

# The MTEC Strategic Project Generation Handbook

## Communication patterns for strategic project generation in selected INTERREG IIIA Programmes

by INTERACT Point Managing Transition and External Cooperation (MTEC)



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With this handbook INTERACT Point Managing Transition and External Cooperation intends to address one of the major challenges of INTERREG III and of the new European Territorial Cooperation Objective, namely the strategic dimension of projects. Based on desk research and interviews, carried out and coordinated by experts Manfred Kojan, Herwig Langthaler and Richard Hummelbrunner, current practices and experiences in project generation of selected INTERREG III A programmes were analysed. The study has been coordinated by Mauro Novello, INTERACT Point MTEC Project Manager. The outcome should be useful for the preparation and implementation of the new programmes 2007-13.

The strategic project generation handbook can also be found under [www.interact-eu.net](http://www.interact-eu.net), **Management Tools**.

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# PART A: STRATEGIC PROJECT GENERATION AND COMMUNICATION PATTERNS

## INTRODUCTION

The regulations of the EU Commission for the new programming period 2007-2013<sup>1</sup> request that projects should have a strategic dimension in accordance with the Gothenburg and Lisbon Agendas<sup>2</sup>.

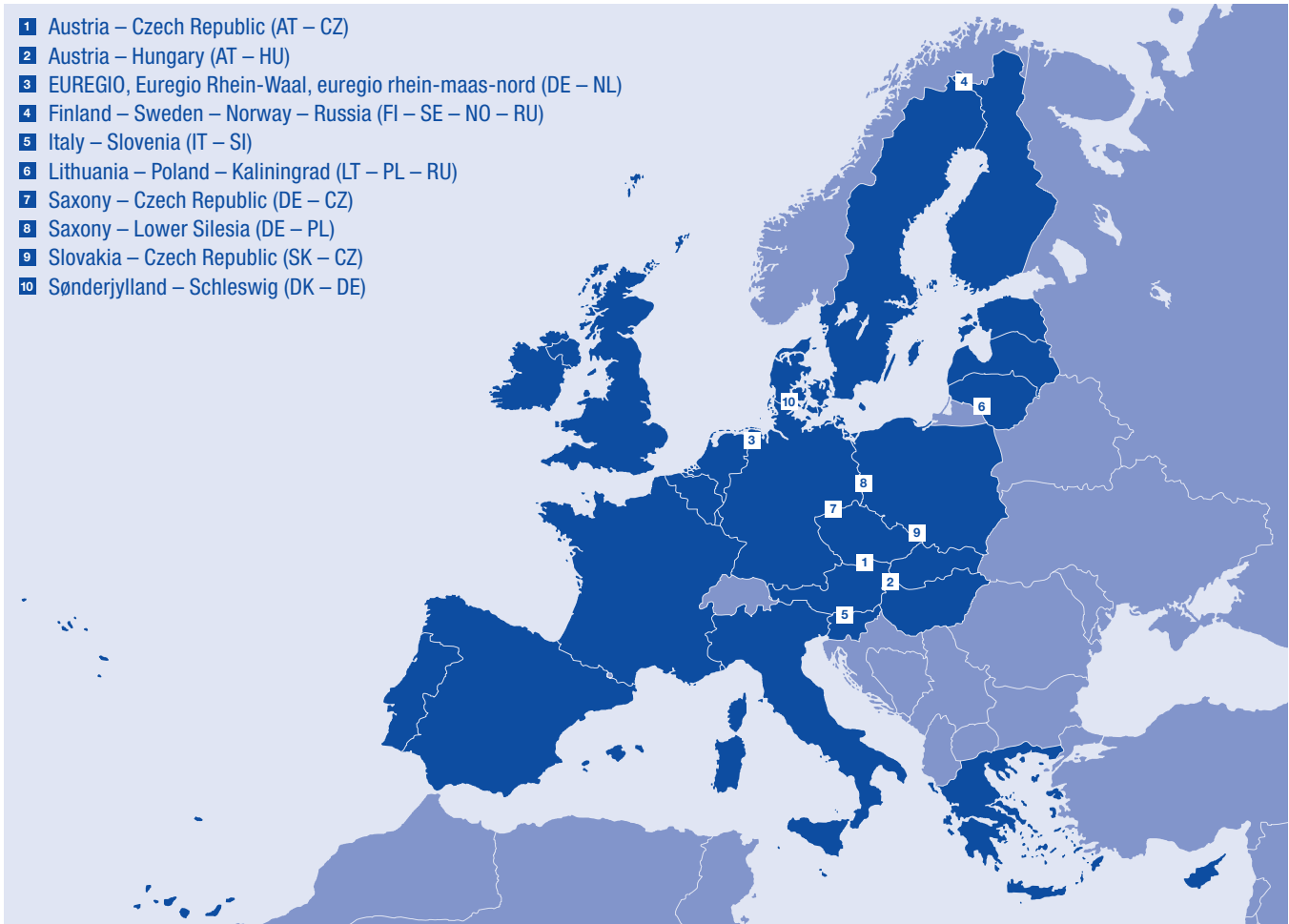
In some INTERREG Programmes, strategic project generation and the necessary cross-border communication and co-ordination have worked quite satisfactorily so far, while in others it has proved difficult to develop projects of a strategic character. The objectives of this study are to find and describe the patterns of formal and informal communication, structures, processes and activities that favour strategic project generation in INTERREG IIIA Pro-

grammes and to document examples of efficient practice in generating strategic cross-border projects.

Special emphasis is given to the Programmes involving the New Member States<sup>3</sup>, though some 'old Programmes' were also investigated to identify successful approaches among the more experienced Programmes as well. The study follows a qualitative approach in order to cover the full complexity and variety of informal information and communication patterns, specific frameworks and experiences.

During the first half of 2006 information was gathered through desk research and detailed personal interviews with Programme authorities of the following 10 INTERREG IIIA Programmes<sup>4</sup>:

- 1 Austria – Czech Republic (AT – CZ)
- 2 Austria – Hungary (AT – HU)
- 3 EUREGIO, Euregio Rhein-Waal, euregio rhein-maas-nord (DE – NL)
- 4 Finland – Sweden – Norway – Russia (FI – SE – NO – RU)
- 5 Italy – Slovenia (IT – SI)
- 6 Lithuania – Poland – Kaliningrad (LT – PL – RU)
- 7 Saxony – Czech Republic (DE – CZ)
- 8 Saxony – Lower Silesia (DE – PL)
- 9 Slovakia – Czech Republic (SK – CZ)
- 10 Sønderjylland – Schleswig (DK – DE)



<sup>1</sup> Regulation (EC) No. 1080/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 on the Regional Development Fund and repealing Regulation (EC) No. 1783/1999 Council Regulation (EC) No. 1083/2006 of July 2006 laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund and repealing Regulation (EC) No. 1260/1999

<sup>2</sup> In June 2006, the European Council adopted the Gothenburg Agenda, a revised EU Sustainable Development Strategy, which focuses on sustainable production and consumption. In March 2000, the EU Heads of States and Governments agreed to make the EU "the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-driven economy by 2010"

<sup>3</sup> This focus complies with INTERACT Point Managing Transition and External Relations' main geographic focus, which is on the regions listed in the Communication COM(2001)437

<sup>4</sup> In alphabetical order

## 1. SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

The findings presented in the study are based on interviews with the many authorities of the Programmes investigated. One or other aspect might well be added and in some cases different conclusions might be drawn about other Cooperation Programmes.

### Lack of common understanding concerning strategic projects

Strategic project generation is generally regarded as an important issue; nevertheless there are different definitions of it or opinions about it among the actors, even within the same Programme.

A common definition or concept of strategic projects is rarely found within one and the same Programme.

In many cases even the several relevant authorities of one and the same INTERREG IIIA Programme do not share the same understanding of a definition.

It does not matter so much which definition the Programme partners choose for their Programme, but it is very important that a common understanding is developed in an early phase of the Programme cycle regarding

- what should be considered as '*strategic projects*' and
- how such strategic projects should be generated.

### There are marked differences between 'old' and 'new' INTERREG Programmes

- Programme authorities of new Programmes tend to focus rather on timely implementation of projects with reasonable cross-border character in order to disburse the available funds properly. Under these circumstances, the specific strategic focus of projects is of secondary importance only.

- Old Programmes frequently tend to be more ambitious concerning strategic project generation. Authorities often undertake pro-active measures to generate '*strategic*' projects using established regional and cross-border organisations and networks.

- With regard to communication patterns, stakeholders within old Programmes know their relevant counterparts and the administrative and social systems of the partner region quite well. There are frequent cross-border contacts, both formal and informal, and a network of regional stakeholders and institutions at all levels on both sides of the border.

- In new Programmes, cross-border communication depends to a high degree on personal contacts and the individual dedication of a few involved Programme representatives. The level of knowledge about the relevant counterparts, stakeholders and systems of the partner region is rather low. There are only few cross-border regional networks and contacts among the regional stakeholders.

### Top-down and bottom-up approach

In general, strategic projects seem to be initiated by public institutions at the regional level rather than by actors at the local level. Through this top-down approach, issues of general public interest can be implemented as projects of strategic character.

### Strategic focus of Programmes

In most Programmes the main tool for strategic project generation is already established during the programming phase. The focus of the Programme with its priorities and measures, in combination with the evaluation and selection criteria, is the main element determining the strategic focus of the later implementation.

### Several different roles for strategic project generation can be distinguished

The complex process of strategic project generation involves many actors with different roles. Out of 14 possibilities<sup>5</sup>, three roles were regarded as most relevant for strategic project generation: Programme developer, Provider of information, Project promoter.

### Importance of Euroregions

Euroregions are regarded as the most important actor for strategic project generation. Due to their good regional contacts, their cross-border structures and their experience they cover the different roles needed for project generation.

<sup>5</sup> See Annex 3 for a detailed list of roles in strategic project generation

### Development stages of cross-border Programmes

Different development stages of cross-border cooperation can be identified in INTEREG Programmes. Depending on the *'maturity'* of cross-border cooperation and the level and duration of cross-border communication, specific communication patterns and successful communication tools can be distinguished.

- Success factors for strategic project generation
  - Existence of regional networks
  - Regional co-ordination and facilitation between top-down and bottom-up approach
  - High level of transparency of the stakeholder systems and good knowledge of the potential partners on the other side of the border
  - Proactive regional initiative and co-ordination (EUREGIO, RDA, Regional Management)
  - Collaboration between regional support capacities
- Success factors for cross-border communication
  - Transparency and common understanding regarding structures and processes
  - Trust and understanding between partners from both sides of the border
  - Experience and structures to deal with conflicts
  - Good knowledge of the respective other language
  - Informal communication flows in addition to formal structures
- Recommendations (selection)
  - 3-4 day Programme start-up workshop with all relevant Programme authorities at national and regional level
  - Regional who-is-who directory
  - Establishment of regional co-ordination committees
  - Establishment of cross-border workgroups
  - Establishment of cross-border organisations (EUREGIO)
  - SPF (Small Projects Fund) focus on regional networking projects
  - Joint learning and reflection platforms
  - Twinning visits among corresponding Programme authorities

## 2. BACKGROUND

### 2.1 RATIONALE

The generation of projects which represent strategic value added for EU INTERREG Programmes is quite challenging for both Programme authorities and project applicants.

Project generation in this sense refers to initiating the development of projects. This is the whole process from needs assessment and generation of project ideas to involving appropriate potential partners, designing the project outline, etc.

Project development goes further. It also includes the operational set-up of all relevant project aspects (detailed work packages, management and implementation provisions, finances, etc.) and the preparation of final project applications.

The various Programme authorities may create the conditions to enable project generation within the Programme, or they may even get directly involved in some aspects of the project generation process. The further phases of project development are not usually within the influence of the Programme (authorities) and are covered by other partners.

Apart from the usual tasks of Programme and project management, the necessary communication and information flows with the relevant partners and authorities across a national border are quite demanding.

In the past this difficult situation has resulted in

- many INTERREG Programmes being unable to commit quite substantial amounts of money because of a lack of appropriate and mature projects;
- many rather unilateral or doubtful projects being selected by Programme authorities in order to make use of the available money and avoid de-commitment of EU funds;
- many bilateral projects being implemented quite unilaterally in practice;
- it proving difficult for many Programme authorities to steer the focused development of strategic projects by project applicants.

Now, for the new programming period 2007-2013, the regulations of the EU Commission request that projects should have a strategic dimension in accordance with the Gothenburg and Lisbon Agendas.

It seems anyway that in some INTERREG Programmes this strategic project generation and the necessary cross-border communication and co-ordination has worked and

does work quite satisfactorily. In these Programmes the intensity and quality of communication is higher and well coordinated across the border in the various stages of project generation:

- information of potential project applicants
- support for project applicants at either Programme or regional level
- project assessment and project selection.

In some Programmes discussions among Programme authorities took place to find a common approach to defining 'strategic projects', and there are efforts undertaken and mechanisms in place to support the generation of strategic projects.

Further comparative analysis of several INTERREG Programmes showed that the intensity of communication (both formal and informal) between the involved actors at all levels and the density of cross-border networks and contacts varies quite considerably among the Programmes, and that a correlation seems to exist between the quality of cross-border communication and the successful generation of strategic projects.

### 2.2 Objectives of the study

- Based on these initial considerations the objectives of the study were developed, namely to find and describe the patterns of formal and informal communication, structures, processes and activities that favour strategic project generation in INTERREG IIIA Programmes and
- to document examples of efficient practice in generating strategic cross-border projects.

Special emphasis is given to the Programmes involving the New Member States<sup>6</sup>, which may face similar problems. Some 'old Programmes' were also investigated, however, in order to identify successful approaches among the more experienced Programmes as well.

The results of this investigation are to help the Programme authorities and member states involved in the drafting of the new European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) Programmes to design their own communication and support tools in a way that makes the generation of strategic projects more likely.

<sup>6</sup> This also conforms with parts of INTERACT Point Managing Transition and External Relations' geographical focus, which is on the regions listed in the Communication COM(2001)437

### 2.3 STUDY DESIGN

The formal structures of INTERREG Programmes do not sufficiently reflect the complexity and variety of successful Programme management. Other aspects like informal information and communication patterns, specific frameworks and experiences make a crucial contribution to the functioning of the Programme. These aspects can only be investigated by taking a qualitative approach. The methodology of this study therefore concentrates on detailed personal interviews (group interviews, workshops, telephone interviews, individual interviews). The interviews covered a broad spectrum of stakeholders involved in the Programmes (MA, NA, JTS, IBs, Euroregions, Info Points, etc). Nevertheless there are yet other stakeholders who might have a different view of strategic project generation. The results of the interviews therefore have to be seen not as an exhaustive enquiry but as an appraisal by key actors in Programme management.

Following desk research on programme documents, such as Programme summary, CIP, PC, MTE, etc., a series of interviews was carried out with MAs, NAs, JTSs, IBs, Info Points and other institutions from the following INTERREG IIIA Programmes between April and June 2006:

1. Austria – Hungary (AT – HU)
2. Austria – Czech Republic (AT – CZ)
3. EUREGIO, Euregio Rhein-Waal, euregio rhein-maas-nord (DE – NL)
4. Finland – Sweden – Norway – Russia (FI – SE – NO – RU)
5. Italy – Slovenia (IT – SI)
6. Lithuania – Poland – Kaliningrad (LT – PL – RU)
7. Saxony – Czech Republic (DE – CZ)
8. Saxony – Lower Silesia (DE – PL)
9. Slovakia – Czech Republic (SK – CZ)
10. Sonderjylland – Schleswig (DK – DE)

The structured interviews covered the following questions:

#### Strategic projects

- a) What is your Programme's definition/concept of strategic projects? Do the partners share this definition?
- b) How many strategic projects are/have been generated and implemented? What is their budget share (approx)? Are some of these strategic projects clustered as project groups (e.g. *'umbrella projects'* or framework projects)?

#### Project generation

- a) How do Programme bodies or other structures support (strategic) projects in the various phases of project generation? Who is involved? What main tools are involved? What are the main support activities?
- b) What has proved most successful in each of the phases (activities, tools)?
- c) What are the success factors in each of the phases (general design)?
- d) What are the major difficulties/obstacles in each of the phases?
- e) What support roles for strategic project generation do the various actors cover?

#### Cross-border communication quality

- a) How, when and between whom does cross-border communication take place?
- b) What differences in communication quality have you noticed between the Programmes and with the partners?
- c) What might be the reason for these differences?
- d) What are the most important success factors for effective and fruitful cross-border communication?
- e) What are the major difficulties/obstacles to effective and fruitful cross-border communication?

## 3. STRATEGIC APPROACH OF THE EUROPEAN TERRITORIAL COOPERATION

### 3.1 EU STRATEGY APPROACH

Reference to strategic projects and strategic approaches in European Territorial Cooperation Programmes can be found in various EU regulations. However, there is no single definition of strategic projects; these terms are mainly used implicitly.

The term *'strategic projects'* was introduced by the Commission in 2002 following the Interreg III approval and that requests for *'strategic projects'* and stronger involvement of the national level came when most of the programmes (especially when it comes to the IIIB programmes) were already operational. As a result, defining strategic projects in the different programmes was perceived differently and in turn different criteria were developed for defining strategic projects.

There is not one definition for strategic projects, but these terms are mainly used implicitly.

#### General provisions for the ERDF, ESF and CF

In the Council Regulation (COM 2004/492)<sup>7</sup> on General Provisions for the ERDF, ESF and CF the EU Commission requests a *'more strategic orientation on the priorities of the Union'* for the Structural Funds Programmes for the new programming period 2007-2013. Synergies are to be achieved between the cohesion policy and the Lisbon and Gothenburg Agendas.

*'Cohesion policy should contribute to increasing growth, competitiveness and employment by incorporating the Community's priorities for sustainable development as defined at the European Councils in Lisbon and Gothenburg.'*<sup>8</sup>

*'On the basis of the strategic guidelines adopted by the Council, each Member State should prepare a national reference document on its development strategy, which is negotiated with the Commission and decided by the Commission and constitutes the framework for preparing the operational programmes.'*<sup>9</sup>

Under Title II of this document the Commission sets forth the *'Community Strategic Guidelines on Cohesion'*.

Article 23 states that *'The Council establishes at Community level strategic guidelines on economic, social and territorial cohesion defining a framework for the intervention of the Funds.'*

*'For each of the objectives of the Funds, those guidelines shall in particular give effect to the priorities of the Community with a view to promote balanced, harmonious and sustainable development.'*

On the basis of these strategic guidelines *'the member states present their national strategic reference framework which ensures that Community structural aid is consistent with the Community strategic guidelines, and which identifies the link between Community priorities, on the one hand, and national and regional priorities in order to promote sustainable development, and the national action plan on employment, on the other hand. The framework shall constitute a reference instrument for preparing the programming of the Funds.'*<sup>10</sup> (Article 25)

#### ERDF regulation

In Article 2 of the ERDF regulation<sup>11</sup> the following is stated as the overall purpose: *'The ERDF shall contribute to the financing of assistance towards the reinforcement of economic, social and territorial cohesion by reducing regional disparities and supporting the structural development and adjustment of regional economies, including the conversion of declining industrial regions.'*

*In so doing, the ERDF shall give effect to the priorities of the Community, and in particular the need to strengthen competitiveness and innovation, to create sustainable jobs, and to promote environmentally sound growth.'*

<sup>7</sup> Proposal for a COUNCIL REGULATION No. 492/2004 laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund Regulation (EC) No. 1081/2006 of the European Parliament and the Council of 5 July 2006 on the European Social Fund and repealing Regulation (EC) No. 1784/1999 Council Regulation (EC) No. 1083/2006 of July 2006 laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund and repealing Regulation (EC) No. 1260/1999

<sup>8</sup> COM(2004)492: p13 (2) – (2) of Council Regulation (EC) No. 1083/2006

<sup>9</sup> COM(2004)492: p17 (35) – (37) of Council Regulation (EC) No. 1083/2006

<sup>10</sup> Even though the National Strategic Reference Framework does not need to include territorial cooperation.

<sup>11</sup> COM(2004) 495, Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Regional Development Fund - Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council

The increased focus on the strategic approach common to all Structural Fund Programmes constitutes a key change as compared to the last programming period. In this context, future Co-operation Programmes should seek to establish a clear and coherent policy response which on the one hand underpins the achievement of EU objectives and on the other hand tackles the particular challenges and needs of the Programme area.

