



# Cross Border Cooperation in Health sector 2021-2027

Meeting ProMIS 2.12.2021

Valeria Cenacchi EC - DG REGIO

Context

Programming 2021-2027

Going beyond funding

# Cross-border healthcare

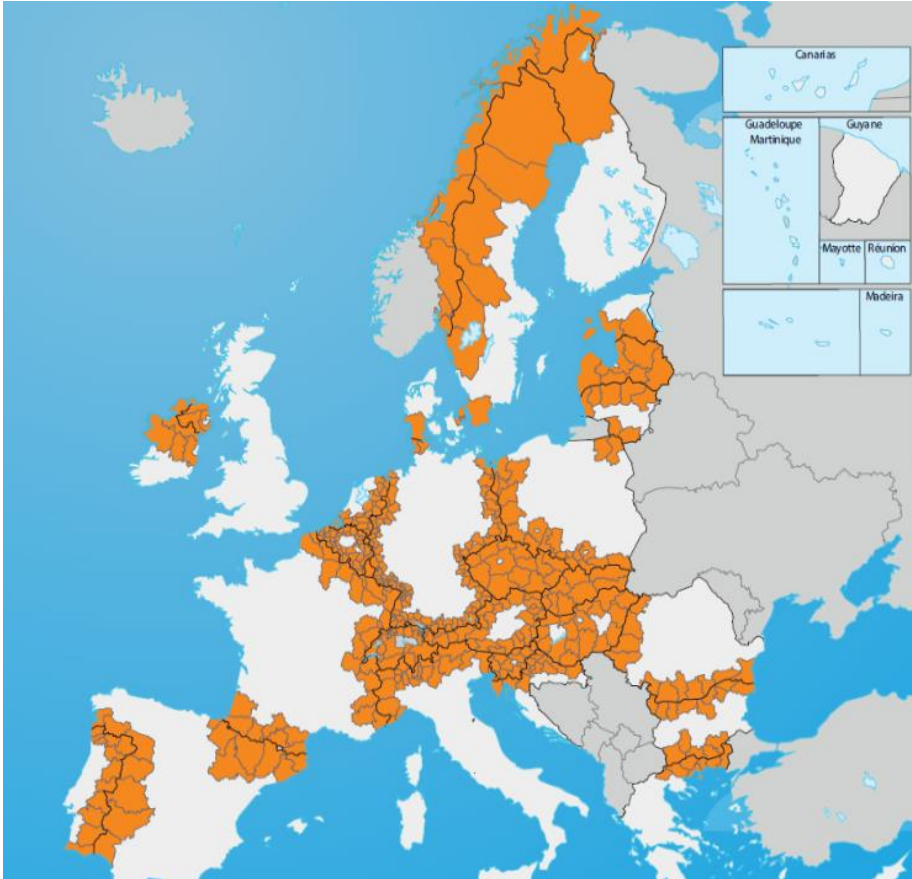
- ✓ *Healthcare of good quality* is one of the principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights and a *high level of human health protection* is stipulated in Article 168 (TFEU).
- ✓ Art. 168 also encourages the complementarity of **health services in cross-border areas**. The Directive on patients' rights in cross-border healthcare (2011/24/EU) ensures patient mobility and access to safe and high-quality healthcare in the EU
- ✓ BUT, cross-border cooperation faces persistent obstacles (legal administrative, cultural, etc.) that hamper the crossing of borders and cross-border mutual development

# COVID19 - impact on borders

- ✓ Vulnerability of cross-border mechanisms and uncoordinated response
- ✓ Structural intensity of cross-border flows and negative effects of border closures (CB workers, CB public services, trust)
- ✓ Increased awareness of the need of more coordination and solidarity
- ✓ Multi-level governance (CB but also at national level) is required to increase response capacity
- ✓ Emergency is better managed where consolidated cooperation exist

*“There can be no ‘emergency cooperation’ in the short term without well-established CB cooperation in the long-term”*

