

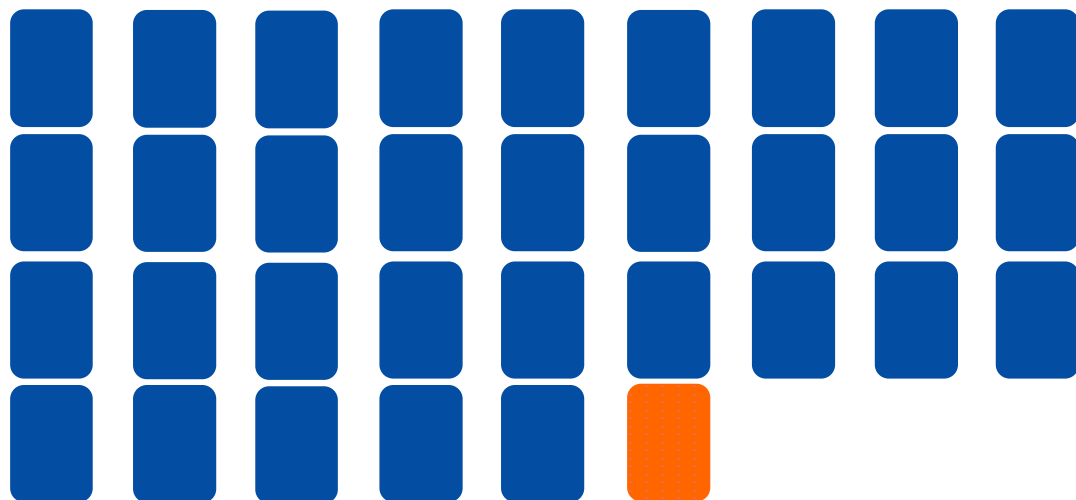


# Interreg: protecting nature across borders

*Simona POHLOVA, Deputy Head of Unit  
DG REGIO, Unit D.2Interreg, Cross-Border Cooperation, Internal Borders*

# DG REGIO's work on territorial cooperation

## Interreg within Cohesion funding:



Cohesion  
**EUR 331 bn**

**Goal:**  
European Territorial Cooperation  
**EUR 8 bn ERDF +  
2 bn external**

## Beyond funding:

Border Focal Point

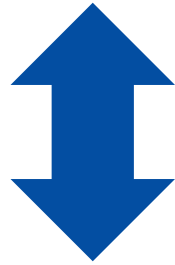


Macro-regional Strategies



# Interreg: one of the goals of cohesion policy

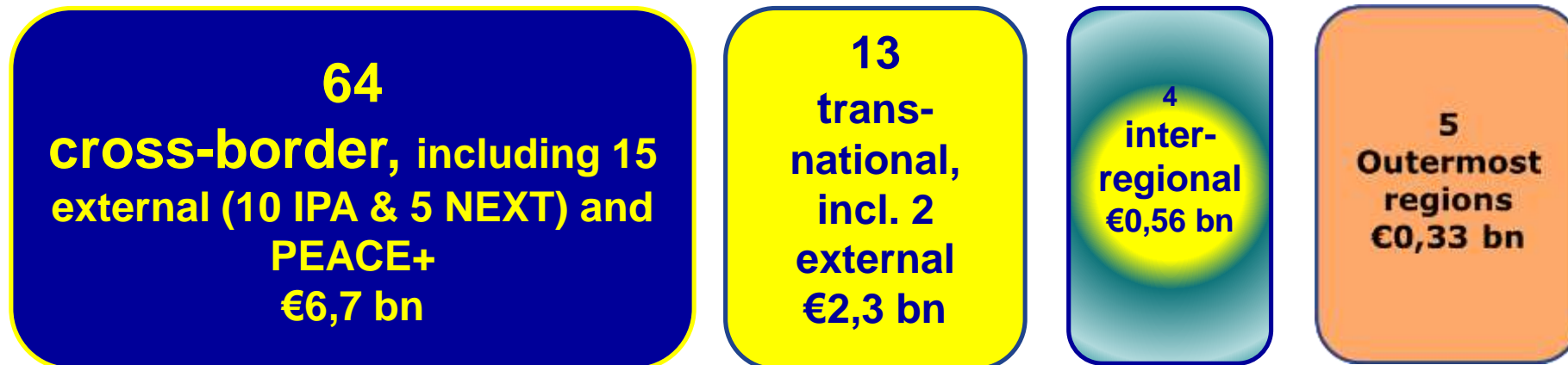
Fully **IN** cohesion (shared management, mostly identical rules and objectives)