In this context, the main focus of the Co-operation Programmes should be on the description of the strategy and priorities, including the coherence of the development objectives and priorities and the related indicators and targets.

Article 12 of the same ERDF Regulation states:  
*'Each operational programme under the "European territorial cooperation" objective shall contain the following information:*

*1) an analysis of the situation of the cooperation area in terms of strengths and weaknesses and the strategy chosen in response; (...)*

*3) a justification of the priorities chosen having regard to the Community Strategic Guidelines on cohesion, the national strategic reference framework where the Member State has chosen to include actions financed under the European Territorial Co-operation objective within it (...)'*

The strategy should be built on the analysis and present a coherent and effective response to the identified obstacles and weaknesses in order to underpin the achievement of the EU objectives (EU-objectives-driven strategy). The logic of the strategic approach to cohesion must be underlined. The strategy must be relevant and appropriate to the cross-border or trans-national area concerned.

In Article 6 of the ERDF Regulation<sup>12</sup> it is stated that under the 'European Territorial Cooperation' objective, the ERDF shall concentrate its assistance on:

1) the development of cross-border economic and social activities through joint strategies for sustainable territorial development, and primarily:

a) by encouraging entrepreneurship and, in particular, the development of SMEs, tourism, culture, and cross-border trade;

b) by encouraging the protection and joint management of the environment;

c) by reducing isolation through improved access to transport, information and communication networks and services, and cross-border water, waste and energy systems; and

d) by developing collaboration, capacity and joint use of infrastructures in particular in sectors such as health, culture and education.

In addition, the ERDF may contribute to promoting the integration of cross-border labour markets, local employment initiatives, equal opportunities, training and social inclusion, and sharing of human resources and facilities for R&TD.

Cross-border cooperation by itself as a strategic objective for overcoming the obstacles between regions which are separated by national borders. For these cross-border Cooperation Programmes several cooperation criteria for 'selection of operations'<sup>13</sup> apply, which imply a wider scope of action and a stronger cooperative approach:

*'To make future projects as effective and strong as possible, 4 new cooperation criteria are outlined to ensure a high level of integration between project partners:*

*Operations selected for operational programmes shall include beneficiaries from at least two countries, which shall cooperate in at least two of the following ways for each operation:*

- *joint development,*
- *joint implementation,*
- *joint staffing, and*
- *joint financing.*

*However, the operations selected for operational programmes aimed at establishing and developing trans-national cooperation may be implemented in a single Member State provided that they have been presented by entities belonging to at least two Member States.'*

<sup>12</sup> COM(2004) 495: p.8, Article 6 – Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council

<sup>13</sup> COM(2004) 495: Article 19 - Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council

### 3.2 LISBON AGENDA<sup>14</sup>

The renewed Lisbon strategy for growth and jobs lays down that programmes co-financed through the cohesion policy should seek to target resources on the following three priorities:

- improving the attractiveness of Member States, regions and cities by improving accessibility, ensuring adequate quality and level of services, and preserving their environmental potential;
- encouraging innovation, entrepreneurship and the growth of the knowledge economy by research and innovation capacities, including new information and communication technologies; and
- creating more and better jobs by attracting more people into employment or entrepreneurial activity, improving adaptability of workers and enterprises and increasing investment in human capital.

### 3.3 CONCLUSIONS

- In the various regulations the EU Commission requests the general strategic orientation of the territorial Cooperation Programmes.
- The territorial Cooperation Programmes have to concentrate their assistance on the areas described in the ERDF Regulation.
- Furthermore the Programmes have to seek synergies with the Lisbon and Gothenburg objectives.
- Against this general background the Programme partners have to come to an agreement about the strategic orientation of the Programme, according to the specific situation in the Programme territory.
- There is no EU-wide official definition of strategic projects. They have to be defined by each Programme individually.
- The strategic orientation can be defined at Programme and priority level. The Programme priorities in combination with the selection criteria are to assure a strategic orientation of the operations/projects selected.
- In this light special attention has to be devoted to the programming exercise in order to define a sound basis for strategic project selection in the future.

At any rate, INTERREG Programmes show a broad spectrum of experience and different practical approaches to the strategic generation of projects.

<sup>14</sup> COM(2005) 0299, Communication from the Commission: Cohesion Policy in Support of Growth and Jobs: Community Strategic Guidelines, 2007-2013; (4.) GUIDELINES FOR COHESION POLICY, 2007-2013

## 4. MAIN FINDINGS

### 4.1 STRATEGIC PROJECTS

Most interview partners very much agree with the importance of this study on the generation of strategic projects. They appreciate this input, especially in the preparation phase for the new programming period.

#### 4.1.1 Definition of strategic projects

A common definition or concept of strategic projects is rarely found within one and the same Programme.

In many cases even the several relevant authorities of one and the same INTERREG IIIA Programme do not share the same understanding of a definition.

In most cases also the various partners do not refer to the same projects when asked to name important strategic projects within their Programme, and frequently they do not consider projects labelled as strategic by other Programme partners to be such.

A wide range of definitions is used for '*strategic projects*'. Strategic projects are frequently considered to be:

- Projects which are very much in line with the Programme's objectives and which fit very well into one of the Programme's priorities/measures and its intentions. It would be important to go one step further in this respect and define such projects that contribute specifically to the Programme's objectives.
- Projects which are developed and promoted on the basis of a (unilateral) regional development strategy. They are of regional importance and they enjoy strong political support from the region, but they are only strategic for one side.
- Projects that are developed in close cross-border co-operation.
- Projects that fulfil most of the four INTERREG selection criteria (joint planning, joint application, joint financing, joint use of results).
- Large projects that absorb a significant proportion of the Programme's budget.
- Projects that may induce several follow-up and/or spin-off projects and initiatives.
- Umbrella projects that implement regional strategic objectives and set a framework for the development of coordinated smaller projects.
- Projects which because of their design and implementation or their envisaged results really connect the territories, people or systems on both sides of the border.

The new ERDF regulations, having outlined the need for programmes (respectively projects) to adopt a strategic focus and be of strategic nature, are providing an opportunity for defining a framework for interpreting strategic projects prior to programmes' approvals. This also provides a good incentive for programmes to undertake a critical review of the projects/operations approved and outcomes achieved in order to draw decisions on what type of actions they would like/would not like to support in the new programming period. However, there should be an understanding that a strategic project is different from a good project.

- It does not matter so much which definition the Programme partners choose for their Programme, but it is very important that a common understanding is developed in an early phase of the Programme cycle regarding
  - what should be considered as '*strategic projects*' and
  - how such strategic projects should be generated.

While it is important to have a common understanding on what a strategic project may look like, there is no one magic formula that could adapt all programmes' diversities.

Therefore, whereas the definition of a strategic project may be more transparent when it comes to types of activities and actors involved, the thematic orientation of the projects might change due to e.g. changing political priorities. It is important that programmes allow a certain level of flexibility in defining a strategic project.

#### 4.1.2 Strategic character of projects

Irrespective of the prevailing definition of strategic projects it can be observed from the study that these projects frequently

- are very complex: they involve many different regional stakeholders and/or address more than one sector of the economy;
- require a long period of time to prepare a sound application;
- need much greater support and coordination than ordinary projects;
- cannot easily be found under a call system, because they require a long consultation process involving many relevant actors (and also the INTERREG authorities);

- have a strong top-down component, either as a political request or based on a needs assessment by administration or Regional Authorities;
- are implemented by regional authorities in the event that no other regional actor is available to act as project owner.

#### 4.1.3 'Old' and 'new' INTERREG Programmes

There are marked differences between 'old' and 'new' INTERREG Programmes concerning the joint definition of strategic projects.<sup>15</sup>

a) In 'new' Programmes strategic projects are not a major issue. The main focus of the involved Programme authorities is to find and select enough mature projects with a reasonable cross-border character in order to assure a timely implementation of the Programme and disburse the available funds properly.

Due to the quite different regimes of INTERREG and Phare CBC/Tacis, both the Programme and the projects were implemented quite unilaterally in the past. Cross-border networks and contacts among the relevant institutions and the potential partners are scarcely developed.

Frequently there are quite different socio-economic conditions on the two sides of the border and the relevant development needs for the sub-region are seen quite differently. Projects are mainly considered strategic when they are very much in line with the general intentions of the Programme.

- This means that the programming phase of the Programme is especially important as it is here that it is decided how far projects will have to be strategic in the sense of the EU INTERREG intentions.
- The main focus of attention of the involved Programme authorities is on the selection of reasonable projects based on the framework provided by the Programme.
- The definition of the priorities/measures in combination with the evaluation and selection criteria is the main regulative mechanism for obtaining 'strategic' projects.
- There is still a high demand for development of the regional and cross-border organisational system and strengthening of the cross-border linkages among regional actors. By the end of the up-coming programme period the 'new Programmes' should have eliminated this deficit.



b) In 'old' Programmes the defined objectives, priorities and measures of the Programme document are the basis for strategic considerations, but the Programme partners frequently undertake further reaching pro-active measures for generating 'strategic' projects.

The regional institutional system has already developed a high number of cross-border linkages and there is a substantial amount of experience with common activities involving partners on both sides of the border.

The socio-economic differences on the different sides of the border have already been fairly evened out and the perception has developed of a single integrated common space.

The actors involved in the Programme are already starting to be more ambitious in the selection of common strategic cross-border projects.

A discussion about strategic projects has already taken place and there is a generally shared concept among the relevant actors as to what the criteria for strategic projects should be.

- There is a well-established cross-border institutional system with transparent procedures in place. It only needs (the initiative to ask) the right questions in order to start a project generation process.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup> 'Old' INTERREG Programmes are those Programmes where an INTERREG-INTERREG cooperation already existed before the year 2000.

The 'new' Programmes are those with participation by New Member states, where the different regimes of INTERREG and PHARE CBC applied before May 2004.

<sup>16</sup> The 'old Programmes' should already have achieved quite most of their initial aims and they are being frequently criticised because of their lack of innovation. This is also why it is vital that these programmes include a top-down element and incorporate national authorities: National backing needs to be secured if old Member States are to continue supporting cross-border programmes.

**4.1.4 Top-down and bottom-up approach**

Top-down: Frequently Programme authorities themselves get actively involved in the generation of strategic projects. On the basis of their own strategic considerations they may involve appropriate project applicants to develop relevant projects and/or they may steer and influence the strategically focussed development of projects by means of their support and advice to project applicants.

In general, strategic projects seem to be initiated by public institutions at the regional level rather than by actors at the local level. Through this top-down approach issues of general public interest can be implemented as projects of strategic character.

Anyhow the level of top-down engagement of the management structures of a Programme depend very much on the involvement of thematic competent experts/representatives in the relevant Programme bodies. Programmes with dominating representatives from the administrative level frequently tend to steer a Programme by administrative requirements rather than by thematic strategic focus.

Bottom-up: Here, the Programme with its eligible measures and operations and project selection criteria forms the framework for quite a broad range of activities by individual project applicants. Local and regional actors actively influence the orientation of the Programme and autonomously generate their own project proposals, for which they apply for co-funding.



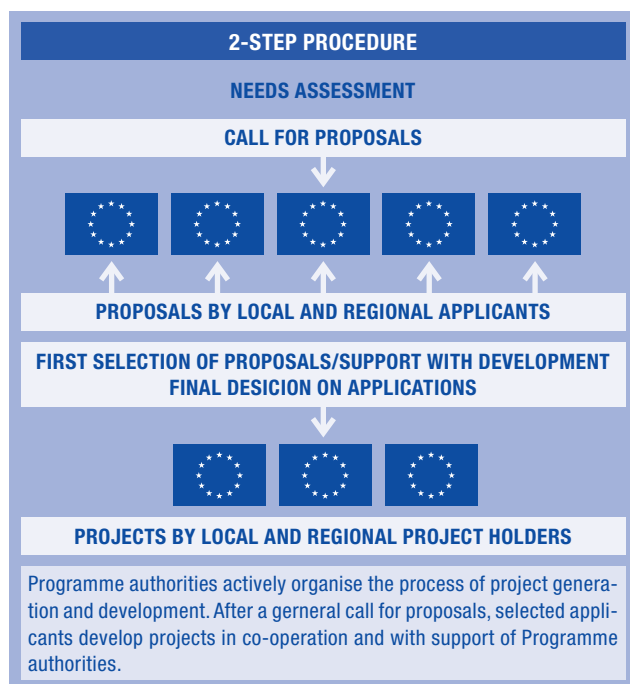
Bottom-up projects reflect local needs and are in line with the priorities and measures of the Programme; they are not automatically generated out of a strategic needs assessment at Programme level but rather reflect the individual strategies of the project owner. A system of calls for tender supports such bottom-up approaches.

Mixtures of top-down and bottom-up approaches are frequently found, e.g. thematic calls, umbrella projects with sub-projects or 2-step call systems. The more possibilities of active involvement Programme authorities have, the more top-down the character of project generation and development. This can be recognized for example at thematic calls or 2-step call systems where Programme authorities can directly influence the thematic focus of projects. Since these calls are open to all applicants also a bottom-up characteristic is included in these approaches.

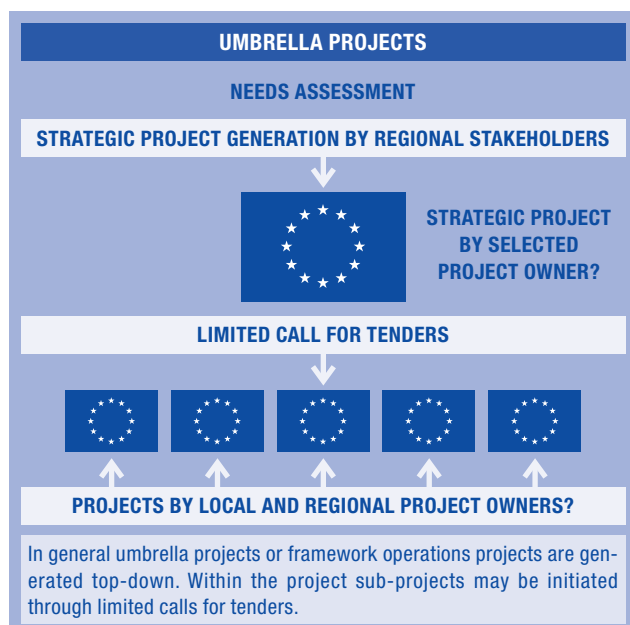
**Strategic focus of Programmes**

In most Programmes the main tool for strategic project generation is already established during the programming phase. The focus of the Programme with its priorities and measures, in combination with the evaluation and selection criteria, is the main element determining the strategic focus of the later implementation.





- The programming process is a highly participative process involving many different stakeholders. A lack of strong, focussed guidance of this process may result in a very broad and general definition of the measures and eligible activities in order to cover all the wishes of the stakeholders. Frequently the issue is who has or takes the authority to reduce the wide range of possible interventions.



- During the implementation process it frequently happens that the absorption of funds under one priority is substantially lagging behind<sup>17</sup>. The praxis of implementation shows that in such a situation funds for the various priorities are reallocated (even though the initial allocation of funds was based on the strategic orientation of the Programme). It is very rare that special efforts are undertaken to generate projects strategically in measures where absorption is lagging behind.

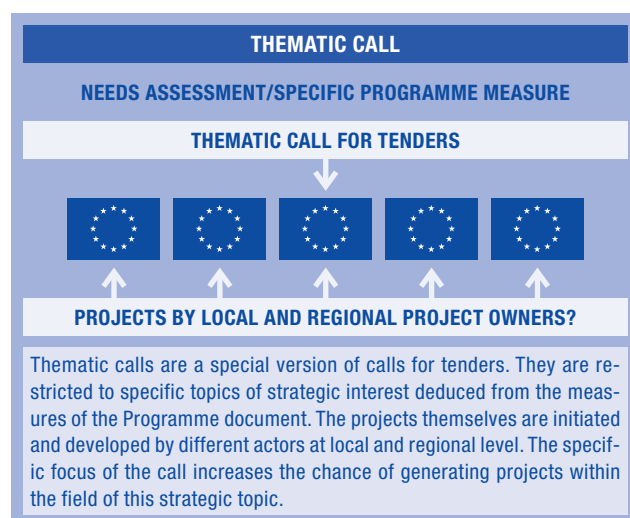
#### 4.1.5 Roles and actors in strategic project generation<sup>18</sup>

##### ROLES

The complex process of strategic project generation involves many actors with different roles. Out of 14 possibilities<sup>19</sup>, three roles were regarded as most relevant for strategic project generation:

##### Programme developer/preparation

The Programme developer defines strategies, priorities and structures of the respective Programme and is regarded as the most important role for the generation of strategic projects. Especially in new Programmes, the Programme itself is often seen as the only benchmark for strategic projects. Projects which are (very much) in line with the priorities and measures of the Programme are then considered strategic. Although priorities and measures sometimes cover a wide range of topics it can be observed that priorities and measures are often accepted as a sufficient framework for the strategy within the Programme area.



<sup>17</sup> Disregarding a priority means that either the wrong priorities were chosen or project support is too weak. Either would have significant implications for a strategic approach.  
<sup>18</sup> This chapter is based on an analysis of additional questionnaires filled in by interview partners (see Annex 3). Actors and roles had to be ranked according to their importance for strategic project generation. The results should be interpreted with caution: some roles overlap and some interview partners apparently tended to focus on their own contribution to strategic project development. Nevertheless, this analysis provides an interesting overview of which roles and actors are regarded as important for strategic project generation.  
<sup>19</sup> See Annex 3 for a detailed list of roles in strategic project generation.

**Provider of information**

The provider of information informs project promoters about INTERREG tenders, tendering procedures and Programme requirements as well as the preparation of applications. Furthermore, he/she conducts PR work and organises meetings and workshops. This role is considered second in importance after that of Programme developer. Again it is obvious that within new Programmes there is a great need for information about detailed Programme requirements. Without this information project ideas may fail to overcome bureaucratic barriers. Joint Technical Secretariats often cover this role.

**Promoter**

Dissemination of information and targeted promotion of the Programme are the main tasks of the Programme promoter and are seen as the third most important role for strategic project generation. The promoter is proactive; he/she has close relations to potential project owners within the region and tries to motivate them for project development. Within Programme implementation Euroregions often cover this role. They are equipped with both information about strategic aims of the Programme and knowledge of potential applicants within the region.

**Top 10 roles for strategic project development<sup>20</sup>**

1. Programme developer/preparation
2. Provider of information
3. Promoter
4. Advisor
5. Initiator
6. Guardian
7. Catalyst
8. Administrator
9. Co-ordinator
10. Networker

**ACTORS**

There are different actors involved in the process of strategic project generation, the following three being considered the most relevant:

**Euroregion/EUREGIO**

Euroregions are regarded as by far the most important actor for strategic project generation. Due to their good regional contacts, their cross-border structures and their experience they can cover different roles needed for project generation. Because of their permanent cross-border communication structures Euroregions successfully assist in identifying strategic issues for their cross-border re-

gion; they co-ordinate between different regional actors and furthermore mediate between strategic guidelines (top-down) and regional/local initiatives (bottom-up). In both old and new INTERREG Programmes Euroregions are seen as the main actor within cross-border structures and the network of cross-border contacts.

**Regional Authority**

The second most relevant actors are Regional Authorities. Within their respective region they are often the first contact and information point for applicants. They have good knowledge of regional actors and can therefore provide targeted information and Programme promotion. Regional Authorities encourage potential applicants to submit projects and assist with technical questions. They know the needs within the region well and co-operate with other Programme bodies such as the Joint Technical Secretariat. In new Programmes there is often no network of well informed potential project owners, therefore information and Programme promotion are considered as essential support for the generation of new projects. Regional Authorities should also be the bodies to assure that the Programme is well connected both to regional and national strategies.

**Joint Technical Secretariat**

Joint Technical Secretariats are Programme bodies responsible for technical questions concerning project development and application. Especially in new Programmes these formal aspects are crucial for successful project development. Among other services Joint Technical Secretariats organize seminars, info days and partner search meetings and provide consultation for potential applicants. This support is seen as very helpful, not only for project application but also for project generation, especially if the JTS operates proactively.

