

EUROPEAN COOPERATION OF RURAL AND ECONOMICALLY WEAKER REGIONS

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European cooperation of rural and economically weaker regions

Climate adaptation, sustainable redevelopment, mobility in rural areas: When German municipalities and regions cooperate with European partners, an inspiring exchange of knowledge often takes place. Rural and economically weaker regions in particular benefit from this exchange but face difficulties, as their capacities for project work are limited.

Interreg B, a European funding programme, enables transnational cooperation, for example in the Alpine Space Programme or Baltic Sea Region. This paper investigates for the period 2000-2020 how Interreg B programmes integrate rural and economically weaker regions into European cooperation. It analyses whether transnational programmes, due to their geographical focus, offer better opportunities for participation in these regions, compared to the Europe-wide programmes "Interreg Europe", "Horizon 2020" and "Interregional Innovation Investments" (1).

The analysis indicates that rural and economically weaker regions are more involved in Interreg programmes than in excellence-focused programmes such as "Horizon" and IS. Differences between transnational and interregional Interreg programmes show that transnational programmes can respond better to policy priorities. However, some Interreg B programmes do not fully utilise the potential to increase the involvement of rural regions. In future, these programmes should increasingly focus on spatially inclusive cooperation.

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Analysis of participation in Interreg B and other EU programmes

FEDERAL INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH ON BUILDING, URBAN AFFAIRS AND SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT

RESEARCH – SUPPORT - ADVISE

Covering all levels of the built environment, from building materials to the European Space

Research: Identify research needs, Manage Federal research programmes, Initiate model projects

Support: Manage Federal investment and support programmes for municipalities

Advise: Spatial monitoring, Regular reporting, Calculation of housing subsidies, Programme evaluations

Competence centres and networks:

Smart Cities, Sustainable Building, International building exhibitions, Interreg, ...

HOW „TERRITORIAL“ IS EUROPEAN TERRITORIAL COOPERATION / INTERREG?

What we initially thought True or False?

- Interreg is more spatially inclusive than other programmes
- Transnational programmes are more inclusive than Europe-wide programmes
- Involvement of rural regions in Interreg B has decreased over time



WHICH PROGRAMMES DID WE LOOK AT?



