



EUROPEAN TERRITORIAL COOPERATION – CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION



Partnerships for Biodiversity – European policies and the role of Protected Areas

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Regional
Policy

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Introduction – EU Cohesion Policy

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Support to cooperation beyond funding



Introduction – EU Cohesion Policy

Cohesion policy 2014-2020



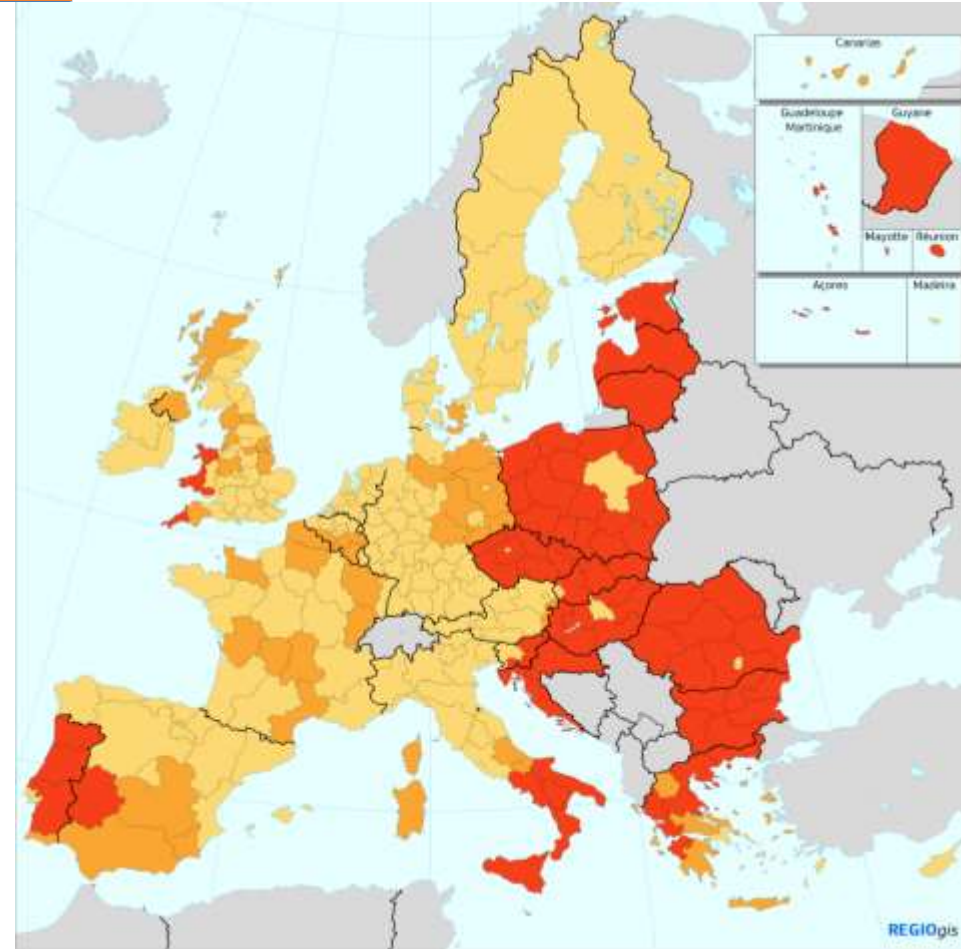
Three funds:

- European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)
- Cohesion Fund (CF)
- European Social Fund (ESF)

€352bn over 2014-2020 concentrated in less developed regions, aiming to:

- Reduce disparities between Europe's regions strengthening **economic, social and territorial cohesion**
- Contribute to the **Europe 2020 Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth**

Implemented by Member States, their regions and cities under **shared management**



ERDF and ESF eligibility for 2014-2020 period:





Smart Growth

1. Research and innovation
2. Information and communication technologies (ICT)
3. Competitiveness of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

Sustainable Growth

4. Shift towards a low-carbon economy
5. Climate change adaptation and risk management and prevention
6. Environmental protection and resource efficiency
7. Sustainable transport and removing bottlenecks in key network infrastructures

Inclusive Growth

8. Employment and support for labour mobility
9. Social inclusion and combating poverty
10. Education, skills and lifelong learning
11. Institutional capacity building and efficient public administration

Translated into Fund-specific investment priorities

2

**European Territorial Cooperation
known as**

Interreg 
EUROPEAN UNION

Interreg is ...?