**BUT** also different: everything is “international” – programmes, projects, partnerships + some management specificities + strong external dimension

# Interreg in 86 programmes operating accross the borders

- For the 2021-2027 programming period = EUR 10 billion
- 4 distinct strands: (A) cross-border, (B) transnational, (C) inter-regional and (D) outermost regions
- External cooperation is fully integrated



**Cooperation with Russia and Belarus has been suspended following the unjustified Russian aggression on Ukraine**

# Interreg contributes to several EU objectives



- 1 A more **competitive** and **smarter** Europe
2. A **greener**, low carbon transitioning towards a net zero carbon economy
3. A more **connected** Europe by enhancing mobility
4. A more **social** and inclusive Europe
5. Europe closer to **citizens** by fostering the sustainable and integrated development of all types of territories

## 2 Interreg-specific objectives

- Better Cooperation Governance
- Safer Europe

# Policy Objective 2 – Greener Europe

The contribution of Cohesion Policy to the EU Green Deal

Interreg  
EUR 3.6 bn

## Most prominent specific objectives in Interreg:



Climate change adaptation



Nature protection & biodiversity



Circular economy



Sustainable water management



Energy efficiency



Renewable energy

+ Sustainable urban mobility  
+ Smart energy systems

## Guiding principles

- At least **30% of allocations** per programme should be devoted to PO2.
- **Climate tracking** and **biodiversity tracking**: coefficients assigned to each intervention field, expressing the expected impacts of the related investments on the biodiversity and climate objectives.