2000-2020



2014-2020



2021-2027

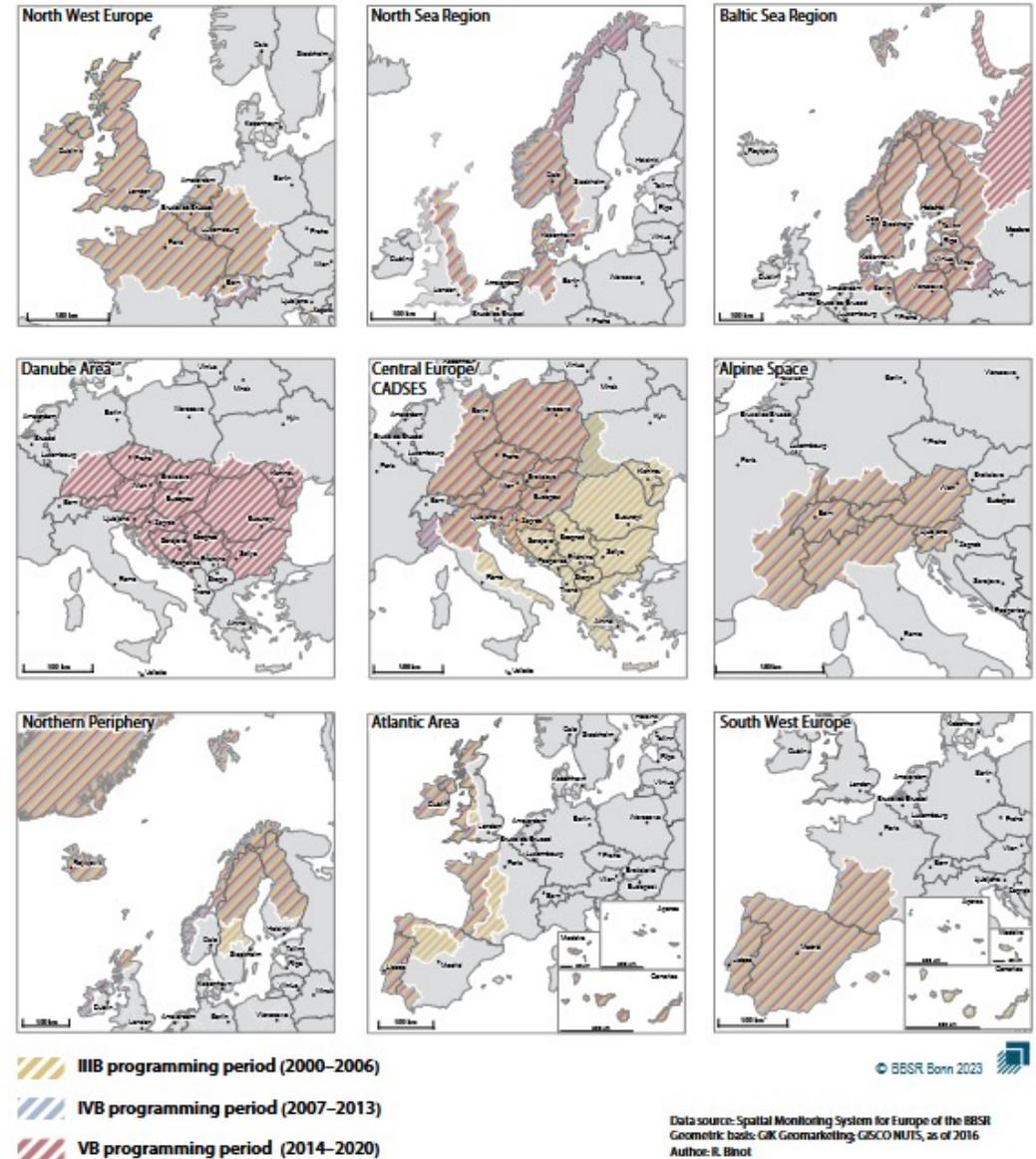


Northern Periphery and Arctic

2021-2027

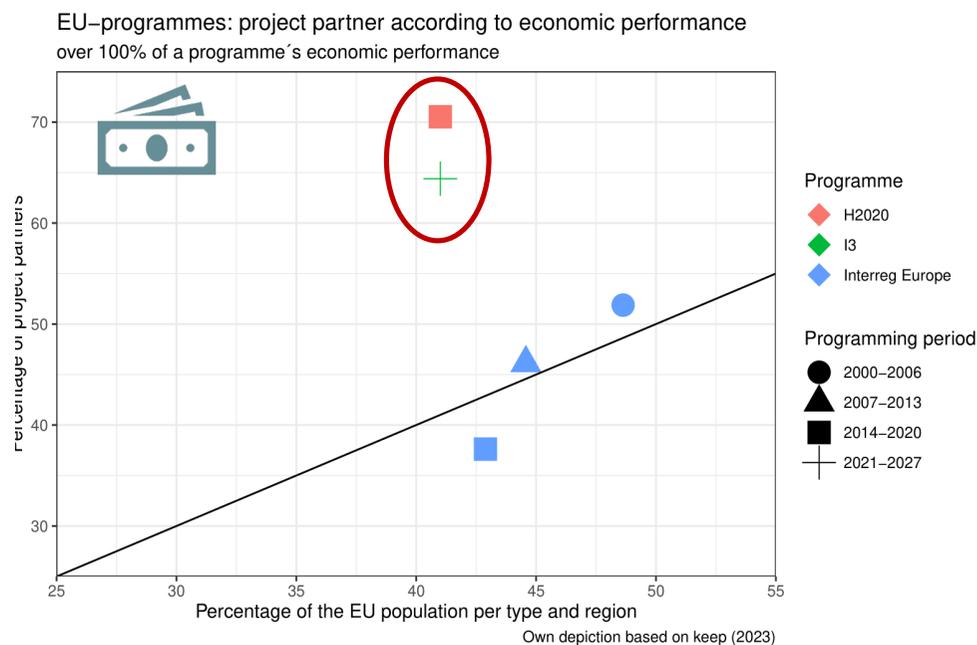
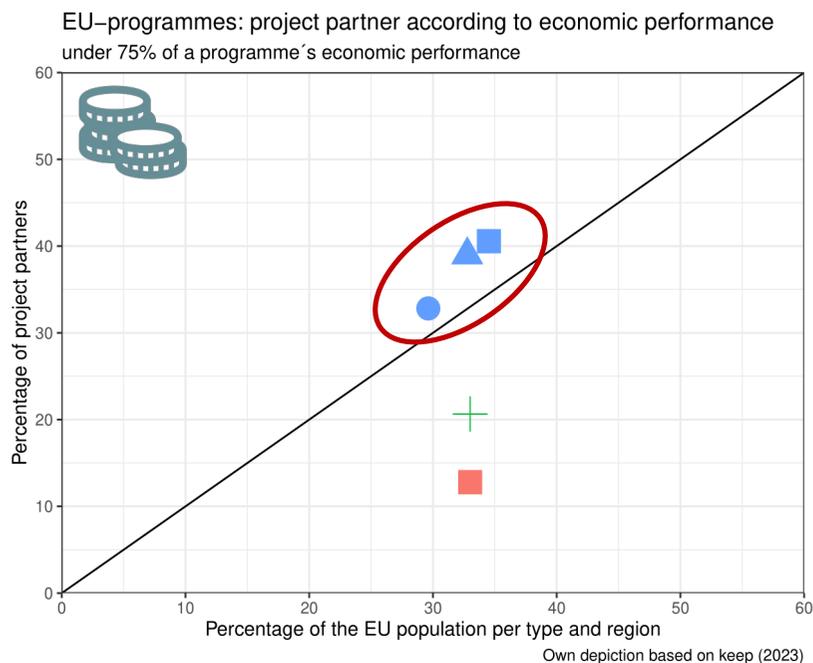
WHICH INTERREG B PROGRAMMES WERE INCLUDED?

