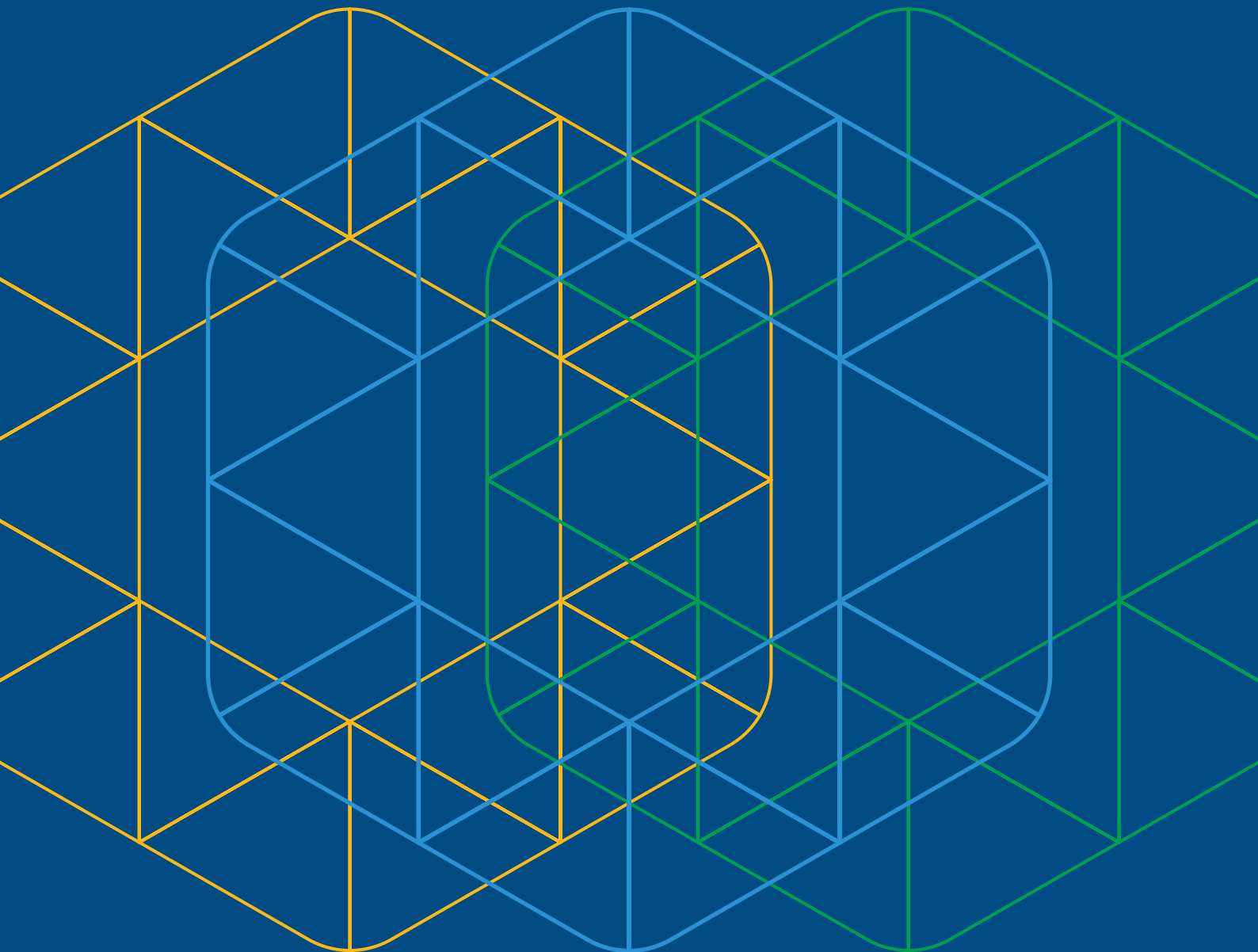


# Ukraine's Cohesion and Regional Development Project, UCORD





UCORD strengthens Ukraine’s recovery by empowering Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) to act as modern platforms for regional planning, investment coordination, and social cohesion. Operating in six pilot oblasts – **Khmelnyskyi, Odessa, Sumy, Ternopil, Vinnytsia, and Volyn** – the project strengthens RDAs through core funding, training, mentoring, and technical assistance. In 2026, a further five non-pilot RDAs were engaged to meet growing demand and strengthen Ukraine’s regional capacity to plan, coordinate, and absorb recovery