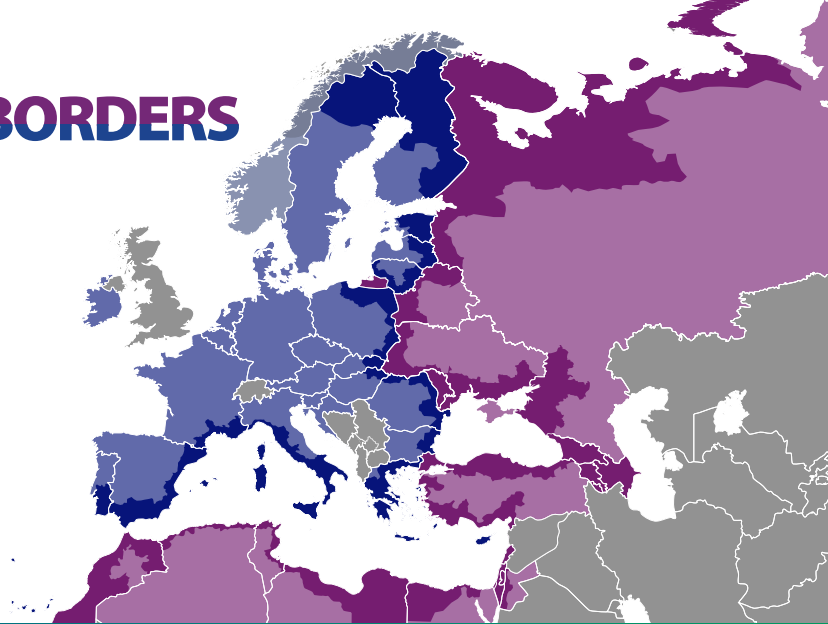


# COOPERATION ACROSS BORDERS



Funded by the  
European Union



## E&I

## ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND INNOVATION IN ENI CBC PROGRAMMES



*Entrepreneurship and innovation (E&I) are key levers to sustainable growth and job creation. In ENI CBC areas, local cross-border cooperation projects and large-scale operations target a field-oriented convergence process to support a harmonised territorial development.*

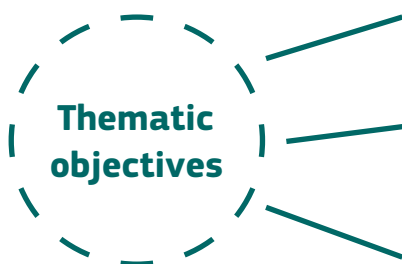
EU support to cross-border cooperation under the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI CBC) copes with different regulatory schemes and uneven development levels among the countries that challenge effective cooperation around innovation and entrepreneurship issues.

By exchanging experiences and building common local strategies, the ENI CBC Programming Document aims at reducing the “frontier effect” between EU and its neighbouring areas. In this context, the ENI CBC strategic objective A “promoting economic and social development in regions on both sides of common border” fosters a system allying cooperation and clustering among socio-economic players and between business, R&I and education systems.

While E&I has a clear link with TO 1 (business) and TO2 (R&D and innovation), its reference to TO3 focuses on tourism, which is a main vector to develop concrete and integrated approaches enhancing the economic attractiveness of cross-border territories.

The strategies present in the ENI CBC Joint Operational Programmes are threefold, addressing distinctly or jointly:

- ◆ enhancement of sectoral value chains in a cross-border perspective, with a business-oriented mindset, targeting traditional or innovative industries;
- ◆ capacity building and skills development approaches through practice sharing, mentoring, development of support services and training for entrepreneurs and businesses;
- ◆ development of digital services to industry, support of innovating enterprises or implementation of open innovation integrated schemes.



