

Challenges at EU's North-East External Borders (CHANEBO)

NORDEVAL

TEAM:



1. South Karelia (NUTS3 - FI1C5) represented by its stakeholder the Regional Council of South Karelia (FI)
2. Ida-Viru (NUTS3 – EE007) represented by the Union of Municipalities in Ida-Viru county (EE)
3. Latgale (NUTS3 – LV005) represented by the Latgale planning region (LV)
4. the area in Lithuania covered by the Euroregion "Country of Lakes" - three LAU level administrative units, of which three – Utena, Ignalina and Zarasai are in NUTS3 region LT029, whereas Švenčionys belongs to NUTS3 region LT011*

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* For the needs of comparability, the data of NUTS 3 Utena County (LV009) was used.

<https://www.espon.eu/projects/chanebo-challenges-eus-north-east-external-borders>

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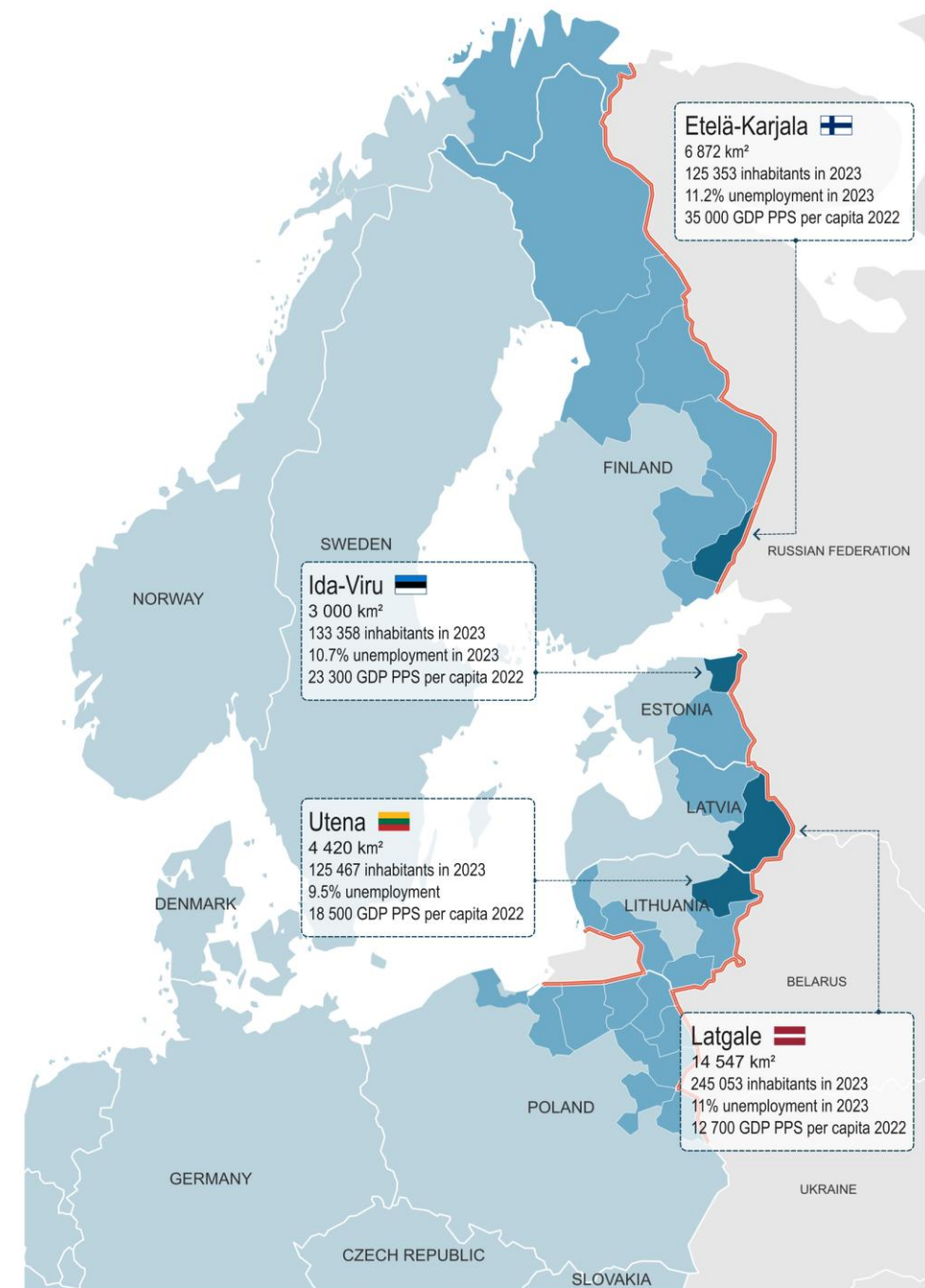


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CHANEBO REGIONS

- Since 2022, **South Karelia's** economy has been reshaped by geopolitical shocks, hitting tourism, retail, transport and security hardest. Existing population and labour market trends have deepened internal disparities.
- In **Ida-Viru** there is an aging populace, rising dependency, youth exodus from phasing-out oil-shale economy. High unemployment, low incomes, weak trust in local authorities. Just Transition funds green energy and industry upgrades, boosting productivity.
- **Latgale** suffers Latvia's sharpest population drop, ageing burden and weak GDP. Exodus persists; FDI scant. Yet incomes grow quickly and capital investment doubles, raising productivity in wood, furniture, machinery, ICT.
- **Utena** faces ongoing depopulation and reversed migration, lagging higher-education, persistent above-average unemployment, poor transport, few large firms, slow SME growth, weak GDP and FDI, while rural tourism expands modestly.



