

RESILIENT BORDERS

10/2024

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

**Cross-Border Spatial Planning and
Crisis Management Pilot Actions**



Co-funded by
the European Union



Call for proposals under
Cross-Border Spatial Planning and Crisis Management Pilot Actions
Two Lots: Crisis Management and Spatial Planning

Managed by the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR) and Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière (MOT) through an Action Grant (2022CE160AT316 CB-CRII) agreed with the Directorate General of Regional and Urban Policy, European Commission.

Co-financed by the European Union, AEBR and MOT.

Published on resilientborders.eu on 4 October 2024



Table of contents

■ PART 1: INTRODUCTION	4
I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION	4
LOT 1: PILOT ACTIONS FOR CROSS-BORDER CRISIS MANAGEMENT	4
LOT 2: PILOT ACTIONS FOR CROSS-BORDER SPATIAL PLANNING	5
II. RELEVANT LITERATURE	5
■ PART 2: THE PRESENT CALL FOR PROPOSALS	6
I. GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE CALL FOR PROPOSAL	6
LOT 1: PILOT ACTIONS FOR CROSS-BORDER CRISIS MANAGEMENT	6
LOT 2: PILOT ACTIONS FOR CROSS-BORDER SPATIAL PLANNING	7
II. ELIGIBLE ORGANISATIONS TO TAKE PART IN THE CALL FOR PROPOSALS	9
III. ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURE	9
IV. AWARD FOR THE SELECTED CASES	10
V. OBLIGATIONS OF THE AWARDED BENEFICIARIES	10
VI. CONTENT OF THE APPLICATION	10
■ PART 3: ONLINE APPLICATION FORM – HOW TO APPLY	11
■ PART 4: SELECTION AND AWARDING PROCESSES	12
I. ELIGIBILITY CHECK	12
II. SELECTION OF THE PROPOSALS TO RECEIVE A GRANT	12
■ PART 5: PUBLIC PROCUREMENT	14
■ PART 6: HOW TO GET ASSISTANCE	14
■ PART 7: KEY DATES	14

PART 1: INTRODUCTION

I. Background information

The 'Cross-Border Spatial Planning and Crisis Management Pilot Actions' initiative aims to support border regions in achieving effective joint spatial planning and cross-border crisis management plans. The expected results of the successful implementation of this initiative are **better cross-border governance and cohesive territorial development or resilience**.

Promoted by the European Commission, this is one of the actions initiated in the framework of the European Parliament's pilot project 'Cross/Border Crisis Response Integrated Initiative' (CB-CRII).

Jointly managed by the **Association of European Border Regions (AEBR)** and the **Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière (MOT)**, the project offers financial and technical support to actors in border regions to develop pilot actions setting up joint cross-border spatial planning or crisis management action plans.

This support will be provided to those cases selected through the present call, which includes two lots:

Lot 1 on Cross-border Crisis Management

Lot 2 on Cross-Border Spatial Planning

For each lot, the call for proposals refers to relevant literature and the newest studies published by the European Commission, with the purpose of supporting interested stakeholders in preparing the application and developing these pilot actions.

Lot 1: Pilot Actions for Cross-Border Crisis Management

This lot is explicitly dedicated to enabling the development of pilot actions that will focus on preparing cross-border plans related to the **joint management of crises**.

The purpose of this lot is to equip border regions with tools, institutions, processes and possibly agreements that guarantee a swift reaction to potential crisis situations in a cross-border context.

Crisis management includes strategies to prevent and reduce existing types of crises. It covers four main phases: prevention, preparedness, response, recovery and lessons learnt.

The key element of the actions will be the joint reaction to a crisis across national borders, that is, the capacity of local actors in border regions to jointly address crises across the same border.

In terms of types of crises covered, these include:

- ▶ Meteorological and hydrological crisis (floods, tsunamis, droughts);
- ▶ Geohazards (natural disasters, forest fires);
- ▶ Biological crises (epidemics/pandemics, animal and plant diseases);

- ▶ Technological crises (disruption of critical infrastructures, chemical, radiological or nuclear accidents);
- ▶ Societal crises (migration, terrorism, security issues, cyber threats).

When occurring in border territories, such crises require the coordinated action of national, regional and local authorities across borders.

