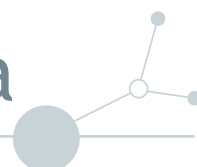


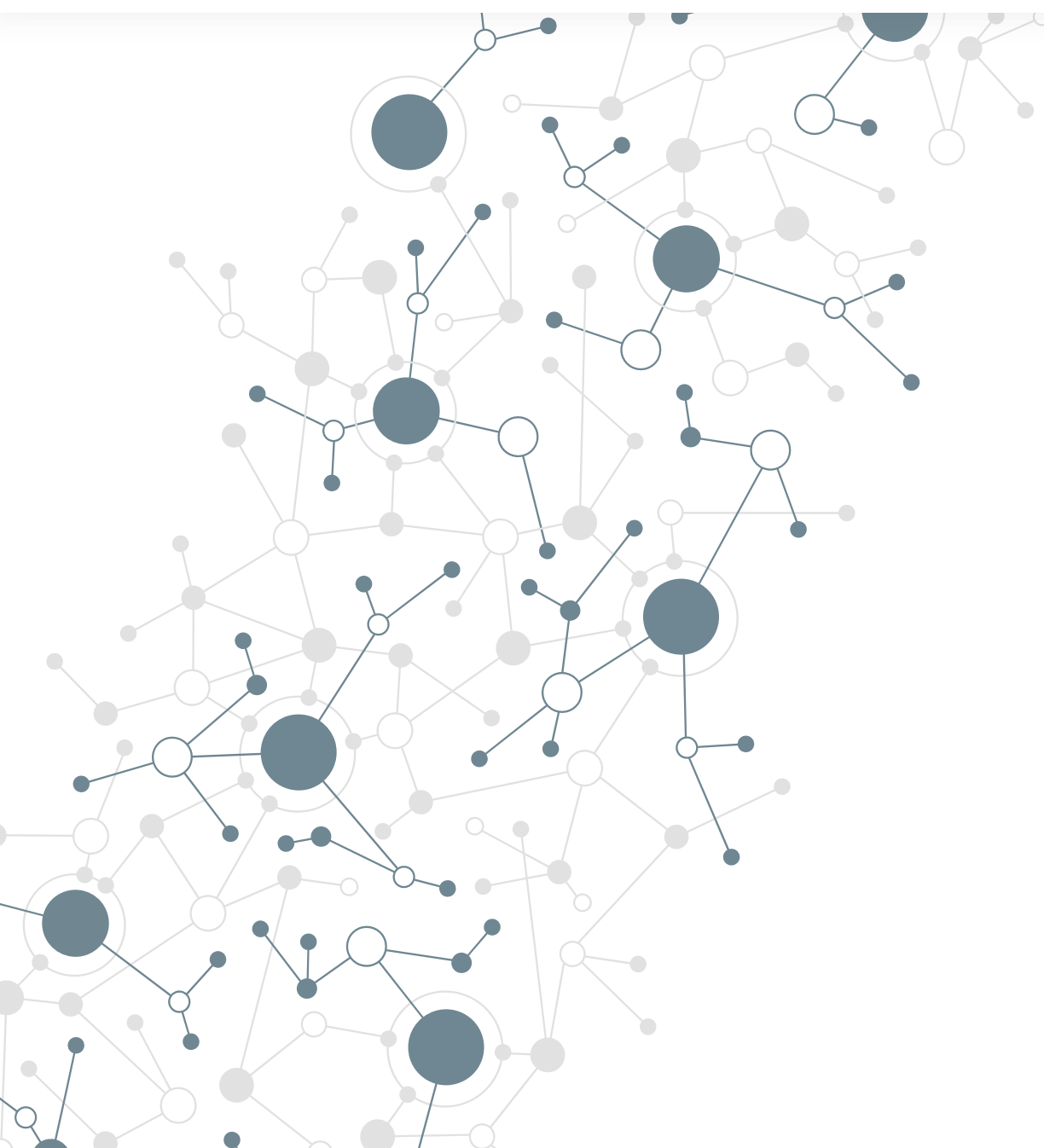


# Mapping of B-Solutions in the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE area

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September 2025





## Introduction

The mapping of existing B-Solutions was carried out in the framework of the preparation of the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE (CE) strategic call for capitalisation projects. It is intended as a practical tool and reference for applicants when preparing their project proposals.

This analysis focuses exclusively on cases concerning inner central European borders (i.e. excluding solutions developed outside the Interreg CE area). Solutions are extracted from the three more recent published compendiums, i.e. the Second (2021) Third (2023) and Fourth (2024) which are available at the **b-solutions project library** (<https://www.b-solutionsproject.com/library>).

B-Solutions are listed on the basis of their category and date of publication (from 2024 to 2021).

Each mapped solution is categorised according to the four thematic groups defined in the compendiums:

- Institutional Cooperation
- Cross-border Public Services
- Employment and Education
- Green (Environmental & Energy-related Cooperation)

The mapping presents a structured overview of B-Solutions in central Europe, highlighting persistent cross-border barriers and potential areas for further action.

By showcasing concrete cases that address recurring legal and administrative border obstacles, the document provides inspiration to applicants for transfer or scale up of b-solutions.

## Summary of findings

The mapping allowed to identify 32 B-Solutions developed under the [B-Solutions initiative](#) of the European Commission (EC), which are relevant to the Interreg CE area. The objective of the analysis is to provide a structured overview of solutions addressing legal and administrative obstacles in cross-border cooperation.

The majority of obstacles stem from legal and regulatory fragmentation, administrative complexity, and institutional coordination gaps. Many cases highlight issues related to inconsistent national laws, lack of mutual recognition of qualifications, and state aid constraints. Other key challenges include redundant administrative procedures, financial barriers such as taxation inconsistencies, and technical obstacles related to infrastructure, digital integration, and energy distribution.

A major recurring theme across the cases is the **need for stronger institutional cooperation**, particularly in governance frameworks that support long-term policy alignment between national and regional authorities. Several solutions propose formal bilateral agreements to replace existing informal arrangements, which often hinder progress. Streamlining administrative processes is another critical recommendation, particularly in employment, tax compliance, and public service coordination. The introduction of bilingual documentation and standardized procedures could significantly reduce bureaucratic burdens on cross-border workers and businesses.

