

Notice C(90) 1562/3 to the Member States, laying down guidelines for operational programmes which Member States are invited to establish in the framework of a Community initiative concerning border areas (Interreg)

(90/C 215/04)

1. At its meeting on 25 July 1990, the Commission of the European Communities decided to establish a Community initiative concerning border areas (hereafter called 'Interreg') within the meaning of Article 11 of Regulation (EEC) No 4253/88 and Article 3 (2) of Regulation (EEC) No 4254/88.

2. In the context of Interreg, Community assistance in the form of loans and grants is made available for measures and in areas which respect the guidelines laid down in this notice, and which are included in operational programmes submitted by the Member States and approved by the Commission of the European Communities.

I. Development aims

3. The aims of the initiative are:

- to assist both internal and external border areas of the Community in overcoming the special development problems arising from their relative isolation within national economies and within the Community as a whole, in the interests of the local population and in a manner compatible with the protection of the environment,
- to promote the creation and development of networks of cooperation across internal borders and, where relevant, the linking of these networks to wider Community networks, in the context of the completion of the internal market of 1992,
- to assist the adjustment of external border areas to their new role as border areas of a single integrated market,
- to respond to new opportunities for cooperation with third countries in external border areas of the Community.

4. Previous experience of efforts to promote cooperation between border areas in the Community indicates that, in general, three types of actions can be distinguished:

- (a) the joint planning and implementation of cross-border programmes;
- (b) the introduction of measures to improve the flow of information across borders and amongst border regions, between public agencies, private organizations and voluntary bodies;

(c) the setting up of shared institutional and administrative structures to sustain and promote cooperation.

5. In the preparation of operational programmes for submission under the Interreg initiative, Member States and regional and local authorities are encouraged to present agreed proposals for cross-border cooperation as far as possible for the three types of action defined in paragraph 4 above and to develop their strategies for cooperation accordingly.

6. In providing Community assistance under this initiative to internal border areas, the Commission will accord priority to proposals which are made in cooperation with regional and local authorities in border areas and which include the establishment or development of shared institutional or administrative structures intended to widen and deepen cross-border cooperation between public agencies, private organizations and voluntary bodies. Where possible, these shared institutional or administrative structures should have the competence to implement jointly determined projects.

7. Measures assisted under this initiative should be designed to have their main development impact on the population of the border areas eligible under this initiative. Particular attention should be given to creating alternative employment opportunities in areas where job losses may arise due to changes in customs and other border-related activities.

II. Definition of eligible areas

8. Eligible areas for the purposes of the Interreg initiative include all objective 1, 2 and 5 (b) areas along the internal and external land borders of the Community delineated at administrative level III of the Nomenclature of Territorial Statistical Units (NUTS III), as listed in Annex 1 to this notice.

9. In exceptional cases, Community assistance may be given to measures relating to the creation or promotion of networks of cooperation, excluding investment in

infrastructure, established in the interests of the population of the border areas concerned, but which concern objective 1, 2 or 5 (b) areas outside the areas described in paragraph 8.

10. Infrastructure investments should be concentrated as far as practicable in administrative areas smaller than the NUTS III level, immediately adjacent to borders. However when, within depopulated regions, it is observed that economic development is held up by the absence of road infrastructures, these infrastructures can be exceptionally taken into consideration in the framework of this initiative in an area going beyond the strictly defined NUTS III level, to the extent that the main aim of these infrastructures is related to the development of the regions in question rather than facilitating transit across those regions.

11. Other internal and external border areas, not eligible for Community assistance under objectives 1, 2 and 5 (b), can nevertheless obtain limited amounts of assistance under Article 10 of Regulation (EEC) No 4254/88 or under Article 1 (2) of Regulation (EEC) No 4255/88 or Article 8 of Regulation (EEC) No 4256/88. Operational programmes submitted under Interreg may, if appropriate, contain proposals for border areas as a whole, comprising both border areas eligible for Community assistance under objective 1, 2 and 5 (b) and correspondingly eligible under Interreg, and other adjacent border areas or border areas for which cross-border cooperation is proposed which can be granted assistance under the Articles cited above, as listed in Annex 2 to this notice.

