



# 21st edition of the #EURegionsWeek

Breaking barriers to cross-border

EU cooperation projects enhancing people's skills in the Western Balkans

A photograph of the European Union flag, which is blue with twelve gold stars arranged in a circle. Two hands are visible at the bottom, holding the corners of the flag, which is waving in the air. The background is a blurred green landscape with trees.

*Gilles Kittel, REGIO D1, IPA/EUSAIR/EU  
Accession Negotiation team leader, 12  
October 2023*

# In this presentation...

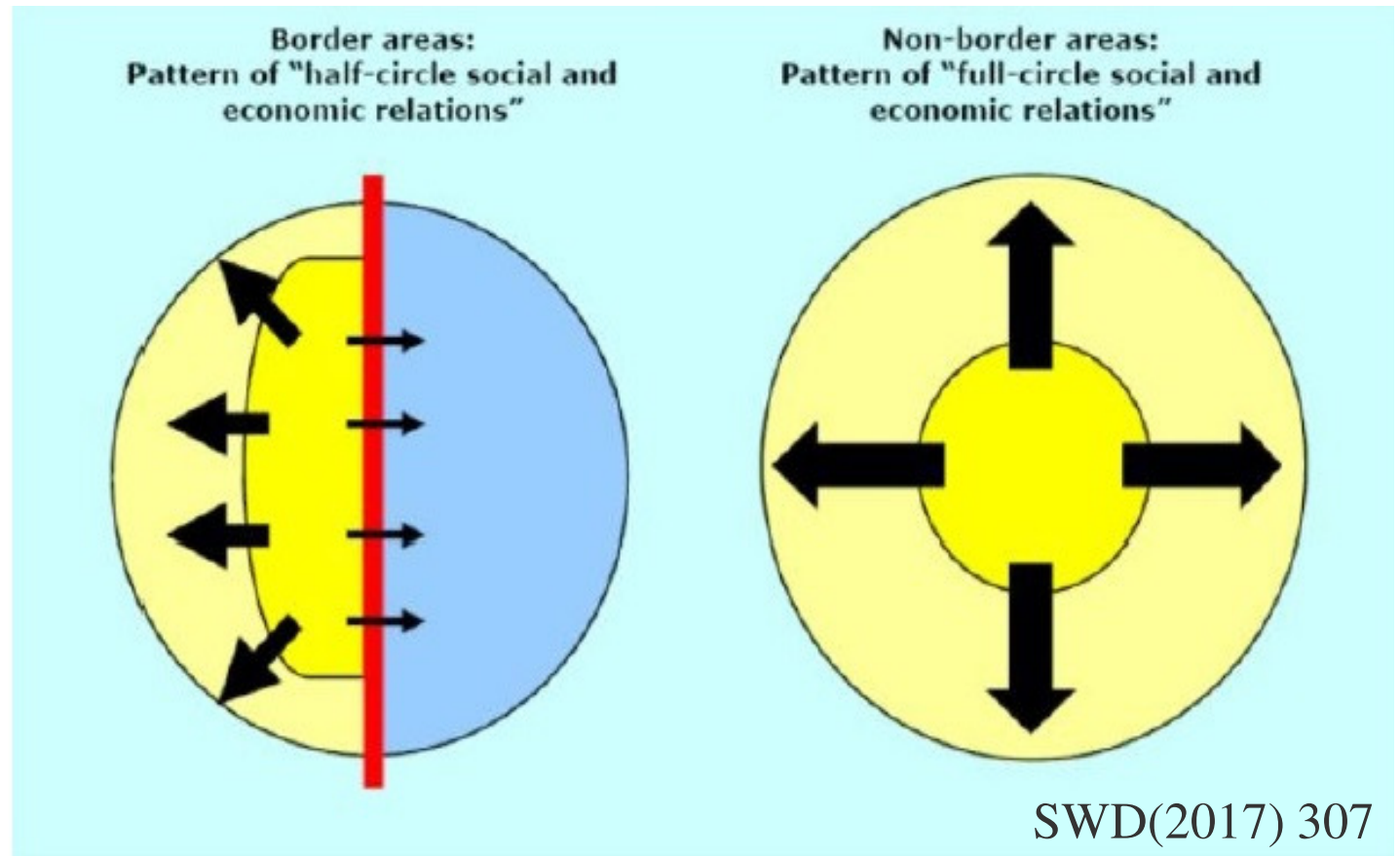
- 1 Cross-border obstacles
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# 1 Cross-border obstacles



# Natural market (or catchment area)

- Fewer job opportunities for individuals
- Smaller pool of skills for employers



# Cross-border obstacles impact

Removing only **one fifth**  
of all obstacles could lead to:

**GDP  
+2% in  
border regions**



**1 million  
new jobs**



- Loss of potential in terms of socio-economic development
- "Border Effect" = Unmet potential development in terms of:
  - Labour mobility
  - Employment opportunities
  - Enhanced pool of skills for employers
  - Balancing contiguous labour markets
  - Economic growth

# Actions to be aware of

- B-solutions:
  - Open call for cases <https://www.b-solutionsproject.com/>
  - Compendia of cases
  - Publication “vibrant cross border labour markets”
- Conference Jan 2023 <https://crossborderlabour.regio-events.eu/>
- Cross-border labour market analysis (ongoing => Q2 2024)

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## A new generation of Interreg IPA programmes

PASSION LED US HERE

*“You can’t solve a problem on the same level that it was created. You have to rise above it to the next level.”*

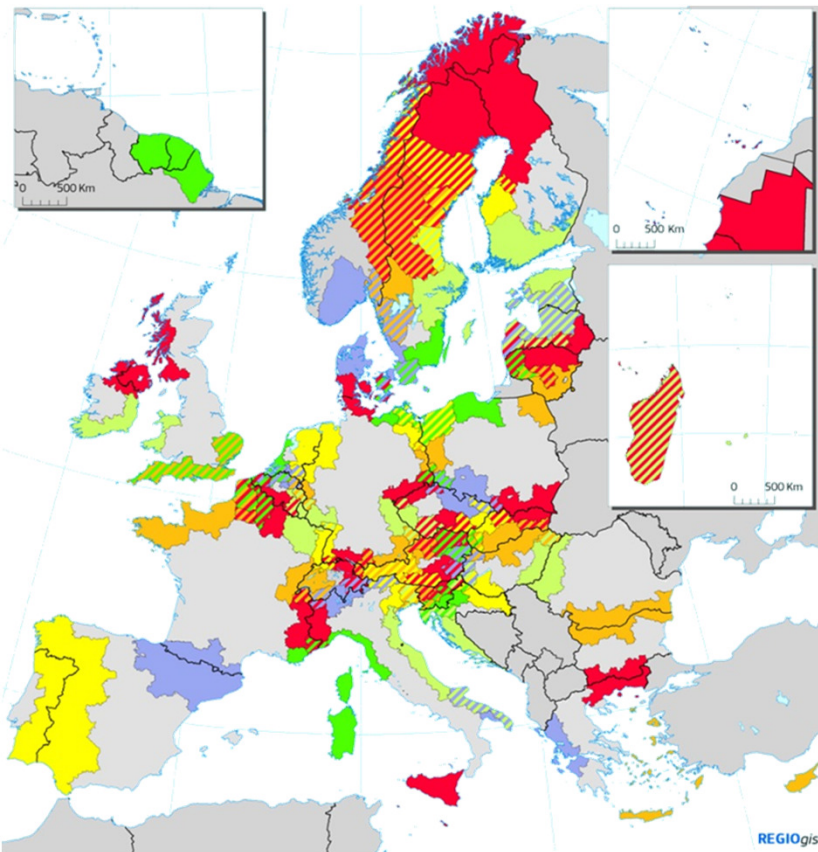
*Albert Einstein*

**#EUBudget, #EUSolidarity, #StrongerTogether**

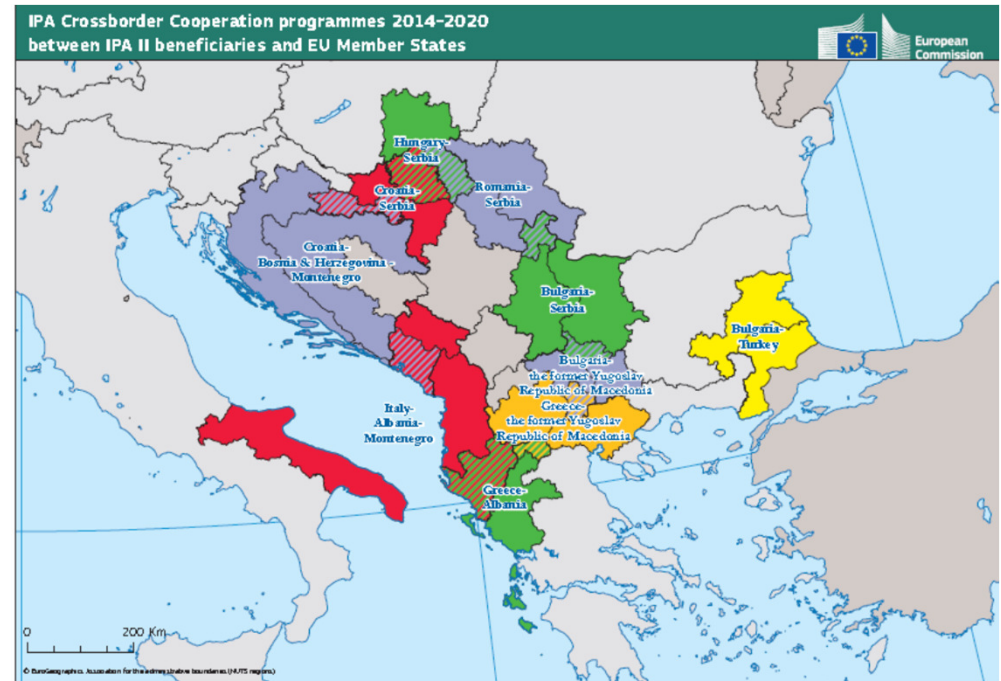


# Emphasis on the coherence and continuity of cooperation programme areas

## Internal Interreg CBC programmes



## Interreg IPA CBC programmes

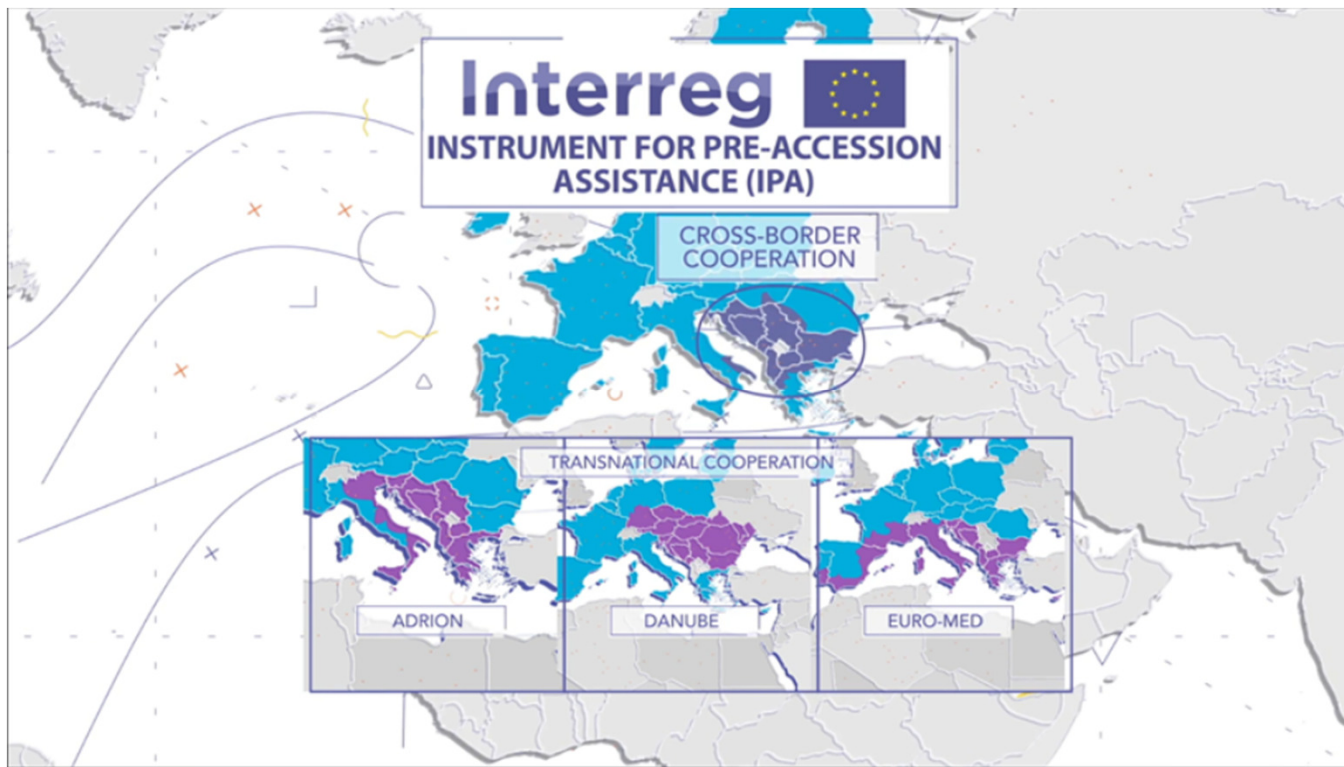


# 3 Interreg IPA TN & 1 Interreg IPA IR programmes

**NEW**

+ URBACT IV  
(enlarged to 5 IPA countries)

NB: EURO NEXT MED & NEXT Black Sea -> also partially financed through IPA.