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Visit CHANEBO StoryMaps

Main page:

<https://gis-portal.espon.eu/arcgis/apps/sites/#/espon-hub/apps/bff3dfc9274f4529aec21da783928daf/explore>

1. [Storymap #1: Flyover the EU's North-East External Borders](#)
2. [Storymap #2: The suspended CBC ENI programmes](#)
3. [Storymap #3: Baltic Borderlands: similar, yet so different](#)
4. [Storymap #4: Zoom in to South Karelia](#)



Read a blog on Scenarios for Europe's eastern border based on CHANEBO activities

<https://steady.page/en/spatialforesight/posts/d60206a7-7742-4c8a-bd7f-1184a04ee609>

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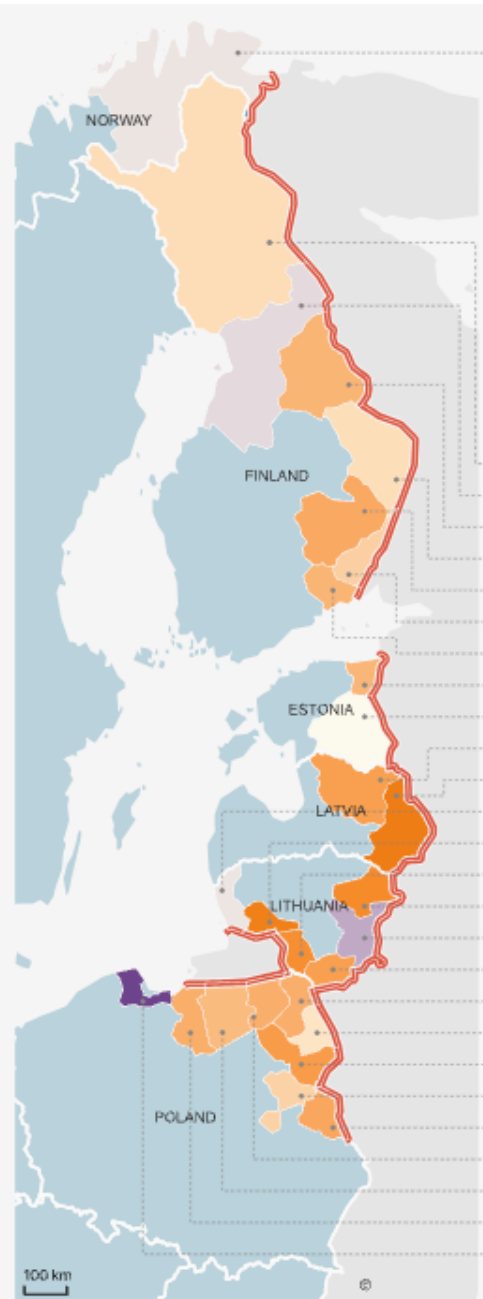
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Border region challenges

27 NUTS 3 regions at the EU external border with Russia and Belarus

- 15 out of 27 NUTS 3 regions are already sparsely populated areas (SPAs)



Population change and density across the CHANEBO regions (2014*-2023)

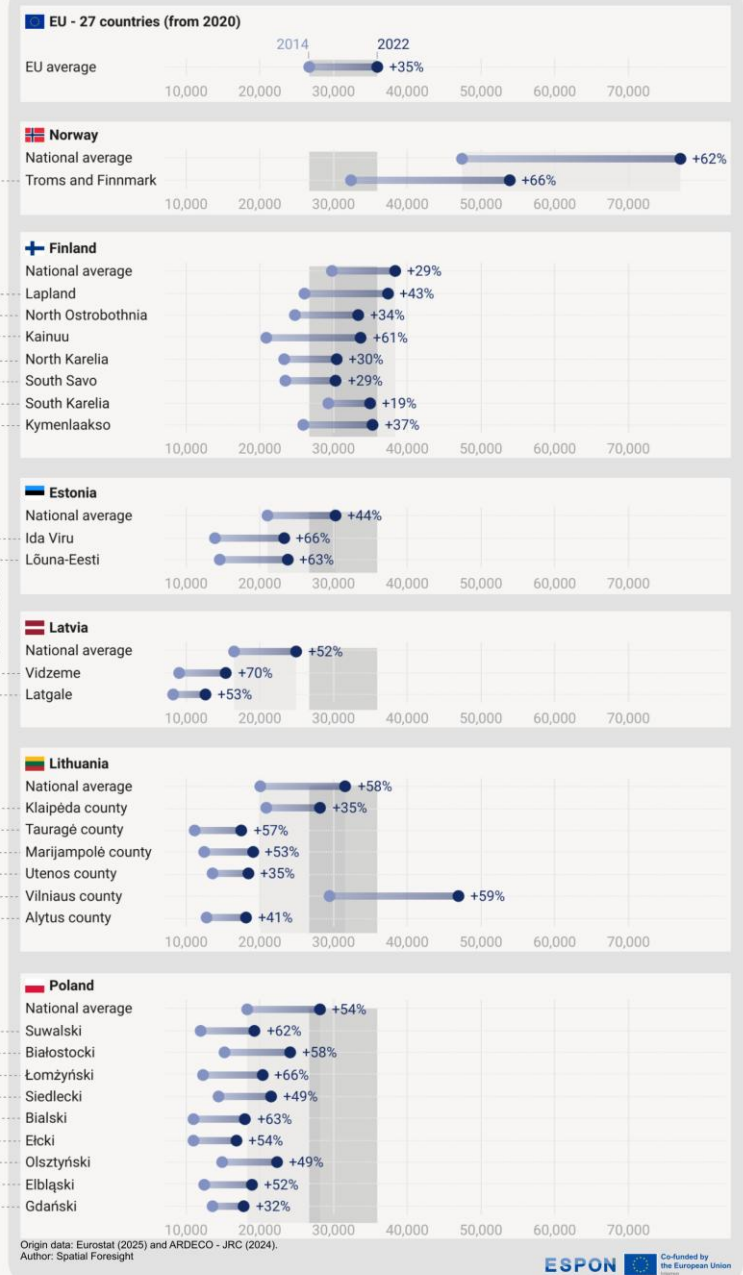
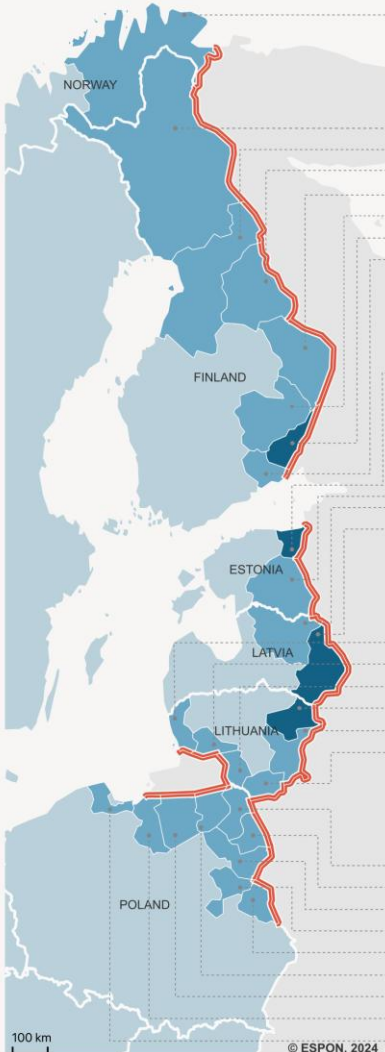
NUTS 3 Regions	Population in 2014*	Population in 2023	Population change between 2014* and 2023	Population density in 2023 (inh./km ²)
NO074 Troms and Finnmark	238 513	242 452	1,7%	3,2
+ FI1D7 Lapland	182 514	175 795	-3,7%	1,8
+ FI1D9 North Ostrobothnia	406 480	416 543	2,5%	10,6
+ FI1D8 Kainuu	76 782	70 521	-8,2%	3,1
+ FI1D3 North Karelia	165 445	159 479	-3,6%	7,4
+ FI1D1 South Savo	152 518	138 052	-9,5%	7,2
+ FI1C5 South Karelia	132 252	125 353	-5,2%	18,2
+ FI1C4 Kymenlaakso	180 845	165 992	-8,2%	29,5
EE00A Ida-Viru	144 941*	133 358	-8%*	38,6
EE008 Lõuna-Eesti	322 052	322 233	0,1%	18,7
LV008 Vidzeme	201 915	180 431	-10,6%	11,8
LV005 Latgale	286 238	245 053	-14,4%	16,8
LT023 Klaipėda county	328 931	334 281	1,6%	64
LT027 Tauragė county	105 356	90 617	-14%	20,6
LT024 Marijampolė county	155 001	135 787	-12,4%	30,4
LT029 Utenos county	143 858	125 467	-12,8%	17,4
LT011 Vilnius county	800 631	848 724	6%	87,2
LT021 Alytus county	151 648	135 620	-10,6%	25
PL843 Suwałski	267 900	244 365	-8,8%	39,2
PL841 Białostocki	502 320	487 613	-2,9%	95
PL842 Łomżyński	395 227	351 876	-11%	39,9
PL925 Siedlecki	420 262	399 123	-5%	66
PL811 Białski	304 389	274 914	-9,7%	46
PL623 Etcki	283 099	258 069	-8,8%	40,7
PL622 Olsztyński	611 612	565 651	-7,5%	54,8
PL621 Elbląski	526 553	479 660	-8,9%	65,4
PL634 Gdański	546 540	623 591	14,1%	144,9

