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EUROPEAN RESEARCH PROJECT //

Collecting and analysing data for the post-27 INTERREG (Core-IB)

Italy-France (Maritime)

Border profile

March 2026

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1 Introduction

1.1 Context and objective of the border profile

The ESPON Core-IB project (Collecting and analysing data for the post-27 INTERREG) provides evidence-based, non-binding analytical work to support the next generation of Interreg programmes post-2027. By collecting and analysing harmonised territorial data, the project highlights key socio-economic characteristics, cross-border interactions, and governance structures. Its spatial focus covers 48 cross-border cooperation areas (40 land and 8 maritime), including all EU internal border regions and those bordering Liechtenstein, Switzerland, and Norway. The findings are analytical and informative; they do not create regulatory or policy obligations for Member States, the European Commission, or programme authorities. Each border profile serves as a comparable knowledge base for policymakers at EU, national, and regional levels, supporting dialogue and reflection rather than prescribing policy choices. The profiles aim to provide consistent, data-driven territorial evidence that can inform strategic discussions about future cross-border cooperation and contribute to the preparation of Interreg programmes post-2027.

The Core-IB border profiles are designed to support the upcoming steps in the Interreg programming process with analyses based on data that is available at the European scale, including ESPON, Eurostat, DG REGIO, JRC, and Interreg databases. Their main purpose is to ensure comparability of data analyses and to provide programme areas with access to recent harmonised data at high geographical resolution (NUTS3 level or finer). Member States may hold additional or more detailed data which can further enrich or contextualise the findings beyond the Core-IB project. These national sources are essential for refining and validating territorial evidence in policymaking processes, including additional regional, fine-scale information and insights from political processes related to prioritisation and objective setting. All border profiles follow a systematic and methodologically robust approach. They provide territorial evidence, structured along 6 thematic dimensions, offering insights into the geographic, economic, environmental, socio-economic, border security and governance characteristics of the border region. Quantitative data and qualitative analyses are combined to ensure meaningful insights into all 48 border areas. Due to methodological constraints and limited resources, local studies and national datasets falling outside the European data framework could not be included. Visualisations, such as maps and charts based on descriptive statistics, facilitate understanding and support evidence-based policymaking. The profiles analyse the border region as a whole at NUTS3 (2021) level (corresponding to the current Interreg VI-A programme area)[1] and position it within a broader European context. For comparative purposes, several reference categories are applied:

- European averages (EU27 + Norway, Switzerland and Liechtenstein, depending on data availability)
- National averages
- National border region averages
- Aggregated border region averages

To complement the quantitative evidence, the profiles also draw on strategic and qualitative sources, including:

- Strategic documents from the Interreg Programme 2021-2027
- Border Orientation Papers from the 2021-2027 programming period
- Information from the keep.eu database on cross-border cooperation activities
- Information from the Cohesion Open Data platform
- Information from the b-solutions initiative
- Information from recent ESPON Projects (i.e., CROSSGOV, House4All, PROFECY Update, CPS 2.0)

[1] As defined by Annex 1, Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/74 of 17 January 2022, as amended by Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2023/1638 of 14 August 2023 (OJ L204, 17.8.2023, p. 9): https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dec_impl/2022/75/oj/eng

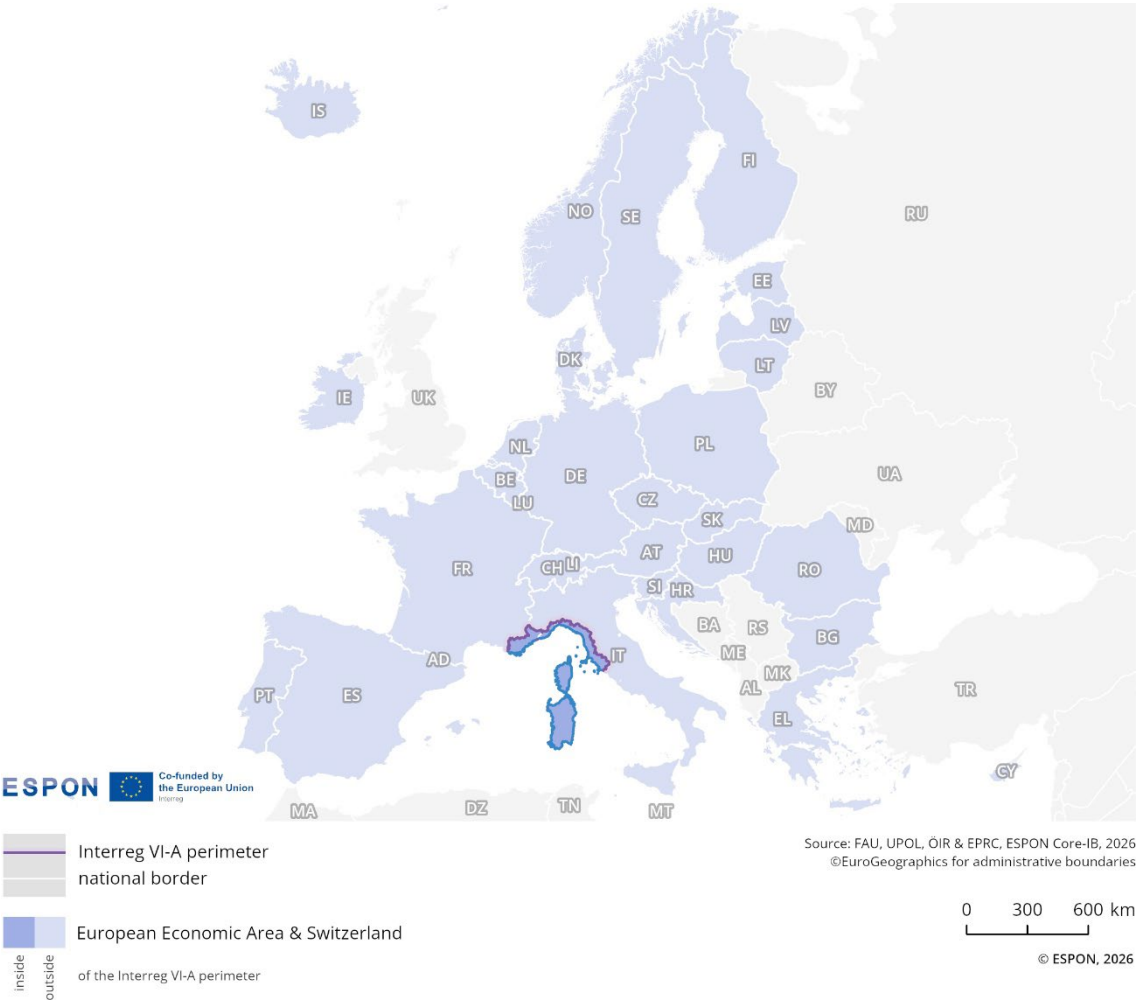
Within the ESPON framework, the CROSSGOV project (Governance mechanisms for cross-border functional areas) has been implemented in parallel to Core-IB. The CROSSGOV hub[2] provides a comprehensive platform for interactive data exploration, and selected data have been incorporated into this study.

Additional project-related information can be explored separately in the Core-IB **Final Report**. Further technical information on this border profile can be found in a separate **Technical Annex** providing an overview of data and methods.

1.2 Presentation of the border area

The Interreg VI-A border region 'Italy–France (Maritime)' covers the area between western Italy and south-eastern France (see Figure 1.1). In Italy, the programme area includes most of the regions of Sardinia, Liguria, and Tuscany, located in insular, north-western, and central Italy, comprising a total of 14 NUTS3 regions. In France, it covers parts of the regions of Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur and Corsica, encompassing a total of 4 NUTS3 regions.

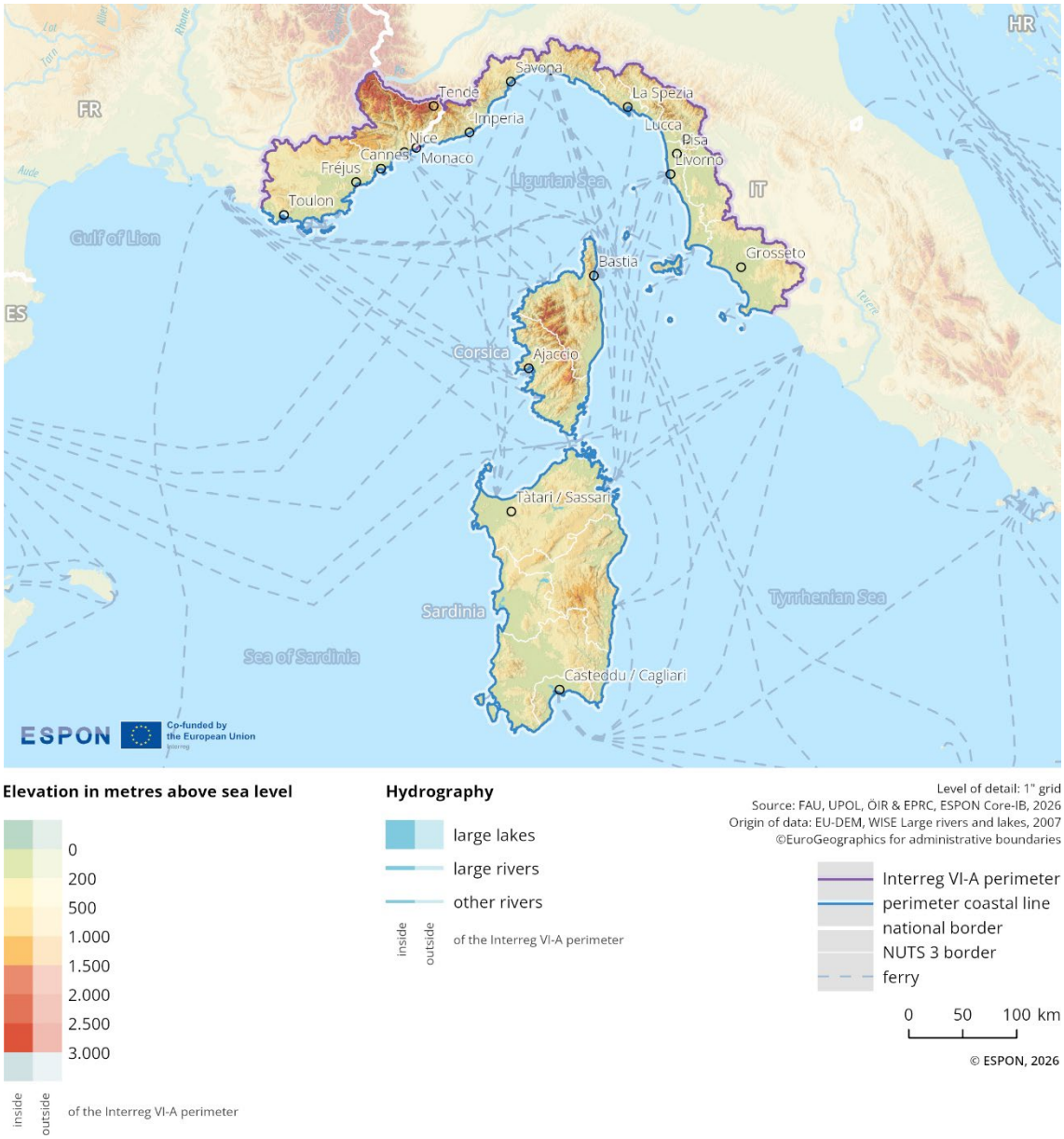
Figure 1.1: Overview map



[2] ESPON CROSSGOV Hub: https://gis-portal.espon.eu/arcgis/apps/experiencebuilder/experience/?id=27e3b86ef44441b08793a2239c370607

Figure 1.2 illustrates the region's geomorphological features and the perimeter of the current Interreg VI-A programme area. Located in the north-western Mediterranean, the area consists fully of coastal and insular regions. The area is characterised by a highly indented coastline, numerous islands and diverse marine and coastal ecosystems.

Figure 1.2: Geographical features and characteristics[3]



Mountain ranges such as the Maritime Alps and the northern and central Apennines dominate the inland areas, creating steep gradients between the coast and the interior. The rugged terrain of Corsica and northern Sardinia also contributes to this landscape. These gradients result in narrow coastal plains, steep river valleys and rapid changes in elevation over short distances.

Spanning approximately 59,660 km², the border region exhibits significant geographical and geological diversity. The coastal zones range from sandy beaches and dune systems to rocky cliffs and limestone

[3] The selection of displayed settlements is based on factors such as size, administrative or cultural importance, transport links, regional coverage and cartographic clarity. This is part of a standard cartographic generalisation process with no pre-set thresholds, and the main aim is to provide orientation.

promontories, and the marine areas feature seagrass meadows, coralligenous reefs and deep submarine canyons, particularly in the Ligurian Sea and Corsican Channel.

The hydrographic network is dominated by short, steep rivers such as the Magra, Arno, Var and Golo, which often exhibit flooding characteristics and play a crucial role in shaping the coastline and transporting sediment.

The programme area is also part of a seismically active zone, influenced by the interaction between the African and Eurasian tectonic plates, particularly along the Tyrrhenian and Ligurian margins. In parts of Liguria and Tuscany, karst phenomena and coastal erosion processes are prominent, further contributing to the area's complex geomorphology.

2 Cross-border analysis

2.1 Territorial dimension

The territorial dimension refers to the spatial characteristics and dynamics of a border region. It specifically depicts how factors such as population density, demographic trends, changes in settlement areas and accessibility influence and reflect cross-border integration.

2.1.1 Population and settlements

This sub-dimension illustrates the population characteristics and land use dynamics of the border region, based on analysed indicators. It examines population density, population development by age groups, and changes in settlement areas. The analysis highlights whether the border functions as a catalyst for integration or as a barrier. Comparisons with the respective countries and the EU average provide context for understanding the region's dynamics.

2.1.1.1 Population density

Indicator description

Population density refers to the number of residents per km². This indicator shows the number of inhabitants per square kilometre in a 1x1 km grid. It therefore provides information on the distribution and concentration of population across the region and allows to identify agglomerations of high density. In particular agglomerations at or close to the border area of key interest.

- **Source**: Eurostat
- **Temporal coverage**: 2021
- **Unit**: Inhabitants/km^2

Please refer to the technical annex for more information.

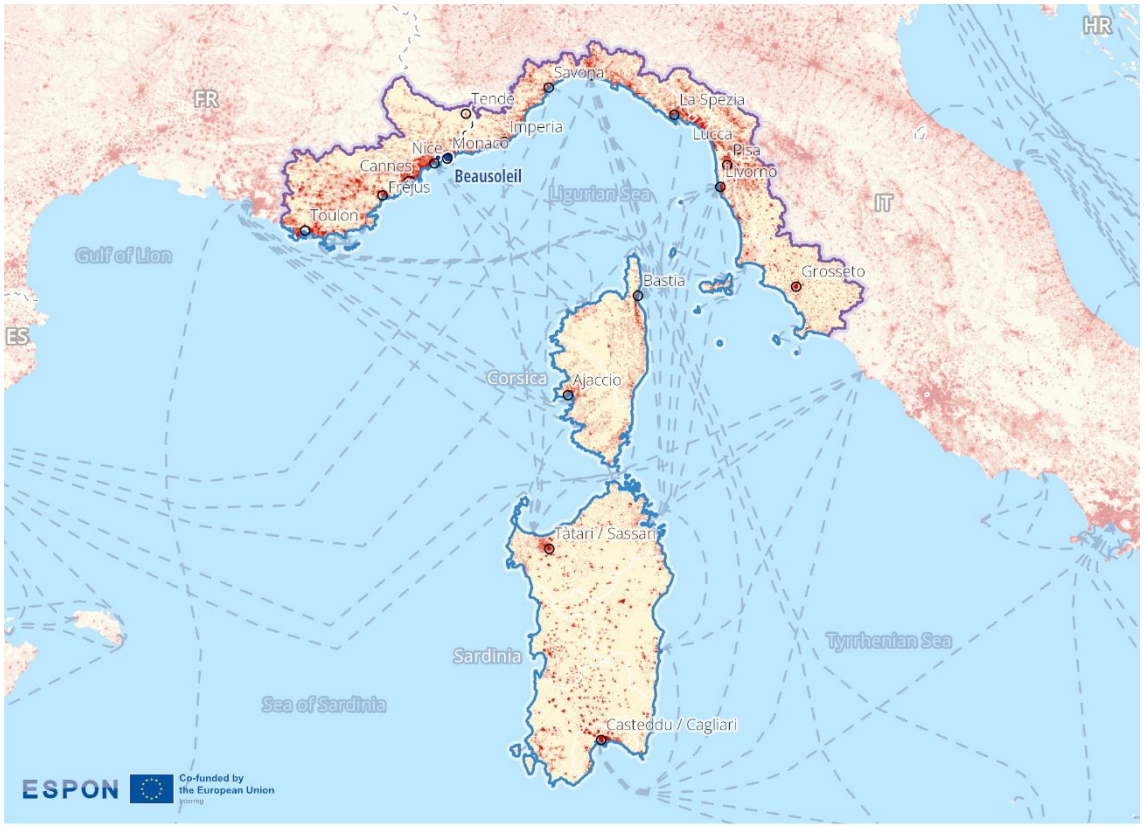
The border region includes 14 urban centres with a population of over 30,000 inhabitants. The map indicates that France's population is concentrated on the coast around Toulon, Cannes, and Nice. The Italian coast is also populated, especially around the towns of Livorno and La Spezia. The density decreases in the southern area of the Italian mainland around Grosseto. Regarding the islands, there are populated areas around Ajaccio on the island of Corsica and Sassari and Cagliari on the island of Sardinia.

The population density in this whole border region is 116 inhabitants/km², which slightly exceeds the EU average of 109 inhabitants/km² (according to EUROSTAT), and it is therefore lower than the aggregated average of all EU evaluated border regions, which is 125 inhabitants/km².

The part of the border region in Italy has an average population density of around 166 inhabitants/km². It is therefore lower than the national average population density in Italy (193 inhabitants/km²).

The part of the border region in France has an average population density of around 94 inhabitants/km². It is therefore lower than the national average population density in France (102 inhabitants/km²).

Figure 2.1: Spatial patterns of population distribution



Number of inhabitants/km² (2021)

- 1–50
- 51–100
- 101–200
- 201–500
- 501–1,000
- 1,001–5,000
- 5,001–56,158
- no population

inside / outside of the Interreg VI-A perimeter

Twin cities (2025)

cities/towns with 10,000+ inhabitants not further than 5km from another one accross a country border

Border cities (2025)

other cities/towns with 10,000+ inhabitants not further than 10km from another one accross a country border

Level of detail: 1km grid
Source: FAU, UPOL, ÖIR & EPRC, ESPON Core-IB, 2026
Origin of data: GISCO Population Grid (version 1.3), 2021
OpenStreetMap, 2025
©EuroGeographics for administrative boundaries

- Interreg VI-A perimeter
- perimeter coastal line
- national border
- NUTS 3 border
- ferry

0 50 100 km

2.1.1.2 Population development (by age groups)

Indicator description

Population development refers to the percentage change in population at regional level between 2014 and 2024. The data reflects on the total population, as well as on the age groups 0-14, 15-64 and 65+.

- **Source**: Annual Regional Database of the European Commission (ARDECO)
- **Temporal coverage**: 2014-2024
- **Unit**: Change in %

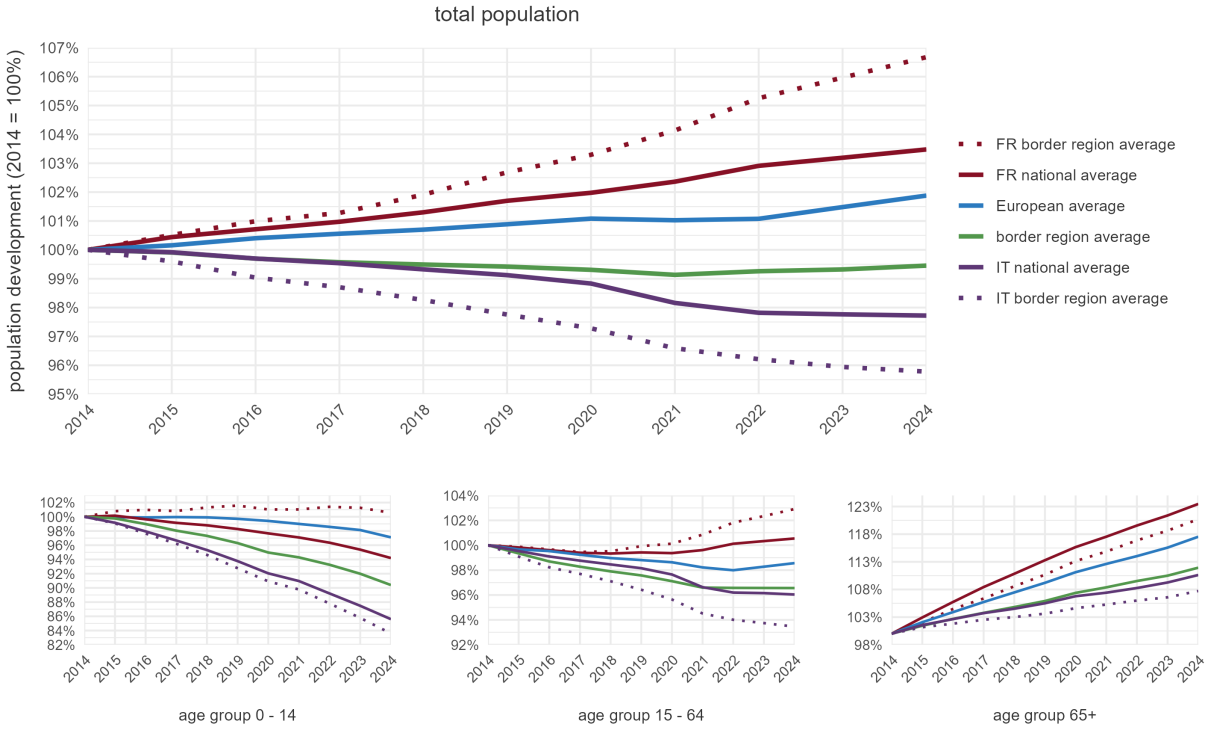
Please refer to the technical annex for more information.

Population in the Italy–France (Maritime) region in 2024 (Eurostat): 7.2 million inhabitants, of which:

- 63.9% in the Italian border territory (4.6 million inhabitants)
- 36.1% in the French border territory (2.6 million inhabitants)
- Region within the border region with the highest population increase since 2014: Corse-du-Sud (FRM01) at 12.4%

Figure 2.2 shows the population change in the Italy–France (Maritime) region between 2014 and 2024. During this period, the region has experienced a slight decline of -0.5%, with the highest growth rate observed on the French side.

Figure 2.2: Population development (2014=100)



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Population development across the border region is moderately below the European average (-0.5% vs. 1.9%) and also moderately below the average development in all border regions (-0.5% vs 1.5%). While

the Italian border area shows a decrease both in border and national averages (-4.2% vs. -2.3%), the French border area shows slightly higher growth than the national average (6.7% vs. 3.5%).

In terms of the development of individual age groups in the border region, the population aged 0–14 experienced a marked decrease of -9.6%, while the working-age population (15–64) showed a slight decrease of -3.4%. The population aged 65 and over underwent a notable increase of 11.9%.

2.1.1.3 Change in settlement areas

Indicator description

The indicator shows the relative change in settlement areas per LAU in the border region. It considers changes in land cover, from non-artificial areas (such as agricultural, forest and seminatural areas, wetlands and water bodies) to artificial areas (such as urban, industrial, construction sites) between 2012 and 2018. This indicator has to be viewed alongside population development in particular.

- **Source/method of retrieval**: The indicator is retrieved via processing of raster data from CORINE Land cover. The raster information is crossed with Local Administrative Units (LAU) to calculate a change in %.
- **Temporal coverage**: 2012-2018
- **Unit**: Change in %

Please refer to the technical annex for more information.

Figure 2.3 illustrates the change in settlement areas at municipal level between 2012 and 2018. Overall, the map shows similar patterns of change in settlement areas on both sides of the Italian-French border. Changes are evident in particular around the urban centres of Livorno, Grosseto and Tàtari / Sassari. Toulon, Monaco, Savona, La Spezia, Ajaccio, Casteddu / Cagliari and the city of Livorno show no significant changes during the observed time period. Growth in settlement areas is particularly evident in the coastal area around Toulon as well as on the coast in Tàtari / Sassari. In close proximity to the national borders, the settlement area increases mainly in the coastal areas around the Italian cities Toulun, Livorno, Tàtari / Sassari and Grosseto. On the French side, the settlement area increases along some parts of the coast. The map also reflects the topographical characteristics of the border region, with significant changes in settlement areas visible along the Mediterranean coast.

Figure 2.3: Settlement area dynamics

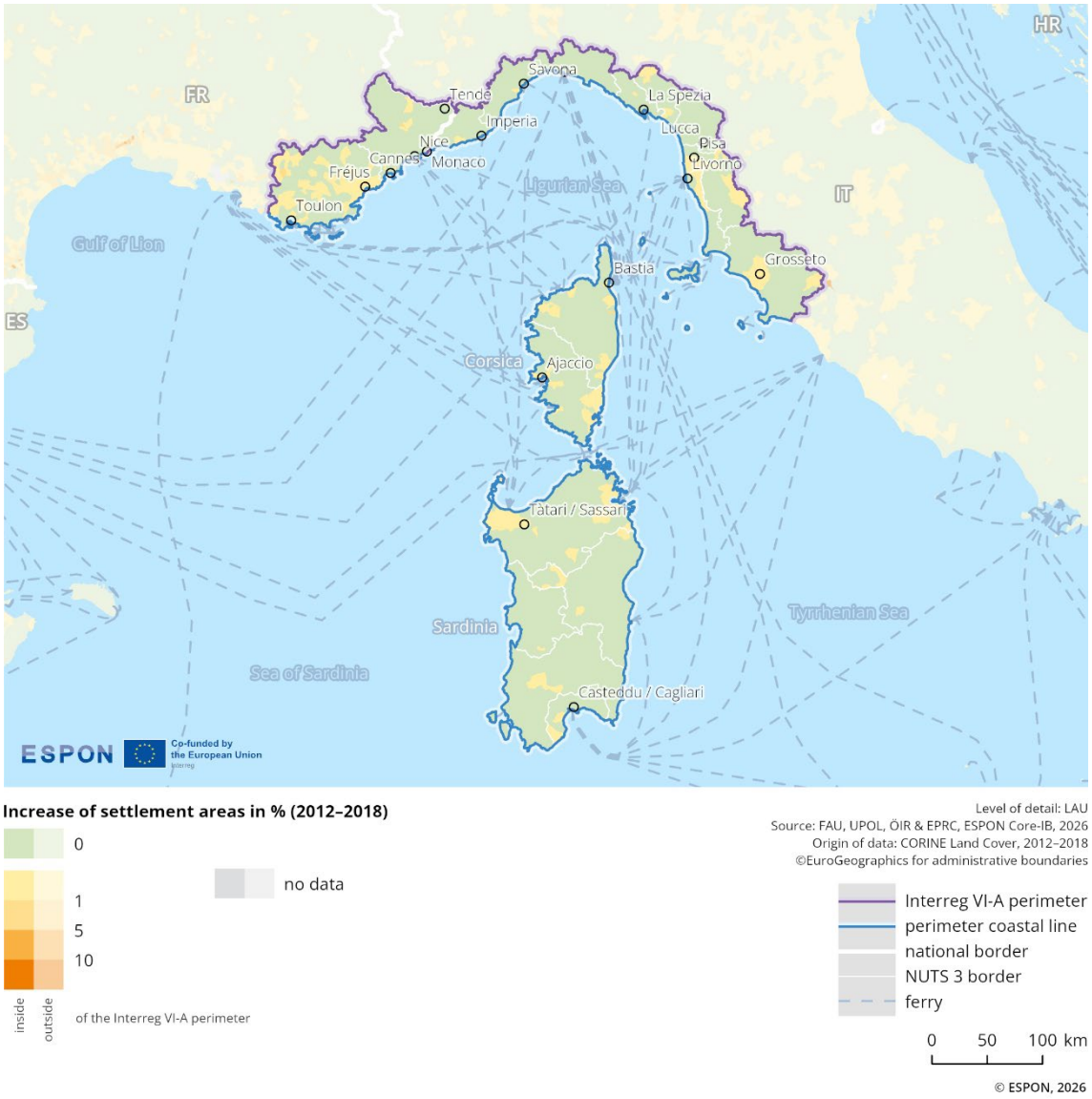
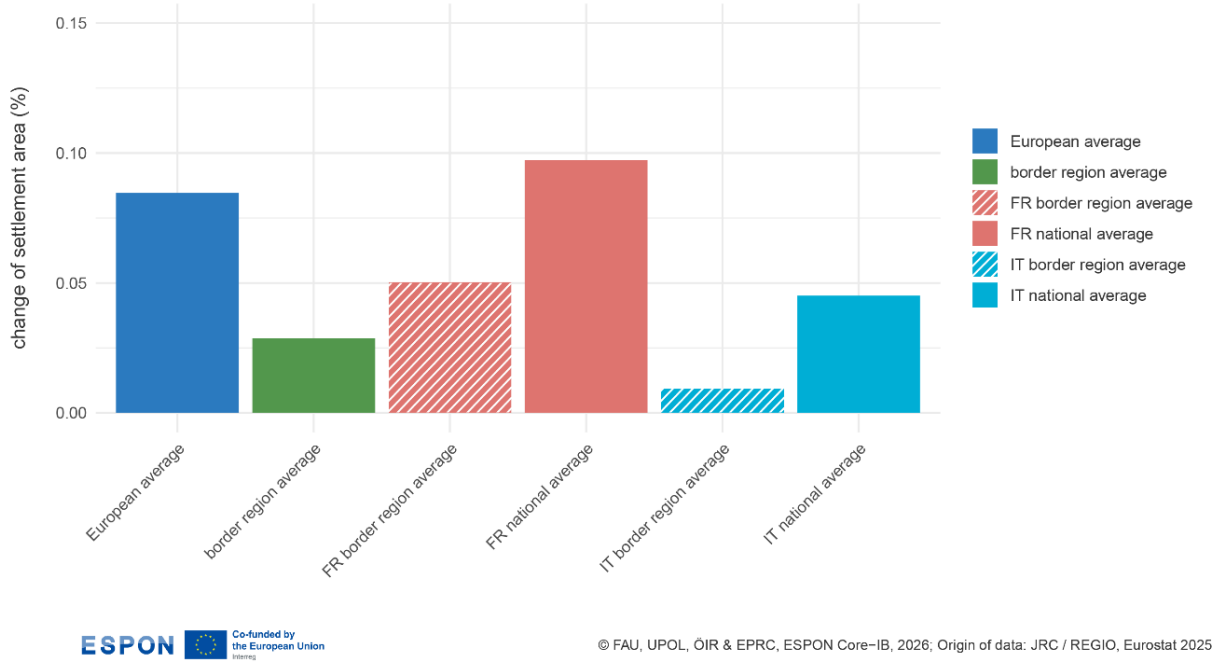


Figure 2.4 presents the change in settlement areas from a comparative perspective. The average for the Italy-France (Maritime) programme area is lower than the overall European average, which includes both EU member states and the EFTA countries Switzerland, Liechtenstein, and Norway. The French values are higher than the Italian ones, which applies for both the national average as well as the border regions. The French and Italian border-regional averages lie below the national French and Italian averages.