- Focus on six INTERREG B programme areas with German participation
- Comparison with (relatively) stable programme areas over three programming periods
- Exclusion of programme areas which were not present over all three periods and had strong transformations over time (exception CADSES/Central Europe)
- Transformation of programme areas and investigation of three periods lead to different economic status of the same regions over time



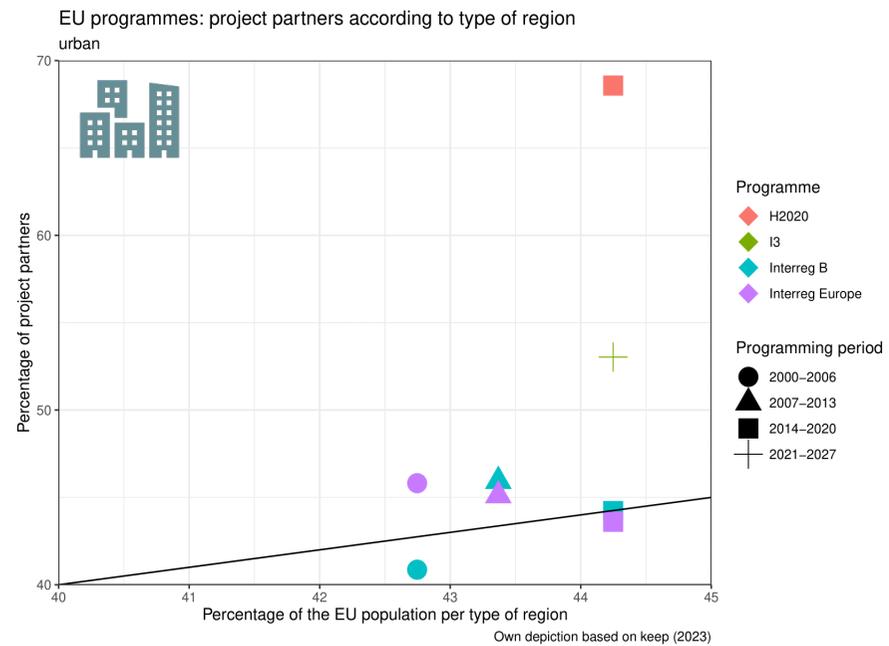
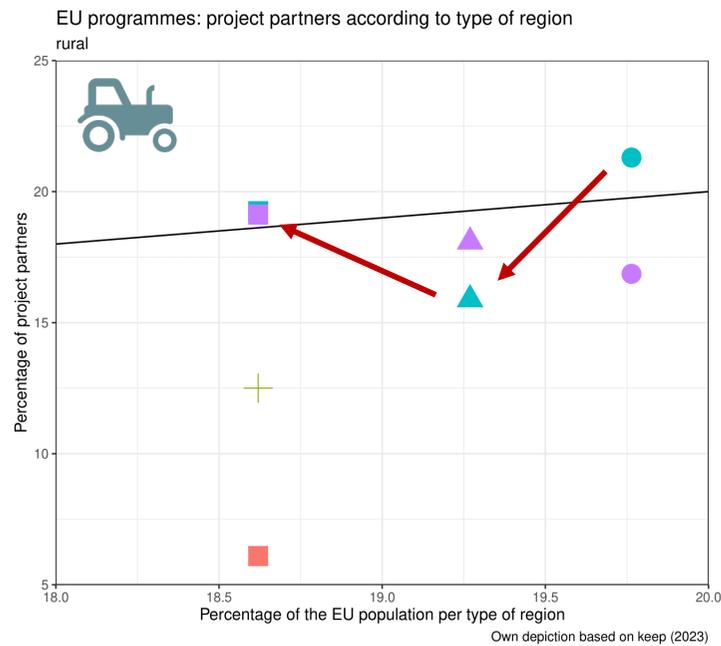
ECONOMICALLY STRONG OR ECONOMICALLY WEAK: WHICH AREAS BENEFIT FROM H2020, INTERREG EUROPE AND I3?