Territorial level: NUTS 3 (2016).
 Source: ESPON CHANEBO, 2025.
 Origin of data: Eurostat (2024) and Eesti Statistika (2025).
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 Author: Spatial Foresight

For Ida-Viru, the 2015 population figure is used instead of 2014 due to data availability. Consequently, the population change for this region reflects the period from 2015 to 2023, rather than 2014 to 2023.

GDP PPS per capita relative to national and EU averages, NUTS 3 regions (2014 vs. 2022)

- Stakeholder region (NUTS3)
- Other regions (NUTS3)
- ESPON countries
- Non-ESPON countries



➔ A new geography with a non-standard functionality - safeguarding EU values and democracy

Territorial Agenda 2030 encourages cooperation in wider functional geographies such as mountainous, coastal, or border regions where shared challenges (e.g., climate adaptation, accessibility, demographic change) and interdependencies call for coordinated development strategies

Territorial level: NUTS 3 (2016).
Map source: ESPON CHANEBO, 2024.
© EuroGeographics for administrative boundaries
Author: Spatial Foresight

Origin data: Eurostat (2025) and ARDECO - JRC (2024).
Author: Spatial Foresight



Common policy needs of CHANEBO regions identified during stakeholder consultation

1. the CHANEBO regions have a specific attention from the national and international security point of view
2. heightened social tensions due to geopolitical concerns and security issues
3. disruption of East-West transport corridors has left regions feeling isolated, contributing to economic and social uncertainty
4. the war exacerbates existing economic disadvantages
5. the negative image hinders investment and tourism, affecting economic growth
6. retaining and attracting businesses, particularly SMEs, is crucial, with potential opportunities linked to near-shoring, dual-use infrastructure and the defence industry
7. closure of borders has impacted tourism, especially with the loss of visitors from Russia and Belarus
8. social integration of Ukrainian refugees, political exiles from Russia and Belarus and low skilled migrant workers is challenging, particularly in non-Russian-speaking areas
9. addressing security vulnerabilities related to infrastructure ('hardware') while strengthening societal resilience ('soft' power) is essential
10. media literacy is critical to counteract hybrid warfare, including disinformation aimed at weakening societal resilience

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Suspended CBC perspective

Main overall findings on EU policy change

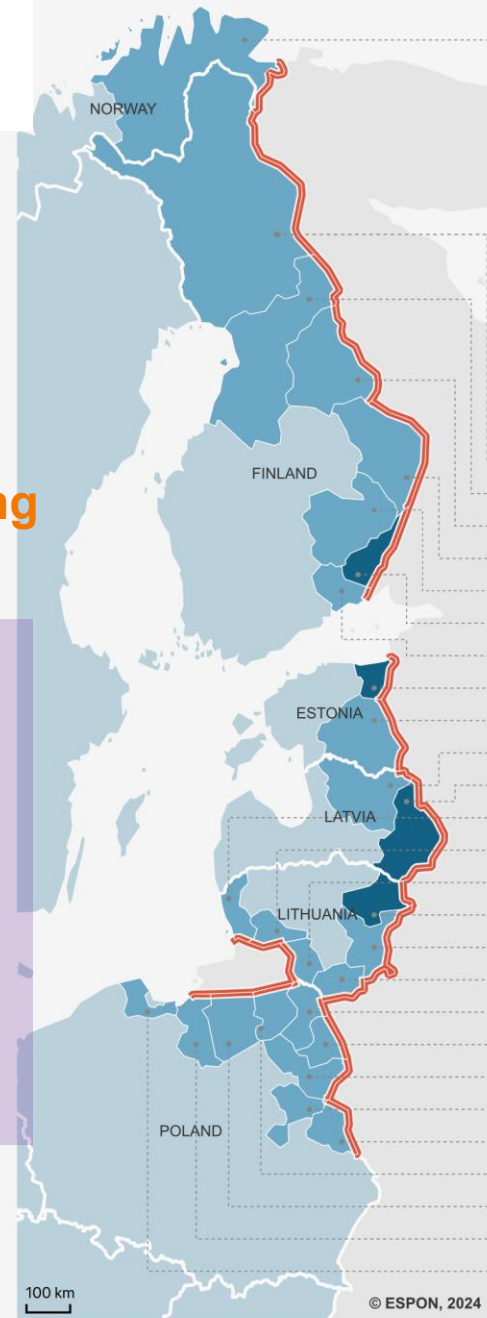
- **Strategic shifts in EU transport policy:** the revised TEN-T policy prioritizes Ukraine and Moldova, delays downgraded links, integrates dual-use infrastructure, and promotes sustainability.
- **EU security in transition:** the EU seeks strategic autonomy but remains reliant on the US while reinforcing border security against hybrid threats.
- **Sanctions policy evolution:** the EU's 17th sanctions package targets Russia, Belarus, Iran, and North Korea, reflecting its shifting geopolitical strategy.

