

The INTERREG North-West Europe Programme

is recruiting its:

HEAD OF UNIT
Finance and Programme

On a long-term contract

For the Joint Secretariat located in Lille, France

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Job description - Head of Unit Finance & Programme

Organisation Overview

The Interreg North-West Europe Joint Secretariat (JS) is a dynamic, mission-driven funding organisation that currently manages a portfolio of approximately €310 million ERDF on behalf of its funding Member States.

It is embedded in an international legal body, called GECOTTI-PE created by the Hauts-de-France Regional Council, which acts as Managing Authority of several European programmes. More about this set-up under the section “Position and role of the Joint Secretariat”.

With a team of around 20 professionals based in Lille (France) and 13 contact points based in offices across the NWE Member States, we finance and oversee interdisciplinary EU cooperation projects that operate at the intersection of such varied fields as research and innovation, climate action, energy transition, circular economy, and social innovation.

We combine the agility of a small and networked organisation with the responsibility of managing significant public funds. These funds comprise mostly project funding directed at 3rd parties across the NWE area executing projects, partly Technical Assistance funding financing the day-to-day operations of the Joint Secretariat and its legal employer (GECOTTI-PE.)

At the service of our funding Member States, the EU and society in general, we strive for excellence, transparency, accountability and measurable societal impact in everything we do.

Position Summary

The Head of Unit Finance & Programme serves as a key member of the Programme Management Team and reports directly to the Programme director.

The Programme Management Team includes – next to the Programme Director – the two other Heads of Unit in the Joint Secretariat (Project Unit, Development & Communication Unit) with whom you will be closely co-operating and exchanging on a day-to-day basis

The successful candidate is to replace the incumbent Head of Unit (retiring in 2026) and a handover period will be organised between both. The expected start date of the employment is at the latest by 1/5/2026.

North-West Europe

As Head of Unit Finance & Programme, you provide strategic and operational guidance across all areas of financial management, audit, risk management and regulatory compliance.

You contribute to ensuring a sound stewardship of public funds, a robust Programme governance and the overall financial sustainability of the Programme.

You lead a team of around five professionals, responsible for financial planning, audit, accounting & internal control, office management, procurement, risk management, evaluation, data, and Programme monitoring & IT systems.

With your unit, you also assist and advice other JS units on regulatory matters and more complex compliance issues and drive effective knowledge management for such matters.

Being Head of Unit of this team is both a strategic and hands-on role: the successful candidate will shape long-term financial strategy while maintaining operational excellence in day-to-day finance, audit and administrative processes.

The successful candidate also brings a people-centred approach and a strong commitment to public values, acting as a manager, mentor and team contributor in all aspects of his/her work.

Key Responsibilities & tasks

Financial Management

- Develop, monitor and implement a comprehensive financial strategy aligned with the Programme's mission(s) and life cycle.
- Support strategic financial decision-making by NWE Member States, the Managing Authority, the Joint Secretariat.... through scenario modelling and risk assessment on e.g. ERDF allocation, programme spending, decommitment risk, cash flow....
- Ensure accurate reporting on financial and Programme performance data to the European Commission (via SFC - System for Fund Management in the European Union)
- Oversee and keep track of the Joint Secretariat and Programme financial operations and expenses by e.g. approving JS invoices, approving monthly Technical Assistance reports, treasury & cash flow management, following Programme procurements...

Audit & Compliance

- Ensure full compliance of Programme operations with relevant EU and Member State regulations through a robust audit and control strategy.
- Ensure a systemic management of risks originating from Project or Programme operations, including appropriate actions to address them (e.g. capacity building, risk prevention, reduction, mitigation, correction...).
- Organise the provision of general and specialised advice on complex regulatory issues to JS colleagues, Programme bodies and relevant stakeholders.
- Oversee the preparation and roll-out of a robust Programme evaluation strategy.
- Liaise with Programme bodies (Managing Authority, Accounting Body, Audit Authority) and GECOTTI-PE on financial, audit and compliance aspects.

People management and Organisation

- Manage, mentor, and develop a small team of experienced professionals on a day-to-day and long-term basis.
- Ensure the planning and balanced allocation of tasks across team members considering the overall Joint Secretariat planning.
- Work cross-functionally and contribute to a high-performing, collaborative, and service-driven culture towards Programme bodies, beneficiaries and relevant stakeholders.
- Foster ethical leadership, accountability, and respect for diversity and inclusion.