**TO1** (8 ENI CBC programmes)  
Business and SMEs development

**TO2** (5 ENI CBC programmes)  
Support to education, research, technological development and innovation

**TO3** (8 ENI CBC programmes)  
Promotion of local culture and preservation of historical heritage

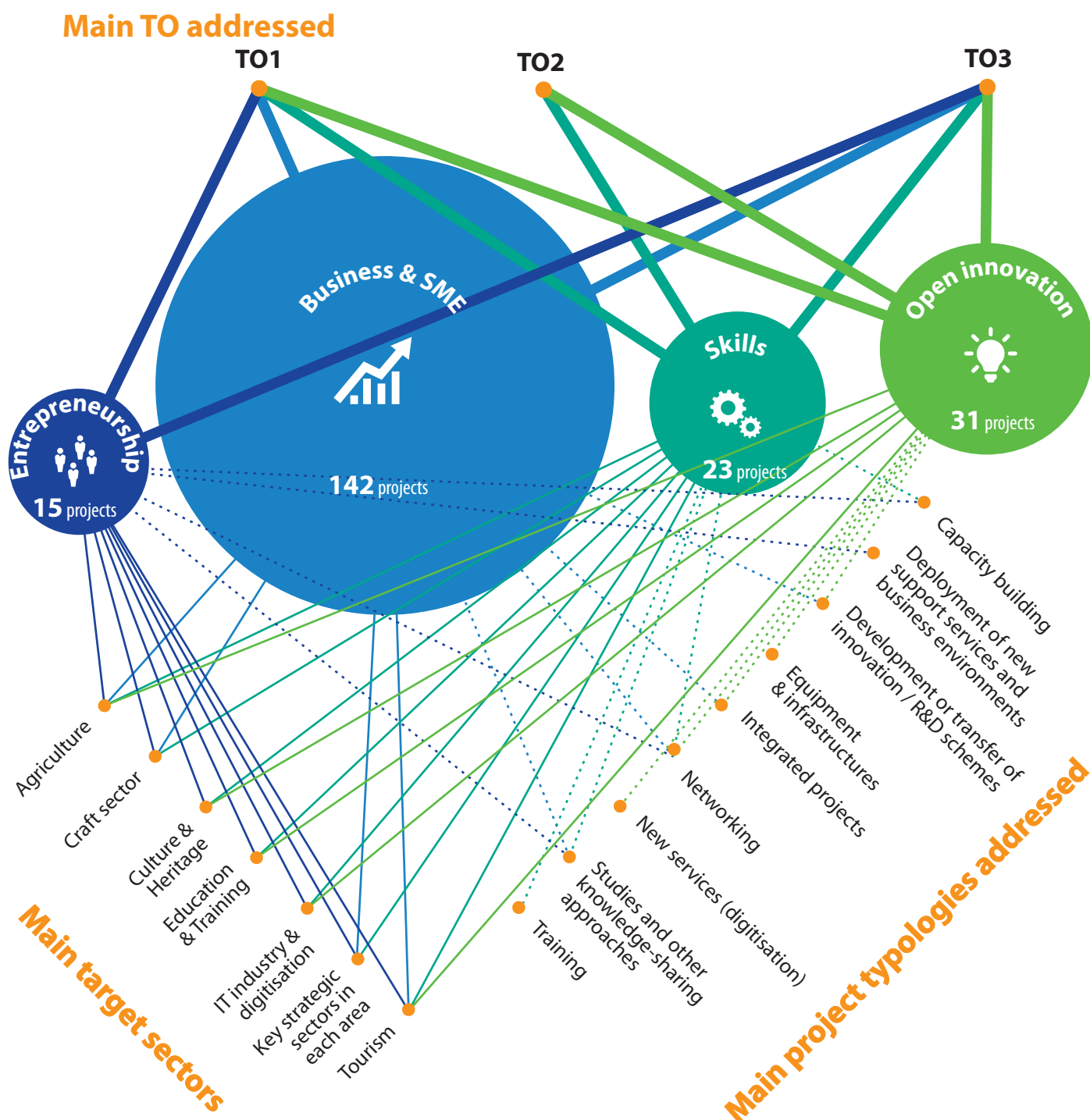
**Strategic objective**

**A**

Promote economic and social development in regions on both sides of common borders

# Clustering projects

The analysis of the objectives, priorities and indicators identified in the Joint Operational programmes, as well as the preliminary overview of all funded projects, has led to the identification of four main clusters: **Entrepreneurship**, **Business & SME**, **Skills** and **Open innovation**. The clustering process also considers the main project types to ease project and programme cooperation on each cluster topic. Where available, sectoral targets are also indicated.



**Tourism** is a key-sector in all programmes. It could represent a use case regarding the development of E&I, in terms of boosting territorial branding through integrated approaches.

**Innovation** is scarcely handled as a target per se. It is rather induced in projects targeting business development or innovative industries and enterprises (start-ups).

**Entrepreneurship and skills** development projects are often similar in their processes. Capacity building projects are therefore combining at least two dimensions of the other categories.

# Key factors for flagship projects

The key success factors needed for flagship processes and projects to emerge are the following ones.