... on CBC

- **Suspension of Interreg NEXT** halts cross-border cooperation reducing learning opportunities and narrowing thematic and geographic collaboration.
- **Regional disparities in CBC cooperation:** suspension impacts Latgale, South Karelia, and Ida-Virumaa most, with thematic gaps in security, mobility, and transport.
- **Loss of infrastructure funding:** the end of Interreg ENI CBC weakens transport, security, and cultural investment.
- **Challenges in Interreg Central Baltic expansion:** the programme's broad scope and strict criteria limit its effectiveness in compensating for lost cross-border cooperation.

Suspension of Interreg CBC ENI / NEXT programmes halts cross-border cooperation reducing learning opportunities and narrowing thematic and geographic collaboration

- Networks lost / new networks take time to be recreated and enabled
- Important source for investments lost
- Limited research cooperation, SME development, improvement of environmental conditions, and collaboration in tourism, culture, and local-level initiatives.
- Safety and security not in focus in the current Interreg programmes, e.g., Central Baltic
- No prepayments leads to dropout of smaller organisations
- Trust and faith in the future undermined



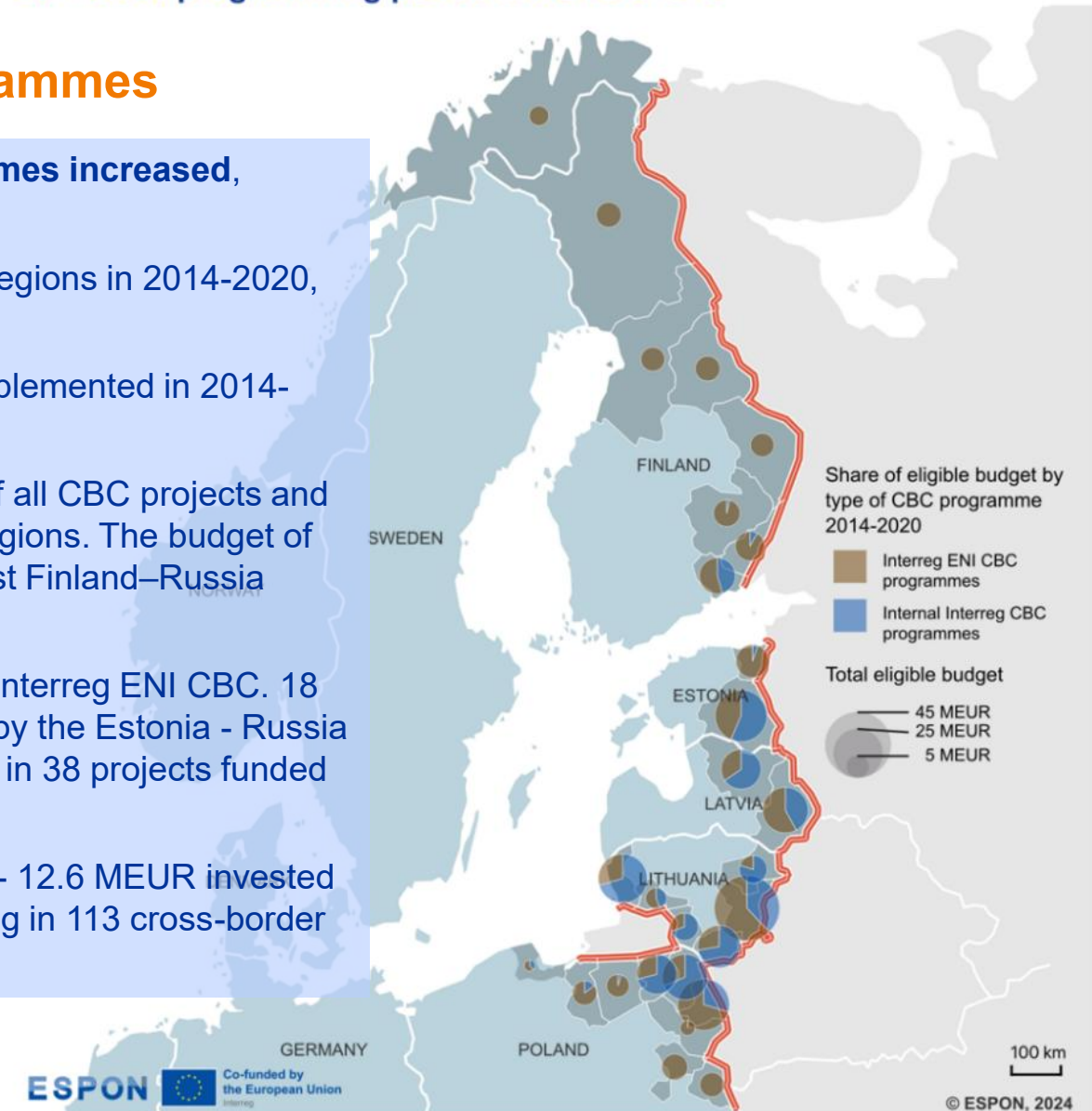
Number of partners and lead partners by programming period in Interreg ENI CBC programmes

