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SI043 Goriška

SI044 Obalno-kraška

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## ACRONYMS

<b>AA</b>	Audit Authority
<b>CA</b>	Certifying Authority
<b>CB</b>	Cross-border
<b>CP</b>	Cooperation Programme
<b>CPR</b>	Common Provision Regulation - Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013
<b>DMCS</b>	Description on Management and Control System
<b>DPS</b>	Italian National Department for Development Policy and Cohesion
<b>e-MS</b>	e-Monitoring-System
<b>EIB</b>	European Investment Bank
<b>EAFRD</b>	European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development
<b>EC</b>	European Commission
<b>EGTC</b>	European Group for Territorial Cooperation
<b>EMFF</b>	European Maritime and Fisheries Fund
<b>ENI</b>	European Neighbourhood Instrument
<b>EPO</b>	European Patent Office
<b>ERDF</b>	European Regional Development Fund
<b>ESCO</b>	Energy Service Company
<b>ESI</b>	European Structural and Investment Funds
<b>ETC</b>	European Territorial Cooperation
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>EUSAIR</b>	EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region
<b>EUSALP</b>	EU Strategy for the Alpine Region
<b>EUSDR</b>	EU Strategy for the Danube Region
<b>FETs</b>	Future and Emerging Technologies
<b>FI</b>	Financial Indicator
<b>FLC</b>	First Level Control
<b>FTEs</b>	Full time employees
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>GHG</b>	Greenhouse Gas
<b>GOA</b>	Group of Auditors
<b>GODCP</b>	Government office of the Republic of Slovenia for Development and European Cohesion Policy
<b>HIT</b>	INTERACT Harmonized Programme Implementation Tools

<b>ICT</b>	Information and Communication Technologies
<b>IFTS</b>	Higher Technical Education and Training
<b>IP</b>	Investment Priority
<b>IPA</b>	Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance
<b>ITI</b>	Integrated Territorial Investment
<b>ITS</b>	Information Transportation System
<b>JS</b>	Joint Secretariat
<b>KETs</b>	Key Enabling Technologies (investments and technologies that will allow European industries to retain competitiveness and capitalize on new markets)
<b>KIS</b>	Key Implementation Step
<b>LP</b>	Lead Partner
<b>MA</b>	Managing Authority
<b>MS</b>	Member State
<b>MC</b>	Monitoring Committee
<b>NA</b>	National Authority
<b>NEET</b>	Not (engaged) in Education, Employment or Training
<b>NSF</b>	National Strategic Framework
<b>NUTS</b>	Nomenclature of territorial units for statistics
<b>OI</b>	Output indicator
<b>OIB</b>	Office for Intermediate Body
<b>OMT</b>	Outright Monetary Transactions
<b>PA</b>	Priority Axis
<b>PMG</b>	Programme Management Group
<b>PP</b>	Project Partner
<b>PROs</b>	Public Research Organizations
<b>RDI</b>	R&D investment
<b>RES</b>	Renewable Energy Sources
<b>R&amp;D</b>	Research and Development
<b>R&amp;I</b>	Research and Innovation
<b>RTO</b>	Research and Technology Organizations
<b>SEA</b>	Strategic Environmental Assessment
<b>SEAP</b>	Sustainable Energy Action Plan
<b>SME</b>	Small and Medium size Enterprises
<b>S3</b>	Smart Specialization Strategy
<b>SO</b>	Specific Objective

<b>SUMP</b>	Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans
<b>SWOT</b>	Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (analysis)
<b>TEN-T</b>	Trans-European Network Transport
<b>TF</b>	Task Force
<b>TO</b>	Thematic Objective
<b>WFD</b>	Water Framework Directive

## SECTION 1. STRATEGY FOR THE COOPERATION PROGRAMME'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE UNION STRATEGY FOR SMART, SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH AND THE ACHIEVEMENT OF ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND TERRITORIAL COHESION

*Reference: Article 27 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council and point (a) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council*

### 1.1. Strategy for the cooperation programme's contribution to the Union strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and to the achievement of economic, social and territorial cohesion

#### 1.1.1. Description of the cooperation programme's strategy for contributing to the Union strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and for achieving economic, social and territorial cohesion.

##### 1.1.1.1. Geographical coverage

The Programme area extends over a total surface of 19,841 km<sup>2</sup> and has a total population of approximately 3 million inhabitants. The entire Programme area includes 5 Italian NUTS3 level regions (provinces of Venice, Udine, Pordenone, Gorizia and Trieste) and 5 Slovenian statistical regions (statistical regions of Primorsko-notranjska, Osrednjeslovenska, Gorenjska, Obalno-kraška and Goriška). Overall, on NUTS2 level on the Italian side, the regions involved are those of Veneto and Friuli Venezia Giulia, while for the Slovenian side Slovene Western Cohesion Region and Eastern Cohesion Region.

Hereafter the whole Programme area - including the above-mentioned NUTS3 level regions - will be identified as "cross-border area"<sup>1</sup>.

For the purpose of the Programme all areas outside urban settlements are considered rural or peripheral areas.

The Programme area comprises urban areas as Trieste, Udine, Gorizia, Ljubljana, Pordenone, Venice, conurbation Koper-Izola-Piran, Nova Gorica, Kranj and Postojna. It also includes several urban centres located in relatively short distances from each other. In this regard, it should be noted that less than a mile separates Gorizia and Nova Gorica cities, while the two coastal cities of Trieste and Koper are less than 15 Km away. In a EU perspective, the Programme area is mainly comprised by intermediate regions and rural regions, furthermore, the Programme area has an above average number of border crossings per 100 km border which offers potentials to further support the development of polycentric cross-border regions<sup>2</sup>. On the border between Italy and Slovenia, it is situated the functional urban region of Gorizia, Nova Gorica and Šempeter where, drawing on the experiences achieved through several European cross-border projects, an EGTC (European Group for Territorial Cooperation) has been established in 2011. The EGTC, considered the most advanced form of cross-border territorial cooperation, shares goals relating to common management and modernization in health, environment and infrastructural sector, urban transport, logistics, energy and economic development initiatives.

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<sup>1</sup>Art. 3.1 of the ETC Regulation and Commission Implementing Decision No. 2014/388/EU.

<sup>2</sup>Source: ESPON Project TERREVI, Nov. 2012

Stretching over 232 km, the Italian-Slovenian border begins in the north at the tripoint formed by the Austro-Italian and Austro-Slovenian borders. It then turns southwards and ends to the south of Trieste, in a village near the Adriatic Sea<sup>3</sup>.

The Programme area comprises more than 320 Km of coast on the Adriatic Sea, which represents a crucial resource both from an environmental and an economic point of view. Moreover all rivers on the Programme area flow into the Adriatic sea.

Figure 1: Map of the Programme area



During the preliminary programming phase, both involved countries - Italy and Slovenia - agreed that the unbalanced configuration of the geographic area was one of the critical factors that affected the implementation of the programme during 2007-2013 period.

This position was expressed on the occasion of the different Task Force meetings and formally presented to the European Commission during the negotiation phase with Member States for the definition and adoption of Commission Implementing Decision No. 2014/388/EU of 16 June 2014 setting up the list of regions and areas eligible for funding from the European Regional Development Fund under the cross-border and transnational components of the European territorial cooperation goal for the period 2014 to 2020.

For this reason Italian side area was limited to NUTS 3 regions including Venice, Trieste, Gorizia, Udine and Pordenone and excluding the former eligible areas of Padova, Rovigo, Ferrara and Ravenna. On the Slovenian side, the eligible NUTS 3 areas include Gorenjska, Goriška, Obalno-kraška, Osrednjeslovenska and Primorsko-notranjska.

<sup>3</sup> Source: <http://www.espaces-transfrontaliers.org/en/bdd-borders/frontiers/frontier/show/italie-slovenie/>

The reduction of the Programme area brings the Programme to its previous INTERREG II and INTERREG III geographic configuration.

The new territorial dimension could help to **strengthen the cohesion level of the Programme area** and better focus strategic approaches and actions on the three pillars of concentration, territorial connection and administrative cooperation.

Moreover the need to contribute to the new-born macro-regional strategy (EUSAIR) imposes more specific attention to coordination and demarcation of activities among all ETC Programmes concerning the interested area. The Programme area takes part to two macro-regional strategies: the EU Strategy for Adriatic-Ionian Region (EUSAIR) and the EU strategy for the Alpine Region (EUSALP), moreover the Danubian Strategy (EUSDR) affects the Programme in the Slovenian side of the Programme area. The contributions of the Programme to the above mentioned strategies are explained in Section 4.

#### 1.1.1.2. Lessons learnt

After assessing the experience of territorial cooperation policy conducted in 2007-2013 as resulted by Mid-term Evaluation Report, some lessons that help defining the strategy for the programming period 2014-2020 have been drawn.

The 2007-2013 programme has funded activities aimed at enhancing the attractiveness and competitiveness of the Programme area. To achieve this overall objective, the programme has pursued four Specific Objectives<sup>4</sup> supported by four Axis<sup>5</sup>.

Despite the global financial and economic crisis the 2007-2013 programme, while facing the difficulty by the cooperation area to counteract the actual trend, has confirmed the validity of its strategic choices, the identified actions and the funded projects, which have proved to be consistent both with the previous framework and with the latest guidelines, also considering the available financial allocations. In fact, the economic crisis has further amplified some of the threats identified in the 2007-2013 SWOT analysis, and in particular, those related to the “Research and Development” and the “Environment” topics, which proved to be the primary issues, which most of the funded projects and financial resources have focused on. In 2007-2013, the 87 funded projects concentration on specific axes/priorities has indeed anticipated some of the central themes of Europe 2020 and confirmed the 2014-2020 strategic choices as a response of the eligible area to public funding. Overall, the 2007-2013 programme has allocated 136 million Euros of public expenditure and 914 partners were involved in projects implementation: the programme has generated large partnerships (most of the projects have from 5 to 14 partners) and consequently the single beneficiaries have handled low financing shares (median value € 80,000).

The 2007-2013 programme featured two types of projects, the standard and the strategic ones. The involvement of the whole Programme area on more ambitious projects, which could also capitalize on previous experiences, is still worth to be pursued in the new programme period due to their capacity of concentrating resources on some “core” issues. Still, the past experience teaches that strategic projects cannot differentiate merely on the base of the amount of resources allocated: while the financial size of a strategic project will be necessarily bigger than the one of standard operation, a different selection method based on a top-down approach is needed in order to guarantee an effective and efficient implementation of a wide area initiative. At the same time, the usual bottom-up approach appears more apt for encouraging the presentation of spontaneous ideas from the territories.

<sup>4</sup>Ensure sustainable territorial integration; Increase competitiveness and the development of knowledge-based society; Improving communication and social and cultural cooperation, in order to remove persistent barriers; Improve the Programme efficiency and effectiveness.

<sup>5</sup> Environment, Transport and sustainable territorial integration; Competitiveness and knowledge-based society; Social integration; Technical assistance.

On the basis of project applications 2007-2013 monitoring proved to be often higher than the pre-determined targets, with high performances in particular for the general cooperation indicators: over 70% of the projects has promoted the joint use of infrastructure, developed collaborations in the field of public services, promoted and improved environmental protection and joint management. Almost 50% of the projects have aimed at reducing isolation through improved access to transport, ICT networks and services.

The 2007-2013 experience has highlighted, in relation to the indicators, the need for the new programming period to pay attention to the relevance of the targets and to the detection methodologies to be adopted. It appears appropriate, in addition, the establishment of a system that can monitor the effects of the financed projects on equal opportunities and non-discrimination and on the environment. It could be useful, finally, the compulsory recognition of the effects required, within the limits of the phenomena reasonably quantifiable.

The process of implementation of the 2007-2013 programme has been affected by some issues that have characterized the start-up phase (difficulty in implementing the regular meetings of the Monitoring Committee due to consensus making rule, documentation drafting and translation due to delayed JTS establishment) and the implementation phase, with procedures for selecting projects often proved too slow (requiring from 7 months to over a year) and late payments, which all led to the 2014 decommitment. These aspects have highlighted, as for the 2014-2020 programming period, in general, the need to act on streamlining and simplification of decision-making processes, ensuring the programme good governance, also in order to speed up the performance of the realizations and, therefore, expenditure reporting and payments. More specifically:

- establish and implement the JTS at the initial stage of programming period;
- use flowing rules for selection of project proposals (containing the number of external experts and creating a mechanism for greater comparison among them);
- encourage the participation of non-voting members of the MC and in particular of the Environmental Authorities;
- have personal numerically adapted to the needs and tasks of the MA.

Finally, with reference to the activities of dissemination of 2007-2013 programme results, great interest has arisen towards the events related to results capitalization, which, by comparison with the Project Partners, enabled to identify development opportunities to pursue for specific thematic areas (tourism, cross-border healthcare, research, development and innovation).

#### 1.1.1.3. Analysis of the situation of the Programme area

The Programme area presents a large number of connected relevant aspects, analysed in the following *main topics*.