In addition, B-Solutions indicate that a greater use of digital tools and data-sharing platforms would facilitate efficiency, especially in areas such as tax compliance, healthcare, and transport. The adoption of



mutual recognition frameworks for professional qualifications, public procurement, and taxation rules remains essential for creating a seamless cross-border environment. Financial constraints also emerge as a critical barrier, with State aid rules and funding eligibility varying significantly across borders. Many initiatives **depend on political commitment and legal adjustments at both national and EU levels**, particularly regarding the alignment of public procurement laws and taxation structures.

While the solutions presented offer promising models, their successful implementation depends on sustained collaboration between national and regional authorities, as well as legislative reforms that address the root causes of cross-border inefficiencies. Interreg funding and policy alignment instruments could accelerate the implementation of B-Solutions and, ultimately, the mitigation of border obstacles in key areas.



## Thematic Group 1: Institutional Cooperation

### 1. Rebuilding of the Shelter "Europahütte - Rifugio Europa"

**Geographic Scope (Cross-border area concerned):**

Italy- South Tyrol, Austria - Tyrol

**Direct Link to the Expert's Final Report:**

[https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/134\\_Report\\_EGTC-Tyrol-South-Tyrol-Trentino\\_Mahlknecht.pdf](https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/134_Report_EGTC-Tyrol-South-Tyrol-Trentino_Mahlknecht.pdf)

**Reference to the Specific Page in the Compendium:**

2024 - Pages 29-30

**Summary of the Context:**

The "Europahütte - Rifugio Europa" is an alpine shelter located directly on the border between Italy and Austria. It has existed for over a century and is jointly managed by entities from both countries. Due to significant structural damage, the shelter requires reconstruction. However, its location across two jurisdictions creates legal uncertainty regarding which national legal framework should govern the reconstruction process and the awarding of the building contract. A clear legal basis and structured cooperation between Italian and Austrian authorities are necessary to facilitate the reconstruction and future management of the shelter.

**Key Obstacles Identified:**

- Uncertainty over which national legal framework applies under construction law.
- Unclear whether public procurement law is applicable to the main contractor.
- Differences in national building regulations, requiring compliance with the stricter legal framework.
- Coordination challenges between administrative authorities in Austria and Italy regarding permit issuance.

**Follow up (at 2024):**

A cooperation contract was signed in 2024 between the **Autonomous Province of Bolzano - South Tyrol** and **DAV Landshut**, the German Alpine Club's Landshut section, which co-owns the shelter.



## 2. Analysis of Cross-Border Obstacles in the Trade of Local Agricultural Products

### Geographic Scope (Cross-border area concerned):

Croatia - Hungary

### Direct Link to the Expert's Final Report:

[https://ec.europa.eu/futurium/sites/futurium/files/crossmarkets\\_policy\\_recommendation\\_eng.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/futurium/sites/futurium/files/crossmarkets_policy_recommendation_eng.pdf)

### Reference to the Specific Page in the Compendium:

2024 - Pages 153-157

### Summary of the Context:

The Pannon European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) represents over 60 local and county-level municipalities along the Croatian-Hungarian border, where agriculture plays a central role in the rural economy. However, small agri-food producers face regulatory barriers that limit cross-border trade, preventing them from fully benefiting from the EU Single Market.

The core challenge arises from differences in national food safety regulations and tax policies, making it difficult for small producers to sell their goods across borders. Although both Hungary and Croatia have national policies supporting local food production, their legal frameworks are not aligned, leading to challenges in taxation, hygiene standards, and trading permits.

### Key Obstacles Identified:

- Diverging national food safety and trading permit regulations
- Complex and non-harmonized VAT and tax procedures
- Lack of bilingual administrative procedures and information gaps
- Limited consumer access to diverse local products

### Follow up (at 2024):

A pilot action under b-solutions was launched to address these obstacles, focusing on stakeholder engagement, legislative analysis, and policy recommendations.

Policy recommendations were drafted, but their implementation depends on further political engagement.



### 3. GO! Borderless Square

**Geographic Scope (Cross-border area concerned):**

Italy - Gorizia, Slovenia - Nova Gorica

**Direct Link to the Expert's Final Report:**

[https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/97\\_EDITED\\_Report-EGTC-GO-Mitja-Ozbic-1.pdf](https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/97_EDITED_Report-EGTC-GO-Mitja-Ozbic-1.pdf)

**Reference to the Specific Page in the Compendium:**

2024 - Pages 185-189

**Summary of the Context:**

The GO! Borderless Square initiative aims to address institutional cooperation challenges in the Italy-Slovenia cross-border region, particularly in the piazza Transalpina/Trg Evrope. This public square, shared by Gorizia (Italy) and Nova Gorica (Slovenia), is a key focal point for cross-border collaboration and will serve as the European Capital of Culture (ECOC) 2025. However, event organization in this shared space is complicated by differences in national administrative, safety, and technical regulations, creating barriers for cultural institutions, local authorities, and event organizers.

To facilitate the smooth organization of cross-border events and enhance institutional cooperation, EGTC GO, together with the municipalities of Nova Gorica and Gorizia, developed a five-step action plan to streamline administrative processes, simplify permit acquisition, and establish a unified regulatory framework.

**Key Obstacles Identified:**

- Diverging national regulations for event organization, including fire safety, security, noise limits, and public health protocols.
- Dual administrative requirements for event permits, increasing time and complexity for organizers.
- Lack of interoperability in digital identification systems (Slovenia recognizes Italian ID cards for online services, but Italy's system does not accept Slovenian ID).
- Language barriers, making compliance with administrative requirements difficult.
- Lack of a special legal framework governing the cross-border square, making event coordination inefficient.

**Follow up (at 2024):**

A draft agreement was prepared by the expert to streamline event organization, and discussions are ongoing among the municipalities. The agreement has not yet been formally adopted.



## 4. Facilitating Youth Mobility Across Borders

### Geographic Scope (Cross-border area concerned):

Italy - Tyrol, South Tyrol, Trentino | Austria - Tyrol

### Direct Link to the Expert's Final Report:

[https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/98\\_Report\\_EGTC-Tyrol-South-Tyrol-Trentino\\_Ivan-Curzolo.pdf](https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/98_Report_EGTC-Tyrol-South-Tyrol-Trentino_Ivan-Curzolo.pdf)

### Reference to the Specific Page in the Compendium:

2023 - Pages 18-20

### Summary of the Context:

The Tyrol-South Tyrol-Trentino region between Italy and Austria has a long tradition of cross-border cooperation, particularly in education, culture, and sports. Many youth exchange programs, training activities, and sports leagues encourage mobility between both sides of the border. However, bureaucratic restrictions for minors under 14 years old hinder participation in these activities.