NUTS 3 Regions	Programming Period 2007-2013			Programming Period 2014-2020		
	Lead partners	Other partners	Total	Lead partners	Other partners	Total
NO074 Troms and Finnmark	6	37	43	7	15	22
+ F11D7 Lapland	25	54	79	8	24	32
+ F11D9 North Ostrobothnia	12	40	52	10	34	44
+ F11D8 Kainuu	11	19	30	9	15	24
+ F11D3 North Karelia	12	51	63	15	51	66
+ F11D1 South Savo	5	11	16	10	26	36
+ F11C5 South Karelia	10	27	37	18	20	38
+ F11C4 Kymenlaakso	11	23	34	9	24	33
EE00A Ida Viru	7	8	15	14	12	26
EE008 Lõuna-Eesti	9	32	41	45	37	82
LV008 Vidzeme	7	10	17	11	20	31
LV005 Latgale	28	49	77	23	52	75
LT023 Klaipėda county	4	13	17	13	18	31
LT027 Tauragė county	7	3	10	5	3	8
LT024 Marijampolė county	3	4	7	6	4	10
LT029 Utenos county	1	12	13	2	5	7
LT011 Vilniaus county	20	8	28	16	11	27
LT021 Alytus county	9	13	22	9	11	20
PL843 Suwalski	9	2	11	11	2	13
PL841 Białostocki	10	8	18	17	10	27
PL842 Łomżyński	8	17	25	6	11	17
PL925 Siedlecki	4	6	10	5	5	10
PL811 Białski	7	9	16	5	12	17
PL623 Etcki	5	1	6	7	2	9
PL622 Olsztyński	11	11	22	6	5	11
PL621 Elbląski	4	4	8	4	7	11
PL634 Gdański	1	5	6	1		1

Territorial level: NUTS 3 (2016).
 Source: ESPON CHANEBO, 2024.
 Origin of data: Eurostat GISCO (2024) and Keep.eu (2024).
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 Author: Spatial Foresight

Main findings on the suspended ENI CBC programmes

- Between 2007-2013 and 2014-2020, **participation in CBC programmes increased**, especially in Interreg ENI CBC projects.
- Over **€341 million** was allocated to CBC projects across 27 NUTS3 regions in 2014-2020, with **€198 million** under ENI CBC
- Participation varied significantly across regions, with **905 projects** implemented in 2014-2020, involving **975 beneficiaries in total**
- The CBC ENI programmes funded **a significant portion (47–48%)** of all CBC projects and were particularly important for Finnish, Estonian, and Polish border regions. The budget of the Estonia-Russia programme (34 million euros) while the South-East Finland–Russia programme (77 million euros)
- **Ida-Virumaa and South Karelia** most affected by the suspension of Interreg ENI CBC. 18 project partners from **Ida-Virumaa** participated in 30 projects funded by the Estonia - Russia ENI CBC programme. 16 South Karelian project partners participated in 38 projects funded by the South-East Finland - Russia ENI CBC programme
- **Latgale** faced significant partner losses despite a balanced structure - 12.6 MEUR invested through ENI CBC programmes with 33 local organisations participating in 113 cross-border cooperation projects



Eligible budget to beneficiaries by type of CBC programme in the 2014-2020 programming period

Country/ region	Internal Interreg CBC	ENI CBC	TOTAL CBC	% of ENI CBC in total
Finland FI	7,192,727.15 €	48,067,336.00 €	55,260,063.15 €	87%
South Karelia	735,240.26 €	8,399,585.00 €	9,134,825.26 €	92%
Estonia EE	16,568,782.81 €	23,098,798.11 €	39,667,580.92 €	58%
Ida Virumaa	614,678.17 €	10,826,738.00 €	11,441,416.17 €	95%
Latvia LV	20,007,226.52 €	18,317,456.73 €	38,324,683.25 €	47%
Latgale	9,150,596.34 €	12,577,463.87 €	21,728,060.21 €	58%
Lithuania LT	62,270,920.61 €	46,819,325.46 €	109,090,246.07 €	43%
Utena	6,504,306.71 €	1,652,636.33 €	8,156,943.04 €	20%

Source: Service Provider, 2024 based on keep.eu data accessed in December 2024

Budget for infrastructure investments by CBC programme in the 2014-2020 programming period

Infrastructure investments under ENI CBC programmes (particularly the large infrastructure projects) have been instrumental in enhancing border security, transport networks, cross-border connectivity, promotion of local culture and cultural heritage

Programme name	Programme type	Share of infrastructure costs in programme budget*	Infrastructure cost budget (EUR)
Poland - Belarus - Ukraine ENI CBC	Interreg ENI CBC programme	65,2%	€123 229 960,15
INTERREG V-A Lithuania - Poland	Internal Interreg CBC programme	77,2%	€51 322 879,07
Poland - Russia ENI CBC	Interreg ENI CBC programme	74,8%	€47 009 383,18
Latvia - Lithuania - Belarus ENI CBC	Interreg ENI CBC programme	59%	€43 206 642,74
Estonia - Russia ENI CBC	Interreg ENI CBC programme	93,4%	€28 475 809,46
INTERREG V-A Latvia - Lithuania	Internal Interreg CBC programme	33,9%	€26 441 756,88
Lithuania - Russia ENI CBC	Interreg ENI CBC programme	94,1%	€22 173 025,36
INTERREG V-A Finland - Estonia - Latvia - Sweden (Central Baltic)	Internal Interreg CBC programme	12%	€18 678 782,78
INTERREG V-A Estonia - Latvia	Internal Interreg CBC programme	42,9%	€18 322 041,33
Kolarctic ENI CBC	Interreg ENI CBC programme	29,9%	€17 941 989,00

* This column represents the share of the infrastructure cost budget as a proportion of the total budget excluding technical assistance of the respective programme. Data is not available for the following programmes: 2014 - 2020 INTERREG V-A Poland - Denmark - Germany - Lithuania - Sweden (South Baltic), 2014 - 2020 INTERREG V-A Sweden - Finland - Norway (Nord), 2014 - 2020 Karelia ENI CBC, 2014 - 2020 Latvia - Russia ENI CBC, and 2014 - 2020 South-East Finland - Russia ENI CBC.

**The financial data obtained from keep.eu and presented in this table may not be entirely accurate for some programmes and should be used as a reference.