**Although Managing Authorities, National Authorities and Intermediate Bodies** are Programme bodies with the highest level of responsibility, the interview partners do not regard them as being crucial for strategic project generation. Managing Authorities and National Authorities in particular are not seen in close relation to the project level; this aspect is ensured by the Joint Technical Secretariats, which are responsible for carrying out Authority. The importance of the above-mentioned Programme bodies mainly lies in their influence on the preparation of priorities and measures which describe the Programmes' strategic fields.

Due to the increasing complexity of INTERREG requirements private consultancies sometimes play a role in

<sup>20</sup> See detailed description of roles in Annex 3

project generation and development as well. In general, however, they do not play an active role in strategic project generation.

#### Ranking of actors for strategic project generation

1. Euroregion/EUREGIO
2. Regional Authority
3. Joint Technical Secretariat
4. Managing Authority / National Authority
5. Intermediate Body
6. Regional Development Agency
7. Private consultancy
8. Other

In certain cases the Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) also plays a role in strategic project generation. The JMC consists of key Programme at a political and senior decision-making level; this means that it can comment on and influence the strategic direction of the P, if needed, the types of project that are encouraged.

The JMC may also establish regional co-ordination committees or specific bilateral working groups to foster focussed strategic project generation in certain areas.

#### 4.1.6 Success factors for strategic project generation

On the basis of the interviews certain success factors for effective strategic project generation can be distinguished.

On the one hand there are general region-specific factors. These are independent of the Programme as such and usually cannot be directly influenced by the Programme authorities. Then, on the other hand, there are Programme-specific factors which are a result of the Programme design and the functioning of the various Programme bodies.

Some of the most important factors are:

#### REGION-SPECIFIC FACTORS

##### a) Several years of joint experience and joint history

- but common history does not automatically and not always lead to a lot of interesting cooperation projects!!

*Example: In the SK–CZ INTERREG Programme the actors in the border region have a long common history dating from the time when they belonged to one state. Despite*

*this no pro-active strategic approach has been developed and there is little knowledge among project applicants concerning project generation.*

- joint experience in managing EU cross-border Programmes and projects

*Example: The DE–NL INTERREG Programme consists of three EUREGIOs which were founded from the late 1950s onwards. Since then they have been providing a structure for the implementation of EU cross-border Programmes. The participation in INTERREG I created initial contacts between separate projects across the border. Through INTERREG II and III this cross-border co-operation could be deepened and projects with more complexity were implemented. Now the Programme actors can increasingly focus on the generation of strategic projects.*

##### b) Existence of regional networks

*Example: Lower Austria participates in three INTERREG IIIA Programmes (AT–CZ, AT–SK and AT–HU). In the second INTERREG period there are already a number of regional actors with profound experience in the requirements of Programme and project management. In order to co-ordinate the planning of their projects as well as for general information purposes they meet each other before each Steering Committee meeting. Besides this formal structure the representatives of these institutions also know each other well on a personal level.*

##### c) Established structures of regional and cross-border communication

*Example: The EUREGIO between Germany and the Netherlands was established in 1958 and since then has continuously developed its cross-border structures. Meanwhile the EUREGIO manages its own INTERREG sub-programme and has a Council, Executive Board, Steering Committee, permanent working groups and a General Assembly. All these structures are strictly bilateral which makes the EUREGIO a key regional actor for the generation of strategic projects.*

##### d) Experience with the demanding Programme requirements

*Example: The regional actors and Programme bodies within the INTERREG Programme Sonderjylland – Schleswig between Denmark and Germany have gained substantial experience in INTERREG Programmes and projects. They have been implementing cross-border Pro-*

grammes and projects since INTERREG I and are therefore very familiar with all the requirements of this demanding co-operation. In the case of the ongoing INTERREG III Programme there are two Technical Secretariats - one on each side of the border – which closely cooperate with each other as well as with other regional actors such as the Euroregion.

#### e) Proximity of actors for personal meetings

*Example: INTERREG North is the European Union's largest Programme. Its geographical extent covers parts of four countries (Finland, Sweden, Norway and Russia) and about 1 million km<sup>2</sup>. This situation makes frequent personal contacts between both project partners and Programme actors very difficult to organise. Transportation costs for project development can be co-financed by the Programme and members of the Technical Secretariats meet regularly at big events. Daily personal contact is nevertheless impossible.*

#### f) Open communication (within the region and across the border)

*Example: Frequent joint workshops on technical Programme implementation issues have been held within 'IQ-train', the joint qualification platform of the INTERREG IIIA authorities of the Czech Republic and Austria (and other countries as well). Apart from the technical part of the Programme enough time is also provided for team-building and social contacts. On this basis the involved Programme stakeholders have been able to develop an open communication climate among colleagues that helps them to address issues very openly, even if they are problematic.*

#### g) Dedication to cross-border co-operation on the part of persons involved

*Example: The INTERREG Neighbourhood Programme Lithuania – Poland – Russia (Kaliningrad) is one of the 'new' Programmes. Interview partners throughout this Programme mention the importance of dedication to the aims of cross-border cooperation, which they recognise in motivated actors, close personal contacts and frequent communication. Regions within the LT – PL – RU Programme area with motivated personnel at Programme level tend to generate more projects. Especially in 'new' Programmes, motivation and dedication help to compensate for the lack of established Programme structures and long years of experience with the specific requirements of INTERREG.*

#### h) Availability of regional support structures

*Example: Strong support structures in the region (such as Euroregions/EUREGIOs and Regional Development Agencies) are a big advantage for successful generation of strategic projects. Especially bilateral structures (such as EUREGIO) that sometimes even have bilateral thematic working groups can be of great help in matching ideas and developing complex genuine cross-border projects. Thanks to their contacts EUREGIOs can co-ordinate both the political level and the level of local and regional initiatives. The Euroregion Neisse–Nisa–Nysa is a trilateral cross-border structure between Germany, Poland and the Czech Republic. It is equipped with permanent trilateral structures which enable both general co-ordination on regional issues and generation and development of new projects. Furthermore, the Euroregion holds the mandate for managing the Small Projects Fund. The regular trilateral working groups are the main source for generation of new projects.*

#### i) High level of transparency of stakeholder systems and good knowledge of the potential partners on the other side of the border

*Example: Over the last decades the INTERREG Programme Germany – Netherlands (EUREGIO – Euregio Rhine-Waal – euregio rhine-meuse-north) has developed clear structures to facilitate cross-border cooperation and communication. Through a dense cross-border network regional actors and potential project partners know each other well. The sub-programmes organise the 'technisch overleg', a process of comprehensive assessment and coordination before each Steering Committee. Representatives of the provincial government as well as the Programme management are involved in this additional procedure to eliminate all open questions before submission to the Steering Committee.*

### PROGRAMME-SPECIFIC FACTORS

#### j) Regional co-ordination and facilitation between top-down and bottom-up approach

*Example: The Regional Management of the Austrian Industrieviertel region acts as facilitator and initiator within its region. It is charged with the implementation of the Small Projects Fund and supports applicants with their project proposals. The Regional Management – in cooperation with other institutions – conducts regional needs assessments and motivates regional actors to*

develop corresponding projects. In cases where no other project owner can be found within the region it acts as final beneficiary and implements strategic projects itself.

#### k) Continuous project generation versus call system

**Example:** In the Austrian INTERREG Programmes a system of continuous project application is applied. All project proposals that are received by a specific deadline in advance of a Steering Committee undergo the compliance check and are discussed at the SC meeting. It is considered advantageous not to have a call system for project proposals in place. Complex, integrated regional development projects (these are considered strategic) need a lot of support and the involvement of many local and regional decision-makers in order to be elaborated successfully. The Austrian IBs work very closely with the project applicants (as well as with the RDAs and the EUREGIOs) to improve project proposals and make them match well both with the needs of the region and the requirements of the INTERREG Programme.

#### l) Good personal contacts and continuity of persons involved

**Example:** Interview partners from all Programmes underline the importance of personal contacts for successful Programme management and strategic project generation. The less fluctuation of personnel within the Programme structures the better for cross-border cooperation in general. Especially in Programmes like INTERREG North, with four countries and an area of 1 million square kilometres, there are very few opportunities for personal contact and meetings, therefore the aspects of knowing each other personally and stable contacts are of even greater relevance.

#### m) Proactive regional initiative and co-ordination (EUREGIO, RDA, Regional Management)

**Example:** On the Italian side of the Italy-Slovenia Programme there is a special 'top-down' procedure for regional co-ordination, the 'regia regionale'. After assessment of regional needs and the identification of project ideas, the Intermediate Bodies and JTS proactively look for regional actors that are suitable as project owners. The Intermediate Bodies then start to co-ordinate a comprehensive process of information and co-ordination within the region, with all relevant actors in the region involved in the development of the project. Finally, applications are presented directly to the Steering Committee by the Intermediate Bodies.

#### n) Proactive information for potential project owners

**Example:** There are two Technical Secretariats for the Programme between Denmark and Germany (Sønderjylland – Schleswig): one is located in Flensburg on the German side of the border, the other in Aabenraa in Denmark. They co-operate on a daily basis and are in contact with the Euroregion as well. If the political or administrative level identifies an idea for a (strategic) project, the Technical Secretariats search proactively for regional organisations with potential interest and capacity for development and implementation and try to motivate and convince them to get involved.

#### o) Collaboration between regional support capacities

**Example:** The Joint Technical Secretariat for the German-Polish Programme between Saxony and Lower Silesia is located in Dresden. To provide easy access to information and support, the JTS co-operates closely with the Euroregion and its regional offices. Members of the JTS arrange consultations at regional offices of the Euroregion; they provide this service every other week (at the beginning of the Programme period), meeting applicants together with colleagues from the Euroregion.

#### p) Provision of targeted support tools

**Example:** In 'new' INTERREG Programmes cross-border networks and contacts are not as dense and experienced as in 'old' Programmes. In these 'new' Programmes support with partner search is therefore seen as a key factor for successful project generation. Within the LT – PL – RU Programme the Lithuanian Joint Technical Secretariat organises regular partner search meetings in co-operation with Programme partners from Poland and Kaliningrad (Russia). This support is well accepted by potential final beneficiaries from all three countries.

## 4.2 CROSS-BORDER COMMUNICATION

It can be observed that strategic projects are frequently characterized (among other things) by the complexity of aspects and stakeholders involved, the need for intensive support, the long preparation period and an intensive consultation process, both between the project promoters and the relevant Programme authorities as well as across the border.

Owing to these factors, communication among the involved actors is of great importance.

It is helpful if formal, and above all transparent, communication and coordination procedures are established at both national level and regional cross-border level in order to get an opinion (ideally a single agreed opinion) on a specific issue and to prepare decisions for the highest bilateral bodies (JSC, JMC).

When screening the various INTERREG Programmes it can be observed that the most noticeable differences in cross-border communication patterns and quality are those between 'old' and 'new' INTERREG Programmes.

### 4.2.1 Characteristics of 'new' Programmes

The following characteristics are typical of cross-border communication and strategic project generation (if any) within 'new' Programmes:

- a) The level of knowledge about the relevant counterparts, stakeholders and systems of the partner region is rather low. There are only few cross-border regional networks and contacts among the regional stakeholders.
- b) There are only few and isolated contacts between stakeholders and authorities on the two sides of the border. At Programme level contacts mainly take place between very few persons and rely on the initiative of these persons to communicate the outcomes within their respective systems.
- c) Formal cross-border Programme structures do exist, as required by the Programmes, but procedures are quite formal and open communication rarely takes place. Interpreters are frequently required for the meetings, and these meetings follow an official agenda.
- d) Communication depends to a high degree on personal contacts and the individual dedication of some Pro-

gramme representatives. The communication patterns are less institutionalised. More intense cross-border communication (apart from the minimum requirement of Joint Committees) does not take place between the structures/institutions, but between individuals who represent these institutions.

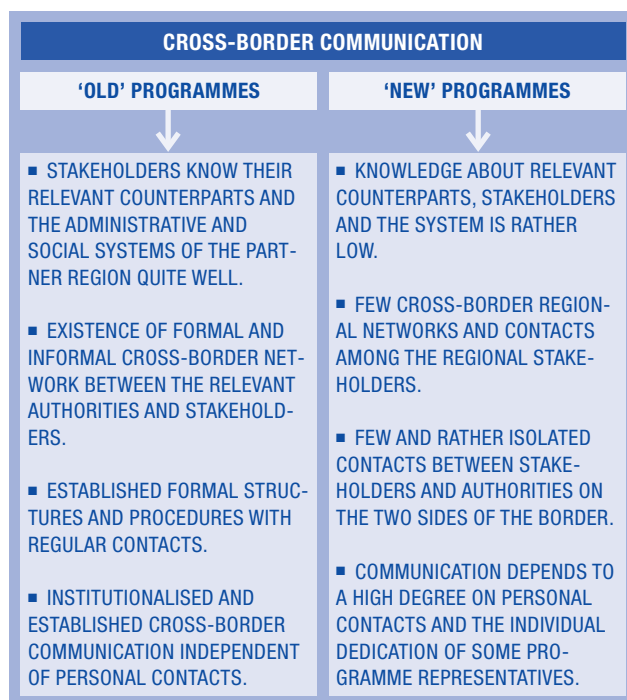
e) At project level it is frequently not the most appropriate institutions across the border that are addressed and involved as project partner, but one of the known contact options has to be chosen.

f) Language barriers represent an additional obstacle to communication. Cross-border contacts are frequently reduced to those persons and representatives with whom communication is possible in one's own or a third neutral language (there is only a weak tradition of learning the language of the neighbouring country).

### 4.2.2 Characteristics of 'old' Programmes

The following characteristics are typical of cross-border communication (and strategic project generation) within 'old' Programmes:

- a) The stakeholders on both sides of the border know their relevant counterparts and the administrative and social systems of the partner region quite well.
- b) There are frequent cross-border contacts, both formal and informal, between the relevant authorities and stakeholders. Communication and contacts already take place within a widespread network of regional stakeholders and institutions at all levels on both sides of the border.
- c) Established formal structures and procedures exist, as well as a longer history of experience with cross-border co-operation. Besides these formal structures and procedures there are also frequent informal and spontaneous contacts.
- d) (Cross-border) communication no longer depends on personal contacts only, but this communication is already institutionalised and the institutions as such are inter-linked.
- e) The involved actors at both Programme and project level are already well aware who is the most appropriate partner for a specific problem or project and can contact this institution/person directly.



#### 4.2.3 Role of Euroregions/EUREGIOs

Formal, and above all transparent, communication and coordination procedures at both national level and regional cross-border level are important in order to reach agreement on a specific issue and prepare decisions for the highest bilateral bodies (JSC, JMC).

In 'old' Programmes such coordination is often quite institutionalised, whereas in 'new' Programmes it takes place quite informally and depends very much on a few individuals.

In these communication and coordination processes Euroregions/EUREGIOs frequently play an important role. They often act as an interface between regional actors from both sides of the border as well as between strategic guidelines (top-down) and initiatives from the region (bottom-up). In particular, their permanent cross-border structures significantly facilitate communication across the border. Euroregions are often the main actor within the cross-border network of regional actors.

The introduction of the European Grouping of Territorial Co-operation (EGTC, Regulation 1082/2006<sup>21</sup>) offers new possibilities for the creation of legal entities for cross-border structures like Euroregions. In particular, the EGTC

has the potential to significantly facilitate the implementation of cross-border and trans-national programmes and projects.

#### 4.2.4 Development stages of cross-border Programmes

Different development stages of cross-border cooperation can be observed in INTERREG Programmes. Depending on the 'maturity' of cross-border cooperation and the level and duration of cross-border communication specific communication patterns and successful communication tools can be distinguished.

In the early stage of cross-border cooperation in particular there are only few contacts with and little information about the stakeholders and partners across the border. There is a lack of experience with the INTERREG requirements and procedures.

- In such an early phase general orientation and familiarisation is needed, both with the cooperation potentials and the stakeholder system across the border.
- In a later, more mature phase of cross-border cooperation issues such as project quality and impact, effectiveness and strategy gain importance.

Different tools tend to be employed, both between the Programme authorities and via-à-vis the potential stakeholders.

##### In the early phase of the Programme

- a) General information events about the Programme, its possibilities and requirements
- b) Getting to know each other (project partners, Programme actors)
- c) Achieving a shared understanding of the Programme and its procedures as well as an understanding of the situation, the background and the agenda of the partners
- d) Basic information leaflets and brochures about the Programme
- e) General web-based information

##### In a later phase of the Programme

- a) Personal consultations among project applicants
- b) Comprehensive support for project development
- c) Comprehensive regional and cross-border co-ordination (administrative and political level) through cross-border working groups or committees for a focused approach towards strategy and impact

<sup>21</sup> Regulation (EC) No. 1082/2006 of the European Parliament and the Council of July 5 2006 on a European grouping of territorial cooperation (EGTC)

#### 4.2.5 Success factors for cross-border communication

On the basis of the interviews certain success factors for fruitful and effective cross-border communication can be distinguished.

On the one hand there are general region-specific factors. These are independent of the Programme as such and usually cannot be directly influenced by the Programme authorities. Then, on the other hand, there are Programme-specific factors which are a result of the Programme design and the functioning of the various Programme bodies.

Some of the most important factors are:

##### a) Region-specific factors

###### ■ Similar institutional systems involved

*Example: The Programme counterparts need to be on a comparable administrative level. If all decisions on one side are taken centrally and the relevant institutions on the other side are at regional level, joint decision-making becomes complicated. Within the Czech – Slovak Programme the involved authorities at both regional and national level have exactly the same responsibilities regarding Programme implementation. Communication between the corresponding counterparts is considered to be quite satisfactory.*

###### ■ Comparable size and structure of the population and the institutions

*Example: Within the Lithuania – Poland – Kaliningrad Programme municipalities play an important role as project owners for local projects. Significant differences in size and population between municipalities in Poland and Lithuania can be a barrier to the development of matching new projects.*

###### ■ Similar hierarchical level of involved administrations

*Example: Hierarchical differences between Programme actors from the different countries concerned can complicate cross-border co-operation at Programme level. The level of responsibilities and competences is a significant factor in negotiation processes and Programme management. This situation can be observed in the DE – NL Programme. With regard to INTERREG the German ‘Länder’*

*(federal states) have competences comparable with those of the Provinces in the Netherlands. Due to their similarity in geographical area and population the Provinces tend to co-operate with the German districts, the level below the Länder. However, the German districts are not on the same hierarchical level as the Provinces.*

###### ■ Speaking the same language

*Example: Language differences make direct and informal communication much more difficult. Not knowing the language of the counterpart makes it difficult to overcome one's inhibitions. Also, the need to involve interpreters in meetings makes the latter more formal and cross-border interaction in the breaks of the meeting or afterwards is rare. No such language barriers exist between the Czech and Slovak authorities and informal communication is therefore well developed.*

###### ■ Similar level of economic development and economic structure

*Example: In Programmes involving partners from ‘old’ and ‘new’ Member States there is frequently a considerable difference in the level of economic development. This makes it more difficult to elaborate joint projects addressing common problems. An example of this is the Austrian-Czech Programme, where there are significant economic disparities.*

###### ■ Transparency and common understanding of structures and processes

*Example: Each country has its own special administrative structures and processes, and these differences have to be kept in mind when working together across the border. Furthermore, each country has its own picture of the complex common processes of INTERREG Programme management. Within the Euroregion Neisse/Nysa/Nisa there is a deep understanding of structures, processes and interests and the needs of the other countries. It is therefore planned to implement trilateral projects only in the next programming period.*

###### ■ Trust and understanding between partners from both sides of the border

*Example: The Programme authorities of the Czech Republic and Austria participate in a joint qualification project called ‘IQ-train’. In recent years the involved Programme representatives had the opportunity to participate in numerous joint seminars and workshops on a broad vari-*

ety of topics. This helped to create a sound basis of common understanding, both of the relevant Programme procedures and of the situation and procedures in the neighbouring country. Apart from that, a fruitful working climate and good informal relations have also developed between the Programme partners.

