

## Public consultation - Overcoming obstacles in border regions

Fields marked with \* are mandatory.

For the last 25 years, the European Union has been investing in cross-border cooperation through Interreg, a financing instrument for regional development across borders. Despite all the progress made, many obstacles persist, and many of these cannot be solved with Interreg financing alone.

The main purpose of this consultation is therefore to collect experiences and opinions from citizens, key stakeholders and experts, in order to get a comprehensive overview of what obstacles persist and of their impact on the daily lives of people and businesses in border regions.

The results will be published online. They will also feed into a study aiming to produce conclusions and practical suggestions on how the EU and its partners can ease remaining obstacles.

For more information on this consultation, please read the background document.

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

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**\* 1. In which capacity are you completing this questionnaire**

- As an individual/private person
- As a self-employed individual
- On behalf of a business/private company
- On behalf of a pan-European interest group
- On behalf of a public authority
- On behalf of an organisation
- On behalf of an academic/research institution
- Other

\* Your name or the name of the business/organisation/institution on behalf of which you are responding

*50 character(s) maximum*

CECICN

**If your organisation is registered in the Transparency Register, please indicate your Register ID-number.**

If your organisation is not registered, you have the opportunity to [Register now](#). Then return to this page to submit your contribution as a registered organisation.

Responses from organisations not registered will be published separately. Non-registered organisations, please [submit your contributions here](#).

For more information about the Transparency Register, click [here](#).

Yes

No

**\*2. Your name or the name of the business/organisation/institution on behalf of which you are responding**

Conference of EU cross-border and interregional city networks (CECICN),  
-Jean Peyrony, Executive Director of CECICN

**3. Contact e-mail address**

cesci@cesci-net.eu

**\* 4. Where are you currently resident or based?**

- |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> BE - Belgique -<br>België       | <input type="radio"/> BG - България -<br>Bulgaria | <input type="radio"/> CZ - Česká<br>Republika | <input type="radio"/> DK - Danmark                |
| <input type="radio"/> DE -<br>Deutschland             | <input type="radio"/> EE - Eesti                  | <input type="radio"/> EL - Ελλάδα -<br>Ellada | <input type="radio"/> ES - España                 |
| <input type="radio"/> FR - France                     | <input type="radio"/> HR - Hrvatska               | <input type="radio"/> IE - Ireland -<br>Eire  | <input type="radio"/> IT - Italia                 |
| <input type="radio"/> CY - Κύπρος -<br>Κύπρος         | <input type="radio"/> LV - Latvija                | <input type="radio"/> LT - Lietuva            | LU -<br><input type="radio"/> Luxembourg<br>(G-D) |
| <input checked="" type="radio"/> HU -<br>Magyarország | <input type="radio"/> MT - Malta                  | <input type="radio"/> NL - Nederland          | <input type="radio"/> AT - Österreich             |
| <input type="radio"/> PL - Polska                     | <input type="radio"/> PT - Portugal               | <input type="radio"/> RO - România            | <input type="radio"/> SI - Slovenija              |
| <input type="radio"/> SK - Slovensko                  | <input type="radio"/> FI - Suomi -<br>Finland     | <input type="radio"/> SE - Sverige            | <input type="radio"/> UK - United<br>Kingdom      |
| <input type="radio"/> IS - Iceland                    | <input type="radio"/> LI - Liechtenstein          | <input type="radio"/> CH -<br>Switzerland     | <input type="radio"/> NO - Norge                  |
| <input type="radio"/> Other                           |   |   |   |

**\* 5. Language in which I complete the questionnaire.**

- |   |                                      |   |  |
|---|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="radio"/> български (bg)      | <input type="radio"/> čeština (cs)   | <input type="radio"/> dansk (da)              | <input type="radio"/> Deutsch (de)         |
| <input type="radio"/> eesti keel (et)     | <input type="radio"/> ελληνικά (el)  | <input checked="" type="radio"/> English (en) | <input type="radio"/> español (es)         |
| <input type="radio"/> français (fr)       | <input type="radio"/> hrvatski (hr)  | <input type="radio"/> italiano (it)           | <input type="radio"/> latviešu valoda (lv) |
| <input type="radio"/> lietuvių kalba (lt) | <input type="radio"/> magyar (hu)    | <input type="radio"/> Malti (mt)              | <input type="radio"/> Nederlands (nl)      |
| <input type="radio"/> polski (pl)         | <input type="radio"/> português (pt) | <input type="radio"/> română (ro)             | <input type="radio"/> slovenčina (sk)      |
| <input type="radio"/> slovenščina (sl)    | <input type="radio"/> suomi (fi)     | <input type="radio"/> svenska (sv)            |  |

**\* 6. How should we publish your response?**

- In full (I consent to the publication of any information in my completed form, including my identity).
- Anonymously (I consent to the publication of any information in my completed form, apart from my name/the name of my organisation, the e-mail/contact address provided and the Transparency Register ID).
- Not at all (My response will not be published. It will be used within the Commission only).