and EU-aligned investments. UCORD connects national, regional, and local levels, supporting partner ministries (Ministry for Development of Communities and Territories, Ministry of Culture, and Ministry of Economy) while enabling RDAs to facilitate translation of national priorities into regional strategies and local implementation.

## Mission

UCORD fosters improved quality of life, resilience, and peace in Ukraine by:

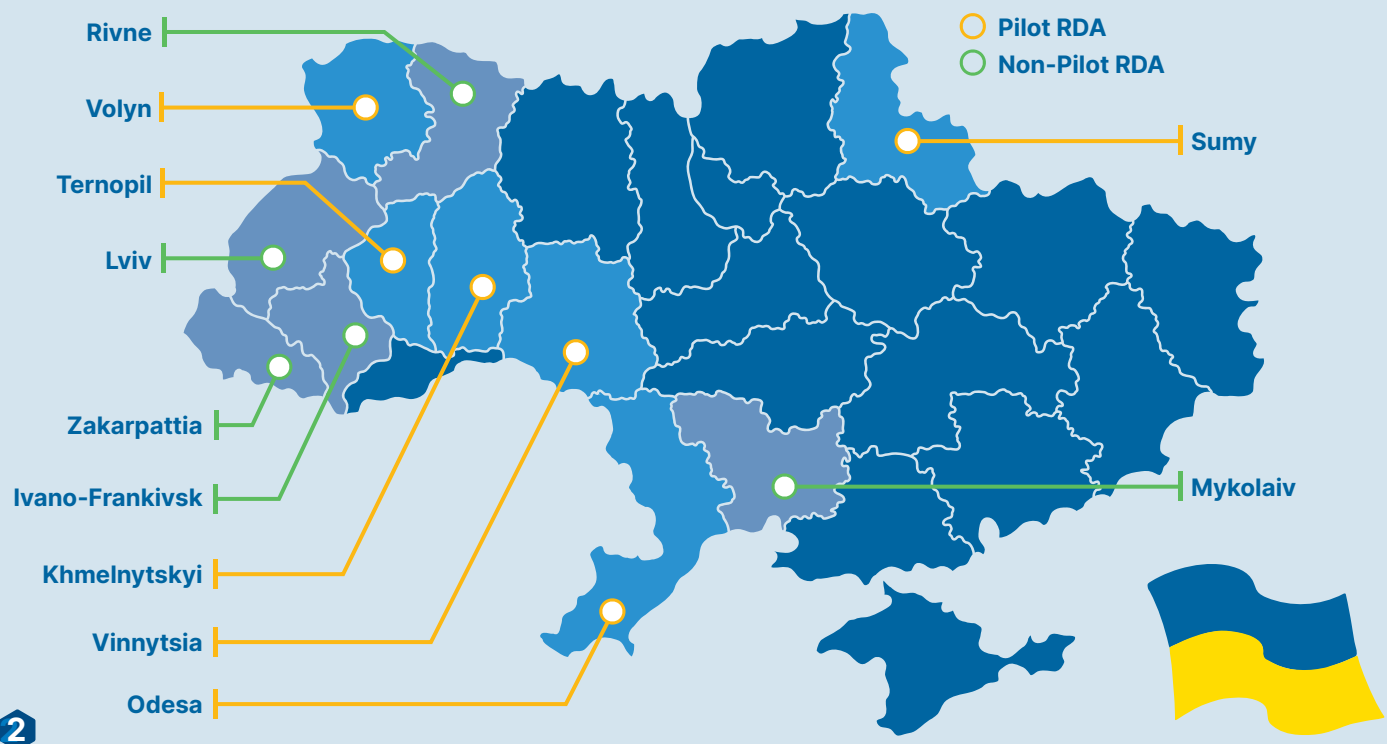
- Aligning local, regional, and national strategies,
- Strengthening RDAs as trusted conveners and drivers of recovery and growth, and
- Promoting culture as a tool for cohesion and identity.