The H2020 and I3 programmes clearly show that they are strongly targeted at economically strong regions, while Interreg Europe is attractive to partners from economically weaker areas.



RURAL VS. URBAN – WHERE DO EU PROGRAMMES WORK?

The graphs show that Interreg involves different types of regions more evenly than Horizon 2020 and I3.



WHAT WE THOUGHT INITIALLY TRUE OR FALSE?

- **Interreg is more spatially inclusive than other programmes**
- Yes, there are more rural and economically weaker regions taking part in Interreg than in Horizon and I 3

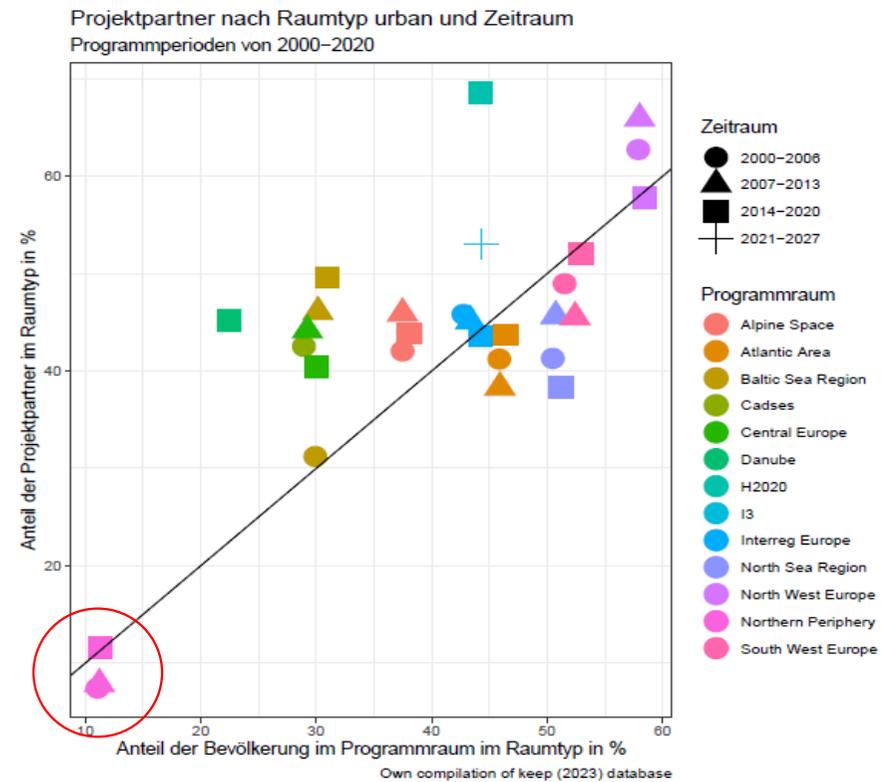
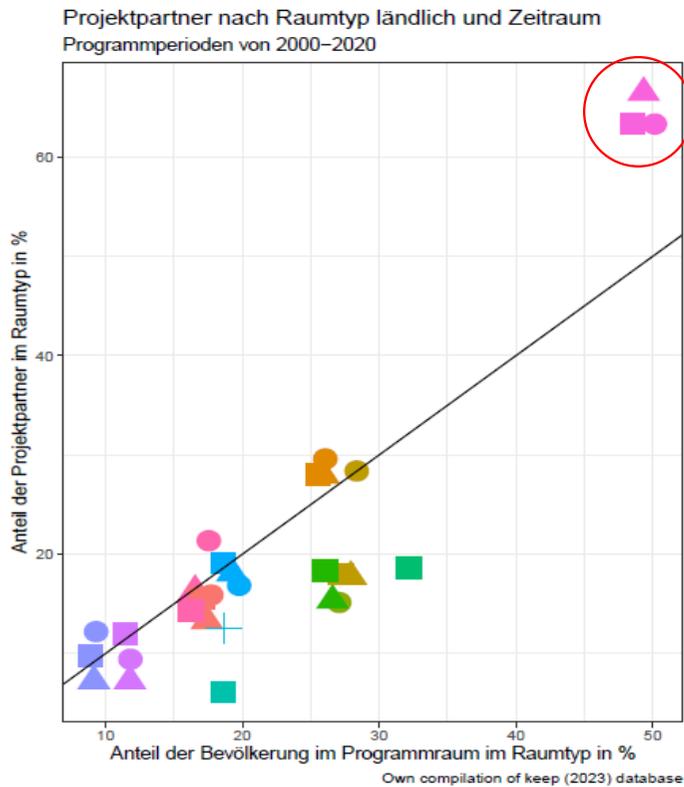
- **Transnational programmes are more inclusive than Europe-wide programmes**
- Yes, and Interreg Europe is doing well, too.