Operational Management

- Foster and implement solid systems for monitoring, reporting and evaluating the Programme's performance on key indicators related to content and finance.
- Support the planning and organisation of periodic monitoring and decision-making meetings with the funding NWE Member States, relevant Programme bodies, EU bodies, relevant stakeholders... (e.g. agenda preparation, meeting logistics, content and delivery of brief notes...)
- Maintain and drive continuous improvement of internal control systems, administrative procedures and IT systems in place.
- Contribute to the work of other JS units and support them in the successful accomplishment of their tasks and targets.

Expected profile

Education & formal knowledge

- Master's degree in Finance, Business Administration, Economics, or other discipline relevant to the job content.
- Solid and hands-on knowledge of audit methodologies and practices.
- Solid understanding of relevant EU regulations and requirements in terms of finance, audit and programme evaluation.
- Strong knowledge of legal frameworks related to public procurement and state aid.
- General knowledge of other EU Cohesion/regional development funding instruments, EU policies and institutions relevant to the position.
- High level of proficiency and fluency in English (required) and at least one of the other NWE programme languages (French, Dutch, German)

Professional experience

- At least 10 years of progressively responsible financial management experience, including 5+ years in a management role in a public or public-private funding environment.
- Demonstrated experience in team management/coordination, change management, and systems improvement.
- Proven experience in managing or overseeing large public funding programmes (domestic, EU, international).
- Experience with working in an environment linked to European or international governance is an asset.

Technical Competencies

- Expertise in financial analysis, planning, forecasting, and multi-year budgeting.
- Solid knowledge of public sector accounting standards, compliance requirements and financial reporting.
- Experience with financial management systems and data analytics tools.
- Proficient in audit, risk management and internal control practices.

Management Skills

- Strategic thinker able to link financial management to organisational mission and impact.
- Team leader with a coaching approach and ability to motivate and develop people.
- Excellent briefing skills with the ability to translate complex financial and/or regulatory concepts to diverse audiences, including non-expert staff, Programme body members and external stakeholders.
- Collaborative and diplomatic, thriving in multi-stakeholder environments.

Personal Qualities

- Result and solution oriented, proactive with a “hands-on” approach suited to a small, agile organisation.
- Well-organised, able to maintain the overview and manage a portfolio of highly diverse tasks
- Team player, reliable and loyal to colleagues.
- Demonstrates professional discretion, and commitment to public values and ethical standards.
- Flexible, with willingness to travel and occasionally work irregular hours.

General information for applicants

Timeline and procedure

- Applications should reach the Joint Secretariat **by Friday 23 January 2026 12h00 noon (CET)**. We will not consider applications received beyond that deadline.
- The application form should be filled in without any changes to the layout and should be emailed in Word format along with your CV to the following e-mail address only: recruiting@nweurope.eu
- We are looking for candidates whose education background and experience match the job requirements, we therefore recommend a careful reading of the job profile before sending your application.
- A short visio interview may be organised with long listed candidates.
- Shortlisted candidates will be asked to come to Lille, France, for interviews and tests in the week of **16-20 February 2026**. No alternative dates or online interviews will be possible.
- An individual e-mail will be sent to these candidates **by Monday 2 February 2026 12h00 noon (CET)**. Candidates will be expected to confirm their participation to tests and interviews by e-mail return. They will then receive full information on logistical aspect taken on board by the Programme (location, hotel room hire if distance requires it, expense claim procedure and conditions, etc).
- All the candidates who will not have been short-listed will be informed in due time. Please note that the large number of applications foreseen will not allow individual feedback to non-shortlisted applicants.
- No information regarding tests form/content will be shared beforehand to the short-listed candidates.

Confidentiality

Candidates are reminded that the selection is confidential.

Should you need information you cannot find in this document, please e-mail:

recruiting@nweurope.eu

Equal opportunities

Equal opportunities policy without distinction on the grounds of gender, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation will be applied.

The selection is not limited to EU citizens.

Terms and Conditions for employment

- The working place is located at the Joint Secretariat Offices based in the city centre of Lille, France.
- The expected start date of the employment is at the latest by 1/5/2026 to allow a proper hand-over with the incumbent Head of Unit (retirement)
- 1 to 2 day per week hybrid/telework possibility
- The contract will be under French labour law, and includes a probation period.
- The jobholder will be offered a gross monthly salary starting from € 5,521.71 depending on experience (respectively around € 4,264 net before income tax)
- Public transport commuting costs can be covered up to 50% (including from Belgium) and a „sustainable mobility package“ is also available for e.g. bike commute.

