

INTERREG CENTRAL EUROPE PROGRAMME 2021-2027

Priority 2: Cooperating for a greener central Europe
SO 2.1: Supporting the energy transition to a climate-neutral
central Europe

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Disclaimer

This document has been approved by the programming Task Force “Working Group CENTRAL EUROPE 2021+” as an advanced draft of the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme 2021-2027. The document was drafted in compliance with Article 17 of Regulation (EU) 2021/1059, according to the template annexed to the aforementioned regulation.

Further information on the programming process for the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme 2021-2027 can be found at www.interreg-central.eu/CE21-27.

Please note that contents of this document may change also substantially following negotiations with the concerned parties, namely the nine Member States participating in the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme and the European Commission.

Priority 2: Cooperating for a greener central Europe

Specific objective: Supporting the energy transition to a climate-neutral central Europe

Reference: Article 17(3)(e)

PO2 - (i) Promoting energy efficiency measures and reducing greenhouse gas emissions

Related types of action and their expected contribution to those specific objectives and to macro-regional strategies and sea-basin strategies, where appropriate

Reference: Article 17(3)(e)(i), Article 17(9)(c)(ii)

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SO 2.1: Supporting the energy transition to a climate-neutral central Europe

Territorial needs for central Europe

Many regions of central Europe are still highly dependent on fossil fuels and their GHG emissions are above EU average. Significant regional disparities exist in view of energy efficiency performance as well as the use of renewable energies, making it difficult for them to meet EU energy targets and climate objectives of the European Green Deal. To become climate neutral by 2050, central Europe needs to transform its energy system. This is addressed by several climate-related policies, among others, the EU Hydrogen Strategy which promotes clean hydrogen production.

Energy efficiency improvements can also deliver clear economic benefits. Consequently, regions and cities need to increase efforts and improve policies to address energy-related matters in all sectors, including the industrial and residential sectors. Renewable energy production can also offer new development opportunities for rural and peripheral areas. Transnational cooperation aims to play a central role in supporting and coordinating the societal and economic transformation to climate-neutral regions and cities in central Europe.

Transnational cooperation actions

In this SO, Interreg CE will support transnational cooperation to increase energy efficiency, reduce energy consumption and develop framework conditions for the sustainable production and use of renewable energies across the programme area. Possible cooperation actions include the joint development and implementation of strategies and action plans, tools, trainings, pilot actions and related solutions. Actions should improve energy-related policies and capacities and help central European regions and cities to implement affordable sustainable energy solutions that fit their specific territorial settings.

Actions which are related to the promotion of renewable energy production should consider in particular their contribution to climate neutrality policies and potential environmental impacts e.g. on biodiversity and Natura 2000 species and habitats, hydro-morphology, water-use, noise, vibrations and electromagnetic impacts as well as cultural landscape protection and regional specific concerns as addressed within relevant international conventions (e.g. Alpine Convention).

Furthermore, circular solutions, use and reuse of sustainable materials, and the integration of nature-based solutions should be considered, where appropriate.

More concretely, the programme will fund actions to improve the situation in the following thematic fields (non-exhaustive list):

- Smart integration of carbon-neutral solutions across sectors
- Renewable energy sources
- Energy efficiency of buildings and public infrastructures
- Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from industry and other sectors
- Energy planning at local and regional levels
- Energy demand management and behavioural change
- Financing schemes for energy efficiency and renewable energy investments
- Energy poverty

Examples of actions supported (non-exhaustive list):

- Supporting the development of coherent policy frameworks at local and regional level for the transition towards a climate-neutral economy and society in central Europe
- Improving capacities of relevant stakeholders and fostering the exchange of knowledge and good practices on climate change mitigation at local and regional levels, especially between regions with similar territorial characteristics regarding the practical implementation of climate action plans
- Supporting cost-effective measures and pilot actions that increase energy efficiency and improve the integration of sustainable renewable energy sources in SMEs and in different sectors (e.g. in the building and construction sector, industry, agriculture, forestry)
- Implementing pilot actions to test innovative and climate-neutral solutions through e.g. taking up and exploiting R&D results for the energy efficient renovation and heating and cooling of buildings (including cultural heritage buildings)
- Developing and implementing smart city and smart regions approaches, including energy efficiency improvements of district heating networks, to foster carbon-neutral societies and territories
- Pilot testing the production of decentralised renewable energy, and supporting the empowerment of renewables self-consumers and communities, especially in rural areas, considering, for example, the sustainable management of end-of-life solar panels
- Improving energy demand management and fostering behavioural changes of consumers for reducing energy consumption and a resource-efficient and sustainable use of energy

- Promoting the production and use of advanced biofuels, notably the second (produced from non-food crops, such as cellulosic biofuels and waste biomass) and third generation biofuels (algal biomass)
- Supporting policies and strategies to overcome barriers for deploying carbon capture, utilisation and storage solutions in order to reduce GHG emissions
- Developing and introducing new or improved incentive schemes that encourage the reduction of industrial GHG emissions on local and regional level and strengthen the sustainable usage of renewable energy sources (including hydrogen) and energy storage solutions
- Fostering the introduction of corporate climate change mitigation targets and embedding them into existing business management tools (e.g. analytics) and decision-making (e.g. product development)
- Mobilising investments, in particular private funds, to implement energy efficiency measures and make use of renewable energy sources in different sectors, including the industrial, service and residential sectors
- Fostering the collection of integrated data on energy management and the interoperability of data through digital technologies and the coordination of standards and regulatory aspects

Actions should seek synergies with other European instruments, in particular linked to the EU Green Deal. They should build on research results and innovative technologies developed in programmes like Horizon Europe, LIFE etc. and lever infrastructure investments through the private sector and EU financing instruments as e.g. national and regional ERDF programmes, Connecting Europe Facility (CEF), InvestEU, the Just Transition Fund or the EIB. If relevant, also synergies and complementarities with the ESF+ should be considered, e.g. linked to the development of green skills and green jobs, and the EAFRD, regarding the increase of efficiency in energy use in agriculture.