## Entrepreneurship

Integrated approaches associating at least 3 of the following aspects:

- ◆ *training & education*
- ◆ *capacity building*
- ◆ *studies*
- ◆ *awareness raising*
- ◆ *promotion*



## Business

Integrated approaches associating at least 4 of the following aspects:

- ◆ *marketing/promotion*
- ◆ *access to finance*
- ◆ *networking*
- ◆ *capacity building*
- ◆ *infrastructures*
- ◆ *training*
- ◆ *territorial development*
- ◆ *new services to enterprises*
- ◆ *digitisation*



## Skills

Integrated approaches associating at least 3 of the following aspects:

- ◆ *training & education*
- ◆ *capacity building*
- ◆ *networking*
- ◆ *new training products and curricula*



## Open innovation

Integrated approaches associating at least 3 of the following aspects:

- ◆ *R&D&I infrastructure*
- ◆ *triple helix (clustering and networking, collaborative approaches)*
- ◆ *open innovation (living labs)*
- ◆ *social innovation*
- ◆ *capacity building*

## Project portfolio

Entrepreneurial know-how is a key success factor to boost economic development dynamics in cross-border areas. Youngsters represent a main target in this process, as demonstrated in the Karelia **BUSY** project, aiming at strengthening capacities of youth entrepreneurs and self-employed people to start businesses across the border. The project proposes pitching trainings, start-up bootcamps and entrepreneurship conferences to ensure a high-quality professional training, networking and exposure to mentors, facilitators and a pool of investors to help participating project start-ups and individual young entrepreneurs to grow and develop their businesses.

<https://kareliacbc.fi/en/projects/busy-business-youngsters-ka4022>

Entrepreneurship is also a matter of mindset: making it arise allows to develop new business reflexes that will increase products' value and competitiveness in so-called traditional sectors such as farming and food production. In the Estonia-Russia CBC Programme, selected **ACTIVE VIL-LAGE** partners bet on a peer-to-peer connection between rural entrepreneurs to build strong entrepreneur networks, while accompanying them through training, events and support services both in Estonia and Russia.

<https://keep.eu/projects/22368/>

SMEs are the backbone of employment and local economy across Europe and its borders. All ENI CBC programmes target them to enhance business development, through sectoral collective actions or the implementation of support services. These approaches are handled both in Northern and Southern territories.

The **Kolarctic Reindeer Meat – Quality High (RMQH)** project lies on complementary expertise of Finnish and Russian reindeer meat producers to foster export development of the industry.

[www.barentsinfo.org/loader.aspx?id=df33973c-4faa-4102-9c76-a0614d29487e](http://www.barentsinfo.org/loader.aspx?id=df33973c-4faa-4102-9c76-a0614d29487e)

**MEDSt@rts** jumps another hurdle under the Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme: the one of SMEs access to finance. The project will develop an innovative supporting model to facilitate access to funding for “non-bankable” people, targeting strongly committed Mediterranean youngsters with innovative business ideas. Scouting, training and funding will be the three main steps of the project's approach towards job and enterprise creation.

[www.enicbmed.eu/fr/node/499](http://www.enicbmed.eu/fr/node/499)

Entrepreneurship and innovation are all about skills development. The Black Sea Basin **CERTOUR II** project applies this assumption to the tourist sector. The project expands the findings of a former project aiming at improving the quality of agri-tourism services. The second step is now to upgrade the skills of the SMEs' staff to make them able to implement managerial tools and techniques in their enterprises and to improve their competitiveness. (e-) Training modules, toolkits, mentoring and networking shape the process to ensure a complete and effective support system.

<http://certour2.org/>

This capacity building and practical showcases approach is applied to the agrisector in the South-East Finland-Russia programme area, thanks to the **BioCom** project, using bioeconomy concepts and processes for agricultural industry in neighbouring border territories. Innovative agricultural practices and technologies, focusing on both food production and the efficient usage of agricultural resources, will also contribute to lower farmland footprints.

[www.xamk.fi/en/research-and-development/russian-finnish-bioeconomy-competence-centre-biocom/](http://www.xamk.fi/en/research-and-development/russian-finnish-bioeconomy-competence-centre-biocom/)

Innovation is tackled in various ways by ENI CBC programmes. The first stream is to interconnect different groups to stimulate new ideas and businesses, such as the **SME4SMARTCITIES** project does within the Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme, by allying local authorities and SMEs to develop smart services and technologies in a co-design approach. On one hand, the project will help cities to be the front-runners of innovation, in particular through the use of Public Procurement of Innovative solutions. On the other, the project will support SMEs in order to guarantee that their products and services meet the expectations and needs of smart cities.

