

# European Cooperation for Rural and Economically Weaker Regions

Discussing territoriality in transnational Interreg programmes

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11 March 2025

Online





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### Outline

This event is hosted by BBSR and co-hosted by Interact. BBSR is a German national agency for spatial development and involved in transnational programme committees.

A new publication by BBSR shows that there are big differences in the participation of rural regions in European funding programmes:

- Between 2014 and 2020, in both Interreg B and Interreg Europe the share of partners from rural areas was almost proportional to the share of population,
- The Interregional Innovation Investments (I3) show low participation from rural areas,
- Participation from rural areas in Horizon 2020 was marginal.

The analysis also shows that there's scope for better involvement of economically weaker regions in Interreg B:

- In many programmes, participation from economically weaker regions was relatively low compared to the share of population. This was especially true for the 2007-2013 funding period. Their participation changed notably in a number of Interreg programmes from one funding period to the next. Some programmes showed a balanced involvement of economically weaker regions and thus showed that it can be done.

The Interreg B programmes have the prerequisites and the potential to actively involve rural and economically weaker regions. Focusing collaboration opportunities in transnational areas can help structurally weaker regions become more involved. This feature of transnational cooperation is a distinctive advantage—and one that deserves even greater emphasis and exploitation in the future. We kindly invite you to discuss these results and viewpoints with us in the light of Interreg post 2027.

We very much encourage you to have a look at the analysis which will be discussed during the event. For more details on the analysis please see the publications below:

[Full report in English](#)

[Full report in German](#)

### Objectives

This event aims to:

- raise awareness for place-based thinking in transnational Interreg Programmes,
- gather input to policy debate on territoriality in post 2027 Interreg.

### Target group

Transnational Interreg Programme representatives from JS, MA, Member States, regional level, DG Regio, academia, further structural funds programmes.



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**Tuesday, 11 March 2025**

**10.30 – 10.40**

### **Welcome and introduction**

- *Jens Kurnol, BBSR*
- *Pieter Louwers, Interact Office Vienna*

**10.40 – 10.55**

### **Dialogue with project partners from rural, economically weaker regions**

A deep dive into making territoriality more tangible through project partners, understanding their challenges with getting involved in Interreg.

- *Sven Tobreluts, Association of Municipalities of Tartu County*
- *Marta Jacuniak-Suda, Office for Regional Development Weser-Ems*

**10.55 – 11.15**

### **The results of the BBSR analysis**

A presentation of the results of the BBSR analysis on European cooperation of rural and economically weaker regions followed by Q&A.

- *Sina Redlich and Philipp Gareis, BBSR*

**11.15 – 11.50**

### **Operational panel discussion: Place-based thinking in transnational Interreg Programmes**

- *Eeva Rantama, Baltic Sea Region*
- *Luca Ferrarese, Central Europe*
- *David Grzegorzewski, North-West Europe*

### **Open discussion with all participants**

How can transnational programmes become more territorial in practical terms (partnerships, priorities, project selection, evaluation,...) and which challenges do programmes face?

**11.50 – 12.20**

### **Strategic panel discussion: Territoriality in post 2027 transnational Interreg**

- *Moray Gilland, DG Regio, European Commission*
- *Monika Strojicka-Gevorgyan, Polish Ministry of Development Funds and Regional Policy*
- *Prof. Spyros Niavis, University of Thessaly*

### **Open discussion with all participants**

How can transnational programmes become more territorial in policy terms (future regulation, PO5, ISO1, territorial instruments, partnership principle,...)?

**12.20 - 12.30**

### **Wrap up and outlook**

- *BBSR and Interact*