##### Natural and Cultural resources

From a morphological point of view, geographical coverage of the Programme area is characterized by an internal diversity with the presence of coastal areas, mountain ranges and flat parts, which involve needs and different attraction points based on the morphology of the territory itself. The orography and the morphological characteristics of the area, on the one hand offer elements of great environmental and naturalistic attraction and lend themselves to important actions in the development of tourism, while on the other hand they also represent significant natural hazards, such as hydro-geological and seismic risks, as well as the risk of subsidence and coastal erosion, the latter especially on Italian side.

For each physical environment there is a corresponding wide diversity of landscapes that can be summarily classified as follows:

- Alpine landscapes
- Alpine Foothills landscapes
- Hilly landscapes



- High and low plain landscapes
- River basins landscapes
- Littoral Lagoon landscapes
- Coastal landscapes
- Karst landscapes

The entire area looks like a single mosaic of biodiversity and is particularly rich in both animal and plant species and habitat types, including the Adriatic Sea. The numerous protected areas all follow the IUCN classification system and are divided into National Parks, Regional Parks, Marine protected areas, Nature (State and Regional) Reserves as Natural Regional Reserve Bosco Nordio (113,54 ha) situated in Venezia Province or State Reserve of Cucco and Rio Bianco belonging to Province of Udine.

Also in consideration of the opportunities of protection and enhancement for tourism purposes, it should be noted the presence of the Triglav National Park, located in the statistical regions of Gorenjska and Goriška, which includes a large part of the Julian Alps on the borders with Austria and Italy. The Triglav National Park is one of the best preserved in Europe; here, Mediterranean, alpine and continental types of flora prosper, in which rare plants stand out, like the white poppy, the yellow gentian and the Zois' bellflower. Very important and worthy of note are the Marine Protected Area of Miramare and Strunjan in the Gulf of Trieste and the six Regional Parks in the Programme area, the Friuli Dolomites, the Julian Prealps (Friuli Venezia Giulia) and Sile River (province of Venice) on the Italian side and the Sečovelje salina nature park, the Škocjanske jame park and the Notranjska Regional Park on the Slovenian side, characterized by the Slovenian karst landscape and considered an island of biodiversity. The area of Classical Karst, which is considered of international importance, is very rich with natural, mostly karst phenomena and cultural heritage.

As referred above, from Italian side, it should be mentioned the Natural Park of Sile River: it lies 4152 hectare (16 sq miles) within 11 municipalities in the provinces of Padua, Treviso and Venice. Friuli Dolomiti Regional Park is part of the western mountain area dominating the upper plain of Friuli, between the rivers Tagliamento and Piave.

Equally important for biodiversity issues is Julian Prealps Regional Park that presents a mountain chain characterized from steep slopes in the South.

The Classical Karst is also an integrated part of the Dinaric Karst, which is one of the most celebrated karst regions in the world. Therefore, the State Parties in the area (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Italy, Slovenia and Serbia) are working on the preparation of the nomination to inscribe the Dinaric Karst on the UNESCO World Heritage List as a transnational serial nomination. Škocjan Caves, which take part of the UNESCO World Heritage List as well as Ramsar Convention List of wetlands of international importance, are used to be one of the largest underground passages in the world; other Ramsar sites are the Sečovelje salina nature park, the northernmost salt pans in the Mediterranean; Lipica as a cradle Stud Farm has a long tradition in breeding the Lipizzaner horses; Štanjel is a picturesque medieval village with castle, art gallery and other important attractions. From Italian side, it should be mentioned the Natural Reserve of Forra del Cellina (304,00ha), inside the province of Pordenone. The Nature Reserve includes the most significant section of the valley dug by the stream Cellina in the Cretaceous limestones, which forms the mountains situated between Barcis and Montereale Valcellina, in the Province of Pordenone. Among UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Slovenia since 2012, there is Idrija, located in the traditional region of Goriška. Also the prehistoric pile dwellings in the area of Ljubljansko barje is part of World's cultural heritage together with Palù di Livenza (Italy), one of the oldest Palaeolithic sites in northern Italy, both listed in the "Prehistoric pile-dwelling sites in the Alps", which extend from France to Slovenia, passing through Switzerland, Germany, Austria and Italy. Regarding other UNESCO heritage of Italian Programme area, besides Aquileia and the Dolomites (listed as UNESCO World Heritage Sites since 2011) now Friuli Venezia Giulia can boast another place included in the World Heritage Sites: Cividale del Friuli (one of the most



representative symbols of the Lombard power in Italy), that is a town full of art treasures immersed in enchanting valleys rich in age-old traditions.

Last but not least, Venice lagoon (in UNESCO list since 1987), enclosed bay of the Adriatic Sea in which Venice city is situated. Founded in 5th century and spread over 118 small islands, Venice became a major maritime power in the 10th century. The whole city is an extraordinary architectural masterpiece in which even the smallest building contains works by some of the world's greatest artists.

The whole territory also shares some rivers such as the River Isonzo-Soča, rising in Slovenia, in the Triglav National Park, passing through Posočje and the urban area of the GECT GO/EZTS GO to Italy and finally to the nature reserve of the Isonzo estuary and, often creating problems of joint water management and enhancement of the river basin. The subterranean course of Reka river (means river in Slovenia) is situated in south-western part of Slovenia. It is a 50 kilometers long river with karstic features. Its main characteristic is that disappears underground and has the longest (30 kilometers) underground path of all Slovenian rivers. After that it springs as the river Timavo in Italy, near village Duino between Trieste and Monfalcone and outflows in the gulf of Trieste.

As for water management, it is worth to be mentioned the permanent Slovenian-Italian Water Management Commission and the joint River Basin Management Plans on river Isonzo-Soča: in the context of support of WFD, cross-border harmonization of the two basin management plans and planning to share cross-border cooperation projects on water management are currently pursued; in the context of the Flood Directive, it is under way the coordination and harmonization of the maps for flood risk and of plans aimed at reducing flood risks as well as it is planned cooperation in actions in case of floods. Also data sharing and sharing of methodologies are under way in order to draft a common plan for reducing flood risks.

The geomorphological and climatic diversity of the Programme area and also the junction between Mediterranean bio-geographical areas, alpine areas and Illyrian Balkan areas lead to the presence of plant and animal biodiversity among the most elevated in Europe. There is also a strong presence of forest and woodland areas, especially on the Slovenian side.

The percentage of Natura 2000 sites in the Programme area is 30.9% as data regarding the whole Programme area.

### **Socio-demographic aspects**

With a population of 3,098,865 inhabitants, the Programme area has a population density of 161 inhabitants/km<sup>2</sup> and is deeply inhomogeneous among the various provinces and regions. The population growth is +3.8% between 2003 and 2012, in line with the European trend. Four of the 10 provinces / regions involved collect more than 70% of the population. The phenomenon of an aging population, with important social and economic effects, is an emerging factor. It is more pronounced in Italian side, than in Slovenian one. The situation about migration, which balances the aging of the population, is inhomogeneous between territories and between the two Members States.

Among the Italian provinces, Trieste has the highest population density (1,116 inhabitants/km<sup>2</sup> in 2011) even though this figure has decreased compared to 2005. The lowest value on the Italian side was recorded in 2011 in Udine, i.e. 110 inhabitants/km<sup>2</sup>, with a positive balance relative to the figures from 2005 equal to 1.85%. The population density in the statistical region of Goriška remained almost unchanged (-0,4%) between 2005 and 2011, as did, generally speaking, the other statistical regions involved in the Programme area (variation between 2,4% and 2,6%) with the exception relative to the statistical region of Osrednjeslovenska (+7.36%), which proved to be the most densely populated of the Slovenian areas.

The age structure of the aforesaid Italian regions showed the composition of the population aged from zero to 14 years with a national average of 14%; also in Slovenia data for this age group was similar (14.2%). The active population, from 15 to 64 years of age, varied from 64% in Friuli Venezia Giulia to 65.9% in Veneto, while the Italian average was 65.7%. For the same age group in Slovenia,

the average was much higher, reaching 69.3%. The figure for the over 65 age group varied from 19.9% in Veneto to 23.4% in Friuli Venezia Giulia; in Italy the average was 20.3% and was lower in Slovenia, at 16.5%. The analysis of the age structure of the population in the Slovenian statistics regions involved in the programme has a trend similar to the whole Slovenia. In the Slovenian regions of the Programme area the active population in the 15-64 age class is slightly lower than the whole of Slovenia (-0.4%).

As regards the Slovenian regions involved in the programme we notice in the period between 2008 and 2014 a progressive reduction in the age group between 15 and 64 years for the youngest age group (+1%) and the oldest (+0.8%). As far as the Italian areas are concerned, in 2011, Trieste recorded the highest national old-age index (243), although the data was improving compared to that of 2005, which was 251.5. The Italian province with the lowest old-age index was Pordenone, with 146.9.

As far as the Slovenian regions are concerned, the figure is more homogenous; in particular, it varies from a minimum of 105.8 in Osrednjeslovenska to a maximum of 134.3 for Obalno-kraška. In other words, the Slovenian population has a greater number of people aged under 15 years compared to people aged over 65.

The migratory balance per 1000 inhabitants in the Programme area between 2006 and 2010 showed a decrease (passing from 4.87 to 2.71 per 1000), although in 2007 and in 2008 this same indicator doubled.

With reference to the percentage of population at risk of poverty or social exclusion, the Programme area ranks significantly lower than the European average of areas at risk of poverty and social exclusion, but over the last few years these territories have seen an increase in these phenomena.

Finally, the Programme area is characterized by some unbalances in different territories, in particular in terms of services related to social inclusion and welfare systems. The process of aging of the population, which covers the entire area, albeit with uneven character, is a factor that, in the medium term will have a significant impact on health policy and social inclusion. This aspect is aggravated by the effects produced by the economic crisis in terms of an increase in the unemployment rate, even against older workers. The specific expected result is the strengthening of institutional and administrative capacity in the implementation of services addressing social needs and health and that through active aging can be socially cohesive and economically competitive.

### **Cultural and national minorities**

The Programme area can be considered the meeting place of the Latin, Slavic and German cultural and linguistic identities; among those, Italian minority living in Obalno-kraška region in Slovenia and Slovene minority living along the state border.

Regarding Italian Programme area, it should be noted that Friuli Venezia Giulia constitutes a space of complex-linguistic contact. The basis of the current situation can be attributed to the historical events of immigration and settlement that have placed side-by-side Romans, Germans, Slavs. There are used four official languages: besides Italian, Slovene, Friulan and German (Germanic-speaking communities can be found along the alpine areas of Friuli). Italian national legislation and several regional laws were issued in the past decades to safeguard the autochthonous minority languages, most notably in the autonomous border regions. Friulan language, spoken currently by almost 600,000 of people, is one of the historic minorities included in the Italian law 482/1999. In particular, it shows strong and compact in the province of Udine and in mountainous and hilly areas of the provinces of Pordenone and Gorizia. Native communities living along the eastern border of Italy mainly speak Slovenian language. Slovenians are an autochthonous minority with an historical presence protected by London Memorandum (1954) and Treaty of Osimo (1975), which is one of the historic minorities included in the Italian law 482/1999, it is protected by the Law for the protection of Slovene minority (Law 38/2001) and it is subject of protection even by

regional norms (Friuli Venezia Giulia Regional law 205/2007). It lives in the provinces of Trieste, Gorizia and Udine.

Minorities are an integral element of the European Union and are an important factor in achieving the cohesion policy, which is one of Europe's basic strategies. Cooperation between Slovenia and Italy is a natural result of efforts demonstrated by both countries ratifying the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. The Slovenian minority in Friuli Venezia Giulia and the Italian minority in Slovenia present a paradigm of positive engagement. With their participation both minorities have played an important role in creating cohesion policy and social integration of cross-border and broader programming area, thus in the new programming period it can be expected to upgrade the systematic and successful integration between majority and minority entities.

### **Labour, Economic and Productive Context**

Labour market situation in the Programme area has been characterized, in the recent period, by the strong impact of the crisis and especially by its persistence, which has worsened unemployment data that, until 2007/2008, were extremely favourable. The employment rate is slightly worse than EU figures, but it signals a pejorative trend, particularly for the Italian side of the programme. This situation affects the most vulnerable groups, such as in particular low skilled workers, with a particular aggravation of young people and women. Macroeconomic analysis of the area highlights decidedly marked disparities in terms of gross domestic product per capita. In general terms, the average GDP per capita for the entire area in 2011 amounted to € 23,082, against € 29,900 of the Italian provinces and € 17,360 of the Slovenian context. In 2010 equivalent figures were slightly lower, both relative to the figure for the entire area and also for the two territorial sides. The production system of the Programme area is generally characterized by structural conditions of weakness and by a medium-small size companies, effected by elements of undercapitalization and of difficult access to credit.

### **Tourism**

According to UNWTO figures on future trends in the tourism industry, the number of international tourists in Europe will grow at an average annual rate of 3.3% between 2010 and 2030. This will bring about an increase of 43 million arrivals every year and a total of 1.8 billion tourists in 2030 from all around the world. The main destination area in the world continues to be Europe, but its market share will be reduced progressively in favor of the areas with highest growth, namely the Far East and Asia-Pacific.

