



The 2014-2020 Interreg Programme Management Handbook is composed of fact sheets. Each theme is covered by one fact sheet so that the reader can easily and quickly choose the relevant fact sheet.

Fact Sheet: Knowledge Management and Capitalisation in Interreg

1. What is it? What is the definition of the term/ theme of this fact sheet?

Capitalisation in Interreg can be understood as an integrated building process that gathers valuable programme and project results within a specific field of regional development policy. It enables sharing of knowledge and raising awareness among Interreg stakeholders about the achievements of Interreg in a particular field (capital). Furthermore, it supports the (re-)use and/or transfer of this capital, ultimately promoting improved performance and delivery. A concrete definition is:

As a building process, capitalisation is aimed at consolidating the capital built by Interreg projects and programmes, with the objectives of:

- *Making the knowledge and results generated by projects more accessible, thus improving transfer of knowledge.*
- *Obtaining additional results through the benchmarking and detailed content analysis, building on existing knowledge and experience.*
- *Promoting the re-use and / or transfer of this knowledge and these results, in order to boost performance and delivery*
- *Raising awareness and improving communication of results in specific fields of regional policy.*

Capitalisation efforts take place on different levels:

- On project level
- At territorial level
- On programme level
- On inter-programme level within Interreg
- With other European programmes or initiatives on specific thematic fields

At Programme level, especially, it can have different purposes:

- **Communication purpose:** to increase the visibility of programme and project results to citizens and key decisions-makers at all territorial levels;
- **Programme learning:** as input to programme strategy development and for building thematic knowledge and expertise in Interreg programme bodies;
- **Transfer of project-generated knowledge and outcomes:** to promote the (re)use of project outputs, foster the use of synergies and complementarities between projects, and avoid double funding of similar project interventions. Ultimately, to support a more coordinated and efficient deployment of EU funding;
- **Support good policymaking:** to transfer the knowledge generated by projects to the competent policy-making bodies at different territorial levels.



2. Why we are discussing it?

Capitalisation is an ever-evolving issue which is progressively gaining importance among the Interreg community. In order to promote the use of project and programme results in the 2014-2020 programming period, as well as demonstrate the overall contribution of Interreg to regional policies, a well planned and co-ordinated process is needed. In addition, Interreg practitioners have learned that capitalising on project or programme results helps them reinforce their own policy goals.

3. Capitalization in the 2014 - 2020 programming period

The capitalisation processes can support this by;

- Gathering project and programme results and consolidating the work of both programmes and projects.
- Highlighting achievements to date, and identifying where there are gaps in order to address and contribute effectively towards the objectives of EU Cohesion Policy.

4. Challenges and frequently-asked questions

Challenges for programme capitalisation:

- **Choose the right strategy, taking into account specific capitalization priorities/objectives and available resources.**
Choosing the right approach is not always easy. Going for top-down or bottom-up? Who does what? Is there a need for external experts? These are only some of the questions that should be taken into account when setting up capitalization activities. The role assigned to the range of potential actors involved in the activities will determine the quantity and quality of the results achieved.
- **Conceive capitalization actions as part of a long-term process rather than a one-off activity:**
Capitalization is first of all a process. Ensuring the long-term sustainability of the process is the challenge that the programme faces when planning capitalization actions. This applies to both the planning and the implementation of the activities. What matters for the territory/area/partners in the long term? Designing capitalization activities around long-term priorities (thematic, geographical, programmatic, etc.) will ensure the sustainability of the process in the long term. How to guarantee a long-term involvement by project beneficiaries and stakeholders? Choosing the right tools (calls for projects, events and seminars) and assuring certain regularity is the key to keeping stakeholders involved in the long-term.
- **Consider the use of consolidated clustering interests among project partners when planning capitalization actions:** Experience shows that sometimes clustering exercises work best when they develop naturally rather than through a process driven by external actors/factors. Discovering such dynamics and unlocking their potential is a challenge when involving project beneficiaries in capitalization activities.

Challenges for inter-programme capitalisation:

- **Tackle the lack of a comprehensive and up-to-date overview of Interreg projects:** Currently, there is only very fragmentary documentation of the knowledge generated in Interreg as a whole. Interreg's project database KEEP could develop into a single-entry point for Interreg-specific thematic information.
- **Challenge the lack of published project information and language barriers:** Accessing project information is difficult for programmes that publish only the minimum required information about



approved projects. Uniform minimum standards¹ regarding the type and depth of information published per project on programmes' websites would not only facilitate knowledge management and capitalisation, but would also help communicate and demonstrate Interreg's contribution to EU sectorial policies. In addition, the lack of information in English on both programme and project websites can be seen as a lost opportunity for inter-programme knowledge management and capitalisation. Projects should also be made aware of the fact that providing minimum information in English on their websites can earn them much greater (search engine) visibility.