- One of the two goals of **EU cohesion policy**
 - Investment for Growth & Jobs (IfGJ)
 - **European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) or "Interreg"**
- A **cooperation framework** between national, regional and local actors from different Member States
- A **tool** to promote a harmonious economic, social and territorial development of the Union as a whole (Treaty)
- An instrument that operates **at three different geographical levels**
- A major **financial support mechanism** for cooperation across borders (€10 billion 2014-2020)

Interreg V 2014-2020

**107 Territorial Cooperation Programmes
with a budget of €10.1 billion ERDF**



* ERDF Contribution to IPA (enlargement) and ENI (neighbourhood)



Cross-border cooperation now and after 2020

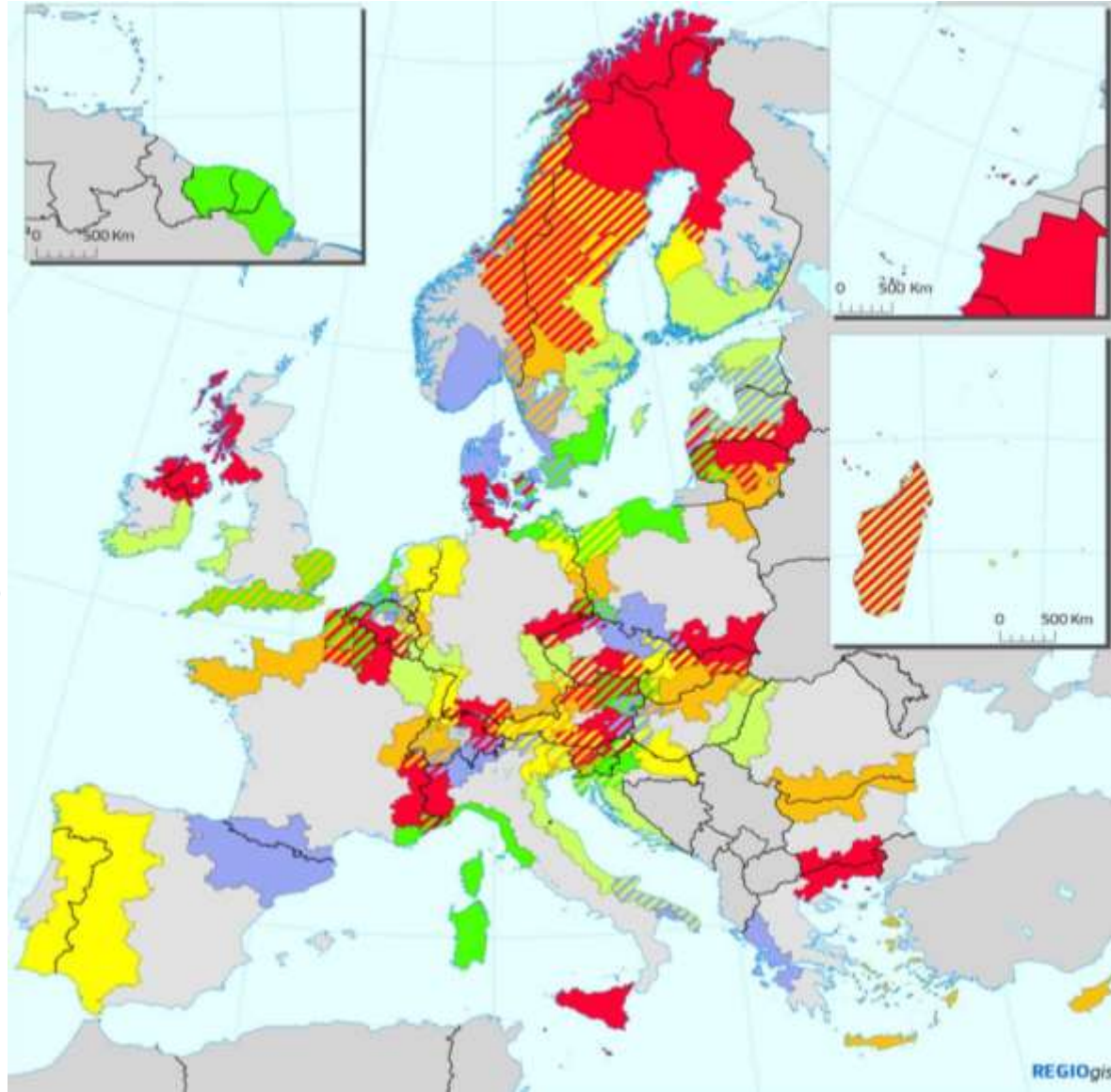
Interreg V A – Cross-border cooperation (CBC)

