



Ministry of Public Works,
Development and Administration

MINISTRY OF REGIONAL
DEVELOPMENT AND
PUBLIC WORKS



**DECISION no 4
of 16th of September 2020**

**approving the selection of the policy objectives that will be financed under the future
Interreg VI-A Romania-Bulgaria Programme**

Having regard the provisions of articles 3 and 4 of the Rules of Procedure of the Joint Working Group for Strategic Planning and Programming for Romania-Bulgaria cross-border cooperation programme 2021-2027,

The Joint Group for Strategic Planning and Programming for Romania-Bulgaria cross-border cooperation programme 2021-2027 has adopted this:

DECISION

Article 1 - The present document approves the selection of the Policy Objectives and the specific objectives to be financed under the future Interreg VI-A Romania-Bulgaria Programme, as presented in Annex 1.

Article 2 - The Programme structures are mandated to update the definitions of the Policy Objectives and the specific objectives according to the approved regulations. The Joint Group for Strategic Planning and Programming shall be duly informed.

Article 3 - Annex 1 is enclosed to this document and is part of this decision.

Chair

Denitsa NIKOLOVA

Deputy Minister

**Ministry of Regional Development
and Public Works, Bulgaria**

Vice-Chair

Marius VASILIU

Deputy Secretary General

**Ministry of Public Works, Development
and Administration, Romania**

Selection of the Policy Objectives to be financed under the Interreg VI-A Romania-Bulgaria Programme

According to the draft regulations, 5 general Policy Objectives and 2 Policy Objectives are dedicated to Interreg programmes:

General Policy Objectives:

- **A smarter Europe** by promoting innovative and smart economic transformation ('PO 1')
- **A greener, low-carbon Europe** by promoting clean and fair energy transition, green and blue investment, the circular economy, climate adaptation and risk prevention and management ('PO 2')
- **A more connected Europe** by enhancing mobility and regional ICT connectivity ('PO 3')
- **A more social Europe** implementing the European Pillar of Social Rights ('PO 4')
- **A Europe closer to citizens** by fostering the sustainable and integrated development of urban, rural and coastal areas and local initiatives ('PO 5')

Interreg specific objectives:

- **A better Interreg Governance** (ISO 1)
- **A safer and more secure Europe** (ISO 2)

The Territorial Analysis for the Romania-Bulgaria Cross-border Region identifies the needs and the potential of the area in all socio-economic fields (transport infrastructure, tourism, environment, human capital, governance etc.). The main conclusion of the analysis is that the cross-border area is *a territory of contrasts: the population decline and slow progress on infrastructure and public services development are paralleled by a trend of economic growth, the quality of environmental factors is worsening, while the sustainable energy share and potential is high, a tradition of cross-border cooperation, paralleled by a lack of trust in the administration and language barriers. Moreover, counties in the cross-border area share similar economic development challenges but do not have the internal resources to address them.*

Thus, the main conclusion of the analysis is that the cross-border territory has needs in all fields and that *Romania-Bulgaria Interreg Programme 2021-2027 should aim to boost the cooperation in order to ensure the socio-economic development of the region, lifting it from the last places in the European rankings, and transforming it into a sustainable and competitive community, by capitalising in a responsible manner on the territorial specificities and the resources offered by the presence of the Danube and the Black Sea Coast.*

Consequently, based on:

- the findings of the territorial analysis
- the restrictions set by the regulations related to the thematic concentration¹
- limited budgetary resources²,

¹ Based on the current information, at least 60% of the ERDF allocation shall be allocated to maximum 3 POs; 15% shall be allocated to specific interreg objectives (these proposals are under negotiation).

² Based on the draft regulation provisions regarding the methodology for setting the financial allocation of the future programme, we estimate that the budget will be lower than the current programme. We estimate, based on the available information, an ERDF allocation of around 165 MEUR (+

we need to prioritize the interventions at the level of the future Interreg VI-A Romania-Bulgaria Programme and to observe the thematic concentration. Thus, the following Policy Objectives shall be financed:

1. A more connected Europe by enhancing mobility and regional ICT connectivity ('PO 3'), with the specific objective:

iii. Developing sustainable, climate resilient, intelligent and intermodal national, regional and local mobility, including improved access to TEN-T and cross-border mobility

Only strategic projects will be financed, namely projects which will observe, inter alia, the following:

- A high cross-border approach should be observed by the interventions as well as real cross-border impact.
- The projects should be in the benefit of the entire area of the Programme and should focus also on the *Green Deal* objectives (e.g. water transport/navigability).
- The projects should enhance cross-border mobility and eliminate the missing links and administrative barriers.
- Ready to go projects (mature at the moment of submission).

A strategic project to analyse the connectivity, including possibilities for new bridges across Danube (rail/road), ports etc. will be included in the Programme. The elaborated analysis will include possible future investments that should be in line with the existing bilateral Memoranda, relevant national and EU strategic documents, including the Master plans of both countries.

2. A Europe closer to citizens by fostering the sustainable and integrated development of urban, rural and coastal areas and local initiatives ('PO 5'), with the specific objective

ii. fostering the integrated social, economic and environmental local development, cultural heritage and security, including for rural and coastal areas also through community-led local development

The implementation of this PO is done through an integrated territorial strategy for a certain area. This strategy must be owned and implemented by the relevant stakeholders from the covered territory.

This strategy shall build upon the territorial strategies/priorities of both countries focusing on the integrated development of the cross-border region and taking into account the development of the Euro Velo 6 Route (as one of its key elements).

Under this PO, operations related to SMEs will be supported, with a dedicated budget and respective indicators.

PO5 shall be implemented in accordance with the provisions of EU regulations, the recommendations issued/provided by the European Commission and in line with the publication - *Bringing territoriality into Interreg - Policy Objective 5* - drafted by Interact³.

national contribution of 20 or 30%, depending on the final decision), which is much lower compared with the current programme financial allocation of ERDF 215 MEUR (+15% national co-financing).

³ http://www.interact-eu.net/library?title=&field_fields_of_expertise_tid=78&field_networks_tid=All#2959-publication-bringing-territoriality-interreg-policy-objective-5