Crises are characterised by threat, surprise and a short time to make decisions and react. Crisis management deals with threats before, during and after their occurrence. This means building the skills and techniques to better detect, evaluate, grasp and handle serious situations. Crises may be sudden or smouldering, and their primary phases are detection, preparedness and prevention, containment and damage control, recovery and learning.

Preparing a crisis management plan is a complex exercise that might need to consider many elements and circumstances and involve (and train) many stakeholders. For this reason, it is crucial to **support actors in border regions** in setting up joint plans to manage crises in cross-border contexts.

Lot 2: Pilot Actions for Cross-Border Spatial Planning

This lot is explicitly dedicated to **cross-border spatial planning**.

Thanks to the freedom of movement, European internal borders are intended to become common living areas, allowing economic integration, the development of cross-border public services, and the emergence of vibrant cross-border communities. Nonetheless, many people still struggle to find affordable housing and healthcare or effective transport solutions in many of these areas. Legal and administrative obstacles, as well as social and territorial inequalities, still threaten cross-border living areas' cohesion.

As the COVID-19 outbreak has shown, cross-border interdependencies are not enough tackled by coherent cooperation between public authorities across the border. This would require reinforced multi-level governance and joint spatial planning, understood as territorial development aiming at territorial cohesion, as well as coordination of sectoral and territorial policies.

Lot 2 of this call aims, therefore, at promoting this integrated approach, embedded in multi-level governance, by:

- ▶ Helping to develop effective and sustainable cross-border public services;
- ▶ Reinforcing cross-border governance able to coordinate such public policies for citizens living in the same area, under the democratic control of entities representing the interests of both sides of the border;
- ▶ Adopting cross-border 'co-development' approaches in order to assure a win-win economic and sustainable development of the Cross-border region, including cross-border public funding of necessary investments;
- ▶ Sharing and providing information across the border (including data issues);
- ▶ Promoting a cross-border sense of belonging and a joint vision for the future;
- ▶ Boosting cross-border networks of persons has proven essential in a crisis context.

Cross-border regions selected by the present call for proposals should tend to reach progress on one or several of the goals mentioned below (OECD tool). Diverse approaches are possible, mixing some of these components and not necessarily all of them.

II. Relevant literature

OECD and European Commission (2024), *Cross-border Governance Framework and Tool*¹.

European Commission, Technopolis Group, CMCC, and Nordregio (2024), *Strengthening the resilience of EU border regions. Mapping risks & crisis management tools and identifying gaps*².

European Commission and Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière (2021), *The effects of COVID-19 induced border closures on cross-border regions, an empirical report covering the period March to June 2020*³.

European Commission and Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière (2022), *Analysis of the impact of border-related measures taken by Member States in the fight against COVID-19*⁴.

Congress of Local and Regional Authorities' Governance Committee, Council of Europe (2019), *Resolution calling for a fair distribution of fiscal wealth in cross-border territories*⁵, following a report drafted by KH Lambertz⁶.

ESPON and DG REGIO (2022), *Cross-border public services: CPS inventory analysis and policy recommendations*⁷.

DG REGIO, Spatial Foresight, TCP International, TRT and EureConsult SA (2022), *Study on Providing public transport in cross-border regions – Mapping of existing services and legal obstacles*⁸.

AEBR and European Commission (2020, 2022, 2024) Compendiums of cases analysed by the *b-solutions* initiative. Some of them directly or indirectly deal with these issues. All *b-solutions* publications are available in the project's online library⁹:

- ▶ *b-solutions: Solving Border Obstacles. A compendium 2022-2023 (2024)*.
- ▶ *b-solutions: Solving Border Obstacles. A compendium 2020-2021 (2021)*.
- ▶ *Border regions for the European Green Deal – Obstacles and solutions to cross-border cooperation in the EU (2021)*.
- ▶ *More and better cross-border public services – Obstacles and solutions to cross-border cooperation in the EU (2021)*
- ▶ *Vibrant cross-border labour markets – Obstacles and solutions to cross-border cooperation in the EU (2021)*.
- ▶ *b-solutions: Solving Border Obstacles. A compendium of 43 Cases (2020)*.

¹ Available on <https://futurium.ec.europa.eu/en/border-focal-point-network/news/cross-border-governance-framework-and-tool>.

² Available on <https://futurium.ec.europa.eu/en/border-focal-point-network/news/big-news-border-focal-point-has-just-published-new-study-cross-border-disaster-risk-and-crisis>.