Eligible zones
NUTS III + maritime
borders (max. 150 km)

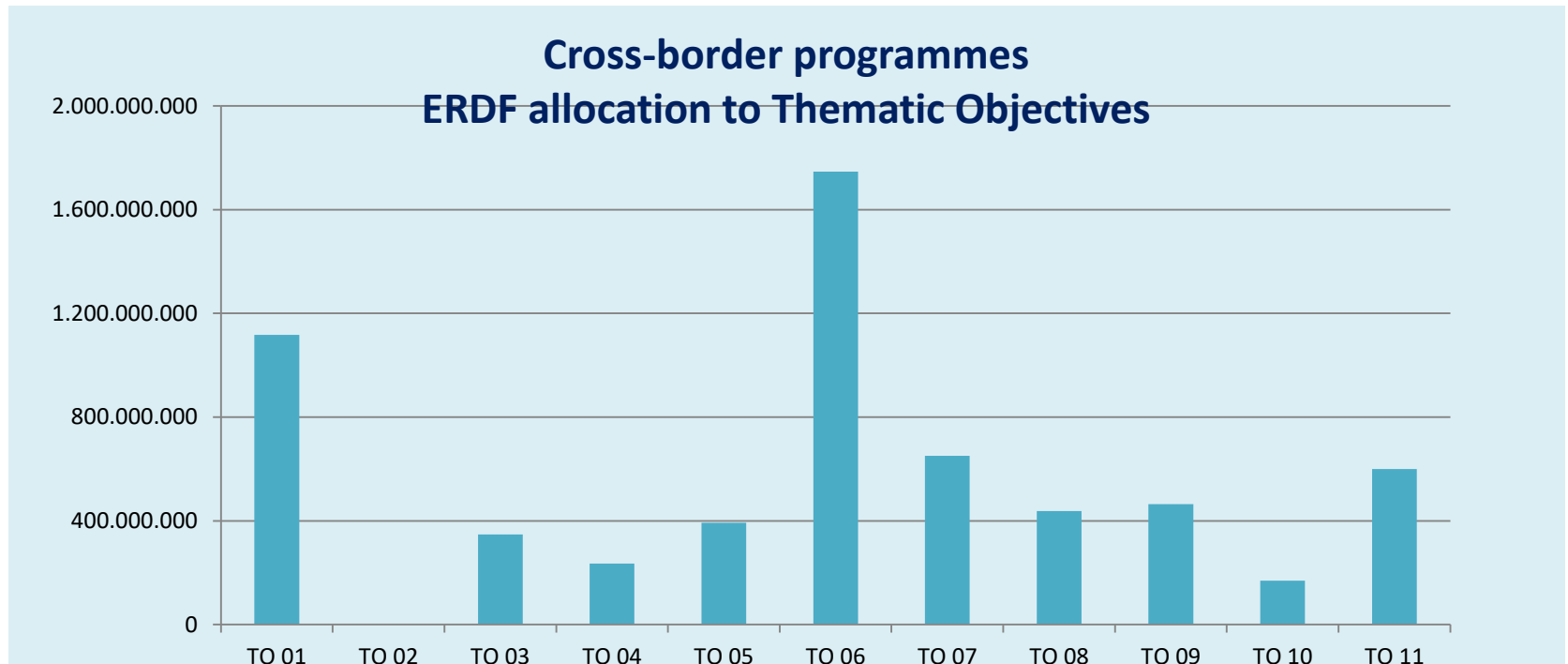
60 programmes
(incl. outermost regions)

