

Annual Implementation Report 2021: Citizens' Summary

TAKING CENTRAL EUROPE FORWARD TOGETHER

Central Europe is home to 150 million people - a third of the entire EU population. The regions and cities they live in face similar challenges for their future, and our EU funding programme "Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE" helps them to address these together without reinventing the wheel.

Concretely, **our funding brings together public and private organisations from across central Europe in transnational projects**. In our projects, the partners try to find common answers in view of climate change, innovation gaps and other challenges. They jointly develop and test new competences and solutions and ultimately help cities and regions to offer better services for their citizens and companies.

In 2021, our funding programme reached and even surpassed all targets set for the year. All projects that started their activities in 2016 and 2017 could be successfully closed. Despite the continuing Covid-19 pandemic, all other projects that have been funded since 2018 and 2019 managed to carry out their planned activities with only minor or even no deviations from their original plans.

But 2021 was also a remarkable year for the future of cooperation in central Europe: **We finalised preparations for the next generation of our funding programme**. The strategic founding document of Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE 2021-2027 was completed and approved by a working group of programme countries in June 2021. The document was then officially submitted to the European Commission for their approval in September 2021.

Most importantly, this milestone achievement allowed us to launch a **first call for project proposals of the new programme** already on 15 November 2021 - as one of the first EU Cohesion Policy programmes in the 2021-27 programming period (see also further below).

FUNDED PROJECTS AT THE END OF 2021

84 CLOSED

54 ONGOING

NEW FUNDING AVAILABLE FOR TRANSNATIONAL PROJECT IDEAS

Our first call for proposals was launched on 15 November 2021 with an indicative budget of 72 million EUR from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). With this call we invited public and private organisations from across central Europe to submit their proposals for working together on common challenges that know no borders, in line with the programme vision:

"Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE envisions a united central Europe that cooperates to become smarter, greener, and better connected together. Based on shared needs and a common identity, the programme aims for a trustful culture of cooperation beyond borders."

FIRST CALL IN NUMBERS



1169

ATTENDEES OF OUR
CALL LAUNCH EVENT



3538

MEMBERS OF
APPLICANT COMMUNITY



10704

VIEWS OF
VIDEO TUTORIALS



182

INDIVIDUAL
CONSULTATIONS

IMPACT EVALUATION OF INTERREG CENTRAL EUROPE 2014-20

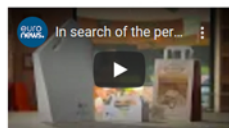
In 2021, we also launched our programme impact evaluation. In the first phase of this evaluation process, external experts looked at the effects of projects that started in 2016 and 2017 after our first two calls. They found evidence of **the positive impacts** that the programme has on the needs identified across all thematic priorities. At the same time, they found that the programme **helps to bridge socio-economic and competitiveness gaps** between more and less developed cities and regions in central Europe.

PROJECTS

INNOVATION

Our innovation projects make central Europe more innovative and competitive. They address socio-economic challenges and needs and take smart growth forward.

> Learn more about projects



PROJECTS

LOW CARBON

Our low carbon projects reduce the carbon footprint in central Europe. They increase the use of renewable energies and take energy efficiency forward.

> Learn more about projects

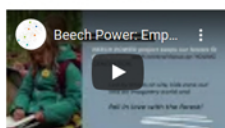


PROJECTS

ENVIRONMENT | CULTURE

Our environment and culture projects respond to the need for protecting and sustainably using natural and cultural heritage and resources.

> Learn more about projects



PROJECTS

TRANSPORT

Our transport projects better connect central Europe. They reduce gaps between peripheral regions and well-connected centres, thus taking accessibility forward.

> Learn more about projects



PROJECT OUTPUTS AND RESULTS AT THE END OF 2021



677

STRATEGIES AND ACTION
PLANS DEVELOPED



543

PILOTS
IMPLEMENTED



581

NEW TOOLS AND
SERVICES DEVELOPED



809

TRAININGS
PROVIDED