme website.

The programme is also committed to simplifying procedures both for the applicants and beneficiaries. Part of this effort is the further development of the online system for submitting applications and for monitoring the finances and activities of approved projects. In 2016, this systems was further improved to limit errors in submitting applications and give all applicants a chance to have their proposals assessed. More developments are under way in 2017.



The programme also worked hard during 2016 on the designation process of the managing authority and the certifying authority, which is an important step for sending the funds to the projects. The process should be successfully concluded in 2017.

The programme communication follows the latest trends, but with value and benefit for the applicants or project beneficiaries always in mind. Online events and webinars welcomed large numbers of participants and offered them information or trainings in the comfort of their home or office. Wide use of digital communication tools saves their time and travel costs. The programme also made communication easier and less costly for the projects as it generates the design and templates of the website and the project poster for them shortly after their start.

## Solutions for better regional policies

More than 1 000 partner organisations involved in 130 projects have started working on improving 893 policy instruments in 221 regions all over Europe. Citizens from these regions should soon benefit from the results of these projects. For example, citizens in Tallinn should benefit from an improved waste management plan ([INTHERWASTE](#) project). In the region of Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, new solutions for low carbon buildings ([ZEROCO2](#) project) may be financed by their Operational Programme ERDF-ESF PACA under the Priority Objective 3, Energy transition and Sustainable valuation of resources. Social businesses in Örebro County should benefit from an improved regional development strategy considering specific business support needs of social enterprises ([RaiSE](#) project). The health sector in Portugal's Norte region should benefit from smart specialisation ideas coming from other corners of Europe and financed through the Regional Operational Programme 2020 ([HELIUM](#) project).

## For more information

The latest programme news and details on activities can be found on the programme website:

[www.interregeurope.eu](http://www.interregeurope.eu)

For any queries, please contact:

Interreg Europe secretariat  
[info@interregeurope.eu](mailto:info@interregeurope.eu) / +33 328 144 100  
Les Arcuriales, Entrée D 5<sup>ème</sup> étage  
45 rue du Tournai, 59000 Lille, France

# **IMPLEMENTATION REPORT FOR THE EUROPEAN TERRITORIAL COOPERATION GOAL**

## **PART A**

### **IDENTIFICATION OF THE ANNUAL/FINAL IMPLEMENTATION REPORT**

CCI	2014TC16RFIR001
Title	INTERREG EUROPE
Version	2016.0
Date of approval of the report by the monitoring committee	23-Jun-2017

## **2. OVERVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COOPERATION PROGRAMME (ARTICLE 50(2) OF REGULATION (EU) NO 1303/2013 AND ARTICLE 14(3)(A) OF REGULATION (EU) NO 1299/2013)**

### **Key information on the implementation of the cooperation programme for the year concerned, including on financial instruments, with relation to the financial and indicator data.**

2016 was very active in terms of programme's implementation with the approval and start of the first call projects, selection and launch of the policy learning platform, and the launch and implementation of the second call for proposals.

The first monitoring committee of the year took place on 9-10 February in Utrecht (NL). The monitoring committee decided on the first call for proposals and agreed on the application pack for the second call in written procedure shortly afterwards. In Utrecht, 64 projects were approved under conditions. When these conditions were fulfilled, the managing authority signed the subsidy contracts. All projects were able to fulfil the programme requirements and they started their activities on 1 April 2016.

The second call for proposals was announced during the annual event in Rotterdam (NL), on 22-23 March. 511 participants attended in person, with a further 1145 following the event online. The participation online was lower than expected due to the unfortunate and sad circumstances of the terrorist attacks in Brussels, which happened at the same time. The event presented the main features of the programme and facilitated partner search.

The second call ran from 5 April to 13 May 2016. Assistance to applicants was ensured primarily by the joint secretariat. Lead applicant workshops took place during the event in Rotterdam. A number of online assistance tools were put in place: weekly question & answer sessions with joint secretariat staff; a webinar week for applicants with four sessions on the main elements of an application form. The project idea form was integrated into the website through which applicants could request feedback on their idea provided by the joint secretariat in written form, via skype or by phone. 94 applicants were advised on their project idea that way. A partner search tool was implemented on the website, as well as a 'self-assessment tool' on a project idea. Points of contact in Interreg Europe Partner States also promoted the programme's call through information events and website updates.

In total, 211 applications were received during the second call. 158 of these were eligible for quality assessment (75%). Thanks to the measures implemented after the results of the first call (e.g. full online submission), the rate of ineligibility decreased. The quality assessment, split into two steps (strategic and operational), was carried out in less time than expected and the monitoring committee was able to make decision on the second call for proposals already during its second meeting on 4-5 October in Winterthur (CH). 66 projects were approved under conditions. The approval process was finalised by the end of 2016, so all second call projects could start their activities on 1 January 2017.

The third monitoring committee was held on 13-14 December in Bratislava (SK). It was dedicated to the exchange on the decision making process on projects and to the approval of the application pack for the third call for proposals.



The call for tenders to set up and implement the Interreg Europe policy learning platform closed on 11 January 2016. Following the eligibility and quality assessment procedures as defined in the tender documents, the framework agreement contract (2016-2023) was awarded to a consortium of nine companies led by INNO TDS based in France. On 22 September 2016, the consortium officially started the implementation of the first annual workplan. The main activities implemented by the end of the year were:

- Launch event of the policy learning platform during the European Week of Regions and Cities on 11 October 2016 (EWRC website: <http://cor.europa.eu/ewrc2016/Pages/636130883945818127-Policy-learning-lab-practical-approaches-for-smart-and-sustainable-regions-.aspx>, PLP video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hNJtxyKGtuM&feature=youtu.be>)
- Draft version of the Implementation manual defining all procedures and methodologies
- Online policy briefs and articles
- Participation in thematic events of other relevant EU platforms and programmes.

The main implementation activities of the programme in 2016 are summarised below:

- 3 monitoring committee meetings (9-10 February in Utrecht, NL; 4-5 October in Winterthur, CH; 13-14 December in Bratislava, SK)
- Second call for proposals organised: 5 April – 13 May
- Organisation of assistance to applicants: 1 March – 15 May
- 37 national and regional information seminars organised by Interreg Europe points of contact
- 4 lead applicant workshops organised (Rotterdam)
- 20 webinars organised (12 for applicants, 6 for project partners, 2 for programme partners)
- 94 applicants advised on their project idea

Few programme indicators can be completed for this report.

No major programme implementation issues were identified in 2016. But the programme monitors closely the following areas (detailed in section 5) which could be flagged as potential challenges:

- Reaching and mobilising the target group ‘managing authorities’
- The policy learning platform implementation faced several start up difficulties
- The EC interpretation of article 28 of the ETC Regulation on the programme method for the exchange rate and its impact on partner reporting and the programme monitoring system.
- COCOF/EGESIF guidance on sampling methodologies and the treatment of errors (in relation to the application of the projected error rate in the ETC context)
- The designation process and its impact on joint secretariat human resources and the timing for the submission of the first interim payment claim

The new requirements for the annual closure of accounts, especially the treatment and deduction of irregularities and its impact on the programme monitoring system.





### 3. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PRIORITY AXIS

#### 3.1 Overview of the implementation

ID	Priority axis	Key information on the implementation of the priority axis with reference to key developments, significant problems and steps taken to address these problems
1	Research, Technological Development and Innovation	<p>As far as projects under priority axis 1 are concerned, 21 projects were approved in the first call and 19 in the second call. Most of these projects (33 out of 40) were approved under specific objective 1 (b). The first call projects started their activities in April 2016 with the first progress report to be submitted in January 2017. The second call projects will start their activities in 2017. Currently, priority 1 has the highest number of running projects in the programme. This reflects high interest of EU regions in the topic, which look for exchanging experience in the way to implement their smart specialisation strategy. Opportunities offered by the first priority axis of the programme were also promoted at different thematic events such as the ERRIN workshop in September 2016.</p> <p>The contract for the implementation of the policy learning platform was awarded at the beginning of 2016 and the launch was organised in October 2016 during the European Week of Regions and Cities. Among the first activities carried out under priority 1, several articles and policy briefs were published on the programme website (e.g. ‘The triple helix challenge - Science and policy making-bridging the gap’). The platforms were also presented at key event such as the kick-off events of the Smart Specialisation Platform on Industrial Modernisation (Barcelona) and Agri-Food (Florence).</p>
2	Competitiveness of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises	<p>As far as projects in priority axis 2 are concerned, a total of 33 projects were approved in 2016. 17 projects were approved in the first call and 16 in the second call. The first call projects started their activities in April 2016 with the first progress report to be submitted in January 2017. The second call projects will start their activities in 2017.</p> <p>Interest in this priority is high and the implementation is according to the plans with 25% of the</p>

ID	Priority axis	Key information on the implementation of the priority axis with reference to key developments, significant problems and steps taken to address these problems
		<p>funds committed after two calls going to projects in this priority. The projects focus on a wide range of topics covered under the axis from SME internationalisation, entrepreneurship, innovation capacity of SMEs to access to finance.</p> <p>Opportunities offered by the second priority axis of the programme were promoted at different thematic events such as the EURADA annual conference in May 2016.</p> <p>The contract for the implementation of the policy learning platform was awarded at the beginning of 2016 and the launch was organised in October 2016 during the European Week of Regions and Cities. Among the first activities carried out under priority 2, several articles and policy briefs were published on the programme website (e.g. ‘The role of regions in the implementation of the Small Business Act for Europe enabling synergies through coordination between H2020 and ESIF’). The platform was also presented at key events such as the 7th Strategy Forum EUSBSR in October in Stockholm.</p>
3	Low Carbon Economy	<p>As far as projects under priority axis 3 are concerned, almost the same number of projects were approved in the two calls for proposals organised in 2016: 15 projects in the first call and 16 in the second call.</p> <p>The main focus of the projects under this priority relates to energy efficiency (11) and mobility (14). Only one project focuses on renewable energies. This is in line with the trends of the previous programming period, where energy efficiency was more popular among projects.</p> <p>Opportunities offered by this priority axis of the programme were promoted at different thematic events such as the informal Energy and Managing Authorities (EMA) Network event (May 2016).</p> <p>The contract for the implementation of the policy learning platform was awarded at the beginning of 2016 and the launch was organised in October 2016 during the European Week of Regions and Cities. Among the first activities carried out under priority 3, several articles and policy briefs were published on the programme website (e.g. ‘Low-Carbon Economy’). The platform was also presented at key events such as the Energy and Managing Authorities network on 10 May 2016 in Brussels or the ‘S3, Energy and Innovation in European Regions’ on 13 October 2016 in</p>

ID	Priority axis	Key information on the implementation of the priority axis with reference to key developments, significant problems and steps taken to address these problems
		Brussels.
4	Environment and Resource Efficiency	<p>As far as projects under priority axis 4 are concerned, 11 projects were approved in the first call and 15 in the second call. A similar number of projects are approved under the two investment priorities with 14 projects approved under ‘natural and cultural heritage’ and 12 under ‘resource efficiency’.</p> <p>One of the lessons learnt in 2016 is that applications submitted under this priority have an overall lower quality compared to proposals submitted in other priority axes. As a result, priority axis 4 has the lowest number of approved projects among the four priorities (26 in total).</p> <p>Opportunities offered by this priority axis of the programme were promoted at different thematic events such as the Urban Agenda event in May 2016.</p> <p>The contract for the implementation of the policy learning platform was awarded at the beginning of 2016 and the launch was organised in October 2016 during the European Week of Regions and Cities. Among the first activities carried out under priority 4, several articles and policy briefs were published on the programme website (e.g. ‘The role of regional cooperation in preserving cultural heritage’). The platforms were also presented at key event such as the European Network of Environment and Managing Authorities (ENEA-MA) on 2 June 2016 in Brussels.</p>
5	Technical Assistance	<p>In 2016, the technical assistance focused on the management of the first two calls for proposals, on further developments of the online monitoring system and on the designation process of the managing authority and the certifying authority.</p> <p>Following the quality assessment of the first call applications, 64 projects were approved by the monitoring committee. The programme then launched its second call, proceeded with the eligibility check and quality assessment and approved another 66 projects.</p> <p>The programme organised its annual event in Rotterdam to promote the second call for proposals and help applicants comply with the programme requirements. National points of contact held information events for the second call applicants. Events for approved projects of the first two calls were also held in the second semester of 2016. The joint secretariat invited centralised first</p>