- In Austria, minors can travel unaccompanied with a simple parental declaration.
- In Italy, the process is significantly more restrictive, requiring an “accompanying declaration” that must be validated by the police and renewed frequently.

This administrative burden discourages families and organizations from facilitating cross-border mobility, affecting educational and cultural integration in the region.

### Key Obstacles Identified:

- Disparity in travel authorization requirements between Italy and Austria, with Italy requiring additional police validation for minors under 14.
- Limited validity of travel authorizations in Italy, often requiring frequent renewals (single-use or max. six months).
- Absence of an EU-wide regulation for minor travel authorizations, leaving each Member State to regulate mobility individually.
- Lack of exemptions for organized activities (e.g., school trips, sports leagues, cultural exchanges).

### Follow up (at 2023):

National authorities have been informed of the administrative challenges, but no formal changes to travel authorization procedures for minors have been made.



## 5. s4g - Solutions for Good

### **Geographic Scope (Cross-border area concerned):**

Poland - Czech Republic (Lower Silesia & Olomouc, Joint Secretariat of Interreg Poland-Czech Republic)

### **Direct Link to the Expert's Final Report:**

[https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Report\\_04-.pdf](https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Report_04-.pdf)

### **Reference to the Specific Page in the Compendium:**

2021 - Pages 20-21

### **Summary of the Context:**

The Marshal's Office of Lower Silesia in Poland regularly posts or second its employees to work at the Joint Secretariat in Olomouc, Czech Republic, within the framework of the Interreg Poland-Czech Republic Programme. This practice is essential for cross-border cooperation but lacks a clear legal framework, creating administrative and legal uncertainties for both public servants and their employers.

Currently, there are no uniform EU or national regulations that specifically govern the long-term posting or secondment of public sector employees between Member States, making it difficult to determine labour rights, social security contributions, and tax obligations.

### **Key Obstacles Identified:**

- No clear legal framework for cross-border posting of public servants
- Uncertainty regarding applicable national laws
- Need for coordination among multiple Polish regional authorities

### **Follow up (at 2021):**

Findings have been shared with relevant national institutions, but no legal changes have been introduced to clarify cross-border posting of public servants. The issue remains unresolved.





## 6. Setting Up a Special Economic Zone in the Cross-Border Area Nova Gorica - Gorizia

### **Geographic Scope (Cross-border area concerned):**

Slovenia - Italy (Nova Gorica, Gorizia, and Šempeter-Vrtojba region)

### **Direct Link to the Expert's Final Report:**

[https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Report\\_05.pdf](https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Report_05.pdf)

### **Reference to the Specific Page in the Compendium:**

2021 - Pages 23-24

### **Summary of the Context:**

The Regional Development Agency of Northern Primorska, together with municipalities in Slovenia and Italy (Gorizia, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Nova Gorica), is working towards creating a Special Economic Zone (SEZ) in a cross-border area. The initiative aims to strengthen cross-border cooperation and regional economic development through a shared economic space.

A local EGTC (European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation) has already been established, which could serve as the managing body for the SEZ. However, the project faces significant legal and administrative hurdles, mainly related to taxation, customs regulations, and compliance with EU competition law.

### **Key Obstacles Identified:**

- Legal Constraints on State Aid & Tax Incentives
- Regulatory Uncertainty for a Customs-Free Zone
- Practical & Administrative Barriers

### **Follow up (at 2021):**

The EGTC and local municipalities continue advocating for regulatory adjustments, but the legal framework for a Special Economic Zone has not yet been established.



## 7. Fa.Re. Facilitating Recovery Activities Across the Italian-Slovenian Border

### **Geographic Scope (Cross-border area concerned):**

Italy - Slovenia (Friuli Venezia Giulia & Goriška regions)

### **Direct Link to the Expert's Final Report:**

[https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Report\\_06.pdf](https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Report_06.pdf)

### **Reference to the Specific Page in the Compendium:**

2021 - Pages 26-27

### **Summary of the Context:**

The National Institute of Social Security (INPS) in Italy is responsible for recovering unpaid social security contributions from employers and individuals across borders. However, differences in legal interpretations and procedural requirements between Italy and Slovenia have made debt recovery inefficient.

Currently, unclear EU and national rules on the enforceability of recovery claims in another Member State create delays, requiring additional national-level legal proceedings in Italy. This issue is further complicated by differing interpretations of cost reimbursements for cross-border debt recovery.

### **Key Obstacles Identified:**

- Lack of clarity on the recognition of enforceable debt recovery instruments
- Unclear rules on reimbursement of costs for recovery procedures

### **Follow up (at 2021):**

The issue has been raised at the national level, but no legal reforms have been implemented to streamline cross-border debt recovery. The situation remains unchanged.



## 8. Legal Status of a Branch Office of an EGTC in the Partner Country

### **Geographic Scope (Cross-border area concerned):**

Slovakia - Hungary

### **Direct Link to the Expert's Final Report:**

[https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Report\\_08.pdf](https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Report_08.pdf)

### **Reference to the Specific Page in the Compendium:**

2021 - Pages 32-33

### **Summary of the Context:**

The European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) Via Carpatia was established to facilitate cross-border cooperation between Slovakia and Hungary. Although EGTCs are recognized as independent legal entities under EU law, their practical recognition and funding eligibility within national legal frameworks remain challenging.

A key issue is that national funding is often restricted to entities registered within the country. To receive Hungarian funding, EGTC Via Carpatia had to establish a separate non-profit entity in Hungary, creating additional administrative and legal complexities.

Additionally, awareness of EGTCs among national authorities remains low, leading to inconsistent recognition and operational challenges.

### **Key Obstacles Identified:**

- Limited financial support for EGTCs at the EU level
- Lack of consistent recognition of EGTCs at the national level
- Differences in national legal frameworks

### **Follow up (at 2021):**

A legislative amendment in Hungary has resolved the funding issue, but practical implementation is still in progress.