In 2013 are registered 414,192 Italian tourists in Slovenia with an amount of 929,327 overnight stays. Thanks to its natural conditions, the country for several decades is the favorite place for the athletic training from the best teams. Recently, hiking, mountaineering, sightseeing and cycling are more popular activities. Regarding Italian Regions of the Programme area, 2,060,824 of tourists in 2013 are registered in Friuli Venezia Giulia (1,027,545 foreign, 1,033,279 Italian) and 15,984,972 in Veneto Region (10,471,034 foreign, 5,513,938 Italian). The highest affluence has been registered in Venezia (amount 8,240,596 tourists) for Veneto Region and Trieste (383,696) for Friuli Venezia Giulia Region.

The absence of direct public transport connections between Slovenia and Italy, either railway or airplane, penalizes the central and southern Regions of Italy. Above all a rail link connecting the airport of Ronchi dei Legionari, Venezia and Ljubljana, passing through the urban area of the GECT GO/EZTS GO, connecting the urban centres is missing. Slovenian tourists in Italy generally prefer to stay in hotels and guesthouses, while they show no preference for the use of apartments or camp-sites. For "mini-holidays" in Italy, they usually prefer cities of art and shopping locations. Most Slovenian tourists organize their trips to Italy on their own and only a quarter of them use a travel agency or a tour operator, especially for trips to smaller locations in central and southern Italy, where the most popular type of holiday is one of "relaxation", followed by recreational activities and sightseeing.

The Programme area has high tourism potential on the basis of its natural and cultural assets. There are existing developed tourist products (gastronomy, active tourism, cultural, leisure, historic...), which need to be upgraded in line with quality and sustainability standards, including also eco-friendly mobility.

### **Climate Change and Energy**

The Programme area is affected simultaneously by the impact of the continental, Alpine and Mediterranean climates. The average winter temperatures are harsh in the mountain zone while along the coast, thanks to the mitigating effect of the marine breezes, they rarely go below zero. Still, climate change affects the cross-border area, which will have to deal with increasing average temperature and growing vulnerability of territories to natural disasters (in particular floods).

Adapting to climate change and reducing the effects of global warming asks for overarching efforts in many sub systems like the energy, transport, water management, soil consumption, forest management and natural risks prevention, in a long term perspective. The European Union has responded to the challenge of climate change by setting ambitious mitigation goals (GHG reduction/renewable energy production/energy efficiency). Both Italy and Slovenia failed in closing the gap between their 2008-to-2012 emissions and Kyoto Target and 2020 emissions will be higher than the 2020 target<sup>6</sup>. As consequence, additional measures are needed to further reduce GHG emissions.

The poor efficiency recorded relative to the final use of the energy, in particular in transport, both private and collective, in residential and public buildings, increases the economic returns from structural requalification operations aimed at pursuing energy saving goals. The increase in the use of energy produced from renewable sources, with a view to achieving the goals set by the European Union by 2020 and (with the Energy Roadmap 2050) by 2050, also requires investments in the connection systems and in the local electricity distribution network, avoiding destabilizing feedbacks on networks due to the greater unpredictability of electricity generation using such sources. Italy consumes less energy than the average EU27, but it is behind Slovenia for coverage of electrical consumption using renewable energy sources. In Italy the gross production of electricity records figures of 50.3 GWh per ten thousand inhabitants, with a very slight fluctuation compared to 2011 (51.0), below the EU27 average (65.3).

### **Research and Development**

The topic of Research & development is a key factor for the competitiveness of a territory: the development of synergies between enterprises, research and development centres and the higher education sector is key to the achievement of most of the Europe 2020 targets.

At European level, every year the public European Commission publishes the annual Innovation Union Scoreboard that compares the results obtained in the field of the research and innovation by the EU Member States, bringing to light the relative strengths and weaknesses of their systems of research and innovation. Slovenia is in 13<sup>th</sup> position inside the “innovative followers” group, while Italy records a slight drop in growth compared to the previous year (and to the European average) taking the 16<sup>th</sup> position, in the group of the “moderate innovators”.

The Slovenian Innovation System consists of a collection of institutions that collaborate closely with each other and with European and international counterparts, thanks also to factors such as the small size of the country, the quality of the educational system and international culture. The role of the various organizations in the Innovation System and the quality and intensity of their relationships are fundamental for economic growth. Interactions with Italy are numerous, particularly with the organizations of the innovation system in Friuli Venezia Giulia and Veneto, thanks also to the availability of community programmes of cross-border cooperation.

Lastly, it is worth underlining the presence of Technical-Scientific Parks and centres dedicated to technical and scientific research that operate in order to satisfy the requirements of

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<sup>6</sup>European Environment Agency

competitiveness in the economic and productive system and, at the same time, favour the establishment and reinforcement of virtuous networks between all the players in the industry and in research located in the Programme area.

In the Slovenian side, there are currently several regional R&D agencies, and many actors primarily involved in providing consultancy services to local entities (SMEs). Regarding public research performance main actors comprise five universities, various autonomous higher education institutions and 47 government research institutes (among them 15 public PROs).

In Friuli Venezia Giulia Region there are two universities and four research centres as well as some Technological Districts of High Specialization.

In the NUTS3 of Venice there are two universities as well as the Venice International University, an international center for higher education and research including a total of sixteen institutions from several countries. Furthermore the NUTS3 of Venice hosts several other research institutions and foundations whose activities embrace numerous disciplines.

A key role in the development of the Programme area is the introduction of the regional Smart Specialisation Strategies (RIS3). These have been developed in order to set priorities that build on the regional competitive advantages. The existence of the regional smart specialisation strategy (RIS3) is the key element for planning investments under TO1 “Strengthening research, technological development and innovation”.

### **Transport and Logistics**

Both of the Position Papers of the DG REGIO services reveal the need for Italy and Slovenia to strengthen the network of railway infrastructures and to invest in more sustainable methods of transport. According to the European Environment Agency, the reduction in polluting emissions in 2012 was in part due to a reduction in the economic activity, while the emissions caused by means of transport continue to grow.

The challenge, therefore, is to successfully reduce emissions from transport vehicles and to support energy savings, by promoting the passage from road transport to rail and maritime transport, while at the same time responding to the need to improve public transport networks.

### **Railway infrastructures**

Considering railway density, both Slovenia, with its 6 km of railway network per hundred km<sup>2</sup> of territorial surface, and Italy, with 5.6 km, rank in an intermediate position in Europe (EU 5.0 km, 2011). With regard to passenger traffic, the Italian network transported 45,944 million passengers per km in 2011, recording an important increase compared to figures from the previous year (43,349), while Slovenia, with 689 million passengers, continues to record a decreasing trend (729 in 2010, 689 in 2011 and 659 in 2012). The exact opposite is true of freight transport via rail, where Slovenia records a significant increase in the movement of tonnes per kilometre. There is a huge potential and need for developing environment-friendly and low-carbon transport systems and promoting sustainable urban mobility.

### **Road network**

The two Italian eligible NUTS 2 regions present extremely different road length, with Veneto Region presenting a value three times higher (9,612 Km) than that registered by Friuli Venezia Giulia (3,929 Km). Slovenian road network extends for a total of 38,985 Km (2012), with a substantial equity between the two cohesion regions for the motorways length, but with Slovene Eastern Cohesion Region presenting for other roads a higher value of 10,000 km respect Slovene Western Cohesion Region. Slovenia possesses a motorway network of 769 km with an increase of about 10% in the period 2008-2012. Moreover Slovenia has the maximum figure for density in Europe (7.20 km per 10,000 motor vehicles; the main reason being the transit traffic) compared to the EU average (2.89 km) and to the Italian density (1.8 km). For the Italian side, Veneto has the same number as the national level, while Friuli Venezia Giulia has a higher motorway density (2.7 km). For both sides, freight transport by road continues to be preferred to the rail and



maritime modes of transport, with repercussions on traffic congestion of the roads. It is necessary to find valid and efficient alternatives, like the use of combined road-rail transport.

### **Ports**

The maritime ports will need to be the main interfaces of the land transport networks, in particular rail transport, by improving the intermodal connections and become places of commercial trade with strong potential. The area boasts three port hubs, considered core ports in the TEN-T Network: Venice, Trieste and Koper, the most oriented port in the North Adriatic area. Its efficient connection and integration to the TEN-T multimodal corridors has to be fully supported. In the Italian Programme area, the ports of Venice (2,000,000 sqm) and Trieste (1,725,000 sqm) have the greatest surface areas dedicated to freight storage. As well as this aspect, in particular for the Port of Venice, there is also the considerable increase in cruise traffic, which is doubtless able to stimulate tourist activities in the ports concerned.

The Koper port as one of the most important logistics-distribution centres has the leading role with the biggest market share in the North Adriatic from 2010 onwards.

In 2013 the port handled a record of 18 million tons and 600,000 TEUs of containers (which represents an increase of 75% from 2009). At the same time, the Port of Koper gained also the second position for car volumes in Mediterranean - immediately after Barcelona.

### **Logistics**

Together with the infrastructural problems coexist other weaknesses due to administrative obstacles, lack of technologic integration among transport systems and of logistic related services. The two countries boasts great potential for the development of transport logistics branch: for the Italian side, logistic network railway nodes (Mestre and Trieste), motorways (A4) and ports (Trieste, Monfalcone), interports (Cervignano) and Ronchi dei Legionari Airport and its Intermodal Pole; for the Slovenian area, motorways of the sea, the port of Koper and its logistics infrastructure, the international airport of Ljubljana and the whole road/railway/maritime network.

Moreover the area constitutes the meeting point between two of the 9 European Core Network Corridors: the Baltic-Adriatic Corridor and that of the Mediterranean.

On both sides, all the investments in the infrastructures must be based on a transport policy to be able in catching these flows and transforming the negative effects (pollution, traffic, soil consumption) into positive assets, in terms of growth. In this context, it would be important to improve cross-border connections, capitalizing what has been done with the co-funded projects under 2007-2013 programme (ADRIA A, TIP projects and with the GECT GO/EZTS GO) for the implementation of a cross-border logistic platform Gorizia - Nova Gorica. An important role could be assumed by potential cross-border intermodal hubs within the Programme area, such as the pre-existing management authorities of the services to be converted because of the fall of the borders (e.g. the potential railway junction between Gorizia and Nova Gorica/Vrtojba/Sezana). On the maritime border a good example of cooperation in the logistics is the institution of the North Adriatic Ports Association (NAPA)- among Trieste, Venezia, Koper and Rijeka.

### **Education**

The educational systems of the two countries get different results. The OECD-PISA 2012 data indicate, on both side of the Programme, valid school systems in terms of quality and quantitative data are consistent with the relevant age groups.

From the viewpoint of upper secondary education, in terms of duration of school cycles, various discrepancies were found, relative to age groups, which have a significant impact on the statistical basis of reference, although the two different cycles are nevertheless comparable in terms of teaching and education.

In this context, in the various second grade educational channels there are 115,401 students studying, of which 33.15% in the Slovenian area and 66.85% in the Italian area. Relative to the resident population based on NUTS 3, the statistical region of Gorenjska is the one with the highest number of students enrolled in the advanced educational cycle, while Trieste is the province with the lowest number of enrolled students.

Regarding the impact of the educational system, investigations OECD-PISA 2012 show that students in Slovenia reach an average result of 481 in reading, 501 in math and 514 in science. Data for Italy are 490 in reading, 485 in math and 494 in science. Slovenian students exceed the OECD average in mathematics and science. Italian students are below the OECD average in all three parameters. In addition, the weakness of higher technical education in Italy (IFTS/ITS), decreases the impact of tertiary education even in regions involved in the Programme.

### **SWOT analysis**

The following SWOT analysis presents internal strengths and weaknesses as well as external opportunities and threats of the area, for each goal of Europe 2020 Strategy and each Thematic Objective. In this way, a comprehensive analysis of the whole territory is provided with reference to all 11 TO, which has represented the fundamental basis for the identification of the needs and challenges to be addressed through the present Programme. It combines the situation analysis of the Programme area with an analysis of strategic documents on European, national and regional level (e.g. programming documents and policy papers).