**\* 7. Does your organisation specialise in cross-border cooperation or in working to ease or remove border obstacles?**

- Yes
- No
- Don't know/Not applicable

## BORDER OBSTACLES

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**\* 1. How do you view the border in your region?**

- As an opportunity
- As an obstacle
- It has no impact
- Other
- Don't know

**\* If you replied, 'other', please say how you view the border in your region.**

*50 character(s) maximum*

as an opportunity and an obstacle at the same time

**\* 2. Are any of the following border obstacles relevant in your region?**

### Explanation

Yes = this obstacle is relevant in my region

No = this does not apply in my region.

n/a = I have no opinion. / I don't know.

	yes	no	n/a
*Difficult physical access, e.g. 'I can't cross the border because there is no bridge/tunnel//It takes too long to travel to the other side//There are no/too few buses and trains to the other side'	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Language barriers, e.g. 'I don't speak the language they speak on the other side of the border//The people on the other side don't speak my language.'	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Legal and administrative barriers, e.g. 'The national taxation systems/pension systems are different//My professional qualifications are not recognised on the other side of the border//I'm not allowed access to certain medical services/education schemes'.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Lack of trust, e.g. 'I don't trust the people from across the border.'	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Economic disparities, e.g. 'It's too expensive on the other side of the border//There is too big a gap between economic conditions on either side of the border.'	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Sociocultural differences, e.g. 'I don't like the way society works on the other side of the border//I have better access to my rights on my side of the border'.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Public authorities' interest in working together, e.g. 'Local politicians don't seem to be interested in working together//Political debate doesn't include border issues'.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

\* If you replied 'other', please state which obstacle(s) apply/applies.

*100 character(s) maximum*

ISIG study for COE: 6 categories of obstacles  
Obstacles evolve over the time

**3. Please select up to 3 obstacles from the previous question. Choose those you think pose most problems in your region.**

Explanation: Please state what form this/these obstacle(s) take(s) in your region and how it/they affect(s) your life. Use one box per obstacle.

**Obstacle 1**

*500 character(s) maximum*

Note: what follows is a general observation that needs to be declined and adapted for each cross-border territory.

Obstacles related to the border as a separation between 2 national systems (policy/institutional, technical/administrative/functional, economic etc.)

Lack of integrated territorial approaches

Cross-border issues remain marginal

Absence in coordination of national regulations

Institutional asymmetry

See detail (also other responses to the survey) in annex.

**Obstacle 2**

*500 character(s) maximum*

Obstacles related to the border as a separation between 2 communities (individual links, knowledge, shared visions)

Relations of cooperation are closely related to the exchanges between people, but several factors may hinder this cooperation:

Lack of knowledge of languages

Difference of political and administrative cultures

Lack of knowledge of the cross-border territory (cross-border data)

Lack of confidence, change of contact persons

### Obstacle 3

*500 character(s) maximum*

Obstacles related to INTERREG and the lack of synergy with the local/regional/national policies

Cf. annex

Lack of cross-border data

Lack of territorial approaches of the programs

Lack of articulation of the programmes among one another and with other programmes

Complexity and heaviness of the programs

Reduced political involvement

Difficult perpetuation, insufficient use of encountered difficulties

Lack of communication, of exchange of experiences/results

#### 4. How can this/these obstacle(s) be overcome?

Explanation: Please write your answers in the order in which you ranked the obstacles in question 3 above. Use one box per obstacle and include:

- all aspects of your potential solution, such as any administrative procedures that need to be changed and any national, regional or local regulatory provisions that you think affect the situation;
- any organisations, groups or individuals you think should be involved in the process;
- any other factors that might help overcome the obstacle(s).

If you have any real-life examples of projects or solutions to a similar problem from elsewhere in Europe, please mention them too.

##### Solution to obstacle 1

*500 character(s) maximum*

In order to resolve the obstacles, a multi-level action is needed:

Cf. annex

Level 1/3 - local/regional:

In each border region, on the basis of existing law

Level 2/3 - national:

On each border, states need to cooperate to coordinate their legislation

Level 3/3 - European:

At European level, it has to be taken into account by sectoral policies and more coordination, by better legislation, new tools (ECBC)

### Solution to obstacle 2

*500 character(s) maximum*

In border regions, one should also act on/with civil society:

Cf. annex

People-to-people projects  
Learning of the language of the neighbour  
Create perennial places for training and capitalization  
Develop a cross-border and European citizenship  
Promote cross-border mobility of all publics  
Develop cross-border media

### Solution to obstacle 3

*500 character(s) maximum*

At the level of the INTERREG programmes, one needs to:

Cf. annex

Cross-border territorial observation  
Promote the linking of partners  
Strengthen the role of local communities and cross-border groupings in the programmes  
Develop innovative forms of cross-border territorial governance  
Finance 'people to people' projects  
Improve mutual knowledge  
Coordinate the CP among themselves and with other regional / national programmes

## COOPERATION ACROSS BORDERS

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### \* 1. Are you aware of any cross-border cooperation activities in your region?