#### ■ Experience and structures to deal with conflicts

*Example:* A Programme actor from the Germany – Netherlands INTERREG Programme describes mutual trust as one of the success factors involved in cross-border communication. Furthermore, he stresses the importance of past problems which could be resolved together. Such experience deepens the relationship between Programme actors and the confidence to solve new problems. In general, it is important to have a solution-oriented attitude rather than a problem-oriented one.

#### ■ Good knowledge of the respective other language

*Example:* The Danish-German Programme between Sønderjylland – Schleswig covers an area where people tend to be familiar with their neighbours' language. Danish people in particular have a good knowledge of German, while the Germans have caught up with learning Danish in recent years. Nevertheless, language abilities are still regarded as a key factor for successful cross-border cooperation and the further integration of the border region. An INTERREG language campaign has therefore been initiated to further improve knowledge of the Danish and German languages respectively.

#### ■ Informal communication flows in addition to formal structures

*Example:* The Programme authorities of the Czech Republic and Austria participate in a joint qualification project called 'IQ-train'. In recent years the involved Programme representatives had the opportunity to participate in numerous joint seminars and workshops on a broad variety of topics. This helped to create a sound basis of common understanding, both of the relevant Programme procedures and of the situation and procedures in the neighbouring country. Apart from that, a fruitful working climate and good informal relations have also developed between the Programme partners.

### b) Programme-specific factors

#### ■ Regular meetings during implementation phase

*Example:* Within the INTERREG Programme North the Technical Secretariats of the sub-programmes (in Finland, Sweden, Norway) are important actors in supporting project development, with most of the cross-border communication taking place between them. In addition to project-related meetings they get together before every Steering Committee to discuss general development as well as project ideas and applications. In combination with the Steering Committee these meetings last a few days.

#### ■ Joint organisation of events

*Example:* Cross-border communication can often be observed in relation to concrete events or projects. Organising events together with other partners at Programme level helps to deepen mutual understanding and increases the quality of cross-border communication. Programme actors from Lithuania (Joint Technical Secretariat), Poland (Info Points) and Russia (support office Kaliningrad) work closely together in organising regular partner search events. The JTS bears the overall responsibility while the Polish and Russian institutions contact and invite potential project partners in their regions.

## 5. RECOMMENDATION

### 5.1 JOINT DEFINITION OF STRATEGIC PROJECTS

Combining the approaches of European Commission, interview partners of the 10 programmes and findings of the study, the following criteria can be regarded as the most common ones for strategic projects within INTER-REG IIIA-Programmes:

- They are in accordance with the objectives of European strategies or Programme documents
- They are of genuine cross-border character
  - joint development
  - joint implementation
  - joint financing
- They provide joint regional value - added
- They introduce innovations or address a significant problem
- They have a significant impact
  - They are likely to have a sustainable impact

Whatever definition of strategic projects is applied within a Programme, it is crucial that all Programme partners have a profound discussion on this issue at an early stage (already during the programming phase). It is necessary to come to a shared understanding of strategic projects and how such projects can best be generated within the Programme.

### 5.2 'OLD' PROGRAMMES

Old Programmes do not need to develop cross-border networks and contacts as such, but they can already focus on more demanding cross-border cooperation projects, that really have a strong impact on the economic and social cohesion of the programme region.

These Programmes should really seek to develop projects strategically in case that there is an unsatisfying absorption in one priority/measure rather than to reallocate funds to measures/priorities with a more advanced absorption. EUREGIOs, joint cooperation committees or bilateral thematic working groups can be helpful to undertake such joint strategic project generation measures.

### 5.3 'NEW' PROGRAMMES

New Programmes still need to create a sound basis to enable strategic project generation in their territory. It might be of strategic importance to put a strong emphasis on the development of cross-border contacts and net-

works as well as on a general cross-border system development for a better integration of the two sub-regions.

This might be achieved by

- implementing a large number of (bottom-up) cross-border projects with genuine bilateral participation of the partners. These projects may sometimes lack a strong and measurable direct economic impact, their main aim being to help develop the cross-border system and contacts among stakeholders.
- implementing some large (top-down) projects that really help economic and social cohesion and provide valuable experience of working together on more complex issues.

Projects in 'new' Programmes should not be over-burdened with requirements such as being highly innovative or having a strong economic impact. Such Programmes may still need time to develop a sound basis for more ambitious objectives. The development of sustainable contacts and networks forms part of such a sound basis.

### 5.4 STRATEGIC FOCUS OF THE PROGRAMME

Strategic steering of a Programme is essentially defined by its priorities, measures and selection criteria. For this reason it is necessary to introduce a strategic focus right at the outset in the programming phase; this should be clear but not too broad and incorporate all of these elements. Without such a strategic focus Programmes run the risk of steering the quantity and quality of project proposals merely by (demanding) that project promoters fulfil certain administrative requirements.

### 5.5 GENERAL

The following tables summarise the success factors for project generation and cross-border communication that were identified in the course of the analysis. Furthermore, they contain a set of recommendations for actions to be taken in the event that these success factors are not (or not sufficiently) in place. These recommendations are based on examples drawn from the analysed Programmes and are described briefly at the end of this section.

## a) Success factors for strategic project generation

SUCCESS FACTORS	IF NOT	RECOMMENDATIONS
<b>REGION-SPECIFIC FACTORS</b>		
Several years of common experience and common history		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ 3-4 day Programme start-up workshop with all relevant Programme authorities at national and regional level</li> <li>■ regional who-is-who directory</li> </ul>
Existence of regional networks		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ regional coordination committees</li> <li>■ thematic cross-border workgroups</li> <li>■ SPF focus on regional networking projects</li> <li>■ regional who-is-who directory</li> </ul>
Established structures of regional and cross-border communication		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ thematic networking projects</li> <li>■ promotion of Euregios and RDAs</li> <li>■ regional who-is-who directory</li> </ul>
Experience with the demanding Programme requirements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ 3-4 day Programme start-up workshop with all relevant Programme authorities at national and regional level</li> <li>■ seminars for project applicants</li> <li>■ Programme manuals for applicants and project owners</li> </ul>
Proximity of actors for personal meetings		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ travel subsidies for project applicants</li> <li>■ web-based information material</li> <li>■ combined Steering Committee meetings with an additional day for technical discussions on Programme implementation issues</li> </ul>
Open communication (within the region and across the border)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ joint learning and reflection platforms</li> <li>■ consideration of social aspects in organisation of technical meetings (joint dinners, joint study visits, etc.)</li> </ul>
Dedication to cross-border co-operation on the part of persons involved		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ political support for cbc issues</li> <li>■ joint development of a vision for the future of the region</li> </ul>
Availability of regional support structures		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ set-up of RDAs and Euregios</li> <li>■ financial support for regional support structures</li> <li>■ official function of regional support structures within Programme implementation</li> </ul>
High level of transparency of stakeholder systems and good knowledge of the potential partners on the other side of the border		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ regional who-is-who directory</li> <li>■ regional and cross-border coordination committees</li> </ul>
<b>PROGRAMME-SPECIFIC FACTORS</b>		
Joint experience in managing EU cross-border Programmes and projects		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ 3-4 day Programme start-up workshop with all relevant Programme authorities at national and regional level</li> <li>■ combined Steering Committee meetings with an additional day for technical discussions on Programme implementation issues</li> </ul>
Good personal contacts and continuity of persons involved		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ incorporating evening programme and overnight stays into necessary Programme events</li> </ul>
Regional co-ordination and facilitation between top-down and bottom-up approach		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ thematic workgroups develop joint project proposals for further funding</li> <li>■ very specific thematic calls</li> </ul>
Project development in partnership between project applicants and Programme authorities		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ continuous project generation instead of call system</li> <li>■ permission for IBs and JTS to act as project promoters (and not as controllers and administrators only)</li> <li>■ two-step call system</li> <li>■ thematic coaches within IBs or JTS to support project applicants</li> <li>■ sufficient capacities/resources within IBs and JTS to support project applicants</li> </ul>
Proactive regional initiative and co-ordination (EUREGIO, RDA, Regional Management)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ regional needs assessment with regional stakeholders</li> </ul>
Proactive provision of information to potential project owners		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ information days for potential project applicants</li> <li>■ availability of web-based information material</li> </ul>
Collaboration between regional support capacities		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ JTS information days at regional chambers of commerce and other regional structures</li> <li>■ regional cbc platforms</li> </ul>
Provision of targeted support tools		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ organisation of (sectoral/thematic) partner search meetings</li> </ul>

## b) Success factors for cross-border communication

SUCCESS FACTORS	IF NOT	RECOMMENDATIONS
<b>REGION-SPECIFIC FACTORS</b>		
Similar institutional systems involved		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ nominate corresponding structures as representative authorities in the Programme bodies</li> </ul>
Comparable size and structure of the population and the institutions		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ designate balanced eligible regions on both sides of the border</li> </ul>
Similar hierarchical level of involved administrations		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ nominate corresponding structures as representative authorities in the Programme bodies</li> </ul>
Speaking the same language		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ language courses for Programme authorities and local population</li> <li>■ free interpreter services for project owners in the project preparation phase</li> <li>■ specific language focus within the eligible operations</li> </ul>
Transparency and common understanding of structures and processes		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ 3-4 day Programme start-up workshop with all relevant Programme authorities at national and regional level</li> <li>■ combined Steering Committee meetings with an additional day for technical discussions on national Programme implementation issues</li> <li>■ twinning visits by corresponding Programme authorities</li> </ul>
Trust and understanding between partners from both sides of the border		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ joint learning and reflection platforms</li> <li>■ consideration of social aspects in organisation of technical meetings (joint dinners, joint study visits, etc.)</li> </ul>
Experience and structures to deal with conflicts		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ joint learning and reflection platforms</li> <li>■ consideration of social aspects in organisation of technical meetings (joint dinners, joint study visits, etc.)</li> </ul>
Good knowledge of the respective other language		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ language courses for Programme authorities and local population</li> <li>■ free interpreter services for project owners in the project preparation phase</li> <li>■ specific language focus within the eligible operations</li> </ul>
Informal communication flows in addition to formal structures		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ consideration of social aspects in organisation of technical meetings (joint dinners, joint study visits, etc.)</li> </ul>
<b>PROGRAMME-SPECIFIC FACTORS</b>		
Initial meetings between Programme actors at the beginning of the Programme period; Regular meetings during implementation phase		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ 3-4 day Programme start-up workshop with all relevant Programme authorities at national and regional level</li> <li>■ combined Steering Committee meetings with an additional day for technical discussions on national and joint Programme implementation issues</li> </ul>

**EXPLANATION OF SELECTED RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- **3-4 days Program start-up workshop with all relevant Program authorities on national and regional level**

Such 3-4 days workshops with all relevant actors at the beginning of the programme period should help to achieve a joint understanding of the implementation arrangements and the relevant aspects of the Programme. These workshops should also facilitate to understand the administrative system and the conditions of the neighbouring country and help creating personal links among the future counterparts and actors involved. Also actors, who did not take part in the programming process before, should participate.

- **regional who-is-who directory**

A directory (also published on relevant Internet web-sites) which is listing the contact details and the functions / activities of all relevant institutions in the region on both sides of the border should help Programme authorities and project applicants to find the appropriate institution for their specific request.

Such regional and cross-border who-is-who directories might also be useful for specific segments of society (businesses, NGOs, etc.)

- **regional and cross-border coordination committees**

Regional coordination committees might meet (in advance of joint cross-border meetings) in order to facilitate the exchange of information on a regional basis and to find a regional approach to pending issues and project proposals. They should involve both Programme authorities and

regional administration representatives and selected regional stakeholders (Euregio, etc.)

Cross-border coordination committees are sometimes introduced in order to assure continuity of the development of certain development issues in a Programme region.

- **thematic cross-border workgroups**

For an exchange of information and profound discussion of sectoral issues experts, both from administration and relevant institutions meet to exchange views and to find ways to generate coordinated project proposals. In some Programmes such thematic cross-border workgroups are discussed in order to prepare the basis for thematic calls for projects within the Programme or they even develop joint project proposals for further funding.

- **SPF focus on regional or thematic networking projects**

Calls for SPF projects might specifically focus on networking projects. All forms of creating contacts across the border might be promoted generously.

- **promotion and setting-up of Euregios and RDAs and financial support for regional support structures**

Euregios and RDAs might be specifically promoted within the Programme. If such structures do not exist it might be considered to facilitate the setting-up of such structures also within the Programme. If such structures do already exist they might receive certain financing of their operations out of the Programme and they might get officially involved and fulfil official tasks within Programme implementation.

- **seminars for project owners**

In combination with the promotion of the Programme or for a group of project owner of newly awarded projects it might be useful to provide concise training both for the relevant project manager as well as for the financial managers. They need to be familiar with the demanding requirements for management and administration of INTERREG projects and know where to find competent coaching during implementation of their projects.

- **Programme manuals for applicants and project owners**

It is essential to provide concise written information about the demanding requirements for management and administration of INTERREG projects. Manuals prove to be quite useful for that purpose.

- **Travel subsidies for project applicants**

In certain cases it might be reasonable to assist project applicants financially already in the project generation phase.

- **web-based information material**

In many Programmes quite concise written information about the Programme and the demanding requirements for management and administration of INTERREG projects is provided. This serves as a good starting point for inquiries.

- **combined Steering Committee meetings with an additional day for technical discussions on Programme implementation issues**

Especially in cases when participants of Programme meetings have to travel long distances the necessary Programme meetings might be combined extended to include joint workshops and seminars on specific technical issues and to improve the personal contacts among the representatives.

- **joint learning and reflection platforms**

Joint learning and reflection platforms among Programme authorities help to discuss Programme implementation issues among the partners and to gain a shared understanding of the administrative procedures and requirements. They may also help to develop the partnership climate among the actors and to strengthen informal contacts.

- **consideration of social aspects on technical meetings (joint dinners, joint study visits, ...)**

Many programme implementation issues may be resolved quite un-bureaucratic just with a brief phone call between the relevant Programme counterparts. In order to do so it is necessary to know the partner well and to have a certain level of personal relation with him/her. The social dimension of mere technical meetings helps to intensify the contacts among the partner also on the personal level. It is frequently helpful to foresee also overnight stays for joint meetings in order to assure a good participation of participants in the social activities as well.

- **political support for CBC issues**

It is essential to keep the political stakeholders of the region well informed about the Programme and to assure their full support. Their support and esteem of the Programme helps to motivate and to support the Programme administration structures.

- **joint development of a vision for the future of the region**

A shared understanding of the needs and the potentials of the region is essential<sup>22</sup>. Joint strategy development and coordinated work groups are usually established to achieve such.

- **Continuous project generation instead of call system**

Under a call system Programme authorities frequently maintain a neutral position towards any project applicant and they do not provide advice or influence the design of the contents of the project. Under a system of continuous project generation Programme authorities tend to take a more partnership approach towards the project applicants and by doing so influence steer more directly the orientation and the design of project proposals to make them better fit to the strategic intentions of the Programme.

- **Permission for IBs and JTS to act as project promoters (and not as controllers and administrators only) and**

- **Provide sufficient capacities/resources within IBs and JTS to support project applicants,**

- **Thematic coaches within IBs or JTS to support project applicants**

Similar to the continuous project generation it is necessary that already during the Programming phase the implementation provisions of the Programme are design in a way that they foresee an active participation and support of IBs and JTS in project generation and that they are equipped with sufficient resources for that as well. If such functions are not foreseen these bodies often tend to cover mainly the function of bureaucratic administration only.

- **Two step call system**

Under a two step call system it is possible to select under a first call the appropriate project ideas first and later on select and support those who fit best into the strategic orientation of the Programme.

- **regional needs assessment with regional stakeholders**

A shared understanding of the needs and the potentials of the region are essential. Joint work groups are usually established to achieve such.

- **information days for potential project applicants**

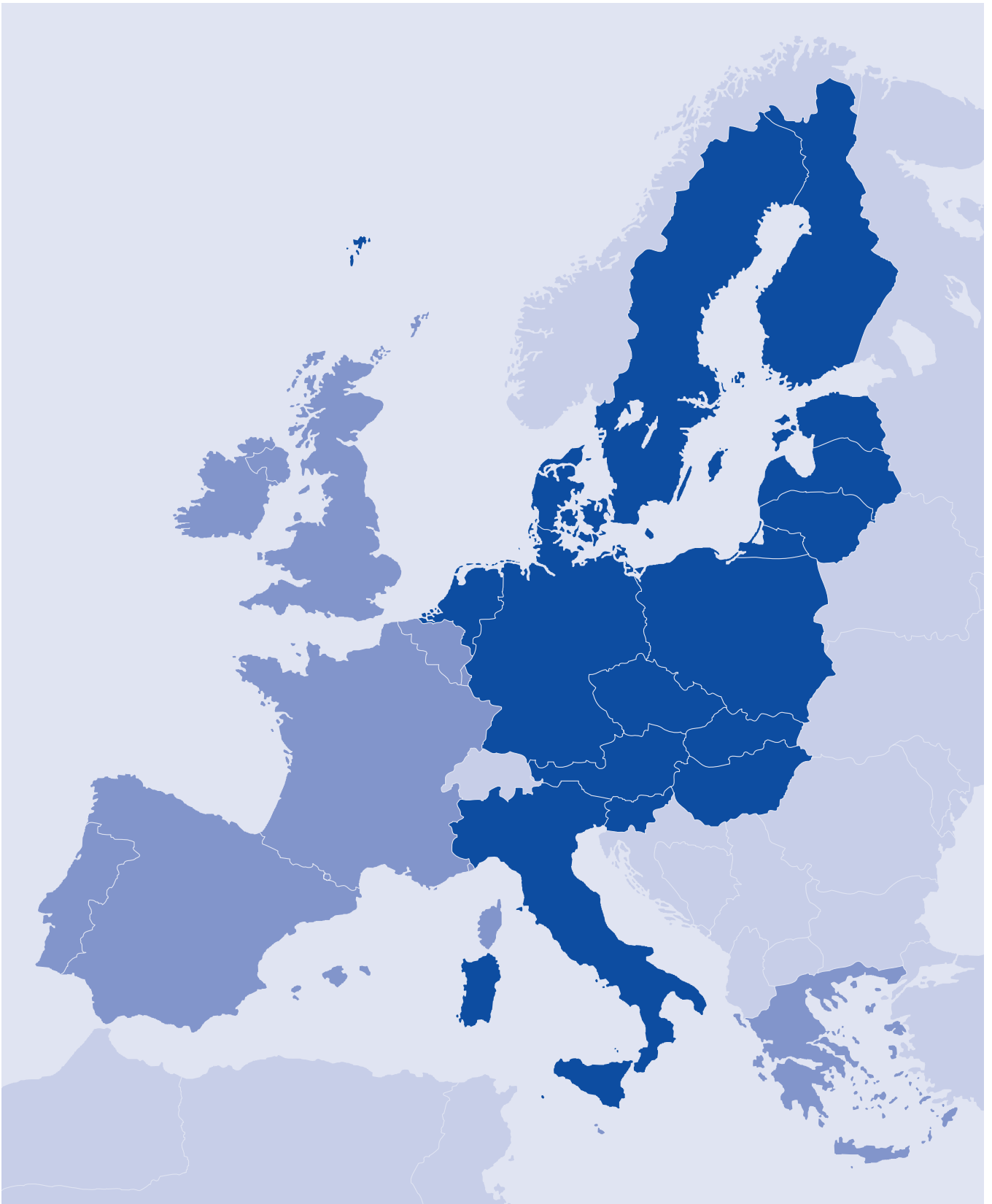
In many Programmes information days for the general public or for specific target groups are held about the Programme, its possibilities and the requirements for project applicants either at the beginning of the Programme period or parallel to calls for proposals.

- **JTS information days at regional chambers of commerce and other regional structures**

The Programme bodies might seek the cooperation with other institutions in the region in order to address jointly the potential project applicants or to raise the awareness for project possibilities within a specific sector of society.

<sup>22</sup> Distinction needs to be made between generally agreed shared idea for the programme area (an essential part of programming) and a formal written vision for the whole programme area normally looking about 30 years ahead. The last has been identified as good practice but are only applied in few examples in cross-border programmes (though this is rapidly becoming standard practice in transnational programmes).