III. Eligible measures

12. In this section of the notice, a list of measures eligible for assistance under the Interreg initiative is given below. When submitting operational programmes, Member States are expected to choose from this list a more limited but balanced set of measures on which Community assistance should be concentrated. This choice should have regard to the priorities described in paragraphs 6 and 7 above and to ensuring coherence with the measures in favour of the areas eligible under Interreg envisaged in the context of Community Support Frameworks, in relation to which Interreg is a complementary action.

13. As regards measures to promote cooperation between internal border areas of the Community, the following actions may be assisted, provided that a development impact can be foreseen on both sides of the

border and that their planning and, where possible, implementation is undertaken on a cross-border basis. Special attention should be paid to creating alternative employment opportunities in border areas affected by significant job losses as a consequence of the completion of the internal market:

- (a) studies related to development plans treating border areas as an integrated geographical unit;
- (b) aids to investment and the provision of services and facilities to support and promote the development of small and medium-sized enterprises and craft industries and, in particular, technology transfer and marketing support services. An accent should be placed on developing cross-border networks of economic contacts between SME;
- (c) the development of tourism (including agritourism) and the development and management for tourism purposes of natural parks through which a border runs;
- (d) the provision of local water, gas and electricity supplies and local telecommunications and the development of renewable energy resources; the common development and use of hydraulic resources and infrastructures;
- (e) pollution prevention and control, waste disposal or environmental conservation programmes and the monitoring of environmental standards of new industries locating in border areas;
- (f) rural development programmes to diversify farmers' incomes and for forestry, fishing and agricultural waste disposal;
- (g) genetic improvement and animal and plant health measures designed to increase agricultural productivity and to facilitate cross-border trade;
- (h) measures to improve agricultural products and processes, to promote product diversification, to develop quality labels and trademarks; measures to improve marketing structures and to support cooperative marketing strategies particularly where these facilitate cross-border trade;
- (i) the establishment or development of trade organizations, professional associations, planning and advisory groups such as cross-frontier development associations or other public, private or voluntary bodies aiming to facilitate cross-border contact in the economic and social spheres and the provision of language training for this purpose;

(j) in areas seriously deficient in infrastructures, improving transport and other communications systems (including media services) within and between border areas by the creation or modernization of infrastructures, provided that such operations have their principal development impact on the areas concerned on both sides of the border or are a response to problems directly linked to the existence of borders, for example by facilitating cross-border traffic;

(k) measures to promote cooperation in higher education, between research centres and in vocational training, particularly the sharing of resources and facilities on a cross-border basis;

(l) training and employment measures particularly for the unemployed and for persons directly or indirectly affected by changes in border-related activities arising from the establishment of the single market and related to measures described in subparagraphs (a) to (k).

14. With regard to measures for areas along the external borders of the Community, the following actions may be assisted:

(a) improving infrastructures, in particular access to and communications within external border areas, and the provision of local water, gas and electricity supplies;

(b) pollution prevention and control and waste disposal, including dealing with problems exacerbated by proximity to external borders, or in relation to subparagraphs (c) to (e) below;

(c) aids to investment and provision of supporting services and facilities in particular for technology transfer and for marketing for small- and medium-sized enterprises and cooperatives;

(d) the promotion of tourism (including agritourism);

(e) agricultural and rural development measures as in paragraph 13 (f), (g) and (h) above;

(f) training and employment measures particularly for the unemployed and for persons directly or indirectly affected by changes in border-related activities arising from the establishment of the single market and related to measures described in subparagraphs (a) to (e).