0 %

No contribution

40%

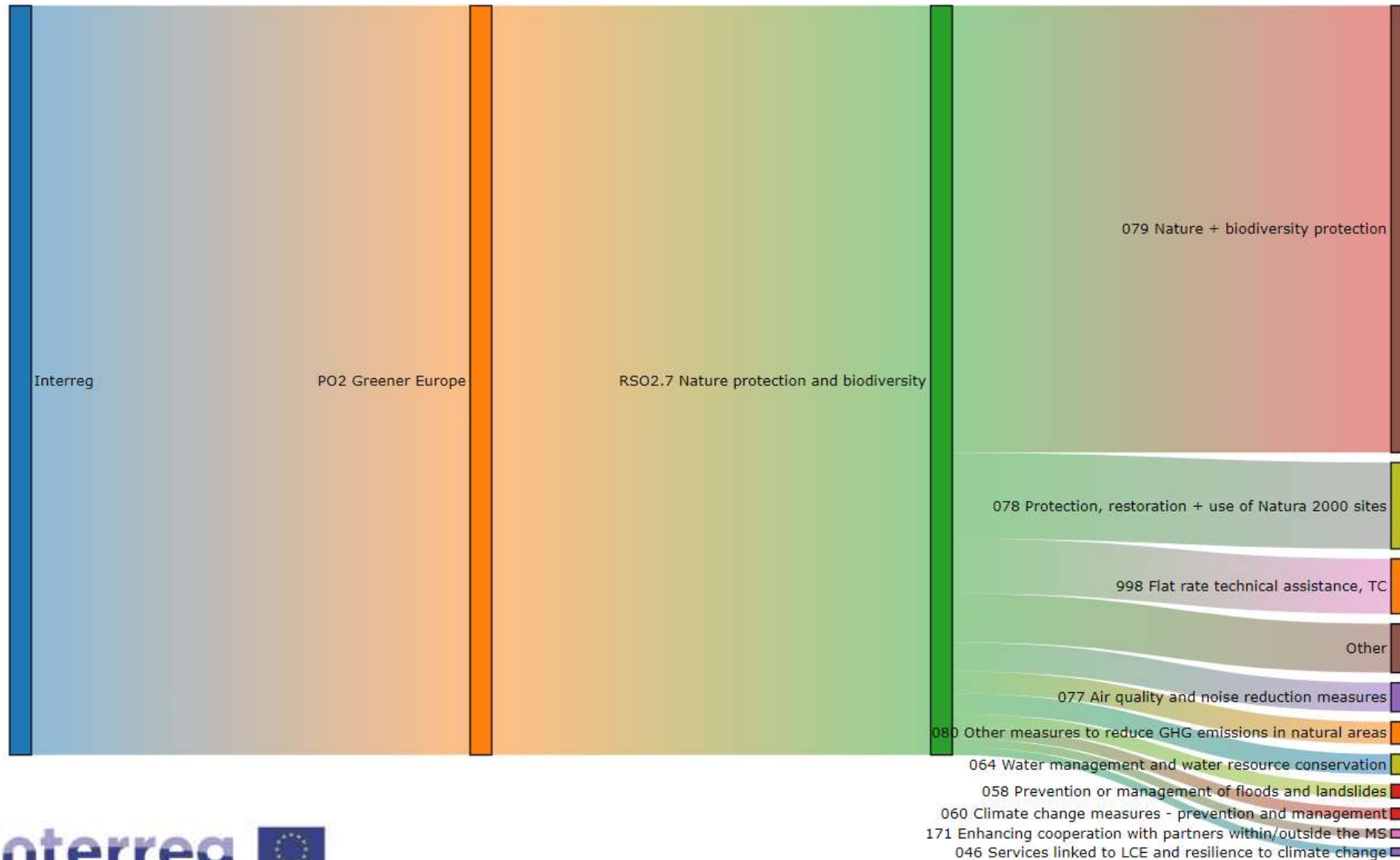
Moderate contribution

100%

Significant contribution

- **Do No Significant Harm** principle assessed during programming and during the selection of operations.

# Specific Objective 2.7 – Nature protection and biodiversity



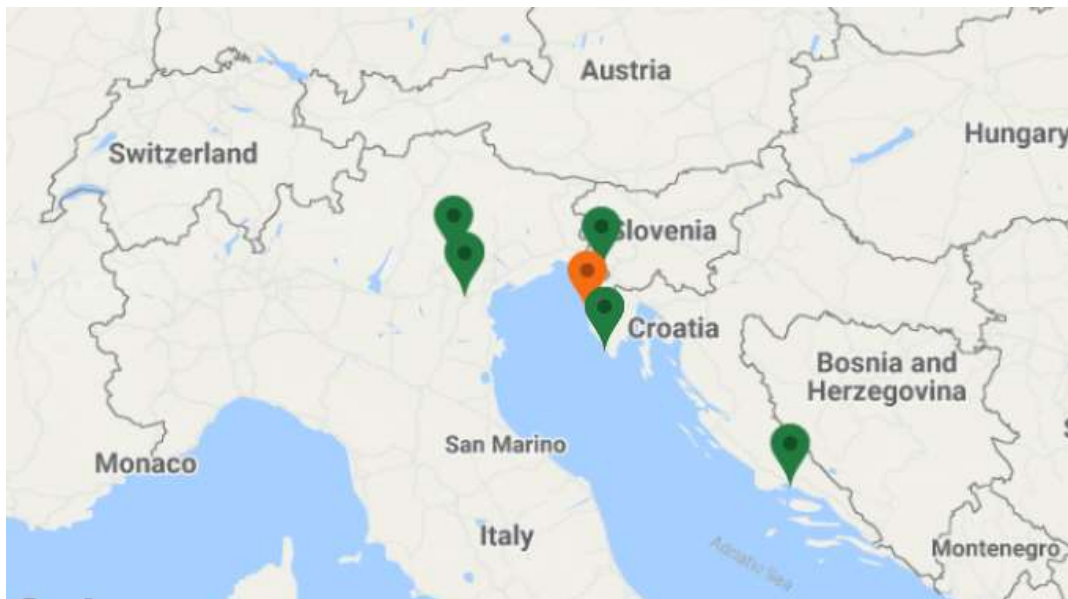
2021-2027 period  
**EUR 951.5 mln**

10 fields of  
intervention



# WASTEREDUCE

Integrated waste reduction strategies and solutions in projected and Natura 2000 areas



**Duration:** February 2024 – July 2026

**Budget:** EUR 1.6 million

**Objective:** reduce waste and its environmental impacts in Natura 2000 protected areas.

The project's approach includes **monitoring, prevention, reduction, and mitigation** strategies, focusing on rivers and coastal areas.