In general, the programme area shows a relatively dynamic settlement development. The need for an integrated approach to spatial development is obvious. Spatial development has to balance the various demands on land use (e.g., residential, commercial, tourism, transport, agriculture, and nature conservation), and this requires ongoing coordination and exchange, also across the border.

Figure 2.4: Change in settlement areas (2012-2018) (comparison)



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2.1.2 Accessibility of the border area

This sub-dimension illustrates the functional travel connections that already exist in the border region. It examines average cross-border travel times for different modes of transport and cross-border catchment areas based on mobility flows. It also considers travel times to and from border crossings. The analysis shows whether mobility flows are integrated between border regions or if the border hampers mobility.

2.1.2.1 Comparative quality of selected cross-border connections

Indicator description

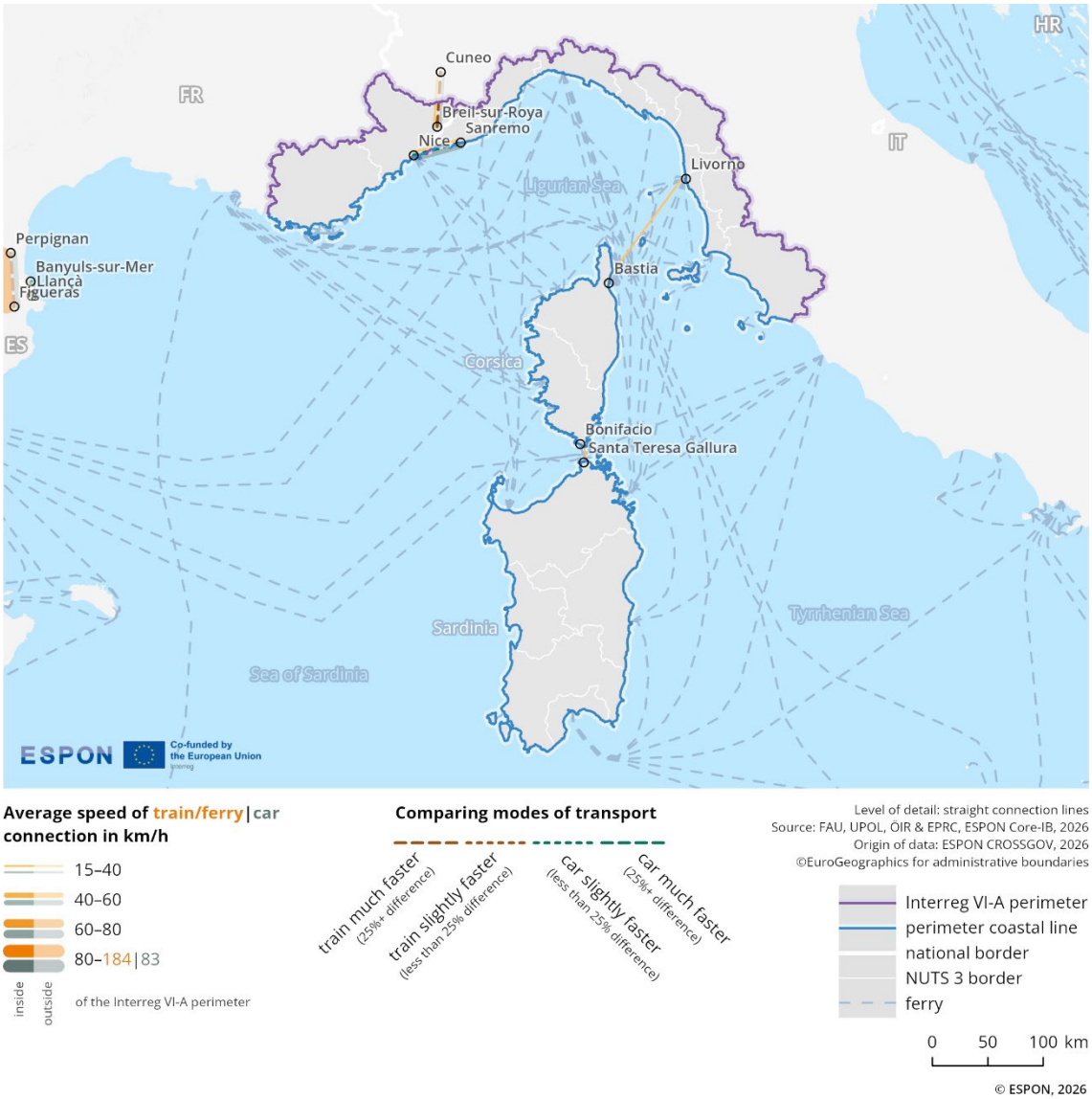
The indicator presents a comparative perspective for different modes of transport (public and private) and their average travel speed (so-called space-time-lines). As such it helps to understand and interpret accessibility patterns along the border and highlights the comparative quality of selected cross-border connections.

- **Source/method of retrieval**: Average number and speed of rail connections/ferries, average speed of car connections between selected cities and towns in border regions using Rail Travel Sites, Google Maps, luftlinie.org, Direct Ferries, local ferry companies
- **Temporal coverage**: 2025 (first quarter)
- **Unit**: km/h

Please refer to the technical annex for more information.

Cross-border accessibility shapes cross-border interactions. Figure 2.5 illustrates this using a "space-time-line" map, which shows parts of a European overview of car, train and ferry travel times in the Italy-France (Maritime) border region. This visualisation enables an assessment of transport quality by highlighting differences between public (train, ferry) and private (car) transport modes.

Figure 2.5: Comparative quality of selected cross-border connections



The selection of cities and connections covered is based on a set of criteria applied throughout Europe within the ESPON CROSSGOV project[4]. These criteria include the presence of a railway station, population size, distance to the border, node hub and functionality. The thickness of the lines (orange for trains and ferries, grey for cars) indicates the average speed of connections in km/h, with thicker lines representing faster connections. Dotted lines in-between reflect the indexed ratio between train and car speeds. A brown colour scale (values below 100) denotes that trains are faster than cars along the specific route, while a green scale (values above 100) indicates the opposite.

The selected connections within the programme area include Nice–Sanremo and the ferry lines Livorno–Bastia and Bonifacio–Santa Teresa Gallura. On the Nice–Sanremo route, car travel outperforms the train connection in terms of speed. Both ferry routes are, with less than 40 km/h, quite slow[5].

[4] ESPON CROSSGOV Atlas, see Storymap on 'Space-time-lines': https://gis-portal.espon.eu/arcgis/apps/storymaps/collections/345c978adf784ad-fac30c16b90219d35?item=4

[5] For more information on European ferry routes see this online map: https://maritime-forum.ec.europa.eu/contents/map-week-ferry-routes_en

2.1.2.2 Cross-border catchment area based on mobility flows

Indicator description

This indicator measures the movement of people across borders. The density of cross-border movements by Twitter/X users is displayed on a grid cell covering an area of 20x20 km. The indicator does not differentiate between reasons for movement.

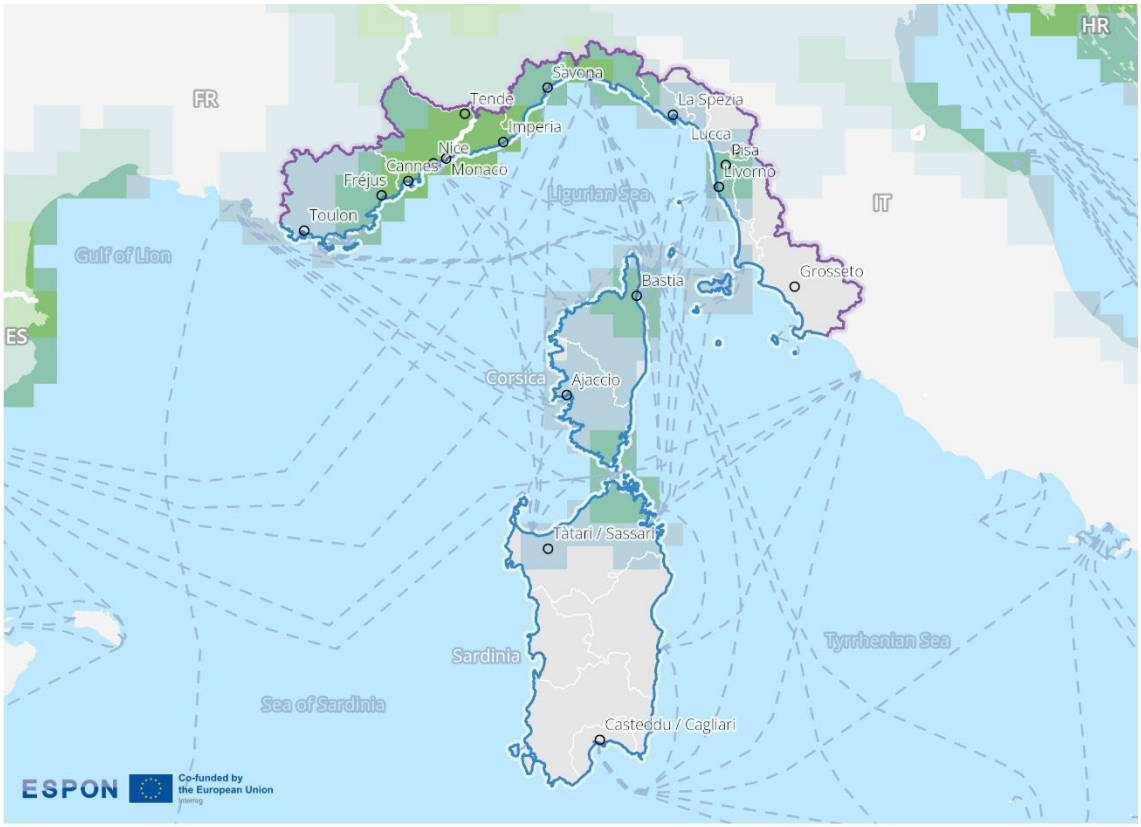
- **Source/method of retrieval**: The indicator is calculated based on Twitter (currently X) data. The digital footprint of individual users provides information about physical mobility flows and is used to calculate cross-border catchment areas of different intensity.
- **Temporal coverage**: 2013-2023
- **Unit**: n/a

Please refer to the technical annex for more information.

Figure 2.6 shows the cross-border catchment area in the border region based on mobility flows from 2013 to 2023, highlighting estimated cross-border mobility intensity across 3 different quartiles. The first quartile represents the 25% highest mobility intensity shown in dark green, the second quartile represents 25-50% coloured in green-blue, and the third quartile represents 50-75% in light blue.

The intensity of cross-border mobility of people within this cross-border region is variable. The highest mobility intensity is recorded only in the vicinity of the city of Monaco. Moderate mobility intensity is observed east of the city of Toulon, around the cities of Savona and Livorno, and on the northern and southern edges of the island of Corsica. Low mobility intensity is found near the cities of Toulon, La Spezia, Ajaccio, and in the northern part of Sardinia around the city of Sassari. In the remaining Italian parts of the region, no intensity is recorded or data are unavailable.

Figure 2.6: Cross-border mobility intensity



Estimated cross-border mobility intensity (2013-2023)

high
moderate
low

inside / outside of the Interreg VI-A perimeter

Level of detail: 20km aggregated grid
Source: FAU, UPOL, ÖIR & EPRC, ESPON Core-IB, 2026
Origin of data: ESPON CROSSGOV, 2026
©EuroGeographics for administrative boundaries

Interreg VI-A perimeter
perimeter coastal line
national border
NUTS 3 border
ferry

0 50 100 km

2.1.2.3 Cross-border travel-time accessibility

Indicator description

The indicator shows the time it takes to travel from any location within a region to the next border crossing, using grid data and subsequent categorisations into accessibility groups of 30, 60 and 90 minutes. It reflects the accessibility in cross-border areas, considering road transport. The indicator can describe the quality and speed of road connections and thus spatial reach of the cross-border services.

- **Source/method of retrieval**: Based on the OpenStreetMap road network, the travel time to the border is calculated for a grid of the border are. Based on this, areas are calculated within which border crossings can be reached below thresholds of 30, 60 and 90 minutes. As additional visual element, key services pharmacies, doctors, hospitals and shops (retrieved from the ESPON PROFECY project) are displayed and categorised into the accessibility groups.
- **Temporal coverage**: 2025 (first quarter, for accessibility data), 2021 (for service facility data)
- **Unit**: Minutes

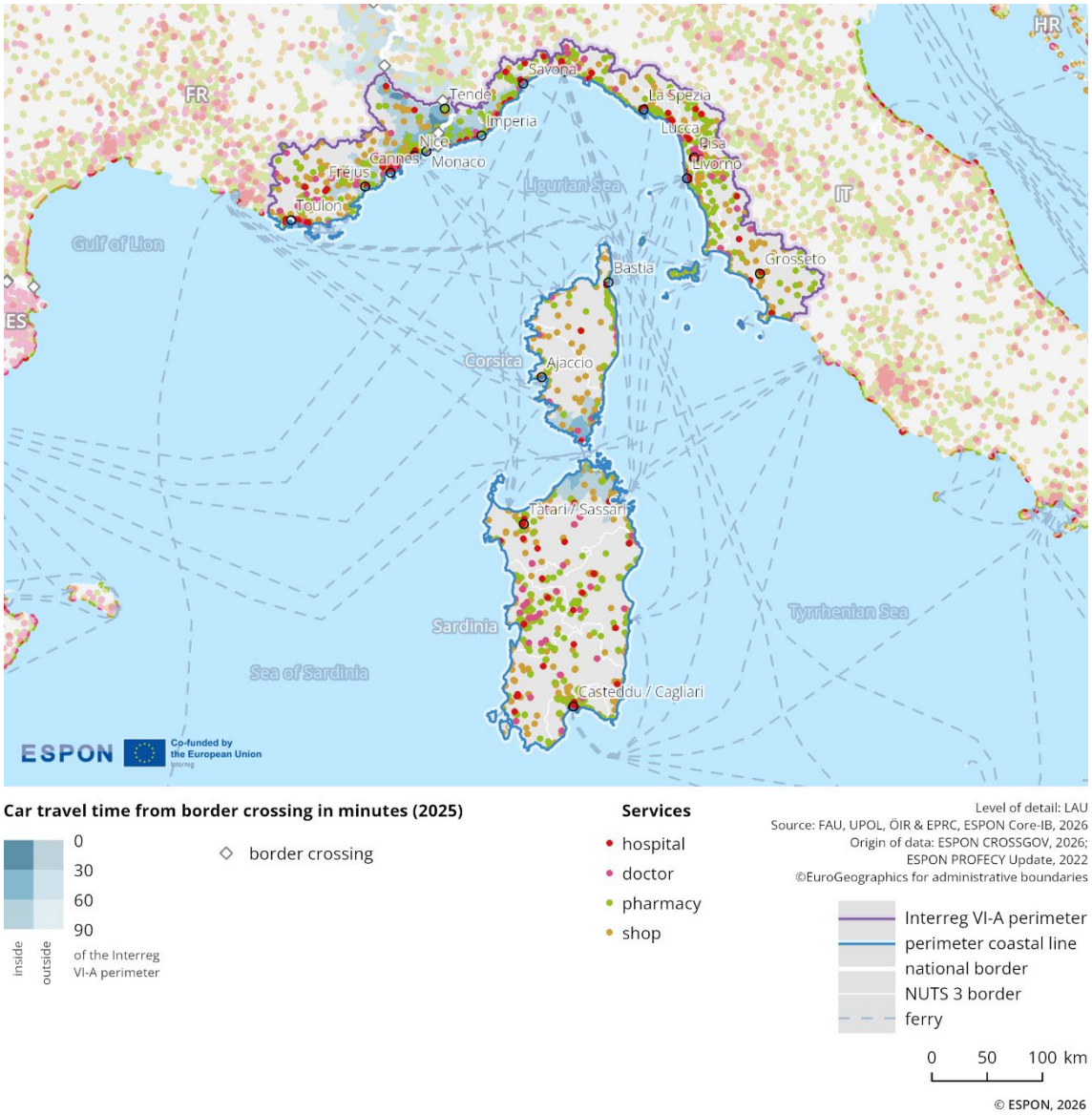
Please refer to the technical annex for more information.

Figure 2.7 illustrates cross-border travel time accessibility in the Interreg area, showing the time distance from the national border in 2025 The legend indicates 3 travel time categories in minutes (30, 60, 90) represented by different shades of blue. In addition, it marks the location of services, including hospitals, doctors (general practitioners), pharmacies, and shops (supermarkets and conventient stores), with distinct coloured symbols.

The map shows that this maritime cross-border region has limited road connections. Only a short border is on the mainland, where 2 small zones belong to the 30-minute travel time category. The next small region, located on both sides of the border, falls within a 60- to 90-minute travel time. The rest of the mainland is covered by the category above 90 minutes of travel time. Concerning islands, there are 2 travel time categories, 60 and 90 minutes. They exist between the southern part of the island of Corsica and the northern part of Sardinia.

Services such as shops, hospitals, doctors, and pharmacies are more frequent on the mainland than on the islands. The services are primarily located along the coast. The highest concentration of services is in the cities of Toulon, Monaco, and Livorno. The number of services on the island of Sardinia is higher than in Corsica.

Figure 2.7: Travel-time accessibility from border crossings



2.1.3 Key messages on the territorial dimension

The Italy-France (Maritime) programme area includes very diverse types of regions, i.e. mainland territories as well as islands (notably Corsica and Sardinia), thereby featuring a wide range of topographic characteristics. Similarly, this influences the localisation of human settlements and the population density. Coastal areas in mainland France and Italy are generally quite densely populated, around cities, although the average population density is lower than both national averages. The population development in the cross-border region remains quite stable, with increasing numbers in French territories and decreasing in Italian regions. Population ageing is noteworthy as the population share of 65+ years has been sharply increasing, especially in the French regions of this cross-border area. Settlement areas have particularly increased in the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region as well as in the southern part of Corsica and northern part of Sardinia.

Transport and accessibility, notably between mainland (Italy and France) and the island of Corsica and Sardinia exist. Maritime transport is however relatively slow and heavily marked by seasonality (for passenger/tourist transport). This is reflected in the moderate to limited cross-border mobility, which is mainly observed at the mainland border between France and Italy.

Similarly, services such as shops, hospitals, doctors, and pharmacies are more frequent on the mainland than on the islands. These services are primarily located along the coast. The number of services on the island of Sardinia is higher than in Corsica.

2.2 Economic dimension

The economic dimension includes analyses of gross domestic product, labour market conditions, competitiveness, and key infrastructure and housing indicators. The aim is to illustrate the impact of the border on economic performance, whether it acts as a barrier or a bridge, and the extent to which integration is supported by labour mobility, remote working, and infrastructure connectivity.

2.2.1 Gross Domestic Product

This sub-dimension illustrates the economic situation of the border region by analysing gross domestic product (GDP). It shows economic development within the border region and how this has changed over time. Comparisons with the respective countries and the EU average provide important context for understanding the region's dynamics.

2.2.1.1 Gross domestic product per capita at current market prices

Indicator description

The indicator shows the regional GDP/capita in current prices and its development over the past years. It highlights structural differences and similarities between the border region and the respective national figures as well as the European average. Furthermore, it highlights patterns within the border region, although has to be interpreted with care in the case of a strong presence of commuters.

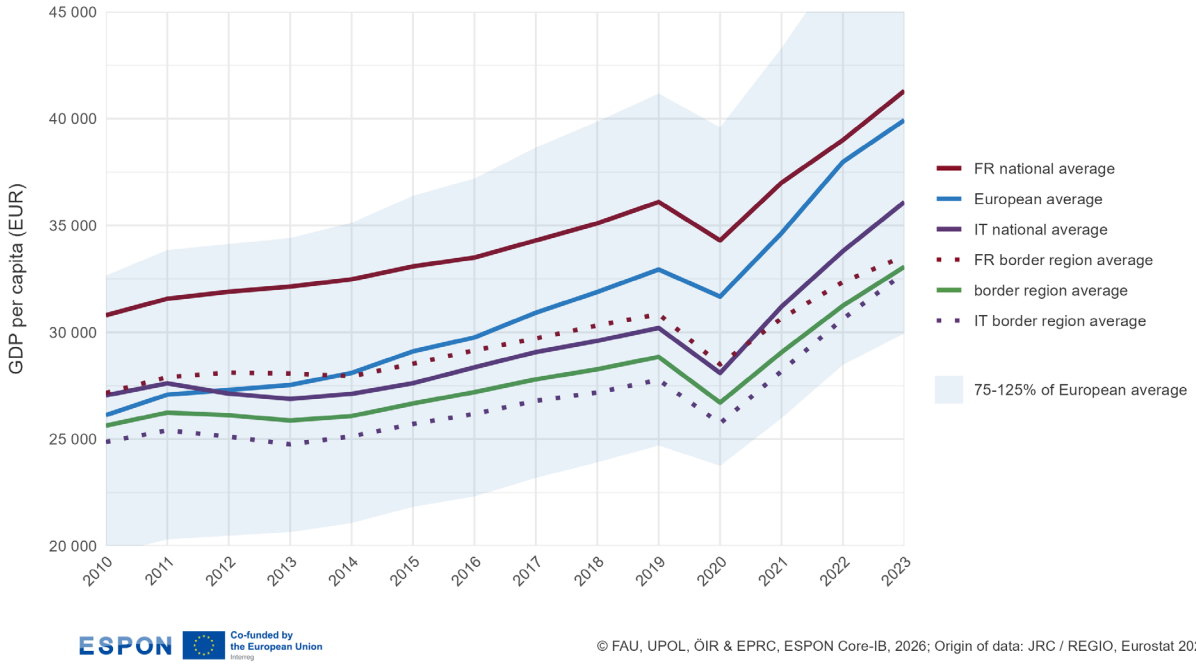
- **Source**: Eurostat, Annual Regional Database of the European Commission (ARDECO)
- **Temporal coverage**: 2010-2023
- **Unit**: Euro per capita

Please refer to the technical annex for more information.

The analysed area shows a GDP/capita value of 86,3% of the EU average in 2022 and 87,7% of the average in European border regions in general. The region marks a 20,3% increase of GDP per capita in the border region between 2014 and 2022[6]. This corresponds to a 15,4 percentage points lower increase of GDP per capita in the border region compared to the EU average. Furthermore, this corresponds to 14,9 percentage points lower increase of GDP per capita in the border region compared to the average of European border regions. Both the Italian and the French GDP per capita values for the border regions are below their perspective national average. Same is true for the GDP per capita growth rate. Italy and France both have one of the lower GDP growth rates since 2014, but the border regions still display an even lower growth rate. For the Italian border region, it is 13,1% and for the French border region 19,8% below the EU average since 2014.

[6] Percentage changes are calculated using Eurostat data to ensure harmonised statistics from official sources. The latest year for which full coverage of all European regions is available on Eurostat is 2022. For visualisation purposes, ARDECO data has been used to enable longer time series to be visualised by filling the official dataset's existing gaps with model-based estimates. Therefore, slight deviations between the calculation and visualisation are possible.

Figure 2.8: Gross domestic product at current market prices (per capita)



ESPON Co-funded by the European Union Interreg

2.2.2 Labour market and commuting

This sub-dimension highlights the existing and potential functional links within the labour market of the border region. It examines the employment situation and commuting patterns, as well as the role of telework agreements, and considers developments over time based on analysed indicators. The analysis identifies factors that facilitate or hamper cross-border labour market integration.[7]

2.2.2.1 Share of employment

Indicator description

This indicator shows the share of employees in the population aged 15 to 64. Although it does not fully capture entrepreneurs, marginal employees, or civil servants, this is an important statistic for understanding general labour market patterns. It covers 2 aspects: first, high values can result from a high proportion of the resident population being employed. Second, high values can result from a high number of incoming commuters (from other NUTS3 regions within the country or from neighbouring countries). The same arguments apply to low values: they may indicate low levels of employment, or they may result from high shares of outgoing commuters. Values of more than 100% are possible, since the number of incoming commuters can exceed the number of inhabitants aged 15 to 64 (including both domestic and cross-border commuters).

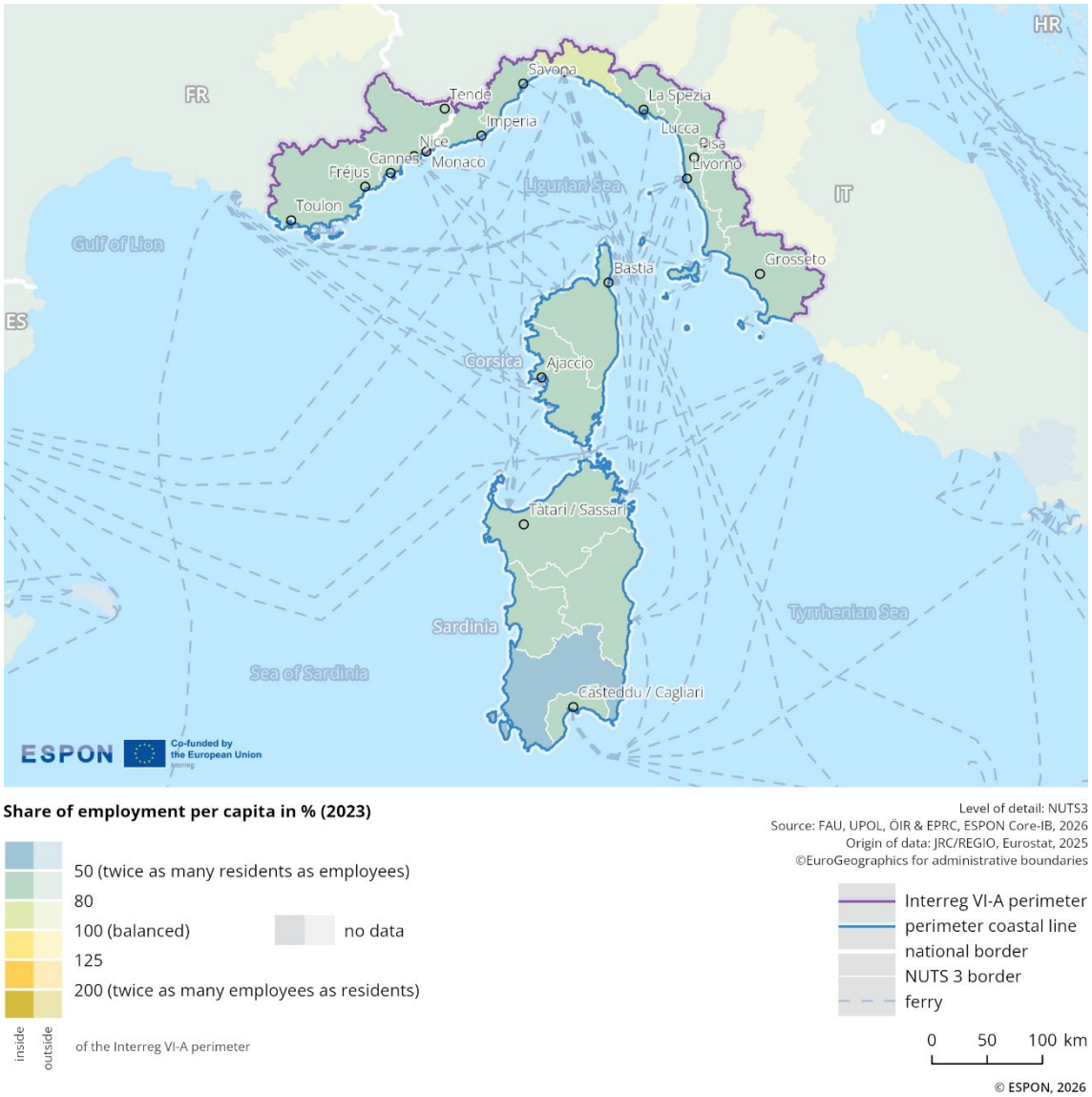
- **Source**: Eurostat, Annual Regional Database of the European Commission (ARDECO)
- **Temporal coverage**: 2014-2023
- **Unit**: Share in %

Please refer to the technical annex for more information.