## PART B: FACT SHEETS OF INTERREG PROGRAMMES



## INTERREG IIIA PROGRAMME AUSTRIA – CZECH REPUBLIC (AT – CZ)

### PROGRAMME BUDGET (IN MEURO)

Total budget	69,2
ERDF	38,3

### CONTACT DETAILS JTS

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### CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION HISTORY

The Austrian provinces initiated cross-border cooperation with former Czechoslovakia back in 1987 with the Framework Programme on the Cooperation between the Land Lower Austria and Southern Moravia.

Contacts were intensified after the opening up of Eastern Europe, and in 1992 bilateral working groups were installed. At the level of the Länder governments of Lower and Upper Austria, the *'Mixed Commissions'* Upper Austria – Southern Bohemia and Lower Austria – South Moravia were set up to promote intensive cooperation and the resolution of existing cross-border problems in the above-cited areas within the context of a number of working groups.

Close cooperation has also been established at the municipal level, between the social partners and above all between associations in different areas of interest. These contacts have been maintained and constituted a sound basis for the establishment of cross-border Euregios.

Though project implementation under the two INTERREG Programmes was not yet based on a coordinated cross-border strategy for the development of the common border region, the projects implemented generated a multitude of positive transnational effects and may be viewed as an effective contribution to the development of the border area and the strengthening of cooperation on both sides of the border. This is basically due to the following factors:

### SPECIAL FEATURES /CHARACTERISTICS

#### General

About 5 m people live in this cooperation area of approx. 50.000 km<sup>2</sup>, with the Czech part being substantially larger and also having twice the population. The GDP per capita on the Austrian side is about twice that on the Czech side. The cross-border cooperation pattern shows a strong division of the whole Programme area into two sub-cooperation areas (Upper Austria – Southern Bohemia and Lower Austria – South Moravia) with only few projects overcoming this division. The iron curtain separated the two countries very effectively, and although contacts have improved in recent years the institutional contacts are still weak and the language barrier still remains.

#### Structure of Programme & communication

On the Austrian side the main operational management activities are undertaken at the level of the three involved Länder (federal provinces), where the decisions about ERDF co-funding are also taken. The national level on the Austrian side only assists in certain coordination activities. On the Czech side decision-making competence is more concentrated at national level, which sometimes makes coordination at regional level less effective. In the last few years this direct cross-border communication at the regional level of the Programme has improved considerably. This is also due to the fact that staff with competence in the language of the neighbouring region are employed in all offices of the involved IBs.

The JTS is divided into two offices, one for each side of the border, which brings this institution closer to the corresponding national and regional Programme administrations as well as to the beneficiaries. On the other hand, however, it reduces the intensity of cross-border communication within this structure.

#### Strategic approach

Projects considered as strategic are mainly complex projects that have a high level of cross-border integration and the potential to induce further cross-border activities. However, when monitoring revealed that the absorption of funds under one priority was lagging substantially behind, the available budgets were reallocated and no substantial strategic efforts were undertaken to generate projects in this specific area.

Strategic plans foresee more intense development of cross-border networks and cross-border structures (e.g. EUREGIOs).

PROGRAMME STRUCTURE BY PRIORITIES (P) AND MEASURES (M)					
P1 Cross-border Economic Co-operation	P2 Accessibility	P3 Cross-border Organisational Structures and Networks	P4 Human Resources	P5 Sustainable Spatial and Environmental Development	P6* Special Support for Border Region
P1/M1 Development and Support of Business Sites and Business Service Infrastructure in Border Areas	P2/M1 Improvement of cross-border Transport and Telecommunication Infrastructure	P3/M1 Support of cross-border Organisational Structures and Development of Networks	P4/M1 Development of Regional Labour Markets within the Context of EU Enlargement	P5/M1 Resource Management, Technical Infrastructure and Renewable Energy Supply	P6/M1 Special Support for Border Region
P1/M2 Cross-border Co-operation of Enterprises (SMEs) and Counselling and Support for cross-border Business Activities	P2/M2 Transport Organisation, Planning and Logistics	P3/M2 Micro-projects including People-to-People Actions and Small Pilots	P4/M2 Development of Co-operation and Infrastructure in the Fields of Education, Training and Science	P5/M2 Measures for Nature and Environmental Protection including National and Nature Parks	
P1/M3 Tourism and Leisure				P5/M3 Cross-border Spatial Development in Rural and Urban Areas	
Technical Assistance					

\* Priority 6 'Special Support for Border Regions' is treated under a separate budget line. The funds for this additional priority have been allocated entirely for the year 2002 and can be spent only at the Austrian side of the border until the end of 2004.

### Support & tools

The IBs, the RDAs and the EUREGIOs are very actively and pro-actively involved in project generation and provision of support to project applicants. Two factors are considered to support this: firstly, each of these institutions is very well connected and communicates intensively with its respective counterparts on the other side of the border. This means they can quickly obtain the necessary information from their partner and check the viability of project ideas. Secondly, it is considered important that a system of continuous project applications is in place (instead of a call system). This enables these institutions to provide more active support to project applicants and to (re-) focus project ideas.

### GOOD PRACTICE: TOOL

A joint transnational learning network for INTERREG programme actors (IQ-Train -INTERREG Quality Training <http://www.iq-train.net/>) from 'older' and 'younger' EU member states (CZ, AT, SI, IT) has been created under the INTERACT Programme.

IQ-Train matches training demands with existing INTERREG knowledge among the target group – mainly the staff of Managing Authorities, members of the Monitoring and Steering Committees and actors from regional intermediary institutions relating to INTERREG.

In many bilateral and multilateral workshops and seminars the involved INTERREG authorities have had the

opportunity to develop a shared understanding of the region, the Programme, the procedures, specific issues and, last but not least, the persons involved and their institutional background. This has greatly helped to develop a cooperative climate of mutual understanding and trust. As one of the involved participants explained: *'We now understand each other and the procedures much better. It is easy for me to pick up the phone and call my colleague. I am not afraid to ask stupid questions.'*

### GOOD PRACTICE: PROJECT

#### GIZ net (Cross-border Impulse Centres)

*'Breaking down borders in people's minds ...'*

The 'Cross-border/Transnational Impulse Centres' (GIZes) are concerned with overcoming the borders that frequently still exist in the minds of some people.

A total of 11 GIZes along the border between Lower Austria and the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary offer suggestions and support activities for the cross-border and transnational development of everyday activities in the border region. The aim is to diminish prejudices in the respective small regions by close economic, social and cultural co-operation and motivate the local population to greater cross-border and transnational collaboration.

Every GIZ has an appropriate partner organisation in the respective neighbouring country to help the GIZ managers fulfil their tasks optimally. Activities are planned and carried out together, ideas and information are exchanged.

## INTERREG IIIA PROGRAMME AUSTRIA – HUNGARY (AT – HU)

### PROGRAMME BUDGET (IN MEURO)

Total budget	76,9
ERDF	41,5

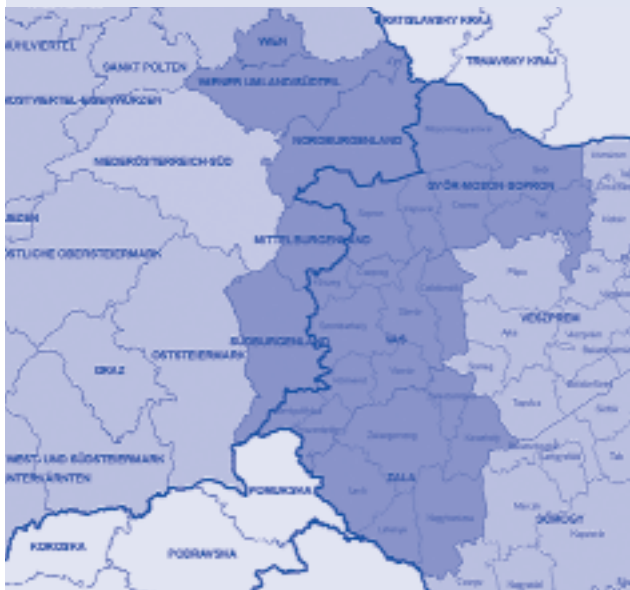
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### CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION HISTORY

After the fall of the iron curtain and the opening of the borders, co-operation between the Austrian and Hungarian neighbours was quickly recognised as a chance for regional development.

Austria and Hungary participated in the INTERREG IIA-PHARE CBC Programme 1995-1999, which helped to improve and intensify cross-border co-operation in the joint

border region. The process of building up cross-border contacts was started and first joint projects were developed.

For the Programme cycle 2000-2006 both sides jointly created an interdisciplinary co-operation programme. Until Hungary's accession to the EU, cross-border activities in Austria were financed under INTERREG IIIA and those in Hungary under PHARE CBC. The procedures of the PHARE CBC Programme were particularly important as part of the pre-accession learning process for the local and regional authorities in Hungary.

Since Hungary's accession in May 2005 Austria and Hungary have both implemented their cross-border projects under INTERREG IIIA.

### SPECIAL FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS

#### General

The Programme area is a mainly rural region with 3.4 million inhabitants (2.4 on the Austrian side and 1 million on the Hungarian side). The biggest cities within the 20,500 km<sup>2</sup> area are Vienna and Győr. Environmental protection is one of the highest priorities in the region.

#### Structure of Programme & communication

The Austrian Federal Chancellery acts as Managing and Paying Authority for this Programme as well as for the Austrian Programmes with the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Slovenia, so the Austrian-Hungarian INTERREG Programme co-operates closely with these other Programmes. The Joint Technical Secretariat is located in Vienna (head office) and in Sopron. Furthermore, the Intermediate Bodies and the Hungarian Info Points are involved in the generation of new projects and frequent cross-border communication takes place between these actors.

#### Strategic approach

Three types of projects are regarded as being of strategic character:

- projects which are initiated from the political level (top-down approach)
- projects which generate follow-up activities
- projects generated by Programme bodies based on a regional needs assessment.

In Austria the Regional Managements play an important role in the generation of new projects. They act as coordinator, initiator or regional mediator and in some cases also as project owner.

PROGRAMME STRUCTURE BY PRIORITIES (P) AND MEASURES (M)					
P1 Cross-border Economic Co-operation	P2 Infrastructure	P3 Cross-border Organisational Structures and Networks	P4 Human Resources	P5 Sustainable cross-border environmental and spatial development	P6* Special Support for Border Region
P1/M1 Development and Support of Business Sites and Business Service Infrastructure in Border Areas	P2/M1 Improvement of cross-border Transport and Telecommunication Infrastructure	P3/M1 Support of cross-border Organisational Structures and Development of Networks	P4/M1 Development of Regional Labour Markets within the Context of EU Enlargement	P5/M1 Resource Management, Technical Infrastructure and Renewable Energy Supply	P6/M1 Special Support for Border Region
P1/M2 Cross-border Co-operation of Enterprises (SMEs) and Counselling and Support for cross-border Business Activities	P2/M2 Transport Organisation, Planning and Logistics	P3/M2 Micro-projects including People-to-People Actions and Small Pilots	P4/M2 Development of Co-operation and Infrastructure in the Fields of Education, Training and Science	P5/M2 Measures for Nature and Environmental Protection including National and Nature Parks	
P1/M3 Tourism and Leisure				P5/M3 Cross-border Spatial Development in Rural and Urban Areas	
Technical Assistance					

\* only valid for AT side, was closed by end 2004

### Support & tools

The type of support provided by Programme bodies has changed during the Programme period. At the beginning the focus was on offering broad information events, whereas towards the end of the Programme cycle the applicants mainly needed individual information, support and consultation. Thanks to the good cross-border contacts in the region support with partner search is no longer of great importance.

### GOOD PRACTICE: TOOL

#### IB and project steering

The Austrian Regional Managements act as Intermediate Bodies and are members of the Joint Steering Committee. They provide information and support for applicants within their respective regions.

The Regional Managements often recommend setting up steering groups within (bigger) projects. Applicants are then supposed to involve the Regional Management in these structures, so the latter can easily participate in regular meetings and inform project partners about relevant developments and assist if problems occur. The meetings

are also an opportunity for the Regional Management to obtain detailed information about ongoing projects and their progress. In general, the connection between project partners and Programme bodies is to be strengthened at project level.

### GOOD PRACTICE: PROJECT

#### LAMO–Labourmarket Monitoring

The general aim of this project is to develop a monitoring system for gathering data regarding labour markets on both sides of the border. Especially data about migration and commuting is of great interest and can serve as basis for political decisions. The geographical focus lies on the cities Bratislava, Brno, Győr, Sopron and Vienna. The monitoring system is developed in close cross-border co-operation between Hungarian and Austrian partners.

Additionally interviews with experts from both countries (scientists, politicians..) are conducted.

Furthermore enterprises are interviewed to find out more about their concrete needs and expectations. The project runs from 01.01.2003 till 31.12.2005.

## INTERREG IIIA PROGRAMME EUREGIO – EUREGIO RHINE-WAAL – EUREGIO RHINE-MEUSE-NORTH

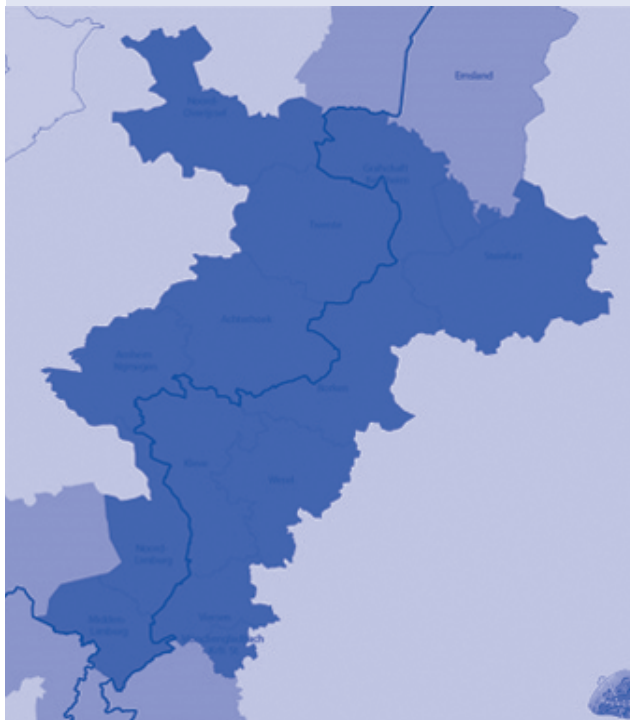
### PROGRAMME BUDGET (IN MEURO)

Total budget	218,0
ERDF	99,9

### CONTACT DETAILS JTS

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### CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION HISTORY

The Programme area has a long history of cross-border co-operation. Even before INTERREG I and II there was cross-border co-operation, especially through the three Euregios: EUREGIO in Gronau was founded in 1958, Euregio Rhein-Waal in 1968 and euregio rhein-maas-nord in 1978.

Just before approval of the first operational INTERREG I Programme the three Euregios and the respective governments in Germany and the Netherlands signed a dec-

laration that all INTERREG funds should go to a common account and be distributed according to project quality only, not by national quota.

The long co-operation before and in the context of INTERREG I and II has led to a dense cross-border network of regional actors independent of the structures of the INTERREG Programme. In the present INTERREG IIIA period the three Euregios are acting for the first time under a common Programme. Each Euregio defines its specific priorities in its own sub-programme.

### SPECIAL FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS

#### General

The cross-border Programme area of the three Euregios is situated between the centres of Rhein-Ruhr in Germany and Randstad in the Netherlands. The area covers some 22,000 km<sup>2</sup> with 7.7 m inhabitants (4.9 million on the German side and 2.8 million on the Netherlands side). The structure is rather rural and dominated by small and medium-scale towns. The Programme's main objective is to convert the formerly nationally peripheral location of the regions into a centrally located area in Europe and to make a regional contribution to European integration.

#### Structure of Programme & communication

The structure of the Programme is decentralised with three Euregios as the central actors. Each of the three sub-programmes has a separate Steering Committee and Intermediate Body. Due to the long history of cross-border co-operation, structures are well functioning and transparent.

A dense network of chambers, associations, municipalities and institutions and their formal and informal communication flows contributes significantly to the high quality of cross-border co-operation. Thanks to a good knowledge of the respective other language there are few language barriers in the Programme area.

#### Strategic approach

Due to the well established Programme structures, the generation of new projects is connected with a process of comprehensive regional and cross-border co-ordination. The Euregios with their permanent cross-border committees co-ordinate this process and involve all relevant regional actors. Project generation especially takes place within the cross-border working groups of the Euregios. Projects with a more strategic character are sometimes implemented as framework projects or covering the area of all three sub-programmes.

PROGRAMME STRUCTURE BY PRIORITIES (P) AND MEASURES (M)					
P1 Spatial structure	P2 Economy, technology, innovation	P3 Environment, nature, landscape	P4 Qualification and labour Market	P5 Socio-cultural integration	P6 Technical Assistance
P1/M1 Cross-border integrated spatial development/ functional development	P2/M1 Co-operation of SME/cross-border market	P3/M1 Environment, nature and landscape	P4/M1 Development of labour market/mobility of employees/cross-border networks in qualification, vocational training and employment	P5/M1 Social networks/elimination of everyday border problems	P6/M1 Programme Management INTERREG IIIA
P1/M2 Traffic/mobility, transport, maintenance/telecommunication	P2/M2 Development and transfer of technology	P3/M2 Agriculture		P5/M2 Culture, historical heritage and education	P6/M2 Reporting, controlling, evaluation, information and publicity
	P2/M2 Recreation and Tourism				

### Support & tools

The Programme Managements of the three Euregios, and especially the thematic project managers, provide information and support for applicants. In general they follow a pro-active approach of generating new project ideas and assisting potential applicants. Before the final decision of the Steering Committee of each sub-programme a comprehensive regional and cross-border co-operation process takes place including regional committees, councils of the Euregios, provinces in the Netherlands and the German Länder.

### GOOD PRACTICE: TOOL

‘*Technisch overleg*’ meetings are organized by the Programme Management of the respective sub-programmes and take place once or twice before each Steering Committee. The participants are the Auditing Bodies (Provinces in NL, Districts in DE) as well as the Programme Management. All applications are discussed in detail; questions and recommendations from the Auditing Bodies are forwarded to applicants by the Programme Management for possible revision. The aim is to consider and resolve all technical aspects of assessment in advance of the meetings of the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee can then focus on the content of the project and its value added for the Programme.

### GOOD PRACTICE: PROJECT

#### NDIX

The common intention of the joint Programme is to become a competitive and dynamic economic region. For this reason it sets value on co-financing projects in the economic and technology sector. The INTERREG project ‘*Dutch German Internet Exchange*’ (NDIX) is one example supporting this intention. The goal of the project is to improve the availability of broadband connections, the value for money of Internet links and the position of the region in terms of competition in the information and communication technology sector. Through this INTERREG project a centre in Münster (Germany) was opened and physically connected to the node in Enschede (Netherlands) via a fibre-optic link. As a result, large volumes of data can be transported directly, and therefore more cost-effectively, via the Internet, since these data no longer need to be directed via nodes located far away in Frankfurt and Amsterdam. Organisations and businesses can link up to both locations and profit from the advantages of the newly laid fibre-optic connection; for example, unlimited capacity in communication. This project is therefore regarded as one of the best-practice projects of the cross-border cooperation between Germany and the Netherlands.

The project is financed by the European Union, the Ministries of Economic Affairs of the Netherlands and the Federal State of North Rhine-Westphalia and the regional co-financing bodies.