³ Available on <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/46250564-669a-11eb-aeb5-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>

⁴ Available on https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/information/publications/studies/2022/analysis-of-the-impact-of-border-related-measures-taken-by-member-states-in-the-fight-against-covid-19

⁵ Available on <https://www.coe.int/en/web/congress/-/fairer-distribution-of-taxes-in-transfrontier-areas?inheritRedirect=true&redirect=%2Fen%2Fweb%2Fcongress%2F37th-session>

⁶ Available on <https://rm.coe.int/fair-distribution-of-taxes-in-transfrontier-areas-potential-conflicts-/168097f09d>

⁷ Available at https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/policy/cooperation/european-territorial/cross-border-public-services_en.

⁸ Available on https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/studies/public-transport-cross-border/transport-cross-border-study.pdf

⁹ <https://www.b-solutionsproject.com/library>.

PART 2: THE PRESENT CALL FOR PROPOSALS

I. General information on the call for proposals

AEBR and MOT, in cooperation with DG REGIO, open the present call for proposals 'Cross-Border Spatial Planning and Crisis Management Pilot Actions' – with **Lot 1 focusing on Cross-border Crisis Management** and **Lot 2 on Cross-border Spatial Planning**.

The objective of this call is to initiate the implementation of up to **10 pilot actions for each lot** to identify and promote sustainable methods of developing resilient border regions through elaborating plans for cross-border crisis management on the one hand and for cross-border spatial planning on the other.

Any eligible applicant can apply to one or to both lots of this call.

This call for proposals addresses:

- ▶ Public entities (national, regional, local) from land and fixed link maritime border regions of the 27 EU countries and EFTA countries along EU borders;
- ▶ Cross-border entities such as European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC), Euroregions, Eurodistricts, Eurocities, and similar cross-border structures with legal personality, established under public or private law.

For every pilot action, the applicant might be a cross-border structure with legal personality (e.g. an EGTC) or, at least, two public bodies, one for each side of the border. Cross-border structures with legal personality, however, do not need to apply with a partner if they are composed by at least one public body from each side of the border and at least one member's territory is limited by the national border.

- ▶ See details under 'Eligible organisations to take part in the call for proposals'.

The 10 selected beneficiaries in each lot will receive **sub-grants** to implement pilot actions. The main objective of these pilot actions is to **prepare a joint cross-border crisis management plan under lot 1**, and a **cross-border spatial planning action plan under lot 2**.

Sub-grants up to € 40,000 each will be available for selected beneficiaries to prepare such plans. The financial support can be used for different types of activities helpful to set up a joint plan, including the following eligible activities:

- ▶ Preparing a study, roadmap, memorandum, draft agreement, protocol, an inventory/database (data collection), testing phase/experiments, etc.
- ▶ Organising consultations, study/field visits, meetings, workshops, etc.
- ▶ Communicating and promoting the pilot action through information campaigns, modules, etc.

Importantly, devised plans are not expected to be officially adopted by the participating authorities, nor are agreements to be signed by the end of the implementation period if the proposal envisages the preparation of an agreement. The expectation and the aim of the pilot actions is to explore possibilities for joint planning with competent authorities from the whole cross-border territory and to prepare a plan.

The **implementation period** for the pilot actions will run for **8 months, from 1 February 2025 to 30 September 2025**.

Lot 1: Pilot Actions for Cross-Border Crisis Management

Pilot actions to be developed under this lot will aim to **prepare a joint cross-border crisis management plan**. To this end, the stakeholders might develop **agreements, institutions, tools or processes** for crisis management.

Institutions, tools and processes include:

- ▶ Joint planning of extreme scenarios;
- ▶ Coordinated management, and specifically in aspects related to prevention, preparedness and response efforts;
- ▶ Tools like early warning systems/alter plans, guidelines, information systems, joint exercises and/or trainings, networks, toolboxes, processes, simulations and strategic plans;
- ▶ Monitoring dashboards;

- ▶ Working groups;
- ▶ Emergency planning;
- ▶ Risk-assessment models;
- ▶ Protocols or atlas;
- ▶ Workshops to stimulate coordination and interoperability;
- ▶ Support the development of climate-resilient infrastructures;
- ▶ Nature-based solutions to mitigate the impacts of climate-related disasters;
- ▶ Facilitating the exchange of best practices and lessons learnt;
- ▶ Knowledge-sharing platforms and peer-to-peer exchanges;

- ▶ Fostering community engagement and participation, raising awareness and building local capacities involving communities in joint design and implementation of crisis management;
- ▶ Encouraging joint management of natural resources and ecosystems to enhance resilience to natural hazards.