- **Involvement of rural regions in Interreg B has decreased over time**
- ?



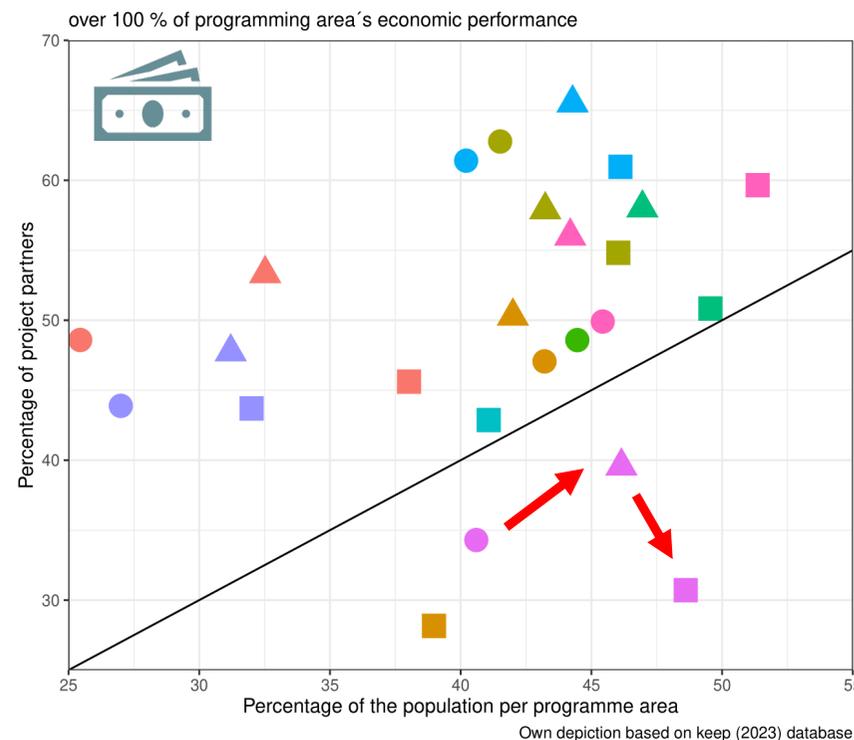
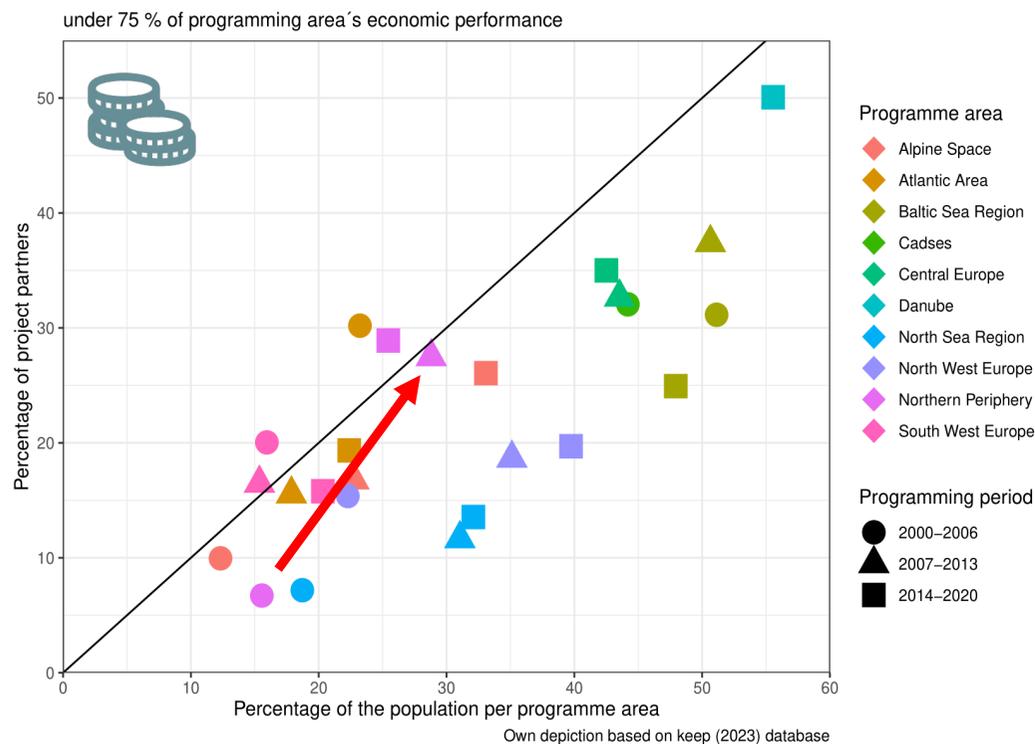
RURAL VS. URBAN – WHICH AREAS BENEFIT FROM INTERREG B?