Tableau: Spatial Foresight • Source: Keep.eu • Créé avec Datawrapper

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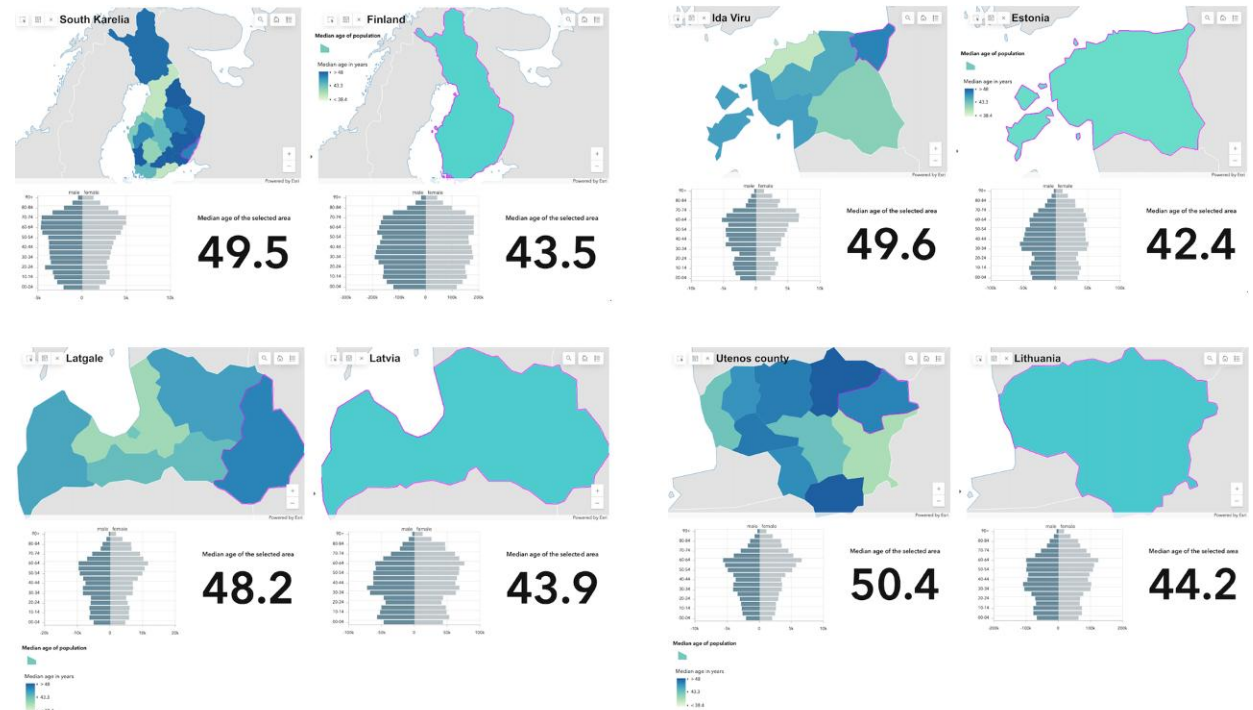
Regional profiling and comparative analysis

Demography

Indicator	 South Karelia	 Ida Viru	 Utenos county	 Latgale
Population in 2014 (total inh.)	132 252	144 941	143 858	286 238
Population in 2023 (total inh.)	125 353	133 358	125 467	245 053
Population change between 2014 and 2023	-5%	-8%	-13%	-14%
Population density in 2023 (inh./km ²)	18.2	38.6	17.4	16.8
Median age of population in 2023	49.5	49.6	50.4	48.2
Old-age dependency ratio in 2024 (population 65 years or over to population 20 to 64 years)	54.4%	50.4%	41.1%	40.9%

Demographic

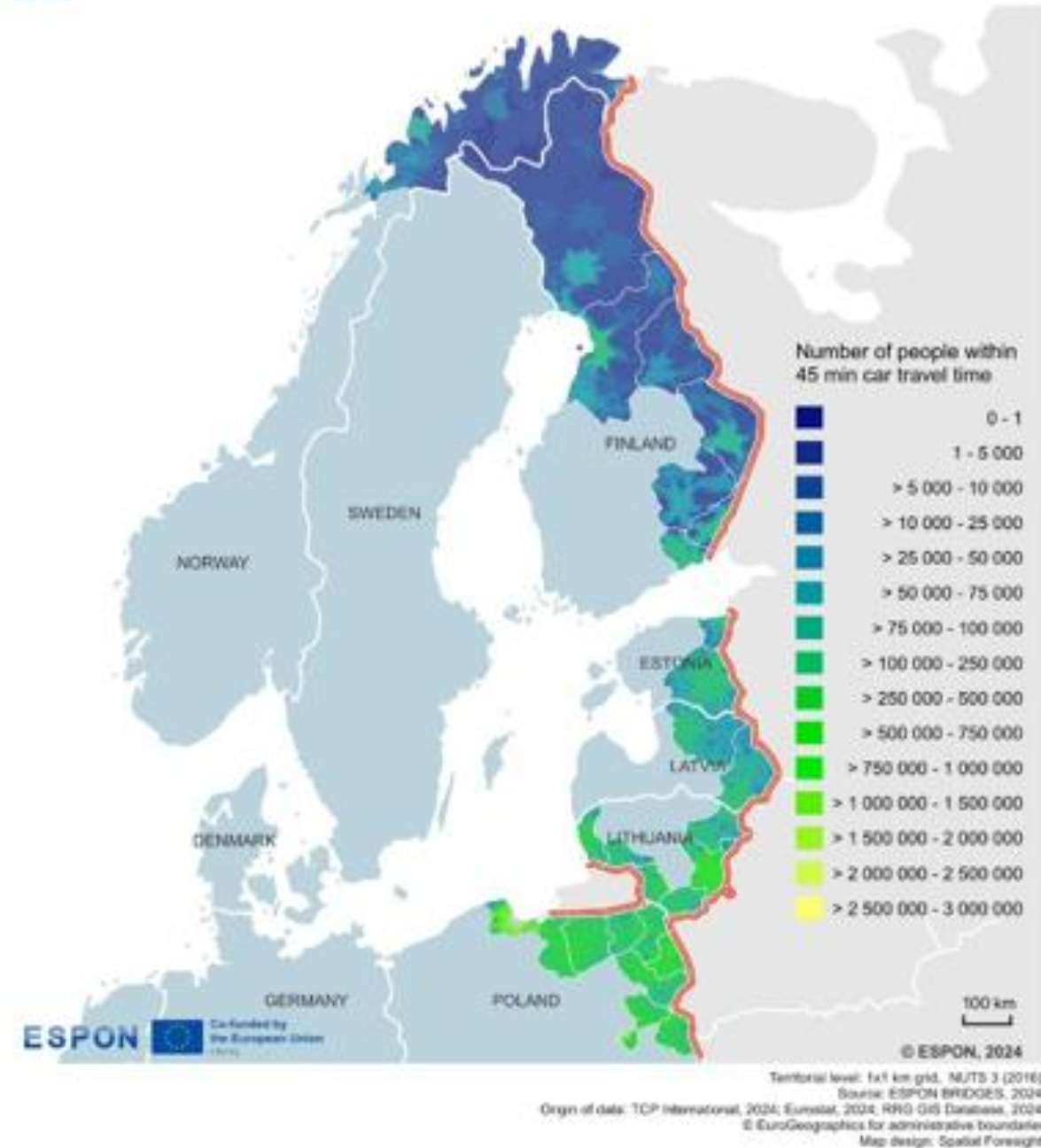
- Peripherality manifests in similar demographic trajectories: shrinking and ageing populations, rural sparsity, and net outmigration. Migration has provided only partial relief
- Urban centres continue to concentrate remaining population and resources, offering some resilience, while rural municipalities face existential demographic challenges







