**Press release**

**35 Years of Interreg – Romania and Serbia Celebrated European Cooperation**

**Timișoara, 30 September 2025**

The Multifunctional Hall of the Timiș County Council hosted Interreg Cooperation Day, an anniversary event marking **35 years of Interreg programmes**, while also celebrating more than two decades of cross-border collaboration between Romania and Serbia.

The event brought together over **100** representatives of central and local institutions from both countries, including **H.E. Silvia Davidoiu, Ambassador of Romania to Serbia, H.E. Ivana Jakšić Matović, Consul General of the Republic of Serbia in Timișoara**, and **Mr Gabriel Ghilea, Undersecretary of State within the Ministry of Development, Public Works and Administration**. They highlighted the importance of the results achieved through joint projects and the role of European solidarity in fostering development in the border region.

During this edition, **21 projects** with major impact were awarded in fields such as cross-border connectivity, cultural heritage protection, healthcare and community safety. Among them were successful initiatives with a fund absorption rate of over 99%, such as the rehabilitation of navigation infrastructure on the Bega Canal and the improvement of medical services in neurology and psychiatry. Special awards were granted for projects with a global impact, including the **2023 RegioStars Award-winning** project on water quality monitoring in mining areas, as well as initiatives with strong social and cultural significance, which strengthened cross-border cooperation by promoting traditions, education and inclusion. Outstanding partnerships developed for managing emergency situations in the Banat region were also recognised, underlining the importance of cross-border cooperation for the sustainable and safe development of communities.

The programme also featured a cultural moment offered by students of the Faculty of Music in Timișoara, who performed traditional Romanian and Serbian pieces, symbolising the cultural ties between the two states.

The second part of the event took place on **1 October**, with a visit to the Bega Canal and the hydrotechnical node at Sânmihaiu Român, modernised through the strategic project “Repairing Navigation Infrastructure on the Bega Canal” (RORS-15), financed under the Interreg-IPA Romania-Serbia Programme.

This year’s edition of **Interreg programmes** demonstrated once again **that European funding means** improved infrastructure, stronger cross-border connectivity, institutional cooperation and the consolidation of neighbourly relations between Romania and Serbia.

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**Interreg Cooperation Day – A European Celebration**

Since 2012, Romania and Serbia have joined the more than **1,490 events** organised across the European Union to celebrate Interreg Cooperation Day, events with an estimated reach of over **47 million people**.

The 2025 edition carries a special significance: we are marking 35 years of Interreg, an opportunity to reflect on the journey of this initiative which has become a cornerstone of the European Union’s cohesion policy. Over time, Interreg has brought together tens of thousands of partners and projects, building real bridges between communities. This theme also gives us the chance to reflect on **cross-border cooperation at the Romania-Serbia border, now celebrating more than two decades.**

*Interreg Cooperation Day is a celebration of the communities on both sides of the Danube and proof that European solidarity delivers tangible results. Through the event in Timișoara and the experience of sailing on the Bega River, we aim to showcase concrete outcomes of Romanian-Serbian cooperation in areas such as cross-border connectivity, joint infrastructure development, environmental protection and institutional collaboration – all of which contribute to improving the quality of life for local communities in the border area.*