ID	Priority axis	Key information on the implementation of the priority axis with reference to key developments, significant problems and steps taken to address these problems
		<p>level controllers (FLC) and FLC approbation bodies to inform them about and discuss the Interreg Europe reporting process, the new EU and programme eligibility rules and the programme anti-fraud strategy. The joint secretariat also trained first call projects on EU and programme requirements through a communication and finance seminar.</p> <p>The programme organised workshops during the European Week of Regions and Cities in Brussels and officially launched the policy learning platform.</p> <p>The managing authority and joint secretariat worked on the management and control system description, the development of underlying procedures and the online monitoring system and the designation of the managing authority and the certifying authority. (See section 5 below) The designation is expected by summer 2017.</p>

### 3.2 Common and programme specific indicators (Article 50(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)

#### Priority axes other than technical assistance

Priority axis	1 - Research, Technological Development and Innovation
Investment priority	1a - Enhancing research and innovation (R&I) infrastructure and capacities to develop R&I excellence, and promoting centres of competence, in particular those of European interest

Table 2: Common and programme specific output indicators

(I)	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Target value	2016	Observations
F	1	Number of Action Plans developed	Number	76.00	0.00	In accordance with the programme manual (§ 6.2.4), approved projects will report on the number of action plans developed at the end of Phase 1. There are 19 projects ending their phase 1 in 2018. Therefore, first data on this indicator will be available to be reported in AIR 2018.
S	1	Number of Action Plans developed	Number	76.00	0.00	In accordance with the programme manual (§ 6.2.4), approved projects will report on the number of action plans developed at the end of Phase 1. There are 19 projects ending their phase 1 in 2018. Therefore, first data on this indicator will be available to be reported in AIR 2018.
F	2	Number of people with increased professional capacity due to their participation in interregional cooperation activities	Number	1,000.00	0.00	In accordance with the programme manual (§ 6.2.4), approved projects will report on the number of people with increased professional capacity at the end of Phase 1. There are 19 projects ending their phase 1 in 2018. Therefore, first data on this indicator will be available to be reported in AIR 2018.
S	2	Number of people with increased professional capacity due to their participation in interregional cooperation activities	Number	1,000.00	0.00	In accordance with the programme manual (§ 6.2.4), approved projects will report on the number of people with increased professional capacity at the end of Phase 1. There are 19 projects ending their phase 1 in 2018. Therefore, first data on this indicator will be available to be reported in AIR 2018.
F	3	Share of all European regions' (NUTS 2) registered to the Policy Learning Platform	%	7.00	0.00	Due to start up difficulties the web developments were delayed and the online registration will be available in 2017.
S	3	Share of all European regions' (NUTS 2) registered to the Policy Learning Platform	%	7.00	0.00	Due to start up difficulties the web developments were delayed and the online registration will be available in 2017.
F	4	Number of policy learning events organised by the Policy Learning Platform	Number	10.00	1.00	The kick-off event of the policy learning platform took place on 11 October 2016. Due to start up difficulties the organisation of other policy learning events was delayed. The first events will be organised in 2017.
S	4	Number of policy learning events organised by the Policy Learning Platform	Number	10.00	1.00	The kick-off event of the policy learning platform took place on 11 October 2016. Due to start up difficulties the organisation of other policy learning events was delayed. The first events will be organised in 2017.

(I)	ID	Indicator	2015	2014
F	1	Number of Action Plans developed	0.00	0.00
S	1	Number of Action Plans developed	0.00	0.00
F	2	Number of people with increased professional capacity due to their participation in	0.00	0.00

(1)	ID	Indicator	2015	2014
		interregional cooperation activities		
S	2	Number of people with increased professional capacity due to their participation in interregional cooperation activities	0.00	0.00
F	3	Share of all European regions' (NUTS 2) registered to the Policy Learning Platform	0.00	0.00
S	3	Share of all European regions' (NUTS 2) registered to the Policy Learning Platform	0.00	0.00
F	4	Number of policy learning events organised by the Policy Learning Platform	0.00	0.00
S	4	Number of policy learning events organised by the Policy Learning Platform	0.00	0.00



Priority axis	1 - Research, Technological Development and Innovation
Investment priority	1a - Enhancing research and innovation (R&I) infrastructure and capacities to develop R&I excellence, and promoting centres of competence, in particular those of European interest
Specific objective	1.1 - Improve the implementation of regional development policies and programmes, in particular programmes for Investment for Growth and Jobs and, where relevant, ETC programmes, in the field of research and innovation infrastructure and capacities, notably in the framework of Smart Specialisation Strategies.

Table 1: Result indicators

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline value	Baseline year	Target value (2023) Total	2016 Total	2016 Qualitative	Observations
1	Share of Growth & Jobs and ETC programmes where measures inspired by INTERREG EUROPE were implemented	% of all Growth & Jobs and ETC programmes	2.62	2014	8.00	0.00		At this stage of the programme implementation, it is still too early to report achievements on this indicator. In accordance with the cooperation programme, the first survey addressed to Growth & Jobs and ETC programmes will be launched in 2018. The projects approved under the first call for proposals have just started their activities. The policy learning platform has just started activities.
2	Amount of Structural Funds (from Growth & Jobs and ETC) influenced by INTERREG EUROPE	EUR	3,500,000.00	2014	48,000,000.00	0.00		At this stage of the programme implementation, it is still too early to report achievements on this indicator. In accordance with the cooperation programme, the first survey addressed to Growth & Jobs and ETC programmes will be launched in 2018. The projects approved under the first call for proposals have just started their activities. The policy learning platform has just started activities.

ID	Indicator	2015 Total	2015 Qualitative	2014 Total	2014 Qualitative
1	Share of Growth & Jobs and ETC programmes where measures inspired by INTERREG EUROPE were	0.00		0.00	

ID	Indicator	2015 Total	2015 Qualitative	2014 Total	2014 Qualitative
	implemented				
2	Amount of Structural Funds (from Growth & Jobs and ETC) influenced by INTERREG EUROPE	0.00		0.00	

Priority axis	1 - Research, Technological Development and Innovation
Investment priority	1b - Promoting business investment in R&I, developing links and synergies between enterprises, research and development centres and the higher education sector, in particular promoting investment in product and service development, technology transfer, social innovation, eco-innovation, public service applications, demand stimulation, networking, clusters and open innovation through smart specialisation, and supporting technological and applied research, pilot lines, early product validation actions, advanced manufacturing capabilities and first production, in particular in key enabling technologies and diffusion of general purpose technologies

Table 2: Common and programme specific output indicators

(1)	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Target value	2016	Observations
F	1	Number of Action Plans developed	Number	154.00	0.00	In accordance with the programme manual (§6.2.4), approved projects will report on the number of action plans developed at the end of Phase 1. There are 19 projects ending their phase 1 in 2018. Therefore, first data on this indicator will be available to be reported in AIR 2018.
S	1	Number of Action Plans developed	Number	154.00	0.00	In accordance with the programme manual (§6.2.4), approved projects will report on the number of action plans developed at the end of Phase 1. There are 19 projects ending their phase 1 in 2018. Therefore, first data on this indicator will be available to be reported in AIR 2018.
F	2	Number of people with increased professional capacity due to their participation in interregional cooperation activities	Number	2,000.00	0.00	In accordance with the programme manual (§6.2.4), approved projects will report on the number of action plans developed at the end of Phase 1. There are 19 projects ending their phase 1 in 2018. Therefore, first data on this indicator will be available to be reported in AIR 2018.
S	2	Number of people with increased professional capacity due to their participation in interregional cooperation activities	Number	2,000.00	0.00	In accordance with the programme manual (§6.2.4), approved projects will report on the number of action plans developed at the end of Phase 1. There are 19 projects ending their phase 1 in 2018. Therefore, first data on this indicator will be available to be reported in AIR 2018.
F	3	Share of all European regions' (NUTS 2) registered to the Policy Learning Platform	%	18.00	0.00	Due to start up difficulties the web developments were delayed and the online registration will be available in 2017.
S	3	Share of all European regions' (NUTS 2) registered to the Policy Learning Platform	%	18.00	0.00	Due to start up difficulties the web developments were delayed and the online registration will be available in 2017.
F	4	Number of policy learning events organised by the Policy Learning Platform	Number	18.00	1.00	The kick-off event of the policy learning platform took place on 11 October 2016. Due to start up difficulties the organisation of other policy learning events was delayed. The first events will be organised in 2017.
S	4	Number of policy learning events organised by the Policy Learning Platform	Number	18.00	1.00	The kick-off event of the policy learning platform took place on 11 October 2016. Due to start up difficulties the organisation of other policy learning events was delayed. The first events will be organised in 2017.

(1)	ID	Indicator	2015	2014
F	1	Number of Action Plans developed	0.00	0.00
S	1	Number of Action Plans developed	0.00	0.00
F	2	Number of people with increased professional	0.00	0.00

(1)	ID	Indicator	2015	2014
		capacity due to their participation in interregional cooperation activities		
S	2	Number of people with increased professional capacity due to their participation in interregional cooperation activities	0.00	0.00
F	3	Share of all European regions' (NUTS 2) registered to the Policy Learning Platform	0.00	0.00
S	3	Share of all European regions' (NUTS 2) registered to the Policy Learning Platform	0.00	0.00
F	4	Number of policy learning events organised by the Policy Learning Platform	0.00	0.00
S	4	Number of policy learning events organised by the Policy Learning Platform	0.00	0.00

Priority axis	1 - Research, Technological Development and Innovation
Investment priority	1b - Promoting business investment in R&I, developing links and synergies between enterprises, research and development centres and the higher education sector, in particular promoting investment in product and service development, technology transfer, social innovation, eco-innovation, public service applications, demand stimulation, networking, clusters and open innovation through smart specialisation, and supporting technological and applied research, pilot lines, early product validation actions, advanced manufacturing capabilities and first production, in particular in key enabling technologies and diffusion of general purpose technologies
Specific objective	1.2 - Improve the implementation of regional development policies and programmes, in particular programmes for Investment for Growth and Jobs and, where relevant, ETC programmes, that support the delivery of innovation by actors in regional innovation chains in areas of "smart specialisation" and innovation opportunity.

Table 1: Result indicators

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline value	Baseline year	Target value (2023) Total	2016 Total	2016 Qualitative	Observations
1	Share of Growth & Jobs and ETC programmes where measures inspired by INTERREG EUROPE were implemented	% of all Growth & Jobs and ETC programmes	3.66	2014	25.00	0.00		At this stage of the programme implementation, it is still too early to report achievements on this indicator. In accordance with the cooperation programme, the first survey addressed to Growth & Jobs and ETC programmes will be launched in 2018. The projects approved under the first call for proposals have just started their activities. The policy learning platform has just started activities.
2	Amount of Structural Funds (from Growth & Jobs and ETC) influenced by INTERREG EUROPE	EUR	3,500,000.00	2014	144,000,000.00	0.00		At this stage of the programme implementation, it is still too early to report achievements on this indicator. In accordance with the cooperation programme, the first survey addressed to Growth & Jobs and ETC programmes will be launched in 2018. The projects approved under the first call for proposals have just started their activities. The policy learning platform has just started activities.