Agreements can regulate crises in a number of fields, including:

- ▶ Common areas;
- ▶ Technical maintenance of common resources;
- ▶ General management and protection.

A useful inventory of agreements, institutions, tools and processes in border territories can be found in European Commission, 2024, *Strengthening the resilience of EU border regions. Mapping risks & crisis management tools and identifying gaps*¹⁰. It is strongly recommended to consider this study and its recommendation.

Pilot actions under the crisis management lot are expected to develop a plan which includes, as minimum requirement, indication of the following features:

- ▶ Identification of **roles and responsibilities** of main partners in the cross-border territory: for the regions involved, the plan should define who is responsible for what during a crisis;
- ▶ Outline of the **chain of command** for the cross-border territory: the plan should establish a clear decision-making process with regard to the whole cross-border region;
- ▶ Design of **coordination of the teams**: the plan should identify strategies for communication and coordination among the teams to be involved;
- ▶ Set up of a cross-border **communication plan**: the plan should develop protocols for communication during the crisis.

The crisis management plan to be developed by the end of the pilot action is therefore expected to deliver this minimum information.

Lot 2: Pilot Actions for Cross-Border Spatial Planning

Pilot actions to be implemented under this lot will aim to prepare a joint cross-border spatial planning action plan. To this end, the stakeholders might develop **agreements, institutions, tools or processes** for spatial planning:

- ▶ Cross-border governance bodies;
- ▶ Internal governance and stakeholder participation (structures);
- ▶ Strategic planning documents;
- ▶ Information sharing;
- ▶ Cross-border public services;
- ▶ Monitoring and evaluation of cross-border governance and planning;
- ▶ Sustainable and adaptable funding for cross-border governance bodies (it is noted that e.g. the development of instruments as tools to fund cross-border governance bodies may be funded, but not regular cost of cross-border structures), and for cross-border investments;
- ▶ Durable political commitment;
- ▶ Visibility and promotion of the cross-border region for residents, visitors and investors.

See details under 'Award for the selected cases'.

Plans to be delivered under the Spatial planning lot are invited to focus on one or more of the following dimensions (based on OECD and European Commission (2024), *Cross-border Governance Framework and Tool*¹¹).

1. Establishing and reinforcing a cross-border governance architecture

Type of eligible actions:

- ▶ Establishing different types of internal governance structures, (e.g. assembly, office of the presidency), deciding which actors should have a voice within the cross-border co-operation body, who should be able to make decisions, and how those decisions should be made;
- ▶ Establishing a cross-border governance body;
- ▶ Developing multi-level governance (coordination between local actors and regional / national levels);
- ▶ Developing cross-border contacts and networks of persons acting within their domestic or cross-border institutions.

¹⁰ Available on https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/information-sources/publications/studies/2024/strengthening-the-resilience-of-eu-border-regions_en/

https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/studies/KN-02-24-586-2A-N.pdf

¹¹ Available on <https://futurium.ec.europa.eu/en/border-focal-point-network/news/cross-border-governance-framework-and-tool>.

2. Planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating cross-border governance, planning and public services

Type of eligible actions:

- ▶ Creating comprehensive cross-border development strategies;
- ▶ Integrating a cross-border perspective into existing regional and/or local development plans;
- ▶ Establishing cross-border brokering activities (e.g. strategic relationship building and knowledge sharing);
- ▶ Public services: defining the need for cross-border service delivery, the specific services that will be provided in the short, mid- and long-term, as well as the delivery models and funding mechanisms;
- ▶ A monitoring and evaluation plan (data that helps policy makers assess project effectiveness, defining monitoring and evaluation goals and objectives);
- ▶ Developing cross-border data and territorial information systems (about flows, public services and plans...).

3. Funding and financing cross-border bodies and investments

Type of eligible actions:

- ▶ Assessing and costing the human resources and operational expenses required to sustain the activities of the governance body;

- ▶ Determining an equitable and clear mechanism to set membership fees;
- ▶ Guide the efforts of cross-border policy makers to mobilise and diversify funding and financing for cross-border action;
- ▶ Developing cross-border sustainable funding systems for cross-border investments and services, taking into account asymmetric contexts (cross-border workers flows, taxation issues...) in a co-development and financial solidarity perspective ...