## INTERREG IIIA PROGRAMME NORTH

### PROGRAMME BUDGET (IN MEURO)

Total budget	80,5
ERDF	47,5
TACIS CBC	3,5

### CONTACT DETAILS JTS

#### SUB-PROGRAMME KOLARCTIC

##### Regional Council of Lapland

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### CONTACT DETAILS JTS

#### SUB-PROGRAMME NORTH CALOTTE

##### Swedish State Provincial Office in Norrbotten

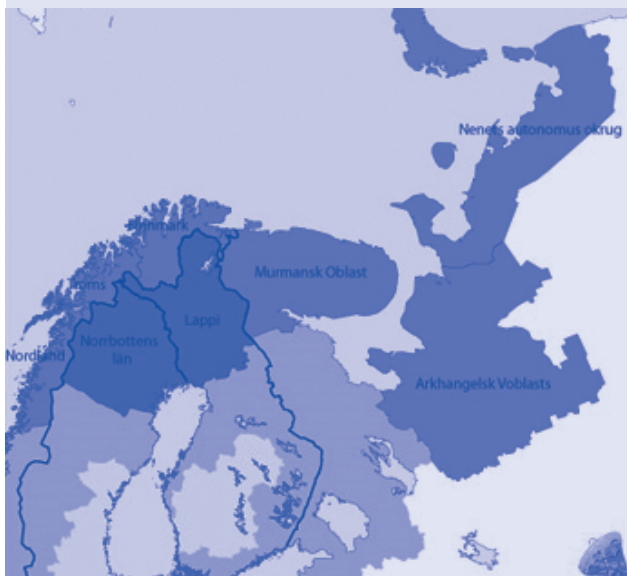
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### CONTACT DETAILS JTS

#### SUB-PROGRAMME NORTH CALOTTE

##### Sami Parliament

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### CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION HISTORY

Experiences with cross-border Programmes of the European Union started with the participation in the INTERREG IIA Barents and North Calotte Programme. This Programme involved the EU members Finland and Sweden as well as Norway and Russia.

There were initial difficulties due to the large number of different countries and financiers. Co-operation with Russia did not work well because of the inflexibility of the TACIS CBC system and distinct cultural differences. Furthermore, Russian actors were often unable to participate because of a lack of financial resources. There was no secretariat in Sweden, which might have been one reason for the lesser volume of activities on the Swedish side.

However, by the end of the Programme period the participants had identified joint policies, learned how other countries perceive things and become familiar with the EU's project culture. In the end a total of 97 projects was accepted and some of the initiatives and projects started at that time could be deepened in the current period.

### SPECIAL FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS

#### General

The main characteristic of the Programme area is its geographical extent: covering about 1 million square kilometres, the North Programme is the European Union's largest INTERREG IIIA Programme. The Programme area is only sparsely inhabited. Just 3.5 million people live in the respective parts of the four countries of Finland, Sweden, Norway and Russia. They speak Finnish, Swedish, Norwegian and Russian as well as some minority languages (Sami).

#### Structure of Programme & communication

There are decentralised structures within the Programme. The three sub-programmes Kolarctic, North Calotte and Sapmi each have their own Steering Committee and Secretariat, though there is only one Managing Authority, Paying Authority and Monitoring Committee. Russia participates in the Programme through TACIS CBC (offices in Murmansk, etc.). Most of the cross-border communication at Programme level takes place between the Secretariats of the sub-programmes, which meet regularly.

#### Strategic approach

Apart from the priorities defined in the CIP and PC there is no further reflection concerning strategic projects. Issues

PROGRAMME STRUCTURE BY PRIORITIES (P) AND MEASURES (M)						
P1 Development of the business sector in North Calotte	P2 Development of cross-border expertise and mobilisation of resources at the regional and local level	P3 Business Co-operation	P4 Expertise and welfare	P5 Internal functionality of the Programme area	P6 Sami development work	P7 Technical Assistance
P1/M1 Logistics, production technology and business co-operation	P2/M1 Education and research	P3/M1 Production co-operation and business networks	P4/M1 Education	P5/M1 Infrastructure and transportation	P6/M1 Sami social development	P7/M1 Programme administration
P1/M2 Joint use of information technology	P2/M2 Cross-border regional and local mobilisation of resources	P3/M2 Development of expertise in business	P4/M2 Research and development	P5/M2: Information technology and communication	P6/M2 Data acquisition and expertise	P7/M2 Information, publicity and monitoring
P1/M3 Theme, cultural and experience-based tourism			P4/M3 Culture and welfare			

P1, P2 = North Calotte sub-programme; P3, P4, P5 = Kolarctic Neighbourhood Programme; P6 = Sápmi sub-programme

like IT infrastructure (internet, e-mail) or preservation of cross-border cultural heritage (Sami) are regarded as being of strategic importance.

### Support & tools

Support for applicants is focussed on specific instruments and comes mainly from the Secretariats. The Secretariats offer individual consultation and, due to the geographical extent of the Programme area, assistance with partner search.

### GOOD PRACTICE: TOOL

The character of the Programme is dominated by its large area and different languages, both of which are barriers to the generation and development of cross-border projects. To facilitate project generation under these circumstances the Secretariat of the Sub-Programme North Calotte offers small grants even before project application. These grants cover costs for travelling, meetings and translation and aim to contribute to the quality of project proposals by helping applicants to overcome these barriers. The grants amount to 50% of eligible costs in each case, to a maximum of EUR 5,000. This support is well accepted by applicants and regarded as an important tool for project generation by the Secretariat.

### GOOD PRACTICE: PROJECT

#### Northern Dimension of Tourism

NDT – Northern Dimension of Tourism, is a group of projects which all are based on the same development strategy of northern tourism. The basic idea is that tourism areas in Northern Finland, Norway and Russia could benefit from the fact that they are very different and their images as tourism resorts have different focuses. Finnish Lapland is famous for its winter products, and summer season has been silent. In the neighbouring areas of Norway, the summer season is most lively tourism season. These two areas benefit from sharing the best parts of each other images, and Russia complements this nature tourism area with its wilderness.

INTERREG III A North has financed four projects in this MPU-strategy:

- MPU-B: Image:**  
creating common image for the area 'Northernmost Europe', and 'launching' it through pr- and information activities
- MPU-D: Marketing**  
marketing of the Northernmost Europe-area
- MPU-C: The content of Siula exhibition in Saariselkä**  
building an exhibition in Saariselkä that presents the nature and history of the Northernmost Europe area
- Russian content for the Northernmost Europe exhibition (financing from Tacis).**

## INTERREG IIIA PROGRAMME ITALY – SLOVENIA (IT – SI)

### PROGRAMME BUDGET (IN MEURO)

Total budget	101,0
ERDF	48,6

### CONTACT DETAILS JTS

**Regional Directorate for International Relations and Local Autonomies – Community Relations and European Integration Service of Friuli Venezia Giulia**

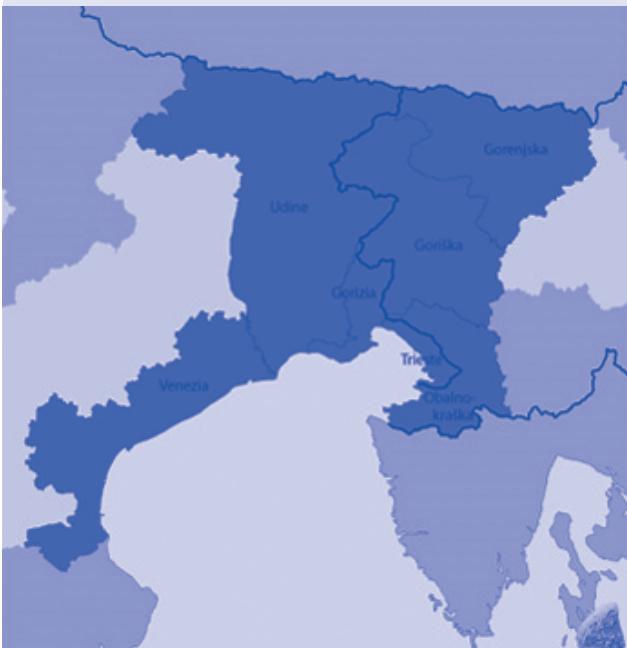
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### CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION HISTORY

For a long time today's border between Italy and Slovenia separated two different economic and political systems. After Slovenia gained independence first forms of co-operation started, which were soon institutionalized by the European Union's cross-border programmes. INTERREG IIA-PHARE CBC 1995-1999 in particular helped Italy and Slovenia to improve their cross-border co-operation.

Following a broad cross-border process the joint programming document INTERREG IIIA – PHARE CBC Italy-Slovenia 2000-2006 was completed in 2001. Until 2004

activities on the Italian side of the border were financed under INTERREG, and those in Slovenia under PHARE CBC. In this phase cross-border co-operation was continued and intensified. In May 2004 Slovenia became a member of the European Union. From then on INTERREG projects were implemented on both sides of the border and co-financed by ERDF only.

### SPECIAL FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS

#### General

The Programme area covers 11,000 km<sup>2</sup> and an overall population of 1.9 million inhabitants. It comprises the whole of Slovenia and two regions in Italy (Veneto and Friuli Venezia Giulia). The region faces typical problems of border areas such as isolation and limited economic, social and cultural exchange.

#### Structure of Programme & communication

The Autonomous Region Friuli Venezia Giulia (Central Directorate for International and Community Relations and Local Autonomies – Community Relations and European Integration Service) acts as Managing Authority with responsibility for the whole Programme.

The other relevant Programme actors are the three Intermediate Bodies (one for each region) and the Joint Technical Secretariat. Cross-border communication at Programme level mainly takes place between the Joint Technical Secretariat and the Slovenian and two Italian Intermediate Bodies.

#### Strategic approach

The three Intermediate Bodies are important actors in project generation. Under PHARE CBC Slovenia already had a needs assessment procedure in addition to a call system for the generation of more strategic projects, and this has been retained. Within the Italian regions a special procedure (*'regia regionale'*) exists to generate strategic projects. The Italian Intermediate Bodies act either as regional co-ordinator or as final beneficiary and project owner.

#### Support & tools

Prior to project application two different phases can be distinguished. The Intermediate Bodies especially accompany the first phase of finding and elaborating the general project idea, whereas the Joint Technical Secretariat is involved in the second phase, providing technical support and information. Applicants are supported by tools such as workshops, brochures, personal contacts and individual consultations.

PROGRAMME STRUCTURE BY PRIORITIES (P) AND MEASURES (M)				
P1 Sustainable development of the cross-border region	P2 Economic co-operation	P3 Human resources, co-operation and systems harmonisation	P4 Special support for regions bordering candidate countries	P5 Support for co-operation
P1/M1 Protection, preservation, up-grading of the environment and of the land	P2/M1 Improvement of competitiveness and co-operation	P3/M1 Qualification of human resources, professional updating and innovative initiatives on the labour market	P4/M1 Special support for regions bordering candidate countries	P5/M1 Technical assistance to common bodies
P1/M2 Development and strengthening of organisation, infrastructure and cross-border networks	P2/M2 Cross-border co-operation in the tourism sector	P3/M2 Co-operation in culture, in communication, in research and among institutions for the harmonisation of systems		P5/M2 Evaluation, information and publicity
	P2/M3 Cross-border co-operation in the primary sector			

On the other hand, call for proposals system of project selection follows normal procedures used in many EU funded programmes.

#### GOOD PRACTICE: TOOL

##### ***'Regia regionale'* (regional co-ordination)**

On the Italian side of the border projects are developed either *'bottom-up'* by applicants who submit their proposals within calls for proposals, or *'top-down'* through a special regional co-ordination procedure, the *'regia regionale'*.

In this process project ideas are mainly generated by public bodies following their assessment of regional needs. They are encouraged to develop these ideas by the Intermediate Bodies and assisted by the Joint Technical Secretariat. If they do not develop the project on their own the JTS looks for other regional actors that would be suitable as project owners. The Intermediate Bodies are subsequently responsible for the process of co-ordination and information within the region, whereby other relevant regional actors are informed and involved in the development of the project. Finally, applications are submitted to the Intermediate Bodies and the JTS, who present them to the Steering Committee for final decision.

*'Regia regionale'* are therefore of public interest and generally have a high budget. Although there are only a small number of *'regia regionale'* projects, their share of the total budget amounts to some 50%.

#### GOOD PRACTICE: PROJECT

##### **Waste Water Management**

Under PHARE CBC the Slovenian Government Office for Local Self-Government and Regional Policy conducted a needs assessment which identified waste water management as a topic of strategic importance. This Office subsequently launched a comprehensive process of regional co-ordination for project generation, involving partners such as municipalities, RDAs (on behalf of the Regional Authorities), chambers of commerce, NGOs, government ministries, university, etc.

The Italian side was kept informed from the very beginning and the draft sent to the Italian Programme partners for their suggestions. Although PHARE CBC operated with yearly budgets, two years of budget funding were earmarked in advance for this strategic topic.

The final beneficiaries (municipalities) were pre-selected in a first thematic call, while the second call was conducted by the final beneficiaries themselves to identify companies for actual project implementation.

## INTERREG IIIA PROGRAMME LITHUANIA – POLAND – KALININGRAD (LT – PL – RU)

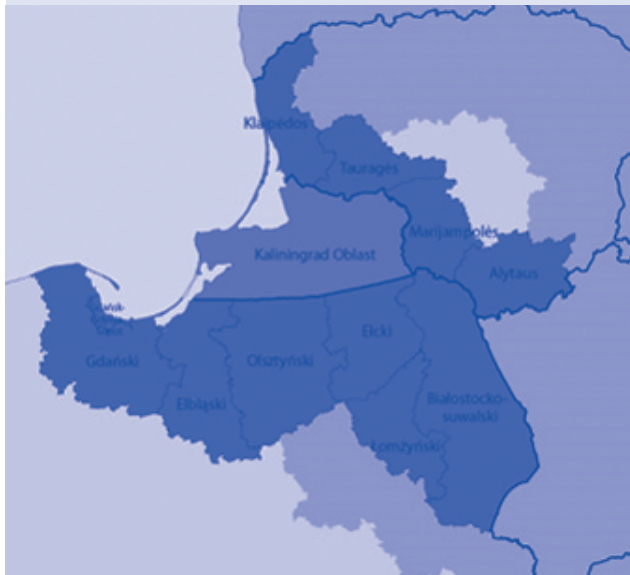
### PROGRAMME BUDGET (IN MEURO)

Total budget	48,7
ERDF	36,5
Other	9,5

### CONTACT DETAILS JTS

#### Lithuanian Ministry of the Interior

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### CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION HISTORY

After the collapse of the Soviet Union the border areas of the three countries developed rather unevenly. Lithuania and Poland became members of NATO and the EU whereas the Kaliningrad region was restructured from a military garrison of the Soviet Union into a free economic zone of the Russian Federation.

Cross-border activities in the region started mainly in 1994 with Lithuania and Poland participating in the PHARE CBC Programme. From 1994 to 1999 the CBC Programme financed the implementation of 329 projects in both countries.

Since the accession of Lithuania and Poland to the European Union, these countries have been eligible to partici-

pate in INTERREG III in combination with TACIS CBC for Kaliningrad. The drafting of the programming document was a joint consultative process between the three countries involved, with the Lithuanian Ministry of the Interior as the lead coordinating body.

### SPECIAL FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS

#### General

The Programme area covers 97,000 km<sup>2</sup> with a population of 6.7 m inhabitants. The region includes the Kaliningrad region – a small Russian enclave between the EU member states Lithuania and Poland - and is therefore of particular significance for the European Union and for Russia. The area is also characterized by relatively large ethnic minority groups across the border.

#### Structure of Programme & communication

The Lithuanian Ministry of the Interior acts as Managing Authority and is also host to the Joint Technical Secretariat. In Poland the regional Info Points of the vojvodships are the most important actors for cross-border communication and co-operation. They are all part of the cross-border communication structures which also include the Local Support Office in Kaliningrad and the three Euroregions.

#### Strategic approach

In the Programme area INTERREG projects are mainly generated bottom-up as initiatives of the region, while projects with a more complex cross-border co-ordination tend to be generated by the Euroregions. The Euroregions act as regional and cross-border co-ordinators and facilitators, mainly on account of their good contacts to municipalities. Municipalities are important project owners, especially for infrastructure projects. The general strategy of the Programme focuses on infrastructure (~70%); projects are regarded as strategic if they have a clear cross-border impact.

#### Support & tools

Most final beneficiaries need assistance with the complex requirements of INTERREG project application and implementation. Other factors such as language problems, differences in administrative systems and socio-economic circumstances also complicate the development of new projects. The JTS in co-operation with the Euroregions and the Polish Info Points provides information and consultation and assists with the cross-border partner search.

PROGRAMME STRUCTURE BY PRIORITIES (P) AND MEASURES (M)		
P1 Competitiveness and productivity growth of the cooperation area through development of cross-border infrastructure and border security, economic and scientific/technological cooperation	P2 Contribution to the cooperation between populations, socio-cultural integration and the labour market	P3 Technical assistance
P1/M1 Stimulating of economic and scientific/technological cooperation	P2/M1 Support for local initiatives	P3/M1 Programme management, implementation, monitoring and control of the Structural Funds
P1/M2 Improvements in physical and border security infrastructure to encourage development of the border area	P2/M2 Regional cultural identity and cultural heritage	P3/M2 Other activities coming under technical assistance
P1/M3 Environmental protection, growth of energy efficiency and promotion of renewable energy sources		
P1/M4 Development of tourism and tourism infrastructure for development of cross-border tourism and recreation as well as improvement of cultural heritage objects of cross-border importance		

### GOOD PRACTICE: TOOL

#### Partner search forum

Many applicants have the problem of identifying appropriate partners in the neighbouring countries. Direct cross-border contacts only exist close to the border, so regions far away from the border depend on assistance from the Programme bodies. The Joint Technical Secretariat therefore organises a partner search forum roughly twice a year in co-operation with the Euroregions and Info Points. The Polish Info Points distribute information in their respective region, organise transport and even cover travel costs. The 3rd partner search forum in April 2006 was attended by 120 persons from Lithuania, Poland and the Kaliningrad Region; participants were assigned to workshops based on the registration forms they had sent to the JTS in advance. To date, 410 participants have taken part in partner search events of this kind.

### GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE: PROJECT

#### Launch of the Integrated System of Population and Environmental Protection in the border area of Poland and Lithuania

This joint INTERREG project aims to increase the technical infrastructure and equipment level in order to run effective fire-rescue operations during both national and trans-national incidents, and to reduce the death-toll from accidents on roads and waterways. Technological and tactical know-how in the prevention of industrial accidents is to be transferred among the partners, and specialized equipment for chemical, ecological and flood rescue brigades is to be purchased – 9 rescue trucks and 2 rescue boats, 1 hydraulic elevator. The lead partner of the project is the Marijampole Fire Prevention and Rescue Services (Lithuania), while the project partners are several state fire service headquarters from Polish provinces and counties. The project duration is 13 months, and the ERDF contribution amounts to EUR 997,000.

## INTERREG IIIA PROGRAMME SAXONY – CZECH REPUBLIC (DE – CZ)

### PROGRAMME BUDGET (IN MEURO)

Total budget	255,0
ERDF	191,3

### CONTACT DETAILS JTS

#### Sächsische Aufbaubank - Förderbank

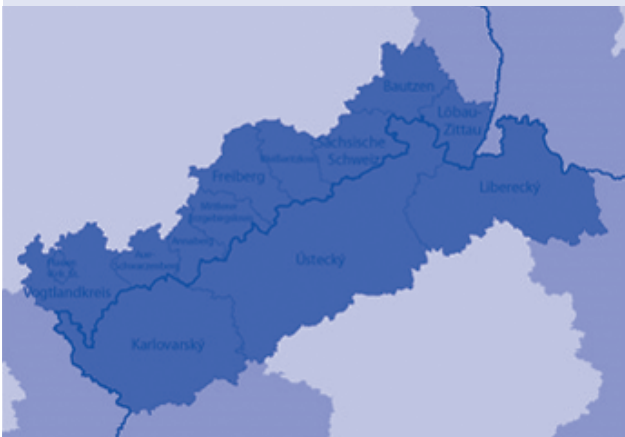
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### CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION HISTORY

Since 1991 the Euroregions Egrensis, Erzgebirge, Elba/Labe and Neisse-Nysa-Nisa have formed a cross-border framework along the 454km border between the two countries. In 1992 Germany, the Czech Republic and Slovakia signed a treaty on good neighbourliness and co-operation.

Under the INTERREG II PHARE CBC Programme Saxony – Poland – Czech Republic (1994-1999) 113 projects were implemented in the Czech Republic and 570 in Saxony. These projects made an important contribution to resolving urgent problems within the border region.

In 1999 both countries started with the elaboration of the Saxony – Czech Republic Development Concept, which formed the basis for the future common programming processes and the joint programming document for Germany and the Czech Republic in 2000. Since the enlargement of the European Union in 2004, ERDF funds have been implemented on both sides of the border (the funding rate of 75% applies to the border regions of both countries).