ID	Indicator	2015 Total	2015 Qualitative	2014 Total	2014 Qualitative
1	Share of Growth & Jobs and ETC programmes where	0.00		0.00	

ID	Indicator	2015 Total	2015 Qualitative	2014 Total	2014 Qualitative
	measures inspired by INTERREG EUROPE were implemented				
2	Amount of Structural Funds (from Growth & Jobs and ETC) influenced by INTERREG EUROPE	0.00		0.00	

Priority axis	2 - Competitiveness of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises
Investment priority	3d - Supporting the capacity of SMEs to grow in regional, national and international markets, and to engage in innovation processes

Table 2: Common and programme specific output indicators

(I)	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Target value	2016	Observations
F	1	Number of Action Plans developed	Number	230.00	0.00	In accordance with the programme manual (§6.2.4), approved projects will report on the number of action plans developed at the end of Phase 1. There are 19 projects ending their phase 1 in 2018. Therefore, first data on this indicator will be available to be reported in AIR 2018.
S	1	Number of Action Plans developed	Number	230.00	0.00	In accordance with the programme manual (§6.2.4), approved projects will report on the number of action plans developed at the end of Phase 1. There are 19 projects ending their phase 1 in 2018. Therefore, first data on this indicator will be available to be reported in AIR 2018.
F	2	Number of people with increased professional capacity due to their participation in interregional cooperation activities	Number	3,000.00	0.00	In accordance with the programme manual (§6.2.4), approved projects will report on the number of action plans developed at the end of Phase 1. There are 19 projects ending their phase 1 in 2018. Therefore, first data on this indicator will be available to be reported in AIR 2018.
S	2	Number of people with increased professional capacity due to their participation in interregional cooperation activities	Number	3,000.00	0.00	In accordance with the programme manual (§6.2.4), approved projects will report on the number of action plans developed at the end of Phase 1. There are 19 projects ending their phase 1 in 2018. Therefore, first data on this indicator will be available to be reported in AIR 2018.
F	3	Share of all European regions' (NUTS 2) registered to the Policy Learning Platform	%	25.00	0.00	Due to start up difficulties the web developments were delayed and the online registration will be available in 2017.
S	3	Share of all European regions' (NUTS 2) registered to the Policy Learning Platform	%	25.00	0.00	Due to start up difficulties the web developments were delayed and the online registration will be available in 2017.
F	4	Number of policy learning events organised by the Policy Learning Platform	Number	28.00	1.00	The kick-off event of the policy learning platform took place on 11 October 2016. Due to start up difficulties the organisation of other policy learning events was delayed. The first events will be organised in 2017.
S	4	Number of policy learning events organised by the Policy Learning Platform	Number	28.00	1.00	The kick-off event of the policy learning platform took place on 11 October 2016. Due to start up difficulties the organisation of other policy learning events was delayed. The first events will be organised in 2017.

(I)	ID	Indicator	2015	2014
F	1	Number of Action Plans developed	0.00	0.00
S	1	Number of Action Plans developed	0.00	0.00
F	2	Number of people with increased professional capacity due to their participation in interregional cooperation activities	0.00	0.00
S	2	Number of people with increased professional capacity due to their participation in interregional cooperation activities	0.00	0.00



(1)	ID	Indicator	2015	2014
F	3	Share of all European regions' (NUTS 2) registered to the Policy Learning Platform	0.00	0.00
S	3	Share of all European regions' (NUTS 2) registered to the Policy Learning Platform	0.00	0.00
F	4	Number of policy learning events organised by the Policy Learning Platform	0.00	0.00
S	4	Number of policy learning events organised by the Policy Learning Platform	0.00	0.00

Priority axis	2 - Competitiveness of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises
Investment priority	3d - Supporting the capacity of SMEs to grow in regional, national and international markets, and to engage in innovation processes
Specific objective	2.1 - Improve the implementation of regional development policies and programmes, in particular programmes for Investment for Growth and Jobs and, where relevant, ETC programmes, supporting SMEs in all stages of their life cycle to develop and achieve growth and engage in innovation.

Table 1: Result indicators

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline value	Baseline year	Target value (2023) Total	2016 Total	2016 Qualitative	Observations
1	Share of Growth & Jobs and ETC programmes where measures inspired by INTERREG EUROPE were implemented	% of all Growth & Jobs and ETC programmes	1.83	2014	33.00	0.00		At this stage of the programme implementation, it is still too early to report achievements on this indicator. In accordance with the cooperation programme, the first survey addressed to Growth & Jobs and ETC programmes will be launched in 2018. The projects approved under the first call for proposals have just started their activities. The policy learning platform has just started activities.
2	Amount of Structural Funds (from Growth & Jobs and ETC) influenced by INTERREG EUROPE	EUR	0.00	2014	192,000,000.00	0.00		At this stage of the programme implementation, it is still too early to report achievements on this indicator. In accordance with the cooperation programme, the first survey addressed to Growth & Jobs and ETC programmes will be launched in 2018. The projects approved under the first call for proposals have just started their activities. The policy learning platform has just started activities.

ID	Indicator	2015 Total	2015 Qualitative	2014 Total	2014 Qualitative
1	Share of Growth & Jobs and ETC programmes where measures inspired by INTERREG EUROPE were implemented	0.00		0.00	
2	Amount of Structural Funds	0.00		0.00	

<b>ID</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	2015 Total	2015 Qualitative	2014 Total	2014 Qualitative
	(from Growth & Jobs and ETC) influenced by INTERREG EUROPE				

Priority axis	3 - Low Carbon Economy
Investment priority	4e - Promoting low-carbon strategies for all types of territories, in particular for urban areas, including the promotion of sustainable multimodal urban mobility and mitigation-relevant adaptation measures

Table 2: Common and programme specific output indicators

(I)	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Target value	2016	Observations
F	1	Number of Action Plans developed	Number	230.00	0.00	In accordance with the programme manual (§6.2.4), approved projects will report on the number of action plans developed at the end of Phase 1. There are 19 projects ending their phase 1 in 2018. Therefore, first data on this indicator will be available to be reported in AIR 2018.
S	1	Number of Action Plans developed	Number	230.00	0.00	In accordance with the programme manual (§6.2.4), approved projects will report on the number of action plans developed at the end of Phase 1. There are 19 projects ending their phase 1 in 2018. Therefore, first data on this indicator will be available to be reported in AIR 2018.
F	2	Number of people with increased professional capacity due to their participation in interregional cooperation activities	Number	3,000.00	0.00	In accordance with the programme manual (§6.2.4), approved projects will report on the number of action plans developed at the end of Phase 1. There are 19 projects ending their phase 1 in 2018. Therefore, first data on this indicator will be available to be reported in AIR 2018.
S	2	Number of people with increased professional capacity due to their participation in interregional cooperation activities	Number	3,000.00	0.00	In accordance with the programme manual (§6.2.4), approved projects will report on the number of action plans developed at the end of Phase 1. There are 19 projects ending their phase 1 in 2018. Therefore, first data on this indicator will be available to be reported in AIR 2018.
F	3	Share of all European regions' (NUTS 2) registered to the Policy Learning Platform	%	25.00	0.00	Due to start up difficulties the web developments were delayed and the online registration will be available in 2017.
S	3	Share of all European regions' (NUTS 2) registered to the Policy Learning Platform	%	25.00	0.00	Due to start up difficulties the web developments were delayed and the online registration will be available in 2017.
F	4	Number of policy learning events organised by the Policy Learning Platform	Number	28.00	1.00	The kick-off event of the policy learning platform took place on 11 October 2016. Due to start up difficulties the organisation of other policy learning events was delayed. The first events will be organised in 2017.
S	4	Number of policy learning events organised by the Policy Learning Platform	Number	28.00	1.00	The kick-off event of the policy learning platform took place on 11 October 2016. Due to start up difficulties the organisation of other policy learning events was delayed. The first events will be organised in 2017.

(I)	ID	Indicator	2015	2014
F	1	Number of Action Plans developed	0.00	0.00
S	1	Number of Action Plans developed	0.00	0.00
F	2	Number of people with increased professional capacity due to their participation in interregional cooperation activities	0.00	0.00
S	2	Number of people with increased professional capacity due to their participation in	0.00	0.00

(1)	ID	Indicator	2015	2014
		interregional cooperation activities		
F	3	Share of all European regions' (NUTS 2) registered to the Policy Learning Platform	0.00	0.00
S	3	Share of all European regions' (NUTS 2) registered to the Policy Learning Platform	0.00	0.00
F	4	Number of policy learning events organised by the Policy Learning Platform	0.00	0.00
S	4	Number of policy learning events organised by the Policy Learning Platform	0.00	0.00

Priority axis	3 - Low Carbon Economy
Investment priority	4e - Promoting low-carbon strategies for all types of territories, in particular for urban areas, including the promotion of sustainable multimodal urban mobility and mitigation-relevant adaptation measures
Specific objective	3.1 - Improve the implementation of regional development policies and programmes, in particular programmes for Investment for Growth and Jobs and, where relevant, ETC programmes, addressing the transition to a low-carbon economy, notably in the framework of Smart Specialisation Strategies.

Table 1: Result indicators

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline value	Baseline year	Target value (2023) Total	2016 Total	2016 Qualitative	Observations
1	Share of Growth & Jobs and ETC programmes where measures inspired by INTERREG EUROPE were implemented	% of all Growth & Jobs and ETC programmes	1.31	2014	33.00	0.00		At this stage of the programme implementation, it is still too early to report achievements on this indicator. In accordance with the cooperation programme, the first survey addressed to Growth & Jobs and ETC programmes will be launched in 2018. The projects approved under the first call for proposals have just started their activities. The policy learning platform has just started activities.
2	Amount of Structural Funds (from Growth & Jobs and ETC) influenced by INTERREG EUROPE	EUR	13,000,000.00	2014	192,000,000.00	0.00		At this stage of the programme implementation, it is still too early to report achievements on this indicator. In accordance with the cooperation programme, the first survey addressed to Growth & Jobs and ETC programmes will be launched in 2018. The projects approved under the first call for proposals have just started their activities. The policy learning platform has just started activities.