# Cross-Border relevance



- ❑ 40% EU territory; 30% EU population (150 million), 30% EU GDP. Many natural CB assets
- ❑ **BUT** border effects and **obstacles** (lower accessibility, higher complexity)
- ❑ Unused potential: +2% GDP in border regions / estimated 1 million new jobs
- ❑ **Living labs** for innovative practices: frontrunners of EU integration



Interreg is the Union's instrument to support **cooperation across regions and countries**

One of the two goals of EU cohesion policy (synonym for "**European Territorial Cooperation - ETC**")

An established brand for more than **30 years**

Interreg covers:

- A financial support mechanism for cooperation programmes
- A working community to address horizontal enabling conditions to cooperation

# Programming Interreg 2021-2027

**Cross-Border  
73 programmes**

**Trans-  
National  
14 pr.**

**Inter-  
regional  
4 pr.**

**Outermost  
regions  
5 pr.**

- ✓ **Interreg VI = 4 strands - 96 Cooperation Programmes**
- ✓ **Budget EUR 8.05 bn**
- ✓ External cooperation fully integrated
- ✓ Link to Macro Regional Strategies

# New architecture of Cohesion Policy

1. **A smarter Europe** (innovative & smart economic transformation)
2. **A greener, low-carbon Europe** (including energy transition, the 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)

## + INTERREG Specific Objectives:

- 1) better cooperation governance
- 2) a safer and more secure Europe



# Relevant for **HEALTH** under Interreg

- PO1: RDI, 3S, e-gov, e-health, skills
- SO4.5: “*ensuring equal access to health care and fostering resilience of health systems, including primary care, and promoting the transition from institutional to family-based and community-based care*” – but also SOs for education/training and social inclusion
- PO5: territorial multidimensional strategy, bottom-up governance
- ISO1: systemic approach to cooperation, long term perspective (solve legal obstacles, CB data collection, trust building, capacity building, pilots)

# Coordination and embedding of cooperation

- Interreg programmes do not operate in isolation
- Seek for better coordination and complementarities
  - Link with Macro Regional Strategies
  - Link between different Interreg strands (examples of Mediterranean, Adriatic Ionian, Baltic Sea)
- Cooperation is not the sole responsibility of Interreg
  - Embedding of cooperation in mainstream programmes (UE and national)
  - Benefits: more ambitious projects, new partners, complementarities and synergies good project pipeline, visibility



# ... and planning ahead

## 2021 EC REPORT

EU Border Regions Living labs of EU Integration  
COM(2021)393

4 clusters:

1. Deeper institutional cooperation (obstacles, EGTC, data, quality of cooperation)
2. More and better cross-border public services (environment, transport, health, education, culture = functional areas)
3. Vibrant cross-border labour markets (jobs, qualifications)
4. Border regions for the European Green Deal (border regions fit for 55, risks, energy, nature)

Working across services and sectors  
**Border Focal Point network**



# B-Solutions initiative

To tackle border obstacles (about 90 pilot projects so far)

Typical examples of obstacles in health sector:

- issues concerning the provision of services and the reimbursement of the medical costs, exacerbated by a lack of coordination between relevant actors
- the existence of burdening procedures regulating the recognition of qualifications and the hiring of foreign medical staff
- overall complexity of governance systems

✓ Proposed solutions point mainly to legal solutions (**bilateral agreements**)

✓ Sustainable solutions require:

- **multi-level governance** approaches
- measures to **raise knowledge of and skills in cross-border cooperation**
- **population-based strategies** to favor access to healthcare services and public health provision

<https://www.b-solutionsproject.com/>

# Main takeaways

- In 2021-27 cooperation should take a new dimension:
  - More strategic approach of programming (multilevel, cross-sectors, synergies between funds, integrated functional/catchment areas)
  - Strengthen partnership principle: sectoral stakeholders and civil society should be involved at all stages
  - It requires new tools (CB data, b-solutions, CB bodies, small projects, pilots)
- Better governance optimize the use of funding and increase the response capacity in case of crisis
- Healthcare is a top priority because it brings citizens better quality of life, increases attractiveness of regions and promotes innovation
- Active community : <https://futurium.ec.europa.eu/en/border-focal-point-network>