### Smart growth

TO 1	
Strengths	Weaknesses
Clusters of excellence in academic and industrial research and virtual network between research institutions and competence centres. Natural and cultural assets as a solid basis to develop innovative activities and projects. Skilled human capital.	Low level of R&D in several (rural) regions/insufficient technology transfer and previous difficulties to follow research and innovation priorities. Concentration of services activities in main urban areas. Capitalization of research outcomes and knowledge diffusion should be strengthened.
Opportunities	Threats
Cross-border connections can additionally contribute to strengthening capacities and knowledge in the sector of innovative services and products, encouraging the link between high-technology companies and research institutions. Enhance the ability of SMEs to use the results of research and innovation produced by innovation and research poles. R&D specializations in bio-sector (Biomed, Biotech), agri-food sector, eco-construction, civil engineering and energy.	Inability to convert the productive system to innovative sectors due to insufficiently integrated platforms for Technology transfer. Presence of marginalized areas and brain drain. Reduction of returns on investments in R&D.
TO 2	
Strengths	Weaknesses
Good level of ICT use.	Lower level of broadband coverage respect other developed regions.
Opportunities	Threats
Diffusion of e-services, in particular for tourism, culture, social inclusion and e-health.	Reduction of competitiveness for not digitalized SME Digital services are less developed in remote areas.
TO 3	
Strengths	Weaknesses
Tertiary sector provides employment to the majority of the workforce. Presence of Leader enterprises in the area due also to policy support for business.	Asymmetric competitive ability and uneven access to financial sources of the area. Unbalanced model of regional development.
Opportunities	Threats
Policy support for cooperative economic activities, development of clusters and networks. Development of new business model of marketing in the area of sustainable tourism and innovative sectors.	Inability to convert the productive system to innovative sectors. Concentration of firms and competencies in few urban centres.



### Sustainable growth

TO 4	
Strengths	Weaknesses
Increasing level of renewable energy access (biomass, wind, solar, hydroelectric and geo-thermal). Large number of sustainable urban mobility plans.	Poor Energy efficiency. Need of investments in Smart Grids in order to better exploit the potentials of renewable energy sources.
Opportunities	Threats
Opportunities provided by integrated planning for sustainable mobility. Development and Employment Opportunities provided by Green Growth. Action Plan for Sustainable Energy. Use of alternative renewable energy resources and new technologies in the field of energy storage.	Failure in getting Europe 2020 targets. Negative Energy balance and increase of energy dependence from external market. Investments in RES discouraged by economic crisis.
TO 5	
Strengths	Weaknesses
High level of investments in this field during 2007-2013 programming period.	Geophysical characteristics of the territory, sensitive to hydro-geologic natural risk.
Opportunities	Threats
Enhancement of alert and monitoring systems and promotion of disaster resilience.	Development of hydrogeological instability. Increase of temperature average due to climate change that can compromise biodiversity.
TO 6	
Strengths	Weaknesses
Existence of attractive natural, historical and cultural sites. Great potential to use natural and cultural heritage as development driver. Outstanding mobile heritage.	Increase of polluted areas and bad status of water resources. Weak coordination and lack of systemic approach among territories. Need to enhance integration of promotion and valorisation activities at CBC level.
Opportunities	Threats
Increase of sustainable and naturalistic tourism demand that can also provide opportunities in cross-border cooperation and ecologic management. Take advantage from green technologies to foster both economic growth and environment management. Valorization of "mobile" heritage as important component of the cultural heritage.	Increase of pollution and of unsustainable use of natural resources. Degradation of conservation status of habitats and protected areas. Reduction of public investments for environment and cultural heritage protection and restoration.
TO 7	
Strengths	Weaknesses
Good level in transport infrastructures, in particular road infrastructures. Core Ports (Trieste, Venezia and Koper) in the Core Network of TEN-T Network and NAPA associates. Improvement of electrified railway network .	Insufficient development of cross-border connections, in particular for railway infrastructures and need to further support the development of polycentric cross-border regions. Bad accessibility of peripheral and remote and mountain areas and disparities in railway infrastructures and services.
Opportunities	Threats
Inclusion of priority projects involving the area in the Core Network of TEN-T for Corridor Adriatic-Baltic and Mediterranean in the period 2014-2020 in order to improve cooperation activities. Improvement in innovative services supply for maritime and public transports.	Risk of delay in TEN-T projects. Risk of marginalization of the area from freight movements.

### *Inclusive growth*

TO 8	
Strengths	Weaknesses
High level of competences and scholarship of human capital.	Low rate of productivity, even on female rate. Different level of unemployment rate in the Programme area.
Opportunities	Threats
Priority level assigned at EU level to Youth Employment (Youth Employment Initiative) active ageing and social inclusion policies.	Growth of the unemployment rate, particularly for low skilled workers. Progressive aging of the population.
TO 9	
Strengths	Weaknesses
Coherent dimension of migrations compared to demographic data.	Elderly heavily exposed to the risk of poverty.
Opportunities	Threats
Cross-border improvement of modernization for the social and health systems. Integration between urban and rural areas to reduce the isolation of some regions.	Negative trend of the indicator on population living in poverty risk or social exclusion. Progressive reduction of levels of health care.
TO 10	
Strengths	Weaknesses
High level of attendance in the educational system.	Weak link between high level education and labour market and increasing number of NEET.
Opportunities	Threats
Opportunities provided by the better link to productive system and by cross-border labour mobility. Better integration with life-long learning system.	Efficiency reduction in educational processes.
TO 11	
Strengths	Weaknesses
High level of participation to ETC Programs for both the two sides of the area.	Need for better innovation and efficiency in the Public Administration, in particular through the reduction of administrative burden on citizens and business sector and enhancement of cross-border projects in order to strength capacity building.
Opportunities	Threats
Conception and realization of common solutions and services in key areas like risk management and health. Increase in PA transparency and Open Data accessibility. Increased multilevel governance in the cross-border area. Improved cooperation among stakeholders on key issues like education and energy.	Difficulties of cooperation to take action due to an incoherent legislation (at national and regional level) and lack of improvement in PA competences.

### Challenges and needs

Following the results raised from the analysis of the situation of the Programme area and from the SWOT Analysis, several challenges and needs have been identified for their relevance in terms of Europe 2020 contribution and for their possibility to be effectively addressed by the cooperation strategy. These elements represent the basis for the selection of the Thematic Objectives and Investment Priorities and for the definition of the Programme Specific Objectives and types of actions realizing its thematic concentration.

Europe 2020 Strategy	CHALLENGES	NEEDS
<b>Smart growth</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Better exploit innovation and skills levels in the key and most competitive sectors</li> <li>- Technological transfer of research results to business sector and improve investments in applied research</li> <li>- Ability to act as a collective system for the development and spread of new technologies and for the creation and growth of businesses with high added value projected towards the global markets</li> <li>- Enhance the ability of SMEs to use the results research and innovation produced by large research and innovation poles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increase investments in R&amp;D within the common smart specialization priorities</li> <li>- Improve cooperation between research centers/academia, public administration and private sector according to <i>quadruplehelix approach</i></li> <li>- Push on integration between research centers</li> <li>- Capitalization of research outcomes and knowledge diffusion should be strengthened</li> <li>- To develop a cross border institutional platform in order to share know-how and best practices</li> </ul>
<b>Sustainable growth</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Discourage car users and improve accessibility, quality and innovation of public transport</li> <li>- Avoid marginalization of less accessible areas from main functional urban areas and services</li> <li>- Increase multimodality exploiting proximity among different transport system</li> <li>- Reduce road traffic and congestion, air pollution and energy consumption</li> <li>- Decrease CO2 emissions caused by transport</li> <li>- Revitalize ports as important nodes for passengers and freight mobility</li> <li>- Capitalize relevant experiences and initiatives in the field of energy and mobility planning</li> <li>- Utilisation of geothermal energy and energy from the sea</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Raise air quality level promoting integrated low carbon strategies</li> <li>- Improve integrated planning for transport systems between the two borders in line with TEN-T Comprehensive/Core network</li> <li>- Develop more sustainable mobility systems in urban and local areas, leading to livelihood, air quality and human health</li> <li>- Encourage the shift from road transport to rail and maritime transports also investing in multimodality and ITS</li> <li>- Better connections between coastal areas and hinterland</li> <li>- Improve networking and cooperation among the three core ports of the area (Trieste, Venice, Koper)</li> <li>- Explore the possibility of using alternative energy sources</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Explore the possibility of using alternative renewable energy sources</li> <li>- Reduce pressure and usage conflicts affecting environment and natural and cultural heritage</li> <li>- Exploit the endogenous natural and cultural potential as important impulse to green growth and green jobs</li> <li>- Avoid the risk of biodiversity fragmentation, reduction and loss</li> <li>- Fight against degradation and pollution of natural and cultural sites due to human behaviours and activities</li> <li>- Promote the natural and cultural sites of the area in a better integrated and coordinated manner</li> <li>- Provide new services and products through the development of green technologies in order to answer to market demand raising by the incoming needs</li> <li>- Stimulate economic activity within the concept of sustainable development</li> <li>- Reduce the threats posed by climate changes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Action Plan for Sustainable Energy in the cross-border area</li> <li>- Define cross-border solutions improving natural and cultural resources management, contrasting negative effects (pollution, natural risks, loss of biodiversity, etc.) and promoting their potential as development factor</li> <li>- Develop knowledge, accessibility and attractiveness and enhance the state of conservation of the natural and cultural heritage also favouring territorial and touristic marketing shared strategies</li> <li>- Improve the conservative status of the most damaged protected areas and ensure their protection through joint interventions</li> <li>- Stimulate eco-friendly behaviours of citizens and tourists</li> <li>- Share better knowledge on ecosystems and improve capacities in their management and protection</li> <li>- Foster the diffusion of ICT tools and innovative approaches and skills</li> <li>- Water, river basins and/or integrated coastal management</li> </ul>
<b>Inclusive growth</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Answer adequately to raising demand of citizens and enterprises for simplification and digitalization</li> <li>- Develop new models, tools networks increasing coordination and cooperation in order to equilibrate development disparities and unbalances and improve territorial cohesion of the area</li> <li>- Decrease percentage of the population at risk of poverty and social exclusion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide efficient and innovative public services, improving e-government and e-democracy</li> <li>- Encourage cross-border cooperation at different level (institutional, political and administrative) to converge decision makers' attention on common issues</li> <li>- Improve e-health and better quality of social services for most vulnerable categories</li> <li>- Promote new job opportunities for target groups particularly affected by economic crisis (elderly workers, youngs)</li> </ul>

#### 1.1.1.4 Cooperation Programme Strategy

All programmes under cohesion policy should contribute to the European Union strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and to the achievement of economic, social and territorial cohesion.

The full range of EU policies and instruments (including the European Regional Development Fund) should be used more effectively to reach these goals. For this reason the Cohesion Policy Legislative package has strengthened the strategic synergies between EU policies, mainly through:

- the adoption of the Common Strategic Framework (as annex to the Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013) containing the guiding principle for all ESI Funds;
- the identification of 11 Thematic Objectives directly linked to the priorities of Europe 2020 Strategy.

In each programme it should be selected the appropriate Thematic Objectives and investment priorities out of the full thematic set established in Art. 9 of the CPR (for Thematic Objectives) and in the Fund -specific rules (for investment priorities). For the Cooperation Programmes, the selection set of investment priorities is composed of those listed at the Art. 5 of the ERDF Regulation as integrated by Art. 6 of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013.

This selection and resulting allocation of funds must be consistent with thematic concentration requirements (Art. 4 of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013 in the case of ETC). By doing this programmes are clearly linked to the Europe 2020 strategy enabling the assessment of the contribution of the ESI Funds to objectives of this strategy agreed at the EU level.

In the Programme Strategy the following 4 Thematic Objectives and 6 Investment Priorities have been selected:

Europe 2020 Strategy	Thematic Objectives	Investment priorities ERDF (art. 5 Reg No. 1301/2013)
<b>Smart growth</b>	<i>(1) strengthening research, technological development and innovation</i>	(b) Promoting business investment in R&I, developing links and synergies between enterprises, research and development centres and the higher education sector, in particular promoting investment in product and service development, technology transfer, social innovation, eco-innovation, public service applications, demand stimulation, networking, clusters and open innovation through smart specialisation, and supporting technological and applied research, pilot lines, early product validation actions, advanced manufacturing capabilities and first production, in particular in key enabling technologies and diffusion of general purpose technologies.
<b>Sustainable growth</b>	<i>(4) supporting the shift towards a low-carbon economy in all sectors;</i>	(e) Promoting low-carbon strategies for all types of territories, in particular for urban areas, including the promotion of sustainable multimodal urban mobility and mitigation-relevant adaptation measures.
	<i>(6) protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency;</i>	(c) Conserving, protecting, promoting and developing natural and cultural heritage.
		(d) Protecting and restoring biodiversity and soil and promoting ecosystem services, including through Natura 2000, and green infrastructure.
		(f) Promoting innovative technologies to improve environmental protection and resource efficiency in the waste sector, water sector and with regard to soil, or to reduce air pollution.
Europe 2020 Strategy	Thematic Objectives	Investment priorities (art. 7 Reg No. 1299/2013)
<b>Inclusive growth</b>	<i>(11) enhancing institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders and efficient public administration</i>	(iv) Enhancing institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders and efficient public administration by promoting legal and administrative cooperation and cooperation between citizens and institutions.

The Programme strategic choices and the definition of its Intervention Logic have been done taking into account:

- context analysis of the cooperation area and the emerging territorial needs and challenges;
- consistency with EU, national and regional priorities;
- lessons learnt from the past programming period, taking into account also mid-term evaluation results;
- the results of the consultation process.

The overall Objective of the Programme is:

**“Promote innovation, sustainability and cross-border governance to create a more competitive, cohesive and livable area”**

The following 4 Priority Axes have been identified to answer to the existent needs and challenges.