- Yes  
 No

Please specify.

*300 character(s) maximum*

The CECICN follows cross-border cooperation via its member networks at borders all over Europe, in a thematic, territorial and multilevel approach.

## 2. Has cross-border cooperation improved in your region over the last decade?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Why has cooperation improved?

*500 character(s) maximum*

INTERREG initiated and facilitated cooperation  
The bottom-up approach facilitated the rise of projects  
Cooperation has allowed to increase the mutual knowledge, the networking of existing actors and structures, the development of common structures, the dissemination of pilot actions, and to increase the project quality  
CECICN via its members networks (MOT, CESCO, UBC, MedCities, FAIC, CAAC, CoDCR, CTA) and all structures dedicated to CBC (AEBR, TEIN) contributed to promote cooperation

## \*3. Have you heard of Interreg or European Territorial Cooperation?

- Yes
- No

\*What does it mean to you?

*300 character(s) maximum*

INTERREG is an indispensable tool to strengthen partnerships and implement joint projects, and to build a concrete Europe close to the territories. All borders need to continue to be supported via INTERREG.

## 4. Any further comments?

*500 character(s) maximum*

Local authorities, states and Europe need, each one at their own level, to learn from the results of each project and erase what makes subsist the borders. It is not enough to only fund projects. We also need to continue building the EU, gradually harmonize social, fiscal, economic tools etc. For a constructive and lasting cooperation, the territories should continue to participate using the measures and tools not only in a short-term perspective, but also with a medium and long term policy vision.

## 5. Do you have any publications about border obstacles that might be relevant to this consultation?

If so, please upload it here. If it takes up more than 1MB, please email it to [REGIO CONSULTATION BORDER OBSTACLES](#).

List the publication(s) as follows:

- Title;
  - date of publication (YYYY-MM);
  - author;
  - Full URL link to the site where the publication is posted (if it is online).
- [02c97750-9c1f-4ff5-82e3-20518b59f855/CONTRIBUTION\\_CECICN\\_obstacles\\_cbc.pdf](#)

## Useful links

Consultation on overcoming obstacles in border regions [EN]

([http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/en/newsroom/consultations/overcoming-obstacles-border-regions/](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/newsroom/consultations/overcoming-obstacles-border-regions/))

Background document [EN]

([http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/sources/consultation/overcoming-obstacles-border-regions/pdf/background](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/consultation/overcoming-obstacles-border-regions/pdf/background)

Hintergrunddokument [DE]

([http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/sources/consultation/overcoming-obstacles-border-regions/pdf/background](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/consultation/overcoming-obstacles-border-regions/pdf/background)

Document de référence [FR]

([http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/sources/consultation/overcoming-obstacles-border-regions/pdf/background](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/consultation/overcoming-obstacles-border-regions/pdf/background)

Регистрирате сега [BG]

([http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/sources/consultation/overcoming-obstacles-border-regions/pdf/background](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/consultation/overcoming-obstacles-border-regions/pdf/background)

Podkladovým dokumentu [CS]

([http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/sources/consultation/overcoming-obstacles-border-regions/pdf/background](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/consultation/overcoming-obstacles-border-regions/pdf/background)

Baggrundsdokumentet [DA]

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Taustdokumenti [ET]

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Documento de referencia [ES]

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Popratni dokument [HR]

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Documento di riferimento [IT]

([http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/sources/consultation/overcoming-obstacles-border-regions/pdf/backgroun](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/consultation/overcoming-obstacles-border-regions/pdf/backgroun)

Pamatdokumentā [LV]

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Aiškinamajame dokumente [LT]

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Achtergronddocument [NL]

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Dokumentacie źródłowym [PL]

([http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/sources/consultation/overcoming-obstacles-border-regions/pdf/backgroun](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/consultation/overcoming-obstacles-border-regions/pdf/backgroun)

Documento de referência [PT]

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Documentul de referință [RO]

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Referenčnom dokumente [SK]

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Tausta-asiakirjassat [FI]

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Samrådsdokumentet [SV]

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## Contact

✉ [REGIO-CONSULTATION-BORDER-OBSTACLES@ec.europa.eu](mailto:REGIO-CONSULTATION-BORDER-OBSTACLES@ec.europa.eu)

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