ID	Indicator	2015 Total	2015 Qualitative	2014 Total	2014 Qualitative
1	Share of Growth & Jobs and ETC programmes where measures inspired by INTERREG EUROPE were	0.00		0.00	

<b>ID</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	2015 Total	2015 Qualitative	2014 Total	2014 Qualitative
	implemented				
2	Amount of Structural Funds (from Growth & Jobs and ETC) influenced by INTERREG EUROPE	0.00		0.00	



Priority axis	4 - Environment and Resource Efficiency
Investment priority	6c - Conserving, protecting, promoting and developing natural and cultural heritage

Table 2: Common and programme specific output indicators

(I)	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Target value	2016	Observations
F	1	Number of Action Plans developed	Number	115.00	0.00	In accordance with the programme manual (§6.2.4), approved projects will report on the number of action plans developed at the end of Phase 1. There are 19 projects ending their phase 1 in 2018. Therefore, first data on this indicator will be available to be reported in AIR 2018.
S	1	Number of Action Plans developed	Number	115.00	0.00	In accordance with the programme manual (§6.2.4), approved projects will report on the number of action plans developed at the end of Phase 1. There are 19 projects ending their phase 1 in 2018. Therefore, first data on this indicator will be available to be reported in AIR 2018.
F	2	Number of people with increased professional capacity due to their participation in interregional cooperation activities	Number	1,500.00	0.00	In accordance with the programme manual (§6.2.4), approved projects will report on the number of action plans developed at the end of Phase 1. There are 19 projects ending their phase 1 in 2018. Therefore, first data on this indicator will be available to be reported in AIR 2018.
S	2	Number of people with increased professional capacity due to their participation in interregional cooperation activities	Number	1,500.00	0.00	In accordance with the programme manual (§6.2.4), approved projects will report on the number of action plans developed at the end of Phase 1. There are 19 projects ending their phase 1 in 2018. Therefore, first data on this indicator will be available to be reported in AIR 2018.
F	3	Share of all European regions' (NUTS 2) registered to the Policy Learning Platform	%	12.00	0.00	Due to start up difficulties the web developments were delayed and the online registration will be available in 2017.
S	3	Share of all European regions' (NUTS 2) registered to the Policy Learning Platform	%	12.00	0.00	Due to start up difficulties the web developments were delayed and the online registration will be available in 2017.
F	4	Number of policy learning events organised by the Policy Learning Platform	Number	14.00	1.00	The kick-off event of the policy learning platform took place on 11 October 2016. Due to start up difficulties the organisation of other policy learning events was delayed. The first events will be organised in 2017.
S	4	Number of policy learning events organised by the Policy Learning Platform	Number	14.00	1.00	The kick-off event of the policy learning platform took place on 11 October 2016. Due to start up difficulties the organisation of other policy learning events was delayed. The first events will be organised in 2017.

(I)	ID	Indicator	2015	2014
F	1	Number of Action Plans developed	0.00	0.00
S	1	Number of Action Plans developed	0.00	0.00
F	2	Number of people with increased professional capacity due to their participation in interregional cooperation activities	0.00	0.00
S	2	Number of people with increased professional capacity due to their participation in interregional cooperation activities	0.00	0.00

(1)	ID	Indicator	2015	2014
F	3	Share of all European regions' (NUTS 2) registered to the Policy Learning Platform	0.00	0.00
S	3	Share of all European regions' (NUTS 2) registered to the Policy Learning Platform	0.00	0.00
F	4	Number of policy learning events organised by the Policy Learning Platform	0.00	0.00
S	4	Number of policy learning events organised by the Policy Learning Platform	0.00	0.00

Priority axis	4 - Environment and Resource Efficiency
Investment priority	6c - Conserving, protecting, promoting and developing natural and cultural heritage
Specific objective	4.1 - Improve the implementation of regional development policies and programmes, in particular Investment for Growth and Jobs and, where relevant, ETC programmes, in the field of the protection and development of natural and cultural heritage.

Table 1: Result indicators

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline value	Baseline year	Target value (2023) Total	2016 Total	2016 Qualitative	Observations
1	Share of Growth & Jobs and ETC programmes where measures inspired by INTERREG EUROPE were implemented	% of all Growth & Jobs and ETC programmes	1.57	2014	16.00	0.00		At this stage of the programme implementation, it is still too early to report achievements on this indicator. In accordance with the cooperation programme, the first survey addressed to Growth & Jobs and ETC programmes will be launched in 2018. The projects approved under the first call for proposals have just started their activities. The policy learning platform has just started activities.
2	Amount of Structural Funds (from Growth & Jobs and ETC) influenced by INTERREG EUROPE	EUR	19,000,000.00	2014	96,000,000.00	0.00		At this stage of the programme implementation, it is still too early to report achievements on this indicator. In accordance with the cooperation programme, the first survey addressed to Growth & Jobs and ETC programmes will be launched in 2018. The projects approved under the first call for proposals have just started their activities. The policy learning platform has just started activities.

ID	Indicator	2015 Total	2015 Qualitative	2014 Total	2014 Qualitative
1	Share of Growth & Jobs and ETC programmes where measures inspired by INTERREG EUROPE were implemented	0.00		0.00	
2	Amount of Structural Funds	0.00		0.00	

ID	Indicator	2015 Total	2015 Qualitative	2014 Total	2014 Qualitative
	(from Growth & Jobs and ETC) influenced by INTERREG EUROPE				

Priority axis	4 - Environment and Resource Efficiency
Investment priority	6g - Supporting industrial transition towards a resource-efficient economy, promoting green growth, eco-innovation and environmental performance management in the public and private sectors

Table 2: Common and programme specific output indicators

(I)	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Target value	2016	Observations
F	1	Number of Action Plans developed	Number	115.00	0.00	In accordance with the programme manual (§6.2.4), approved projects will report on the number of action plans developed at the end of Phase 1. There are 19 projects ending their phase 1 in 2018. Therefore, first data on this indicator will be available to be reported in AIR 2018.
S	1	Number of Action Plans developed	Number	115.00	0.00	In accordance with the programme manual (§6.2.4), approved projects will report on the number of action plans developed at the end of Phase 1. There are 19 projects ending their phase 1 in 2018. Therefore, first data on this indicator will be available to be reported in AIR 2018.
F	2	Number of people with increased professional capacity due to their participation in interregional cooperation activities	Number	1,500.00	0.00	In accordance with the programme manual (§6.2.4), approved projects will report on the number of action plans developed at the end of Phase 1. There are 19 projects ending their phase 1 in 2018. Therefore, first data on this indicator will be available to be reported in AIR 2018.
S	2	Number of people with increased professional capacity due to their participation in interregional cooperation activities	Number	1,500.00	0.00	In accordance with the programme manual (§6.2.4), approved projects will report on the number of action plans developed at the end of Phase 1. There are 19 projects ending their phase 1 in 2018. Therefore, first data on this indicator will be available to be reported in AIR 2018.
F	3	Share of all European regions' (NUTS 2) registered to the Policy Learning Platform	%	12.00	0.00	Due to start up difficulties the web developments were delayed and the online registration will be available in 2017.
S	3	Share of all European regions' (NUTS 2) registered to the Policy Learning Platform	%	12.00	0.00	Due to start up difficulties the web developments were delayed and the online registration will be available in 2017.
F	4	Number of policy learning events organised by the Policy Learning Platform	Number	14.00	1.00	The kick-off event of the policy learning platform took place on 11 October 2016. Due to start up difficulties the organisation of other policy learning events was delayed. The first events will be organised in 2017.
S	4	Number of policy learning events organised by the Policy Learning Platform	Number	14.00	1.00	The kick-off event of the policy learning platform took place on 11 October 2016. Due to start up difficulties the organisation of other policy learning events was delayed. The first events will be organised in 2017.

(I)	ID	Indicator	2015	2014
F	1	Number of Action Plans developed	0.00	0.00
S	1	Number of Action Plans developed	0.00	0.00
F	2	Number of people with increased professional capacity due to their participation in interregional cooperation activities	0.00	0.00
S	2	Number of people with increased professional capacity due to their participation in	0.00	0.00

(1)	ID	Indicator	2015	2014
		interregional cooperation activities		
F	3	Share of all European regions' (NUTS 2) registered to the Policy Learning Platform	0.00	0.00
S	3	Share of all European regions' (NUTS 2) registered to the Policy Learning Platform	0.00	0.00
F	4	Number of policy learning events organised by the Policy Learning Platform	0.00	0.00
S	4	Number of policy learning events organised by the Policy Learning Platform	0.00	0.00

Priority axis	4 - Environment and Resource Efficiency
Investment priority	6g - Supporting industrial transition towards a resource-efficient economy, promoting green growth, eco-innovation and environmental performance management in the public and private sectors
Specific objective	4.2 - Improve the implementation of regional development policies and programmes, in particular programmes for Investment for Growth and Jobs and, where relevant, ETC programmes, aimed at increasing resource-efficiency, green growth and eco-innovation and environmental performance management.

Table 1: Result indicators

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline value	Baseline year	Target value (2023) Total	2016 Total	2016 Qualitative	Observations
1	Share of Growth & Jobs and ETC programmes where measures inspired by INTERREG EUROPE were implemented	% of all Growth & Jobs and ETC programmes	0.52	2014	16.00	0.00		At this stage of the programme implementation, it is still too early to report achievements on this indicator. In accordance with the cooperation programme, the first survey addressed to Growth & Jobs and ETC programmes will be launched in 2018. The projects approved under the first call for proposals have just started their activities. The policy learning platform has just started activities.
2	Amount of Structural Funds (from Growth & Jobs and ETC) influenced by INTERREG EUROPE	EUR	19,000,000.00	2014	96,000,000.00	0.00		At this stage of the programme implementation, it is still too early to report achievements on this indicator. In accordance with the cooperation programme, the first survey addressed to Growth & Jobs and ETC programmes will be launched in 2018. The projects approved under the first call for proposals have just started their activities. The policy learning platform has just started activities.

ID	Indicator	2015 Total	2015 Qualitative	2014 Total	2014 Qualitative
1	Share of Growth & Jobs and ETC programmes where measures inspired by INTERREG EUROPE were	0.00		0.00	



ID	Indicator	2015 Total	2015 Qualitative	2014 Total	2014 Qualitative
	implemented				
2	Amount of Structural Funds (from Growth & Jobs and ETC) influenced by INTERREG EUROPE	0.00		0.00	

## Priority axes for technical assistance

Priority axis	5 - Technical Assistance
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Table 2: Common and programme specific output indicators

(1)	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Target value	2016	Observations
F	5	No of Interregional Cooperation Projects approved	Number	200.00	0.00	No approved projects are fully implemented yet.
S	5	No of Interregional Cooperation Projects approved	Number	200.00	130.00	In total, 130 projects were approved during the first two calls for proposals.
F	6	No of project visits and participations in project events by JS	Number	200.00	0.00	No approved projects are fully implemented yet. No project final conferences were held yet.
S	6	No of project visits and participations in project events by JS	Number	200.00	3.00	In 2016, the joint secretariat participated physically in the kick-off meetings of three projects (i.e. Beyond EDP, iEER and MOLOC). In addition, the joint secretariat participated remotely through telephone/ video-conference or skype in 24 kick-off events of projects.
F	7	Average no. of visits to programme website	Number/month	15,000.00	28,539.00	
S	7	Average no. of visits to programme website	Number/month	15,000.00	28,539.00	
F	8	No of Monitoring Committee meetings	Number	14.00	3.00	
S	8	No of Monitoring Committee meetings	Number	14.00	3.00	
F	9	No of employees (FTEs) whose salaries are co-financed by TA	Number		26.50	
S	9	No of employees (FTEs) whose salaries are co-financed by TA	Number		26.50	

(1)	ID	Indicator	2015	2014
F	5	No of Interregional Cooperation Projects approved	0.00	0.00
S	5	No of Interregional Cooperation Projects approved	0.00	0.00
F	6	No of project visits and participations in project events by JS	0.00	0.00
S	6	No of project visits and participations in project events by JS	0.00	0.00

(1)	ID	Indicator	2015	2014
F	7	Average no. of visits to programme website	10,221.00	0.00
S	7	Average no. of visits to programme website	10,221.00	0.00
F	8	No of Monitoring Committee meetings	2.00	0.00
S	8	No of Monitoring Committee meetings	2.00	0.00
F	9	No of employees (FTEs) whose salaries are co-financed by TA	0.00	0.00
S	9	No of employees (FTEs) whose salaries are co-financed by TA	0.00	0.00

Priority axis	5 - Technical Assistance
Specific objective	5.1 - To maximise the effectiveness and efficiency of the management and implementation of the INTERREG EUROPE Programme.