Priority Axis 1: Promoting innovation capacities for a more competitive area	TO 1
	IP 1.b

The strategy of Priority Axis 1 aims to promote more effective investments in research, innovation and education and targets the strengthening of existing innovation potentials in all sectors - which attract foreign investment and capital flows -through a better cooperation among public and private actors of the R&D system. Actions defined within the Priority Axis 1 represent a concrete response to challenges and needs of the Programme area and will be implemented in a territorial context characterized by a strong potential of R&D and innovation and affected by the lack of successful connections between research Centres, business and institutional actors. As underlined in the SWOT Analysis, the Programme area reveals a strong R&D base and the presence of public and private actors committed in research and innovation activities. At the same time these actors still create weak linkages and short-term cooperation with the business sector, whose role is fundamental for the competitiveness and the growth of the productive system and for an innovation-friendly context. For this reason the Programme will develop and implement strategies and actions contributing to increase the competitiveness on international market creating common comparative advantages for SMEs operating in the eligible area. The Programme will realize a deep integration with the guidelines contained in smart specialization documents of the three territories involved, promoting and multiplying business opportunities provided by “regional specialization areas” especially in the overlapping fields - sustainable living and working environment, smart and integrated approach to natural resources and traditional productions (e.g. Smart Agrifood, cross border circular chains) and smart factories . In addition, through the selected operations, it will be possible to meet the need of competences and knowledge sharing, starting progressing and increasing innovation capacities of all engaged actors. Capitalizing projects and actions already implemented in this field, it will be possible improving local actors’ capacities and introducing innovative solutions and approaches. The Programme will realize a deep integration with the guidelines contained in smart specialization documents promoting and multiplying business opportunity provided by "regional specialization areas".



Priority Axis 2: Cooperating for implementation of low carbon strategies and action plans	TO 4
	IP 4.e

A lower carbon society is possible promoting emissions cutting in an integrated manner in all involved sectors and life attitudes. The Programme will face these challenges and needs developing and implementing place based low-carbon energy and mobility strategies contributing to reduce GHG emissions and to achieve EU energy targets.

By capitalizing projects and past experiences it will be possible to improve local actors' - especially public ones - capacities of implementing established solutions (e.g. energy efficiency of public buildings); moreover it will be possible to introduce innovative solutions for energy saving, resources efficiency, better exploitation of local sources for renewable energy production, smart grids, etc. To find new strategic models and approaches transforming weaknesses (energy dependency, pollution, greenhouse emissions, increasing energy costs, etc.) into new growth opportunities, investing in green jobs and green economy, green technologies and production methods. Transport is among the principal source of emissions. New solutions for urban smart mobility will be defined, fostering their sustainability, better quality, accessibility and innovation.

Priority Axis 3: Protecting and promoting natural and cultural resources	TO 6
	IP 6.c IP 6.d IP 6.f

Priority Axis 3 responds to the need for better protecting natural and cultural heritage and resources, also by promoting their sustainable use as a development asset of the area.

The valorization and promotion of natural and cultural sites as an attractive touristic destination will be pursued, also fostering the diffusion of ICT tools, new skills and competences, territorial marketing, branding and communication strategies, social media. Encouraging tourism as a development factor, great attention will be paid on its overall sustainability. This means, on the one hand, the diversification of the tourism supply focusing on naturalistic and ecologic activities, sport, history, local products, customs, food, traditions, unique identity etc. On the other hand, the diffusion of a responsible tourism, inspiring eco-friendly behaviours and reducing negative impacts of touristic flows on natural and cultural heritage. There is a huge potential of promotion of UNESCO sites.

Moreover, new jobs and growth may be created stimulating green technologies, capturing new demand for more sustainable products and services and at the same time improving environment quality with the help of innovative tools.

The link between natural assets, managed by the several parks, cultural heritage and tourism will be developed in a sustainable, environment friendly and resource efficient way.

The survival and enhancement of natural and cultural heritage is a value *per se* and therefore it is not necessarily related to its touristic exploitation. Projects in this Priority Axis will also aim at the conservation, protection, attractiveness and valorization of material and immaterial cultural heritage.

The Programme recognizes the importance to preserve biodiversity finding common approaches and sharing visions and tools for the protection of the habitats. Actions under this Priority Axis will be implemented in line with the common framework to safeguard natural assets and the most

relevant policy instruments to achieve the EU biodiversity objectives, also considering the relevant number of Natura 2000 sites in the Programme area.

Waste and water management represent a challenge and opportunity for the whole Programme area thus the development and testing of innovative environmental friendly technologies in these fields will be part of the programme activities.

Priority Axis 4: Enhancing capacity building and cross-border governance	TO 11
	IP 11 ETC

The Priority Axis 4 will enhance modernization and quality of public administrations and services benefitting from mutual experiences, shared knowledge and harmonized and coordinated practices among the population of the two borders. The two main focuses will be:

- a) on operations addressing the enhancement institutional and operational capacity building on some key issues (e.g. natural disasters, energy, pollutions, etc.);
- b) on operations addressing human potential and needs (e.g. education, employment, public health, health and social care, cultural diversity, etc.).

The Programme will also foster the cooperation between public and private sectors on some of the above mentioned key issues (e.g. vocational education, energy, health technologies, etc.). Public administrations should put together available resources, even immaterial ones (competences, knowledge, open-data, technical support, etc.), to gain critical mass and achieve common results and targets.

The priority also aims at bringing together citizens, public bodies, NGOs, minorities, companies and any other entities, in any combination needed for strengthening cooperation.

The intent is to define common frameworks, joint strategies, networking tools concerning the aspects that are particularly sensitive to a more cooperative and cohesive approach between two borders.

### **Cross-cutting issues**

Besides the thematic concentration on the selected Thematic Objectives, further **cross-cutting issues** have been identified and will be addressed in a transversal way through specific actions into the different Priority Axes:

**Information and Communication Technologies:** they represent a fundamental tool for the development of innovation, for knowledge sharing and for pursuing competitiveness in the different sectors included in the Programme strategy;

**SME:** considering the productive system of the cooperation area, SME are a special target whose performance and behaviour have a deep impact on the cooperation strategy. For this reason they should be carefully considered with specific actions devoted to them and to the business sector. In priority axes which foresee actions related to ICT, the SMEs, when appropriate, could have the possibility to use ICT innovation Vouchers, in line with the Commission's guidance on ICT Innovation Voucher Schemes;

**Education:** it is not possible producing a visible change without intervening on human capital skills and competencies. Some actions in this field are complementary and necessary for achieving the intended results.

**Social inclusion:** the Programme will apply the principles of equal opportunities and non-discrimination and thus will contribute to a more inclusive and cohesive development by means of stimulating activities addressing needs of disadvantaged groups in order to allow them to better integrate into the society.

**Employment:** unemployment - especially but not exclusively among young people - is a serious and common issue for the Programme area. An added value of projects will be therefore their aptitude to contribute to inclusive growth by promoting more and better jobs.



1.1.2 Justification for the choice of Thematic Objectives and corresponding investment priorities, having regard to the Common Strategic Framework, based on an analysis of the needs within the Programme area as a whole and the strategy chosen in response to such needs, addressing, where appropriate, missing links in cross-border infrastructure, taking into account the results of the ex-ante evaluation

Table 1 Justification for the selection of Thematic Objectives and Investment Priorities

<p><b>T01</b> <b>Strengthening research, technological development and innovation</b></p>	<p><b>1b</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Need to stimulate the adoption of innovation approaches and technologies by SMEs of the Programme area;</li> <li>- High potential for mobilising synergies between business and research and investments in product and process innovations;</li> <li>- Need to supports Europe 2020 objective of “Smart Growth” and to strengthen the regional impact of smart specialization strategies;</li> <li>- Need to improve competitiveness and internationalization of SMEs confronted to worldwide competition;</li> <li>- Need to improve cooperation between actors of the R&amp;D system and to support networking, clusters and open innovation;</li> <li>- There is an uneven distribution of R&amp;D activities across the Programme area;</li> <li>- Potentials of cross-border and regional clusters remain unused;</li> <li>- Forge R&amp;D specialisations in traditional areas such as agri-food sector, eco-construction, civil engineering and energy;</li> <li>- Need to promote innovation community clusters in academic and industrial research.</li> </ul>
<p><b>T04 Supporting the shift towards a low-carbon economy in all sectors</b></p>	<p><b>4e</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increasing trend in GHG emissions due to transport;</li> <li>- Need to promote local actors’ capacities in energy planning focusing on energy savings, emissions reduction and exploitation of local RES potential;</li> <li>- Sustainability of urban and local mobility and lower dependence from energy external markets;</li> <li>- Still inadequate cross-border connections for sustaining the potential traffic of passengers (particularly tourists) and freight;</li> <li>- Environment-friendly modes of transport generate positive effects on livelihood in urban areas, better air quality, safeguarding of human health;</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Difficult access to services and infrastructure for mountain and remote areas</li> <li>- Excessive share of goods transported by road and traffic congestion;</li> <li>- 40% of emissions are produced by in buildings;</li> <li>- Exploit the potential of the ports infrastructures, improving their networking, innovative services and coastal-hinterland connections;</li> <li>- Exploit the potential of the renewable energy sources.</li> </ul>
<b>TO6 Preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency</b>	<b>6.c</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- High value natural and cultural heritage sites;</li> <li>- Considerable resources to be protected or valorised;</li> <li>- Coordination of development plans and common orientation of cross-border offers in the field of tourism, leisure and culture still need to be improved;</li> <li>- Need to increase the sustainable use of natural and cultural resources, in order to preserve their integrity;</li> <li>- Increased pressure on natural and cultural heritage due to human activities and climate change;</li> <li>- Capitalize past experiences and improved competencies concerning environmental protection and cultural heritage valorisation;</li> <li>- Increase of private-public partnership for natural and cultural sites management;</li> <li>- New opportunities deriving from ICT adoption in the management of natural and cultural resources, even for touristic purpose;</li> <li>- Decrease of public investments in this sector.</li> </ul>
	<b>6.d</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Need to develop environmental protection measures and to maximize the results of the previous programming period; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support in Natura 2000 sites will be given to construction of green infrastructure with the objective of preserving and restoring ecosystems that provide key ecosystem services;</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Need to develop the integrated management of marine and river ecosystems and to protect biodiversity against pollution, soil consumption and natural risk;</li> <li>- High environmental resources in the CB area threatened by human activities;</li> <li>- Crucial role of the environment in the attractiveness and economic development of the entire area;</li> <li>- The area features parks, Natura 2000 sites, valuable landscapes and biodiversity</li> </ul>

		<p>providing quality of life and global attractiveness; these natural assets are suitable for a strong interaction among local actors affected by the issue and for mechanisms of cooperation and coordination.</p>
	6.f	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Need to increase the competitiveness of the area through the development of the green economy;</li> <li>- Increase cooperation between public and private administrations for the construction of models and the promotion of investments on innovative environmentally friendly technologies for waste and water management and building a shared system for monitoring natural resources and environmental risks;</li> <li>- Strengthen cooperation between the two countries to determine models for the efficient and innovative water and waste cycle management;</li> <li>- Ensure in level efficient management of water resources, increased water quality;</li> <li>- Increase hydrogeological security of the territories involved and reduce the flood risk;</li> <li>- Strengthen the competitiveness of companies operating in the field of natural resource management through innovation.</li> </ul>
<b>TO 11</b> <b>Enhancing institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders and efficient public administration</b>	<b>(CTE-CB)</b> <b>11b</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To strengthen cooperation between the different institutions involved in the Programme;</li> <li>- To foster the cooperation among stakeholders to tackle common key issues of Programme area (e.g. energy and education);</li> <li>- Improve the efficiency of public administrations involved through innovative operational models;</li> <li>- Addressing the impact of population aging on welfare, health, and institutional systems;</li> <li>- Increase capacity of public administration to meet the challenges of climate changes and energy needs;</li> <li>- Allow the public administration to be an active player for tackling social exclusion,</li> <li>- Enable a shared policy between the two countries for monitoring and managing the risk of emergencies;</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improvement of human potential by promoting the culture diversity and language of the neighbouring country;</li> <li>- Strengthening the quality of educational services strongly associated with the economic system to improve the human capital.</li> </ul>
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## 1.2. Justification for the financial allocation

The overall Programme budget is € **92.588.182,00**, with an ERDF contribution of € **77.929.954,00** (85%) and a national counterpart of € 14.658.227,00 as detailed in the Section 3.

The allocation of resources expresses the decisions that led to the definition of the Programme strategy. In particular, the financial allocation reflects the relevance assigned to the different strategic options on the basis of the following elements:

- the social and economic analysis, which defined the challenges and the needs for the Programme area;
- the estimated financial size of the projects foreseen in each Priority Axis based on the experience of the 2007-2013 period;
- the opinions expressed during the consultation rounds by stakeholders;
- the number and the consistency of the identified investment priorities and the financial absorption capacity of the foreseen actions.