## Thematic Group 2: Cross-border Public Services

### 9. The Road to Health: European Solution for Cross-Border Rescue Driving

**Geographic Scope (Cross-border area concerned):**

Italy - South Tyrol, Austria - Tyrol

**Direct Link to the Expert's Final Report:**

[https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/146\\_EGTC-Tyrol\\_Pichler.pdf](https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/146_EGTC-Tyrol_Pichler.pdf)

**Reference to the Specific Page in the Compendium:**

2024 - Page 43

**Summary of the Context:**

In the EU, the lack of harmonization in traffic laws creates significant obstacles to cross-border emergency medical transport. The Autonomous Province of Bolzano in Italy faces particular challenges, as many residents, who are German speakers, prefer to receive medical treatment in Innsbruck, Austria. However, the transportation of patients across the border is complicated by differing national regulations concerning rescue vehicle licensing, driver qualifications, and vehicle weight limits. These legal inconsistencies hinder the efficiency of emergency medical services, particularly for volunteer ambulance drivers.

**Key Obstacles Identified:**

- Divergent national regulations on ambulance driver licensing
- Conflicting requirements for driving heavy rescue vehicles (over 3.5 tonnes)
- Differences in national age restrictions for rescue vehicle drivers

**Follow up (at 2024):**

The issue has been presented at an EU meeting, but no binding agreements have been made. Efforts continue to push for harmonized volunteer rescue driving rules, but formal development has not yet started.



## 10. Cross-Border Public Transport

### Geographic Scope (Cross-border area concerned):

Germany - Bavaria, Allgäu | Austria - Vorarlberg, Tyrol

### Direct Link to the Expert's Final Report:

[https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/123\\_Report\\_EuregioViaSalinaTransport\\_Schurmann.pdf](https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/123_Report_EuregioViaSalinaTransport_Schurmann.pdf)

### Reference to the Specific Page in the Compendium:

2023 - Pages 67-69

### Summary of the Context:

In the Euregio via salina cross-border region between Germany and Austria, heavy road traffic caused by both tourism and daily commuting could be alleviated through improved public transport integration. However, several obstacles prevent the seamless operation of cross-border transport services, making it difficult for residents and tourists to use public transport as a viable alternative to private vehicles.

- Different national contracts with transport companies create incompatibility in ticketing systems.
- Bus stop regulations and timetable integration issues hinder connectivity.
- The lack of coordinated planning and data sharing makes efficient transport development challenging.

By overcoming these administrative, technical, and financial barriers, the Euregio could reduce congestion, lower emissions, and improve mobility across the border.

### Key Obstacles Identified:

- **Administrative Complexity:** Multiple actors in Germany and Austria with different responsibilities lead to inefficient coordination and unclear financial responsibilities.
- **Lack of Integrated Transport Planning:** Fragmented transport hubs, bus routes, and timetable structures prevent seamless travel.
- **Ticketing and Tariff Incompatibility:** No harmonized ticketing system exists, and tourist guest cards are not mutually recognized.
- **Data and Digital Services Gaps:** Inconsistent timetable data and the lack of joint mobility apps reduce the appeal of public transport.

### Follow up (at 2023):

A working group has been established, but a fully integrated ticketing system and timetable coordination are still in development. The solution has not yet been implemented.



## 11. Cross-Border Ambulant Therapeutic Services

### Geographic Scope (Cross-border area concerned):

Germany - Bavaria, Allgäu | Austria - Tyrol, Vorarlberg

### Direct Link to the Expert's Final Report:

[https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/124\\_-Report\\_Euregio-via-Salina\\_Urs-Kramer.pdf](https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/124_-Report_Euregio-via-Salina_Urs-Kramer.pdf)

### Reference to the Specific Page in the Compendium:

2023 - Pages 70-73

### Summary of the Context:

In the Allgäu-Tyrol cross-border region between Germany and Austria, patients in rural and mountainous areas face difficulties accessing ambulant therapeutic services, such as physiotherapy and home care. Due to geographic constraints, some patients could receive better care in the neighboring country, but differences in national reimbursement systems prevent this from happening efficiently.

### Key challenges include:

- Health insurance funds on both sides do not recognize or reimburse cross-border home care providers.
- Therapists working in the neighboring country must bill privately, leaving patients to pay upfront.
- There is no legal framework allowing direct billing between foreign healthcare providers and national insurance funds.

If addressed, cross-border ambulant healthcare would improve access to medical services, particularly for elderly and mobility-impaired individuals.

### Key Obstacles Identified:

- Unclear EU Legal Framework
- Different National Health Insurance Regulations
- Absence of Cross-Border Billing Agreements

### Follow up (at 2023):

Policy recommendations have been shared, but health insurance funds have not yet adapted reimbursement procedures. The system remains unchanged.



## 12. Cross-Border Commercial Passenger Transport

### **Geographic Scope (Cross-border area concerned):**

Germany - Bavaria | Austria - Tyrol | Italy - South Tyrol, Trentino

### **Direct Link to the Expert's Final Report:**

[https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/126\\_EDITED\\_Report\\_CCI-Bolzano\\_-Mahlknecht-1.pdf](https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/126_EDITED_Report_CCI-Bolzano_-Mahlknecht-1.pdf)

### **Reference to the Specific Page in the Compendium:**

2023 - Pages 74-76

### **Summary of the Context:**

The Alpine regions of Tyrol, South Tyrol, and Trentino are highly dependent on tourism, making cross-border taxi and hired car transport essential for economic and mobility purposes. However, Germany and Austria do not recognize cross-border passenger transport services using small vehicles (up to nine seats), leading to police checks, fines, and vehicle confiscations for Italian operators.

Due to the absence of a specific EU regulation governing taxis and hired car services across borders, the sector remains highly fragmented. This creates significant challenges for tourism, local economies, and transportation services in border regions.

### **Key Obstacles Identified:**

- Lack of EU Legislation
- Different National and Regional Passenger Transport Rules
- Lack of Mutual Recognition Agreements

### **Follow up (at 2023):**

Local authorities are negotiating bilateral agreements, but the regulatory issue for small cross-border passenger transport remains unresolved.



## 13. Comparison of Water Tourism Regulations on the Slovakian-Hungarian Border

### Geographic Scope (Cross-border area concerned):

Slovakia - Csallóköz | Hungary - Szigetköz

### Direct Link to the Expert's Final Report:

[https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/129\\_Report-Arrabona-EGTC\\_CESCI.pdf](https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/129_Report-Arrabona-EGTC_CESCI.pdf)

### Reference to the Specific Page in the Compendium:

2023 - Pages 77-79

### Summary of the Context:

The Danube River and its tributaries in the Szigetköz-Csallóköz cross-border region present major opportunities for water tourism development. However, differing national regulations and a lack of coordination between Slovakia and Hungary have limited the potential for cross-border adventure and water tourism. The absence of clear legal definitions, harmonized technical standards, and mutual recognition of training qualifications further complicates the industry's growth.