4. Promoting and advocating for cross-border development

Type of eligible actions:

- ▶ Actions to (re)build political awareness of and support for cross-border co-operation among both newly elected and incumbent politicians;
- ▶ To develop and implement a cross-border promotion plan addressing stakeholders and citizens;
- ▶ To develop cross-border education, knowledge, narratives and visions, contributing to cross-border sense of belonging and commitment of persons.

The call will open on 4 October 2024 and stay open until 30 November 2024.

II. Eligible organisations to take part in the call for proposals

The present call for proposals is open to:

- ▶ Public bodies (national, regional, local) from land border regions and maritime regions with fixed link of the 27 EU countries and EFTA countries. Eligible territories are the NUTS level 2 and 3 regions of the European Union and EFTA countries along all internal borders and all NUTS level 2 and 3 regions of the European Union and EFTA countries¹²;
- ▶ Cross-border entities (EGTCs, Euroregions and similar cross-border structures with legal personality).

Eligible public bodies should have a national boundary limiting their territory.

For public bodies, the **application must involve a partner** from the other side of the same border, whose territory is contiguous to that of the partner applicant. The partner must also be a public body. Cross-border structures with legal personality, however, do not need to apply with a partner if they are composed by at least one public body

from each side of the border and at least one member's territory is limited by the national border.

The concept of territory, as applied in this call for proposals, covers the territory for which a given public institution or body has a mandate, meaning the legal competence to intervene in certain areas and territories. As such, the territory is not limited to the territory in which one entity is located.

Applicants shall be located in a EU member state or a neighbouring EFTA country, and their territories share at least one EU internal land or maritime border (with fixed link) with another EU member state.

During the eligibility check, in case any applicant's status as eligible candidate is uncertain, AEBR and MOT will seek clarifications with all relevant partners to determine eligibility.

III. Eligible expenditure

The grant shall be used to finance as eligible expenditure:

- ▶ Sub-contracting cost for the action (for example for procurement of external services and expertise);
- ▶ Travel and accommodation costs and corresponding per diem for the people involved in the pilot action;
- ▶ Purchase of services and equipment for the implementation of the pilot action (including interpretation, catering, communication for meetings and events, translations, and preparation of communication outputs);
- ▶ Staff costs based on real costs, based on the number of working hours that the beneficiary's employees need for implementation of the pilot action under the following conditions:
 - A beneficiary can report the hours of an employee working under an employment contract or equivalent;
 - A beneficiary cannot declare more than 1,147 hours per full-time employee per calendar year.

This maximum number of hours is reduced to a pro rata of 1,147 hours for part-time employees. If the same employee works on several projects, the sum of productive hours declared for the employee in these projects cannot exceed 1,147 hours or the applicable pro-rata per calendar year;

- A beneficiary can report only actual (productive) hours that were worked and dedicated to project-related tasks. Non-productive hours relating to holidays, sick leave, maternity leave, etc. are not eligible;
 - Beneficiaries will have to deliver to AEBR or MOT an employment confirmation and reports confirming the number of hours worked for the pilot action for each person for whom they report staff costs.
- ▶ An overhead of indirect costs up to a maximum of 7% of the direct costs.

¹² The list of NUTS regions can be found here:
<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/nuts/>

IV. Award for the selected cases

The selected cases will be granted a budget of up to 40,000.00 € to devise a joint plan, implement joint actions, foster and design tools, strategies, procedures or agreements for joint cross-border crisis management or for joint spatial planning (please refer to the section “I. General information on the call for proposals” for more details on the expected actions to be supported by the call).

The action is expected to lead to solid cooperation among relevant public bodies that will draft a joint plan with the grant.

Pilot actions to be supported shall be of good quality, designed and implemented with the involvement of key stakeholders, including competent authorities, and result-oriented.