Population structures in the four main CHANEBO regions versus the national average, 2023

Demography

- The regions are bellwethers of broader demographic shifts in the EU's eastern frontier
- Low population densities near the border, limit labour availability, market size, and service accessibility.
- Policy responses must reflect the multifaceted nature of these challenges
- Revitalisation strategies should be grounded in local assets, with targeted support for service delivery in sparsely populated areas, labour market adaptation, and inclusive migration integration
- Cross-border cooperation, digital connectivity, and place-based investment offer pathways for sustainable demographic resilience



Economy and trade

Indicator	 South Karelia	 Ida Viru	 Utenos county	 Latgale
GDP EUR per capita 2014	37 300 €	10 300 €	8 500 €	5 700 €
GDP EUR per capita 2022	43 600 €	21 000 €	13 900 €	9 700 €
Change in GDP per capita [EUR] between 2014 and 2022	17%	104%	64%	70%
GDP PPS per capita 2014	29 400	14 000	13 700	8 300
GDP PPS per capita 2022	35 000	23 300	18 500	12 700
Change in GDP per capita [PPS] between 2014 and 2022	19%	66%	35%	53%
Investments in tangible fixed assets in 2022 (EUR per capita)	13 028 €	no equivalent data	1 410 €	1 543 €
Investments in tangible fixed assets in 2014 (EUR per capita)	6 647 €	no equivalent data	no data	1 062 €
Change in investments in tangible fixed assets between 2014 and 2022	96.0%	no equivalent data	no data	45.3%
Value added per employee (per capita, by year, in EUR) in 2022	37 906 €	29 500 €	30 240 €	18 554 €
Value added per employee (per capita, by year, in EUR) in 2014	32 109 €	no data	no data	9 964 €
Change in added value per employee between 2014 and 2022 (per capita, by year)	18.1%	no data	no data	86.2%

Economic Indicators

- Income and investment disparities remain deeply entrenched. Disposable income levels in Ida-Viru, Latgale, and Utena are the lowest in their countries.
- GDP per capita is growing slowly, but the gap with national averages is either static or widening.
- While EU support, such as the Just Transition Fund and other Cohesion Policy tools, has helped stimulate some economic activity, private sector investment remains weak.
- All regions struggle with attracting foreign direct investment outside of core municipal areas.
- Special Economic Zones and industrial parks have had limited success in reversing these trends, particularly in rural zones.

Connectivity & Social and security aspects

- Connectivity is a critical weakness across the regions. All four regions face challenges from disrupted eastbound transit, sparse rail connections, and rising infrastructure costs per capita due to depopulation.
- Peripheral geography, outdated transport infrastructure, and insufficient public mobility options reduce economic integration and access to services.
- Although digital infrastructure is stronger, especially in South Karelia and Utena, the lack of reliable road and rail links - particularly in rural zones - continues to isolate communities. This undermines regional competitiveness and limits access to education, healthcare, and employment opportunities.

Social and security aspects

- All four regions are adapting to new hybrid threats, including disinformation, cyberattacks, and border provocations.
- Border security, cyber readiness, and civil defence education are rising regional priorities.
- Disinformation targeting mainly Russian-speaking populations seeks to divide society, undermine trust in institutions, and support Russia's geopolitical goals, echoing narratives used to justify aggression in Ukraine. Limited disinformation risk in South Karelia.
- EU/NATO frameworks offer support, but success depends on local implementation of strategic goals.
- Public trust varies by region but is influenced by shared issues: marginalisation, demographic change, and centre-periphery divides.
- South Karelia and Utena benefit from higher institutional trust, while Ida-Virumaa and Latgale face vulnerabilities due to socio-linguistic divides. Russian-speaking areas face added challenges from historical mistrust and disinformation.
- Stronger local visibility, inclusive services, and culturally sensitive governance raise trust.
- Effective resilience relies on inclusive governance, civil defence awareness, and targeted communication.
- Sustained investment in security, democratic resilience, and socio-economic cohesion is crucial. Media literacy, youth engagement, and multilingual communication are common needs. Combating manipulation remains crucial for regional security and integration across the eastern EU border.

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ESPON policy questions

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ESPON policy questions

1

How to differentiate and develop new growth pattern with near-by EU regions, to open new markets and to engage with new business partners?

Rationale for a shift in growth orientation: potential for developing new models aligned with EU priorities such as strategic autonomy, green and digital transitions, and security resilience, while also exploring new trade routes and leveraging increased defence investments and security collaborations in the Baltic-Nordic corridor.

Strategic actions:

- Deepen economic integration with nearby EU regions
- Leverage EU security and defence priorities
- Tap into neighbourhood and candidate country demand

Supportive policy and financial environment:

- Tailored funding instruments
- New cooperation programmes
- Communication and market branding

New growth patterns - principles and drivers:

- Cross-Border business ecosystems
- Strategic near-shoring and industrial repositioning
- North–South axis development

Business readiness and connectivity :

- Special Economic Zones and Innovation Hubs
- Infrastructure investment
- Entrepreneurial and workforce development

Which policies and tools can enhance the relations with regions located at the northern and southern part of the CHANEBO area, including cultural policies and mobility connections?