Table 1: Result indicators

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline value	Baseline year	Target value (2023) Total	2016 Total	2016 Qualitative	Observations
TA1	Share (%) of all supported operations (projects and platforms) that is implemented successfully, demonstrated by the achievement of planned outputs.	%	0.00	2013	90.00	0.00		Interreg Europe programme was approved on 11 June 2015 – projects and platform have started their activities in 2016 only, so it is too early to report on this indicator.
TA2	Share (%) of total programme ERDF budget decommitted	%	0.00	2013	0.00	0.00		Interreg Europe programme was approved on 11 June 2015. The first decommitment target will therefore be in December 2018.

ID	Indicator	2015 Total	2015 Qualitative	2014 Total	2014 Qualitative
TA1	Share (%) of all supported operations (projects and platforms) that is implemented successfully, demonstrated by the achievement of planned outputs.	0.00		0.00	
TA2	Share (%) of total programme ERDF budget decommitted	0.00		0.00	

**3.3 Table 3: Information on the milestones and targets defined in the performance framework**

Priority axis	Ind type	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Milestone for 2018 total	2016 Final target (2023) total	2016	Observations
1	F	1	Amount of financial resources spent	EUR	11,000,000	84,441,686.00		
1	O	1	Number of Action Plans developed	Number	70	230.00		
2	F	1	Amount of financial resources spent	EUR	11,000,000	84,441,685.00		
2	O	1	Number of Action Plans developed	Number	70	230.00		
3	F	1	Amount of financial resources spent	EUR	11,000,000	84,441,685.00		
3	O	1	Number of Action Plans developed	Number	70	230.00		
4	F	1	Amount of financial resources spent	EUR	11,000,000	84,441,685.00		
4	O	1	Number of Action Plans developed	Number	70	230.00		

Priority axis	Ind type	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	2015	2014
1	F	1	Amount of financial resources spent	EUR		
1	O	1	Number of Action Plans developed	Number		
2	F	1	Amount of financial resources spent	EUR		
2	O	1	Number of Action Plans developed	Number		
3	F	1	Amount of financial resources spent	EUR		
3	O	1	Number of Action Plans developed	Number		
4	F	1	Amount of financial resources spent	EUR		
4	O	1	Number of Action Plans developed	Number		

### 3.4. Financial data

**Table 4: Financial information at priority axis and programme level**

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Priority axis	Fund	Calculation basis	Total funding	Co-financing rate	Total eligible cost of operations selected for support	Proportion of the total allocation covered with selected operations	Public eligible cost of operations selected for support	Total eligible expenditure declared by beneficiaries to the managing authority	Proportion of the total allocation covered by eligible expenditure declared by beneficiaries	Number of operations selected
1	ERDF	Total	99,344,632.00	85.00	72,113,381.00	72.59%	70,438,595.55	125,994.31	0.13%	41
2	ERDF	Total	99,344,629.00	85.00	55,099,228.00	55.46%	53,874,228.00	125,994.31	0.13%	34
3	ERDF	Total	99,344,629.00	85.00	52,753,693.00	53.10%	52,008,280.50	125,994.31	0.13%	32
4	ERDF	Total	99,344,629.00	85.00	43,392,924.00	43.68%	42,682,795.25	125,994.34	0.13%	27
5	ERDF	Public	28,931,099.00	74.52	28,931,099.00	100.00%	28,931,099.00	2,740,423.00	9.47%	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>ERDF</b>		<b>426,309,618.00</b>	<b>84.29</b>	<b>252,290,325.00</b>	<b>59.18%</b>	<b>247,934,998.30</b>	<b>3,244,400.27</b>	<b>0.76%</b>	<b>135</b>
<b>Grand total</b>			<b>426,309,618.00</b>	<b>84.29</b>	<b>252,290,325.00</b>	<b>59.18%</b>	<b>247,934,998.30</b>	<b>3,244,400.27</b>	<b>0.76%</b>	<b>135</b>

**Where applicable, the use of any contribution from third countries participating in the cooperation programme should be provided (for example IPA and ENI, Norway, Switzerland)**

In 2016, 10 interregional projects with a total of 11 partners from Norway were approved, 2 of them being lead partners. A total amount of EUR 1,196,158 of Norwegian funding has been committed to these projects. The Norwegian funding for these projects is directly managed by the programme authorities. It is paid by the certifying authority to the lead partners of the concerned projects together with the ERDF contribution.

Regarding Switzerland, 1 interregional project with 1 Swiss partner was approved in 2016, with a total budget of EUR 393,920. The contribution from Switzerland is allocated and paid directly by the Swiss authorities to Swiss partners.

The platform activities in 2016 with a total expenditure of €542,750.26 also benefited from a contribution from Norway (€4,364.07) and Switzerland (€4,552.74).

In 2016, Norway and Switzerland also participated in the technical assistance expenditure of the Interreg Europe programme with a contribution of EUR 34,827 and EUR 17,056 respectively.

It is also possible for partners from other third countries to participate in the projects, however, only at their own cost. So far, one approved project currently involves one partner from another third country. This partner is from Albania with a total budget of EUR 5,965.

**Table 5: Breakdown of the cumulative financial data by category of intervention**

As set out in Table 2 of Annex II to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 1011/2014 (Model for transmission of financial data) and tables 6-9 of Model for cooperation programmes

Priority axis	Fund	Intervention field	Form of finance	Territorial dimension	Territorial delivery mechanism	Thematic objective dimension	ESF secondary theme	Economic dimension	Location dimension	Total eligible cost of operations selected for support	Public eligible cost of operations selected for support	The total eligible expenditure declared by eneficiaries to the managing authority	Number of operations selected
1	ERDF	096	01	07	07					72,113,381.00	70,438,595.55	125,994.31	41
2	ERDF	096	01	07	07					55,099,228.00	53,874,228.00	125,994.31	34
3	ERDF	096	01	07	07					52,753,693.00	52,008,280.50	125,994.31	32
4	ERDF	096	01	07	07					43,392,924.00	42,682,795.25	125,994.34	27
5	ERDF	121	01	07						25,969,277.60	25,969,277.60	2,422,113.00	1
5	ERDF	122	01	07						424,656.71	424,656.71	0.00	0
5	ERDF	123	01	07						2,537,164.69	2,537,164.69	318,310.00	0



**Table 6: Cumulative cost of all or part of an operation implemented outside the Union part of the programme area**

1. Operation (2)	2. The amount of ERDF support(1) envisaged to be used for all or part of an operation implemented outside the Union part of the programme area based on selected operations	3. Share of the total financial allocation to all or part of an operation located outside the Union part of the programme area (%) (column 2/total amount allocated to the support from the ERDF at programme level *100)	4. Eligible expenditure of ERDF support incurred in all or part of an operation implemented outside the Union part of the programme area declared by the beneficiary to the managing authority	5. Share of the total financial allocation to all or part of an operation located outside the Union part of the programme area (%) (column 4/total amount allocated to the support from the ERDF at programme level *100)
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**(1) ERDF support is the Commission decision on the respective cooperation programme.**

**(2) In accordance with and subject to ceilings set out Article 20 of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013.**

#### 4. SYNTHESIS OF THE EVALUATIONS

The monitoring committee approved the Interreg Europe evaluation plan on 29 March 2016. According to the plan, the evaluation assessing effectiveness, efficiency and impact of the programme will take place in 2018.

In the meantime, internal evaluations on the two calls and the assistance to potential applicants took place with the aim to inform the Partner States for their decision on the terms of reference for the third call in 2017 and to improve the assistance tools for potential applicants.

Analysis of the applicant data from the two calls showed that institutions from 94% of all Partner State NUTS2 regions (91% for EU only) were interested in Interreg Europe projects and participated in an application. This shows that the programme is on target in informing 90% of its potential beneficiaries about its funding opportunities.

Private non-profit organisations, the new group targeted by the programme, represented 15.4% of all applicant organisations in the two calls (11.2% of the total budget applied for), which meets the programme expectations.

Interest in the four thematic objectives was relatively evenly spread across the two calls, but the quality of applications differed. This resulted in a higher proportion of research and innovation projects approved (30% of all – 5% priority axis 1.1, 25% priority axis 1.2) and lower proportion of environment and resource efficiency projects approved (21% of all – 12% priority axis 4.1, 9% priority axis 4.2).

All Partner States are represented in the approved projects with organisations from 78% of NUTS2 regions (EU only).

Majority of the policy instruments addressed by the approved projects are Structural Funds programmes (82.2%) with close to 40% of them having the policy responsible body directly involved in the project as a partner.

An online survey on the assistance to applicants was open from 1 August to 23 September 2016 and gathered 723 replies (12% response rate) from the key programme target groups (36% from national, regional or local public authorities, EU or ETC institutions or EGTC). Majority of the replies came from the programme online community members (65%). Over 40% of the respondents used the assistance to applicants' tools assessed by the survey.

The survey results showed relatively high satisfaction with the assistance overall. 73% of respondents rated the assistance as above-average (4 or 5). The average score was 3.88.

The survey results informed the programme on preferred methods of assistance related to a specific tool - preference of direct feedback on project idea or online tools for guidance on programme requirements. Physical events were seen as a good tool mainly for networking.

The results also showed that there was still an important share of respondents who did not know about the assistance tools the programme offered.

The programme communication plan for 2017 was adapted to reflect the results of the survey: the concept of the annual event was shaped mainly as a networking opportunity; numerous new online video tutorials and seminars were put on the plan; wider and more frequent use of various channels was foreseen to share the information about all the available assistance to applicants' tools for the third call for project proposals in 2017.

## 5. ISSUES AFFECTING THE PERFORMANCE OF THE PROGRAMME AND MEASURES TAKEN

### (a) Issues which affect the performance of the programme and the measures taken

In 2016, the programme strived to address the challenges identified in the previous years to avoid that major issues affect its performance. The following elements should be highlighted:

#### • **Mobilising the core target group:**

The most important challenge remains the mobilisation of the core target groups, i.e. the managing authorities and equivalent bodies in charge of the Investment for Growth & Jobs programmes. According to the ETC regulation, Interreg Europe's mission is to improve the performance of these programmes in particular. However, it appears that the bodies in charge of these programmes have other priorities and only a minority sees interregional cooperation as a strategic opportunity. The main challenge for Interreg Europe is to convince this target group that cooperation is of added-value to their programmes.

With the measures taken in 2015 and overall careful communication in all events where Interreg Europe was promoted in 2016, some improvements can be noticed. Direct participation of managing authorities and other responsible bodies of Investment for Growth & Jobs programmes increased in the approved projects. In the first call for proposals, managing authorities or intermediate bodies represented 29% of all partners addressing Structural Funds. In the projects approved in the second call for proposals, this share increases to 37%.

Despite this improvement, mobilising the core target group remains high on the agenda of the programme bodies. The programme therefore continues implementing several measures that confirmed to be of added value, in particular:

1. At national level and in coordination with the national points of contact, organisation of information days dedicated to Investment for Growth & Jobs managing authorities
2. Preparation of materials to demonstrate the impact interregional cooperation can have on regional / national operational programme

#### • **PLP implementation**

The consortium started the implementation of the first annual workplan in September 2016. The overall coordination is very demanding, in particular with regards to teambuilding, alignment of expectations, common understanding of procedures, quality standards and methodologies.