UCORD equips RDAs to **plan, coordinate, and implement** recovery and development investments at scale. It supports Ukraine’s EU-aligned recovery architecture by strengthening the regional level of planning and coordination and helping oblasts and hromadas translate strategies into investment-ready pipelines and connect to EU and national financing mechanisms. The six pilot regions serve to test institutional approaches and delivery models that will later be extended to additional RDAs across Ukraine.

By strengthening governance, performance systems, and multi-stakeholder engagement, UCORD helps RDAs remain credible and functional even in a rapidly changing environment.

**Ukraine’s recovery requires strong regional coordination across municipalities and sectors. With UCORD support, as active regional leaders, RDAs are increasingly not just implementers but facilitators of Ukraine’s recovery:**

- Credible and trusted partners and a vital bridge between regional administrations, national ministries, local partners and donors;
- Co-creators of oblast strategies;
- Pipeline builders of intermunicipal projects (e.g. waste management, industrial zones);
- Facilitation of SME development, culture initiatives, and environmental infrastructure.





“

Thanks to the UCORD project ... we can systematically help communities, attract investment, support business, and work on developing social cohesion through culture and creative industries, supporting cluster initiatives, and the sustainable development of environmental projects related to water supply, sanitation, and waste management. In other words, UCORD does not just provide funding, but helps to build systematic work.”

**Orest Sorokopud,**  
Director Volyn RDA



## Complementarity with EU support

EU programmes support decentralisation and development across hromadas. UCORD strengthens the regional level by enabling RDAs to coordinate cooperation between oblast authorities, hromadas, civil society, and the private sector, supporting the alignment of regional strategies and the preparation of joint investment initiatives. UCORD-supported RDAs:

- mobilise regional partnerships to coordinate development priorities and advance joint regional initiatives;
- develop investment-ready regional project pipelines by supporting stakeholders in preparing projects aligned with regional strategies;
- facilitate access to EU and national financing by helping hromadas and regional partnerships prepare projects and applications; and
- support the design and implementation of regional and inter-municipal initiatives, particularly investments that individual hromadas cannot deliver alone.

### *UCORD complements EU support by operationalising the regional level through RDAs*

#### UCORD Ukrainian stakeholders

Ministry for Development of Communities and Territories; Ministry of Culture; Ministry of Economy; Parliamentary committees; local government associations; RDAs of the project's pilot regions; oblast state administrations and councils; utility companies; private businesses; civil society; and citizens.

UCORD strengthens these institutions. RDAs act as trusted intermediaries and co-implementers, while UCORD provides facilitation, mentoring, technical assistance, and quality assurance – supporting long-term institutional resilience.



“

Regional development means creating conditions where businesses can grow, investment comes to the region, and communities benefit from new opportunities.”

**Serhii Kononenko,**  
Director Odesa RDA, which secured participation in an EU-funded programme supporting cooperation between Ukraine and Moldova and will manage approximately €2 million to support SME development.