Figure 2.9 illustrates the share of employment per capita in the population aged 15 to 64 in 2023. The data are categorised into ranges from below 50% (twice as many residents aged 15 to 64 as employees) to above 200% (twice as many employees as residents aged 15 to 64), with 100% representing a balanced ratio. Blue or green-coloured regions indicate more residents aged 15 to 64 than employees, while yellow regions indicate more employees than residents aged 15 to 64.

[7] See also: European Commission 2024: Cross-Border Regional Labour Market Analysis, https://op.europa.eu/s/AazM

Figure 2.9: Employment share[8]



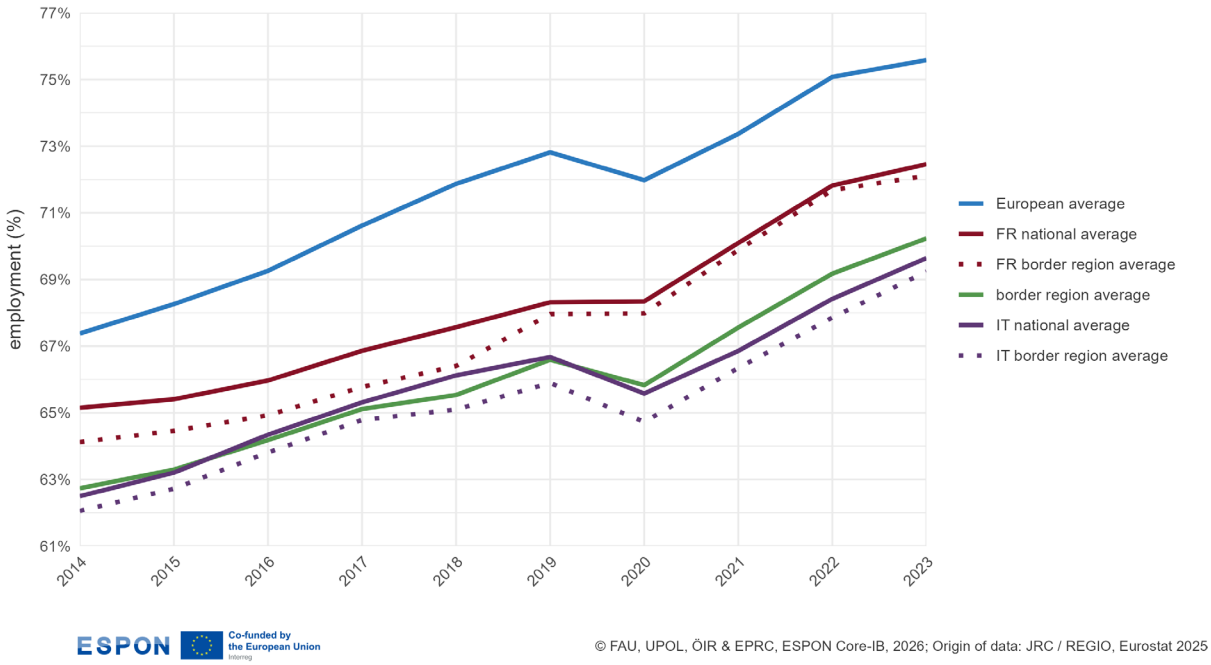
The share of employment in this border region has remained stable, with the regional average reaching 70.2% in 2023, representing an increase of 7.5 percentage points since 2014. In most parts of the region, indicator values range from 50% to 80%. Only in the wider area around the city of Cagliari are values below 50%. When comparing the share of employment in this border region with different averages, the following can be observed (see Figure 2.10):

- Compared to the European average, values in the cross-border region are lower by 5.4 percentage points; in 2014, the difference was 4.7 percentage points.
- Compared to the Italian national average, values in the cross-border region are higher by 0.6 percentage points; in 2014, the difference was 0.2 percentage points.
- Compared to the French national average, values in the cross-border region are lower by 2.2 percentage points; in 2014, the difference was 2.4 percentage points.
- The French border area records values 0.4 percentage points below the French national average, while the Italian border area records values 0.4 percentage points below the Italian national average.

[8] Note: In this map, 'residents' refers to the population aged 15 to 64.

› Compared to the average of all cross-border regions, values are lower by 4.2 percentage points; in 2014, the difference was 3.6 percentage points.

Figure 2.10: Employment share over time (comparison)



ESPON Co-funded by the European Union Interreg

2.2.2.2 Share of working-age population

Indicator description

This indicator shows the share of people aged 15 to 64 in the total population, reflecting the potential working-age population. The population counted includes all residents who live in the country permanently, excluding foreign students and military personnel. Using the 15–64 age range is a standard European statistical proxy, since differences in retirement age or labour participation across countries cannot be captured systematically. It allows for regional differentiation of potential workforce throughout the border region.

- **Source**: Eurostat, Annual Regional Database of the European Commission (ARDECO)
- **Temporal coverage**: 2014-2023
- **Unit**: Share in %

Please refer to the technical annex for more information.

Figure 2.11 shows the evolution of the share of the working-age population in the Italy–France (Maritime) cross-border region between 2014 and 2023. In 2023, the programme area shows an average working-age population share of 60.8%, compared to the European average of 63.9% and 63.7% for the average of all cross-border regions.

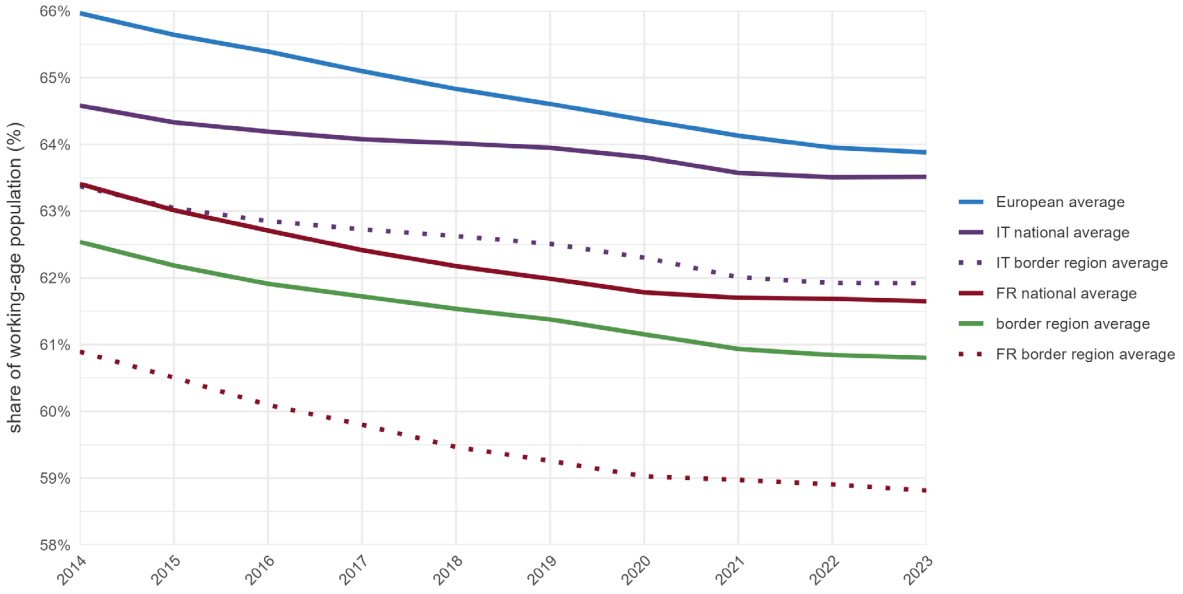
The share of the working-age population in the whole cross-border region is moderately higher than the French border average (58.8%), and slightly lower than the Italian border average (61.9%).

Compared to national levels, it is slightly lower than the French national average (61.7%), and moderately lower than the Italian national average (63.5%).

The programme area experienced a moderate 1.7 percentage point decrease in the share of working-age population between 2014 (62.5%) and 2023 (60.8%). This decline is similar to the European average, which dropped by 2.1 percentage points in the same period. All areas in the region show a declining trend, with the decrease being more pronounced in the French parts (-2.1 percentage points at the border and -1.7 percentage points at the national level) than in the Italian parts (-1.5 percentage points at the border and -1.1 percentage points at the national level).

The Italy–France (Maritime) cross-border region experienced a moderate overall decline in the share of the working-age population between 2014 and 2023. In 2023, the region remained clearly below both the European and cross-border averages, with slightly more favourable values on the Italian side.

Figure 2.11: Share of working-age population over time (comparison)



ESPON Co-funded by the European Union Interreg

2.2.2.3 Employment by sector

Indicator description

The indicator differentiates the number of jobs in a region by sector. This indicator focuses on workplace-based employment, providing insight into the employment landscape of a region. The dataset can be disaggregated according to "10-sector" NACE (Nomenclature statistique des activités économiques dans la Communauté européenne) classifications, allowing for detailed analysis of employment distribution across various industries.

- **Source**: Eurostat, Annual Regional Database of the European Commission (ARDECO)
- **Temporal coverage**: 2014-2023
- **Unit**: Share in %

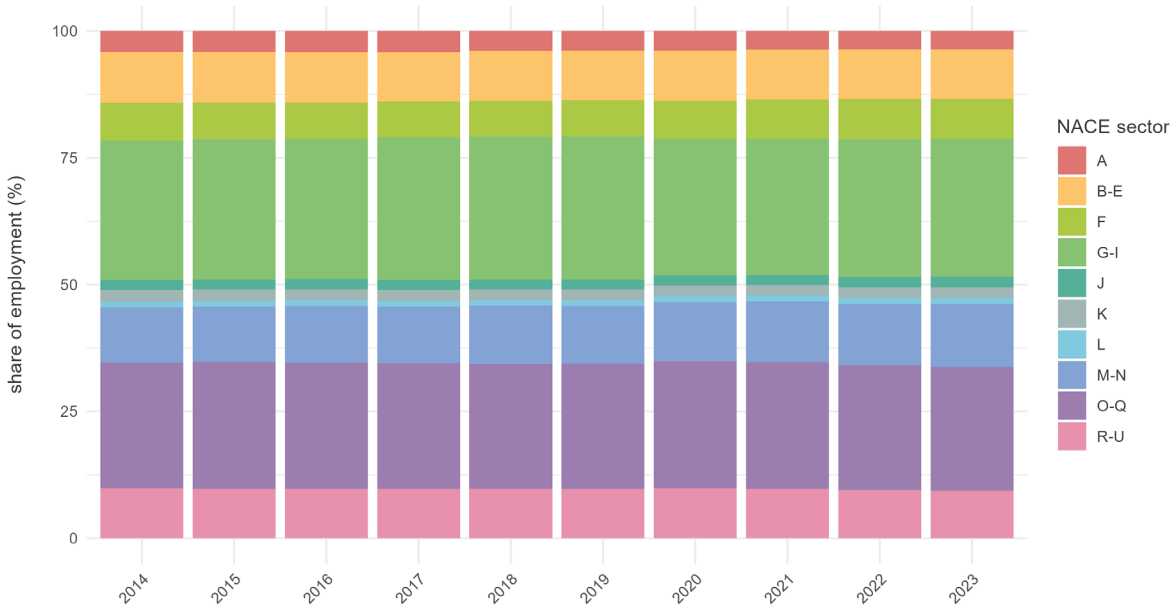
Please refer to the technical annex for more information.

Figure 2.12 illustrates the relative number of jobs in the border area differentiated by sectors. It shows where jobs are located (not where employed persons live). This workplace-based indicator offers insight into the employment structure of a region.

The dataset uses a '10-sector' classification based on NACE categories. The sectoral breakdown is as follows:

- A: Agriculture, forestry and fishing
- B-E: Mining and quarrying (B), Manufacturing (C), Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply (D), Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities (E)
- F: Construction
- G-I: Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles (G), Transportation and storage (H), Accommodation and food service activities (I)
- J: Information and communication
- K: Financial and insurance activities
- L: Real estate activities
- M-N: Professional, scientific and technical activities (M), Administrative and support service activities (N)
- O-Q: Education (O), Human health and social work activities (Q)
- R-U: Arts, entertainment and recreation R), Other service activities (S), Activities of households as employers; undifferentiated goods- and services-producing activities of households for own use (T), Activities of extraterritorial organisations and bodies (U)

Figure 2.12: Employment by sector (comparison)



A: Agriculture, forestry and fishing
B-E: Mining and quarrying (B), Manufacturing (C), Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply (D), Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities (E)
F: Construction
G-I: Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles (G), Transportation and storage (H), Accommodation and food service activities (I)
J: Information and communication
K: Financial and insurance activities
L: Real estate activities
M-N: Professional, scientific and technical activities (M), Administrative and support service activities (N)
O-Q: Education (O), Human health and social work activities (Q)
R-U: Arts, entertainment and recreation (R), Other service activities (S), Activities of households as employers; undifferentiated goods- and services-producing activities of households for own use (T), Activities of extraterritorial organisations and bodies (U)

Between 2014 and 2023, the relative number of jobs in the different sectors remains fairly stable. There is a slight decline in the share of employment in agriculture, forestry and fishing (A), Arts, entertainment and recreation (R), Other service activities (S), Activities of households as employers; undifferentiated goods- and services-producing activities of households for own use (T), and Activities of extraterritorial organisations and bodies (U). Conversely, there is a modest increase in the number of jobs in Professional, scientific and technical activities (M) and Administrative and support service activities (N).

Over the entire period, the sectors with the highest share of available jobs are ´G-I´ (Wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles, Transportation and storage, Accommodation and food service activities), ´M-N´ (Professional, scientific and technical activities, Administrative and support service activities) and ´O-Q´ (Education, Human health and social work activities).

2.2.2.4 Outgoing cross-border commuters

Indicator description

The indicator shows outgoing cross-border commuting dynamics at NUTS3 level. Even though no origin-destination information can be provided, it is assumed that commuters primarily travel across the nearest border. Spatial, economic and population arguments are combined to calculate the number of outgoing cross-border commuters.

- **Source/method of retrieval**: Eurostat/LFS data on outgoing commuters currently available on NUTS2 level has been regionalised for NUTS3 by means of weighting by border length, NUTS3 population-weighted centroid distance to border, population per NUTS3 region (15–64 years old) and real compensation per employee
- **Temporal coverage**: 2015-2023
- **Unit**: Share in %

Please refer to the technical annex for more information.

Commuting is one of the most relevant cross-border flows to identify functional linkages. Figure 2.13 illustrates the share of outgoing commuters per capita for each NUTS3 region (more concretely speaking the share of outgoing commuters among the residential population of the age group 15-64 years old, resembling the potential labour force). Origin-destination information cannot be provided, but the share of outgoing commuters in regions close to the border indicates the relevance of commuting. It highlights functional relations in the labour market within the cross-border region.

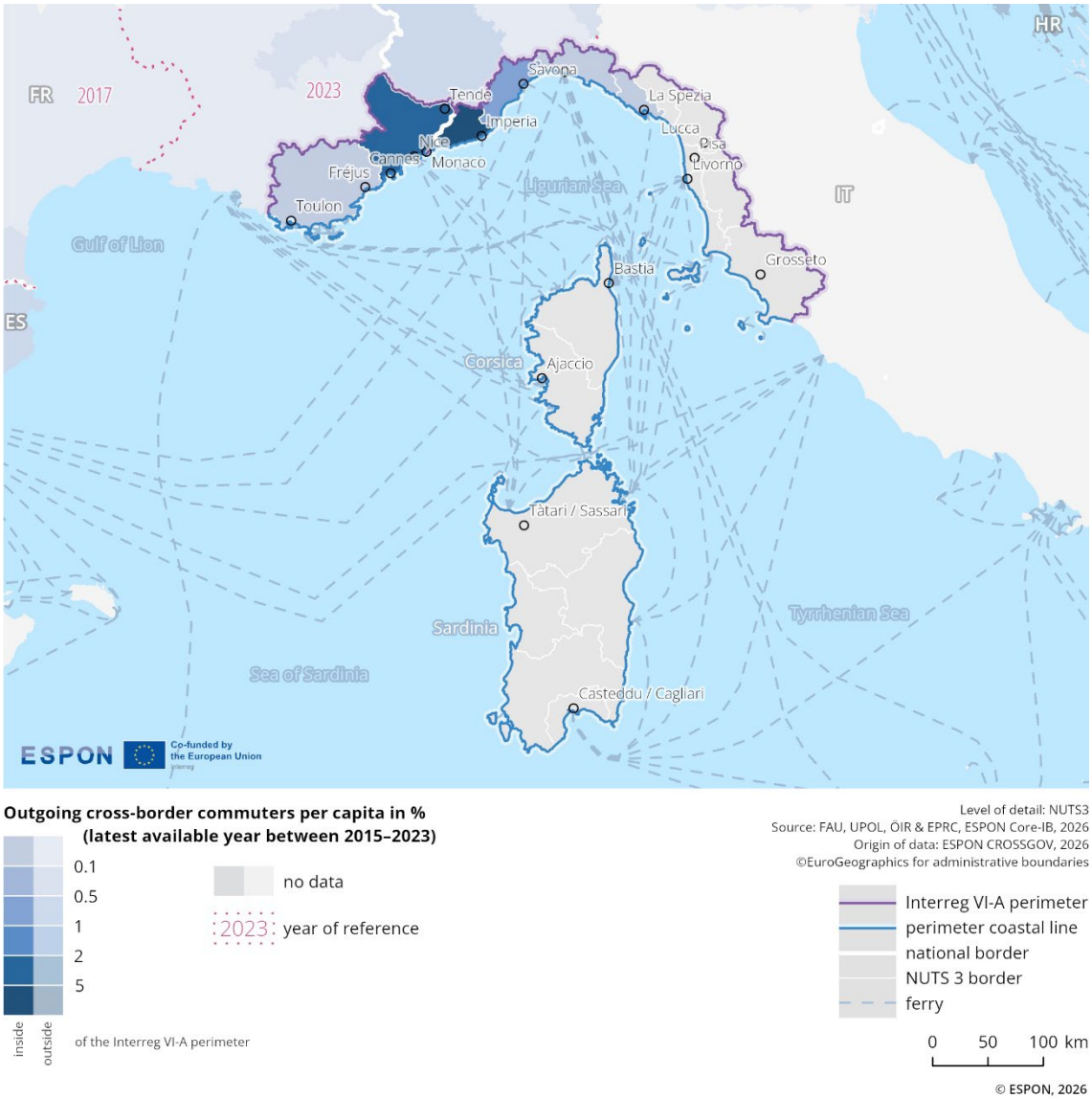
The figure illustrates the share of cross-border commuters, based on the most recent available year of data. It shows relatively strong cross-border commuting activity in areas directly adjacent to the land borders, concentrated on both the French and Italian sides. For several other Italian (Sardenia) and French (Corsica) regions, no data is available. However, the indicated ferry links provide an overview of the available mobility options[9].

The Alpes-Maritimes (France) and Imperia (Italy) regions stand out with comparatively high levels of outgoing cross-border commuters on both sides of the land border, with a slight predominance of flows towards France. This highlights the coastal French–Italian Riviera as the main cross-border commuting corridor in the programme area, centred on the urban axis Nice–Monaco–Ventimiglia. This further emphasises the important role of this area as a commuting corridor[10].

[9] For more information on European ferry routes see this online map: https://maritime-forum.ec.europa.eu/contents/map-week-ferry-routes_en

[10] See Eurostat Statistical Atlas for NUTS3 (2021) regions: https://ec.europa.eu/statistical-atlas/viewer/?config=typologies.json&ch=NUTS&mids=BKGCNT,NUTS2021L3,CNTOVL&o=1,1,0.7&center=49.69576,14.3332,4&lcis=NUTS2021L3&

Figure 2.13: Outgoing cross-border commuting patterns



2.2.2.5 Cross-border telework agreements

Indicator description

The indicator shows what kind of legal framework for cross-border telework is enacted.

- **Source/method of retrieval**: The indicator is based on information about the legal framework for social security regarding cross-border teleworking, categorised by border pair.
- **Temporal coverage**: Status as of March 2025
- **Unit**: n/a

Please refer to the technical annex for more information.

The 2 countries involved in the programme are signatories of the 2023 Framework Agreement on Cross-Border Telework. Under this agreement, cross-border workers can telework from their country of residence for up to 50% of their total working time without affecting their social security affiliation.

2.2.3 Competitiveness

This sub-dimension illustrates the competitiveness of the border region by analysing the main industry sectors that contribute to its economic development. It assesses gross value added (GVA) at basic prices by sector, as well as nominal compensation per hour worked, in order to understand productivity levels and sectoral strengths.

2.2.3.1 Gross value added at basic prices by sector

Indicator description

The indicator shows the gross value added (GVA), which is a measure of the contribution of a country or region to the economy. Regional GVA represents the value generated by all units involved in the production of goods and services within a specific area. This indicator can be disaggregated by industry and service sector, allowing for a detailed analysis of economic contributions across different fields. Additionally, the sum of GVA across all industries or sectors, combined with taxes on products and minus subsidies on products, yields the gross domestic product (GDP) of the region. The dataset is available in "10-sector" NACE classifications, facilitating comprehensive evaluations of the regional economy.

- **Source**: Annual Regional Database of the European Commission (ARDECO)
- **Temporal coverage**: 2014-2023
- **Unit**: Million purchasing power standards (PPS)

Please refer to the technical annex for more information.

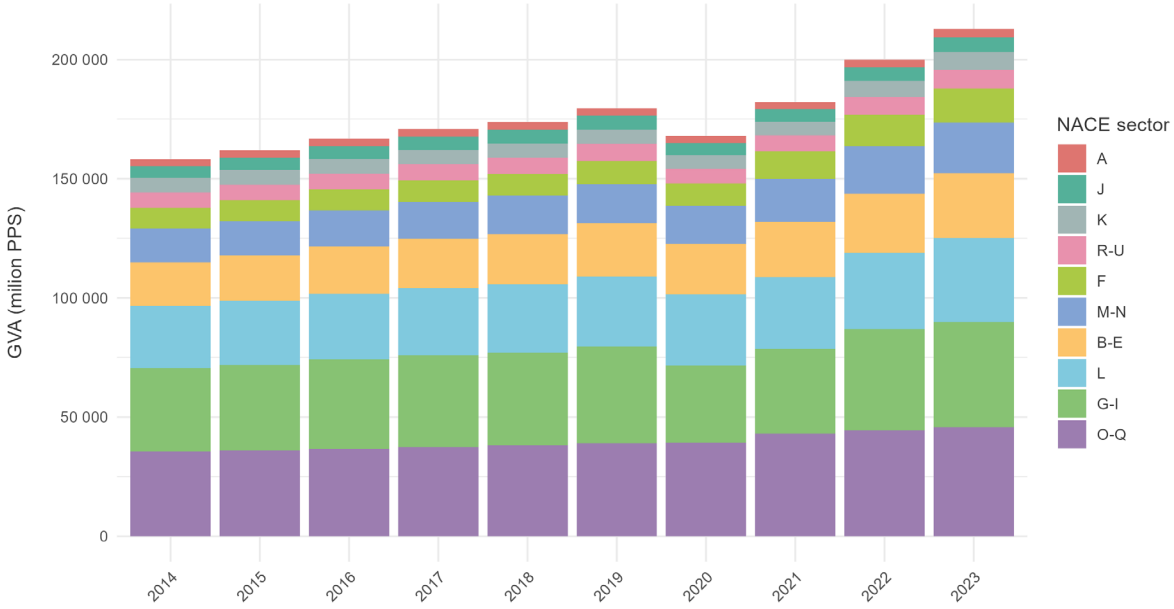
Figure 2.14 visualises gross value added (GVA), which is an important indicator of economic activity. GVA measures the value created by all economic activities involved in producing goods and services in a specific area. It is differentiated by sectors to provide detailed insights into the economic contributions of different fields.

The dataset uses a '10-sector' classification based on NACE categories. The sectoral breakdown is as follows:

- A: Agriculture, forestry and fishing
- B-E: Mining and quarrying (B), Manufacturing (C), Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply (D), Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities (E)
- F: Construction
- G-I: Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles (G), Transportation and storage (H), Accommodation and food service activities (I)
- J: Information and communication
- K: Financial and insurance activities
- L: Real estate activities
- M-N: Professional, scientific and technical activities (M), Administrative and support service activities (N)
- O-Q: Education (O), Human health and social work activities (Q)
- R-U: Arts, entertainment and recreation R), Other service activities (S), Activities of households as employers; undifferentiated goods- and services-producing activities of households for own use (T), Activities of extraterritorial organisations and bodies (U)

Between 2014 and 2023, the GVA in the border area of Italy-France (Maritime) increased from 158,151 million purchasing power standards (PPS) to 212,845 million PPS — a growth of 35%. Sector groups G–I, L and O–Q together make up over half of the total GVA, highlighting their significant contribution to the regional, also green and blue, economy within the border area. The sector groups O–Q contributed the largest share, with a total of 45,795 million PPS in 2023. This underlines the significance of sectors such as Education (O), Human health and social work activities (Q) in the Italy-France (Maritime) border region. The comparatively large share of Information and communication (J) highlights the relevance of digital growth within the green and blue economy in this maritime border area. The constantly growing and substantial share of real estate activities (L) can also be attributed to maritime tourism.

Figure 2.14: Gross value added at basic prices by sector (comparison)



A: Agriculture, forestry and fishing
B-E: Mining and quarrying (B), Manufacturing (C), Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply (D), Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities (E)
F: Construction
G-I: Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles (G), Transportation and storage (H), Accommodation and food service activities (I)
J: Information and communication
K: Financial and insurance activities
L: Real estate activities
M-N: Professional, scientific and technical activities (M), Administrative and support service activities (N)
O-Q: Education (O), Human health and social work activities (Q)
R-U: Arts, entertainment and recreation (R), Other service activities (S), Activities of households as employers; undifferentiated goods- and services-producing activities of households for own use (T), Activities of extraterritorial organisations and bodies (U)

2.2.3.2 Nominal compensation per hour worked

Indicator description

The indicator shows the average income paid for each hour worked, known as compensation per hour worked. This measure is calculated by dividing the "compensation of employees at current prices" by the total number of "hours worked (employees)." Employees, in this context, are defined as individuals engaged by contract in productive activities for a resident unit, receiving remuneration irrespective of their place of residence. The total hours worked is considered the most appropriate measure of labour input, representing the aggregate number of hours actually worked by employees. This indicator provides valuable insights into labour productivity and wage dynamics within the economy.

- **Source**: Annual Regional Database of the European Commission (ARDECO)
- **Temporal coverage**: 2023 (missing data from 2023 in Switzerland were supplemented by values from 2022)
- **Unit**: Euro

Please refer to the technical annex for more information.

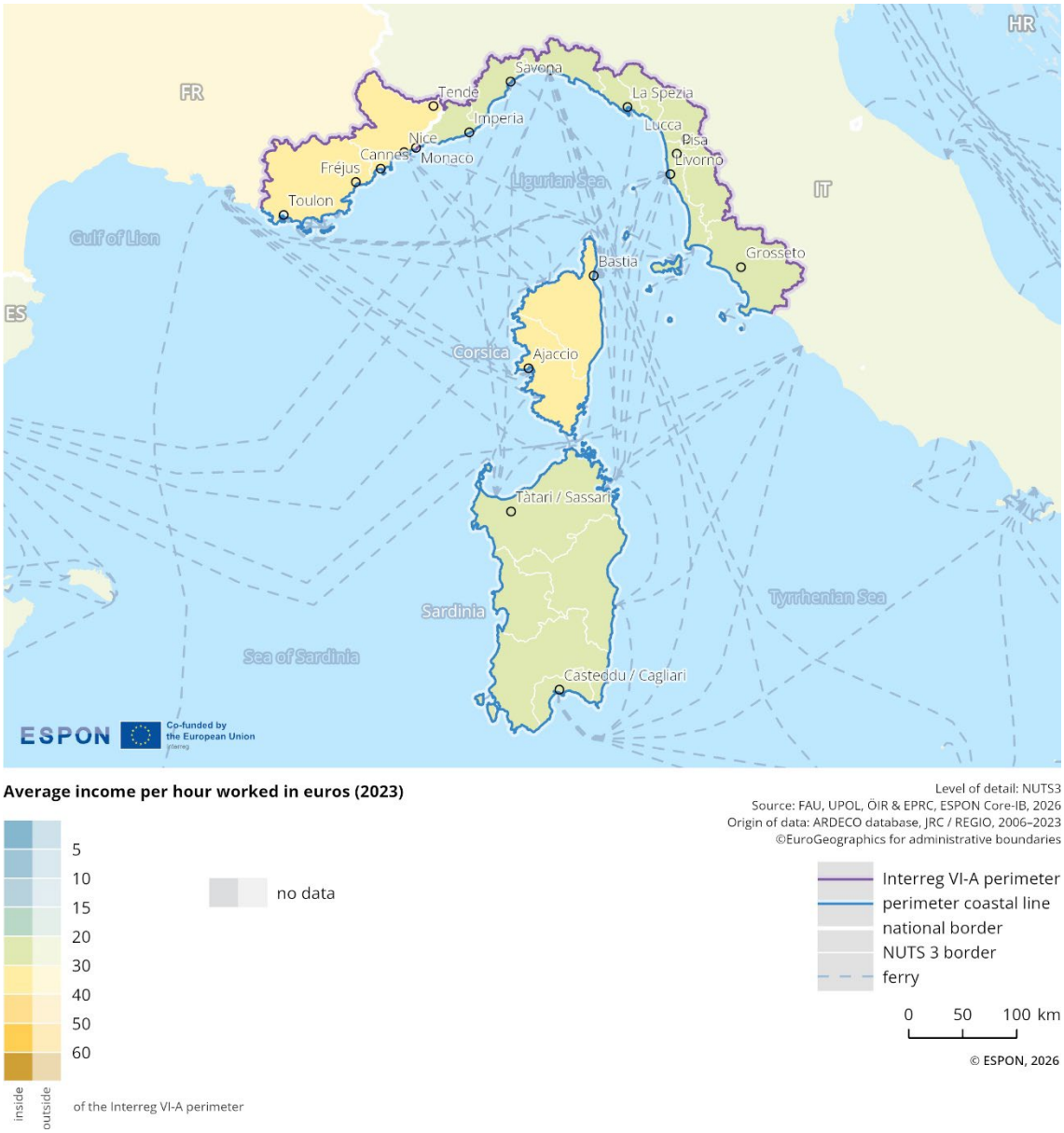
Figure 2.15 shows the average values for the 'compensation per hour worked'. This indicator is calculated by dividing the total compensation of employees (at current prices) by the total number of hours worked by those employees. In this context, 'employees' are defined as individuals engaged by contract in productive activities. The data is available for the place of work, regardless of the place of residence. Total hours worked represent the actual number of hours worked by employees and are considered the most accurate measure of labour input.

