



Regions of the North Sea, Atlantic, Channel, and Arctic of Europe are on the frontline in terms of Brexit impacts. We have a long history of cooperation involving partners in the United Kingdom (UK) and fear the damage to our own economies, and the subsequent knock-on effects to other parts of Europe. The European Union has nourished such cooperation thanks to dedicated programmes under the European Territorial Cooperation objective.

In light of the ongoing negotiations on the multiannual financial framework for 2021–2027 and in view of the ongoing preparations for the future European Territorial Cooperation programmes, we, CPMR Member Regions:

- Remind all decision-makers in the EU and the UK of the benefits of ETC programmes, including that ETC programmes leverage resources, they foster international collaboration which leads to innovative solutions to shared challenges, and ETC partnerships lead to policy change and have a long-term impact on public services.
- Call on EU decision-makers to ensure no barriers are constructed in the new programmes that would impede or prevent constructive cooperation at regional level with UK partners post-Brexit.
- Argue strongly that the current programme geography for transnational and cross-border cooperation programmes involving at least one UK region must remain in the next period, and that any significant change would also impact negatively on the entire cooperation area, such as the North Sea, the Channel, and the Atlantic Area.
- Invite the European Commission to show ambition when it comes to future cross-border and transnational programmes bordering the United Kingdom.
- Believe, therefore, that Orientation Papers for programmes bordering the UK should include chapters with dedicated proposals regarding objectives for the potential involvement of the UK, notwithstanding the eventual decision of the UK Government to opt-in or not to future INTERREG programmes. This would provide a steer regarding future cooperation opportunities with UK stakeholders, and would give a political message of openness towards the UK.
- Insist that these Orientation Papers should be developed through a structured dialogue with the concerned border regions, who are the best placed to identify cooperation needs.
- Repeat our call that the European Territorial Cooperation budget should represent at least 3.5% of the overall budget for Cohesion Policy, and should under no circumstances be smaller than the 2014–2020 budget levels.
- Ask the European Commission to consider developing additional financial mechanisms to alleviate the impact of Brexit at territorial level, either through existing funding programmes or via a new dedicated Brexit fund.