The potential for involving rural regions is not being fully exploited in INTERREG B
NPA is an exception!



ECONOMICALLY STRONG OR ECONOMICALLY WEAK – WHICH AREAS BENEFIT FROM INTERREG B?

A balanced integration of economically weak regions can be seen in individual Interreg B programme areas, but the potential is not being fully exploited.



WHAT WE THOUGHT INITIALLY TRUE OR FALSE?

- **Interreg is more spatially inclusive than other programmes**
- Yes, there are more rural and economically weaker regions taking part in Interreg than in Horizon and I 3

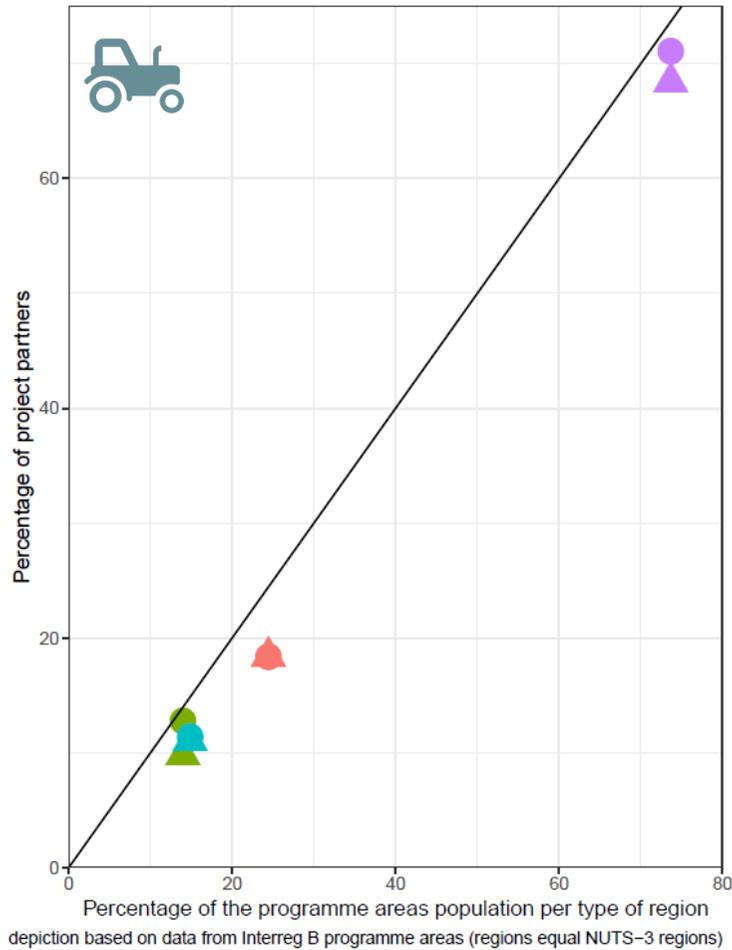
- **Transnational programmes are more inclusive than Europe-wide programmes**
- Yes, and Interreg Europe is doing well, too.

- **Involvement of rural regions in Interreg B has decreased over time**
- Yes, but increased again after 2014.