In 2023, nominal compensation per hour worked in average in France is €36.30 and in Italy €24.70. The map of the average wage rates in the border region are quite unevenly distributed. In most areas, the average hourly income ranges between €20 and €40.

French NUTS3 regions in this cross-border area report the highest values, for example Alpes-Maritimes (€37.20) and Corse-du-Sud (€36.80). The lowest numbers are depicted for regions in Sardenia (Italy) such as Oristiano and Nuoro (€22.60). This reveals a strong disparity between two closely located regions.

Cross-border wage differences can encourage labour migration from lower-wage areas to more economically prosperous neighbouring regions, creating both opportunities and challenges for local labour markets and social systems. However, in this particular border region, the wage differences do not appear to be especially significant.

Figure 2.15: Average income per hour



2.2.4 Infrastructure and housing

This sub-dimension shows the impact of the border on infrastructure and housing in the region. It assesses housing prices and average internet speed in order to identify cross-border effects, including potential price spillovers and disparities. The analysis reveals whether infrastructure and housing markets facilitate integration or expose structural challenges that are specific to the border area.

2.2.4.1 Advertised sales prices

Indicator description

The indicator shows the advertised sales price per square meter for houses/appartements as retrieved from commercial real estate websites at national level. In the cross-border region, local differences between average sales prices are highlighted and the "cutting" effect of the border and its influence on price levels is visualised.

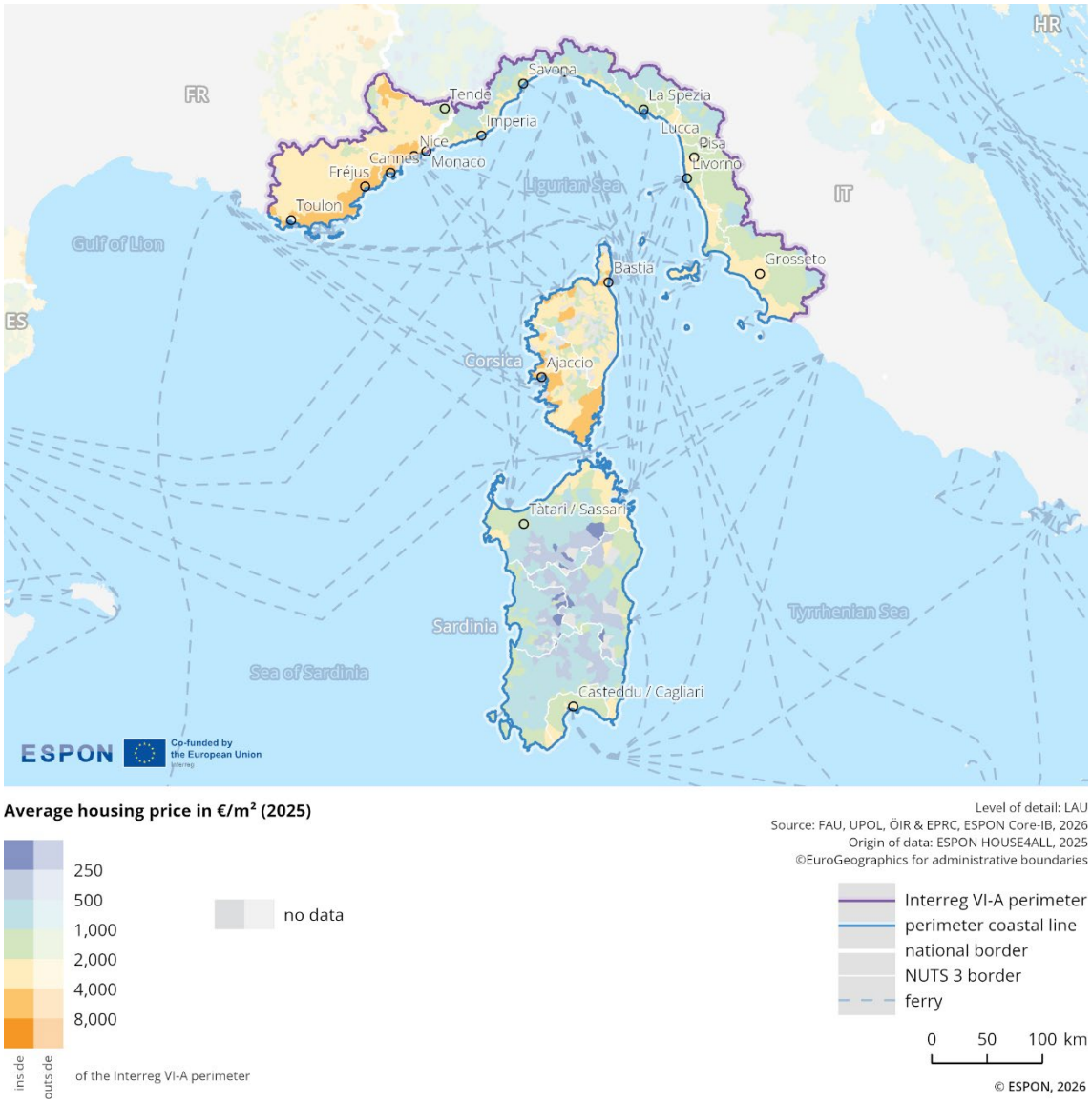
- **Source/method of retrieval**: Processed ESPON House4all data. The original data is collected via web-scraping of national listing websites over a one-year period.
- **Temporal coverage**: 2024/2025
- **Unit**: Average price per square meter (€/m^2)

Please refer to the technical annex for more information.

Figure 2.16 illustrates the advertised sales price of housing in 2025 across the border region. The data are categorised into ranges of average housing price per square metre, from below 250 €/m^2 up to more than 8,000 €/m^2, shown in colours ranging from purple and blue to green, yellow and orange.

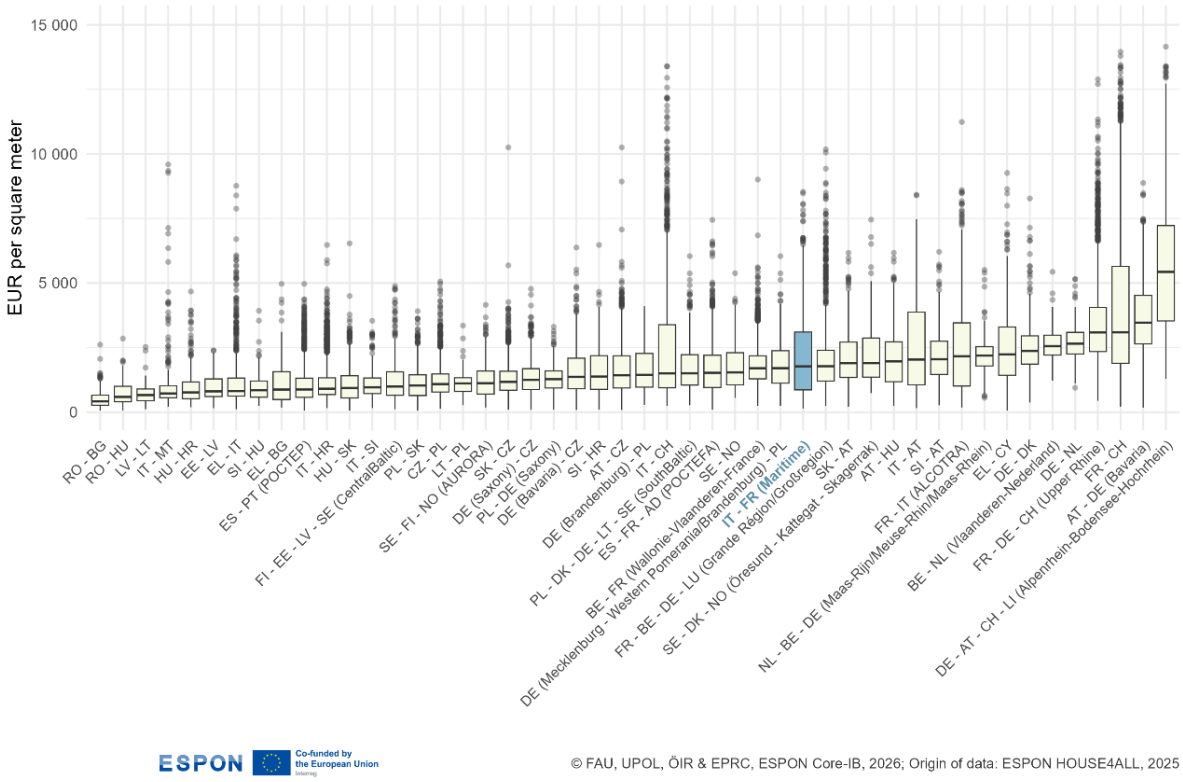
The French mainland and the island of Corsica have higher prices, ranging from 2,000 to 8,000 €/m^2, with prices increasing towards the coast around towns such as Toulon, Cannes, and Nice. The Italian mainland and the Italian island of Sardinia have lower prices than France. In Italy, prices range from 500 to 2,000 €/m^2, with prices rising again towards the coast. Prices in inland Sardinia fall to 250 €/m^2 or lower. The cross-border represents an evident difference in average advertised sales prices.

Figure 2.16: Advertised housing prices



The French part of the border region records an average advertised residential sales price of approximately €3,297 per square metre, while the Italian part reports a considerably lower average price of about €1,182 per square metre. Overall, the average advertised sales price across the entire border region is estimated at €2,122 per square metre. This value slightly exceeds the average for all EU-evaluated border regions (€1,900 per square metre), but remains below the European average of approximately €5,600 per square metre.

Figure 2.17: Advertised housing prices (comparison)



2.2.4.2 Average internet speed

Indicator description

The indicator shows the population weighted average internet speed available at municipal level. It highlights differences in the "digital preparedness". In border regions, this indicator is particularly relevant for identifying digital infrastructure gaps that may hamper balanced development and cross-border integration.

- **Source/method of retrieval**: Processing of data provided by Speedtest by Ookla Global Fixed and Mobile Network Performance Maps, based on Ookla's analysis of Speedtest Intelligence data.
- **Temporal coverage**: 2022
- **Unit**: Download speed in Mbps

Please refer to the technical annex for more information.

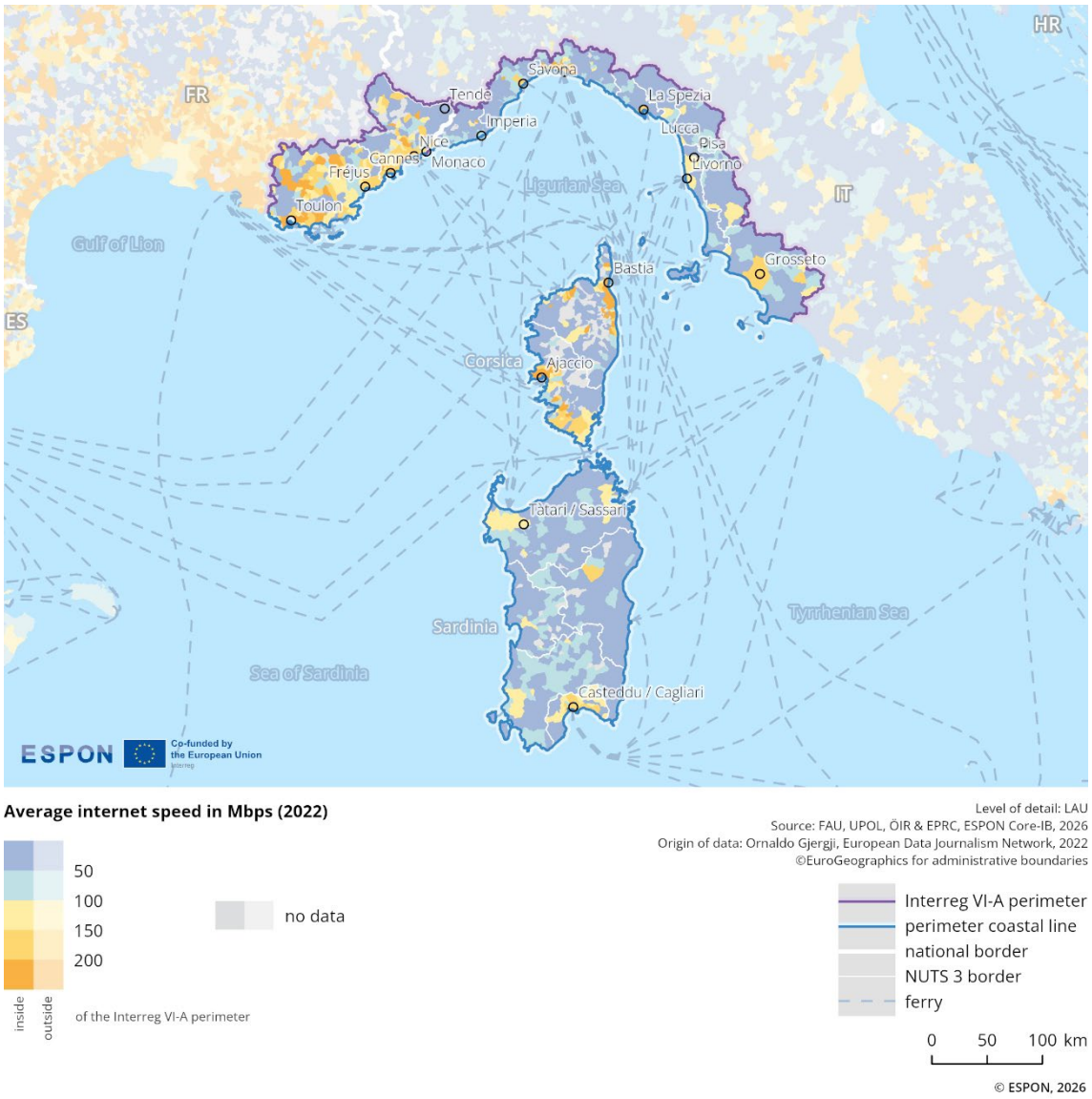
Digitalisation is a highly relevant issue in European border regions, with the overarching objective of ensuring appropriate digital access. It is widely recognised as a key precondition for successful regional and economic development. A major challenge in this process is preventing 'digital divides'— i.e., avoiding significant disparities in economic, social, and spatial terms.

Average internet speed is a telling indicator of such disparities, highlighting differences in 'digital preparedness' at the local level. Figure 2.18 shows the average download speed at the municipality level. The colour scheme ranges from dark blue (very slow speeds) to orange (very fast speeds). The

data, prepared by OBC Transeuropa for EDJNet, is based on Speedtest Intelligence data from Speedtest/Ookla's Global Fixed and Mobile Network Performance Maps for the first quarter of 2022. The average download speeds are expressed in megabits per second (Mbps), not to be confused with megabytes per second (MBps).

The map reveals significant differences between urban and rural areas, with values ranging from under 50 Mbps to over 200 Mbps. Cities such as Savona, Grosseto, Casteddu/Cagliari, Tàtari/Sassari, Ajaccio, Toulon, and Monaco report relatively high average speeds, while surrounding areas tend to have significantly lower values. This may be due to the greater return on investment typically associated with digital infrastructure projects in urban areas compared to rural ones. However, not all urban areas in this border region have high download speeds, for example, Livorno and La Spezia do not stand out in this regard. Mountainous terrain on the islands and along the coast clearly poses a challenge in providing high-speed internet. In the case of islands and remote coastal areas, digital disparities need to be understood within the specific context of maritime geography. These territories often face structural disadvantages in connectivity compared to the mainland, resulting from their physical isolation, limited infrastructure, and higher costs of network deployment and maintenance.

Figure 2.18: Average internet download speed



2.2.5 Key messages on the economic dimension

Considering the GDP per capita, the economic situation of the whole cross-border area has been following a very positive development, resuming its economic growth since the 2019-2020 Covid crisis. Both parts of the border region are below their respective national averages, but the difference between the 2 parts has been reducing, especially in the last few years. The employment share is quite stable in the whole programme area, but also below the respective national shares. The average working-age population share in this border region is also below the EU average as well as below the average of all cross-border regions, and particularly low in the analysed French territories.

The economic sectors providing the highest share of jobs in the programme area are wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles, Transportation and storage, Accommodation and food service activities), Professional, scientific and technical activities, Administrative and support service activities and education, Human health and social work activities.

Due to the maritime nature of this cross-border area, cross-border commuting is mainly occurring in the 2 regions between mainland France and Italy. Nominal compensation per hour worked in the maritime Italy–France border region is quite unevenly distributed, but this does not appear to be especially significant for cross-border commuting.

Housing prices vary to a great extent. A striking difference is visible between the high-priced properties along the French Côte d'Azur and in Corsica, compared to the relatively more accessible housing prices in inland Sardinia.

2.3 Green dimension

The green dimension highlights the environmental characteristics, vulnerabilities and sustainability-related interactions within the border region. The analysis provides insight into the environmental interdependence of border regions. Additionally, the spatial distribution of renewable and conventional energy infrastructure, alongside indicators of resources and the circular economy, reveals whether the border facilitates collaborative transitions towards sustainability.

2.3.1 Nature protection and pollution

This sub-dimension investigates cross-border functional links in protected areas and areas affected by air and water pollution. It analyses the presence of protected areas in order to identify cross-border ecological links and conservation efforts. It also highlights the extent to which air and water pollution affects people living in border regions.

2.3.1.1 Protected areas

Indicator description

The indicator shows the presence and territorial coverage of protected areas based on the combination of 3 data sources, i.e., Nationally designated areas, Natura 2000 Network and Emerald Network.

- **Source/method of retrieval**: The indicator represents a combination of nationally designated areas, Natura 2000 and Emerald network provided by EEA (European Environment Agency) Geospatial data catalogue.
- **Temporal coverage**: 2024
- **Unit**: n/a

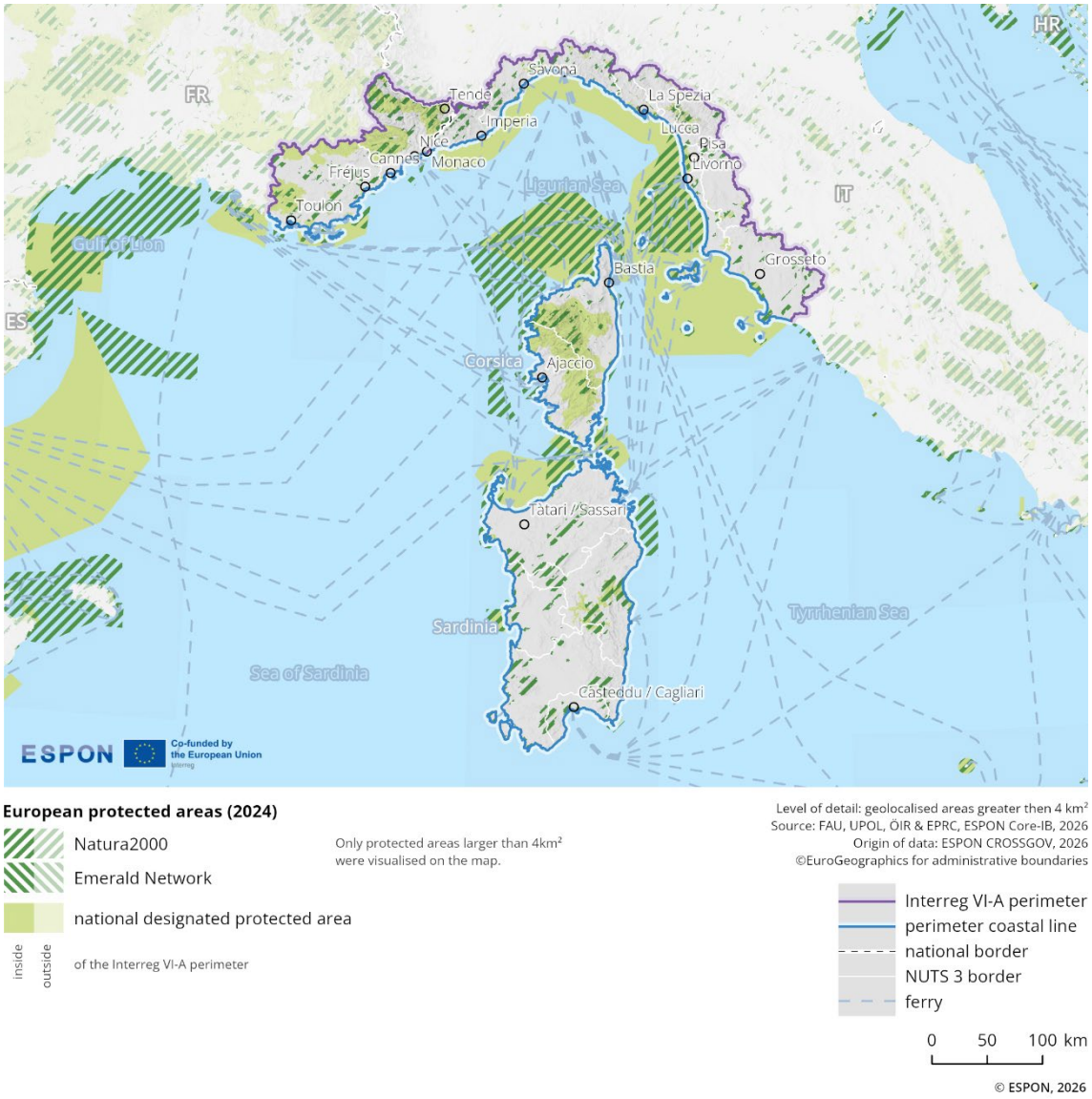
Please refer to the technical annex for more information.

Figure 2.19 illustrates the distribution of protected areas in 2024 across the border region. The data differentiate between Natura 2000 sites, the Emerald Network, and nationally designated protected areas, with only protected areas larger than 4 km² displayed .

Protected areas within the Interreg region are concentrated along the coastal zones and major islands. The largest contiguous sites are in the west of Livorno and northern Sardinia, where extensive overlaps between Natura 2000 and national protected areas are visible. On the mainland near Livorno, La Spezia, and Grosseto, coastal and marine zones are well covered, while inland areas show sparse distribution. The island of Corsica also contains several medium-sized protected areas, mostly along the coasts.

Protected areas with cross-border counterparts are very present, especially between Corsica and Sardinia as well as between Corsica and the Italian Coastline, which have continuous protected areas.

Figure 2.19: Nature protected areas



2.3.1.2 Air pollution

Indicator description

The indicator shows the air pollution from fine particulates (PM2.5) at NUTS3 level. The data shows the population-weighted average air pollution level (µg/m³), providing an indication of the extent to which the regional population is affected by air pollution.

- **Source/method of retrieval**: Processing and analysis of European Environment Agency data
- **Temporal coverage**: 2022
- **Unit**: Population weighted average of µg/m³

Please refer to the technical annex for more information.

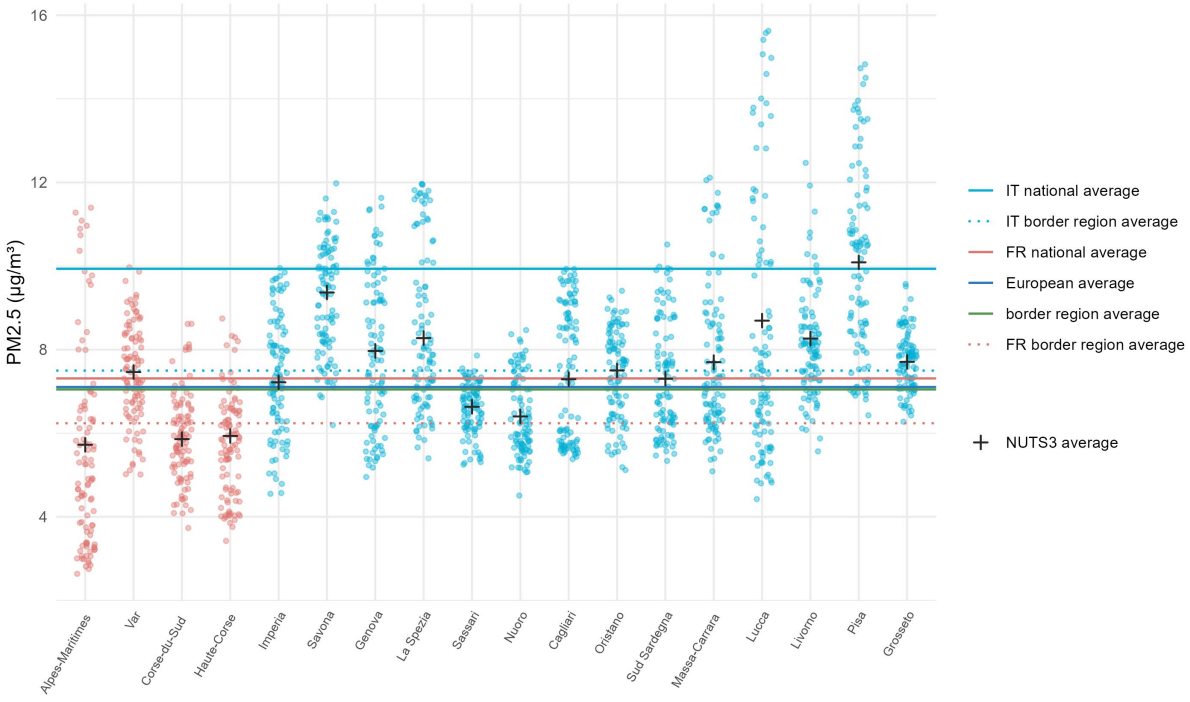
Figure 2.20 illustrates PM2.5 concentrations (in µg/m³) across NUTS3 regions in Italy and France in the maritime border area. Each small dot represents an individual measurement, while the black crosses indicate the average PM2.5 concentration for each NUTS3 region[11]. The regions are aligned along the x-axis, with French regions on the left (in red) and Italian regions on the right (in blue).

PM2.5 values in both countries span a wide range. Overall, Italian regions show higher individual peaks in PM2.5 concentrations than French regions. French NUTS3 averages cluster below 12 µg/m³ with only few measurements exceeding 10 µg/m³. Italian NUTS3 averages display considerably more variability, and several exceed 12 µg/m³.

The Italian border region average lies below both the Italian national average. A similar pattern is seen in the French national and border region averages, although the difference is less pronounced.

The European average and the cross-border average are closely aligned and lie slightly below the French national average. The cross-border average reflects the combination of higher values from the Italian border region and lower values from the French border region.

Figure 2.20: Air pollution



[11] See Eurostat Statistical Atlas for NUTS3 (2021) regions: https://ec.europa.eu/statistical-atlas/viewer/?config=typologies.json&ch=NUTS&mids=BKGCNT,NUTS2021L3,CNTOVL&o=1,1,0.7&center=49.69576,14.3332,4&lcis=NUTS2021L3&

2.3.1.3 Water pollution

Indicator description

The indicator shows the ecological status or potential for coastal and river water bodies. It is based on an assessment of biological, hydro-morphological, chemical and physico-chemical quality elements.

- **Source/method of retrieval**: Processing and analysis of European Environment Agency data
- **Temporal coverage**: 2022 (supplemented by 2016 data)
- **Unit**: n/a

Please refer to the technical annex for more information.