### SPECIAL FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS

#### General

The Programme area covers 20,300 km<sup>2</sup> and some 3 million inhabitants (1.4 million in Saxony and 1.6 million in the Czech Republic). The cross-border region comprises districts with high population density, infrastructure, heavy industry and economic and cultural activities on the one hand, and on the other hand sparsely populated peripheral areas. Trans-European and Central European transport corridors connect the region to large-scale rail and road transport systems.

#### Structure of Programme & communication

The management of the Programme is closely linked to that of the INTERREG Programme for Saxony and Lower Silesia (PL). There is one Managing Authority and one JTS, situated in Dresden. The Euroregions play an important role within the Programme area, not only in project generation but also in providing permanent cross-border communication structures. The committees and working groups of the Euroregion contribute significantly to the growing together of the cross-border region.

#### Strategic approach

As in the Saxony-Poland Programme, the term ‘strategic projects’ is not generally used. The Joint Technical Secretariat in Dresden distinguishes between

- basic projects without a partner in the other country,
- projects with a similar project in the other country, and
- advanced projects with complementary projects in the other country (simultaneous approval by Steering Committee and simultaneous implementation).

#### Support & tools

The JTS, the Euroregion and the Czech Intermediate Bodies contribute most to the generation and development of new projects. The contribution of the Euroregions is especially focussed on Joint Small Project Fund.

PROGRAMME STRUCTURE BY PRIORITIES (P) AND MEASURES (M)			
P1 Economic development	P2 Infrastructure	P3 Spatial and environmental development	P4 Human resources/networks
P1/M2 Economic development	P2/M1 Transport infrastructure	P3/M1 Environment	P4/M1 Education and qualification
P1/M2 Tourism	P2/M2 Other infrastructure	P3/M2 Rural development	P4/M2 Socio-cultural development
			P4/M3 Co-operation
			P4/M4 Security
Technical Assistance			

**GOOD PRACTICE: TOOL**

**Workshops for strategic project development**

Some ideas for future strategic projects have already been identified as an output of needs assessment. To support the actual generation of projects the Joint Technical Secretariat plans to organise cross-border workshops for potential project partners. With these workshops the Secretariat aims to actively support the process of strategic project generation.

**GOOD PRACTICE: PROJECT**

**Creation of a daycare facility for German and Czech children (*‘Rainbowhouse’*)**

The aim of the project was to set up a daycare facility which can be attended by children from both sides of the border. The project ran from 2001-2003 with total costs of EUR 1.4 million (EUR 0.99 million from INTERREG). The kindergarten (*‘Rainbowhouse’*) was built in the German town of Oberwiesenthal and had its first intake of children in 2003. The nursery teachers attended language courses to allow them to accommodate Czech children as well, and institutional exchange was organised between the relevant organizations of the Czech and German municipalities. In May 2004 the daycare facility was already caring for 10 Czech children aged 2-6 years.

## INTERREG IIIA PROGRAMME SAXONY – LOWER SILESIA (DE – PL)

### PROGRAMME BUDGET (IN MEURO)

Total budget	255,0
ERDF	191,3

### CONTACT DETAILS JTS

#### Sächsische Aufbaubank - Förderbank

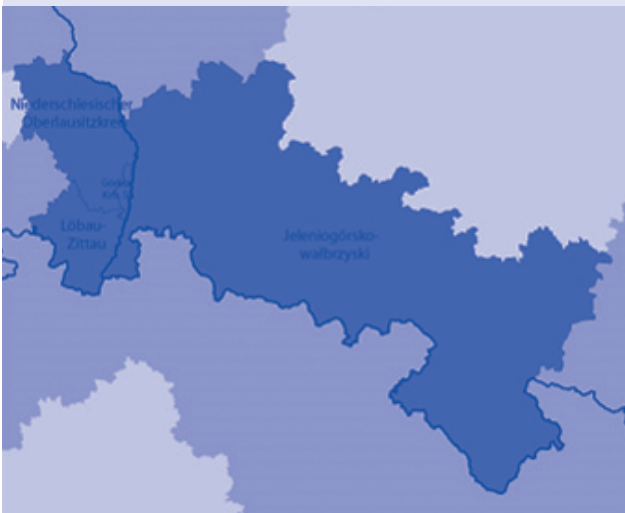
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### CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION HISTORY

Traditionally the region has been an area of significant historical events and migration. The border between Saxony and Lower Silesia is one of the youngest borders in Central Europe, having only existed for half a century.

During the time of the former DDR the border wasn't really open - there were only a few border crossings and no close contact between the populations on either side - so there is still a strong language barrier and no tradition of co-operation and relatedness.

Many German production plants have relocated to Lower Silesia, especially those in traditional sectors like textiles, glass and china, while Polish workers are looking for new career opportunities in Saxony.

Under INTERREG IIA, cross-border co-operation was administrated through a single PHARE CBC Saxony – Poland – Czech Republic Programme for all three countries

(570 projects were implemented in Saxony). The successor to this Programme was the INTERREG IIIA Phare CBC Programme for Saxony and Lower Silesia, which was changed into a common INTERREG Programme with the enlargement of the European Union in 1994. Since then ERDF funds have also been available for projects on the Polish side of the border.

### SPECIAL FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS

#### General

Both sides of the border have been influenced by significant economic transformation. Saxony still suffers from high unemployment and Lower Silesia is much less prosperous than the German side, therefore the whole Programme area belongs to the objective 1 programme of the EU with ERDF funding of 75%. Parts of the Polish Programme area are up to 150 km away from the border with Saxony, which complicates effective cross-border co-operation.

#### Structure of Programme & communication

Although separated into two different Programmes, the Saxony – Lower Silesia and Saxony – Czech Republic Programmes co-operate closely with each other and share a Joint Technical Secretariat, a Managing Authority and a complementary list of priorities and measures. The Euroregion Neisse-Nysa-Nisa as a trilateral cross-border organisation plays an important role in the Programme area. Most cross-border communication is somehow connected with the Euroregion or the JTS, and the Programme actors now know each other and each other's interests well.

#### Strategic approach

The term '*strategic projects*' is not used within the Programme. The Joint Technical Secretariat distinguishes between

- basic projects without a partner in the other country,
- projects with a similar project in the other country, and
- advanced projects with complementary projects in the other country (simultaneous approval by Steering Committee and simultaneous implementation).

#### Support & tools

The JTS, the Euroregion and the Regional Info Points in Poland contribute most to the generation and development of new projects. The permanent cross-border working groups of the Euroregion in particular play an important role in project generation.

PROGRAMME STRUCTURE BY PRIORITIES (P) AND MEASURES (M)					
P1 Economic development and business co-operation	P2 Infrastructure	P3 Environment	P4 Rural and urban development	P5 Education, qualification and employment	P6 Co-operation, Culture, Social, security
P1/M1 Economic development	P2/M1 Transport infrastructure	P3/M1 Environment	P4/M1 Rural development	P5/M1	P6/M1 Socio-cultural development
P1/M2 Tourism	P2/M2 Other infrastructure	P3/M2	P4/M2 Urban development	P5/M2	P6/M2 Co-operation
				P5/M3	P6/M3 Security
Technical Assistance					

## GOOD PRACTICE: TOOL

### Series of information events

Following Poland's EU accession the Joint Technical Secretariat organised a series of events with the aim of informing the interested public about the possibilities under the respective measures of the new INTERREG Programme. These bilingual events were well accepted and comprised the following issues:

- Tourism
- Environment and rural development
- Youth, family, school
- Education, qualification and employment
- Culture and sports
- Economic development
- Health care and support for disabled people
- Security

Besides presentations by ministries, public bodies and Programme actors these information events were designed to facilitate the exchange of experiences and initiation of new contacts.

## GOOD PRACTICE: PROJECT

### Cross-border qualification of German and Polish young persons as specialists in the fields of gastronomy, the environment and tourism

This project aimed to facilitate the start into employment for Polish and German young people and increase their language abilities. A special thematic focus was on knowledge about the respective national cuisine. The 2-year project had a budget of EUR 43,000, of which EUR 32,000 were co-financed by INTERREG IIIA. At the end of the project it proved possible to integrate the results into the regular curricula of other educational institutions.

## INTERREG IIIA PROGRAMME SLOVAKIA – CZECH REPUBLIC (DE – CZ)

### PROGRAMME BUDGET (IN MEURO)

Total budget	18,2
ERDF	13,7

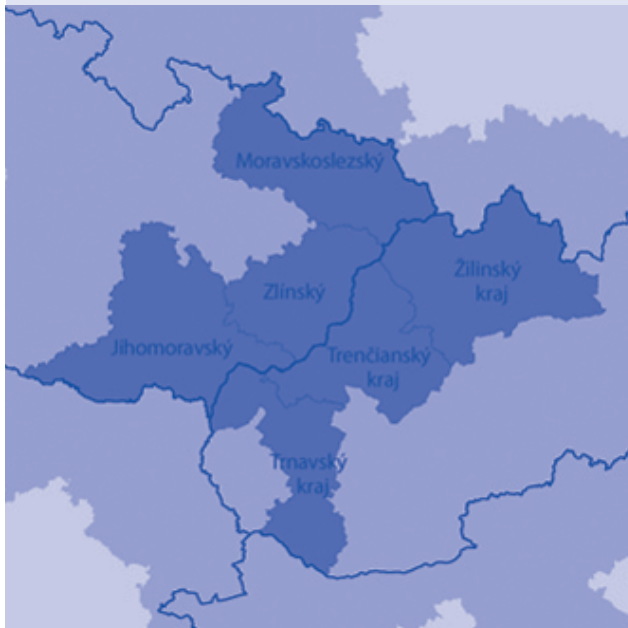
### CONTACT DETAILS JTS

#### Slovak Ministry of Construction and Regional Development

Milan Gál  
 SK – 825 25 Bratislava 1, Prievozská 2/B  
 t: +421 259 753 219  
 gal@build.gov.sk  
 www.build.gov.sk

#### Centrum pro regionální rozvoj ČR pobočka pro NUTS II

Dušan Sláma  
 CZ – 602 00 Brno, Obilní trh 7  
 t: +420 5 4121 2134  
 at-cz@oir.at  
 www.at-cz.net



### CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION HISTORY

The Slovak-Czech border used to be a boundary where common contacts and relations had been developed and maintained within the scope of a single country. These natural contacts were partly disrupted after the division of the federal state into two independent countries.

In the subsequent period, cross-border activities were focused mainly on contact within the newly created Euroregions. However, numerous contacts at local level still exist from the former period as one common state.

A Phare CBC Programme for the programming period 2000 – 2006 has been implemented on the Slovak-Czech border, in which a total of 4 MEUR have been allocated. Two large waste water projects have been realised as well as a common Small Projects Fund with about 50 projects in 2002. In the following years cross-border co-operation ceased to be financed by the Programme due to administrative implementation difficulties.

There is quite some potential for small-scale people-to-people projects, though the relevant institutions do not have so much experience with the generation and implementation of integrated large-scale projects.

### SPECIAL FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS

#### General

Until 1992 this Slovak-Czech border area belonged to one and the same country, so numerous personal contacts between partners and institutions from the neighbouring regions still exist from that time and there is a reasonable level of knowledge among actors about the situation across the border.

The Programme region covers about 32,000 km<sup>2</sup> with some 4.8 m inhabitants. Even though Czech and Slovak are two separate languages, the differences are not big enough to represent a substantial language barrier between the involved Programme authorities and the potential project partners.

Nevertheless, experience of cross-border cooperation is quite limited with few projects and activities having taken place in recent years.

#### Structure of Programme & communication

The Managing Authority is hosted by the Slovak Ministry of Construction and Regional Development, as is the JTS. The JTS is divided into two offices, one for each side of the border. This brings the institution closer to the corresponding national and regional Programme administrations and to the beneficiaries, but on the other hand it reduces the intensity of cross-border communication within this structure. Communication at Programme level mainly takes place at the level of the MA and the NA, and the Czech and Slovak authorities' experience with cooperation and joint EU Programme implementation is not so

PROGRAMME STRUCTURE BY PRIORITIES (P) AND MEASURES (M)		
<b>P1</b> Social and cultural development and networking	<b>P2</b> Landscape maintenance and tourism development	<b>P3</b> Technical assistance
P1/M1 Human Resources, Social and Cultural Development	P2/M1 Build-up and development of tourism infrastructure	P3/M1 Management support, implementation, Programme control and monitoring
P1/M2 Maintenance and improvement of natural resources and living conditions related to the tourism development	P2/M2 Landscape development respecting environmental aspects	P3/M2 Studies, seminars, information and advertising measures, evaluation
P1/M3 Micro-Project Facility		

strong. Nevertheless, because the same authorities on both sides of the border are frequently involved in the same activities on a trilateral basis with Austria, a certain common understanding about INTERREG has developed.

**Strategic approach**

The strategic approach for projects is based on the strategy of the Programme and the selection criteria. So far no further discussion has taken place about a more specific approach.

**Support & tools**

The JTS and the IBs have organised several information seminars and publicity events about the Programme based on the good experience gathered with this tool in connection with the previous Small Projects Fund. The potential project applicants (all kinds of local authorities, initiatives and NGOs) consider this general and direct information most important at this stage of the Programme.

**GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE: TOOL**

General information seminars with potential project applicants detailing the basic possibilities and requirements of the Programme are held on both sides of the border. This raises awareness of the Programme among the general public, and following these seminars many potential project applicants contact the IBs and JTS for more specific information and to discuss the viability of their ideas.

**GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE: PROJECT**

The Programme's Micro Projects Facility provides co-funding for many small cross-border initiatives. This can motivate a large potential target group to consider the possibility of cross-border issues in their specific area, as well as initiating or further intensifying cross-border contacts among many corresponding institutions.

## INTERREG IIIA PROGRAMME SØNDERJYLLAND – SCHLESWIG (DK – DE)

### PROGRAMME BUDGET (IN MEURO)

Total budget	28,2
ERDF	14,1

### CONTACT DETAILS JTS

#### Sønderjyllands Amt (DK)

Ingrid Clausen  
 DK – 6200 Aabenraa, Denmark, Skelbaekvej 2  
 t: +45 74 335419  
 Ingrid\_clausen@sja.dk  
 www.sja.dk

#### INTERREG III Geschäftsstelle (DE)

Hans-Ulrich Bührung  
 DE – 24941 Flensburg, Germany, Lise-Meitner-Str. 2  
 t: +49 0461 99 92 213  
 hubuehring@wireg.de  
 www.wireg.de



### CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION HISTORY

The region's long tradition of cross-border co-operation in European Union programmes started with INTERREG I. At that time the focus of INTERREG I was mainly on initiating new cross-border contacts through selected co-operation projects.

During the Programme period of INTERREG II two other Danish – German INTERREG II Programmes were implemented. Despite the European Commission's interest in merging the three Programmes under INTERREG III, three separate Danish-German Programmes were ultimately approved.

Now INTERREG III is continuing this cross-border co-operation and is implementing even more advanced and complex projects.

### SPECIAL FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS

#### General

The Programme area covers Sønderjylland in the south of Denmark and Schleswig in northern Germany. About 700,000 people live in this area, which is known mainly for its maritime landscapes.

The Programme is the only one of the three Danish – German Programmes with a direct land border, and is therefore an important corridor for trade and transport towards the Scandinavian countries. The language barrier is regarded as a major obstacle to fruitful cross-border project implementation, though there is a better knowledge of German in Denmark than vice versa.

#### Structure of Programme & communication

The overall Programme responsibility via-à-vis the European Commission lies with the Danish Managing Authority, the Sønderjyllands Amt.

Nevertheless, the Programme is implemented in close partnership with the German side and includes national, regional and local authorities. The two Secretariats in Aabenraa (DK) and Flensburg (DE) in particular co-operate closely on a daily basis. The Euroregion with its permanent cross-border structures contributes significantly to the good network of cross-border co-operation and communication.

#### Strategic approach

The Euroregion is active in project generation. Especially the Secretariat and the six thematic committees with participants from both sides of the border often initiate new projects with strategic relevance for the whole region. In general the Euroregion acts as mediator between the political level (top-down) and the initiatives from the region (bottom-up).

#### Support & tools

In the first phase of project generation it is mainly the Euroregion that is involved. The Technical Secretariats in Aabenraa and Flensburg subsequently provide specific

PROGRAMME STRUCTURE BY PRIORITIES (P) AND MEASURES (M)				
P1 Economic development	P2 Nature, environment and energy	P3 Human resources	P4 Institutional and socio- cultural networks	P5 Technical assistance
P1/M1 Co-operation in the field of tourism	P2/M1 Improvement and pro- tection of natural resources, especially maritime areas  P2/M2 Co-operation on research and development of new energy sources	P3/M1 Establishment of common labour market through strategic and sustainable co-operation between schools and those institutions involved in social care	P4/M1 Establishment of networks between socio-cultural partners on both sides of the border	
P1/M2 Promotion of economic development and SMEs				
P1/M3 Research and transfer of technology				

information and consultation for detailed project development. They assist with the search for project partners and inform applicants about all technical questions concerning the application. In some cases members of the Secretariats even attend the preparation meetings of the project partners involved.

#### GOOD PRACTICE: TOOL

##### Language courses as part of project preparation

According to a regional study carried out 1,5 years ago, language abilities are regarded as a key factor for cross-border communication and co-operation. Members of the Technical Secretariats therefore underline the importance of language courses at project preparation meetings. The Secretariats always highly recommend including language courses for project partners as part of the project. These measures can then be financed within the INTERREG project and help to improve both project quality and the general co-operation climate in the border region.

#### GOOD PRACTICE: PROJECT

##### Language focus Danish-German

The general aim of this project is to increase awareness of the language of the respective neighbour country. This is to be achieved through:

- more and better offers for adults to learn Danish and German
- more and better teaching materials for adults to learn Danish and German
- involvement of teachers in adult education
- further training for teachers in adult education
- creation of institutional and personal networks through cross-border schools, courses and exchange of teachers and learners
- testing and implementation of curricula for different target groups
- development of website with overview of language courses in the border region
- campaign to increase awareness of the importance of bilingualism.

The total costs of this project are EUR 1.1 m, with EUR 0.5 m co-financed through INTERREG.

## ABBREVIATIONS

<b>AT</b>	Austria
<b>CBC</b>	Cross-border Cooperation
<b>CF</b>	Cohesion Fund
<b>CIP</b>	Community Initiative Programme
<b>CZ</b>	Czech Republic
<b>DE</b>	Germany
<b>DK</b>	Denmark
<b>EGTC</b>	European Grouping Territorial Cooperation
<b>ERDF</b>	European Regional Development Fund
<b>ESF</b>	European Social Fund
<b>ETC</b>	European Territorial Cooperation Objective
<b>FI</b>	Finland
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>HU</b>	Hungary
<b>IB</b>	Intermediate Body
<b>IT</b>	Italy
<b>JMC</b>	Joint Monitoring Committee
<b>JSC</b>	Joint Steering Committee
<b>JTS</b>	Joint Technical Secretariat
<b>LT</b>	Lithuania
<b>M1, M2...</b>	Measure
<b>MA</b>	Managing Authority
<b>MTE</b>	Mid-term Evaluation
<b>NA</b>	National Authority
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organisation
<b>NL</b>	Netherlands
<b>NO</b>	Norway
<b>NUTS</b>	Nomenclature des unités territoriales statistique
<b>P1, P2...</b>	Priority
<b>PC</b>	Programme Complement
<b>PL</b>	Poland
<b>RDA</b>	Regional Development Agency
<b>R&amp;DT</b>	Research & Development
<b>RU</b>	Russia
<b>SE</b>	Sweden
<b>SI</b>	Slovenia
<b>SME</b>	Small and Medium-sized Enterprise(s)
<b>SK</b>	Slovakia
<b>SPF</b>	Small Project Fund
<b>SPG</b>	Strategic Project Generation

## GLOSSARY<sup>23</sup>

### BENEFICIARY

An operator, body or firm, whether public or private, responsible for initiating and/or implementing operations. In the context of aid schemes under Article 87 of the Treaty, beneficiaries are public or private firms carrying out an individual action and receiving public aid.

### BUSINESS SUPPORT

Funding which is available for the development of existing businesses especially Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs). This aims to foster sustainable business development by encouraging innovation and enterprise, removing barriers to growth, providing high quality business support including facilitating the successful exploiting of new and emerging technology.