With a **cross-border perspective**, WASTEREDUCE addresses pollution issues affecting both green and blue areas, promoting collaboration for more effective waste management. The project's comprehensive approach spans various levels of analysis and involves collaboration among diverse stakeholders.

**Lead partner:** Institute of Agriculture and Tourism, Croatia

Interreg



Co-funded by  
the European Union

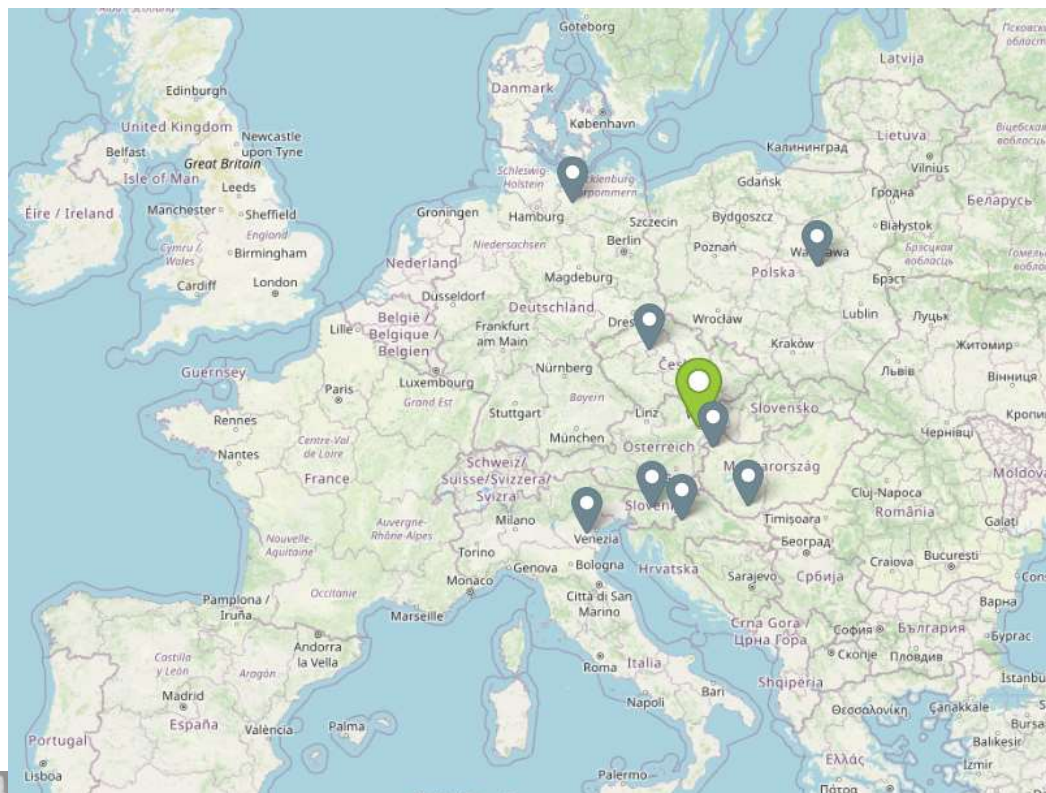
Italy – Croatia

WASTEREDUCE



# RE-ENFORCE

Transnational Cooperation on nature-based solutions for restoring degraded forests of Central Europe



**Duration:** June 2024 – May 2027

**Budget:** EUR 2.6 million

**Objective:** developing a transnational strategy for the restoration of degraded forests.

The strategy will be tested in **six pilot actions** taking place in areas damaged by climate change, increasing disturbances (droughts, bark beetles, fires and storms) or unsustainable forest management practices.

They will help researchers to study the drivers of degradation and provide a testing ground for nature-based solutions. A common understanding of the drivers of degradation and possible nature-based solutions is a step forward in the harmonisation of nature conservation policies in Central Europe.

**Lead partner:** Austrian Research Centre for Forests



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# Thank you



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