15. Where there are possibilities for cooperation between external border areas of the Community and adjacent areas in third countries, assistance may also be given to actions similar to those listed in paragraph 13. However, Community aid under the Interreg initiative can only be given to eligible areas within the Community. In cases where proposals for cross-border cooperation with border areas in third countries are submitted, the Commission may give consideration to assisting such actions from other budgetary resources where possible and appropriate.

IV. The Community's contribution to the financing of Interreg

16. The Interreg operational programmes shall be the subject of joint financing by the Member States and the Community. The total contribution by the European Community's Structural Funds to interreg during the period 1990 to 1993 is estimated at ECU 800 million. Community resources will be concentrated mainly in objective 1 areas in accordance with the priorities established in Regulations governing the Structural Funds. In addition, further assistance may be provided for complementary pilot projects under Article 10 of Regulation (EEC) No 4254/88, Article 1 (2) of Regulation (EEC) No 4255/88 and Article 8 of Regulation (EEC) No 4256/88. Loans from EIB resources may also be made available.

17. The Commission's decision on the amount of the Community's budget contribution to individual operational programmes will reflect the population and level of development of the border areas concerned and the quality of the programmes submitted. The rates of assistance will be decided in conformity with the provisions of the Regulations governing the Structural Funds and take account of the financing capacity of the national and regional authorities concerned. In evaluating the quality of the programmes, the Commission will take into account the following elements in particular:

- the presence of a coherent regional strategy for the border areas concerned, seen as a single geographical unit, with a clear statement of the development aims into which the aims of the operational programmes have been properly integrated,
- the likely development impact of the proposed measures within the areas eligible for this initiative, taking into account deficiencies in infrastructures and services and the consequences for employment of the removal of internal borders,
- for internal border areas within the Community, the contribution the proposed measures will make to

promoting cross-border cooperation across as wide a number of fields as possible and thus assist the completion of the internal market,

- the additional character of the resources requested from the Community as well as those made available by the national and regional authorities in support of the operational programme,
- the likely effectiveness of the mechanisms for implementation, monitoring and evaluation. For border areas within the Community joint mechanisms should be envisaged,
- the extent to which an optimal combination is made of loans and grants.

V. Implementation

18. Member States wishing to benefit from Interreg are invited to present detailed proposals for operational programmes, or amendments to an existing or proposed operational programme in application of Community Support Frameworks, within six months of the date of publication of this notice. Proposals for operational programmes received after this date need not be taken into consideration by the Commission.

Where relevant, expenditure related to objective 2 and 5 (b) areas should be separately shown.

Proposals relating to internal border areas in the Community should be submitted in the form of a single operational programme by the two or more Member States concerned. The structures and procedures for the implementation of the programme on a cross-border basis, where appropriate, should be indicated.

19. All correspondence related to this notice should be addressed to:

Mr E. Landaburu,
Director-General,
Directorate-General for Regional Policy,
Commission of the European Communities,
200 Rue de la Loi,
B-1049 Brussels.

Where such correspondence relates to objective 5 (b) regions, it should also be addressed to:

Mr G. Legras,
Director-General,
Directorate-General for Agriculture,
Commission of the European Communities,
200 Rue de la Loi,
B-1049 Brussels.

ANNEX 1

LIST OF BORDER REGIONS (NUTS III) ELIGIBLE UNDER INTERREG, CLASSIFIED BY OBJECTIVE

BELGIE/BELGIQUE

Objective 2

Turnhout (*)
 Thuin (*)
 Liège
 Maaseik (*)
 Tongeren (*)
 Arlon (*)

Objective 5b

Bastogne
 Dinant (*)

DANMARK

Objective 2

Lolland (**)

Objective 5b

Storstrøms Amt (*)
 Bornholms Amt (*)
 Fyns Amt (*)
 Sønderjyllands Amt (*)

DEUTSCHLAND (1)