Also 12 IPA CBC
programmes
(enlargement)

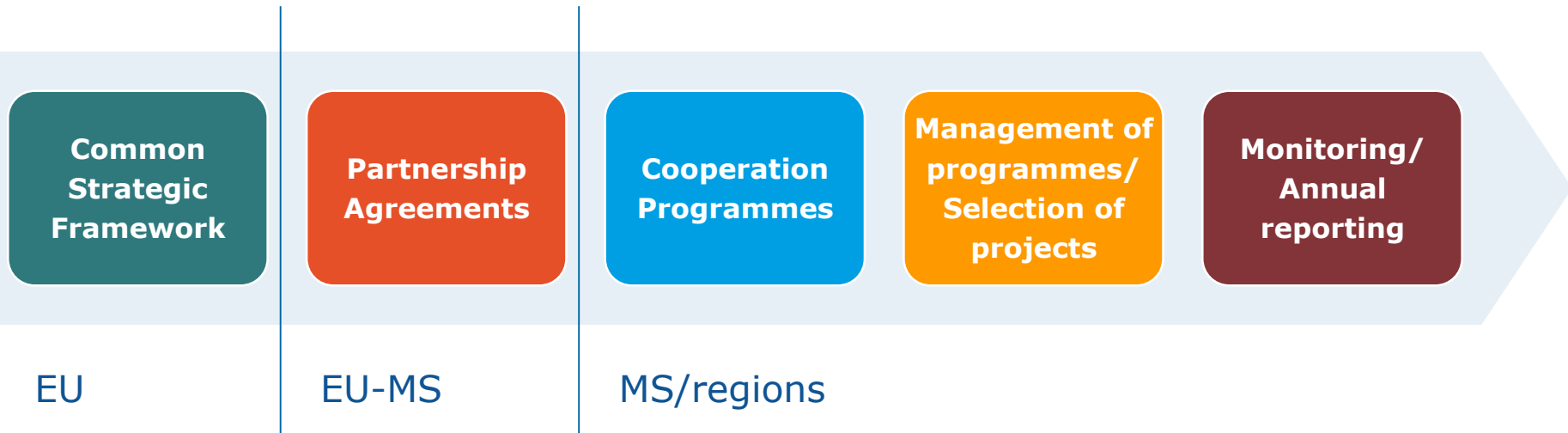
Usually 2 MS



Thematic focus – Interreg cross-border 2014-2020



Who does what?



Interreg projects

- Involvement of at least 2 **partners** from 2 different MS
- Projects need to match the **thematic scope** of the programme and contribute to its **results**
- (Usually) **relatively small** in size, compared to national or regional ERDF/CF projects
- EU co-financing up to **85%**
- Focus on **new solutions**, not business as usual
- **Many rules** are programme-specific (incl. eligibility)
- **Funding decisions** are taken by the monitoring committee
- Cooperation takes **time and effort**

After 2020...

Commission proposals tabled in May 2018 – negotiations ongoing

- Lower budget (Brexit) – €8.4 billion for Interreg, of which €4.4 billion for cross-border
- Maritime borders more embedded into sea-basin cooperation
- Link to governance of cross-border regions – % of the budget for this

Shorter and modern menu of priorities

5 policy objectives + 2 Interreg-specific objectives

1. A smarter Europe (innovative and smart economic transformation)
2. A greener, low-carbon Europe (including energy transition, circular economy, climate adaptation and risk management)
3. A more connected Europe (mobility and ICT connectivity)
4. A more social Europe (the European Pillar of Social Rights)
5. A Europe closer to citizens (sustainable development of urban, rural and coastal areas and local initiatives)

1. A better Interreg governance
2. A safer and more secure Europe

Thematic concentration!