The funds allocated to Priority Axes 1, 2, 3 and 4 (corresponding to the selected Thematic Objectives 1, 4, 6 and 11 ETC) amount to 94% of the Programme financial resources; the remaining 6% is allocated to Technical Assistance. The Programme respects therefore the thematic concentration requirements (Art. 6 of the Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013), assigning at least 80% of the Programme resources on up to 4 Thematic Objectives.

The largest amount of funding will support operations under Priority Axis 3 “**Protecting and promoting natural and cultural resources**” with 35% of the total ERDF allocation, while the remaining resources have been distributed among the others, as indicated:

- Priority Axis 1: Promoting innovation capacities for a more competitive area - 24% of the ERDF contribution;
- Priority Axis 2: Cooperating for implementation of low carbon strategies and action plans - 15% of the ERDF contribution;
- Priority Axis 3: Protecting and promoting natural and cultural resources - 35% of the ERDF contribution;
- Priority Axis 4: Enhancing capacity building and cross-border governance - 20% of the ERDF contribution;
- Priority Axis 5: Technical Assistance - 6% of the ERDF contribution.

The choice to allocate 24% of ERDF support, amounting to € 18.671.150,00 , to the activities under the **Priority Axis 1** (Investment Priority 1b) answers to the need of providing an adequate investment to revitalize the local economy, to increase access to research results for SMEs and to contribute to both the economic as well as the social innovation transfer. The processes of internationalization, clustering and construction of long chains passes through qualification and innovation in product, process and context. Just the elements of innovation are enabling factors for the inclusion of the local economic system in the context of international competition. For this reason, it is believed that, in order to strengthen the cooperation among the key actors and to promote the knowledge transfer and innovative activities, it is necessary to allocate about a quarter of the resources available.

As underlined in the situation analysis, the issue of climate change is one of the most significant challenges to be faced. It is a challenge that requires an integrated approach between the different territories of the cross-border area, asking for an increased support in the reduction of the ecological footprint produced by human activity inside the area. It runs through the whole Programme transversally, as specified in the Section 8 of this Programme, but it is directly tackled by the Priority Axes 2 and 3.

With regard to the **Priority Axis 2**, which is related to Investment Priority 4e, it is believed that the promotion of low carbon strategies and the will to actively contribute to the achievement of the goals set by the European Union by 2020 and by 2050 for the reduction of polluting emissions,

the allocation of 15% of the total financial allocation of the Programme, which amounts to € **11.662.447,00**, is appropriate. Under this Priority Axis, the indicative amount of support to be used for climate change objectives is 4.675.797,20 €, corresponding to the 6% of the total available resources.

The **Priority Axis 3**, with the allocation of 35% of the available resources, amounting to € **27.690.158,00**, is the Priority Axis receiving the highest investment by the Programme. The strategy for the protection and promotion of natural and cultural resources is divided into multiple specific objectives such as “conserving, protecting, restoring, and developing natural and cultural heritage”, “enhance the integrated management of ecosystems for a sustainable development of the territory”, and, finally, “development and testing of innovative environmental friendly technologies for the improvement of waste and water management”. This articulation of objectives (corresponding to the Thematic Objective 6, Investment Priorities 6c, 6d and 6f) motivates a more significant investment in order to avoid dispersion of investments and resources. The challenges identified need to be addressed first by the public administration. In a very difficult phase faced by all relevant social actors (enterprises, financial services, workers and their representatives, citizens) mainly caused by the economic crisis, public administration can play the role of facilitator and enabler of processes involving the complex economic and social context of the two borders. The leading role of the public sector can be assumed more effectively in a logic of exchange and dialogue between the institutional bodies of two different countries. Both the processes of smart and inclusive development, as well as support for environmental sustainability can benefit from an added value produced by the combined and consistent efforts of government and of public Authorities. For this reason, it is believed to invest, as part of the Programme, € **15.230.402,00** equal to 20% of the total financial allocation for the Priority Axis 4. The Priority Axis will meet the specific aim to strengthen the institutional capacity through cooperation mobilizing public authorities and key actors of the Programme area planning joint solutions for common challenges, consistent with the provisions of Thematic Objective 11.

In order to ensure the full effectiveness and efficiency in the management of the Programme and to maximize the impact in the local context, it is expected to allocate 6% of the total ERDF budget to Technical Assistance, equal to € **4.675.797,00**.

Table 2: Overview of the investment strategy of the cooperation programme

Priority Axis	ERDF support (€)	Proportion (%) of the total Union support for the Cooperation Programme (by Fund)			Thematic Objective	Investment priority	Specific Objective corresponding to the investment priorities	Result indicators corresponding to the Specific Objective
		ERDF	ENI (where applicable)	IPA (where applicable)				
1	18.671.150,00	24%	0%	0%	TO1	1b	1.1 Strengthen the cooperation among key actors to promote the knowledge transfer and innovative activities in key sectors of the area	Level of cross-border cooperation among key actors of the Programme area
2	11.662.447,00	15%	0%	0%	TO4	4e	2.1 Promotion of implementation of strategies and action plans to promote energy efficiency and to improve territorial capacities for joint low-carbon mobility planning	Level of capacities of municipalities in decreasing energy use
3	27.690.158,00	35%	0%	0%	TO6	6c	3.1 Conserving, protecting, restoring, and developing natural and cultural heritage	Level of Cross-border cooperation in sustainable valorization of cultural and natural heritage
						6d	3.2 Enhance the integrated management of ecosystems for a sustainable development of the territory	Level of preservation of status of species Level of preservation of status of habitats
						6f	3.3 Development and the testing of innovative environmental friendly technologies for the improvement of waste and water management	Level of cross border application of green technologies or processes.

Priority Axis	ERDF support (€)	Proportion (%) of the total Union support for the Cooperation Programme (by Fund)			Thematic Objective	Investment priority	Specific Objective corresponding to the investment priorities	Result indicators corresponding to the Specific Objective
		ERDF	ENI (where applicable)	IPA (where applicable)				
4	15.230.402,00	20%	0%	0%	TO11	11ETC	<b>4.1</b> Strengthen the institutional cooperation capacity through mobilizing public authorities and key actors of the Programme area for planning joint solutions to common challenges	<b>Capacity of public authorities and stakeholders in cross-border cooperation and governance</b>
5	4.675.797,00	6%	0%	0%	N/A	N/A	<b>5.1</b> To ensure the efficient management and implementation of the Programme	



## SECTION 2. PRIORITY AXES

(Reference: points (b) and (c) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

### Section 2.A. Description of the Priority Axes other than technical assistance

(Reference: point (b) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

#### 2.A.1. Priority Axis 1

<b>ID</b>	<b>Priority Axis1</b>
<b>Title</b>	<b>Promoting innovation capacities for a more competitive area</b>

<input type="checkbox"/> The entire Priority Axis will be implemented solely through financial instruments
<input type="checkbox"/> The entire Priority Axis will be implemented solely through financial instruments set up at Union level
<input type="checkbox"/> The entire Priority Axis will be implemented through community-led local development

#### 2.A.2. Justification for the establishment of a Priority Axis covering more than one Thematic Objective

(Reference: Article 8(1) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Not applicable

#### 2.A.3. Fund and calculation basis for Union support

<b>Fund:</b>	<b>ERDF</b>
Calculation basis (total eligible expenditure or eligible public expenditure)	€ 18.671.150,00 Total eligible expenditure

#### 2.A.4. Investment Priority 1.b

(Reference: point (b)(i) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Investment Priority	1.b) Promoting business investment in R&I, developing links and synergies between enterprises, research and development centres and the higher education sector, in particular promoting investment in product and service development, technology transfer, social innovation, eco-innovation, public service applications, demand stimulation, networking, clusters and open innovation through smart specialisation, and supporting technological and applied research, pilot lines, early product validation actions, advanced manufacturing capabilities and first production, in particular in key enabling technologies and diffusion of general purpose technologies.
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#### 2.A.5. Specific Objective 1.1 corresponding to the Investment priority and expected results

(Reference: points (b)(i) and (ii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

ID	1.1
Specific Objective	<i>Strengthen the cooperation among key actors to promote the knowledge transfer and innovative activities in key sectors of the area.</i>
Results that the Member States seek to achieve with Union support	<p>Since innovation and technology development are the result of a complex set of relationships among actors in the innovation system, stronger links within the territory as well as a critical mass of innovative actors are required for improving the general innovation capacity of the area.</p> <p>For this reason, the Specific Objective 1.1 intends to accelerate result oriented cooperation among actors of the innovation system - especially among private and public R&amp;I actors, to improve the framework conditions for stakeholders, to increase access to research results for SMEs and to contribute to both the economic as well as the social innovation transfer.</p> <p>The promotion of business investment in R&amp;I and the development of synergies between enterprises, research centres and the higher education sector play a key role in order to achieve most of the Europe 2020 targets. Research and Innovation are key factors for the competitiveness of a territory and are considered crucial elements to improve the ability of local SMEs to face the challenges posed by global competition. In the CBC programming, strong focus is given to the field of research and innovation as well as promotion of development of joint smart specialisation approaches and partnerships among different actors. Moreover the added value of the CBC cooperation is to give emphasis to best practices exchange concerning both technological transfer and innovation methodologies (open innovation, living lab, pre-commercial public procurement, etc.).</p> <p>All these challenges are even intensified by the impact of the persistent financial and economic crisis which requires structural</p>

ID	1.1
Specific Objective	<i>Strengthen the cooperation among key actors to promote the knowledge transfer and innovative activities in key sectors of the area.</i>
	<p>and significant changes. The economic crisis has, in fact, reinforced the need to develop new organization processes and knowledge based competitiveness, encouraging clusters among innovation players and the creation of innovative business models across the complete value chains related to concrete products and/or services development. In particular, the diffusion of entrepreneurial networks and culture funded on creativity, open innovation, flexibility, knowledge, is envisaged as an important development driver.</p> <p>For the Specific Objective 1.1, the main change sought is to improve the innovation system of the eligible area and strengthen the innovation profile of clusters and networks, in particular in their cross-border dimension, in the field of smart and green growth. A specific attention will be paid to the promotion of eco-innovation services aiming to promote sustainable development models and to develop effective European standards. The main sectors to be supported shall include priority areas defined by the regional smart specialization strategies (traditional sectors and KETs).</p> <p>All projects shall ensure coherence and synergy with ERDF regional and national programmes and/or other relevant regional/local financial instruments.</p> <p><b>Expected result</b>  <i>Increased cooperation among key actors of the innovation system, reinforced CB innovation clusters and durable networks in the key sectors of the eligible area, reflected on a tangible results level (jointly developed products and/or services).</i></p>

Table 3: Programme-specific result indicators (by Specific Objective)

(Reference: point (b)(ii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

ID	Indicator	Measurement Unit	Baseline Value	Baseline Year	Target Value (2023)	Source of Data	Frequency of reporting
1.1	Level of cross-border cooperation among key actors of the Programme area	Gross value added at basic prices in millions of Euro	6.519,11	2011	7.758,86	Eurostat	2018-2020-2023

## 2.A.6. Actions to be supported under the Investment Priority (by Investment Priority)

### 2.A.6.1 A description of the type and examples of actions to be supported and their expected contribution to the Specific Objectives, including, where appropriate, identification of the main target groups, specific territories targeted and types of beneficiaries

(Reference: point (b)(iii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Investment Priority	1.b
<p>According to the Specific Objective 1.1 within Investment Priority 1(b), the following types and examples of actions will be supported.</p> <p><u>Types of Actions</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Awareness raising, knowledge transfer and capitalization activities, development of tools and services (analytical tools, strategies, management tools, capacity building etc.) in relation to jointly developed innovative products and/or services;</li> <li>2. implementation of innovative activities and investments in key sectors of the Programme area, taking into account KET, FET and overlapping regional smart specialization strategies.</li> </ol> <p><u>Example of actions</u></p> <p><b><u>Following examples of actions are not an exhaustive list</u></b> and may be integrated with others aiming at contributing to the achievement of selected objectives and results.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge transfer, cooperation and sharing between Research Centres, Universities and higher education institutions, incubators, clusters and SMEs, aimed at fostering the awareness of business opportunities in the Programme area and improving marketing and innovation management skills;</li> <li>• Enhancing cooperation among enterprises and R&amp;D private and public bodies for the development of joint services and innovative practices to support the starting up, the strengthening and better exploitation of innovative and creative new businesses and commercialization of joint products/services, also in the traditional areas;</li> <li>• Support the creation and development of technology platforms related to smart specialization strategies and European platforms within the priority areas;</li> <li>• Promoting innovative environmental technologies and common resource efficiency standards especially in field of renewable energy sources in order to improve environmental protection and resource efficiency in line with smart specialization strategies;</li> <li>• Supporting RDI also into renewable energy technologies;</li> <li>• Promoting joint applied research and pilot projects for supporting environmentally sustainable growth and the social innovation to the Programme area in the sectors in line with the regional smart specialization strategies;</li> <li>• Promoting organizational innovation in SMEs;</li> <li>• Facilitating the diffusion and the transfer of R&amp;D results from research institutions to the business sector for the development of innovative processes, services and products;</li> <li>• Joint cross-border university study programmes, exchange initiatives for students, researches and professors for enhance knowledge transfer.</li> </ul> <p><u>Target groups</u></p>	