While general safety and environmental regulations exist at the EU level, the specific implementation details vary between Hungary and Slovakia, leading to inconsistencies and challenges for tour operators, authorities, and tourists.

### Key Obstacles Identified:

- Regulatory Differences between Hungary and Slovakia
- Lack of Awareness and Coordination
- No Common Permitting System or Quality Standards

### Follow up (at 2023):

A coordinated action plan is being drafted, but no legal changes have been introduced to harmonize regulations. The solution is not yet in place.





## 14. Introducing Cross-Border Healthcare into Regular Operation

### **Geographic Scope (Cross-border area concerned):**

Lower Austria (Austria) - South Bohemia (Czech Republic)

### **Direct Link to the Expert's Final Report:**

[https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Report\\_14.pdf](https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Report_14.pdf)

### **Reference to the Specific Page in the Compendium:**

2021 - Pages 51-52

### **Summary of the Context:**

The Lower Austrian Health Agency, through its Healthacross Initiative, has been facilitating cross-border healthcare cooperation between Austria and the Czech Republic. Citizens in the Lower Austria - South Bohemia border region frequently seek medical care across the border, but reimbursement disparities create significant barriers.

Despite EU legislation allowing for cross-border healthcare reimbursement, differences in national legal frameworks and reimbursement procedures make it difficult for patients to receive fair compensation, discouraging them from seeking treatment abroad. The goal is to integrate cross-border healthcare into regular operations, ensuring seamless patient mobility in the region.

### **Key Obstacles Identified:**

- Disparities in Reimbursement Rates and Administrative Burdens
- Complex Bureaucratic and Administrative Requirements
- Legal and Institutional Fragmentation

### **Follow up (at 2021):**

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is being prepared, but a permanent reimbursement mechanism has not yet been implemented.



## 15. Cross-Border Health Services, Mountain Rescue, and Patient Transfer

### **Geographic Scope (Cross-border area concerned):**

Karlovy Vary Region (Czech Republic) - Bavaria and Saxony (Germany)

### **Direct Link to the Expert's Final Report:**

[https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Report\\_19.pdf](https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Report_19.pdf)

### **Reference to the Specific Page in the Compendium:**

2021 - Pages 66-67

### **Summary of the Context:**

The Karlovy Vary Region in the Czech Republic shares a border with Bavaria and Saxony in Germany, a mountainous area with significant tourism activity, particularly for winter and summer sports. Given the nature of outdoor activities in the region, cross-border emergency healthcare services and patient transfers are essential.

Despite an existing intergovernmental framework agreement between Germany and the Czech Republic, legal and administrative barriers remain, discouraging Czech citizens from seeking emergency care in German hospitals, even when they are geographically closer than Czech facilities. Additionally, planned healthcare services are hindered by differences in reimbursement mechanisms, preventing seamless patient mobility and access to medical treatment across borders.

### **Key Obstacles Identified:**

- Emergency Medical Services (EMS) - Cross-Border Restrictions
- Planned Medical Care - Reimbursement Challenges

### **Follow up (at 2021):**

Efforts are underway to introduce legislative amendments, but cross-border healthcare reimbursement challenges remain unresolved.



## Thematic Group 3: Employment and Education

### 16. Mapping Cross-Border Skills Involving Employers: Building and Construction

**Geographic Scope (Cross-border area concerned):**

Italy - Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Slovenia

**Direct Link to the Expert's Final Report:**

[https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/104\\_Report\\_FVG\\_Curzolo.pdf](https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/104_Report_FVG_Curzolo.pdf)

**Reference to the Specific Page in the Compendium:**

2024 - Pages 75-77

**Summary of the Context:**

The construction industry is a vital economic sector in the Italy-Slovenia cross-border region, employing thousands of workers. However, the sector faces labour shortages and skills mismatches, requiring better mapping of workforce needs and training opportunities. Currently, there is a lack of reliable data at the local level, making it difficult to analyze job market needs and improve skills-based job matching across the border. To address these challenges, a coordinated approach to skills mapping and sectoral cooperation is required.

**Key Obstacles Identified:**

- Lack of available data on construction employment
- Challenges related to the posting of workers
- Language barriers and cultural differences

**Follow up (at 2024):**

While various EU initiatives exist to support skills development in the construction sector, no formal cross-border cooperation mechanism has been established between Italy and Slovenia to address these specific challenges.



## 17. Cross-border Employment at the Croatian-Hungarian Border

### **Geographic Scope (Cross-border area concerned):**

Croatia - Hungary

### **Direct Link to the Expert's Final Report:**

[https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/122\\_Report\\_Pannon-EGTC\\_CESCI-and-Crowe.pdf](https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/122_Report_Pannon-EGTC_CESCI-and-Crowe.pdf)

### **Reference to the Specific Page in the Compendium:**

2024 - Pages 79-80

### **Summary of the Context:**

The Pannon European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) is a cross-border entity operating under Hungarian jurisdiction with branch offices in Croatia. The EGTC employs two Croatian nationals who reside and work in Croatia, but differences in national employment, taxation, and social security laws create uncertainties for both the employer and employees.

As a temporary solution, the employees receive their gross salary from Hungary but pay taxes and social security contributions in Croatia. However, this ad hoc arrangement does not provide legal clarity for the employer, discouraging cross-border employment due to potential compliance risks and financial penalties.

### **Key Obstacles Identified:**

- Lack of a clear legal framework for cross-border employment
- Uncertainty regarding applicable employment law
- Taxation and social security misalignment
- Employer compliance challenges

### **Follow up (at 2024):**

Legal consultations have been initiated, but a clear framework for cross-border employment is still lacking.



## 18. Limitations in Cross-Border (Further) Education

### Geographic Scope (Cross-border area concerned):

Germany - Bavaria (Allgäu), Austria - Tyrol

### Direct Link to the Expert's Final Report:

[https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/154\\_Report\\_Allgau-GmbH\\_OiR.pdf](https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/154_Report_Allgau-GmbH_OiR.pdf)

### Reference to the Specific Page in the Compendium:

2024 - Pages 105-107

### Summary of the Context:

In the Allgäu-Tyrol cross-border region between Germany and Austria, there is a high demand for skilled workers, but employers struggle to fill positions due to barriers in vocational education and training (VET).