Beneficiaries must understand and observe the following preconditions:

- ▶ All expenditures are essential for the pilot action's implementation and would not have been incurred if the pilot action had not been carried out (value added);
- ▶ All expenditure must comply with the principles of efficiency, economy and effectiveness, and therefore the resources used in the pursuit of the beneficiary's

activities will be made available in due time, in appropriate quantity and quality, and at the best price-quality ratio (principle of economy); beneficiaries ensure the best relationship between the resources employed, the activities undertaken and the achievement of objectives (principle of efficiency); the objectives that the project partners pursue are achieved through the activities undertaken (principle of effectiveness);

- ▶ All expenditure is generated and paid by the beneficiary during the eligible pilot action phase (February – September 2025);
- ▶ No other EU funds have contributed towards the financing of the same expenditure (prohibition of double funding);
- ▶ Relevant public procurement rules are observed.

The sub-grants are split in three instalments: 40% to be received as pre-financing 15 days after signature of the sub-grant agreement between AEBR-MOT and the beneficiary, 40% to be received after four months of implementation and 20% at the end of the implementation periods, concerning the last 20% on condition of the approval of the related reports.

V. Obligations of the awarded beneficiaries

Beneficiaries must collect and deliver to AEBR (for lot 1) or MOT (for lot 2) the following documents to prove costs reported:

- ▶ Procurement documentation;
- ▶ Invoices (or equivalent accounting documents);
- ▶ Proof of delivery of services;
- ▶ Payment proof.

The applicant will be requested to submit a progress report and a final report to monitor the progress on project achievements and expenditure.

The progress report will be due between month 4 and 5 of implementation, while the final report will be due one month after the closure of the implementation.

AEBR (for lot 1) and MOT (for lot 2) will provide a template for the submission of the reports.

VI. Content of the application

Applicants will indicate:

- ▶ A title of the pilot action to be developed;
- ▶ Data on the partners;
- ▶ Description of the pilot action's specific objective;
- ▶ Description of the planned methodology to implement the pilot action;
- ▶ Calendar of the proposed activities (according to the template provided with this call);

- ▶ Budget necessary to develop the pilot action with a justification of each activity (according to the template provided with this call).

PART 3: ONLINE APPLICATION FORM – HOW TO APPLY

Applications must be submitted via an online form available on: <https://resilientborders.eu/> (Call for proposals – Application).

Annexes can also be uploaded and attached to the application. These could be a map presenting the intervention area, a graph, an infographic, etc. The type and size of the accepted files to be annexed are specified in the dedicated webpage.

The application form is to be filled in English. You can use the existing tool [eTranslation Tool](#) which is an online machine translation service provided by the European

Commission and available for public administrations, small and medium-sized enterprises, academia, non-governmental organisations for free to translate the application.

Please refer to the "Frequently Asked Questions" on the website, which contain detailed instructions on how to fill in the online application form and detailed information.

The final deadline for the submission the application form is 30 November 2024, at 6 pm CET.

PART 4: SELECTION AND AWARDING PROCESSES

Following submission, each application is subject to a selection process organised along the following steps:

- ▶ 1. Eligibility check.
- ▶ 2. Assessment by an external panel of experts and validated by the European Commission (Border Focal Point).

I. Eligibility check

Upon closure of the calls, AEBR and MOT will carry out an eligibility check on all submitted applications for pilot actions. The purpose of the eligibility check is to verify compliance with the received applications and their annexes with the formal eligibility criteria.

The general eligibility criteria are the following:

- ▶ The application form has been submitted electronically via the dedicated webpage before the deadline indicated in the present call for proposals, and filled in English;

- ▶ The application form is completely filled in;
- ▶ The partners correspond to the applicant's profile detailed under section 2 of the present call for proposals and are located on both sides of the national border, or the applicant is a cross-border structure with legal personality.

If any of the eligibility criteria set out above are not met, the application will be deemed ineligible, and no further assessment will be undertaken.

II. Selection of the proposals to receive a grant

Applications that are declared eligible will be subject to an assessment carried out by a panel of external experts.

The experts carry out the quality assessment of the application according to the criteria presented here below. To ensure equal treatment of all applicants, the experts,

AEBR, and MOT will not request any additional clarifications during the quality assessment process. The assessment sheets summarise the assessment outcomes. Each applicant will receive the assessment sheet of their application after the selection of the applications, regardless of whether their project is successful or not.