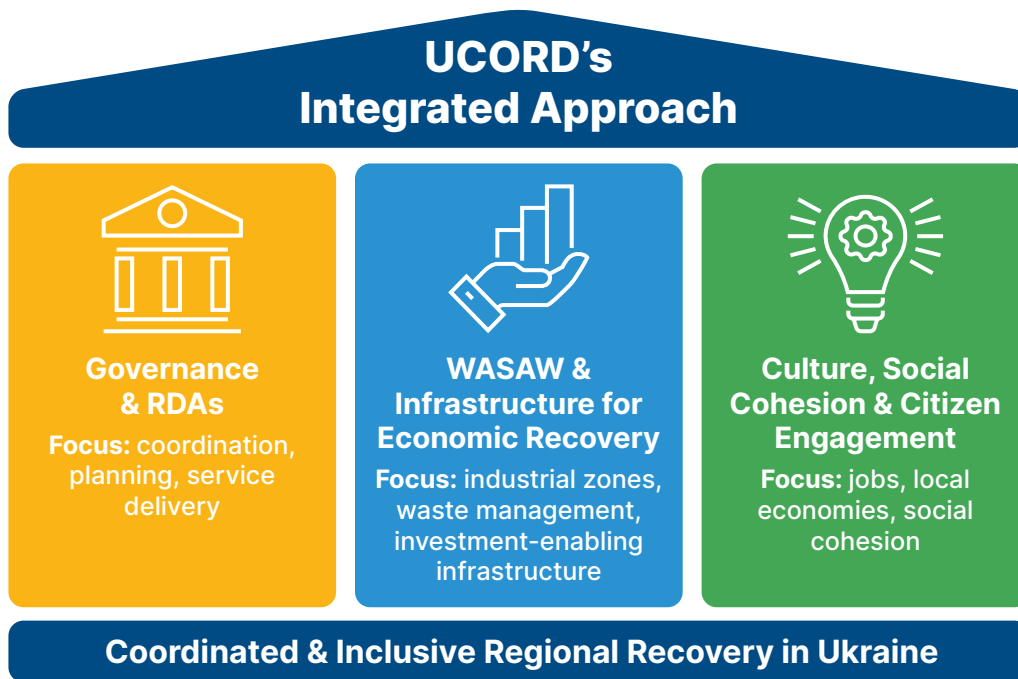




“ UCORD not only strengthened the institutional capacity of the Regional Development Agency of Vinnytsia Region, but also created a fruitful ground for launching and implementing important initiatives for the region. Currently, one of the priorities of our activities is sustainability. And joint projects prove that this word is filled with concrete meaning.”

**Vyacheslav Sokolovyi,**  
Chairman of the Vinnytsia Regional Council

UCORD delivers its outcomes through three mutually reinforcing components that strengthen regional governance, improve essential services, and promote social cohesion. These ensure that recovery is planned, investment-ready, and socially anchored.



## COMPONENT 1

### Governance and Regional Development Agencies (RDAs)

**Positioning RDAs as key players in the national recovery architecture – from planning and coordination to supporting implementation.**

- Capacity building for RDAs as regional coordinators, recognised brokers and quality assurers,
- Support to regional strategies and project pipelines to operationalise Public Investment Management Reform and create investment-ready projects,
- RDAs as credible service providers to hromadas and partners.



**RDAs have  
core funding  
agreements**



**Regional  
development  
strategies**



## COMPONENT 1 OUR FOCUS



6

Clusters4Region programmes

6

Regional development action plans



“ The partnership with Switzerland and the UCORD project allows RDA of Khmelnytskyi region not only to strengthen its own institutional capacity, but also to implement modern strategic planning tools, develop the team's expert potential, and more effectively support hromadas in the preparation and implementation of development projects.”

**Kateryna Savchuk,**  
Director of Khmelnytskyi RDA



## COMPONENT 2

### Water supply, sanitation, and waste management (WASAW) for economic recovery

Small-scale innovations in WASAW are as critical as big infrastructure. UCORD supports both while enabling RDAs to facilitate the preparation, coordination, and support to the implementation of regional development initiatives.

- Infrastructure investments through targeted grant schemes, including industrial zones and regional WASAW infrastructure,
- Preparation and coordination of investment-ready WASAW projects, with RDAs facilitating stakeholder cooperation and supporting implementation,
- Support to regional waste management planning, establishing the strategic framework for future infrastructure investments.

