

# 30 years Together: looking at the past, inspiring the future



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In these challenging times that Europe is facing, I cannot value more what Interreg and cooperation policy have achieved in 30 years. At the heart of the European project, Interreg supports cooperation between regions, by removing obstacles and promoting joint action to bring citizens closer to each other.

The Interreg cooperation programmes and projects cover the entire European continent and the Outermost Regions. They are concrete realisations of Cohesion Policy. Since 1990, Interreg has enabled joint actions and policy exchanges between national, regional and local actors from the EU Member States and their neighbours.

By celebrating the 30 years of Interreg, we all have the chance to take stock of the achievements, but more importantly, we can all play our part in shaping the future of our policy.

I am deeply convinced that the three highlights of this campaign are meaningful for the European project as a whole. By demonstrating that we all have a neighbour, Interreg reminds us that we are all interdependent and that our prosperity and well-being has to be achieved collectively. Cross border and transnational cooperation is key not only within the EU but it also strengthens links and resilience of our neighbouring countries, from the Eastern flank to the southern rim.

Furthermore, Interreg ensures the involvement of citizens and young people in building our continent. Not only does cooperation policy need the voice of civil society to shape the future, but Interreg will also continue to support projects that will enable the next generation to live in a continent full of opportunities, by promoting employment, university exchanges, and equal access to quality services along borders.

Finally, territorial cooperation is crucial to tackle the challenges that know no borders. From the fight against climate change to preventing and addressing public health emergencies, territorial cooperation can offer practical solutions to global and every day's problems, notably in neighbouring regions.

Interreg is a European flagship programme that reinforces the capacity of regional policy to deliver on common public goods, such as sustainable energy, protecting biodiversity and natural heritage on land and in maritime areas or enhance healthcare cooperation across borders.

Interreg is also about leaving no one behind and consolidating the European integration. This is our mission, continually renewed. So let's use this anniversary to question and re-think Interreg. Let's give a new impetus to this fundamental value in the European Union: the spirit of cooperation, driven by the firm belief that we are stronger together.

We are proud to have led this work in cooperation with all programmes and project beneficiaries, and we wish you to enjoy discovering these project stories, about how TOGETHER, concrete solutions are found.

"30 years Together" is the motto of this campaign, it looks at the past but I am convinced that it will inspire all of us when looking towards the next 30 years to come and beyond.