

Declaration nr. 6

Name of the person introducing the declaration: Anke Spoorendonk and Carsten Leth Schmidt

On behalf of the party: SSW and SP

Title: Maintaining the cross-border INTERREG Programme after 2020

In the light of emerging information on the European Commission's Structural Reform Support Programme, the EFA General Assembly calls for the geographical scope and the financial scale of the cross-border INTERREG programme to remain unchanged after 2020. This would include not reducing the level of subsidies to INTERREG 6. This is essential if the area supported by INTERREG 5 is to be retained.

Justification:

INTERREG is an initiative of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) to promote cooperation between EU Member States. The programmes fall under the European Territorial Cooperation Objective (ETCO). Alongside the "convergence" and "regional competitiveness and employment" objectives, it is an independent instrument of European structural policy.

The program promotes cooperative cross-border measures such as infrastructure projects, cooperation between public utilities, joint measures or collaboration in areas such environmental protection, education, spatial planning or culture. The INTERREG programme affects around 37.5% of the citizens the European Union who live close to the 38 internal borders and helps to reduce the geographical disadvantages and linguistic barriers and obstacles to development.

INTERREG has been a European success story, which in many border areas between EU states has made a great contribution to understanding between peoples and to cultural and economic development. In the German-Danish border area in particular, since 1997 the programme has made decisive contributions to many "people-to-people projects" on cultural and labour market themes, extending cross-border cooperation between Denmark and Germany. The national minorities on each side of the border have played a major role in the implementation of many INTERREG projects. The plans announced put these positive developments in danger and must therefore be corrected by the European Commission. The European Parliament's Committee on Regional Policy passed a resolution on this matter on 5 December 2018.