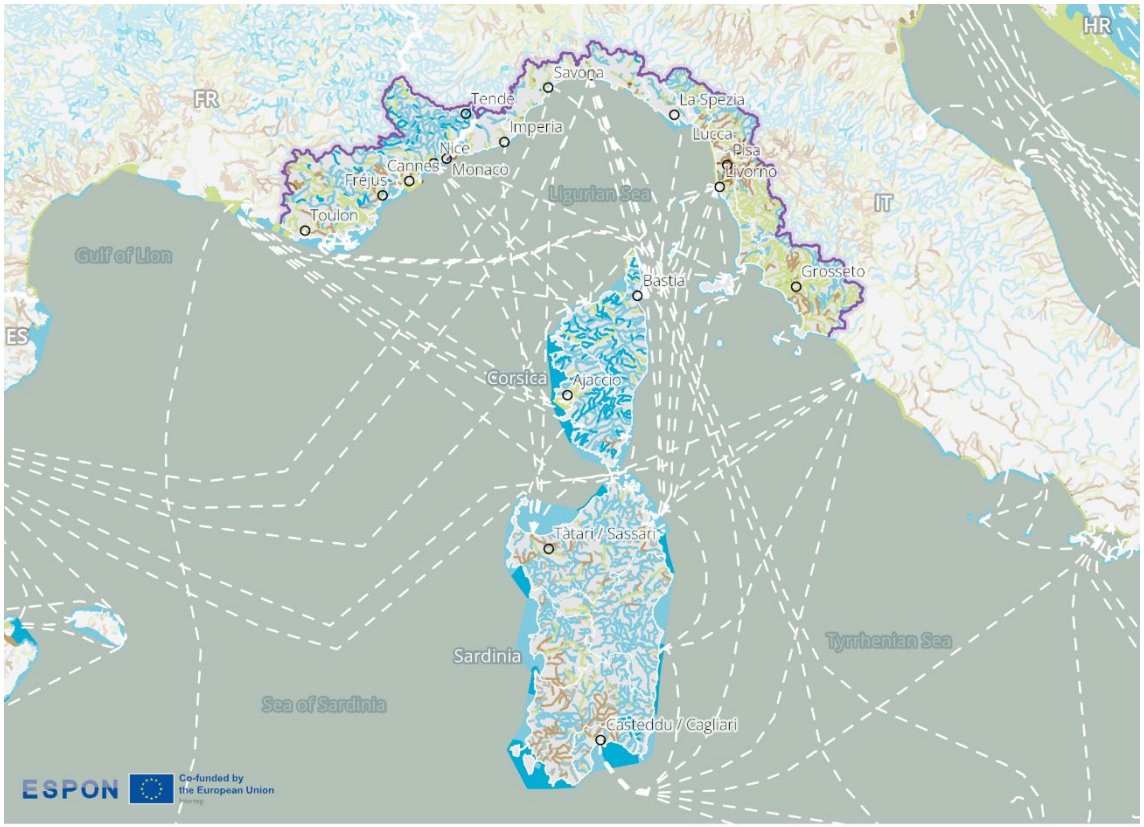
Figure 2.21 illustrates water pollution levels in Italy and France within their Maritime Interreg region in 2022. Water quality is represented using 6 color-coded categories, ranging from "bad" to "high", including an "unknown" category[12].

On both islands, Corsica and Sardinia, water quality is predominantly rated as "high" or "good". Only in a small area in the south of Sardinia is "bad" or "poor" water quality observed.

The coastal areas of the Interreg region show rather mixed water quality. Along the Italian coast, the southern part is mostly rated as "moderate", while rivers around the city of Livorno tend to be rated as "poor" or "bad". On the French side of the Interreg region, around the city of Toulouse, water quality is mostly "moderate", while in the area around Monaco and further inland, it is generally rated as "good" or "high".

[12] For more information see the Water Framework Directive Reporting Guidance (2022): https://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/help/WFD/WFD_715_2022

Figure 2.21: Water quality patterns



Water quality (2022*)

- high
- good
- moderate
- poor
- bad
- unknown

inside outside inside outside of the Interreg VI-A perimeter

Level of detail: geolocalised lines and areas
Source: FAU, UPOL, ÖIR & EPRC, ESPON Core-IB, 2026
Origin of data: © European Environment Agency, 2025
©EuroGeographics for administrative boundaries

- Interreg VI-A perimeter
- national border
- NUTS 3 border
- ferry

0 50 100 km

2.3.2 Climate risks and resilience

This sub-dimension examines cross-border functional links relating to climate risks and resilience. It analyses exposure to natural hazards such as landslides, earthquakes, droughts and floods in order to identify vulnerabilities and risks.

2.3.2.1 Natural hazard risks

Indicator description

The indicator shows the risk the border region is facing in relation to natural hazards (floods, droughts, landslides and earthquakes). The map highlights potential cross-border affectedness and allows to judge the relative relevance of each risk for the cross-border region.

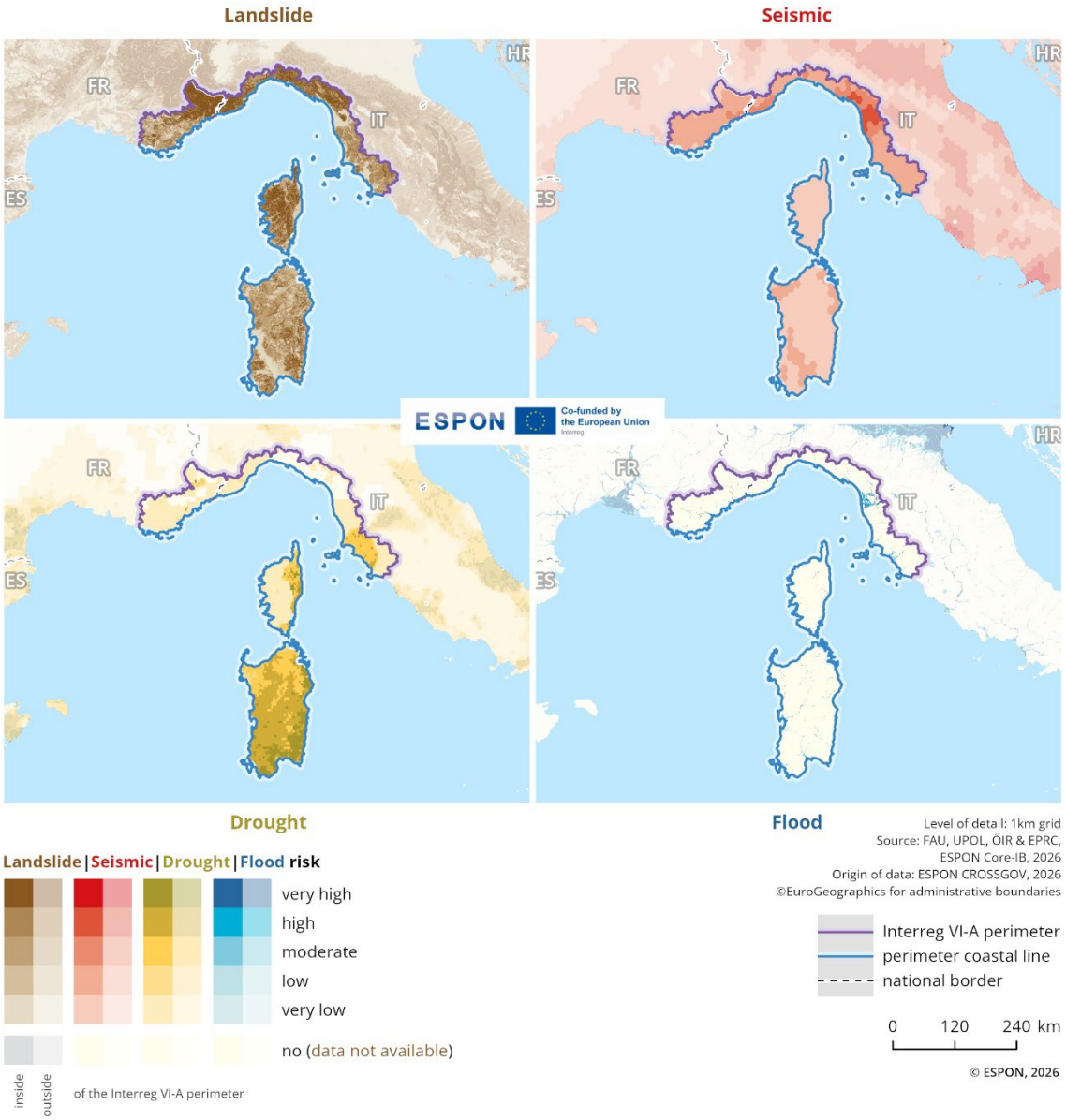
- **Source/method of retrieval**: The indicator is based on geodata from the Disaster Management Risk Knowledge Centre/JRC. It provides the likelihood of specific natural hazard events at grid level.
- **Temporal coverage**: 2024
- **Unit**: n/a

Please refer to the technical annex for more information.

The maps illustrate the spatial distribution of natural hazards in the Maritime region, highlighting areas where risks are shared across national boundaries and where risks are not necessarily cross-border relevant.

Landslides are a common threat throughout most of the region, and the area along the shared land border in the north is one of the most at risk. Droughts pose a particularly high threat in Sardinia, whereas on the mainland the risk is much lower. Some areas near the coast in Toscana (IT) are slightly affected by flood risk. However, this is generally not considered a major risk. There is very little seismic activity on the islands, while the mainland has areas with a moderate to high risk of earthquakes. The area around Livorno-Pisa is particularly prone to earthquakes.

Figure 2.22: Natural hazard risks



2.3.3 (Renewable) Energy and energy infrastructure

This sub-dimension assesses cross-border functional links in energy supply and infrastructure, focusing on existing connections and missing links. The distribution of power lines, energy infrastructure and power stations is analysed to identify supply patterns and potential integration gaps. The analysis reveals whether the border facilitates energy cooperation and connectivity, or if infrastructural differences create barriers.[13]

2.3.3.1 Power lines and energy infrastructure

Indicator description

The indicator shows the distribution of power lines and energy infrastructures in the cross-border region. The geodata highlights the existing links and gaps in the cross-border interconnections of the energy transmission network.

- **Source/method of retrieval**: Geodata on high-voltage energy infrastructure (100 kV and above) has been collected and processed from OpenStreetMap.
- **Temporal coverage**: 2025
- **Unit**: kV

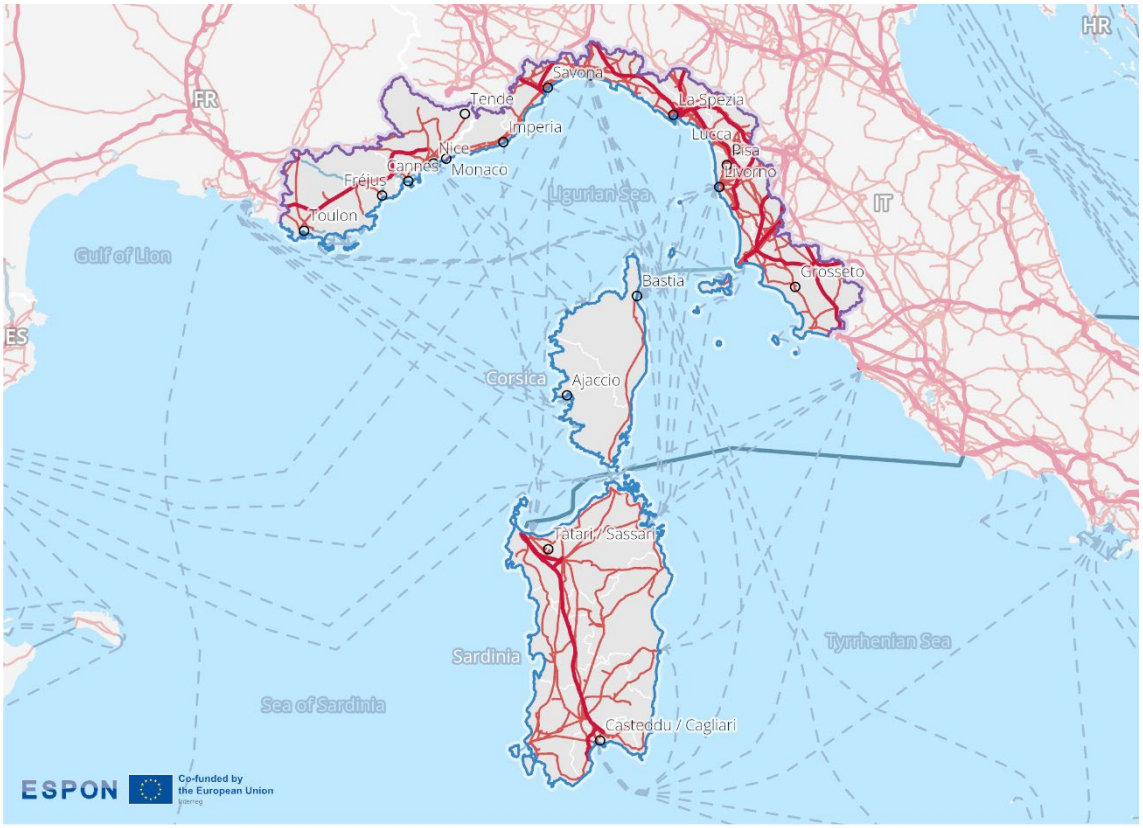
Please refer to the technical annex for more information.

Figure 2.23 illustrates the distribution of power lines and cables in 2025 across the border region. The data distinguish between overhead and underground power lies, further classified into high-voltage (100-230 kV), extra high-voltage (230-1,000 kV), and ultra-high voltage (above 1,000 kV).

The maritime cross-border region of France-Italy exhibit extensive high- and extra high-voltage transmission infrastructure with the exception of Corsica (France). However, one of the 4 direct connections between the 2 countries in this cross-border region runs here on north of the island, via an extra high-voltage submarine cable. The second connection is between north Sardinia (Italy) and southern part of Corsica, this time via a high-voltage submarine cable. There are other 2 direct land connections via high-voltage power lines in the vicinity of Monaco (one of these connections only extends a few kilometres beyond the cross-border region, but overall, it can be considered a direct line).

[13] See also: European Commission 2025: Handbook on Cross-border Energy Communities, https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/studies/2025/Handbook_on_Cross-border_Energy_Communities.pdf

Figure 2.23: High-voltage transmission infrastructure



Overhead power lines (2025)

- High Voltage (100–230 kV)
- Extra High Voltage (230–1.000 kV)
- Ultra High Voltage (1.000 kV+)

Underground power cables (2025)

- High Voltage (100–230 kV)
- Extra High Voltage (230–1.000 kV)
- Ultra High Voltage (1.000 kV+)

inside / outside of the Interreg VI-A perimeter

ANSI Standard C84.1 was used for classification of power lines.

Level of detail: geolocated lines
Source: FAU, UPOL, ÖIR & EPRC, ESPON Core-IB, 2026
Origin of data: ESPON CROSSGOV, 2026
©EuroGeographics for administrative boundaries

- Interreg VI-A perimeter
- perimeter coastal line
- national border
- NUTS 3 border
- ferry

0 50 100 km

© ESPON, 2026

2.3.3.2 Power stations

Indicator description

The indicator shows the location of power stations by type and energy production levels (coal, gas and oil, nuclear, hydro). It can indicate differences and complementarities in the national energy supply systems as well as highlight potential supply-demand links when viewed in conjunction with power lines infrastructure.

- **Source**: OpenStreetMap, Global Energy Monitor, JRC Hydro-power plants database
- **Temporal coverage**: 2025
- **Unit**: MW

Please refer to the technical annex for more information.

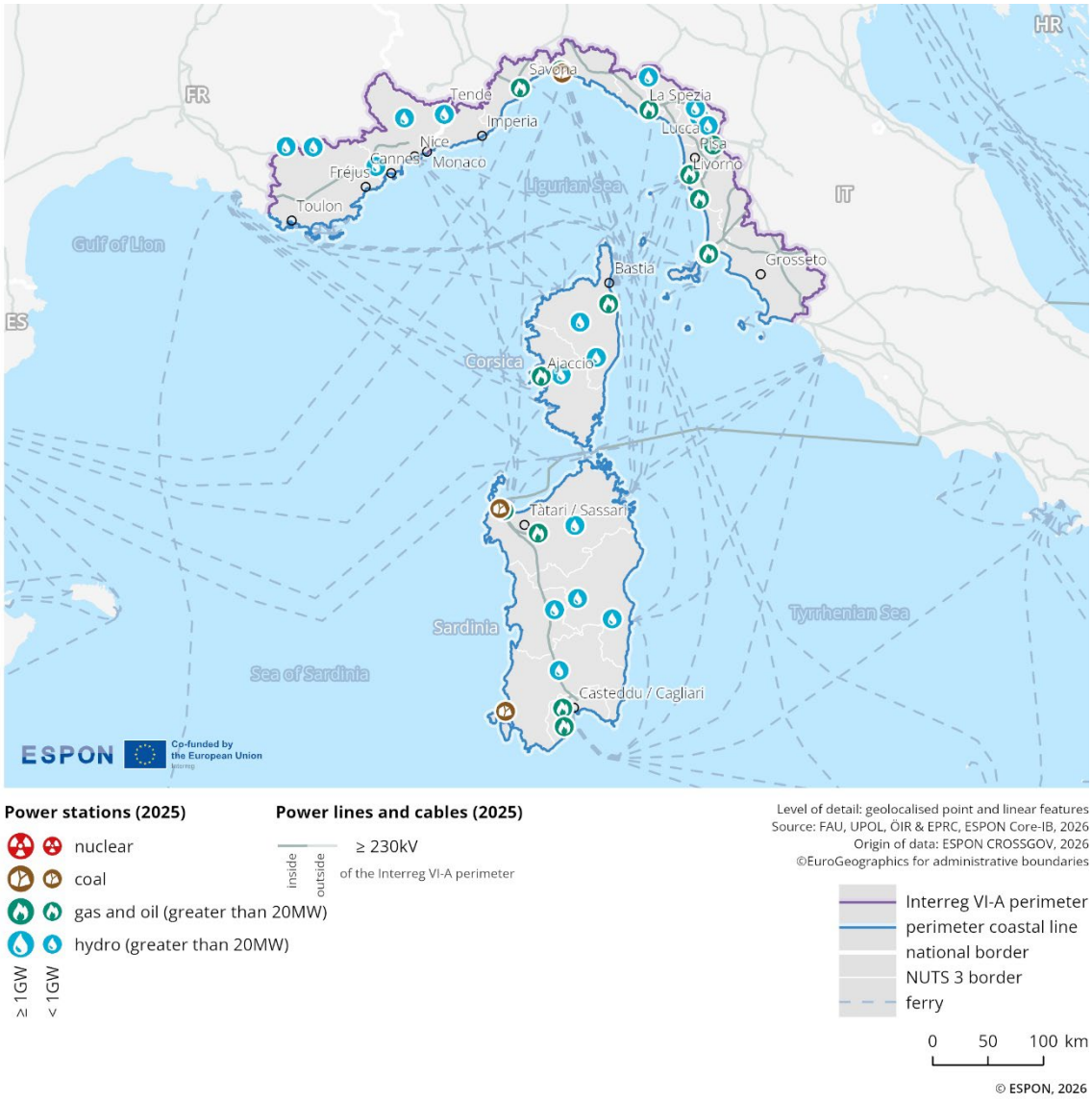
In the maritime France-Italy cross-border region, in total, there are 36 power station locations with the most common ones are hydroelectric power stations (see Table 1).

Table 1: Number and type of power stations

Power stations/plants	Less than 1GW	1GW and up
Nuclear	/	/
Coal	3	/
Gas and oil	15	/
Hydro	18	/

France holds 8 of them, 3 of which are located in Corsica, while 6 of the 10 Italian ones are located in Sardinia. There are 2 gas and oil power stations in the French part of the region, both in Corsica, and one of them runs 4 operations. The other 13 gas and oil power station sites are located in the Italian part of the region, 4 of which are in Sardinia. All 3 coal-fired power plants in this programme area are located in Italy, 2 of which can be found in Sardinia. No nuclear power plant is present in the examined area.

Figure 2.24: Power stations infrastructure



2.3.4 Resources and circular economy

This sub-dimension focuses on resource use patterns in the border region and their implications for circular economy practices. It analyses resource productivity and waste generation in order to evaluate the efficiency and sustainability of resource utilisation across the border.

2.3.4.1 Resource productivity

Indicator description

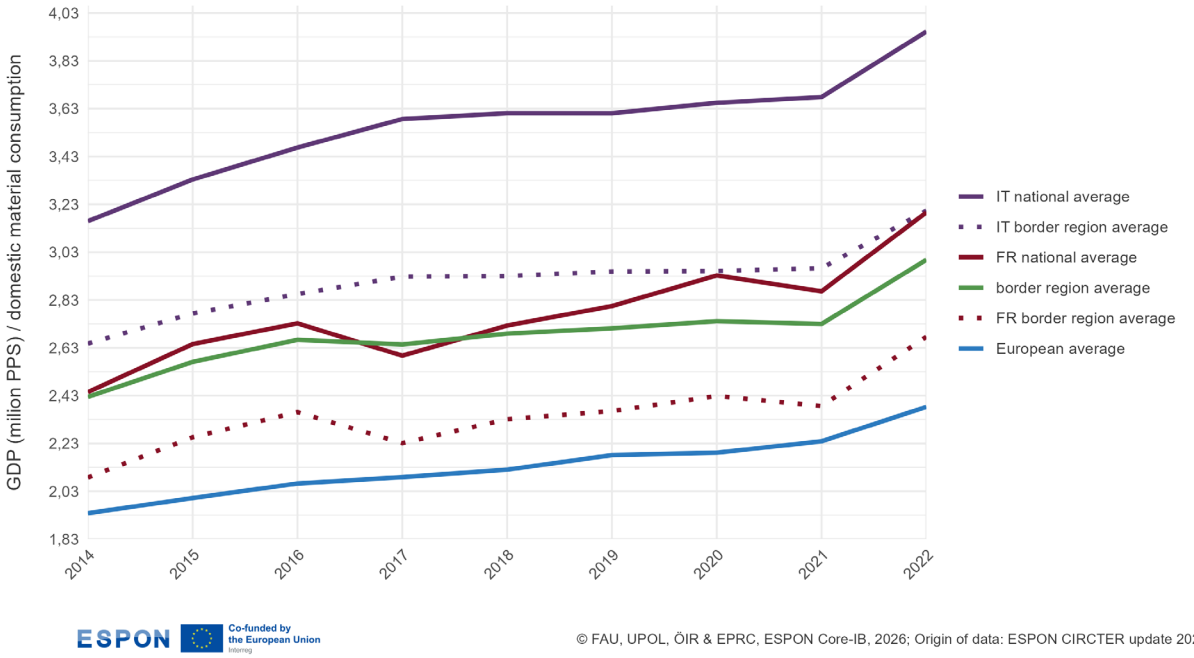
The indicator shows the economic value generated per unit of material consumed for each region within the cross-border area. Developments over time provide insights if the decoupling of productivity from resource use is progressing on regional level.

- **Source/method of retrieval**: Processing of Eurostat and ESPON CIRCTER (Circular Economy and Territorial Consequences) Update data
- **Temporal coverage**: 2014-2022
- **Unit**: PPS/tons

Please refer to the technical annex for more information.

Figure 2.25 illustrates the development of GDP per unit of domestic material consumption in million PPS/DMC (purchasing power standards per domestic material consumption) between 2014 and 2022. The data compare the national averages, the averages of their respective border regions, and the overall border regional average with the European average.

Figure 2.25: Resource productivity



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The Italian national average of resource productivity is represented by the highest line in the graph, showing an increase over the period from around 3.23 in 2014 to over 3.83 million PPS per unit of domestic material consumption in 2022. The Italian border region average follows a similar trend but remains clearly lower.

The French national average also shows an upward trend during the observed period, but less constant and at a significantly lower level compared to the Italian national average. It is nearly aligned with the border regional average. The average for the French border region follows a similar pattern, but remains notably below the French national average, reaching around 2.63 million PPS per unit of domestic material consumption in 2022.

The European average lies significantly below both the Italian and the French national averages, while the French border region average is only slightly higher. The border region average represents a combination of the lower values from the French border region and the higher values from the Italian border region, reaching around 3.13 million PPS per unit of domestic material consumption in 2022. However, notable disparities exist within the border region itself.

2.3.4.2 Generation of waste per GDP

Indicator description

The indicator shows the regional distribution of waste creation in relation to the GDP development. Comparing waste generated to GDP reflects the waste intensity of the economy and provides a measure of "eco-efficiency". Observation of its change from year to year permits to assess whether the economy is able to produce more wealth while at same time generating less waste.

- **Source/method of retrieval**: Processing of Eurostat and ESPON CIRCTER Update data
- **Temporal coverage**: 2014-2022
- **Unit**: Tons/PPS

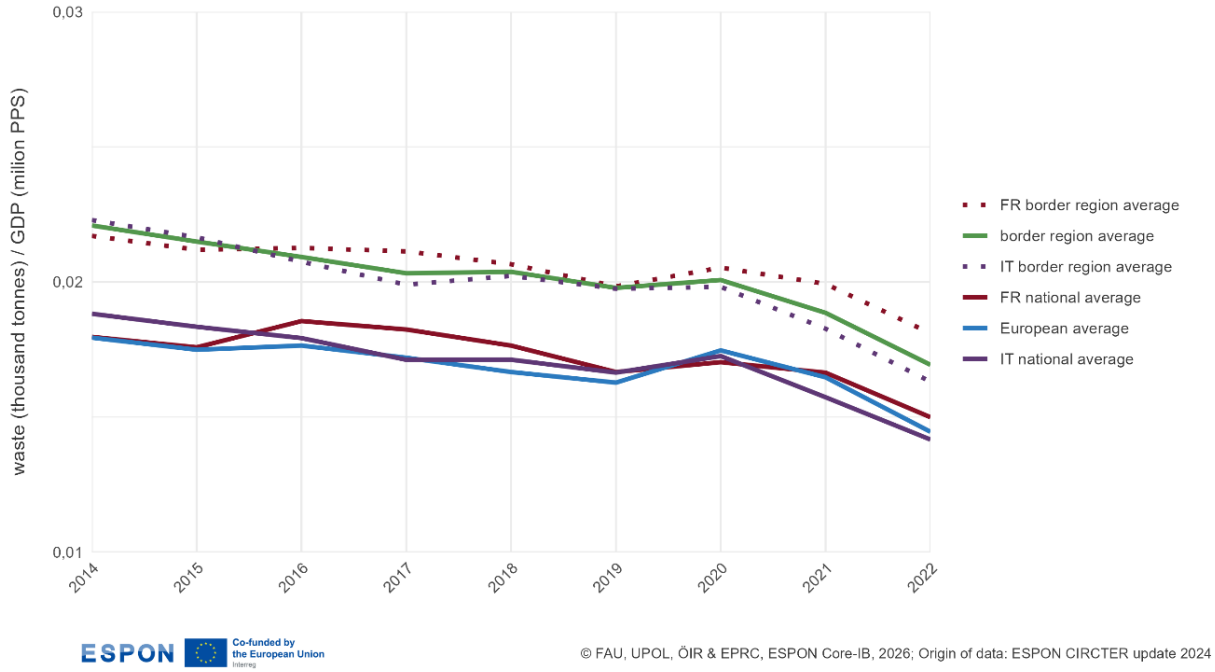
Please refer to the technical annex for more information.

The graph illustrates the trend in waste generation relative to economic output, measured in tonnes of waste per million PPS (Purchasing Power Standard) of GDP from 2014 to 2022 in the Interreg region Italy-France (Maritime).

Italian and French values exhibit a steady downward trend over the observed period. In both countries, the national average closely aligns with the European average, reaching approximately 0.015 tonnes of waste per million PPS in 2022. The border region averages in both countries are notably higher than their respective national averages.

The European average gradually decreases from around 0.018 in 2014 to approximately 0.015 tonnes of waste per million PPS in 2022. The cross-border regional average consistently remains above the European average and is closely aligned with the Italian and French border region averages. In 2022, it reaches a value of approximately 0.017 tonnes of waste per million PPS.

Figure 2.26: Waste generation per GDP



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2.3.5 Key messages on the green dimension

Protected areas within the programme area are concentrated along the coastal zones and islands, particularly in the northern part of Corsica and between Corsica and Italy. The air quality in the Italian regions of the border area is much lower than the (Italian) national average, but still above the French values (regions and national average). The water quality is good to high particularly in Corsica. In Sardinia, while generally good, the water quality deteriorates in the southern part of the island. In most Italian regions, the water quality is moderate.

Landslides are a common threat throughout most parts of the analysed area, with the shared land border in the north being one of the area most at risk. Droughts are a very high threat, especially in Sardinia. The Italian mainland (around Livorno-Pisa) displays areas with a moderate to high risk of earthquakes.

The cross-border region exhibits extensive high- and extra high-voltage transmission infrastructure with the exception of Corsica. High-voltage submarine cables (from Italy to Corsica and from Italy to Sardinia) are providing the islands with electricity. The most common type of power plant is hydropower, closely followed by gas and oil. Coal power is still in use in the Italian regions (mainland and Sardinia).

The cross-border regional average of waste generation (per GDP) consistently remains above the European average and is closely aligned with the Italian and French border region averages.

2.4 Socio-economic dimension

The socio-economic dimension examines patterns of social integration, tourism, and access to public services in the border region. It identifies how socio-cultural links, visitor flows and essential services influence development in the cross-border area. By examining interpersonal interactions via social media, language similarities, tourism intensity, and the accessibility of facilities such as secondary schools, grocery shops, hospitals, doctors, pharmacies and cinemas this dimension highlights both functional integration and potential socio-spatial differences.