Investment Priority	1.b
<p>Beside those defined as beneficiaries, the main target groups are public and private organizations dealing with social and economic innovation. Target groups include enterprises (specially SMEs), their employees, researchers, students, start-ups/spin-offs. Additionally all individuals and/or population groups which are affected by the issue.</p> <p><u>Beneficiaries</u></p> <p>The following list contains mere examples of possible beneficiaries and is therefore not exhaustive since other actors whose activities are coherent with the objective at stake can be selected:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Universities, Research and Development Institutions;</li> <li>- National, regional and local authorities;</li> <li>- Public and private bodies dealing with sustainable growth and social innovation;</li> <li>- Business support organization (e.g. Chambers of Commerce, Regional Development agencies, BICs);</li> <li>- Clusters, intermediaries (agencies, innovation networks, incubators, etc.);</li> <li>- EGTC;</li> <li>- Companies, intermediaries (e.g. innovation agencies, innovation networks, technology and innovation parks), RTOs, polytechnics;</li> <li>- Private and public institutions;</li> <li>- Enterprises, including SMEs;</li> <li>- Non-profit actors.</li> </ul>	

#### 2.A.6.2. Guiding principles for the selection of operations

(Reference: point (b)(iii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Investment Priority	1.b
<p>General guiding principles for the selection of operations common to every priority investments are described on Section 5.</p> <p>Both strategic and standard projects are feasible under this IP according to the financial allocation described in section 5.3.g.</p> <p>Specific selection principles for projects under this Investment Priority may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• proved aptitude to develop outcomes and results deriving from capitalization of successful experiences in 2007-2013 period;</li> <li>• aptitude to create new lasting collaboration networks as well as strengthen and widen exiting ones;</li> <li>• focus on practical applications and on readiness of implementation of transferred knowledge;</li> <li>• synergy with Smart Specialization Strategies;</li> <li>• probable trickle-down effects on the whole Programme-area;</li> <li>• priority shall be granted to projects dealing with topics belonging to overlapping S3.</li> </ul>	

#### 2.A.6.3. Planned use of financial instruments

(where appropriate)

Reference: point (b)(iii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Investment Priority	1.b
The opportunity of the elaboration and implementation of financial instruments will be debated during the implementation of the Cooperation programme.	

#### ***2.A.6.4 Planned use of major projects***

(where appropriate)

(Reference: point (b)(iii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Not applicable

#### ***2.A.6.5. Output indicators (by Investment Priority)***

(Reference: point (b)(iv) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)



Table 4: Common and programme-specific output indicators

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Target value (2023)	Source of data	Frequency of reporting
CO26	Number of enterprises cooperating with research institutions (Common Indicator)	Enterprises	38	Programme monitoring	Annually
CO42	Number of research institutions participating in cross-border, transnational or interregional research projects (Common Indicator)	Organizations	27	Programme monitoring	Annually
1.1.1	Number of innovative services, products and tools transferred to enterprises	Number	10	Programme monitoring	Annually

### 2.A.7. Performance framework

(Reference: point (b)(v) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013 and Annex II of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)

Table 5: Performance framework of the Priority Axis

Priority Axis	Indicator type	ID	Indicator or key implementation step	Measurement unit, where appropriate	Milestone for 2018	Final target (2023)	Source of data	Explanation of relevance of indicator, where appropriate
Priority Axis 1	Output	C042	Number of research institutions participating in cross border, transnational or interregional research projects	Organizations	5	27	Programme monitoring	NA
	Financial	F1	Payment certified and declared to the EC (Priority axis 1)	EUR	€ 2.594.680,41	€ 22.003.752	Programme monitoring	NA

Additional qualitative information on the establishment of the performance framework.

#### 2.A.8. Categories of intervention

(Reference: point (b)(vii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Categories of intervention corresponding to the content of the Priority Axis, based on a nomenclature adopted by the Commission, and indicative breakdown of Union support.

Tables 6-9: Categories of intervention

Table 6: Dimension 1 Intervention field		
Priority Axis	Code	Amount (€)
1	056 Investment in infrastructure, capacities and equipment in SMEs directly linked to research and innovation activities	903.120,45
1	057 Investment in infrastructure, capacities and equipment in large companies directly linked to research and innovation activities	935.159,45
1	060 Research and innovation activities in public research centres and centres of competence including networking	935.159,45
1	061 Research and innovation activities in private research centres including networking	935.159,45
1	062 Technology transfer and university-enterprise cooperation primarily benefiting SMEs	1.309.223,23
1	063 Cluster support and business networks primarily benefiting	935.159,45
1	064 Research and innovation processes in SMEs (including voucher schemes, process, design, service and social innovation)	2.805.478,35
1	065 Research and innovation infrastructure, processes, technology transfer and cooperation in enterprises focusing on the low carbon economy and on resilience to climate change	374.063,78
1	066 Advanced support services for SMEs and groups of SMEs (including management, marketing and design services)	935.159,45
1	067 SME business development, support to entrepreneurship and incubation (including support to spin offs and spin outs)	935.159,45
1	080 e-Inclusion, e-Accessibility, e-Learning and e-Education services and applications, digital literacy	1.870.318,90
1	081 ICT solutions addressing the healthy active ageing challenge and e-Health services and applications (including e-Care and ambient assisted living)	2.805.478,35
1	082 ICT Services and applications for SMEs (including e-Commerce, e-Business and networked business processes), living labs, web entrepreneurs and ICT start-ups)	1.870.318,90
1	104 Self-employment, entrepreneurship and business creation including innovative micro, small and medium sized enterprises	1.122.191,34

Table 7: Dimension 2 Form of finance		
Priority Axis	Code	Amount (€)
1	01 Non-repayable grant	18.671.150,00

Table 8: Dimension 3 Territory type		
Priority Axis	Code	Amount (€)
1	07 Not applicable	18.671.150,00

Table 9: Dimension 6 Territorial delivery mechanisms		
Priority Axis	Code	Amount (€)
1	07 Not applicable	18.671.150,00

2.A.9. A summary of the planned use of technical assistance including, where necessary, actions to reinforce the administrative capacity of authorities involved in the management and control of the programmes and beneficiaries and, where necessary, actions for to enhance the administrative capacity of relevant partners to participate in the implementation of programmes (where appropriate)

(Reference: point (b)(vi) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

<b>Priority Axis</b>	1
Not applicable	

### 2.A.1. Priority Axis 2

<b>ID</b>	<b>Priority Axis 2</b>
<b>Title</b>	<b><i>Cooperating for implementation of low carbon strategies and action plans</i></b>

<input type="checkbox"/> The entire Priority Axis will be implemented solely through financial instruments
<input type="checkbox"/> The entire Priority Axis will be implemented solely through financial instruments set up at Union level
<input type="checkbox"/> The entire Priority Axis will be implemented through community-led local development

### 2.A.2. Justification for the establishment of a Priority Axis covering more than one Thematic Objective (where applicable)

(Reference: Article 8(1) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Not applicable

### 2.A.3. Fund and calculation basis for Union support

<b>Fund:</b>	<b>ERDF</b>
Calculation basis (total eligible expenditure or eligible public expenditure)	€ 11.662.447,00 Total eligible expenditure

### 2.A.4. Investment Priority 4.e

(Reference: point (b)(i) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

<b>Investment Priority</b>	4.e) Promoting low-carbon strategies for all types of territories, in particular for urban areas, including the promotion of sustainable multimodal urban mobility and mitigation-relevant adaptation measures.
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**2.A.5. Specific Objective 2.1 corresponding to the Investment Priority and expected results**  
(Reference: points (b)(i) and (ii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

ID	2.1
Specific Objective	<b><i>Promotion of implementation of strategies and action plans to promote energy efficiency and to improve territorial capacities for joint low-carbon mobility planning.</i></b>
Results that the Member States seek to achieve with Union support	<p>The increase of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and the use of transports with a high environmental impact contribute to the worsening of air quality especially in urban areas and produce heavy consequences on climate change.</p> <p>The challenge, therefore, is to successfully reduce emissions from transport vehicles and to support energy savings and establish the conditions for higher utilization of energy produced from renewable energy sources in order to achieve the goals set by the European Union by 2020 and (with the Energy Roadmap 2050) by 2050.</p> <p>To face these issues it is necessary to increase the local actors' efforts for the development and implementation of low carbon strategies and action plans. Low carbon strategies should contain policies and measures to protect the climate system against human-induced change, including objectives aiming at GHG emissions reduction or resilience or climate change adaptation and mitigation measures. These strategies, owned by local and regional government bodies, should become new reference models for territorial development planning. The intent is also to capitalize what have been already done at local level through the Covenant of Mayors EU Initiative - that supports local and regional authorities in achieving the European 2020 climate and energy policy objectives - and with the implementation of Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMP) in the Programme area cities.</p> <p>On the one hand, there is the need to improve place-based energy planning for optimizing resource consumption, exploiting local renewable energy potentials, mobilizing private investments, developing energy neutral communities.</p> <p>CBC will be promoted to enhance exchanging knowledge and experiences concerning the planning, financing and implementing of concrete actions to deliver sustainable energy measures and reduce their CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.</p> <p>On the other hand, the existent model of mobility is strongly unbalanced towards the road transport and the progressive increase of private mobility to the detriment of the use of public transport provokes road traffic congestion.</p> <p>The diffusion of sustainable public transport systems could significantly contribute to reducing the negative impacts of transport on the environment, improving the quality of life, health, road safety, accessibility of internal areas and touristic attractiveness by intense greening.</p> <p>It is necessary to adopt new integrated, sustainable and accessible urban mobility concepts by fostering environment-friendly modes of transport, developing multimodality and smart services both for passengers and for freight transport, facilitating use of public transport, cycling and walking.</p>

ID	2.1
Specific Objective	<i>Promotion of implementation of strategies and action plans to promote energy efficiency and to improve territorial capacities for joint low-carbon mobility planning.</i>
	<p>The Programme will thus help increasing planning capacities of the public sector and involved actors for low-carbon energy and mobility planning. This will allow the development and implementation of integrated approaches, coordinated management structures and the deployment of innovative technologies.</p> <p><b>Expected result</b>  <i>Adoption and implementation of low carbon strategies encouraging energy savings and fostering the use of alternative transportation systems and the use of alternative energy sources.</i></p>



Table 3: Programme-specific result indicators (by Specific Objective)

(Reference: point (b)(ii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

ID	Indicator	Measurement Unit	Baseline Value	Baseline Year	Target Value (2023)	Source of Data	Frequency of reporting
2.1	Level of capacities of municipalities in decreasing energy use	Municipalities in SEAP	43	2014	47	SEAP	2018-2020-2023

## 2.A.6. Actions to be supported under the Investment Priority (by Investment Priority)

### 2.A.6.1 A description of the type and examples of actions to be supported and their expected contribution to the specific objectives, including, where appropriate, identification of the main target groups, specific territories targeted and types of beneficiaries

Reference: point (b)(iii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013

Investment Priority	4.e
<p>According to the Specific Objective 2.1 within Investment Priority 4(e), the following types and examples of actions will be supported.</p> <p><u>Types of Actions</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Fostering the reduction of energy consumption also by promoting the implementation of energy saving strategies and action plans;</li> <li>2. Decreasing emissions level, also by piloting the use of alternative transportation systems and the general use of alternative energy sources (only renewable ones).</li> </ol> <p><u>Example of actions</u></p> <p><b><u>Following examples of actions are not an exhaustive list and</u></b> may be integrated with others aiming at contributing to the achievement of selected objectives and results.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of joint place-based low-carbon strategies and Pilot Projects to reduce CO2 emissions and optimize resource consumption (public lighting, heat pumps and panels, smart grids, etc.);</li> <li>• Promote cross-border networks of energy neutral communities to share new solutions and alternative approaches by adopting common stricter energy performance standards and through pilot investments;</li> <li>• Development of solutions in order to increase the environmentally friendly accessibility of tourist destinations (e.g.: introduction of multimodality between airports, cycling paths, fisherman ports and marinas etc.);</li> <li>• Development of joint solutions for urban intelligent mobility services and promotion of integrated low carbon solutions to improve linkages between rural and urban settlements (park-ride systems, cycling/walking paths, smart ticketing, passenger rail services on existing infrastructure, experimental maritime services, etc.);</li> <li>• Analysis of potential utilizable renewable energy sources, e.g. geothermal energy and sea energy for heating / cooling and explore options for geothermal electrical switchboard;</li> <li>• Investments in energy efficiency in transport and other fields of intervention and investments aimed at the reduction of greenhouse gas using alternative energy sources (only renewable ones);</li> <li>• Exchanges of best practices in the field of resource efficiency.</li> </ul> <p><u>Target groups</u></p> <p>Beside those defined as beneficiaries, target groups are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- End users of public transport;</li> <li>- Tourists;</li> <li>- Citizens involved in low-carbon mobility or energy saving actions;</li> <li>- People with reduced mobility;</li> <li>- People living in less accessible/rural areas;</li> </ul>	