### 3 HISTEK – A good example of project with capitalisation

**Interreg - IPA CBC**  
Italy - Albania - Montenegro



**HISTEK**

# HISTEK goals

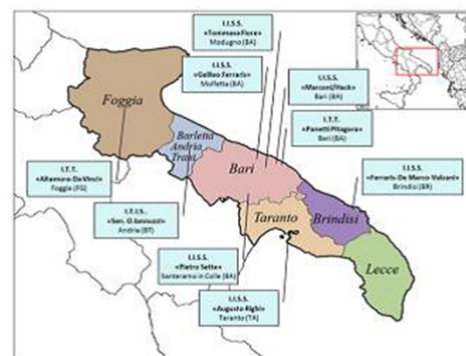
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- To connect the world of **Education and Business** at Cross-border level.
  - To co-design a new level 5 of **Cross-border qualification** (based on the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)) **training offers** for specialised technicians:
    - aligned with the real needs of Cross-Border SMEs,
    - And focusing on common standards on advanced technologies, as one of the cornerstones for technological development of companies, in particular for SMEs
  - To favor the **Cross-border Mobility of young people**, making internationalization and innovation processes more sustainable for CB SMEs.

# Example of activity - Analysis of the training offer in the 3 countries


- **Focus** of the analysis on:
  - **Advanced Manufacturing Technologies (KET 6)**, considered by the European Commission as one of the cornerstones of the technological development strategies of companies, especially SMEs.
- **Cross-Border Aspects** explored:
  - **Context:** Materials and resources (equipment, laboratories, classrooms..).
  - **Professional resources:** Skills possessed by teachers, with specific focus on KET 6.
  - **Relations with the territory:** existing links between education and business.
  - **Training offers**, including transversal skills and technical skills linked to Advanced Manufacturing.

# Example of activity - Analysis of the training offer in the 3 countries

- **Targets involved:**
  - **Puglia:** 10 Schools in the Technological field belonging to 4<sup>th</sup>–5<sup>th</sup> Levels EQF.
  - **Albania:** 10 Schools in the Technological field belonging to 4<sup>th</sup>–5<sup>th</sup> levels EQF.
  - **Montenegro:** 48 Schools in the Technological field belonging to 4<sup>th</sup>–5<sup>th</sup> Levels EQF.



# HISTEK+ Capitalisation Actions

- 
- **Actions to raise the awareness of the 3 Ministries** about the opportunity to setup the new Cross-Border 5<sup>th</sup> level EQF curriculum, with common and shared standards and with a final recognition system, valid in the three countries.
  - **Actions to enlarge the HISTEK Cluster, composed by IT-AL-ME SMEs/Educational Institutions/Public Institutions**, for supporting the implementation of the HISTEK Model, favoring the creation of a strong Cross-Border educational system aimed at boosting the real and sustainable competitiveness of Cross-Border SMEs.

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## EUSAIR under revision





# EUSAIR today



- 10 countries: 4 EU MSs (GR, HR, SI, IT - 13 regions) + 5 IPA countries (AL, BiH, ME, RS, MK) + San Marino
- 72 million inhabitants.
- GDP (PPS) is 10% of that of the EU27.

# IPA Adrion & EUSAIR MRS facilitating the EU Enlargement process of the Western Balkans

- A convergence of interests on the enlargement between EU member and IPA countries;
- A regional dimension that reconnects the WB to the EU;
- A horizontal cooperation based on equal footing;
- A capacity building effect;
- An emphasis on the relevance of territorial cooperation and cohesion and the 4 key dimensions towards the EU Green Deal Actions for 2050
- An inclusive approach towards stakeholders with participatory processes (consultation, engagement and mobilisation).
- A new 5<sup>th</sup> Social Pillar

■ EU areas  
■ Other areas

0 500 Km

# EUSAIR expected achievements and value

## Key Achievements

- Increase in cooperation capacity (generation of joint actions/policy)
- Increase in dialogue
- Bringing actors together
  - **Across countries and sectors**
  - **Across levels comes with maturity (time) and capacity**
- Cooperation with the EC is a sign of maturity.

## Added-value

- Cooperation brings legitimacy to the work - key added value.
- Working with issue on a transnational basis can increase awareness and attention (nationally).
- Facilitate synergies across sectors (closely linked with policy dialogue).

# Conclusions

*“If you want to go fast, go alone, if you want to go far, go together.”*

*African proverb*

**Any Questions?**



#ThisistheEU

#ThisIsTheEU



The EU is built  
on solidarity

# Thank you

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