Due to several start up difficulties, the performance of the consortium was already evaluated at the end of 2016 (official evaluation due with the first report in April 2017) against the quality indicators predefined in the Terms of Reference. Several deficiencies were found in the following issues:

1. Understanding of the requirements, e.g. web developments not in line with programme COM
2. Application of the required methodology, e.g. no proper information flow

3. Relevance and completeness of the tasks, e.g. poor concept notes for events
4. Quality of services offered, e.g. mistakes in online content
5. Respect of deadlines, e.g. for web developments, needs analysis

To ensure quality services to the programme's target groups, a series of meetings, discussions and written notifications took place in December 2016 and the consortium was requested to apply several remedy measures. The most important that were implemented at the beginning of 2017 were:

1. Assign a Project Manager (PM) placed in the joint secretariat in Lille until the platform is set up and runs smoothly.
2. Assign a Web Manager (WM) to work in the secretariat in Lille one day in two weeks until the online platform is up and running smoothly
3. Revise the implementation time schedule for the annual workplan to catch up with the delays and propose new realistic calendar.

• **Financial challenges**

Some of the challenges identified in the AIR 2015 remain:

- The EC interpretation that article 28 of the ETC regulation on the method for the exchange rate concerns all beneficiaries may be source of complexity and errors for beneficiaries coming from the euro zone as they will have different amounts in euros for costs in non-euro countries in their accounting system and in their report to their FLC. To limit the errors, an automatic application of the exchange rate in the reporting system was put in place. In parallel, the issue was raised again to the EC. One way to address it could be to consider that the wording "expenditure incurred in a currency other than the euro" in article 28 means "amount debited from the beneficiary account in a currency other than the euro". The EC's reply is pending.
- The COCOF/EGESIF guidance on sampling methodology and treatment of errors and in particular the error rate projection is still a concern for the years to come, although through a meeting with DG Regio audit services it was understood that a different approach to error rate projection would not be possible during the 2014-2020 period.

While the projects financial reporting has been simplified (see section 11.2), on the programme management side, regulatory requirements remain heavy. Notably, in 2016 the programme faced the following challenges:

- The designation process was more complex and longer than expected. Since the CA is located in a different country than the MA, it was necessary for the MA and the French independent audit body (IAB) to ensure a correct understanding of EU regulations and guidance, identify the responsible body and then coordinate with the Flemish independent audit body for the designation audits. These audits took place in several stages in parallel for the MA and CA. They were followed by the submission of a final version of the management and control system description (MCSD) which is under final review by the French IAB. This body will then, also based on the audit report of the Flemish IAB, issue a final audit opinion for the designation of the MA and CA by the French Prime Minister.

This process was also delayed as the programme had to develop strategies to reply to

new regulatory requirements (eg. risk management and anti-fraud) and fill in both the regulatory MCSD template and the self-assessment checklist (Annex 3 of the EGESIF 14-0013 guidance). The exercise was complex as the links between the checklist questions and the MCSD template were not always clear. The MA and CA however worked together to allow the final submission of the MCSD and expect to be designated by the summer 2017.

Despite this late designation and the human resources involved in this process, it did not prevent the programme to approve 130 projects and to make payments to the 64 first call projects based on the first reports submitted in early 2017.

- Understanding the new requirements of the annual closure of accounts and reflecting on the impact on the IT monitoring system especially regarding the correction of irregularities occurring at different stages is also a challenge that emerged in 2016. To benefit from practical knowledge and experience in this field, the JS asked the French national coordination body (CGET) and INTERACT for some help on that topic and will participate in the seminars that they both organise on this subject in June 2017.

(b) OPTIONAL FOR LIGHT REPORTS, otherwise it will be included in point 9.1. An assessment of whether progress made towards targets is sufficient to ensure their fulfilment, indicating any remedial actions taken or planned, where appropriate.

N/A

## **6. CITIZEN'S SUMMARY (ARTICLE 50(9) OF REGULATION (EU) NO 1303/2013)**

A citizen's summary of the contents of the annual and the final implementation reports shall be made public and uploaded as a separate file in the form of annex to the annual and the final implementation report

You can upload/find the Citizen's summary under General > Documents



**7. REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS  
(ARTICLE 46 OF REGULATION (EU) NO 1303/2013)**

**8. PROGRESS IN PREPARATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF MAJOR PROJECTS AND JOINT ACTION PLANS (ARTICLE 101(H) AND ARTICLE 111(3) OF REGULATION (EU) NO 1303/2013 AND ARTICLE 14(3)(B) OF REGULATION (EU) NO 1299/2013)**

**8.1. Major projects**

Table 7: Major projects

Project	CCI	Status of MP	Total investments	Total eligible costs	Planned notification/submission date	Date of tacit agreement/approval by Commission	Planned start of implementation	Planned completion date	Priority Axis/Investment priorities	Current state of realisation — financial progress (% of expenditure certified to Commission compared to total eligible cost)	Current state of realisation — physical progress Main implementation stage of the project	Ma
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(1) In the case of operations implemented under PPP structures the signing of the PPP contract between the public body and the private sector body (Article 102(3) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013).

Significant problems encountered in implementing major projects and measures taken to overcome them

Any change planned in the list of major projects in the cooperation programme





## 8.2. Joint action plans

Progress in the implementation of different stages of joint action plans

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**Table 8: Joint action plans (JAP)**

Title of the JAP	CCI	Stage of implementation of JAP	Total eligible costs	Total public support	OP contribution to JAP	Priority axis	Type of JAP	[Planned] submission to the Commission	[Planned] start of implementation	[Planned] completion	Main outputs and results	Total eligible expenditure certified to the Commission	Observations
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**Significant problems encountered and measures taken to overcome them**

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## 9. ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COOPERATION PROGRAMME (ARTICLE 50(4) OF REGULATION (EU) NO 1303/2013 AND ARTICLE 14(4) OF REGULATION (EU) NO 1299/2013)

### 9.1 Information in Part A and achieving the objectives of the programme (Article 50(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)

Priority axis	1 - Research, Technological Development and Innovation
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At the end of the first call, 21 first call projects were approved under priority axis 1. Within the priority, only three projects belong to specific objective 1(a) 'innovation infrastructure'. The other 18 focus on specific objective 1(b) 'innovation delivery'. This mirrors the number of applications submitted under the two specific objectives (respectively 11 and 56).

In the second call for proposals, 46 out of 211 applications were submitted under priority axis 1 (22%). 19 of them were finally approved by the monitoring committee (29% of the approved ones). Within the two investment priorities, the figures confirm the trend started with the first call projects: 79% of the projects are approved under specific objective 1(b). As a result, 40 projects are approved under priority 1. This is the most popular priority axis of the programme.

Opportunities offered by the first priority axis of the programme were promoted at different thematic events such as the ERRIN workshop in September 2016.

Concerning the policy learning platform, the following activities took place in 2016:

Policy briefs published on the programme website related to:

- The triple helix challenge - Science and policy making-bridging the gap
- Enabling synergies through coordination between H2020 and ESIF
- Clusters in support of Smart Specialisation Policy implementation

Participation and presentation of the policy learning platform in:

- S3 Steering Team meeting of the DG REGIO on 4 October 2016 in Brussels
- DG Regio Smart Growth matrix meeting on 20 October 2016 in Brussels
- Kick-off event of the Smart Specialisation Platform on Industrial Modernisation on 16-17 November 2016 in Barcelona
- Kick-off event of the S3 Platform on Agro-Food on 6-7 December 2016 in Florence

Articles published on the Interreg Europe website on:

- 21 Interreg Europe projects focusing on strengthening research, technological development and innovation
- Innovation ecosystems and role of frontrunners in mutual learning
- Innovation Union spurs Europe's innovation capacities and reduces fragmentation



- Cluster policymakers meet in Brussels to define Clusters 4.0 Strategy for Europe
- Paving the way to create impact from knowledge

The kick off of the policy learning platform took place at the EWRC on 11 October 2016 in Brussels. 140 participants participated and shared feedback on the services and thematic focus of the platform planned for the first year.

It is still too early in the programme's implementation to be able to assess properly the progress made in achieving its objectives. The first projects started in April 2016 and the platform in the fall 2016.

Nevertheless, as far as the projects are concerned, the results of the first two calls for proposals and in particular the following features of the 40 projects approved in priority axis 1 provide interesting elements regarding the future achievement of the objectives under this priority:

- a total of 339 partners involved,
- 59 MEUR of ERDF already allocated
- a total of 287 action plans to be finalised by the end of phase 1
- out of the 287 policy instruments addressed, 252 are Structural Funds programmes (88%).

So far, priority axis 1 is the most successful in terms of approved projects and success rate. Based on the above data, the implementation of priority 1 is also more successful than initially anticipated. This is reflected in the total ERDF amount allocated which already represents 70% of the total ERDF allocated to this priority axis. This is also reflected in the number of action plans envisaged, which already exceeds the target value provided in the cooperation programme (i.e. 230). It is therefore likely that most of the objectives initially set for this priority will be reached, if not exceeded. It also means that the milestones set for 2018 in the cooperation programme should be hopefully also reached.

There are several reasons which may explain this situation:

- The fact that the smart specialisation strategies have become so important in the current programming period. The level of awareness of the EU regions on TO1 in general and S3 in particular is good. The fact that the S3 methodology promotes interregional cooperation as a means to improve the strategies also plays in favour of priority axis 1.
- The fact that the initial number of projects the programme would support might have been underestimated with an average ERDF budget per project lower than anticipated.
- The fact that the policy instruments addressed are in their vast majority Structural Funds programmes although the eligibility rules just stipulate that at least half of the policy instrument addressed in a project must be Structural Funds programmes.

Priority axis

2 - Competitiveness of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises

In the first call, 17 projects (26% of those approved) were approved under priority axis 2. In the second call, 52 out of 211 applications were submitted under priority axis 2 (25%) and 16 of them were finally approved by the monitoring committee (24% of the approved ones). As a result, a total of 33 projects are approved under priority axis 2. Applicants show a constantly high level of interest in this priority.

Opportunities offered by the second priority axis of the programme were promoted at different thematic events such as the EURADA event in May 2016.

Concerning the policy learning platform, the following activities took place in 2016:

Policy briefs published on the Interreg Europe website on:

- The role of regions in the implementation of the Small Business Act for Europe enabling synergies through coordination between H2020 and ESIF

Participation and presentation of the policy learning platform in:

- 7th Strategy Forum EUSBSR on 9 October 2016 in Stockholm

Articles published on the programme website on:

- 33 Interreg Europe projects focus on competitiveness of SMEs innovation ecosystems and role of frontrunners in mutual learning

The kick off of the policy learning platform took place at the EWRC on 11 October 2016 in Brussels. 140 participants participated and shared feedback on the services and thematic focus of the platform planned for the first year.

It is still too early in the programme's implementation to be able to assess properly the progress made in achieving its objectives. The first projects started in April 2016 and the platform in the fall 2016.

Nevertheless, as far as the projects are concerned, the results of the first two calls for proposals and in particular the following features of the 33 projects approved in priority axis 2 provide interesting elements regarding the future achievement of the objectives under this priority:

- a total of 262 partners involved,
- 42 MEUR of ERDF already allocated
- a total of 235 action plans to be finalised by the end of phase 1
- out of the 235 policy instruments addressed, 202 are Structural Funds programmes (86%).

Based on this information, the implementation of priority 2 is progressing smoothly. The total ERDF amount allocated so far perfectly complies with the initial plan, since half of the budget is committed after two calls. In terms of quality, the initial objectives may also be exceeded since the focus on Structural Funds is higher than anticipated and more projects may also be approved. This is the reason why the number of action plans planned by the 33 projects (235) already exceeded the final target set in the cooperation programme (230). It also means that the milestones set for 2018 in the cooperation programme should be hopefully also reached.