- **Facilitate information flow and enhance thematic focus:** Interreg programmes work in many different thematic areas, and it is hard for programme managers to stay abreast of all the developments taking place on an EU level in all of those areas. Promoting exchange of information among programmes, also through the creation of *ad hoc* thematic networks, is a way to facilitate and improve the work of programme managers within the Joint Secretariats, also in line with the thematic concentration framework.

5. How are challenges addressed?

Interreg programmes and actors are implementing important changes for the 2014-2020 programming period, with a view to making capitalisation a fully-integrated approach throughout the entire programme cycle activities. **Experience shows that programmes are now testing various approaches towards capitalization**, with the aim of adjusting their strategies and achieving better performance and results. For example:

- **The North Sea Programme is organizing continuous capitalisation actions** as part of the activities scheduled throughout the year.
- **Some programmes, such as the MED Programme, are working to involve stakeholders in the planning of capitalization actions** from the very beginning, so that they gain ownership of the whole process.
- **INTERACT, together with Interreg, ENPI CBC and IPA CBC programmes and the European Commission, is working on the evolution of KEEP to cover the programmes, projects and partners of the 2014-2020 period.** The priority of this specific working group is to free the contributing programmes from the extra work required to deliver data to KEEP.
- **The North-West Europe Programme is working to facilitate project online presence and build a repository for information on all the approved projects.**
- **INTERREG EUROPE is working on the implementation of thematic policy learning platforms** which will be open to all regional policy stakeholders. The creation of the Policy Learning Platforms aims at facilitating ongoing Pan-European policy learning and capitalisation of Good Practices among regional actors (participating or not in projects), to improve their regional policies.

These are some examples of programmes working on the implementation of common working tools to facilitate data analysis and comparison among different projects;

¹ E.g., the minimum common standards for project descriptions and project progress reports to be published on programmes' websites defined in the Harmonised Programme Implementation Tools.



6. How does it work in practise?

Experience shows that different strategic approaches can be considered when setting up capitalisation activities:

- **Capitalisation on project level:** one good practice example is the project Competitive Health (Northern Periphery Programme), which extensively capitalised on predecessor projects, both from the Northern Periphery and from other Interreg programmes, by picking up lessons learned. This substantially increased the success rate of the telemedicine services transferred between partner regions. (c.f. <http://www.ehealthservices.eu/project>)
- **Capitalisation at territorial level:** one good practice example is the territorial capitalization strategy designed by the 2 Seas Programme for the programme valorisation and future development. The strategy is made up of three phases: 1) territorial diagnostic, showing how territories have participated in the programmes; 2) territorial benefit, identifying how projects have created benefit for the territories; 3) territorial perspective, aiming at understanding how to valorise the strengths identified in the previous phases, and tackle eventual weakness.
- **Capitalisation on programme level:** one good practice example is the call for thematic clusters launched by the 2 Seas Programme. The call listed some thematic priorities (the list was neither exhaustive, nor binding) and asked project applicants to deliver two clear outputs: the elaboration of a publication, and the organization of an event. The “cluster initiative” aimed at creating strategic cooperation between approved projects and between potential relevant organisations in the 2 Seas geographical area. The objective was to strengthen and enlarge the impact of the Programme for the benefit of the territories (c.f. <http://www.Interreg4a-2mers.eu/clusters/cluster-information/en>)
- **Capitalisation on inter-programme level within Interreg:** one good practice example is North-West Europe’s Health Cluster Europe. In this cluster, 8 health sector projects from 8 different Interreg programmes worked together on integrated, innovative and transferable health care models and solutions for healthy ageing and independent living. (c.f. http://www.nweurope.eu/index.php?act=project_detail&id=5454)
- **Capitalisation with other European programmes or initiatives:** one good practice example is the collaboration between Interreg Programmes and Intelligent Energy Europe/Horizon 2020. Two meetings were organised jointly, reaching over 180 actors (project and programme managers) from both funding instruments. Selected Intelligent Energy Europe and Interreg projects exchanged on how to develop Sustainable Energy Action Plans and on how to integrate energy planning and spatial planning on local and regional governance levels. (c.f. http://www.managenergy.net/networking_meetings/1196#.VJQvLV4AX)

7. Capitalization in the 2014 - 2020 programming period

The strong focus on project results in the 2014-2020 programming period goes hand-in-hand with the necessity to demonstrate the overall contribution of Interreg to regional policies. Furthermore, due to the strong concentration effort requested for this programming period, focusing on achieved results (made available throughout capitalisation processes) will ease the work of both programmes and projects. The overall purpose of this new approach is to make already existing (and financed) results reusable, and to benefit from these. This is meant to help new projects seek and focus on what is still missing and expected, to reach the objectives of EU Cohesion Policy.



8. Reference to other, more-detailed papers

- <http://www.interreg4c.eu/capitalisation/>
- <http://urbact.eu/en/urbact-capitalisation/>
- <http://www.europe-en-france.gouv.fr/Centre-de-ressources/Etudes-rapports-et-documentation/Etude-sur-la-capitalisation-des-programmes-CTE-2007-2013>
- http://www.interact-eu.net/synergies_and_capitalisation/intro/26/15