Despite shared cultural and linguistic ties, significant differences in vocational education systems and diploma recognition procedures discourage students and professionals from seeking specialized training and employment opportunities across the border. These obstacles limit cross-border mobility and constrain workforce development in the region.

### Key Obstacles Identified:

- Fragmented recognition of professional qualifications
- Outdated bilateral agreements on diploma recognition
- Differences in education system governance
- Administrative and practical barriers to cross-border education

### Follow up (at 2024):

While existing EU frameworks provide guidance, **no concrete cross-border mechanism** exists to address vocational education and skills recognition challenges in the **Germany-Austria border region**.



## 19. Tour Guide Practice and Activity on Both Sides of the Hungarian-Croatian Border

### **Geographic Scope (Cross-border area concerned):**

Croatia - Hungary (Mura River Region)

### **Direct Link to the Expert's Final Report:**

[https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Report\\_28.pdf](https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Report_28.pdf)

### **Reference to the Specific Page in the Compendium:**

2024 - Pages 176-179

### **Summary of the Context:**

The Mura River Region, a UNESCO Biodiversity Reserve, has significant ecotourism potential for activities such as kayak and canoe tours. However, regulatory obstacles hinder the full development of sustainable tourism, particularly in the training, accreditation, and cross-border mobility of tour guides.

Currently, Hungary and Croatia have separate regulations for water tourism, and their qualification systems for tour guides are not mutually recognized. This creates legal uncertainties, training discrepancies, and liability risks, preventing a seamless cross-border tourism experience.

### **Key Obstacles Identified:**

1. Gaps in training and lack of mutual recognition of qualifications
2. Legal and administrative discrepancies in license acquisition
3. Differences in conservation regulations and permit processes

### **Follow up (at 2024):**

A working group has been formed, but no legal framework has been put in place to recognize tour guide qualifications across borders.



## 20. Youth Beyond Borders

**Geographic Scope (Cross-border area concerned):**

Austria (Carinthia) - Italy (Friuli Venezia Giulia, Veneto)

**Direct Link to the Expert's Final Report:**

[https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/96\\_Report\\_Senza-confini\\_Ozbic-and-Schuhappendix.pdf](https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/96_Report_Senza-confini_Ozbic-and-Schuhappendix.pdf)

**Reference to the Specific Page in the Compendium:**

2023 - Pages 105-107

**Summary of the Context:**

The Friuli-Venezia Giulia and Veneto regions in Italy and Carinthia in Austria form the EGTC Euregio Senza Confini. The SCET NET Interreg project sought to strengthen institutional cooperation on vocational training to improve cross-border recognition of professional skills. The project aimed to harmonize qualifications and training practices, enabling young students, trainees, and apprentices to benefit from cross-border educational and professional exchanges.

However, differences in national training frameworks, apprenticeships, and recognition of professional qualifications have created legal and administrative barriers. The National Qualification Frameworks (NQF) of Austria and Italy differ in age requirements, compulsory school duration, and the recognition of regulated professions, making it difficult to implement coordinated training systems across borders.

**Key Obstacles Identified:**

- Legal and Regulatory Barriers:
- Administrative and Institutional Barriers:

**Follow up (at 2023):**

A roadmap for harmonizing training and qualifications has been developed, but no formal agreements have been signed.



## 21. Mapping Cross-Border Skills Involving Employers: Mechatronics

### Geographic Scope (Cross-border area concerned):

Italy (Friuli-Venezia Giulia) - Austria (Carinthia)

### Direct Link to the Expert's Final Report:

[https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/105\\_Report\\_FVG\\_Spizzo\\_Mechatronics.pdf](https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/105_Report_FVG_Spizzo_Mechatronics.pdf)

### Reference to the Specific Page in the Compendium:

2023 - Pages 114-116

### Summary of the Context:

Mechatronics, a multidisciplinary field combining electronics, mechanics, and automation, is a high-demand sector in the Friuli-Venezia Giulia (Italy) and Carinthia (Austria) border region. Despite a strong need for skilled workers, many job vacancies remain unfilled due to differences in vocational education and training (VET) systems, certification processes, and lack of standardized skill recognition mechanisms.

A key challenge is the absence of a harmonized methodology for mapping and comparing mechatronics skills across the border, leading to difficulty in workforce mobility, job placement, and cross-border recruitment efforts.

### Key Obstacles Identified:

- Regulatory and Certification Barriers
- Administrative and Institutional Barriers
- Language and Practical Challenges

### Follow up (at 2023):

Employers and training institutions are in discussion, but no standard certification system exists yet.





## 22. Mapping Cross-Border Workers and Labour Market Between Friuli-Venezia Giulia and Carinthia

### **Geographic Scope (Cross-border area concerned):**

Italy (Friuli-Venezia Giulia) - Austria (Carinthia)

### **Direct Link to the Expert's Final Report:**

[https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/106\\_Report\\_FVG\\_Spizzo\\_mapping-CB-workers.pdf](https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/106_Report_FVG_Spizzo_mapping-CB-workers.pdf)

### **Reference to the Specific Page in the Compendium:**

2023 - Pages 118-120

### **Summary of the Context:**

The Friuli-Venezia Giulia (Italy) - Carinthia (Austria) border region has a significant number of cross-border workers, with many residing in one country and working in the other. However, inconsistent data collection, lack of coordination, and administrative obstacles make it difficult to manage issues related to taxation, healthcare, and social security.

There is no reliable system for tracking cross-border commuters, creating challenges for authorities in data sharing, policy planning, and service provision. A new, coordinated tracking system is necessary to improve labour market management and policy alignment across the border.

### **Key Obstacles Identified:**

- Lack of Cross-Border Worker Registration in Italy
- Fragmented Administrative and Data Management Systems
- Administrative Burden for Cross-Border Workers

### **Follow up (at 2023):**

Initial steps have been taken, but a coordinated worker registration system is not yet in place.