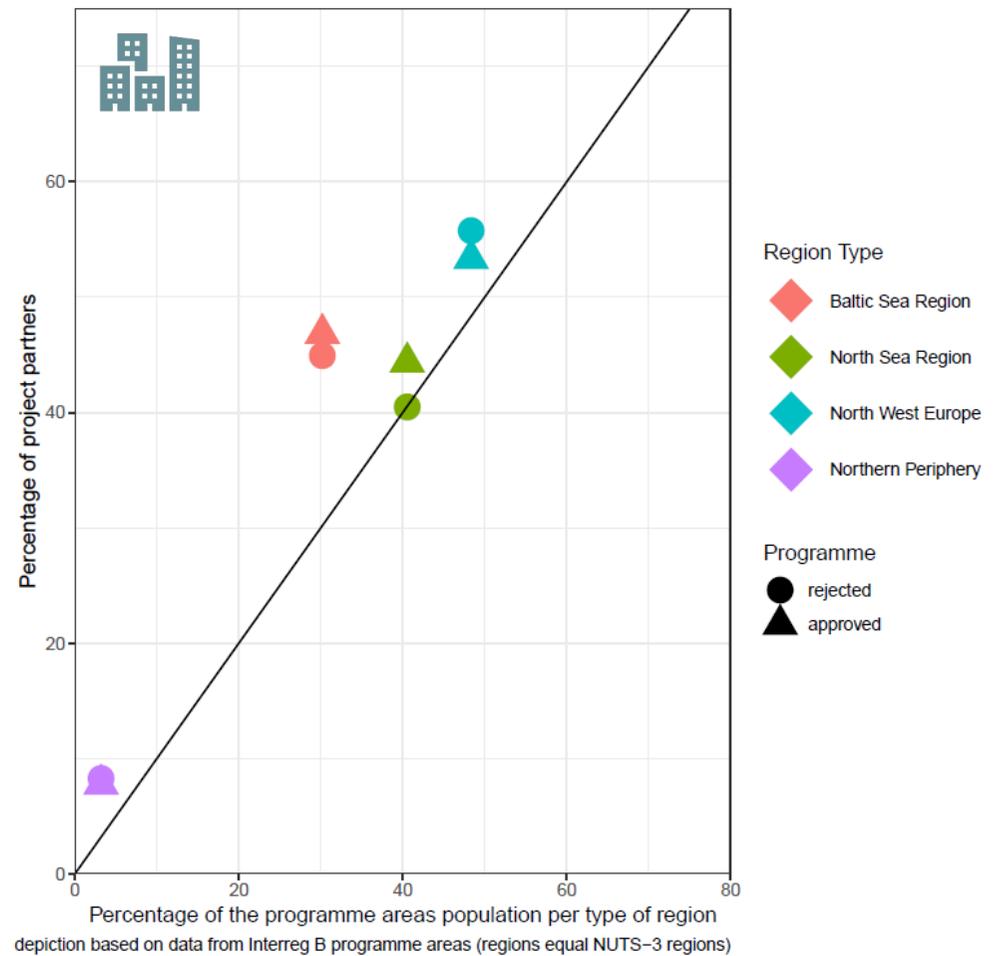


UPDATE 2021 – 2027: RURAL - URBAN

Interreg B: Project partners in rural regions

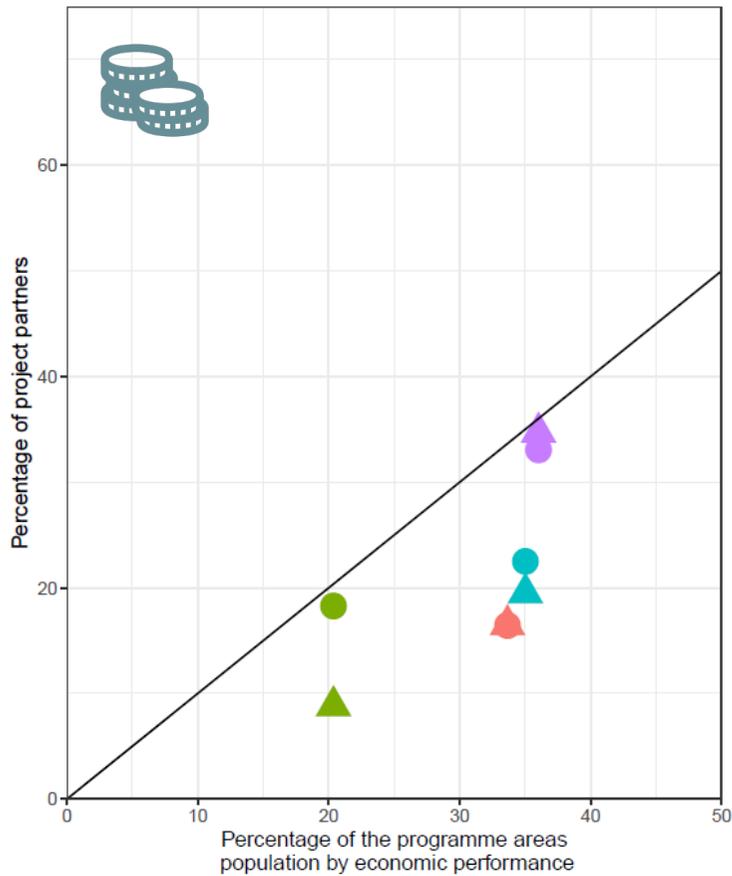


Interreg B: Project partners in urban regions



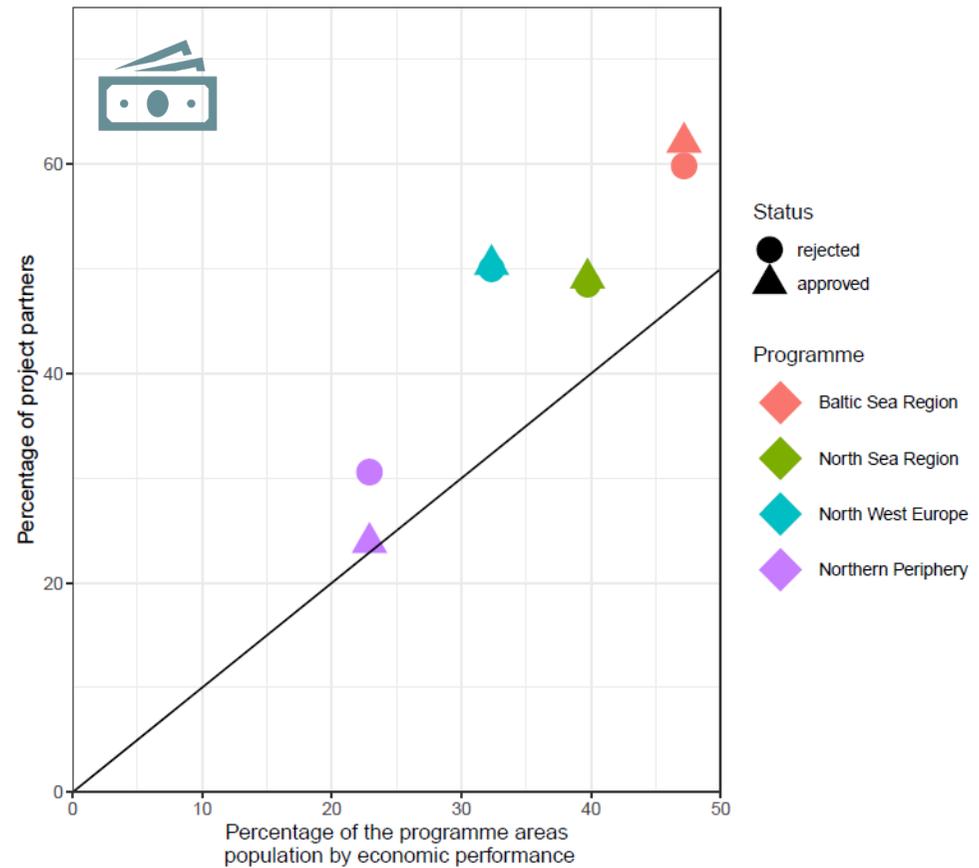
UPDATE 2021 – 2027: WEAKER – STRONGER

Interreg B: Project partners according to economic performance <75% of programme area average



Own depiction based on data from Interreg B programme areas (regions equal NUTS-3 regions)

Interreg B: Project partners according to economic performance over 100% of programme area average



Own depiction based on data from Interreg B programme areas (regions equal NUTS-3 regions)

OUTLOOK

OPTIONS FOR TRANSNATIONAL PROGRAMMES TO BECOME MORE TERRITORIAALLY INCLUSIVE

- Analysing: Where does the funding concentrate
- Programme design: Offering topics, calls and project formats accessible to lower capacity organisations
- Reaching out: Addressing anchor organisations in areas with low participation
- Reaching out: Establishing sub-regional contact points
- Require partnerships to involve partners from new areas
- Capitalisation: requirement to transfer solutions to new areas in the programme
- Earmarking: funding for all types of regions