In the first call for proposals, 15 projects were approved under priority axis 3 (23% of the approved projects). In the second call, 40 out of 211 applications were submitted under priority axis 3 (19%). 16 of them were finally approved by the monitoring committee (24% of the approved ones). As a result, 31 projects are approved under priority axis 3. It is similar to priority 2 in terms of number of approved projects. The main topics of the projects refer to energy efficiency (11) and mobility (14). Only one project focuses on renewable energies. This configuration follows a similar trend as in the previous programming period, where energy efficiency was more popular among projects.

Opportunities offered by the third priority axis of the programme were promoted at different thematic events such as the Euro chambers meeting in April 2016, the informal Energy and Managing Authorities (EMA) Network event (May 2016) or during the Sustainable Energy week in June 2016.

Concerning the policy learning platform, the following activities took place in 2016:

Policy briefs published on the programme website on:

- Low-Carbon Economy

Participation and presentation of the policy learning platform in:

- European Sustainable Energy Week (EUSEW) on 13-17 June 2016 in Brussels
- ERRIN S3 Working Group on 19 September 2016 in Brussels
- Info Day - HR2020 Energy Efficiency Call on 19 September 2016 in Brussels
- Energy and Managing Authorities network on 10 May 2016 in Brussels
- Smart Specialisation: Energy and Innovation in European Regions on 13 October 2016 in Brussels

Articles published on the Interreg Europe website on:

- The Global Green Economy Index 2016 (TO4+TO6)
- Urban Agenda for the EU (TO4+TO6)
- Driving Europe's transition to a low-carbon economy
- Paris Agreement to enter into force as EU agrees ratification
- Policy learning lab: practical approaches for smart and sustainable regions (TO1,TO3,TO4,TO6)
- Winners of the Regiostars Awards 2016 (TO1,TO3,TO4,TO6)
- Cohesion Policy at work: key outcomes of EU investments in 2007-2013
- 31 Interreg Europe Projects target low-carbon economy

The kick off of the policy learning platform took place at the EWRC on 11 October 2016 in Brussels. 140 participants participated and shared feedback on the services and thematic focus of the platform planned for the first year.

It is still too early in the programme's implementation to be able to assess properly the progress made in achieving its objectives. The first projects started in April 2016 and

the platform in the fall 2016.

Nevertheless, as far as the projects are concerned, the results of the first two calls for proposals and in particular the following features of the 31 projects approved in priority axis 3 provide interesting elements regarding the future achievement of the objectives under this priority:

- a total of 243 partners involved,
- 47 MEUR of ERDF already allocated
- a total of 208 action plans to be finalised by the end of phase 1
- out of the 208 policy instruments addressed, 156 are Structural Funds programmes (75%).

Based on this information, the implementation of priority 3 is progressing smoothly. The total ERDF amount allocated so far complies with the initial plan: a bit more than half of the budget is committed after two calls. In terms of quality, the initial objectives may be exceeded since the focus on Structural Funds is higher than anticipated and more projects may also be approved. It also means that the milestones set for 2018 in the cooperation programme should be hopefully also reached.

Priority axis	4 - Environment and Resource Efficiency
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In the first call for proposals, 11 projects were approved under priority axis 4 (17% of the approved projects). In the second call for proposals, 73 out of 211 applications were submitted under priority axis 4 (34%). Only 15 of them were finally approved by the monitoring committee (23% of the approved ones). Applications submitted under this priority have an overall lower quality compared to the rest of the project proposals. As a result, a total of 26 projects are approved under priority axis 4. This priority has the lowest number of running projects, although the number of applications was higher than in the other priorities.

Within the two investment priorities, the numbers of projects are almost equally shared (14 projects under 'natural and cultural heritage' and 12 under 'resource efficiency').

Opportunities offered by the fourth priority axis of the programme were promoted at different thematic events such as the Urban Agenda event in May 2016.

Concerning the policy learning platform, the following activities took place in 2016:

Policy briefs published on IR-E website on:

- Pathways to a circular economy in cities and regions
- The role of regional cooperation in preserving cultural heritage

Participation and presentation of the policy learning platform in:

- European Network of Environment and Managing Authorities (ENEA-MA) on 28 June 2016 in Brussels

Articles published on the programme website on:

- EC Report: Integration of Natura 2000 and biodiversity into EU funding
- New EEA report: Environmental taxation and EU environmental policies
- The Global Green Economy Index 2016 (TO4, TO6)
- Urban Agenda for the EU (TO4, TO6)
- Winners of the Regiostars Awards 2016 (TO1, TO3, TO4, TO6)
- Cohesion Policy at work: key outcomes of EU investments in 2007-2013
- European companies awarded for their green business solutions
- The role of rivers and lakes in European cities, new EEA report
- Circular Economy - hot topic in EU's investment support for a sustainable and low carbon future
- European Commission guide "Improving Resource Efficiency in SMEs"
- 12 Interreg Europe projects support resource efficiency and circular economy
- Municipal waste is decreasing in Europe
- Growing success for Europe's Green jobs
- Nine Interreg Europe projects promote the protection of Europe's cultural heritage
- Five Interreg Europe projects target nature protection in Europe

The kick off of the policy learning platform took place at the EWRC on 11 October 2016 in Brussels. 140 participants participated and shared feedback on the services and thematic focus of the platform planned for the first year.

It is still too early in the programme's implementation to be able to assess properly the progress made in achieving its objectives. The first projects started in April 2016 and the platform in the fall 2016.

Nevertheless, as far as the projects are concerned, the results of the first two calls for proposals and in particular the following features of the 26 projects approved in priority axis 4 provide interesting elements regarding the future achievement of the objectives under this priority:

- a total of 204 partners involved,
- 34 MEUR of ERDF already allocated
- a total of 163 action plans to be finalised by the end of phase 1
- out of the 163 policy instruments addressed, 120 are Structural Funds programmes (74%).

Based on this information, it appears that priority 4 is the least successful in particular in terms of the success rate and the number of approved projects. The implementation is also slightly lagging behind in financial terms since the ERDF amount allocated so far is below the initial plan (40% of the total budget is committed after two calls). However, in terms of quality, the initial objectives may still be achieved since, similarly to the other priority axes, the focus on Structural Funds is higher than anticipated and more projects may also be approved. It means that the milestones set for 2018 in the cooperation programme may be hopefully also reached.

In order to face the above situation, the programme monitoring committee decided to put a special emphasis on priority axis 4 in the terms of reference for the third call for project proposals.

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Priority axis	5 - Technical Assistance
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It is too early to fully assess the effective and efficient delivery of the programme due to the technical assistance activities implementation, as the projects only started their activities in April 2016.

However, with 59.18% of the overall programme budget already committed (130 projects approved out of 472 applications received since the start of the programme, the policy learning platform and technical assistance), it can be considered that the first two calls were successful thanks to the efficient communication activities and assistance to project applicants organised at the programme and national levels and well-designed and efficient selection and approval procedures.

In parallel, the development of the management and control system description and underlying procedures in 2016 should allow the programme authorities to manage the programme efficiently and ensure good quality projects and the proper use of the Union and Norwegian funding.

In relation to the spending targets, as the interregional projects did not yet report costs in 2016, the figures in table 3.4 include only costs of the policy learning platform and technical assistance. However, interregional projects started to report costs to the programme at the beginning of 2017.

In addition, in 2016 the Interreg Europe monitoring committee approved the following measures in order to avoid projects underspending:

- Possibility for the monitoring committee to approve budget cuts for individual partners not reporting after three reporting periods, enabling the committee to reallocate unspent budget to other projects;
- Following a mid-term review for all projects where any underspending issues will be discussed with the joint secretariat, the monitoring committee has the possibility to approve changes in projects' activities and/ or budget before the start of the second project phase.

As the programme was approved in 2015, the first decommitment target will have to be reached in 2018. Based on the payment forecasts submitted to the EC for 2017-2018, the programme is confident that no budget will be decommitted in 2018. The programme continues to monitor closely the projects and programme implementation and spending targets and will report expenditure to the EC regularly through interim payment claims as soon as the managing authority (MA) and the certifying authority (CA) are designated. To do so, the MA and CA have agreed on a yearly indicative planning of interim payment claims. The MA has also put in place measures to help projects report on time (eg. online submission of progress report and online first level control process) and more easily than in the previous period through simplification measures (see section 11.2). These measures should also help with the spending rate of projects and therefore of the programme.

**9.2. Specific actions taken to promote equality between men and women and to promote non-discrimination, in particular accessibility for persons with disabilities, and the arrangements implemented to ensure the integration of the gender perspective in the cooperation programme and operations (Article 50(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 and Article 14(4), subparagraph 2, (d) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)**

An assessment of the implementation of specific actions to take into account the principles set out in Article 7 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 on promotion of equality between men and women and non-discrimination, including, where relevant, depending on the content and objectives of the cooperation programme, an overview of specific actions taken to promote equality between men and women and to promote non-discrimination, including accessibility for persons with disabilities, and the arrangements implemented to ensure the integration of the gender perspective in the cooperation programme and operations

As far as projects are concerned, the equality and non-discrimination principles are directly integrated in the application form (section C.7 on horizontal principles). Each lead partner has to explain to which extent their project contributes to these principles. Based on the explanation, the lead partner selects whether the project is neutral or positive with regards to equality and non-discrimination. This information is part of the selection criterion n°4 'Coherence of the proposal and quality of the approach'. In case the information provided there is not satisfactory and that the project is approved by the monitoring committee, the assessor systematically integrates a condition where the lead partner has to clarify the project positioning towards these principles.

Although none of the programme priority axes directly focuses on these principles, 46 out of 130 approved projects (35%) managed to demonstrate a positive contribution to equality and non-discrimination principles.

### **9.3.Sustainable development (Article 50(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 and Article 14(4), subparagraph 2, (e) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)**

An assessment of the implementation of actions to take into account the principles set out in Article 8 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 on sustainable development, including, where relevant, depending on the content and objectives of the cooperation programme, an overview of the actions taken to promote sustainable development in accordance with that Article

As far as projects are concerned, sustainable development principle is directly integrated in the application form (section C.7 on horizontal principles). Each lead partner has to explain to which extent their project contributes to this principle. Based on the explanation, the lead partner selects whether the project is neutral or positive with regards to sustainable development. This information is part of the selection criterion n°4 'Coherence of the proposal and quality of the approach'. In case the information provided there is not satisfactory and that the project is approved by the monitoring committee, the assessor systematically integrates a condition where the lead partner has to clarify the project's positioning towards this principle.

Obviously, all 57 projects approved under priority axes 3 and 4 directly contribute to sustainable development. But this is also the case of 37 projects approved under priority axes 1 and 2. As a result, 94 out of 130 approved projects (72%) managed to demonstrate a positive contribution to sustainable development.



#### 9.4. Reporting on support used for climate change objectives (Article 50(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)

Calculated amount of support to be used for climate change objectives based on the cumulative financial data by category of intervention in Table 7

<b>Priority axis</b>	<b>Amount of support to be used for climate change objectives (EUR)</b>	<b>Proportion of total allocation to the operational programme (%)</b>
3	17,935,990.19	21.24%
<b>Total</b>	<b>17,935,990.19</b>	<b>4.99%</b>

As stipulated in section 8.1 of the cooperation programme, Interreg Europe addresses climate change mainly through the 31 projects already approved under the 'Low carbon economy' priority axis.

### **9.5 Role of partners in the implementation of the cooperation programme (Article 50(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 and Article 14(4), subparagraph 1, (c) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)**

Assessment of the implementation of actions to take into account the role of partners referred to in Article 5 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, including involvement of the partners in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the cooperation programme

In compliance with section 5.6.2 of the cooperation programme, the Committee of the Regions (CoR) and the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) are official members of the Interreg Europe monitoring committee (MC). As such, they are systematically involved and invited to all MC meetings. So far, the EESC has been a rather passive member whereas the cooperation with the CoR kept on developing in 2016.