## 23. Employee in Another EU Country Primarily in Home Office

### **Geographic Scope (Cross-border area concerned):**

Germany - Austria (EUREGIO Salzburg - Berchtesgadener Land - Traunstein)

### **Direct Link to the Expert's Final Report:**

[https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/128\\_EDITED\\_Report-Euregio-Salzburg\\_-Dike-Schindhelm-1.pdf](https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/128_EDITED_Report-Euregio-Salzburg_-Dike-Schindhelm-1.pdf)

### **Reference to the Specific Page in the Compendium:**

2023 - Pages 139-140

### **Summary of the Context:**

A previous German-Austrian bilateral agreement on cross-border employment (Grenzgängerregelung) determined that social security obligations depended on where an employee worked most of the time. If an employee worked from home for more than 45 days per year, social security rules of their home country applied.

This created hesitancy among employers in allowing remote work for cross-border workers, due to uncertainty over social security, taxation, and employment law obligations. With the increase in telework, the lack of clear rules led to complex administrative and legal challenges for both employers and employees in a cross-border setting.

### **Key Obstacles Identified:**

- Social Security Contributions
- Taxation
- Employment Law Uncertainty

### **Follow up (at 2023):**

A revised agreement has been adopted in January 2024, partially resolving the issue.



## 24. Cross-Border Staffing Difficulties - Ambiguous Application of Social and Health Insurance Regulations

### **Geographic Scope (Cross-border area concerned):**

Hungary - Slovakia (Ister-Granum EGTC)

### **Direct Link to the Expert's Final Report:**

[https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Report\\_22.pdf](https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Report_22.pdf)

### **Reference to the Specific Page in the Compendium:**

2021 - Pages 76-77

### **Summary of the Context:**

Since 2004, citizens in the Hungary-Slovakia border region have benefited from free movement and cross-border employment opportunities. However, those who commute for work across the border face significant administrative challenges, particularly related to the coordination of social security systems.

The unclear application of EU regulations leads to delays, financial burdens, and legal uncertainties for both employees and employers. The lack of streamlined procedures for issuing the A1 certificate—which determines which country's social security system applies—has created barriers for cross-border workers and their employers.

### **Key Obstacles Identified:**

- Unclear and Inefficient A1 Certificate Procedures
- High Administrative and Financial Burdens
- Lack of Coordination Between Authorities

### **Follow up (at 2021):**

National contact points have been proposed, but no formal mechanism has been introduced. The issue remains unresolved.



## 25. Coorcurity: Facilitating the Coordination of Social Security Systems for Cross-Border Workers and Pensioners

### **Geographic Scope (Cross-border area concerned):**

Hungary - Slovakia (EGTC Arrabona)

### **Direct Link to the Expert's Final Report:**

[https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Report\\_27.pdf](https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Report_27.pdf)

### **Reference to the Specific Page in the Compendium:**

2021 - Pages 91-92

### **Summary of the Context:**

Regulation (EC) No. 883/2004 establishes the framework for the coordination of social security systems across the European Union, ensuring that workers and pensioners who relocate or work in another Member State retain their social security rights.

In the Hungary-Slovakia border region, approximately 20,000 people commute daily for work, and over 2,000 Slovakian residents receive a Hungarian pension. However, due to differences in national eligibility criteria and calculation methods, delays and administrative burdens are common when transferring social security or pensions between the two countries.

While the insurance institutions in both Hungary and Slovakia have been actively cooperating, including through annual international pension consulting days, practical coordination challenges persist.

### **Key Obstacles Identified:**

- Lack of Harmonization Between Social Security Systems
- Administrative and Institutional Barriers
- Absence of a Dedicated Cross-Border Coordination Mechanism

### **Follow up (at 2021):**

The findings have been shared in EU discussions, but no concrete policy changes have been made.



## 26. Tour Guide Practice and Their Activity on Both Sides of the Hungarian and Croatian Border

### **Geographic Scope (Cross-border area concerned):**

Hungary - Croatia (EGTC Mura Region)

### **Direct Link to the Expert's Final Report:**

[https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Report\\_28.pdf](https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Report_28.pdf)

### **Reference to the Specific Page in the Compendium:**

2021 - Pages 94-95

### **Summary of the Context:**

The Mura River along the Hungarian-Croatian border is a key natural asset for ecotourism, particularly for kayak and canoe tours. However, tour operators face significant regulatory and administrative hurdles due to the lack of harmonised rules for cross-border river tourism and tour guide authorisations.

The Schengen external border status of the river further complicates matters, creating a highly bureaucratic permit system with involvement from multiple authorities. Additionally, training requirements for water tourism tour guides differ significantly between the two countries, with Hungary requiring up to 400 hours of training, while Croatia requires only 18 hours.

Without mutual recognition of training and permits, cross-border water tourism development is hindered, negatively impacting local businesses and tourism potential.

### **Key Obstacles Identified:**

- Lack of Harmonisation in National Regulations
- Bureaucratic and Administrative Complexity
- Lack of Information and Awareness

### **Follow up (at 2021):**

Ongoing - Coordination efforts are in progress through the EGTC Mura Region.



## Thematic Group 4: Green

### 27. Conservation of Biodiversity on the Mura River

**Geographic Scope (Cross-border area concerned):**

Croatia - Hungary

**Direct Link to the Expert's Final Report:**

[https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/139\\_Report-EGTC-Mura\\_CESCI.pdf](https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/139_Report-EGTC-Mura_CESCI.pdf)

**Reference to the Specific Page in the Compendium:**

2024 - Pages 119-120

**Summary of the Context:**

The Mura and Drava Rivers form part of the cross-border region between Croatia and Hungary, housing rich biodiversity and multiple Natura 2000 protected areas. While there is long-standing cooperation between municipalities in this area, aimed at environmental conservation and sustainable tourism development, regulatory differences and the absence of a joint management structure present significant obstacles.

To enhance biodiversity protection and improve governance, cross-border coordination mechanisms must be strengthened, and harmonization of environmental regulations must be addressed.

**Key Obstacles Identified:**

- Diverging national environmental protection regulations
- Disparities in river management practices
- Lack of a permanent joint management body

**Follow up (at 2024):**

Conservation efforts have been coordinated through bilateral agreements and project-based collaboration, but a formalized management mechanism is still missing.