22

Industrial parks in 'long-list', due diligence completed for 5, and 3 launched

40

DREAM projects, 3 under due diligence



## COMPONENT 2 OUR FOCUS

### Flagship Project Identification

- **Mapping** (industrial zones, WASAW infrastructure, stakeholders & strategic priorities)
- **Coordination** and provision inputs in due diligence (DD) assessment
- **Invite project concepts** from local government



WASAW for economic recovery



### Learning and Capacity Building

- **Analysing** project design and implementation process and capturing lessons learned
- **Preparation** of case studies and templates
- **Design** internal project management processes, procedures and tools

### Flagship Projects Implementation

- **Management** of project coordination groups
- **Coordination** of projects' implementation process
- **Communication** support
- **Monitoring and results reporting**
- **Dialogue** with key stakeholders



### Regional WASAW Policy

- **Analysis** of WASAW regional development
- **Coordination** of regional waste management plans development, stakeholders' engagement, data collection and analysis
- **Dialogue** with oblast authorities on the development of regional waste management plans (Sumy)

UCORD bridges national policy and local delivery: for example, national waste management priorities were translated through RDAs into regional planning and implemented in communities such as Bereza (Sumy), where a pilot local waste plan is now referenced as a national model.



The challenge of a border region can become an opportunity when hromadas work together and develop strong projects."

**Vitaliy Rastorguyev,**  
Director, Sumy RDA





## COMPONENT 3

### Culture, Social Cohesion & Citizen Engagement

Culture is a strategic driver of social cohesion, economic development and community resilience. UCORD works with national institutions, RDAs, cultural actors and creative businesses to strengthen regional cultural ecosystems.

- Support to cultural and creative industries as drivers of entrepreneurship, innovation, and regional economic development,
- Grant programmes – including Renaissance Clusters, Cohesion through Culture, and the Greenhouse of Ideas – strengthening regional cultural ecosystems and creative entrepreneurship,
- Culture as a platform for dialogue and social cohesion, promoting community engagement, identity, and cooperation between citizens and public authorities,
- Policy dialogue and cooperation with the Ministry of Culture, supporting the integration of culture and creative industries into regional development strategies.

8

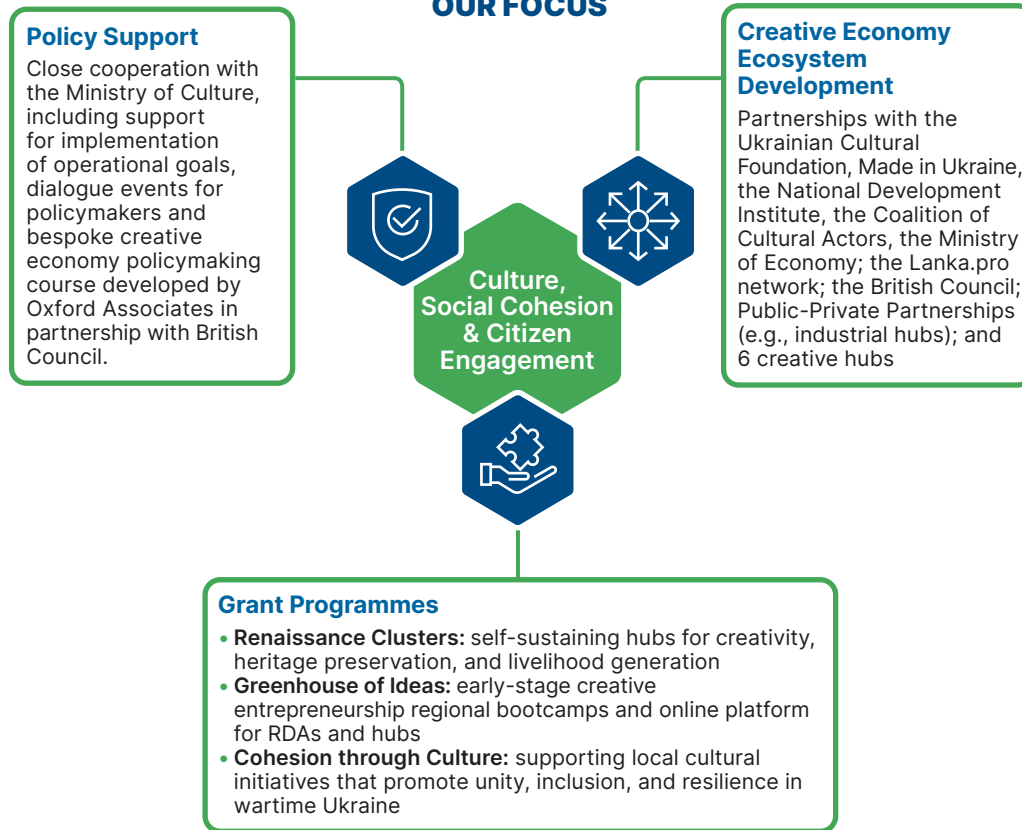
Renaissance Clusters established after transparent 2-stage grant process