Furthermore, actions should take into account action plans of macro-regional strategies as well as relevant EU and EC initiatives such as the Central and South Eastern Europe energy connectivity (CESEC), the Green City Accord and the Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy and the Urban agenda of the EU. It is also encouraged to participate in already existing regional cooperation fora for the Energy Union Governance and to join the energy dialogue on the optimisation of energy and climate policies.

Expected results

Transnational cooperation actions will result in increased capacities of central European regions and cities for implementing improved energy efficiency policies and measures within different sectors. Pilot actions will demonstrate the viability of energy efficiency solutions, which will lead to behavioural changes, reduce implementation barriers and lever further investment for their wide deployment within central Europe. This will ultimately result in lower GHG emissions on the path to carbon-neutrality and help to mitigate climate change.

For INTERACT and ESPON programmes:

Reference Article 17(9)(c)(i)

Definition of a single beneficiary or a limited list of beneficiaries and the granting procedure

Text field [7000]

N/A

Indicators

Reference: Article 17(3)(e)(ii), Article 17(9)(c)(iii)

Table 2: Output indicators

Priority	Specific objective	ID [5]	Indicator	Measurement unit [255]	Milestone (2024) [200]	Final target (2029) [200]
2	SO 2.1	RCO 83	Strategies and action plans jointly developed	Strategy/action plan	3	20
2	SO 2.1	RCO 84	Pilot actions developed jointly and implemented in projects	Pilot action	6	39
2	SO 2.1	RCO 87	Organisations cooperating across borders	Organisation	137	195
2	SO 2.1	RCO 116	Jointly developed solutions	Solution	6	39

Table 3: Result indicators

Priority	Specific objective	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline	Reference year	Final target (2029)	Source of data	Comments
2	SO 2.1	RCR 79	Joint strategies and action plans taken up by organisations	Joint strategy/ action plan	0	2021	15	Programme monitoring system	
2	SO 2.1	RCR 84	Organisations cooperating across borders after project completion	Organisation	0	2021	98	Programme monitoring system	
2	SO 2.1	RCR 104	Solutions taken up or up-scaled by organisations	Solution	0	2021	29	Programme monitoring system	

Main target groups

Reference: Article 17(3)(e)(iii), Article 17(9)(c)(iv)

Text field [7000]

Target groups of funded actions can be both individuals and organisations that will be involved or positively affected by the actions. As a result, they will be stimulated to take up solutions that lead to improved energy efficiency, an increased use of renewable energies and a more climate-neutral central Europe. More concretely, target groups include both public and private actors such as, policy makers and planners, energy agencies, operators and distributors, infrastructure providers and other local and regional energy actors, as well as different economic sectors including SMEs. Target groups include also all population groups, which will benefit from an improved regional and local energy performance.

Identification of the specific territories targeted, including the planned use of ITI, CLLD or other territorial tools

Reference: Article 17(3)(e)(iv)

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Actions can be implemented throughout the programme area and address all types of territories, i.e. both urban and rural areas. Actions could address territories which show a lower performance in energy efficiency and renewable energy use, or which have deficiencies regarding climate-neutral actions as well as more advanced regions. This will allow exchanges and learning from each other. Cooperation will also allow the more advanced regions to strengthen further their energy performance.

All possible actions need to consider the specific territorial characteristics of targeted areas and be aligned to the relevant territorial strategies at the respective governance level (local, regional, national).

Planned use of financial instruments

Reference: Article 17(3)(e)(v)

Text field [7000]

N/A

Indicative breakdown of the EU programme resources by type of intervention

Reference: Article 17(3)(e)(vi), Article 17(9)(c)(v)

Table 4: Dimension 1 - intervention field

Priority no	Fund	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
2	ERDF	SO 2.1	38	4.159.700
2	ERDF	SO 2.1	41	1.039.925
2	ERDF	SO 2.1	44	7.279.475
2	ERDF	SO 2.1	47	1.039.925
2	ERDF	SO 2.1	48	1.039.925
2	ERDF	SO 2.1	49	2.079.850
2	ERDF	SO 2.1	51	1.039.925
2	ERDF	SO 2.1	52	1.039.925
2	ERDF	SO 2.1	53	1.039.925
2	ERDF	SO 2.1	54	1.039.925

Table 5: Dimension 2 - form of financing

Priority no	Fund	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
2	ERDF	SO 2.1	01	20.798.500

Table 6: Dimension 3 - territorial delivery mechanism and territorial focus

Priority No	Fund	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
2	ERDF	SO 2.1	33	20.798.500