Support to cooperation beyond funding

Funding and beyond



- **Interreg**
 - Joint strategy and money
- **European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC)**
 - Common structure and mutual trust
- **European Cross-Border Mechanism (ECBM)**
(proposal)
 - Legal obstacles and initiators

European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC)

- Legal instrument to facilitate and promote cross-border, transnational and interregional cooperation
- Allows public entities of different MS to come together under a new entity with full legal personality
- For example, an EGTC or EGTC members can be:
 - MS
 - Regional or local authorities
 - Any other bodies governed by public law
- Enables public authorities of various MS to team up and deliver joint services, without a prior international agreement to be signed and ratified by national parliaments
- MS must however agree to the participation of potential members in their respective countries
- The EGTC members conclude unanimously a convention and adopt statutes on the basis of this convention

More information at EGTC Platform, Committee of the Regions:
<https://portal.cor.europa.eu/egtc/about/Pages/platform.aspx>

EGTC – Examples

EGTCs specifically set up to manage a cross-border natural park:

- Parc européen / Parco europeo Alpi Marittime – Mercantour (FR/IT)
- Gruppo Europeo di Cooperazione Territoriale (G.E.C.T) Parco Marino Internazionale delle Bocche di Bonifacio (P.M.I.B.B) / Groupement Européen de Cooperation Territoriale (G.E.C.T) Parc Marin International des Bouches de Bonifacio (P.M.I.B.B.) (IT/FR)

An EGTC where the main purpose is not the management of natural parks, but which also covers that aspect:

- Eurométropole Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai (FR/BE)

A park is in the territory covered by an EGTC:

- Hautes Fagnes-Eifel Nature Park (territory of EGTC Euregio Meuse-Rhin) (BE/DE/NL)
- EGTC GECT Pyrénées-Méditerranée (FR/ES)
- EGTC Eurorégion Aquitaine-Euskadi (FR/ES)

European Cross-Border Mechanism (ECBM) proposal – What is it?

- A legal mechanism to overcome legal and administrative obstacles that hamper stronger cross-border interaction
- A framework to establish case by case agreements:
 - European Cross-Border Commitments (ECBC); or
 - European Cross-Border Statements (ECBS) to overcome existing obstacles
- Within those limits, allows for the application in one MS of the legal provisions from another MS

A policy background

25 Years of INTERREG



Many achievements for Cross-Border Cooperation, via funding



But...

What else can be done?