What we offer

- **An exciting and meaningful role** contributing to innovative and sustainable projects making a tangible impact across the North-West Europe area.
- **Professional growth** through on-the-job learning, training, knowledge-sharing, and participation in workshops, site visits and EU cooperation networks.
- Joining a **dynamic team of international colleagues** dedicated to pushing European territorial cooperation forward.
- **Daily immersion in an international and multilingual working environment**, working primarily in English while using and developing additional language skills.
- **A supportive and people-centred workplace**, where initiative, curiosity, and teamwork are valued.
- And much more! —.

How to Apply

Please send the following documents in English:

1. a completed **recruitment application form**,
2. your **curriculum vitae (not exceeding 2 pages)**,

to **recruiting@nweurope.eu**, indicating “Head of Unit Finance and Programme– [Your Name]” in the subject line.

Deadline for applications: Friday 23 January 2026 12h00 noon (CET)



The Interreg North-West Europe Programme

Interreg North-West Europe (NWE) is a European Territorial Cooperation Programme (Interreg) funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the participating NWE Member States.

Interreg is an EU instrument that promotes cohesion between regions and aims to reduce territorial disparities via cooperation across and beyond borders. It provides a framework for public and private stakeholders to develop projects that help Europe address some of its key challenges.

The goal of Programmes like ours, is to bring public and private stakeholders across our cities and regions together in cooperative projects to reduce the existing disparities and, at the same time, contribute to a green, smart and just transition in North-West Europe.

We distinguish ourselves from other EU policy instruments through our multilevel governance and territorial approach with programmes and projects tailored to the needs of a given programme area, i.e. North-West Europe

Within Interreg, transnational programmes like NWE stand out because of the size of areas they cover and the potential they offer to test, upscale and roll out strategies and solutions over a wide part of the Union.

The current NWE 2021-2027 programme holds roughly € 310 million of ERDF to be invested in activities based on the cooperation of organisations from seven countries: Belgium, France, Germany, Ireland, Luxembourg, The Netherlands and Switzerland. Our 5 programming themes cover Climate and environment / Energy transition / Circular economy / Innovation and resilience / Inclusive society. They were carefully chosen by our Member States to address North-West Europe's main challenges in terms of sustainable, smart and inclusive growth.

Through the financing of a mix of activities such as joint development and implementation of strategies, joint piloting and testing of solutions, capacity building... our Programme aims at making NWE regions more resilient and better equipped to respond to existing and future challenges.

Preparations for the Interreg 2028-2034 Programming Period have started at the European level and will take up pace as 2026 evolves.

Further information: www.nweurope.eu

Position and role of the Joint Secretariat

The Joint Secretariat is embedded in an international legal body, called GEIE GECOTTI-PE created by the Hauts-de-France Regional Council, which acts as Managing Authority (MA) of several European programmes.

GECOTTI-PE is a body under private law and is the legal employer of the members of several Joint Secretariats based in Lille (France) such as Interreg NWE, Interreg Europe and the European Urban Initiative Programme.

As Managing Authority, the Hauts-de-France Region is overall responsible for the sound financial management of the mentioned programmes and carrying out the functions described in article 46 of Regulation (EU) 2021/1059.

The Joint Secretariat assists the Managing Authority and other Programme Bodies such as the Monitoring Committee, Audit Authority, Accounting Body...in the implementation of their tasks and responsibilities.

On a day-to-day basis, the Joint Secretariat provides most of the Managing Authority task and services to the North-West Europe Member States and project partners. In short, the main Joint Secretariat's services include:

- Providing high quality assistance to (prospective) project partners at project development (in close collaboration with the Contact Points)
- Preparing and advising Member States on the selection of the best quality projects
- Monitoring and supporting the delivery of projects during project implementation and after project's end.
- Communicating on project results and impacts

Together with the director, the total number of staff members currently includes around 20 people based in Lille and 13 contact points based in offices across the NWE area.

The JS office in Lille is currently organised in three units that each oversee in a highly collaborative way different aspects of the Programme

- One unit assisting in project development and overseeing project assessment and project implementation (Project Unit)
- One unit dealing with horizontal programme aspects such as finance, audit, risk management, evaluation, IT and programme governance matters (Finance & Programme Unit).
- One unit overseeing communication and coordinating project development activities as well as the Contact Point network (Communication and Development Unit)

Further information: www.nweurope.eu