2.4.1 Social integration

This sub-dimension evaluates the level of social integration in the border region by identifying areas with low or high cross-border interactions. It analyses cross-border connectivity in social media and language similarities across and along national borders to evaluate the potential for cultural and social integration.

2.4.1.1 Cross-border connectivity in social media

Indicator description

The indicator refers to the existing connections between users of META social media (in particular Facebook) across the border. It aims at giving an overview of the degree of personal connectivity between inhabitants of the border area. Even though not all these internet connections will relate to real communication exchanges but sometimes just "following" content from other users, they give an overview of interpersonal and cultural knowledge of the social media landscape from across the border.

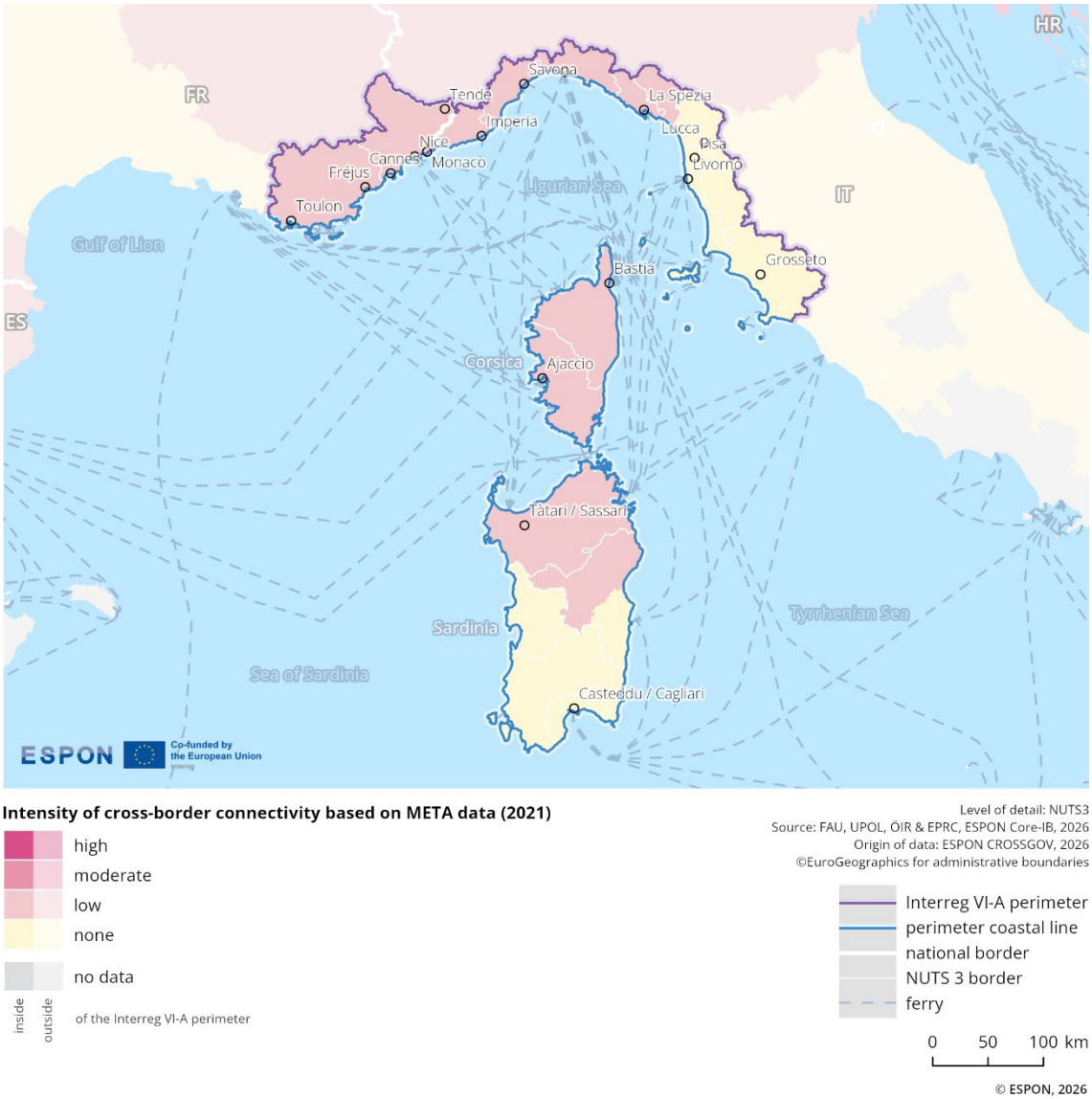
- **Source/method of retrieval**: Processing Facebook data on existing connections across the border (data for Good Meta)
- **Temporal coverage**: 2021
- **Unit**: n/a

Please refer to the technical annex for more information.

Figure 2.27 illustrates the spatial distribution of cross-border connectivity based on Facebook information in the border area. The different shades of pink indicate varying intensities of connectivity, ranging form low to high, with darker tones representing stronger intensity of cross-border connectivity in social media.

The intensity of cross-border connectivity in social media among residents of this border region is rather asymmetrical. In the mainland French areas (around Toulon and Monaco) and in the portion of the Italian mainland closest to the French border (including Savona and La Spezia), cross-border connectivity in social media is low. In the remaining mainland areas of cross-border region (including Livorno and Grosseto), no cross-border connectivity is recorded. In Corsica (around Ajaccio), cross-border connectivity is low, while in Sardinia, it is low around Sassari and absent in the southern areas of the island (around Cagliari).

Figure 2.27: Cross-border connectivity in social media



2.4.1.2 Language similarities along national borders

Indicator description

The indicator specifies whether the language is the same across the border, whether the respective national languages have commonalities, whether while different, there are local linguistic commonalities, and whether the language is different.

- **Source/method of retrieval**: ESPON cross-border public services (CPS) 2.0 database along border segments
- **Temporal coverage**: 2022
- **Unit**: n/a

Please refer to the technical annex for more information.

A local language ("corsican or corsu") exists in Corsica as well as in the northern part of Sardinia and many inhabitants are biligual (French/corsican or Italian/corsican). The Italian regions of the programme also feature Italian dialects, some having similarities with corsican. Nonetheless, the languages is use in the border region remain mainly French and Italian. Despite sharing common roots, the 2 national languages are too different to allow for widespread knowledge of the neighbouring region's language.

2.4.2 Tourism

This sub-dimension identifies key tourism hotspots in the border region to highlight tourism dynamics. It analyses the number of nights spent in tourist accommodation establishments in order to evaluate the attractiveness of, and developments in, the tourism sector. Comparisons with the respective countries and the EU average provide context for understanding the region's dynamics.

2.4.2.1 Nights spent at tourist accommodation establishments

Indicator description

The indicator shows the number of nights a guest or tourist actually spends in a tourist accommodation establishment or non-rented accommodation (overnight stays). This may reveal the tourism attractiveness of a region and shed light on the role of tourism in the local economy, i.e., tourists/guests staying overnight may spend more in the region than one-day visitors.

- **Source**: Eurostat
- **Temporal coverage**: 2020-2023
- **Unit**: Nights per capita

Please refer to the technical annex for more information.

The spatial distribution of overnight stays highlights the importance of key tourist destinations in border areas. Tourism contributes significantly to regional income, infrastructure development and employment, and thereby supports regional prosperity. At the same time, it affects environmental and living conditions, which may reduce local acceptance despite its economic benefits. This is in particular the case in places where overtourism occurs due to seasonal pressures. This notably contributes to increasing land-use conflicts.

Figure 2.28 shows the number of overnight stays per capita at tourist accommodation establishments in 2023. It includes hotels, holiday and other short-stay accommodation, as well as campsites, caravan and trailer parks. The map uses a colour gradient, with darker shades indicating a higher number of nights spent per capita in 2023. It also shows the cumulative number of overnight stays from 2020 to 2023.

In 2023, particularly high intensities of overnight stays are evident on the NUTS3 regions in Italy (land) and in Corsica. Several NUTS3 regions show 20 to 40 nights per capita, including Corse-du-Sud, Haute-Corse, Livorno and Grosseto[14]. In the other regions, the per capita figures are somewhat lower, though still mostly between 10 and 20 nights spent per capita. In terms of total overnight stays over the 3-year period, the leading tourism regions are located in Var (approx. 17 million) and Alpes-Maritimes (approx. 13 million), Livorno (approx. 9.3 million), Sassari (approx. 7.4 million) and Grosseto (approx. 5.9 million).

[14] See Eurostat Statistical Atlas for NUTS3 (2021) regions: https://ec.europa.eu/statistical-atlas/viewer/?config=typologies.json&ch=NUTS&mids=BKGCNT,NUTS2021L3,CNTOVL&o=1,1,0.7&center=49.69576,14.3332,4&lcis=NUTS2021L3&

The UNESCO natural heritage sites Su Nuraxi di Barumini, located in Sardinia, and the Gulf of Porto (Calanche of Piana, Gulf of Girolata, Scandola Reserve), located in Corsica attract numerous tourists.

Figure 2.28: Overnight stays in tourism

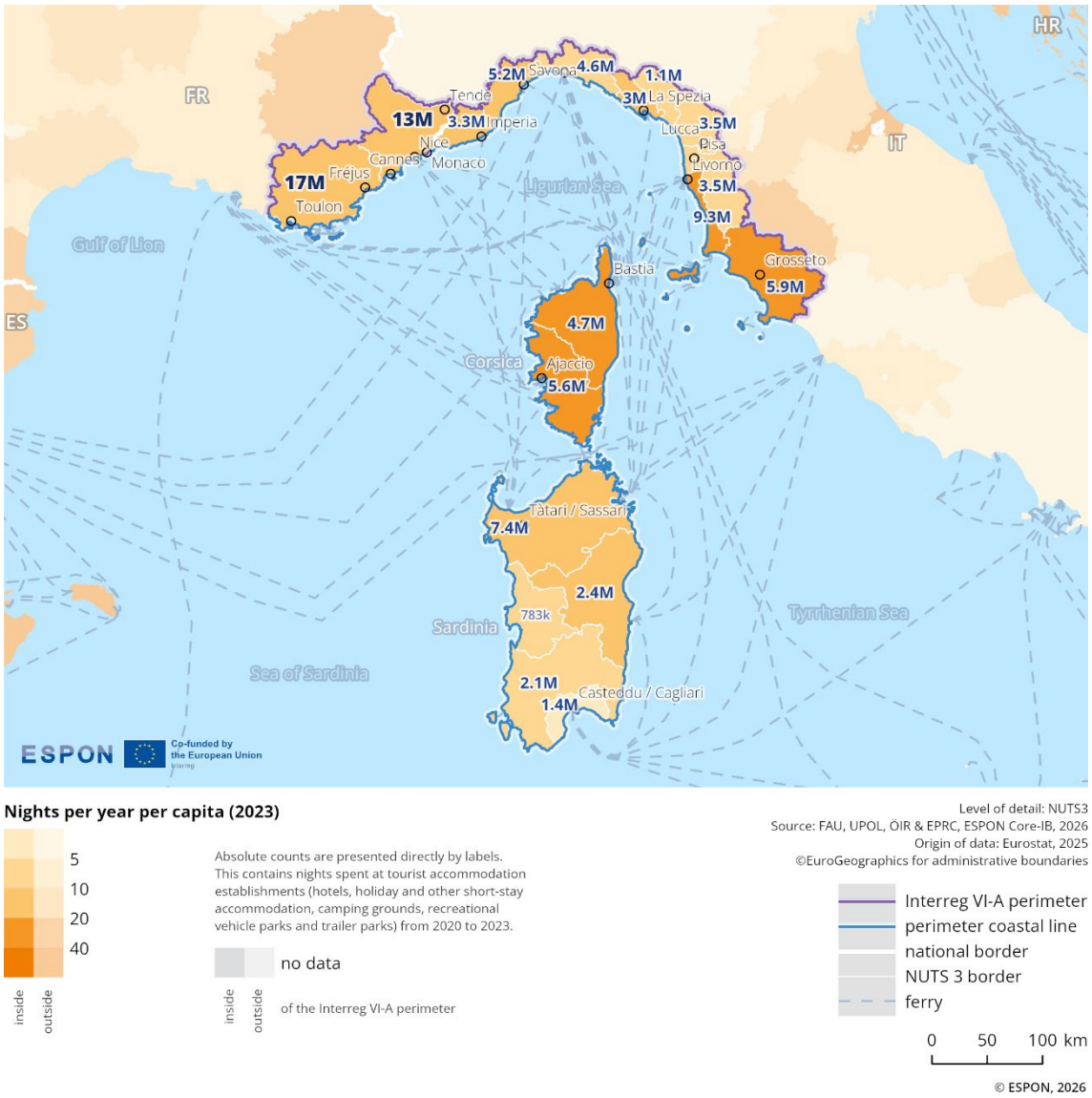
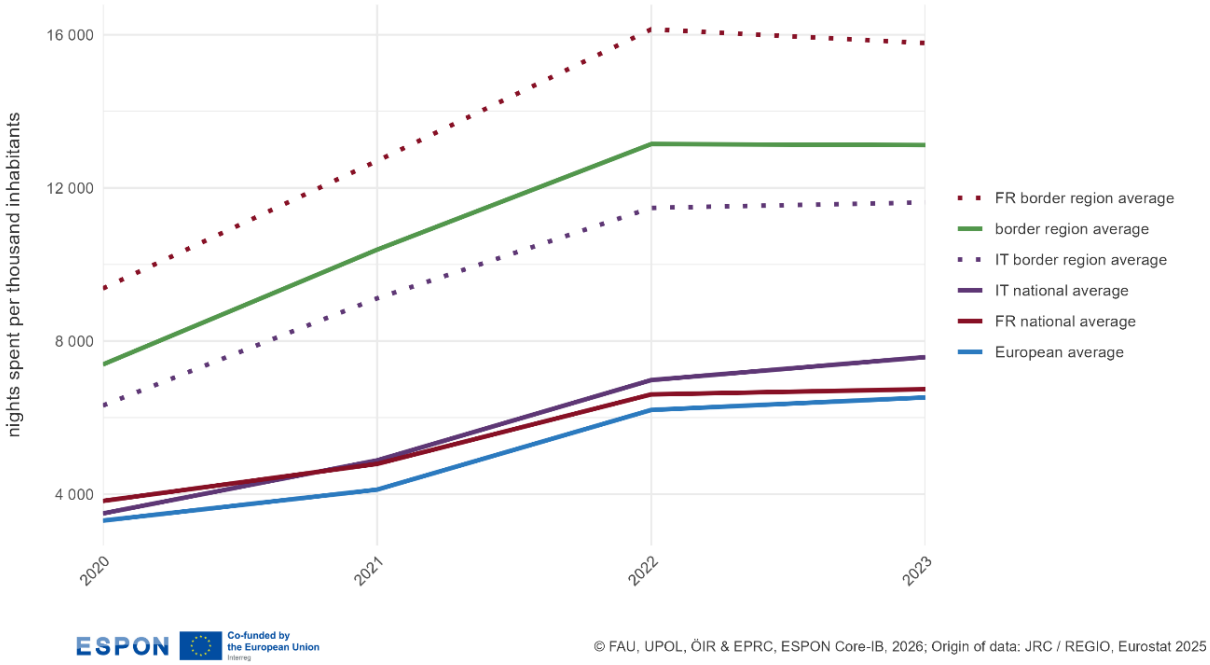


Figure 2.29 illustrates the development of nights spent at tourist establishments per thousand inhabitants from 2020 to 2023. Over the entire period, the average for the Italy-France (maritime) programme area is higher than the overall European average, which includes EU member states and the EFTA countries Iceland, Liechtenstein, Switzerland and Norway. In all 4 years, the border regional averages of both countries are significantly higher than their respective national averages. Additionally, the regional average for the French border area is higher than that for the Italian throughout the given period.

Touristic patterns have a series of implications for spatial development on either side of the border. Transport infrastructure has to consider peak volumes and balancing recreating activities with socio-cultural as well as environmental heritage can be a challenge.

Figure 2.29: Overnight stays in tourism (comparison)



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2.4.3 Services of general interest

This sub-dimension looks at how accessible services of general interest (SGIs) are in the border region, identifying areas that are well-served and those that are more difficult to access. It analyses access to essential services such as secondary schools, grocery shops, hospitals, doctors, pharmacies and cinemas.

2.4.3.1 Accessibility to services of general interest

Indicator description

The indicator shows, for the below listed facilities and services, the average driving time to the nearest facility of a series of services of general interest.

- **Source/method of retrieval**: Processing and analysis of standardised travel-time accessibility to secondary schools, grocery shops, hospitals, doctors, pharmacies and cinemas available in the ESPON PROFECY Update (2022)
- **Temporal coverage**: 2021
- **Unit**: Minutes (in 2.5 x 2.5 km grid)

Please refer to the technical annex for more information.

Figures 2.30 to 2.35 visualise average car travel times to services of general interest within the programme area. The maps display accessibility to:

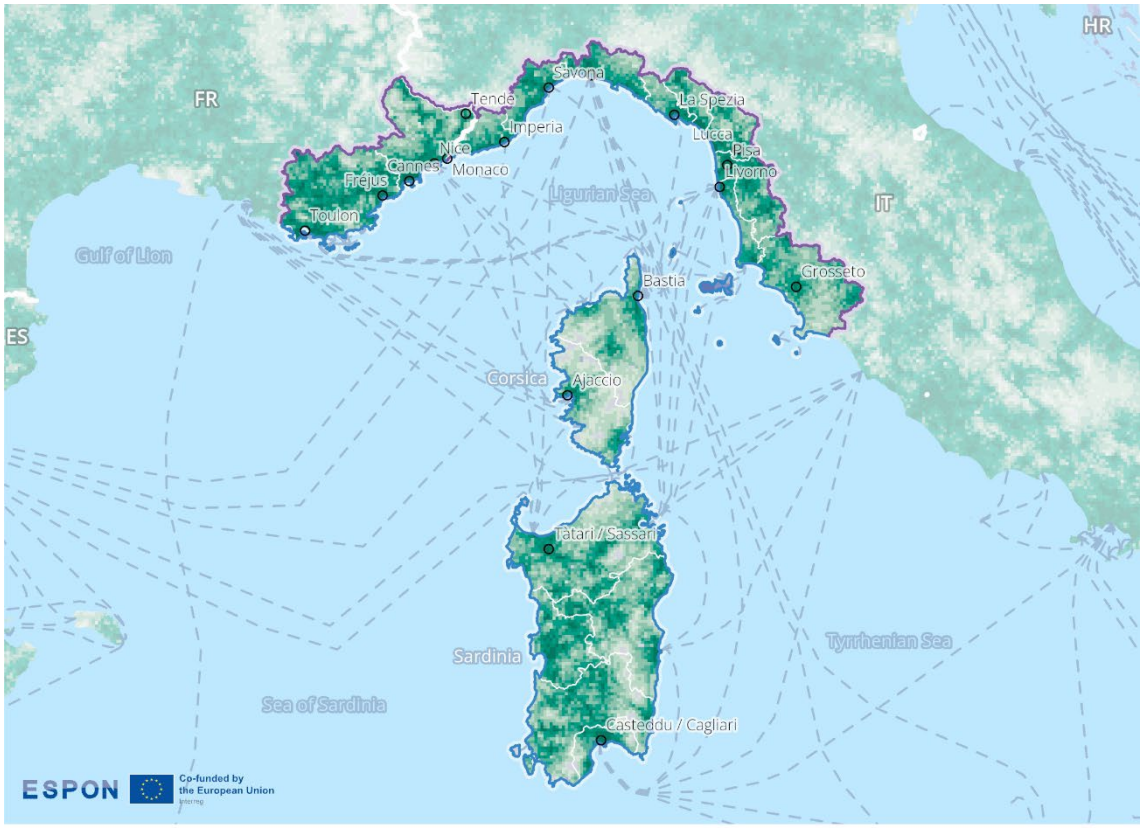
- Secondary schools (Figure 2.30)
- Grocery shops (Figure 2.31)
- Hospitals (Figure 2.32)
- Doctors (Figure 2.33)
- Pharmacies (Figure 2.34)
- Cinemas (Figure 2.35)

These indicators show how long, on average, it takes to reach the nearest facility by car. The data comes from the ESPON PROFECY Update project (2022) and is visualised based on a 2.5-kilometer grid.

In the Italy–France border area, essential services such as hospitals, doctors, pharmacies, schools, and grocery shops are evenly distributed across the Italian and French mainland. On Sardinia and Corsica, travel times are longer. In Corsica, services are mostly concentrated around larger cities, while in Sardinia, accessibility is better in the western part of the island. This results in travel times of less than one hour on the mainland and more than one hour in some island regions. Travel times to most services appear to be somewhat longer on the French side compared to the Italian regions.

Hospitals, as a medical service, are mainly located in cities and more densely populated areas. This common challenge in French and Italian border areas creates an urban–rural gradient, with shorter travel times in and near urban centres and longer travel times in rural or remote regions. The same applies to cinemas as a cultural service.

Figure 2.30: Travel time to secondary schools



Car travel time to the nearest secondary school (2021)

5min
10min
15min
20min
30min
45min
1h
2h
3h
4h
6h
12h

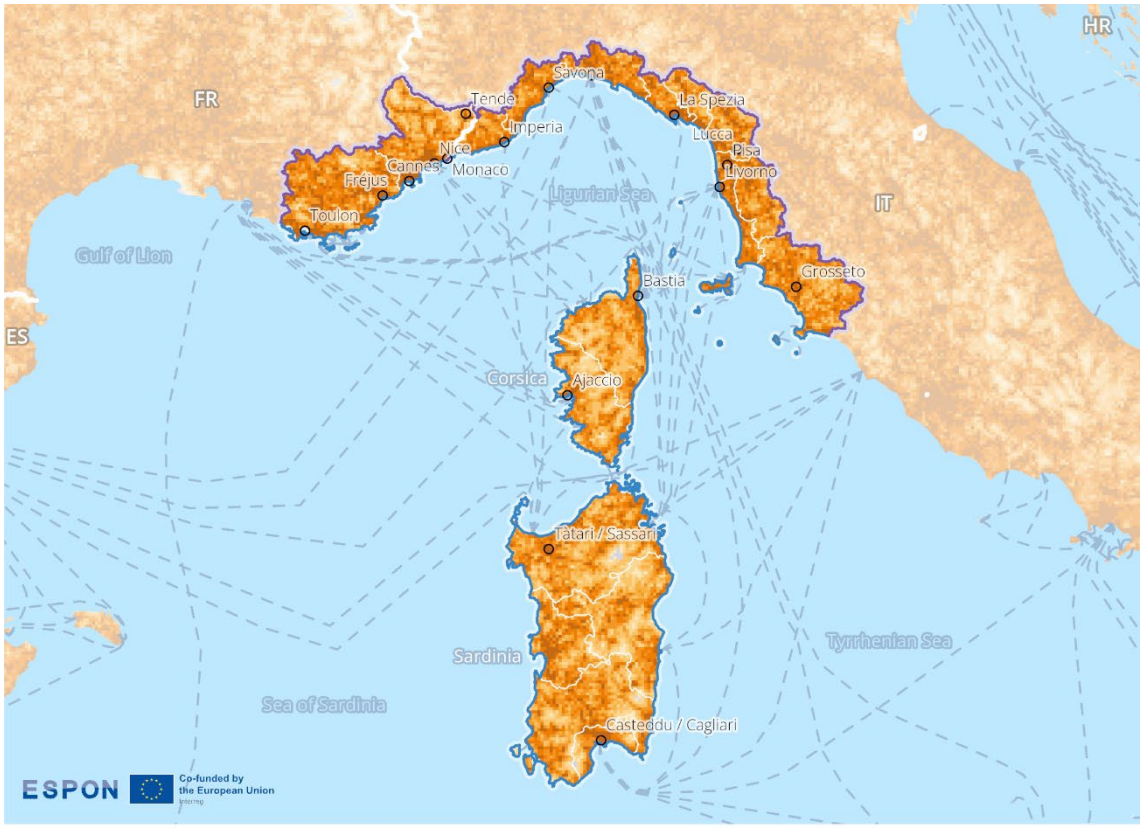
inside outside of the Interreg VI-A perimeter

Level of detail: 2.5km grid
Source: FAU, UPOL, ÖIR & EPRC, ESPON Core-IB, 2026
Origin of data: ESPON PROFECY Update, 2022
©EuroGeographics for administrative boundaries

Interreg VI-A perimeter
perimeter coastal line
national border
NUTS 3 border
ferry

0 50 100 km

Figure 2.31: Travel time to grocery shops



Car travel time to the nearest shop (2021)

5min
10min
15min
20min
30min
45min
1h
2h
3h
4h
6h
12h

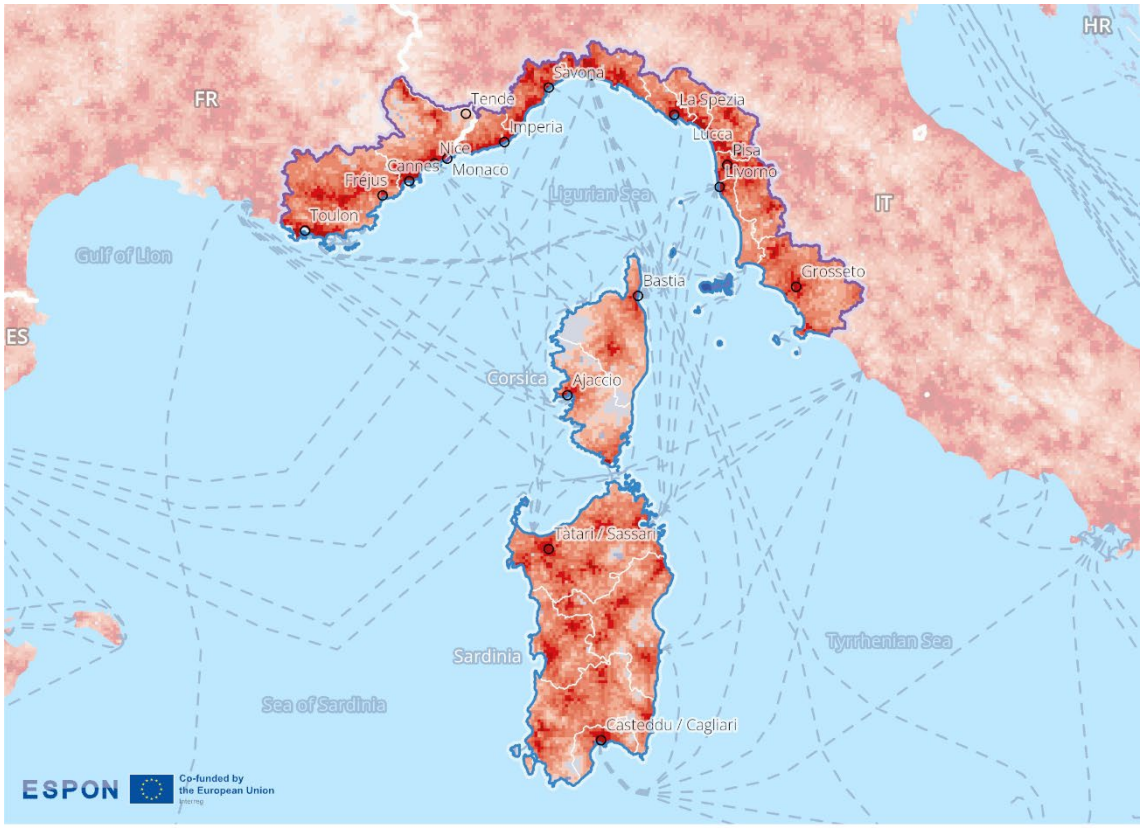
inside outside of the Interreg VI-A perimeter

Level of detail: 2.5km grid
Source: FAU, UPOL, ÖIR & EPRC, ESPON Core-IB, 2026
Origin of data: ESPON PROFECY Update, 2022
©EuroGeographics for administrative boundaries

Interreg VI-A perimeter
perimeter coastal line
national border
NUTS 3 border
ferry

0 50 100 km

Figure 2.32: Travel time to hospitals



Car travel time to the nearest hospital (2021)