185

Greenhouse of Ideas applications, 6 bootcamps, 35-50 grants expected in 2026

Ukraine has approved a **National Culture Development Strategy**, providing a clear framework for cultural policy and future priorities. UCORD supports its implementation at regional level by training policymakers, developing tools for cultural planning, and integrating culture into regional development strategies.

#### COMPONENT 3 OUR FOCUS

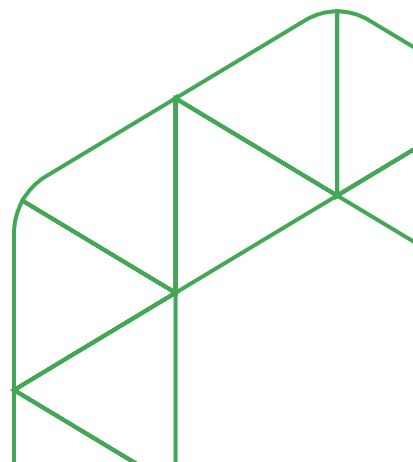


108

Cohesion through Culture applications, 23 projects contracted

13+

Creative economy partnerships established






“ International partnerships help regions implement key infrastructure projects and attract investment.”

**Iryna Skuratko,**

Director Ternopil RDA, which secured participation in the Interreg NEXT Poland - Ukraine Programme and is positioned to coordinate a circular economy fund of approximately €5 million




## UCORD key achievements



**6** RDAs supported with core funding & operational mentoring, strengthening their role as regional service providers and platforms for recovery planning

**4** Regional development strategies updated or developed adopted through inclusive, multi-stakeholder processes aligned with national priorities



**Bereza replicable local waste planning model**




Developed in response to ministerial request to support stronger alignment with national and EU environmental standards

**5** Non-pilot RDAs engaged to develop regional investment pipelines




**Regional WASAW investment pipeline established**




22 infrastructure investment concepts

**6** Greenhouse of Ideas bootcamps delivered, attracting **185** creative entrepreneur applications



**23** community initiatives funded through the Social Cohesion Grant Scheme with the Ukrainian Cultural Foundation, strengthening dialogue and cultural cooperation




**Strategic guidance to ministries**



Support to national reforms, including inputs to State Programme for Development of International Territorial Cooperation and Public Investment Management, and GIS monitoring

**8** Renaissance Clusters established to strengthen regional creative economy ecosystems through cross-sector partnerships



**Integrated Performance Management System (IPMS)**




Developed and piloted, helping RDAs strengthen governance, transparency, and organisational anagement

**EU-aligned smart specialisation methodology**



Customised for Ukrainian needs and integrated into regional strategic planning processes

**New investment opportunities**



Ternopil and Odesa RDAs selected to manage international programmes under Interreg NEXT and EU cross-border initiatives