Beyond the composition of the MC, the Partner States also organise national committee meetings in order to involve relevant partners in the preparation of the programme MC meetings and get their support in the execution of the MC tasks.

The Partner States also support the programme by providing national specific information as necessary including information on potential beneficiaries, providing a point of contact for potential applicants, ensuring wide dissemination of programme information and organising national events.

**10. OBLIGATORY INFORMATION AND ASSESSMENT ACCORDING TO ARTICLE 14(4), SUBPARAGRAPH 1 (A) AND (B), OF REGULATION (EU) No 1299/2013**

**10.1 Progress in implementation of the evaluation plan and the follow-up given to the findings of evaluations**

The programme evaluation plan was presented and discussed for the first time during the first monitoring committee of the year in February in Utrecht. Further to the Partner States' comments, a second version was produced and approved through written procedure in March 2016.

According to this plan, the first external evaluation is planned for the end of 2018.

## 10.2 The results of the information and publicity measures of the Funds carried out under the communication strategy

The Interreg Europe programme communication strategy was approved by the monitoring committee on 30 October 2015. In 2016, the strategy was updated with an additional objective related to the approved projects and related activities. The update was approved by the monitoring committee in February 2016 in Utrecht.

In order to reach the communication objectives, three areas of activities are being implemented; online, public and media relations, and events and meetings. Reach to the following target groups is monitored: public authorities (national, regional, local, EGTC, EEIG), EU programmes/ institutions (ETC, EU), business support organisations, higher education/ research/ training centres, sectoral agencies, infrastructure and (public) service providers, interest groups including NGOs.

In 2016, the following outputs were generated using the three channels.

### Online

Following the Interreg Europe programme website launch in October 2015, the developments continued. The main new features were project websites, document library and improved project idea feedback system. The programme website saw on average 28 539 sessions per month.

The Interreg Europe project websites are integrated into the programme website. In August, 64 first call projects had their websites launched. Training on how to edit them was provided in September. The top performing project websites already saw close to 300 sessions per month attracting people with news articles and regular updates as well as sharing the content on social media and via their newsletters.

Interreg Europe online community grew by almost 45% in 2016 exceeding 9000 registered members. They enjoyed services such as partner search or project idea feedback. New video content was produced to guide applicants on project proposal preparation and project partners on reporting. One third of the community users signed up for the programme newsletter. 25% of the subscribers come from public authorities or EU programmes/ institutions. Over one third represents other than the monitored target groups.

Interreg Europe newsletter was sent regularly to inform subscribers about the programme developments and news. In 2016, the newsletter audience grew from 3000 to 8000. The newsletter reach goes beyond the Interreg Europe online community.

Interreg Europe continued to grow follower base also on social media (Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn).

Second call information campaign was launched in February 2016 across all Interreg Europe communication channels.

After a pilot webinar in late 2015, the programme held a number of webinars and e-learning events in 2016. The online events were organised for:

- partners in approved projects (welcome webinar for lead partners in February with 88 participants; five online question and answer sessions on progress reporting in the fall with 124 participants)

- potential applicants (eight online question and answer sessions on the second call in spring with 194 participants; four lead applicant webinars in March with 985 participants)
- Partner State representatives (online briefing on the second call in February with 22 points of contact; online training on the use of the programme statistics in August)

The webinars welcomed 1421 participants in total with 4.2 as an average score on how informative or useful the event was (with 5 as the top score).

Development of the policy learning platform online services kicked off in September 2016 and initial updates were implemented on the Interreg Europe website in October. The work continues in 2017.

Starting from October, the policy learning platform experts were contributing to the Interreg Europe website with policy briefs and articles on their topics. 36 were published in 2016 and some of them further disseminated on social media or in the Interreg Europe newsletter.

### **Public and media relations**

The programme held a briefing on the second call for the national/ regional points of contact in February and supported them in organising 30 national/ regional information days in 2016 on the second call for proposals and 7 events on the third call (opened in 2017). The joint secretariat prepared presentation templates for the events, country-specific statistics on the first call and the secretariat staff took part in close to half of these events in order to provide more extensive assistance to potential applicants (e.g. by consultation on a project idea). The Partner State representatives reported over 1600 people participating in the information events.

As for media relations, the programme communication strategy foresees the project beneficiaries to play the key role in disseminating the news about their activities among the general public. The programme trained the first call project communication managers on media relations in September. Their first progress reports, submitted at the end of the year, accumulated 754 media appearances on the 64 running projects, reaching on average 28% of the target value set by the projects themselves.

### **Events and meetings**

#### **1/ Promotion of the second call**

Information events, applicant seminars and Europe-wide partner search event took place in 2016 to promote the funding available and attract suitable applicants to apply during the second call for proposals.

- Organisation of information campaign for the second call (5 April - 13 May 2016)
- Programme annual event ‘Europe, let’s cooperate!’ with networking, partners search and lead applicant workshops in Rotterdam (NL) in March 2016 (511 participants, 1145 unique online participants, the event met expectations of 97% of evaluation respondents)
- Lead applicant webinars, video available on-demand (April 2016)
- **37** national and regional information seminars organised by Partner States, 1600

participants

- **94** project ideas received feedback from the joint secretariat
- Updated flyer on the programme was published:  
[https://www.interregeurope.eu/fileadmin/user\\_upload/documents/Interreg\\_Europe\\_brochure.pdf](https://www.interregeurope.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/documents/Interreg_Europe_brochure.pdf)

## **2/ Support for the first call projects**

Projects approved in February 2016 were invited to trainings for smooth implementation of their activities and reporting:

- Lead partner welcome webinar (February)
- Lead partner seminar (March)
- Communication and finance seminars (September)
- Training seminars for the first level controllers (June)

## **3/ External events**

The programme actively contributed to EU events and initiatives: European Week of Regions and Cities, EU Sustainable Energy Week, Smart Regions conference, etc.

Three workshops organised during #EURegionsWeek attracted more than 300 participants:

- Policymaking in 21st century
- Policy learning lab: practical approaches for smart and sustainable regions
- Pathways to a circular economy in cities and regions

Interreg Europe was actively involved in the discussions and related events on the simplification procedures led by the CoR.

The joint secretariat actively participated in various meetings organised by the CoR, DG Regio, INTERACT and joined the INFORM – INIO network meeting.

**11. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION WHICH MAY BE ADDED DEPENDING ON THE CONTENT AND OBJECTIVES OF THE COOPERATION PROGRAMME (ARTICLE 14(4), SUBPARAGRAPH 2 (A), (B), (C) AND (F), OF REGULATION (EU) NO 1299/2013)**

**11.1 Progress in implementation of the integrated approach to territorial development, including sustainable urban development, and community-led local development under the cooperation programme**

Due to its specific focus on Structural Funds programme, Interreg Europe can be related to integrated approach to territorial development in particular through its priority axis 3 on low carbon economy. Seven projects already deal with urban mobility and therefore contribute to sustainable urban development.

This can also be the case of other individual projects such as PERFECT on green infrastructure or MOLOC on low carbon strategy in urban areas. The project INTHERWASTE which tackles the challenge of integrated waste management in heritage cities can also be mentioned although it is approved under priority axis 4.

## 11.2 Progress in implementation of actions to reinforce the capacity of authorities and beneficiaries to administer and to use the ERDF

In 2016, the programme started implementing the simplification measures adopted by the monitoring committee and detailed in the programme manual. In particular, the programme makes use of the following simplified costs options which were automatically applied to facilitate the reporting of costs for all beneficiaries:

- a lump sum for preparation costs (EUR 15 000)
- a flat rate for the budget line 'office and administration' (15% of staff costs)

Under the technical assistance budget, standard scale of unit costs are also used for programme events organised by the national points of contact (NPC) and NPC travel costs.

The joint secretariat also continued to develop its online system allowing projects to submit their applications online in 2016 and the first online reporting of projects in 2017. Tools for first level controllers based on the Harmonised Implementation Tools (HIT) developed by INTERACT (and also further harmonised with the other Interreg programmes managed by the Hauts-de-France Region) were also provided by the programme to the first level controllers (eg. control report and FLC certificate).

In addition, the reporting procedure has also been streamlined by removing one control step: once the partner reports have been verified and confirmed by their first level controller, they no longer have to be re-confirmed by the lead partner's first level controller. Measures have also been taken to allow more budget flexibility for projects, thus shifting the focus more on results.

Finally, to allow projects and first level controllers (FLC) to be aware of programme rules and requirements and ensure smooth reporting, the joint secretariat organised in 2016 seminars for lead partners and FLC as well as webinars on how to report activities and costs that could be attended also by project partners (not only lead partners). Videos targeting project applicants and partners were also posted on the programme website.

Compared to the previous programming period, and as described in section 10.2, a number of online tools (such as webinars and videos) are now used by the programme, multiplying the opportunities for project applicants, partners and controllers to obtain detailed information about the programme procedures and tools and to have their questions answered. This is also a cost-efficient way for the programme to extend its communication scope beyond the traditional targets of the physical seminars (that is, lead applicants and lead partners) to project applicants and partners.

The simplification measures, electronic submission and training opportunities mentioned above were designed and implemented to reinforce both:

- the capacity of beneficiaries to use and report the allocated ERDF and concentrate on the project implementation and results, and
- the capacity of programme and national authorities to administer the ERDF and concentrate on the monitoring of projects' implementation and results.



### 11.3 Contribution to macro-regional and sea basin strategies (where appropriate)

As stipulated by the Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013, recital 19, article 8(3)(d) on the "Content, adoption and amendment of cooperation programmes" and article 14(4) 2nd subparagraph (c) "Implementation reports", this programme contributes to MRS(s) and/or SBS:

Interreg Europe could be related to the development of macro-regional strategy or sea basin strategies since the programme is also supposed to capitalise on ETC programmes including transnational cooperation programmes. But so far, neither the projects nor the platform have been related in one way or another to these issues.

- EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR)
- EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR)
- EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR)
- EU Strategy for the Alpine Region (EUSALP)
- Atlantic Sea Basin Strategy (ATLSBS)

#### **11.4 Progress in the implementation of actions in the field of social innovation**

Interreg Europe is not directly addressing social innovation even if a few projects approved under priority axis 1 can be indirectly related to social innovation. This is the case of the four projects dealing with innovation in the health sector (i.e. HELIUM, HoCare, TITTAN and ITHACA).

### **13. SMART, SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH**

Information and assessment of the programme contribution to achieving the Union strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

Even if it is obviously too early to assess the programme contribution to the smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, it should still be highlighted that all 130 projects approved in 2016 aimed at improving regional development policies that directly contribute to smart and sustainable growth. Due to the thematic focus of the programme, the contribution to inclusive growth is more indirect even if a few projects like SOCIAL SEEDS or RaiSE (addressing social enterprises) have an important inclusive dimension.

**14. ISSUES AFFECTING THE PERFORMANCE OF THE PROGRAMME AND MEASURES TAKEN — PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK (ARTICLE 50(2) OF REGULATION (EU) No 1303/2013)**

Where the assessment of progress made with regard to the milestones and targets set out in the performance framework demonstrates that certain milestones and targets have not been achieved, Member States should outline the underlying reasons for failure to achieve these milestones in the report of 2019 (for milestones) and in the final implementation report (for targets).

N/A

## Documents

Document title	Document type	Document date	Local reference	Commission reference	Files	Sent date	Sent By
Interreg Europe Annual Implementation Report citizen summary 2016	Citizens' summary	29-Jun-2017		Ares(2017)3256102	Interreg Europe Annual Implementation Report citizen summary 2016	29-Jun-2017	nguefore