5min
10min
15min
20min
30min
45min
1h
2h
3h
4h
6h
12h

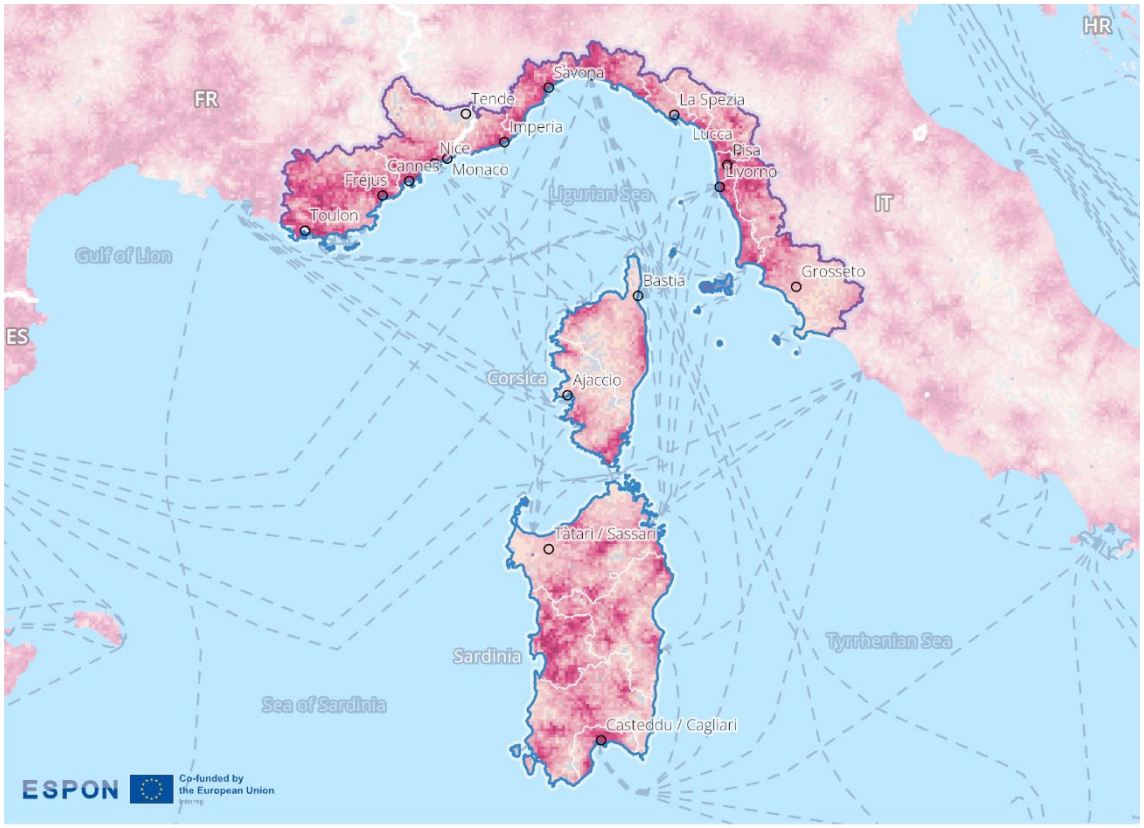
inside outside of the Interreg VI-A perimeter

Level of detail: 2.5km grid
Source: FAU, UPOL, ÖIR & EPRC, ESPON Core-IB, 2026
Origin of data: ESPON PROFECY Update, 2022
©EuroGeographics for administrative boundaries

Interreg VI-A perimeter
perimeter coastal line
national border
NUTS 3 border
ferry

0 50 100 km

Figure 2.33: Travel time to doctors



Car travel time to the nearest doctor (2021)

5min
10min
15min
20min
30min
45min
1h
2h
3h
4h
6h
12h

inside outside of the Interreg VI-A perimeter

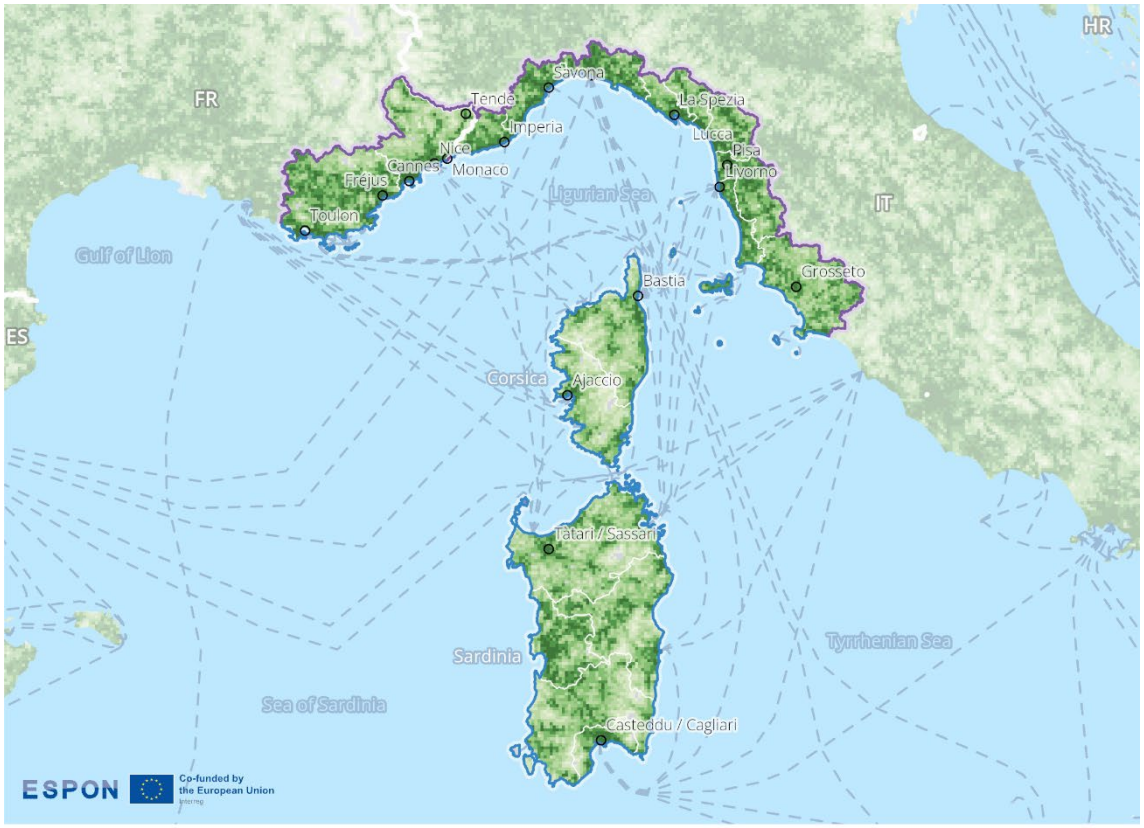
Level of detail: 2.5km grid
Source: FAU, UPOL, ÖIR & EPRC, ESPON Core-IB, 2026
Origin of data: ESPON PROFECY Update, 2022
©EuroGeographics for administrative boundaries

Interreg VI-A perimeter
perimeter coastal line
national border
NUTS 3 border
ferry

0 50 100 km

© ESPON, 2026

Figure 2.34: Travel time to pharmacies



Car travel time to the nearest pharmacy (2021)

5min
10min
15min
20min
30min
45min
1h
2h
3h
4h
6h
12h

inside outside of the Interreg VI-A perimeter

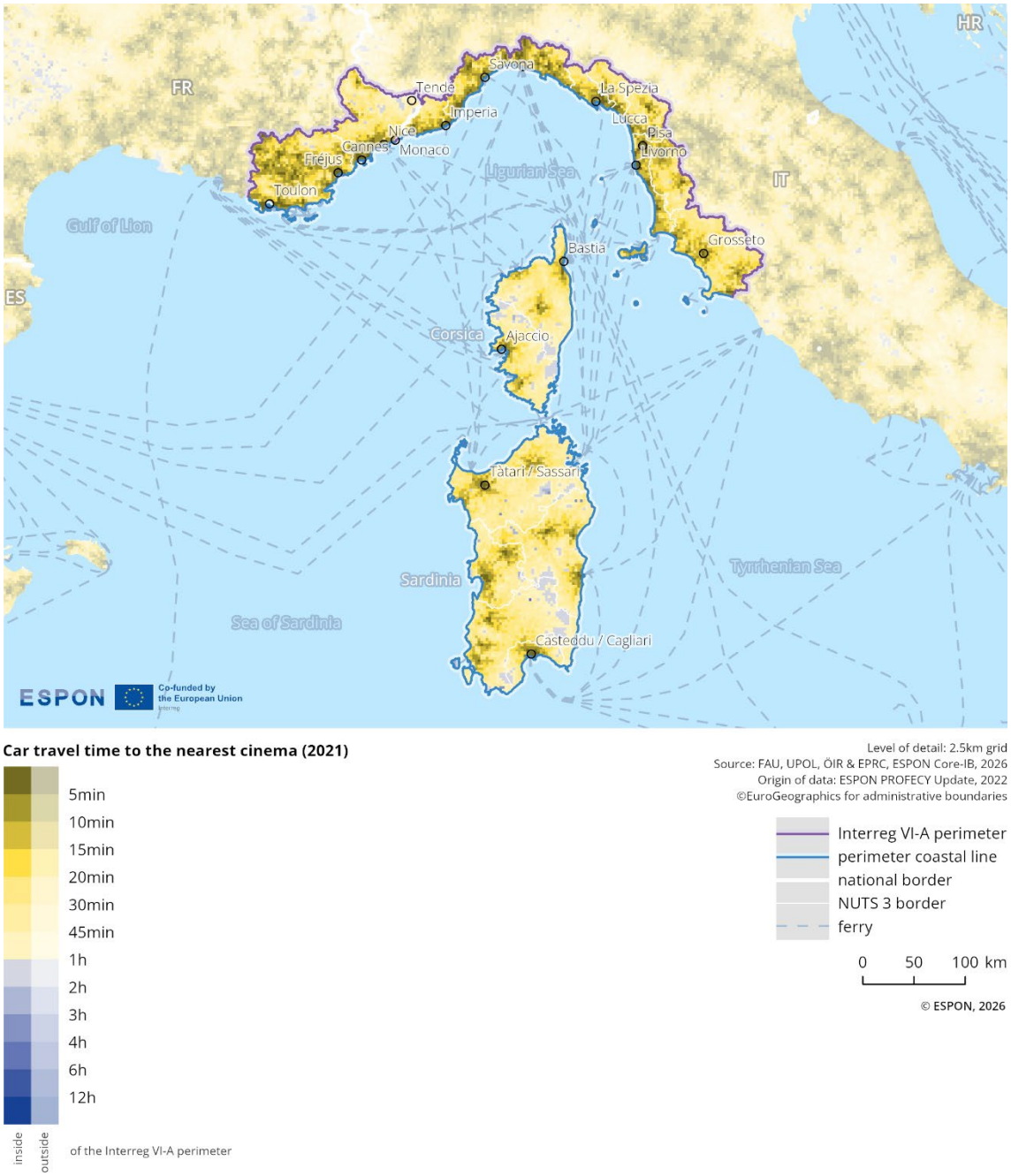
Level of detail: 2.5km grid
Source: FAU, UPOL, ÖIR & EPRC, ESPON Core-IB, 2026
Origin of data: ESPON PROFECY Update, 2022
©EuroGeographics for administrative boundaries

Interreg VI-A perimeter
perimeter coastal line
national border
NUTS 3 border
ferry

0 50 100 km

© ESPON, 2026

Figure 2.35: Travel time to cinemas



2.4.4 Key messages on the socio-economic dimension

Cross-border connectivity in social media remains limited, with slightly higher connectivity near the borders. Cross-border connectivity in social media is mainly concentrated in the immediate vicinity of the land border between France and Italy and, to a lesser extent, between Corsica and northern Sardinia. In large parts of the programme area, especially on the islands and inland territories, cross-border social interaction remains weak or absent. Existing language barierrs and the maritime nature of the border continue to constrain everyday social exchange.

Tourism plays a central role in the socio-economic fabric of the whole cross-border region. Overnight stays per capita are consistently higher than European and national averages, with particularly high tourism intensity in Corsica and several Italian mainland regions. While tourism supports employment

and regional income, it also generates strong seasonal pressures and raises challenges related to local acceptance, infrastructure capacity and environmental sustainability.

Access to services of general interest shows a relatively balanced situation across the French and Italian mainland of the programme area, where essential services such as hospitals, doctors, pharmacies, schools and grocery shops are generally reachable within reasonable travel times. In contrast, island territories face longer travel times and stronger internal disparities. In Corsica, services are concentrated around larger coastal cities, while central mountainous areas remain less accessible. In Sardinia, accessibility is comparatively better in the western part of the island, but still more constrained than on the mainland.

Overall, the socio-economic dimension highlights a cross-border region where tourism and service provision function relatively well at national and regional levels, but where cross-border social integration remains weak and highly localised, pointing to untapped potential for cooperation in cultural exchange, sustainable tourism management and service resilience.

2.5 Border security and safety

This dimension shows the security and safety conditions in border regions. It analyses the number of days on which border control is temporarily reintroduced at internal borders, using this as an indicator of security concerns and restrictions on cross-border movement.

2.5.1 Temporary reintroduction of border controls at internal borders

Indicator description

The indicator shows the number of days of temporary reintroduction of border control at internal borders, including the official reasons behind. The reintroduction of border control at the internal borders must be applied as a last resort measure, in exceptional situations, and must respect the principle of proportionality. The scope and duration of reintroduced border control should be restricted to the bare minimum needed to respond to the threat in question.

- **Source/method of retrieval**: Processing and analysis data of European Commission information pursuant to Article 25 and 28 et seq. of the Schengen Borders Code
- **Temporal coverage**: 2006-2025 (cut-off: 08 May 2025, in order to allow data treatment before work package completion)
- **Unit**: Days per year

Please refer to the technical annex for more information.

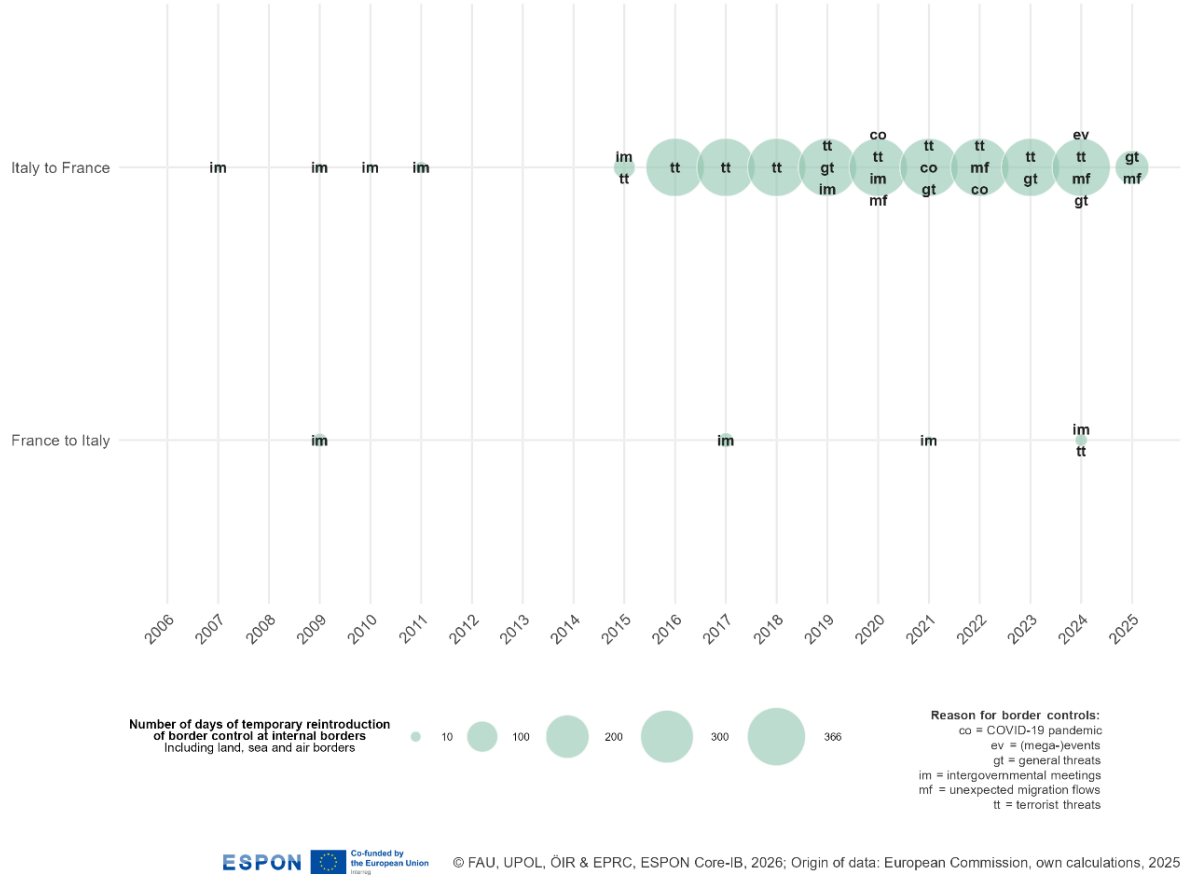
Figure 2.36 illustrates the number of days during which temporary border controls were reintroduced at internal borders within the Schengen Area. Each bubble represents a specific year with bubble sizes indicating the number of days the respective border was under control. The categories of reasons for reintroducing controls include:

- co – COVID-19 pandemic
- ev – (Mega-)events
- gt – General threats
- im – Intergovernmental meetings
- mf – Unexpected migration flows
- tt – Terrorist threats

The data spans from 2006 to 2025 (cut-off: 08 May 2025) and is based on notifications from the European Commission information pursuant to Article 25 and 28 et seq. of the Schengen Borders Code. In line with Schengen rules, the reintroduction of controls is to be used only as a last resort, for exceptional circumstances, and with strict adherence to the principle of proportionality—both in duration and scope.

Both, Italy and France had already been part of the Schengen Area by 2006.

Figure 2.36: Temporary reintroduction of border controls



The Italy-France border area is characterised by an asymmetric pattern:

- Crossing the border from Italy to France: Temporary border control occurred in 15 out of 20 years, driven by intergovernmental meetings such as NATO and G20 summits. From 2016 until 2024 the border is permanently controlled. The reasons are terrorist threats e.g., due to attacks in Paris and Nice (2016-2017), major sports events like the EURO 2016, the Tour de France (2016) or the Olympic and Paralympic Games (2024). Further the border has been controlled due to COVID-19 (2020-2022) and general threats like the situation at the external borders, organized criminality and smuggling (2020-2022). Another reason is the unexpected and persistent migration flows since 2019 (until 2025).
- Crossing the border from France to Italy: Temporary border controls occurred in 4 of 20 years, tied to intergovernmental meetings like G8/G7 (2009, 2017, 2024) or G 20 (2021) as well as terrorist risk (2024).

From a comparative perspective, France has implemented controls for significantly more days than Italy, indicating an unequal impact on cross-border movement in one direction.

These controls tend to have a tangible effect on the smooth functioning of cross-border flows, especially commuting and logistics, as they introduce delays and unpredictability.

2.5.2 Key messages on the border security dimension

The analysis of temporary reintroductions of border controls highlights challenges and potential in the France-Italy (maritime) border region, in particular the asymmetrical implementation of such controls. From a comparative perspective, France has imposed border controls for a significantly longer period of time than Italy. Asides from the Covid crisis, the most recent reasons for introducing border controls are linked to terrorism threats (in line with the ant-terrorism plan "Vigipirate"), organised criminality and smuggling and illegal migratory flows.

The findings suggest that, although the border region benefits from close socio-economic interaction, it remains vulnerable to uncoordinated national measures. Strengthening resilience and ensuring the long-term functionality of cross-border cooperation, particularly in times of crisis, will require continuous, balanced and jointly managed governance mechanisms.

2.6 Governance dimension

This section covers the cross-border governance profile of the Italy-France (Maritime) cross-border programme area. The Interreg VI-A Italy-France (Maritime) programme is based on robust cooperation arrangements among the participating maritime regions of Liguria, Tuscany, Sardinia on the Italian side and Corsica and the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region in France. Cooperation includes long-standing institutional frameworks such as the European Group of Territorial Cooperation ILES or the Treaty of Quirinale and macro-regional strategies like WEST MED that focus on sustainable development in the Mediterranean area. The programme area also benefits from complementarity and synergies with other programmes such as Interreg Euro MED, NEXT MED to cover the transnational border and Italy-Malta, Italy-Tunisia, and Italy-France-Alcotra to foster cross-border collaboration. In terms of territorial context, the programme area encompasses a mix of rural, urban and intermediate areas, including 4 metropolitan cities. A significant insular component, particularly in Sardinia and Corsica, adds complexity due to the restricted access to European markets, the lack of an adequate critical socio-economic critical mass and the reduced connectivity linked to transport and energy networks. These factors shape the programme's strategic focus and stress the need for tailored, targeted and cooperative approached to shared challenges.

2.6.1 Cross-border cooperation

This sub-dimension identifies the extent of cross-border cooperation in the border region. It illustrates areas of high cooperation intensity and identifies functional links in governance structures across borders. It also identifies areas with high awareness of obstacles and the willingness and support services to overcome them, as well as areas where Interreg cooperation intensity is already strong.

2.6.1.1 Cross-border governance structures

Indicator description

The indicator shows active institutionalised cooperation that act as cross-border entities. It includes cooperation formats such as Eurocities, Euroregions, EGTC, cross-border associations, cross-border councils, etc.

- **Source/method of retrieval**: Localisation and categorising of cross-border cooperation formats (Eurocities, Euroregions, EGTC, cross-border associations, cross-border councils, conferences, working communities), based on desktop research.
- **Temporal coverage**: Status as of October 2025
- **Unit**: n/a

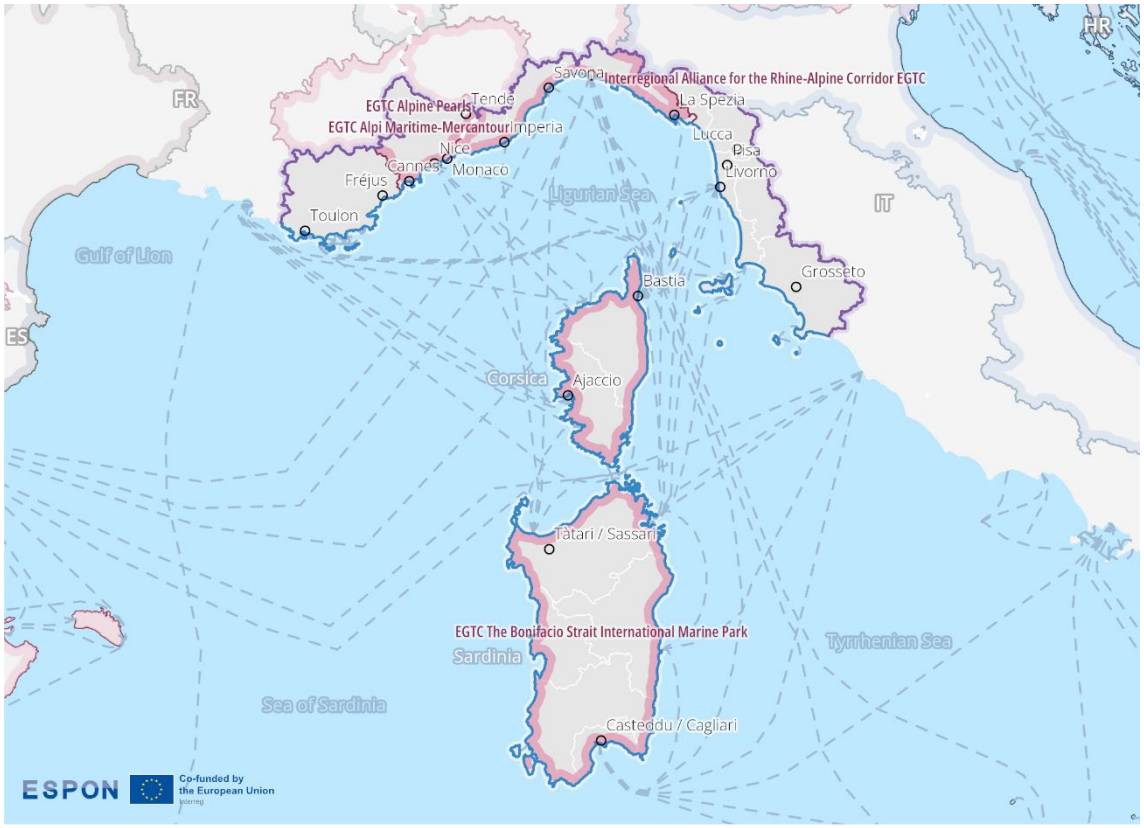
Please refer to the technical annex for more information.

Figure 2.37 shows the different types of institutionalised cooperation. These governance structures either function as cross-border entities or bring together stakeholders from the cross-border region around shared topics. The governance structures covered include Eurocities, Euroregions, European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation (EGTCs), cross-border associations and councils. Project-based cooperation is not included.

The coloured markings on the map indicate different types of institutionalisations: EGTCs are shown in red, Eurocities in yellow, Euroregions/Euregios/Europaregions/Eurodistricts in blue, and other formats in grey.

The multi-level governance structure in this programme area shows broad spatial coverage along the borders. Overall, the programme area exhibits a high level of institutionalised cooperation along the national border, with relatively large perimeters. The EGTC “The Bonifacio Strait International Marine Park” is the most relevant EGTC to the programme area.

Figure 2.37: Cross-border governance structures



Format of cooperation

- EGTC
- Euroregion / Euregio / Europaregion / Eurodistrict
- other

inside / outside of the Interreg VI-A perimeter

Level of detail: NUTS3
Source: FAU, UPOL, ÖIR & EPRC, ESPON Core-IB, 2026
Origin of data: ESPON CROSSGOV, 2026
©EuroGeographics for administrative boundaries

- Interreg VI-A perimeter
- perimeter coastal line
- national border
- NUTS 3 border
- ferry

0 50 100 km

2.6.1.2 Cross-border public services

Indicator description

The indicator shows different services specialised on cross-border challenges and development potential, including their domain of operation. As a specific form of services of general interest, cross-border public services (CPS) address joint problems or development potentials of border regions that are located on different sides of one or more national borders.

- **Source**: ESPON cross-border public services (CPS) 2.0 database
- **Temporal coverage**: 2022
- **Unit**: n/a

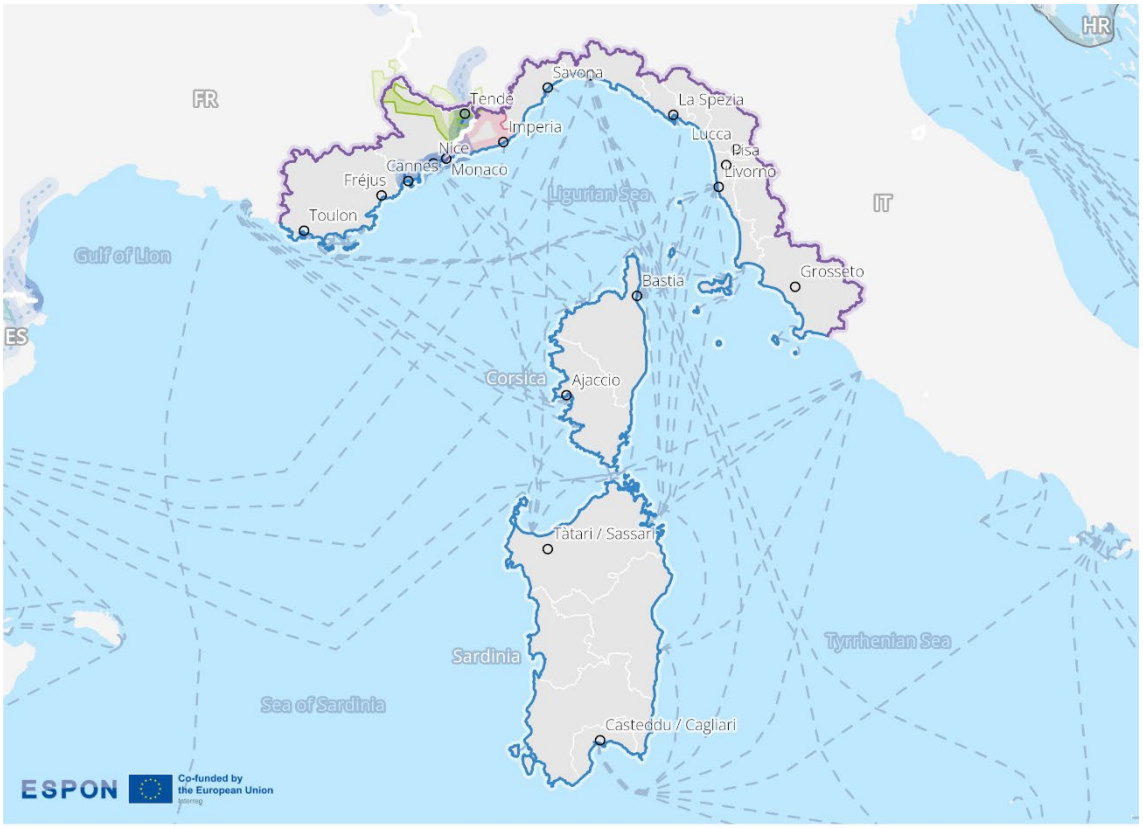
Please refer to the technical annex for more information.

Figure 2.38 depicts the geographical extent of cross-border public services in the border area in 2022. Different thematic areas are represented by distinct symbols and colours, indicating services such as disaster management[15], health care, transportation, education, environment, energy, job placement, and culture. The visualisation highlights where these services operate across the national boundary.

Cross-border public services in the France–Italy–Monaco region are spatially fragmented. A cluster of services surrounds the Monaco–Ventimiglia area, including transportation, health care and environment & water.

[15] For more information on cross-border disaster and risk management between Italy and France see: European Commission: Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy, Technopolis Group, CMCC, Nordregio, *Strengthening the Resilience of EU Border Regions – Mapping Risks & Crisis Management Tools and Identifying Gaps*, 2024, https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2776/832103

Figure 2.38: Cross-border public services



Geographical extent of cross-border public service themes (2022)

areal linear character of the service

- Disaster management
- Health care
- Transportation
- Tourism & information
- Education & research
- Environment & water
- Heating & energy
- Job placement
- Culture

inside outside inside outside of the Interreg VI-A perimeter

Cross-border public services covering more than one theme have been assigned only to one. Furthermore, some polygons have been excluded because they were only approximately and not accurately spatially defined.