### CALL (FOR PROPOSALS)

The official communication to potential project applicants to present proposals and the way to do it, regardless the system and procedure of this communication.

### COMMUNITY INITIATIVE PROGRAMME (CIP)

Programme document describing the background of the programme, as well as the programme's objectives, priorities and measures, financing and implementation. The document is approved by the European Commission.

### COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

There are four specific Community initiatives looking to support within the structural funds framework cross-border, transnational and interregional (INTERREG III) cooperation, rural development (LEADER+) promotion of new practices to fight against all forms of discrimination and inequality in access to the employment market (EQUAL) and economic and social regeneration of crisis towns and suburbs in order to promote sustainable urban development (URBAN II).

### EU REGIONAL POLICY

Important Community policy (35% of the EU budget) that seeks to reduce regional disparities and support less favoured people. The objective of EU regional policy is to promote the reduction of regional disparities, even development of European regions, fight against unemployment, improving work force qualifications and stimulating the spirit of enterprise.

### EUROPEAN COMMISSION

This is the Community Executive, which initiates policies and monitors their application.

*Source: INTERREG IIIA Programme Wales – Ireland, CIP pp.239 ff.*

<sup>23</sup> Sources: Subsidy contract Handbook, INTERACT Point Tool Box, 2005; [www.interact-eu.net/226919/1109953/0/0](http://www.interact-eu.net/226919/1109953/0/0)

**EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND (ERDF)**

The ERDF is intended to help reduce imbalances between regions of the Community. The Fund was set up in 1975 and grants financial assistance for development projects in the poorer regions. In terms of financial resources, the ERDF is by far the largest of the EU's Structural Funds.

**EX-ANTE EVALUATION**

The ex-ante evaluation, carried out before adoption of the programme, is based on situational or environmental indicators to determine needs and consequently the intervention objectives as well as the programming strategy.

**EX-POST EVALUATION**

Carried out after closure of the operations, this evaluation allows evaluation of the impact of the programme in terms of variable statistics.

**MID-TERM EVALUATION**

This evaluation, carried out in 2003 by external experts contracted by each INTERREG programme, transcribed at the half-way point the implementation conditions, the state of progress and the results of the programme. It allowed the programmed monitoring system to be enriched. This evaluation was updated during the course of 2005 (Mid-term evaluation's update).

**EVALUATION SUMMARY REPORT**

Document to be sent to project applicants including the results of the evaluation, as well as general comments from the evaluators.

**PROJECT EVALUATION/ASSESSMENT**

The process of reviewing the project proposals, according to the procedure and criteria established, their scoring and ranking, including the rejection of any proposals that do not comply with the requirements.

**STRATEGIC EVALUATION**

A part of the evaluation process that assesses if proposals are relevant to the priorities and measures of the specific INTERREG programme and specific call. It takes into account whether proposals fit properly into the political, geographical, socio-economic and cultural environments where they will be developed, and if the partners in the project consortium are the right ones to pursue the objectives defined.

**ELIGIBILITY OF EXPENDITURE [FR]**

Community rules to be respected to guarantee equitable implementation of European structural funds. The eligibility of expenses to the Community rules allows them to be

taken into account on behalf of the structural funds concerned. The inspection on the eligibility of expenses is essentially made at the time of the control on service rendered.

**ELIGIBLE COSTS/EXPENDITURE**

Project expenditure that meets the criteria set out in the Regulations and the Implementation Rules. It is the expenditure on which grant is paid.

**FINAL BENEFICIARIES**

Means the bodies and public or private firms responsible for commissioning operations. In the case of aid schemes pursuant to Article 87 of the Treaty and in the case of aid granted by bodies designated by the Member States, the final beneficiaries are the bodies which grant the aid.

**FINANCING PLAN**

The financing plan is carried out by the final beneficiary and approved by the programming Committee and constitutes one of the contractual elements to be respected.

**GUIDE FOR PROJECT APPLICANTS**

Set of documents, forms and guidelines that group all the information, requirements and forms needed to prepare a project application properly. It is addressed to project applicants.

**IMPACT**

In Commission methodology impact is the principal basis for evaluating the success or otherwise of structural funds intervention. Global impacts include net job creation.

**INDICATOR**

An indicator can be defined as the measurement of an objective to be met, a resource mobilised, an effect obtained, a gauge of quality or a context variable. An indicator should be made up by a definition, a value and a measurement unit.

**FINANCIAL INDICATORS**

Financial indicators are used to monitor progress in terms of the (annual) commitment and payment of the funds available for any operation, measure or programme in relation to its eligible cost.

**IMPACT INDICATORS**

Impact indicators refer to the consequences of the programme beyond the immediate effects. Two concepts of impact can be defined:- Specific impacts are those effects occurring after a certain lapse of time but which are, nonetheless, directly linked to the action taken and

the direct beneficiaries. Global impacts are longer-term effects affecting a wider population.

### **OUTPUT INDICATORS**

Output indicators relate to activity. They are measured in physical or monetary units (e.g. length of railroad constructed, number of firms financially supported, etc.).

### **RESULT INDICATORS**

Result indicators relate to the direct and immediate effect on direct beneficiaries brought about by a programme. They provide information on changes to, for example, the behaviour, capacity or performance of beneficiaries. Such indicators can be of a physical (reduction in journey times, number of successful trainees, number of roads accidents, etc.) or financial (leverage of private sector resources, decrease in transportation cost, etc.) nature.

### **INTERMEDIATE BODIES**

(definition under the current programming period INTERREG III): For the purposes of this Regulation, *'intermediate bodies'* shall mean all public or private bodies or services acting under the responsibility of Managing or Paying Authorities or performing tasks on their behalf in relation to final beneficiaries or the bodies or firms carrying out operations.

### **INTERREG**

Cross-border, transnational and interregional cooperation intended to encourage the harmonious, balanced and sustainable development of the whole of the Community area.

### **INTERREG III**

Community initiative seeking to favour the harmonious and even development of European territory by encouraging cross-border cooperation (strand A), transnational cooperation (strand B) and interregional cooperation (strand C).

### **JOINT TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT (JTS)**

The role of the Joint Technical Secretariat takes place upstream of the programme. It runs the territory of the programme and instructs on subsidy requests by final beneficiaries before submission of the dossier to the programming authorities.

### **MANAGING AUTHORITY (MA)**

(definition under the current programming period INTERREG III 2000-06): Any public or private authority or body at national, regional or local level designated by the Member State, or the Member State when it is itself carrying out this function, to manage the INTERREG programme. If

the Member State designates a Managing Authority other than itself, it shall determine all the modalities of its relationship with the Managing Authority and of the latter's relationship with the Commission. If the Member State so decides, the Managing Authority may be the same body as the Paying Authority for the assistance concerned.

### **MATCH FUNDING**

The European structural funds meet only a proportion of the costs of any project. The remainder of the costs therefore has to be match funded from other national resources, which can be from both the public and private sectors.

### **NATIONAL MATCH FUNDING**

Contribution to the financing of an operation emanating from a public authority and making up the national match funding that is necessary for payment of Community part (cf. principle of additionality).

### **MEASURE**

The means by which a priority is implemented over several years which enable operations to be financed. Any aid scheme pursuant to Article 87 of the Treaty or any aid granted by bodies designated by the Member States, or any group of aid schemes or aid grants of this type or any combination thereof which have the same purpose and are defined as a measure.

### **MONITORING COMMITTEE (MC)**

The Monitoring Committee for each programme is notably responsible for giving its agreement for the Programme Complement before its transmission to the European Commission. It also approves all modifications to the Programme Document (SPD/CIP) or to the Programme Complement.

### **NEIGHBOURHOOD PROGRAMMES (NPS)**

Neighbourhood Programmes are cross-border and transnational cooperation programmes involving Member States of the European Union, candidate countries and their neighbours. They are aimed at helping authorities and organisations inside and outside the Union to work together to improve the economic and social conditions of the areas concerned and to address common challenges and opportunities for development.

### **NEW MEMBER STATES**

Former candidate countries that have completed negotiations and have become members of the European Union on 1 May 2004. These are Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia.

*Source: Phare glossary – DG Enlargement Website*

**NUTS**

The nomenclature of territorial units for statistics (NUTS) was created by the European Office for Statistics (Eurostat) in order to create a single and coherent structure of territorial distribution. It has been used in the Community legislation pertaining to the Structural Funds since 1988. The current nomenclature subdivides the 15 countries of the European Union into: 78 NUTS level 1 territorial units: the German Länder, regions in Belgium, Denmark, Sweden, Ireland, Wales and Scotland, the areas included in the spatial planning study ZEAT in France, and other large regions. 210 NUTS level 2 territorial units: the autonomous regions in Spain, French regions and overseas departments (DOM), the Belgian and Dutch provinces, the Italian regions, the Austrian Länder, the German *'Regierungsbezirke'* (primary administrative sub-division of a Land) etc. 1093 NUTS level 3 territorial units: the Nomoi in Greece, the Maakunnat in Finland, the Län in Sweden, the Kreise in German, the French departments, and the Spanish and Italian provinces etc. Eligibility for Objective 1 is principally defined with reference to NUTS level 2; Objective 2 areas are generally defined with reference to NUTS level 3.

**OPERATION**

(definition under the current programming period INTERREG III 2000-06): Any project or action carried out by the final beneficiaries of assistance.

**OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME**

(definition under the current programming period INTERREG III 2000-06): The document approved by the Commission to implement a Community support framework and comprising a consistent set of priorities comprising multiannual measures and which may be implemented through recourse to one or more Funds, to one or more of the other existing financial instruments and to the EIB. An integrated operational programme means an operational programme financed by more than one Fund.

**OPERATIONAL PROGRAMMES**

Regional programmes coming from Community initiative programmes are registered in the operational programmes. They set action strategies within the framework of INTERREG III, URBAN II, EQUAL and LEADER+ and contain, notably, the strategies and priority axis of intervention for respective regional programmes as well as evaluation of expected impact.

**LEAD PARTNER**

The Lead Partner has fully financial responsibility for the entire operation including all partners and is responsible

for the proper reporting of progress to the respective Joint Technical Secretariat as also stipulated in the subsidy contract.

**LEAD PARTNER PRINCIPLE (LPP)**

This is an important feature of INTERREG programmes. The Lead Partner takes the overall responsibility for the submission of the application form and of the implementation of the entire project in case of project approval. The Lead Partner is therefore responsible for the sound management of the project, ensures the delivery of outputs and organises the required audits and control activities. In case the Lead Partner originates from an EU Member State, it shall also be responsible for the financial management and the ERDF funds. If it originates from a non-EU Member State, the responsibility for ERDF funds is delegated to a partner from an EU Member State (ERDF LP), since only a project partner coming from a Member State is entitled to deal with ERDF-funding. The Lead Partner establishes lawful connections between project partners in order to define their mutual cooperation legally. It thereby also protects itself against contractual partners. The Lead Partner principle is employed in all INTERREG IIIB and IIIC programmes, but it is not present in all INTERREG IIIA programmes.

**PARTNER IN CHARGE OF THE OPERATION**

The quality of work of a project co-financed by structural funds is guaranteed by the final beneficiary who commits itself legally and financially to good execution of the project.

**PROJECT PARTNERS**

Other organisations that, in addition to the Lead Partner, sign a Partnership Agreement and are involved with the implementation of a project.

**PARTNERSHIP**

The principle of partnership marks out the close cooperation between the European Commission, the Member State concerned and the authorities participating according to the terms of Community regulation and following their designation by the Member State, in preparation and carrying out of programmes.

**PAYING AUTHORITY (PA)**

One or more national, regional or local authorities or bodies designated by the Member States for the purposes of drawing up and submitting payment applications and receiving payments from the Commission. The Member State shall determine all the modalities of its relationship with the Paying Authority and of the latter's relationship with the Commission.

**PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE PROJECTS**

People-to-People projects are projects that support and encourage the establishment of cooperation (through, for instance, the set up of cooperation networks) between communities and local/regional stakeholders on either side of the border in order to overcome specific development problems resulting from their relative isolation in the framework of national economies. Their aim is to bring communities in the border regions closer together and increase personnel and institutional capabilities for cooperation through networking and development of small scale economic, social and cultural activities.

**PHARE**

The Phare Programme was launched in 1989 following the collapse of the communist regimes in central and eastern Europe. It is intended to help these countries reconstruct their economies. Originally, it affected only Poland and Hungary but it has gradually been extended to cover thirteen central and eastern European countries today (Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia). For the period 1995-99, funding under Phare totalled roughly EUR 6.7 billion and covered fifteen sectors, the main five of which were: infrastructure (energy, transport, telecommunication); development of the private sector and assistance for businesses; education, training and research; environmental protection and nuclear safety; agricultural restructuring. At the same time, Phare is the main financial instrument for the pre-accession strategy for the ten central and eastern European countries (CEECs) which have applied for membership of the European Union. Since 1994, Phare's tasks have been adapted to the priorities and needs of each CEEC. The revamped Phare Programme with a budget of over EUR 10 billion for the period 2000-06 now has two specific priorities, namely: institution building financing investments. Following the proposals put forward by the Commission in its Agenda 2000 communication in July 1997, new forms of pre-accession aid have been added to that already provided by Phare. These are: structural measures to bring the level of environmental protection and of transport infrastructure development in the applicant countries closer to that of the European Union (Ispra) aid to agriculture (Sapard).

**PRIORITY**

(definition under the current programming period INTERREG III 2000-06): One of the priorities of the strategy adopted in a Community support framework or assistance; to it is assigned a contribution from the Funds and other

financial instruments and the relevant financial resources of the Member State and a set of specified targets.

**PROGRAMME COMPLEMENT**

The document implementing the assistance strategy and priorities and containing detailed elements at measure level, as set out in Article 18(3), drawn up by the Member State or Managing Authority and revised as necessary in accordance with Article 34(3). It is sent to the Commission for information.

**PROGRAMMED PROJECT**

A programmed project is a project instructed by the Joint Technical Secretariat and selected by the Programming Committee and the Monitoring Committee.

**PROGRAMMING**

The organising, decision-making and financing process carried out in a number of stages to implement on a multi-annual basis the joint action of the Community and the Member States to attain the objectives referred to in Article 1 of the Council Regulation.

**PROJECT**

The activity for which funding is being sought under a particular priority. Projects are referred to in the Regulations as '*operations*'.

**PROJECT MONITORING**

Monitoring arrangements are designed to determine progress towards project outputs and involve the collection of data and other evidence relating to project performance.

**REGIONAL FRAMEWORK OPERATIONS (RFOS)**

This is one of the three types of cooperation funded under INTERREG IIIC and constitutes a new form of cooperation in the context of INTERREG. A regional framework operation (RFO) is composed of a group of regional authorities or equivalent regional bodies aiming to exchange experience on methodology and project-based activities. The RFO is based on a joint strategy covering the participating regions. This strategic framework can be considered a kind of '*mini-programme*' where the partners can choose the activities to be funded. Each RFO should address a limited range of subjects relevant to the participating regions, thus covering a limited range of smaller projects. In these projects private partners can also be involved.

**SINGLE PROGRAMMING DOCUMENT**

A single document approved by the Commission and containing the same information to be found in a Commu-

## INTERVIEW PARTNERS

nity support framework and Operational programme.

### STRUCTURAL FUNDS

The EU's Structural Funds are administered by the Commission to finance Community structural aid. They comprise the Guidance Section of the EAGGF for agriculture, the Regional Fund for structural aid under the regional policy, the Social Fund for social policy measures, and the Financial Instrument for Fisheries (FIFG). Financial support from the Structural Funds mainly goes to the poorer regions to strengthen the Union's economic and social cohesion so that the challenges of the single market can be met right across the EU.

### SUBSIDY CONTRACT

Contract between the Managing Authority and the operation's Lead Partner. It determines the rights and responsibilities of the Lead Partner and the Managing Authority, the scope of activities to be carried out, terms of funding, requirements for reporting and financial controls, etc.

### SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Sustainable Development is usually defined as *'development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'*.

### TACIS

Launched by the EC in 1991, the Tacis Programme provides grant-financed technical assistance to 13 countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kirghizstan, Moldova, Mongolia, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan), and mainly aims at enhancing the transition process in these countries.

PROGRAMME	INSTITUTION	PERSONS	COUNTRY
AT – CZ	JTS	1	AT
AT – CZ	JTS	1	CZ
AT – CZ	IB	2	CZ
AT – CZ	MA	1	AT
AT – CZ	IB	3	AT
AT – CZ	NA	1	CZ
SK – CZ	MA	1	SK
SK – CZ	NA	1	CZ
SK – CZ	IB	1	SK
SK – CZ	IB	2	CZ
SK – CZ	JTS	1	CZ
FI – SE – NO – RU	JTS	2	SE
FI – SE – NO – RU	JTS	1	RU
FI – SE – NO – RU	JTS	1	NO
FI – SE – NO – RU	JTS/MA	1	FI
DE – PL	JTS	1	DE
DE – PL	Euregio	1	DE
DE – PL	Euregio	1	PL
DE – PL	Regional Auth.	1	PL
DE – CZ	JTS	1	DE
DE – CZ	IB	1	CZ
DE – CZ	NA	1	CZ
DK – DE	JTS/MA	1	DK
DK – DE	JTS	1	DE
DK – DE	Euroregion	1	DK
DK – DE	Regional Auth.	1	DE
LT – PL – RU	JTS	1	LT
LT – PL – RU	Regional Auth.	2	PL
LT – PL – RU	MA	1	LT
LT – PL – RU	Euroregion	2	LT
LT – PL – RU	NA	1	PL
LT – PL – RU	Support Office	1	RU
LT – PL – RU	Project Owner	1	LT
AT – HU	IB	3	AT
AT – HU	JTS	1	HU
AT – HU	MA	1	AT
IT – SI	JTS	1	IT
IT – SI	NA	1	SI
IT – SI	IB	1	IT
IT – SI	MA	1	IT
IT – SI			
DE – NL	JTS	1	DE
DE – NL	MA	1	DE
DE – NL	Euroregion	2	DE
DE – NL	Regional Auth.	2	NL
DE – NL	Regional Auth.	1	DE

## ROLES IN STRATEGIC PROJECT GENERATION

ROLE	DESCRIPTION
<b>Administrator</b>	Manages project funding process, requests to regional level for project proposals, prepares JSPF guidelines, manages project pipeline/applications
<b>Advisor</b>	Assesses initial ideas and realigns them with INTERREG requirements, advises on project design, content and funding, assists in formulating and completing applications, examines proposals regarding professional content and coherence with regional strategy, provides continuous consulting, assists local actors in project development, preparation of applications
<b>Catalyst</b>	Collects ideas, facilitates matching of project ideas, mediates between projects and administrators - local and regional level, brings together projects/actors, connects project promoters with funding authorities/sources, organises co-finance, channels projects into suitable support schemes
<b>Co-ordinator</b>	Liaises with co-funding authorities, partner IBs and regional organizations, co-ordinates ideas and projects within region and cross-border, bundles ideas towards larger projects
<b>Financer</b>	Provides co-financing from own resources/Programmes
<b>Guardian</b>	Monitors compliance with Programme objectives, screens applications
<b>Guide</b>	Oversees project development, meets project promoters, stops unsuitable ideas
<b>Implementer</b>	Procures services and work, implements tenders and grant schemes, prepares project documentation and standard forms; in some cases implements project activities
<b>Initiator</b>	Suggests project ideas and topics, provides examples, raises awareness of deficits/potential, initiates strategic projects, acts as project owner in case of strategic projects
<b>Mentor</b>	Acts as interface between projects and IB, supports project owners in obtaining co-finance, lobbies for project with funding authorities and pre-assessment committees
<b>Networker</b>	Organises meetings and provides advice and support for partner search, liaises with partner country institutions in search for partners, identifies suitable and stable partners, improves communication with partner country, facilitates partnership development and communication between partners
<b>Programme developer/preparation</b>	Defines strategies, priorities and structures
<b>Promoter</b>	Dissemination of information, promotion of Programme, etc.
<b>Provider of information</b>	PR work, informs project promoters about INTERREG tenders, tendering procedures and Programme requirements, preparation of applications, organises meetings and workshops

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