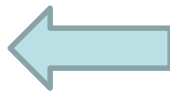


2015 – Cross-Border Review

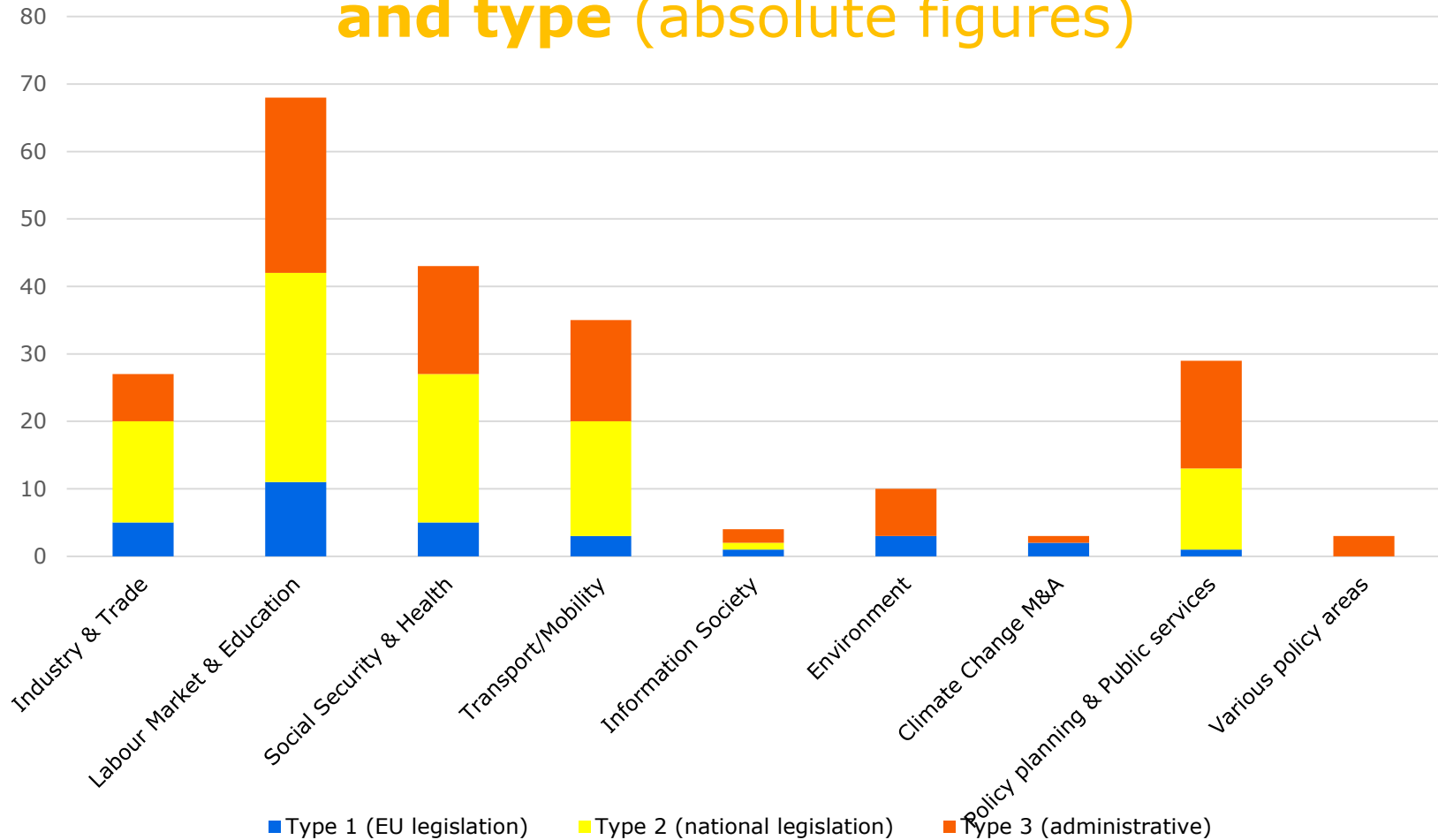
Consultation + Study (and inventory) + Stakeholders workshops



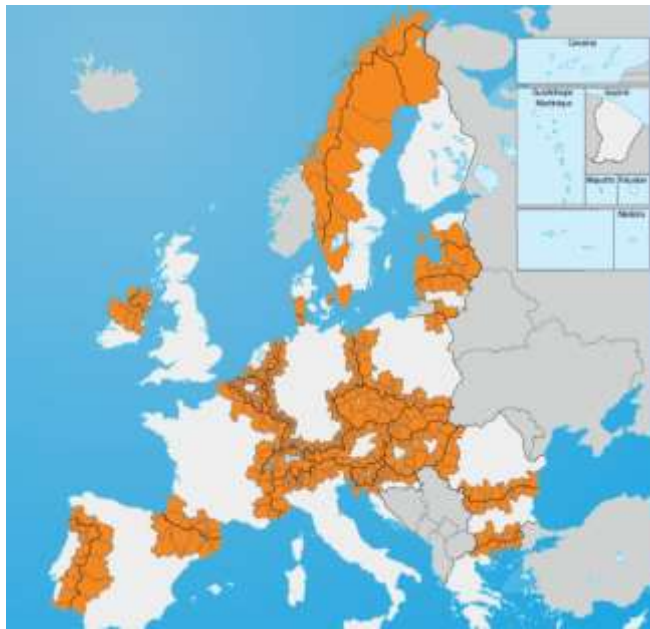
Need to promote Cross-Border Cooperation beyond funding



Inventory: Obstacles by policy area and type (absolute figures)