Cultural policies for territorial identity and exchange:

- Joint cultural programming across regions from Norway to Poland
- Cross-border mobility grants for youth in arts, education, and community projects
- Support for cultural infrastructure and creative industries

People-to-people and institutional cooperation :

- University and vocational education partnerships
- Twin-region and intermunicipal alliances
- Joint governance platforms under Interreg or a future tailored cooperation programme

Joint emergency and resilience planning :

- Cross-border emergency simulation exercises and shared protocols
- Media literacy and information exchange networks

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Improved multimodal connectivity:

- Investing in North-South infrastructure corridors
- Expanding sustainable transport solutions
- Boosting digital mobility and connectivity

Regional branding and tourism cooperation:

- Regional narratives showcasing success stories, innovation, and cultural uniqueness
- Coordinate tourism products across adjacent regions
- Destination accessibility by synchronizing public transport schedules

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ESPON policy questions

3

How can Cohesion Policy further support the regions at EU's north-east external borders become stronger and resilient to future challenges? How to better involve Interreg-specific objective "Safer and more secure Europe" in these regions?

Rationale: The EU's north-eastern external border regions face a unique constellation of vulnerabilities: (1) demographic decline, (2) economic marginalisation, (3) geopolitical tension, and (4) declining cross-border cooperation

Repositioning Cohesion policy: strategic priorities for resilience:

- Infrastructure modernisation
- Demographic stabilisation and labour force retention
- Research and innovation ecosystems
- Digital and social resilience

Leveraging the 'Safer and More Secure Europe' objective

- Joint civil preparedness and contingency planning
- Cross-Border emergency infrastructure
- Digital and cyber resilience
- Community security awareness campaigns

Improving Interreg delivery mechanisms:

- A dedicated cross-border programme
- Sub-programme under Interreg Central Baltic
- Dedicated calls and information campaigns
- Enhanced role of national contact points

Horizontal principles - cross-cutting enablers:

- Place-based flexibility
- Multi-level governance
- Monitoring and evaluation

4

What medium and long-term visions can be built in the studied area that can turn the crisis into an opportunity by also indicating how to develop success factors at regional and international scale?

From 'gateways' to 'gatekeepers' of EU sovereignty - forward-looking, resilient, and strategically significant frontiers - Exaptive resilience as a guiding principle

From margins to strategic frontiers:

- Reimagining the peripheral status as a source of strategic advantage
- **Exaptive resilience** (ESPON TERRA RES study) defines it as a region's capacity to creatively repurpose existing assets in response to disruption, framing this as an opportunity - to 'bounce forward'

Medium-Term Vision: Secured, Revitalised, Inclusive:

- United and secured: physical protection, civil preparedness, societal resilience, and democratic stability
- Revitalized and sustainable economies: strategic near-shoring, green industrialisation anchored in local assets, strengthening R&D capacity and higher education networks
- Inclusive and smart societies: fostering 'the right to stay', building civil trust, promoting transnational identity

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Shared values and a new geopolitical function:

- Rooted in foundational European values: peace, democracy, civic trust, the right to stay, and inclusive development
- Short-term vision (to 2035) embraces a 'North-Eastern Dimension'
- Medium-term vision (to 2045) moves beyond adaptation into transformation

Scenarios :

- 'Green Buffer Zone'
- 'EU Showcasing'
- 'EU-Russian Appeasement'

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Policy recommendations

Horizontal recommendations

1. Dedicated place-based measures of the mainstream ESIF programmes

- ❑ Incorporating actions targeted at the Eastern border regions into existing ESIF programmes for the remainder of the 2021-2027 programming period
- ❑ Ensuring their continuity and reinforcement beyond 2027

2. Exploring ETC

- ❑ Exploring the establishment of a new cooperation programme post-2027 with elements tailored to the specific needs of all EU's Eastern Border regions AND/OR
- ❑ Targeted support could potentially be channeled to the external border regions through existing Interreg programmes such as Central Baltic or Baltic Sea ensuring thematic adjustment and administrative proximity.

Horizontal recommendations

1. Dedicated place-based measures of the mainstream ESIF programmes

- ❑ multi-level governance partnership for better alignment of the EU, national and regional policies;
- ❑ targeted and place-based investments including the dual-use infrastructure considering the low population densities of some of the regions;
- ❑ preventing Eastern Borders regions from ‘competing’ for funds with more developed areas by earmarking funding stream for concerned territories and
- ❑ potential 100% co-financing as well as pre-financing.

Horizontal recommendations

2. Exploring ETC

- ❑ focused and functional cooperation with regions separated either by land or sea but having common challenges and commitment to collaborate on potential solutions;
- ❑ reorienting transnational cooperation priorities along the EU North-eastern Rim;
- ❑ intensified collaboration at the macroregional level and strengthened connections at European and global scales;
- ❑ greater stakeholders' buy-in and ownership widely acknowledged for ETC programmes;
- ❑ creation of alliances across regional and national governments for closer collaboration and
- ❑ placing the programme management in the border proximity.

CHANEBO Recommendations by three pillars

United and Secured	Revitalised and Sustainable	Inclusive and Smart
<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Reframing Borderland Development through North–South and Interregional Cooperation➤ Enhancing Connectivity along the EU's North-eastern External Border from North to South➤ Fostering Crisis Resilience and Hybrid Threat Prevention via Cross-Border Mechanisms➤ Strengthening Civil Preparedness through Regional Trust and Strategic Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Boosting Investment and Reorienting Value Chains through Strategic Near-Shoring and North-South Connectivity➤ Strengthening Business Ecosystems and Value Chains through North–South Cooperation and Skills Development➤ Advancing Sustainable Growth through Green Innovation and Circular Economy Models➤ Revitalizing Border Regions through Culture, Tourism, and the Creative Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Unlocking the Potential of Higher and Vocational Education➤ Accelerating Innovation, R&D, and Digital Transformation in Border Regions➤ Fostering Social Cohesion, Civic Trust, and Democratic Resilience➤ Empowering Communities through Local Service Innovation and Social Engagement

Last, but not least – a shared information space & positive narrative building is recommended

- Develop a shared information space across Eastern Border regions
- Bridge fragmented media landscapes across borders and languages
- Balance information flows — know your neighbours as well as the world
- Counter negative media portrayals with positive, fact-based messaging
- Showcase local success stories to attract people and investment



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Thank you!

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