Level of detail: geolocalised lines and areas
Source: FAU, UPOL, ÖIR & EPRC, ESPON Core-IB, 2026
Origin of data: ESPON CPS, 2022
©EuroGeographics for administrative boundaries

- Interreg VI-A perimeter
- perimeter coastal line
- national border
- NUTS 3 border
- ferry

0 50 100 km

2.6.1.3 Perceived cross-border obstacles in b-solutions

Indicator description

The indicator shows cases of legal or administrative obstacles selected in the framework of the b-solutions initiative. This indicator lists the number, location and nature of suggested solution of cases in the b-solutions initiative, including the topic and parties involved.

- **Source/method of retrieval**: Processing and analysis of the b-solutions initiative data
- **Temporal coverage**: 2018-2025 (first quarter)
- **Unit**: n/a

Please refer to the technical annex for more information.

The b-solutions initiative is a European Union project that supports the resolution of legal, operational and administrative cross-border obstacles. It offers funding for pilot actions and legal expert advice in border regions. A high level of cross-border integration often reveals strong barriers of cross-border functioning. In order to exploit the cross-border potentials, these obstacles have to be overcome or at least addressed. Both the number of reported obstacles and the general interest in solutions serve as important indicators of cross-border interaction.

As part of the ESPON CROSSGOV project, all b-solutions initiatives were analysed to deepen the understanding of the thematic focus of the perceived cross-border obstacles across different border regions and the suggested solution, in particular from the European perspective.

In the border area of Italy–France (Maritime), 2 b-solutions pilot actions were identified. These included initiatives focusing on transportation, such as cross-border mobility (SeaFlix) and addressing obstacles in yachting internships and training. Applications for these pilots were mainly submitted by public bodies or bodies governed by public law.

In this border area, in the field of transport, issues relate to sustainable transport, tourism, maritime mobility, cabotage, and urban mobility networks. Governance and institutional cooperation focus on the establishment of European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation (EGTCs) and collaboration between local and regional authorities. Challenges in this area include navigating administrative procedures and ensuring the recognition of skills in the maritime sector.

The solutions proposed in the pilot actions are predominantly hybrid in nature. For instance, the SeaFlix Cross-Border Mobility initiative involves administrative measures, such as the creation of an EGTC to enhance cooperation and streamline the regulatory framework concerning cross-border transport services. Additionally, it proposes legal amendments to current French legislation to facilitate cabotage and improve access to maritime transport options for cross-border travellers.

The initiative focused on yachting internships and training seeks to eliminate barriers in the education system by proposing operational adjustments, such as removing the requirement for students to obtain the Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW). This is intended to make it easier for aspiring maritime professionals to enter the industry and ensure they receive the necessary training and qualifications. Furthermore, administrative measures include implementing a special EsaBac Techno Yachting school pathway that aligns with industry needs and facilitates smoother transitions into the workforce.

2.6.1.4 Institutionalised advice centres for cross-border issues

Indicator description

The indicator shows where institutionalised advice centres on cross-border issues are located, including their thematic focus and geographical perimeter.

- **Source/method of retrieval**: Localisation and thematic focus of advice centres for cross-border issues are identified via desktop research.
- **Temporal coverage**: Status as of February 2025
- **Unit**: n/a

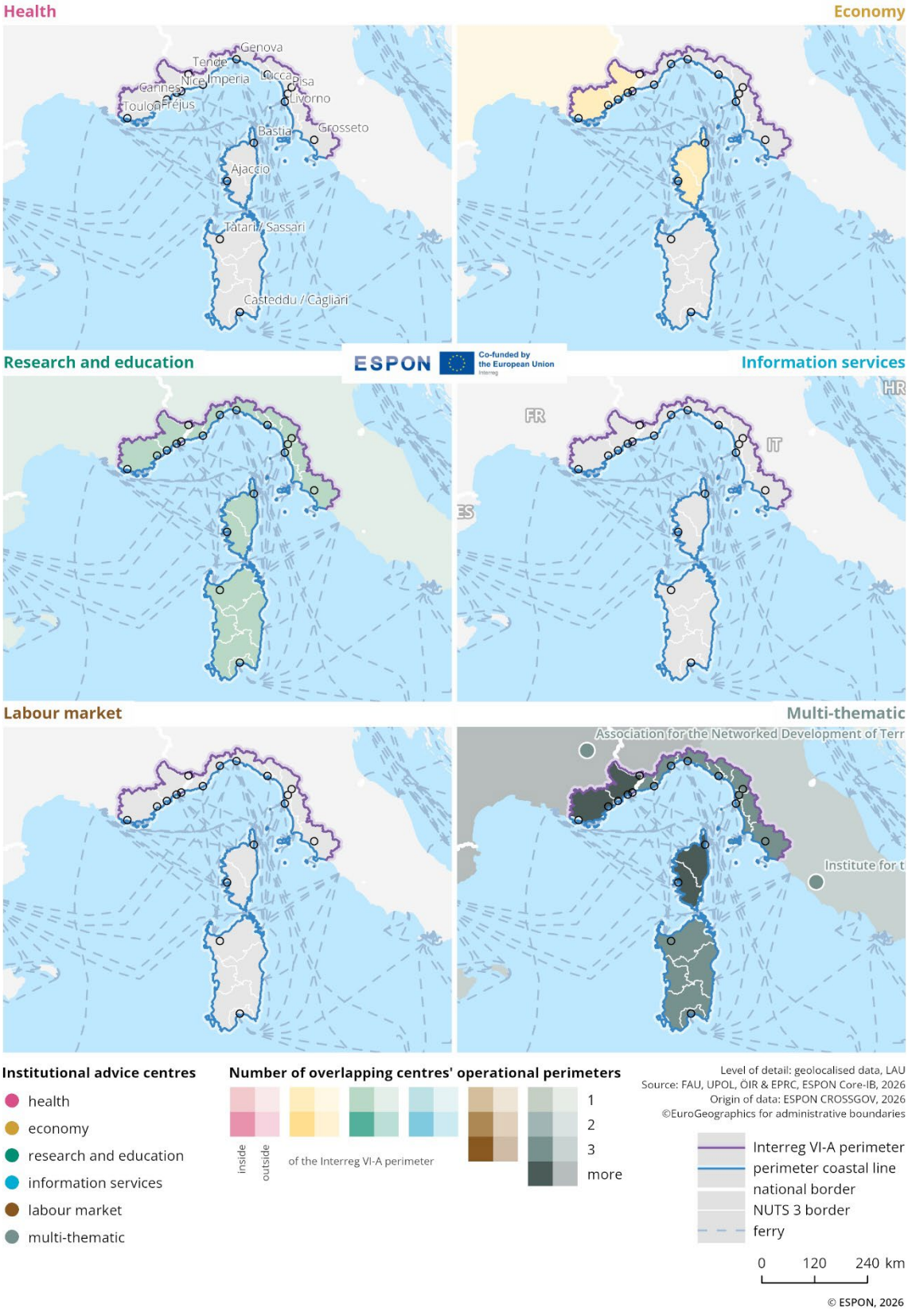
Please refer to the technical annex for more information.

Figure 2.39 shows the locations and types of institutionalised advice centres, along with their operational domains, in the maritime cross-border Interreg region between France and Italy. These centres throughout Europe provide support in various fields such as health, economy, research & education, information services, the labour market, and multi-thematic issues. The operational domains of these centres are also indicated by coloured shading on the map. The more intense the colour, the stronger the influence of that specific domain in the corresponding area.

There are no institutionalised advice centres directly in the Italy-France (maritime) region but there are 2 multi-thematic institutionalised advice centres located near the Interreg region border. As shown on the map, one is located in the eastern part of the map in Italy (Institute for the Study of Alpine Regions and Mountain Areas – EURAC Research), and the other in the northern part of the map in France (Association for the Networked Development of Territories and Services – ADRETS).

Centres with multi-thematic, as well as research and education operational domains, are represented in both countries within the Interreg area, but they are more pronounced in the French part of the Interreg region. Additionally, economic operational domains are also present in the French part.

Figure 2.39: Institutionalised cross-border advice centres



2.6.2 Outline of Interreg activities

The following section outlines the key Interreg activities in the 2021-2027 programming period. The aspects included concern the development opportunities and challenges identified (based on an analysis of the programme document - see Table 2), the budget available and split of allocation (Figure 2.40), overlapping Interreg programmes and the key aspects drawn from the programme.

Table 2: Interreg VI (2021-2027): Opportunities and challenges

Topic	Key development opportunities and challenges identified for Interreg 2021-27
Economy	▪ High vulnerability of coastal and marine ecosystems ▪ Degradation of protected and natural areas due to climate change and land-use conflicts. ▪ Circular economy potential given that France and Italy are both EU leaders in circular economy. ▪ Natural capital accounting and environmental governance provide opportunities to promote conservation and pollution reduction.
Innovation and Competitiveness	▪ Disparities in competitiveness and innovation with only the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region exceeding the EU average ▪ Uneven digitalisation among SMEs especially after the Covid-19 pandemic. ▪ Fragmented support ecosystems.
Connectivity and Accessibility (Physical and Digital)	▪ The maritime borders and insular geography of the Italy-France Maritime area result in a lack of territorial continuity that creates obstacles to mobility and economic cohesion. ▪ Poor internal and external transport links, with limited and seasonal maritime connections and weak hinterland accessibility to main ports and TEN-T corridors.
Social	▪ Difficulties in accessing employment and training opportunities. Labour market mismatches in the programme area. ▪ Barriers for vulnerable groups. ▪ Fragmentation in education and training systems with a lack of cross-border alignment in recognising and validating skills and qualifications.
Governance	▪ Challenges: Weak strategic and governance capacity particularly concerning the specificities of the area (e.g., maritime dimension), new environmental challenges, and territorial development.

Total Budget: EUR 193,296,077.1

Figure 2.40: Split of Interreg allocation

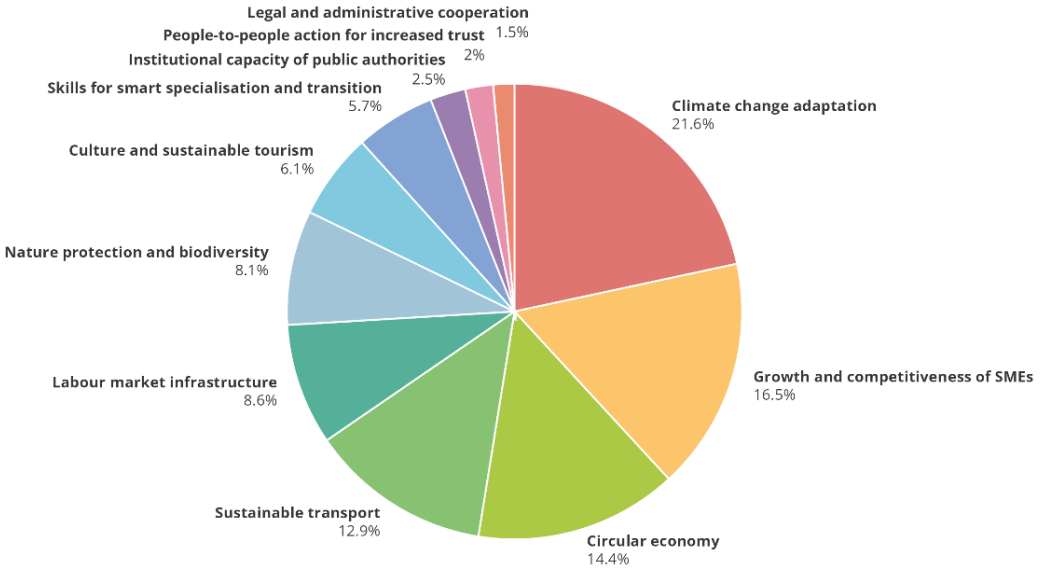


Table 3 shows the number of Interreg 2021-2027 cross-border and transnational programmes which share at least one NUTS3 region with the border area. Each programme has its own distinct rationale, value and territorial focus. However, for the purposes of, for example, planning and capitalisation activities it is potentially helpful for programmes and programme stakeholders to be aware of and connected to other Interreg programmes with which they share a direct territorial link.[16] The 4 Interreg C programmes Interreg ESPON, Interact, Interreg Europe and URBACT cover the whole EU territory and provide a range of joint services and initiatives.

Table 3: Shared geographies with other cross-border and transnational programmes

Interreg A (cross-border)	Interreg B (transnational)
1	2

Key aspects[17]

- Challenges such as environmental vulnerability, the need for economic diversification in tourism-dependent communities, and the push for innovation in maritime sectors have led Italy and France to jointly focus on similar priorities and goals within the Interreg Italy-France Maritime 2021–2027 programme. Demographic decline, youth emigration, and an ageing population particularly affect peripheral and island territories, while persistent issues of accessibility and connectivity hinder economic integration and service delivery. Additional pressures from tourism, maritime traffic, and urbanisation require coordinated management to safeguard natural and cultural assets. Administrative and regulatory differences, as well as linguistic and cultural barriers, further complicate effective cross-border cooperation and project implementation.

[16] It is noted that synergies and links with a wide range of other territorial cooperation and sectoral programmes and initiatives are also valuable and this is reflected in the wider analyses presented in this border profile, but not specifically covered in this table.

[17] Information stemming from the analysis of the programme document

- These shared and cross-border challenges make a joint approach essential. That is why, the programme area fosters distinctive focus for Interreg cooperation on fostering cross-border integration between maritime regions of Italy and France, with the ambition to create a competitive, sustainable, and resilient maritime area in the Mediterranean.
- Prioritisation of green and blue growth, with projects clustered around themes including climate change adaptation and risk prevention, environment and resource efficiency, innovation and competitiveness in maritime sectors, sustainable tourism, and improved mobility and accessibility. Social inclusion, employment, and the joint management of natural and cultural heritage are also key priorities
- Participation of partners is relatively balanced, with strong engagement from both Italian and French regions, including Liguria, Sardinia, Tuscany, and Corsica. Projects require partnerships between eligible regions in both countries, involving public bodies, NGOs, SMEs, and other organisations, with each project led by a designated partner meeting strict eligibility and compliance criteria.
- The Interreg Italy-France Maritime 2021–2027 programme creates strong synergies with other Mediterranean Interreg programmes, such as Interreg Euro-MED and Interreg NEXT MED, in particular through the programme involvement in the Mediterranean Multi-Programme Mechanism (MMM).

2.6.2.1 Interreg cooperation

Indicator description

Based on the keep.eu database, this indicator illustrates the network density of Interreg V-A (2014–2020). It is derived from the geographical location of all partners within a project consortium and reflects the intensity of cooperation between them. For the analysis, project networks were visualised by drawing lines between the locations of partners within a consortium. These connections were subsequently aggregated and spatially abstracted by calculating line density using GIS software. Dark red areas indicate a high density of connections between project partners, while yellow areas represent a lower density of cooperation links.

An additional element in this section is the development of project partner numbers between Interreg IV-A (2007–2013) and Interreg V-A (2014–2020), based on data from the keep.eu database. The datasets were cleaned to remove duplicates, using the partner names as reported in keep.eu. For both programming periods, keep.eu indicates a high level of data completeness[18]. Nevertheless, this development should be interpreted as indicative, as variations in partner name reporting and general limitations regarding the representativeness of the dataset affect the robustness of the results.

- **Source/method of retrieval**: Processing and analysis of the keep.eu database
- **Temporal coverage**: 2007-2013 (Interreg IV-A), 2014-2020 (Interreg V-A)
- **Unit**: n/a

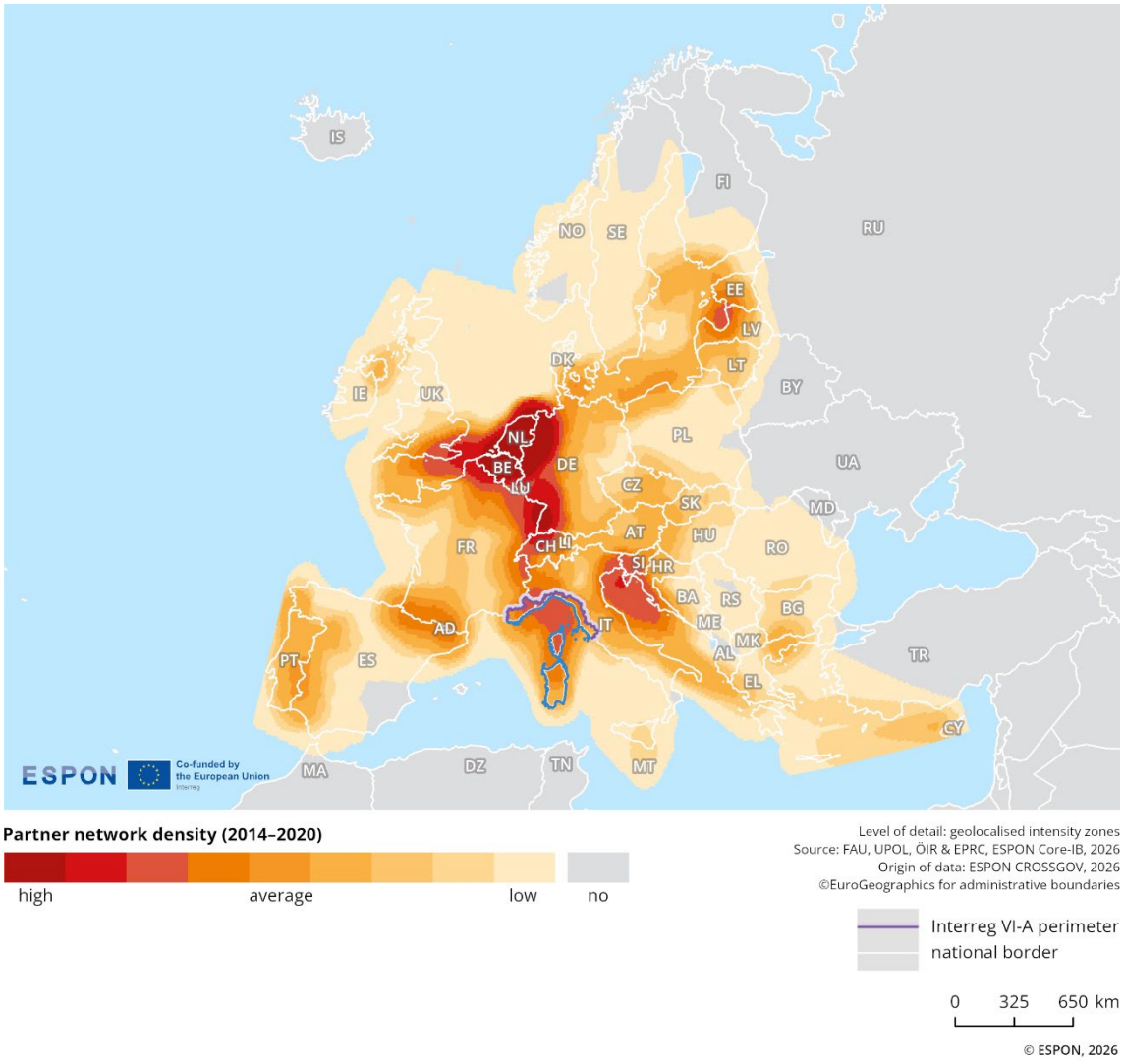
Please refer to the technical annex for more information.

Cooperation activities and networks are among the most meaningful types of information for delineating cross-border functional areas. As such, the indicator on cooperation through Interreg can help to identify networks among cross-border actors and highlight the density of cooperation in specific border segments.

[18] see Keep.eu representativeness: Interreg, Interreg-IPA and ENI cross-border

Figure 2.41 shows the density of Interreg V-A (2014–2020) partner networks. The indicator includes the location of, and links between, Interreg project partners within a project consortium. From a European perspective, partner network density in the maritime Italy-France border area appears to be somewhat unevenly distributed. The partner network density is particularly high in northern parts of the programme area, while the southern areas show more average levels of cooperation. Overall, the partner network density in this border area is higher than the European average. Based on the keep.eu database and excluding duplicates, the number of project partners increased from 352 in Interreg IV-A (2007–2013) to 422 in Interreg V-A (2014–2020), an increase of about 20%. It is important that these changes are considered in the context of factors such as change in programme budgets between 2007-2013 and 2014-2020, emphasis on targeting impact, and numbers of strategic projects.

Figure 2.41: Interreg V-A partner network density



2.6.3 Key messages on the governance dimension

The Italy-France (maritime) border region shows a relatively high degree of institutionalised cross-border cooperation, supported by well-established multi-level governance structures, in particular through EGTCs. This institutional framework ensures broad spatial coverage with only a few areas of the border region remaining uncovered.

Few cross-border public services clusters are present in the cross-border region and are also rather fragmented. The field of transport is particularly relevant to cross-border public transport and the issues

identified relate to sustainable transport, tourism, maritime mobility, cabotage, and urban mobility networks. Governance and institutional cooperation focus on one main European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation and on collaboration between local and regional authorities. Challenges in this area include navigating administrative procedures and ensuring the recognition of skills in the maritime sector.

The strong focus of the Interreg support on priorities addressing environmental vulnerability, the need for economic diversification in tourism-dependent communities, and the push for innovation in maritime sectors is in line with the challenges described in this border profile. Partner network density in the maritime Italy-France border area appears to be somewhat unevenly distributed, with lower values in the southern part of Sardinia.

3 Summary and key observations

To support the strategic dialogue on cross-border cooperation beyond 2027, this territorial analysis provides harmonised and comparable information. Its data-driven evidence helps to inform the future direction of cross-border cooperation by facilitating alignment with EU priorities and the evolving regulatory framework. The Core-IB border profiles adopt a harmonised methodology and provide programme areas with access to recent European data. As this approach comes along with limitations, member states may hold additional or more detailed data which can further enrich or contextualise the findings beyond the Core-IB project (see final report and technical annex of this project). These national sources are essential for refining and validating territorial evidence in policymaking processes, including: a) regional, fine-scale data and b) insights from political processes related to prioritisation and objective setting. The study's findings are analytical and are intended to support reflection and discussion. They do not create regulatory or policy obligations for Member States, the European Commission, or programme authorities.

Table 4 provides 2 types of information. Firstly, it summarises the key analytical findings for the border region, as discussed earlier in this profile. Secondly, it suggests policy options based on the analytical findings. These options are intended to provide a practical and informative basis for the strategic dialogue among programme bodies, managing authorities and the European Commission.

Generally speaking, the aim of cohesion policy is to promote harmonious territorial development (also) across borders. The objective is to mitigate the impact of borders and achieve 360° functionality, thereby enhancing the quality of life and fostering prosperous development on both sides of the border. The upcoming Interreg period offers an opportunity to address these objectives and potentials through targeted cooperation projects.

Table 4: Evidence-based conclusions

Territorial dimension	
Key analytical findings	• This maritime border includes very diverse types of regions, i.e. mainland territories as well as islands (notably Corsica and Sardinia), thereby featuring a wide range of topographic characteristics; • Coastal areas in mainland France and Italy are generally quite densely populated, around cities, although the average population density is lower than both national averages; • Population ageing is noteworthy as the population share of 65+ years has been sharply increasing, especially in the French regions of this cross-border area; • Maritime transport is, however, relatively slow and heavily marked by seasonality (for passenger/tourist transport). This is reflected in the moderate to limited cross-border mobility, which is mainly observed at the mainland border between France and Italy.

Territorial dimension	
Policy options	**Population and settlement related aspects** • A relevant policy option is to address cross-border strategies that support balanced spatial development in a context where settlement growth is concentrated around urban centres and coastal areas, partly shaped by the topography of the border region; • Cross-border cooperation measures contributing to addressing continued population ageing by enhancing the attractiveness of the region for younger age groups. **Accessibility related aspects** • Functional connectivity could be improved through cross-border cooperation in the maritime contexts where transport links are structurally slower and highly seasonal; • The systematic integration of the accessibility challenges of island territories into cross-border transport and spatial development planning can help address persistent connectivity gaps. **Cross-cutting aspect** • Integrated spatial planning approaches to manage competing land-use pressures related to housing, tourism, transport, agriculture and nature conservation.

Economic dimension	
Key analytical findings	• The economic situation of the cross-border area has been following a very positive development, resuming its economic growth since the 2019-2020 Covid crisis. Both parts of the border region are below their respective GDP per capita national averages, but the difference between the 2 parts has been reducing, especially in the last few years; • Due to the maritime nature of this cross-border area, cross-border commuting is mainly occurring in the 2 regions between mainland France and Italy; • Housing prices vary to a great extent. A striking difference is visible between the high-priced properties along the French Côte d'Azur and in Corsica, compared to the relatively accessible housing prices in inland Sardinia.

Economic dimension	
Policy options	**Economic development and integration** • Cross-border strategies could support sustained convergence between the French and Italian parts of the border region, helping to maintain economic dynamism across the entire border area; • The integration of economic development in island territories into wider cross-border growth dynamics can strengthen territorial cohesion; • Coordinated labour market and commuting strategies may help address the declining working-age populations, particularly in the French parts of the region, while maintaining economic dynamism. **Competitiveness related aspects** • Diversification into digital, green and blue economy activities to reduce dependence on seasonal tourism and strengthen long-term competitiveness; • Cross-border innovation and skills development across sectors could enable joint benefits for island and mainland regions; • Digital infrastructure investments could reduce the structural disadvantages in island and remote coastal areas and support stronger economic integration. **Cross-cutting aspect** • Coordinated housing, tourism and spatial planning strategies to mitigate affordability pressures linked to second homes and short-term rentals.

Green dimension	
Key analytical findings	• Protected areas within the Interreg region are concentrated along the coastal zones and islands, particularly in the northern part of Corsica and between Corsica and Italy; • The water quality is good to high particularly in Corsica. In Sardinia, while generally good, the water quality deteriorates in the southern part of the island. In most Italian regions, the water quality is moderate; • The most common type of power plant is hydropower, closely followed by gas and oil. Coal power is still in use in the Italian regions (mainland and Sardinia).
Policy options	**Environmental protection related aspects** • Existing networks of protected areas can be built upon through cross-border cooperation, to further protect and restore environmental quality in the border region in the context of tourism and climate change; • A focus could be on joint monitoring and enhanced cross-border data exchange to improve the management of coastal and river water bodies and air quality in a shared maritime ecosystem. **Climate risks and resilience related aspects** • The application of nature-based solutions along coasts and islands to contribute to risk reduction while enhancing biodiversity and climate adaptation; • Cross-border cooperation could accelerate the shift away from fossil fuels, particularly coal-based power generation still present in Italian regions; • Renewable energy potentials, including hydropower, solar, offshore and hybrid systems, can be jointly developed while ensuring energy security for island territories. **Cross-cutting aspect** • A focus could be on the reduction of the relatively high waste intensity of the border region, contributing to more circular and resource-efficient economic models.

Socio-economic dimension	
Key analytical findings	• Cross-border connectivity in social media is low and spatially concentrated near the land border and between Corsica and northern Sardinia, while remaining weak or absent in most island and inland areas. Linguistic differences continue to limit everyday social integration and interpersonal exchange across the programme area; • Tourism intensity is high across the region, particularly in Corsica and several Italian mainland territories, with overnight stays per capita exceeding national and European averages. It generates strong seasonal pressures and raises challenges related to local acceptance, infrastructure capacity and sustainability; • Essential services of general interest are relatively evenly distributed across the French and Italian mainland, ensuring generally good accessibility to health, education and basic services. Island territories face longer travel times to services of general interest and stronger internal accessibility disparities, especially in mountainous and less urbanised areas.
Policy options	**Social interactions and cohesion** • Cross-border strategies could specifically address socio-cultural topics in a context where everyday interactions are structurally constrained by geography and language barriers; • Strong tourism intensity, particularly in Corsica and parts of the Italian mainland, can be leveraged to foster broader socio-economic exchange across the maritime border region. **Quality of life** • Targeted cross-border knowledge exchange and coordination could improve the planning and resilience of services of general interest, even where direct cross-border service provision is not feasible; • A focus could be on a strategic integration of social, cultural and environmental considerations into tourism strategies to enhance quality of life for residents in highly visited areas. **Cross-cutting aspect** • Strategic cross-border cooperation could help to ensure that economic and tourism dynamics translate into tangible social benefits, despite limited everyday social interaction.

Border security and safety dimension	
Key analytical findings	• France has imposed border controls for a significantly longer period of time than Italy; • Aside from the Covid crisis, the most recent reasons for introducing border controls are linked to terrorism threats, organised criminality and smuggling and illegal migratory flows.
Policy options	**Cross-cutting aspects** • The impacts of border controls on cross-border commuting and logistics can be mitigated through coordinated and institutionalised cross-border policy dialogue, particularly during the touristic season; • The mitigation of border control effects can form part of cross-border cooperation projects in various sectors. Economic networks, transport infrastructure initiatives and tourism-related actions can incorporate considerations related to the impacts of border controls.

Governance dimension	
Key analytical findings	• The Italy-France (maritime) border region shows a relatively high degree of institutionalised cross-border cooperation, supported by well-established multi-level governance structures; • Few cross-border public services clusters are present in the region and are also rather fragmented; • Partner network density in the maritime Italy-France border area appears to be somewhat unevenly distributed, with lower values in the southern part of Sardinia; • The absence of institutionalised cross-border advice centres represents an untapped potential for strengthening cooperation.
Policy options	**Cross-cutting aspects** • Existing institutionalised cooperation frameworks could be further leveraged to strengthen functional maritime cross-border integration; • Cross-border governance could strategically address common challenges such as environmental vulnerability, sustainable tourism and maritime connectivity.

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