Objective 2

Emden, Krfr. Stadt
 Aachen, Landkreis (*)
 Heinsberg (*)
 Borken (*)
 Pirmasens, Krfr. Stadt
 Zweibrücken, Krfr. Stadt
 Pirmasens
 Saarbrücken, Stadtverb. (*)
 Saarlouis (*)
 Berlin

Objective 5b

Nordfriesland (*)
 Schleswig-Flensburg (*)
 Lüchow-Dannenberg
 Aurich (*)
 Emsland (*)
 Leer (*)
 Euskirchen (*)
 Fulda (*)
 Hersfeld-Rotenburg (*)
 Werra-Meißner-Kreis
 Bitburg-Prüm (*)

Daun
 Trier-Saarburg
 Freyung-Grafenau
 Passau (*)
 Regen
 Cham
 Neustadt a. d. Waldnaab
 Schwandorf
 Tirschenreuth
 Coburg
 Hof
 Kronach
 Wunsiedel i. Fichtelgeb.
 Hassberge
 Rhon-Grabfeld
 Merzig-Wadern (*)

ELLAS

Objective 1

Evros
 Xanthi
 Rodopi
 Drama
 Kavala
 Thessaloniki
 Kilkis
 Pella
 Serres
 Kastoria
 Florina
 Thesprotia
 Ioannina
 Kerkira
 Lesbos
 Samos
 Chios
 Dodekanisos
 Irakleio
 Lasithi
 Rethymni
 Chania

ESPAÑA

Objective 1

Orense
 Pontevedra
 Salamanca
 Zamora
 Badajoz
 Cáceres
 Huelva
 Ceuta
 Melilla

Objective 2

Guipúzcoa
 Navarra (*)
 Gerona (*)

Objective 5b

Navarra (*)
 Huesca (*)
 Gerona (*)
 Lérida (*)

FRANCE

Objective 1

Corse du Sud

Objective 2

Ardenne (*)
 Aisne (*)
 Nord (*)
 Pas-de-Calais (*)
 Meurthe-et-Moselle (*)
 Meuse (*)
 Moselle (*)
 Doubs (*)
 Territoire de Belfort
 Pyrénées-Atlantiques (*)

Objective 5b

Meuse (*)
 Haut-Rhin (*)
 Jura (*)
 Pyrénées-Atlantiques (*)
 Ariège (*)
 Haute-Garonne (*)
 Hautes-Pyrénées (*)
 Ain (*)
 Pyrénées-Orientales (*)
 Alpes-de-Haute-Provence (*)
 Hautes-Alpes (*)

IRELAND

Objective 1

North East
 Donegal
 North West

(*) Region is partly eligible under the relevant classification.

(**) Region is smaller than NUTS III.

(1) To be reviewed as and when unification takes place.

ITALIA	LUXEMBOURG (G.D.)	PORTUGAL
Objective 1	Objective 2	Objective 1
Sassari	Luxembourg (G.D.) (*)	Minho-Lima Cávado Douro Alto Trás-os-Montes Beira Interior Norte Beira Interior Sul Alto Alentejo Alentejo Central Baixo Alentejo Algarve
Objective 2	Objective 5b	
Torino (*) Novara (*) Valle d'Aosta (*) Sondrio (*)	Luxembourg (G.D.) (*)	
	NEDERLAND	
	Objective 2	UNITED KINGDOM
Objective 5b	Oost-Groningen Zuidoost-Drenthe Twente (*) Zuid-Limburg (*)	Objective 1
Cuneo (*) Bolzano-Bozen (*)		Northern Ireland (other than the city of Belfast)

(*) Region is partly eligible under the relevant classification.