## 28. Alternative Uses for Processing and Exchanging Sheep's Wool

### Geographic Scope (Cross-border area concerned):

Germany - Bavaria (Garmisch-Partenkirchen), Austria - Tyrol

### Direct Link to the Expert's Final Report:

[https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/153\\_Report-Regio-Zugspitzregion\\_Kramer.pdf](https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/153_Report-Regio-Zugspitzregion_Kramer.pdf)

### Reference to the Specific Page in the Compendium:

2024 - Pages 127-128

### Summary of the Context:

The Austria-Germany border region produces large amounts of sheep's wool, much of which does not meet quality standards for textiles and consumer products but could serve as a natural fertilizer in agriculture and gardening. However, strict sterilization and organic waste disposal regulations make it difficult to process and trade sheep's wool-based fertilizers across borders.

While sheep farmers in Bavaria and Tyrol could benefit from cross-border wool processing facilities, unclear regulations and high processing costs make cross-border trade impractical, limiting the region's circular economy potential.

### Key Obstacles Identified:

- Complex EU regulations on animal by-product processing
- High processing costs reduce profitability
- Regulatory uncertainty for unprocessed wool as fertilizer

### Follow up (at 2024):

A pilot project has started, but no permanent regulatory framework has been adopted. The **lack of legal clarity and high processing costs** continue to **limit cross-border wool recycling** in the Bavaria-Tyrol region.



## 29. Operation and Distribution Formats - Renewable Energy Plants

### Geographic Scope (Cross-border area concerned):

Germany - Austria (Euregio via salina border area of Bavaria and Austria)

### Direct Link to the Expert's Final Report:

[https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/125\\_Report\\_Euregio-Via-Salina-energy\\_OiR.pdf](https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/125_Report_Euregio-Via-Salina-energy_OiR.pdf)

### Reference to the Specific Page in the Compendium:

2023 - Pages 150-151

### Summary of the Context:

Energy communities are decentralized cooperatives that allow citizens, SMEs, and local authorities to jointly invest in and benefit from renewable energy sources. These communities play a crucial role in the green transition by promoting local energy production, consumption, and distribution.

While EU legislation allows for cross-border energy communities, Germany and Austria have not integrated cross-border energy sharing into their national laws. This prevents citizens and businesses from participating in joint energy projects across the border, leading to missed opportunities in renewable energy cooperation in the Euregio via salina region.

### Key Obstacles Identified:

- Lack of EU-wide binding rules for cross-border energy communities
- National restrictions preventing cross-border participation
- Administrative and technical barriers

### Follow up (at 2023):

Energy regulators are reviewing cross-border participation options, but no legal framework is in place yet.





## 30. District Heating Without Borders

### **Geographic Scope (Cross-border area concerned):**

Italy - Austria (Friuli-Venezia Giulia & Carinthia, municipalities of Pontebba and Hermagor)

### **Direct Link to the Expert's Final Report:**

[https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/132\\_Report-Senza-Confini-EGTC\\_Spizzo-1.pdf](https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/132_Report-Senza-Confini-EGTC_Spizzo-1.pdf)

### **Reference to the Specific Page in the Compendium:**

2023 - Pages 153-154

### **Summary of the Context:**

District heating networks use centralized thermal energy production (e.g., biomass, geothermal, or excess industrial heat) to distribute heat for residential and commercial use. They lower energy costs, reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, and increase energy efficiency.

The municipalities of Pontebba (Italy) and Hermagor (Austria) aim to develop a cross-border district heating system, using a biomass power plant located in Austria to supply hotels and buildings in Italy. However, regulatory gaps, taxation differences, and lack of cross-border cooperation hinder the project's implementation.

### **Key Obstacles Identified:**

- No EU-wide legal framework for cross-border heat distribution
- Regulatory barriers at national and regional levels
- Lack of transparency and market integration

### **Follow up (at 2023):**

A feasibility study is ongoing, but no formal cross-border district heating system has been implemented.



## 31. GO2GO Cross-Border Bike Sharing (GO2GO BIKE)

### **Geographic Scope (Cross-border area concerned):**

Italy - Slovenia (EGTC GO: Gorizia - Nova Gorica - Šempeter-Vrtojba)

### **Direct Link to the Expert's Final Report:**

[https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Report\\_45.pdf](https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Report_45.pdf)

### **Reference to the Specific Page in the Compendium:**

2021 - Pages 146-147

### **Summary of the Context:**

With sustainable urban mobility becoming a priority in the Italy-Slovenia border region, the cities of Gorizia (Italy) and Nova Gorica (Slovenia) have committed to integrating their urban mobility strategies. The GO2GO Cross-Border Bike Sharing System is a key initiative aimed at enhancing connectivity between the two cities.

This initiative is particularly relevant in light of the European Capital of Culture 2025, for which Gorizia and Nova Gorica will be the first cross-border hosts. A fully integrated cross-border bike-sharing system would serve as a model for green mobility solutions in Europe.

However, regulatory, administrative, and financial hurdles are slowing down its implementation, mainly due to two separate and incompatible bike-sharing systems currently in place.

### **Key Obstacles Identified:**

- Regulatory and Legal Differences in Public Procurement
- Challenges in Operator Selection and System Integration
- Taxation and Revenue Management Issues

### **Follow up (at 2021):**

Ongoing - The EGTC GO is working on solutions with local municipalities.



## 32. On Safe Legal Ground - Cross-Border Cooperation in Disaster Response

### **Geographic Scope (Cross-border area concerned):**

Austria - Italy (Tyrol - South Tyrol - Trentino EGTC)

### **Direct Link to the Expert's Final Report:**

[https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Report\\_47.pdf](https://www.aebr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Report_47.pdf)

### **Reference to the Specific Page in the Compendium:**

2021 - Pages 152-153

### **Summary of the Context:**

The Tyrol-South Tyrol-Trentino European Region (EGTC) faces recurrent cross-border disaster management challenges, particularly in the Alpine region, where natural disasters frequently impact areas beyond national borders.

Despite the necessity for rapid, coordinated responses, legal and procedural obstacles create uncertainties in cross-border emergency cooperation. Currently, no formal international treaty regulates these operations, and existing cooperation mechanisms rely on informal arrangements between Austrian and Italian authorities.

To improve cross-border disaster management, a harmonised legal and operational framework is needed to clarify jurisdiction, responsibilities, and emergency response protocols.

### **Key Obstacles Identified:**

- Lack of a Formal Cross-Border Agreement for Disaster Response
- Unclear Jurisdiction and Chain of Command
- Operational and Technical Barriers
- Unclear Social Security Coverage for Emergency Responders

### **Follow up (at 2021):**

A working group is drafting a disaster response agreement, but no binding legal framework exists yet.