[www.enicbmed.eu/fr/node/515](http://www.enicbmed.eu/fr/node/515)

South-East Finland-Russia also targets urban development through innovation. **CroBoDDIT** project promotes in Helsinki, Saint Petersburg and Lappeenranta the development of disruptive ICT technologies in urban infrastructures. Disruptive means approaching the problem with a new and exceptional manner, particularly by means of ICT (Internet of Things, Big Data, Robotic Process Automation and blockchain technologies). Partners will connect regional skills of participating high-tech companies and local urban concerns (air quality, waste management) to achieve solutions that better serve the residents.

<https://forumvirium.fi/en/croboddit/>

Infrastructure projects complete this I&E framework, by providing a proper environment to boost both dimensions, as does the Russian-Finnish **Life Science Park** project (<http://lifesciencepark.ru/>) financed under the South-East Finland-Russia Programme. It positions the cross-border region as an emerging life science territory. To do so, the project has set up a cross-border life science park. Beyond material investment, the science park will promote the internationalisation of SMEs through fostering technology transfer and R&D cooperation, including reboot of cooperation ties between academia and authorities.

<http://lifesciencepark.ru/>

# Prospects for Interreg NEXT

In the post-2020 scenario, policy objective (PO) 1: “A smarter Europe and its neighbourhood” targets all dimensions of E&I, with a strong focus on digitisation, support to start-ups and SMEs and smart skills’ development. The Joint Paper on strategic programming for Interreg NEXT recommends the selection of PO1 for 8 of the 15 foreseen programmes.

The boosting of **SMEs’ competitiveness** is clearly a priority for eight programmes (all the programmes from the Arctic cluster and the two Mediterranean ones). Among the seven programmes concerned by the need to invest on **innovation and research**, three belong to the Arctic cluster (Kolarctic, South-East Finland-Russia, Karelia), two to the Baltic area (Latvia-Russia and Estonia-Russia) and two to the Mediterranean cluster.

In addition to these two themes having a relevance for half of the programmes, two specificities should be signalled: **digitisation** has been stressed only for the Mediterranean cluster, and the need to further develop **skills** for smart specialisation and entrepreneurship has been prioritized only for the Black Sea Basin.

## Tourism and cultural heritage sector

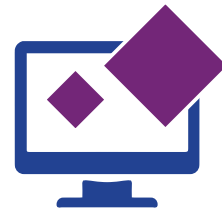
The tourism and cultural heritage sector may be covered through different approaches in the post-2020 scheme.

Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 crisis, and considering its worldwide impact on tourism, a new specific objective (SO) has been added to **PO4 “A more social Europe and its neighbourhood”** in May 2020, enhancing the role of tourism and culture in economic development, social inclusion and social innovation. Furthermore, programmes could decide to tackle post-COVID tourism challenges through a focus on SMEs, employment, health, etc.

Tourism may also be considered as a strategic sector within PO1, with a focus on innovation and SME development. For example, if a programme focuses on the digitisation of heritage, or on support to innovative industries related to tourism, PO1 may be a proper target. So far, the geographical annexes of the Joint Paper

recommend positioning tourism under PO1 for eight Interreg NEXT programmes. Tourism and cultural heritage are also addressed by **PO5 “A Europe and its neighbourhood closer to citizens”** as important thematic areas both for urban (SO5.1) and rural or coastal (SO5.2) areas. This frame targets integrated and multi-sectoral approaches interconnecting with cultural topics. Recommendations for the Mediterranean, Atlantic and South-East Finland-Russia areas focus on this integrated approach.

At local level, a specific focus can be made on tourism under **ISO 1 “A better cooperation governance for Europe and its neighbourhood”**, mainly through governance approaches and the development of small projects associating local communities on joint strategies and products, as it is recommended for seven programmes in the Baltic and Central and Eastern Europe areas.



## PO 1

### A smarter Europe and its neighbourhood

#### Arctic

Kolarctic  
[www.kolarctic.info](http://www.kolarctic.info)

Karelia  
[www.kareliacbc.fi](http://www.kareliacbc.fi)

South-East Finland  
-Russia  
[www.sefrcbc.fi](http://www.sefrcbc.fi)

#### Baltic

Estonia-Russia  
[www.estoniarussia.eu](http://www.estoniarussia.eu)

Latvia-Russia  
[www.latruscbc.eu](http://www.latruscbc.eu)

#### Black Sea

Black Sea Basin  
[www.blacksea-cbc.net](http://www.blacksea-cbc.net)

#### Mediterranean Sea

Italy-Tunisia  
[www.italietunisie.eu](http://www.italietunisie.eu)

Mediterranean  
Sea Basin  
[www.enicbcmed.eu](http://www.enicbcmed.eu)