ANNEX 2

LIST OF BORDER REGIONS (NUTS III) TOTALLY OR PARTLY EXCLUDED FROM CLASSIFICATION UNDER OBJECTIVES 1, 2 OR 5b)

BELGIE/BELGIQUE	DEUTSCHLAND (1)	Fulda (*) Hersfeld-Rotenburg (*) Trier, Krfr. Stadt Bitburg-Prüm (*) Germersheim Südliche Weinstraße Baden-Baden, Stadtkreis Karlsruhe, Stadtkreis Karlsruhe, Landkreis Rastatt Freiburg im Breisgau, Stadtkreis Breisgau-Hochschwarzwald Emmendingen Ortenaukreis Schwarzwald-Baar-Kreis Konstanz Lörrach Waldshut Bodenseekreis Rosenheim, Krfr. Altötting Bad Tölz-Wolfratshausen Berchtesgadener Land Garmisch-Partenkirchen Miesbach Rosenheim Traunstein
Antwerpen Turnhout (*) Ath Mons Mouscron Thuin (*) Tournai Verviers Maaseik (*) Tongeren (*) Arlon (*) Neufchâteau Virton Dinant (*) Philippeville Gent Sint-Niklaas Brugge Ieper Kortrijk Veurne	Flensburg, Krfr. Stadt Lübeck, Krfr. Stadt Herzogtum Lauenburg Nordfriesland (*) Schleswig-Flensburg (*) Wolfsburg, Krfr. Stadt Gifhorn Göttingen Goslar Helmstedt Osterode am Harz Wolfenbüttel Lüneburg, Landkreis Uelzen Aurich (*) Emsland (*) Grafschaft Bentheim Leer (*) Kleve Viersen Aachen, Krfr. Stadt Aachen, Landkreis (*) Euskirchen (*) Heinsberg (*) Borken (*)	
DANMARK		
Sønderjyllands Amt (*)		

(*) Also partly classified under Objectives 2 or 5b or both.

(1) To be reviewed as and when unification takes place.

DEUTSCHLAND ⁽¹⁾ (*Fortsetzung*)

Passau, Krfr. Stadt
 Rottal-Inn
 Weiden i. d. Opf., Krfr. Stadt
 Coburg, Krfr. Stadt
 Hof, Krfr. Stadt
 Kaufbeuren, Krfr. Stadt
 Kempten (Allgäu), Krfr. Stadt
 Lindau-Bodensee
 Oberallgäu
 Ostallgäu
 Saarbrücken, Stadtverb. (*)
 Merzig-Wadern (*)
 Saarlouis (*)
 Saar-Pfalz-Kreis

ESPAÑA

Navarra (*)
 Huesca (*)
 Gerona (*)
 Lérida (*)

FRANCE

Ardennes (*)
 Aisne (*)
 Nord (*)

Pas-de-Calais (*)
 Meurthe-et-Moselle (*)
 Moselle (*)
 Bas-Rhin
 Haut-Rhin (*)
 Doubs (*)
 Jura (*)
 Pyrénées-Atlantiques (*)
 Ariège (*)
 Haute-Garonne (*)
 Hautes-Pyrénées (*)
 Ain (*)
 Savoie
 Haute-Savoie
 Pyrénées-Orientales (*)
 Alpes-de-Haute-Provence (*)
 Hautes-Alpes (*)
 Alpes-Maritimes

ITALIA

Torino (*)
 Vercelli
 Novara (*)
 Cuneo (*)
 Valle d'Aosta (*)
 Imperia
 Varese

Como
 Sondrio (*)
 Bolzano-Bozen (*)
 Belluno
 Udine
 Gorizia
 Trieste

LUXEMBOURG (G.D.)

Luxembourg (G.D.) (*)

NEDERLAND

Noord-Overijssel
 Twente (*)
 Achterhoek
 Arnhem-Nijmegen
 Zeeuwsch-Vlaanderen
 West-Noord-Brabant
 Midden-Noord-Brabant
 Zuidoost-Noord-Brabant
 Noord-Limburg
 Midden-Limburg
 Zuid-Limburg (*)

UNITED KINGDOM

Kent

(*) Also partly classified under Objectives 2 or 5b or both.

⁽¹⁾ To be reviewed as and when unification takes place.