The selection criteria for this call are as follows:

1. Relevance

- ▶ Consistency of the action towards the specific objective of developing resilient border regions through cross-border spatial planning or cross-border crisis management;
- ▶ Relevant objective of the action toward the preparation of a joint cross-border spatial planning or crisis management plan;
- ▶ Contribution to the knowledge of cross-border spatial planning or cross-border crisis management;
- ▶ Involvement of relevant actors with clear mandate to devise the pilot actions or to promote cross-border

cooperation (this applies also to cross-border structures). Therefore, applicants are strongly encouraged to involve the departments in charge of crisis management (lot 1) or of the spatial planning departments of the local or regional authorities (lot 2);

- ▶ Impact of the proposal on the concerned cross-border territory (Cross-border dimension);
- ▶ Capitalisation of previous Interreg projects or other initiatives and solutions to a lack of cooperation in the relevant domain.

2. Quality

- ▶ Logical links between the identified problems, needs and pilot actions proposed (logical frame concept);
- ▶ Quality of the consortium in charge of the pilot action, with partners from both sides of the border, or directly via a cross-border structure;
- ▶ Quality of the cross-border approach to the application, which envisages a joint plan with balanced involvement;
- ▶ Clarity of the proposal, with a clear concept, methodology and organisation of the work (procedures and allocation of resources) for the implementation of the pilot action;
- ▶ Cost effectiveness (sufficient/appropriate budget for proper implementation; best value for money).

3. Cross-border added value

- ▶ Economy: the pilot action aims to create conditions for a win-win economic development of the cross-border region, including cross-border public funding of necessary investments (cross-border spatial justice);
- ▶ Functionality: the pilot action aims to develop cross-border public services, addressing in a coherent way the cross-border area concerned;
- ▶ Institutionality: the pilot action aims to develop a cross-border governance able to coordinate public policies for citizens living there, under cross-border democratic control;
- ▶ Information: the pilot action aims to develop cross-border-shared data and information;
- ▶ Culture and people-to-people: the pilot action aims to develop a cross-border sense of belonging, vision for the future, and cross-border networks of persons;
- ▶ Environment: the pilot action aims to contribute to ecological transition and/or climate adaptation.

With regard to the criteria related to the added value of cross-border cooperation, at least two of these dimensions should be covered within the application.

4. Impact

- ▶ Ambition and expected long-term impact of results on target groups/general public;
- ▶ Possibility to use the results in other countries;
- ▶ Sustainability of results after funding ends.

Each criterion will receive a score of 1 to 5. The overall score of each pilot action proposal will determine the selection.

The list of pilot actions to be selected will be established in the following way:

- ▶ For each lot, the proposals with the highest overall score will be selected if their score is at least above the threshold of 60% of the potential maximum score;
- ▶ The remaining proposals will be selected according to their overall score, based on the highest points attributed;

- ▶ Proposals will be included in the list of pilot actions proposed to receive a grant until the limit of the maximum available budget of 400,000.00€ for each lot is reached. In case at least 10 pilot actions per lot have been selected and in case the total budget of each lot is not used up and sufficient for a further pilot action, the next pilot action with highest score will be selected independently from the lot.

After the assessment by the experts' panel, AEBR and MOT will submit an evaluation report to the European Commission to finalise the selection.

The European Commission may request AEBR, MOT and the experts' panel to further justify the scorings attributed to any of the proposals.

PART 5: PUBLIC PROCUREMENT

Beneficiaries selected for the implementation of a pilot action will be required to respect public procurement rules applicable in their country if they fulfil the definition of

contracting authority according to the relevant national legislation pertaining to procurement.

PART 6: HOW TO GET ASSISTANCE

AEBR's and MOT's staff will be ready to assist applicants with any technical and procedural questions they may have while the call for proposals is open.

A set of FAQs is available online¹³, which will be updated regularly with practical questions posed by applicants through the functional mailbox.

Contact details:

- ▶ **Lot 1 - Crisis management pilot actions**
Managed by AEBR
crisis-management@aebr.eu
- ▶ **Lot 2 - Spatial planning pilot actions**
Managed by MOT
spatialplanning@mot.asso.fr

PART 7: KEY DATES

- ▶ Call opening: 4 October 2024
- ▶ Call closing: 30 November 2024
- ▶ Selection of successful proposals: December 2024
- ▶ Implementation period: February to September 2025

¹³ <https://resilientborders.eu> (see FAQ)

RESILIENT BORDERS

CROSS-BORDER
SPATIAL PLANNING &
CRISIS MANAGEMENT PILOTS



Co-funded by
the European Union