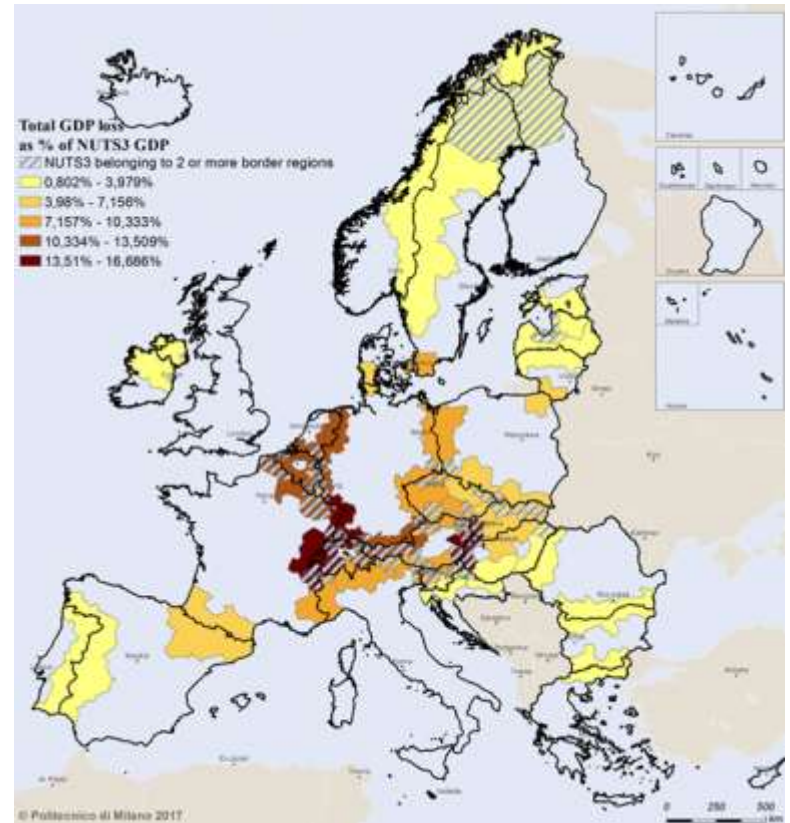
Why this Communication ?



- ❑ Importance of border regions: 40% EU territory; 30% EU population (150 million); 30% EU GDP
- ❑ **BUT** less economically developed, lower access to public services
- ❑ Navigating different legal and administrative systems is still complex, long and costly

"Border Effect" – Unused potential

- Border obstacles lead to lost potential GDP
- Removing 1/5 of all obstacles could lead to +2% GDP in border regions
- Corresponding to 1 million new jobs
- Problems are more deeply felt where there is a greater level of interaction





Communication: 10 actions for Commission and MS



1 – Cooperation = ePlatform for stakeholders + Pilot Projects

2 – Legislative Process = Territorial Impact Assessment + Support MS



3 – eGovernment = Promote existing solutions (with CNECT)

4 – Information Services = Single Digital Gateway + SOLVIT (with GROW)



5 - Employment = Public Employment Services + EURES (with EMPL)

6 – Multilingualism = ERASMUS+ (with EAC)



7 – Accessibility = Missing rail links + cross-border public transport (with MOVE)

8 – Health = Mapping health cross-border cooperation + conference (with SANTE)



9 – Legal + € framework = ECBC legal act + Interreg post 2020

10 – Evidence = Pilot project on data + Research on cross-border cooperation (with EUROSTAT)





Facilitating exchanges amongst cross-border stakeholders

- A online professionals platform has been launched (January 2018) to facilitate exchanges amongst stakeholders:

ec.europa.eu/futurium/en/border-regions

- Not a communication tool from the Commission, but a sharing tool amongst stakeholders
- Post: News / library items / events
- Look for best practices



Engagement of border regions is essential

We are looking for your experiences!

Two ongoing surveys:

- Cross-border information centres

https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/Cross_Border_Information_Centres

- Cross-border data sources

<https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/Cross-Border-data>

The aim is to promote synergies amongst regions working on common challenges!



More information

Interreg

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/policy/cooperation/european-territorial/

Open Data Platform

<https://cohesiondata.ec.europa.eu/countries/TC>