Investment Priority	4.e
<p>- SMEs.</p> <p><u>Beneficiaries</u></p> <p>The following list contains mere examples of possible beneficiaries and is therefore not exhaustive since other actors whose activities are coherent with the objective at stake can be selected:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- National, regional and local authorities;</li> <li>- Energy operators, Energy management institutions, ESCO;</li> <li>- Public transport operators;</li> <li>- Mobility agencies and institutions;</li> <li>- Public and private bodies dealing with energy and climate change, environment, natural resources;</li> <li>- Regional and Local Development Agencies;</li> <li>- Associations and Institutions specialized in people awareness and communication;</li> <li>- Non-Profit-Organizations and other professional and civil society associations dealing with energy, climate change, environmental, natural resources;</li> <li>- Chambers of Commerce, business collective organizations and associations, private enterprises and clusters;</li> <li>- Enterprises, SME;</li> <li>- Universities, Scientific and Technology Parks, Innovation Incubators and Institutions specialized in research, education, training and capacity building.</li> </ul>	

#### 2.A.6.2. Guiding principles for the selection of operations

(Reference: point (b)(iii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Investment Priority	4.e
<p>General guiding principles for the selection of operations common to every priority investments are described on Section 5.</p> <p>Both strategic and standard projects are feasible under this IP according to the financial allocation described in section 5.3.g.</p> <p>Specific selection principles for projects under this Investment Priority should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• contribute to at least one of three types of changes: substitutions of unsustainable with sustainable flows, more efficient use of materials and energy and development of circular chains.</li> </ul>	

#### 2.A.6.3. Planned use of financial instruments

(where appropriate)

(Reference: point (b)(iii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Investment Priority	4.e
<p>The opportunity of the elaboration and implementation of financial instruments will be discussed during the implementation of the Cooperation Programme.</p>	

#### 2.A.6.4 Planned use of major projects

(where appropriate)

(Reference: point (b)(iii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Not applicable

#### ***2.A.6.5. Output indicators (by Investment Priority)***

(Reference: point (b)(iv) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Table 4: Common and programme-specific output indicators

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Target value (2023)	Source of data	Frequency of reporting
2.1.1	Number of implemented actions towards the decrease of annual primary energy consumption in existing public buildings	Number	25	Programme monitoring	Annually
2.1.2	Pilot implementation of innovative services for smart low carbon mobility	Number	5	Programme monitoring	Annually

## 2.A.7. Performance framework

(Reference: point (b)(v) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013 and Annex II of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)

Table 5: Performance framework of the Priority Axis

Priority Axis	Indicator type	ID	Indicator or key implementation step	Measurement unit, where appropriate	Milestone for 2018	Final target (2023)	Source of data	Explanation of relevance of indicator, where appropriate
Priority Axis 2	Output	2.1.1	Number of implemented actions towards the decrease of annual primary energy consumption in existing public buildings	Number	4	25	Programme monitoring	NA
	Financial	F2		EUR	€ 1.356.969,35	€ 13.752.345,00	Programme monitoring	NA

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Additional qualitative information on the establishment of the performance framework.

## 2.A.8. Categories of intervention

(Reference: point (b)(vii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Categories of intervention corresponding to the content of the Priority Axis, based on a nomenclature adopted by the Commission, and indicative breakdown of Union Support

Tables 6-9: Categories of intervention

Table 6: Dimension 1 Intervention field		
Priority Axis	Code	Amount (€)
2	009 Renewable energy: wind	1.166.903,30
2	010 Renewable energy: solar	1.193.949,30
2	011 Renewable energy: biomass	1.193.949,30
2	012 Other renewable energy (including hydroelectric, geothermal and marine energy) and renewable energy integration (including storage, power to gas and renewable hydrogen infrastructure)	1.544.634,09
2	013 Energy efficiency renovation of public infrastructure, demonstration projects and supporting measures	1.193.949,30
2	014 Energy efficiency renovation of existing housing stock, demonstration projects and supporting measures	1.193.949,30
2	015 Intelligent Energy Distribution Systems at medium and low voltage levels (including smart grids and ICT systems)	1.193.949,30
2	043 Clean urban transport infrastructure and promotion (including equipment and rolling stock)	1.068.949,30
2	044 Intelligent transport systems (including the introduction of demand management, tolling systems, IT monitoring, control and information systems)	1.653.423,95
2	090 Cycle tracks and footpaths	258.789,86

Table 7: Dimension 2 Form of finance		
Priority Axis	Code	Amount (€)
2	01 Non-repayable grant	11.662.447,00

Table 8: Dimension 3 Territory type		
Priority Axis	Code	Amount (€)
2	07 Not applicable	11.662.447,00

Table 9: Dimension 6 Territorial delivery mechanisms		
Priority Axis	Code	Amount (€)
2	07 Not applicable	11.662.447,00

2.A.9. A summary of the planned use of technical assistance including, where necessary, actions to reinforce the administrative capacity of authorities involved in the management and control of the programmes and beneficiaries and, where necessary, actions for to enhance the administrative capacity of relevant partners to participate in the implementation of programmes (where appropriate)

(Reference: point (b)(vi) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

<b>Priority Axis</b>	<b>2</b>
Not applicable	

### 2.A.1. Priority Axis 3

<b>ID</b>	<b>Priority Axis 3</b>
<b>Title</b>	<b>Protecting and promoting natural and cultural resources</b>

<input type="checkbox"/> The entire Priority Axis will be implemented solely through financial instruments
<input type="checkbox"/> The entire Priority Axis will be implemented solely through financial instruments set up at Union level
<input type="checkbox"/> The entire Priority Axis will be implemented through community-led local development

### 2.A.2. Justification for the establishment of a Priority Axis covering more than one Thematic Objective (where applicable)

(Reference: Article 8(1) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Not applicable

### 2.A.3. Fund and calculation basis for Union support

<b>Fund:</b>	<b>ERDF</b>
Calculation basis (total eligible expenditure or eligible public expenditure)	€ 27.690.158,00 Total eligible expenditure

### 2.A.4. Investment Priority 6.c

(Reference: point (b)(i) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Investment Priority	6.c) Conserving, protecting, promoting and developing natural and cultural heritage.
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**2.A.5. Specific Objective 3.1 corresponding to the Investment Priority and expected results**  
(Reference: points (b)(i) and (ii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

<b>ID</b>	<b>3.1</b>
<b>Specific Objective</b>	<b><i>Conserving, protecting, restoring, and developing natural and cultural heritage</i></b>
<b>Results that the Member States seek to achieve with Union support</b>	<p>Interreg V-A Italy-Slovenia Programme area boasts of a huge cultural heritage and a wide diffusion of protected areas and naturalistic sites. These assets represent an important factor for the attractiveness of the territory and at the same time should be considered as significant development drivers.</p> <p>The main change sought consists of a greater diversification and valorization of the numerous cultural and natural sites built on a more sustainable concept. The envisaged result is to merge, through sustainable tourism, environmental protection and green growth.</p> <p>This specific objective invests both the need to preserve the integrity of natural and cultural resources whose surviving is continuously threatened by economic and social activities (in particular tourism) and to promote their sustainable use to increase economic development, job opportunities and wellbeing of living population.</p> <p>For Italy-Slovenia cooperation area this kind of cooperation is very important. Let's think in fact to the management of water resources and to maritime and coastal areas, where a common approach and a shared strategy are fundamental for the achieving of each other's objectives.</p> <p>With regard to the valorization policies a systemic approach at a cross-border level is more effective, involving all the private and public subjects in the adoption of action strategies for cultural and landscape identity of the area.</p> <p>The Programme aims at contributing to capitalization of past experiences during precedent programming period, increasing best practices exchange on this issue. Further efforts could be done for a more comprehensive approach and better coordination and interaction among involved stakeholders.</p> <p>It will also stimulate innovative initiatives (ICT, mobile cultural heritage, creative industries, smart tools, services for target group carrying special needs, etc.) that are able to generate added value in the sustainable management of natural and cultural resources of the entire territory.</p> <p><b>Expected result</b> <i>Valorization and promotion of natural and cultural assets of the cooperation area in order to attract sustainable tourism demand.</i></p>

Table 3: Programme-specific result indicators (by Specific Objective)

(Reference: point (b)(ii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

ID	Indicator	Measurement Unit	Baseline Value	Baseline Year	Target Value (2023)	Source of Data	Frequency of reporting
3.1	Level of Cross-border cooperation in the sustainable valorization of cultural and natural heritage	Number of visitors	4.012.237	2014	5.793.754	National/Regional statistic	2018-2020-2023

## 2.A.6. Actions to be supported under the Investment Priority (by Investment Priority)

### 2.A.6.1 A description of the type and examples of actions to be supported and their expected contribution to the specific objectives, including, where appropriate, identification of the main target groups, specific territories targeted and types of beneficiaries

(Reference: point (b)(iii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Investment Priority	6.c
<p>According to the Specific Objective 3.1 within Investment Priority 6(c), the following types and examples of actions will be supported.</p> <p><u>Types of Actions</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Developing common strategies, plans and tools related to conservation and protection of natural resources;</li> <li>2. Development and practical implementation of common strategies, plans and tools related to conservation, protection, attractiveness and valorization of material and immaterial cultural heritage;</li> <li>3. Implementation of small investments and trainings;</li> </ol> <p><u>Example of actions</u></p> <p><b>Following examples of actions are not an exhaustive list</b> and may be integrated with others aiming at contributing to the achievement of selected objectives and results.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actions aimed at reducing and preventing all possible kinds of pollution (taking into consideration Directive 2008/50/EC on Air Quality Plan and other instruments/plans available) deriving from transport, port activities and eutrophication etc.;</li> <li>• Establish the needed small-scale infrastructure to improve/guide accessibility so as to bring direct positive impact on Natura 2000 and other species and habitat types relevant for CB area;</li> <li>• Guide tourism and recreation flows (traffic/visitors) in order to ensure nature and cultural heritage protection (e.g. elaboration and implementation of visitor management plans, visitor monitoring and channelling);</li> <li>• Activities aimed at fostering protection and promotion of natural heritage;</li> <li>• Small scale investments in visitor infrastructure and equipment improving visitor experience;</li> <li>• Research studies and pilot investments aiming at preservation and restoration of Programme area cultural heritage, including also common mobile cultural heritage;</li> <li>• Initiatives for the valorization and promotion of cultural heritage of Programme area</li> <li>• Enhancing networking, knowledge platforms and exchange of innovative practices for the management of cultural heritage;</li> <li>• Designing joint innovative approach, models and tools for the improvement of natural and cultural sites promotion (natural reserves, national and regional parks, UNESCO sites, geo-parks, etc.) as a network;</li> <li>• Valorization of the endogenous potential of the area in all sub-regional types from Alps to the sea and rural areas - in order to foster sustainable tourism growth;</li> <li>• Coordination of land use and promotion of maritime spatial planning in order to minimize conflicts between nature conservation and tourism;</li> </ul>	



Investment Priority	6.c
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initiatives and investments aimed at fostering the accessibility to natural and cultural sites and to develop touristic attractiveness of the CB functional areas and promotion of local quality products, such as: museum networks; common branding; green labelling; thematic &amp; touristic routes, bike path, initiatives to promote autochthonous productions, event, joint festivals.</li> </ul> <p><u>Target groups</u></p> <p>Beside the beneficiaries, mainly consisting of public and private subjects dealing with the management and valorization of natural and cultural assets of the area, the target groups will include potential visitors (citizens, tourists, students), structures providing touristic hospitality or services, SMEs and creative industries.</p> <p><u>Beneficiaries</u></p> <p>The following list contains mere examples of possible beneficiaries and is therefore not exhaustive since other actors whose activities are coherent with the objective at stake can be selected:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- National, regional and local authorities;</li> <li>- Public and private bodies dealing with environment, natural and cultural heritage;</li> <li>- Developing, territorial marketing and touristic agencies;</li> <li>- Protected areas, natural and cultural sites management organizations;</li> <li>- NGOs, Non-Profit-Organizations and other professional and civil society associations dealing with environmental, natural resources, social and cultural issues;</li> <li>- Chambers of Commerce, business collective organizations and associations, enterprises;</li> <li>- Enterprises, SMEs;</li> <li>- Universities and Institutions specialized in research, education, training and capacity building.</li> </ul>	

#### 2.A.6.2. Guiding principles for the selection of operations

(Reference: point (b)(iii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Investment Priority	6.c
<p>General guiding principles for the selection of operations common to every priority investment are described on Section 5.</p> <p>Both strategic and standard projects are feasible under this IP according to the financial allocation described in section 5.3.g.</p> <p>Specific selection principles for projects under this Investment Priority may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on innovative and sustainable ways for capitalizing on cultural and natural resources;</li> <li>• Capacity to express the growth potential of under-exploited sites;</li> <li>• Capacity to compensate economic valorization of natural and cultural resources with their conservation, protection, and restoration for future generations, with clear indication of foreseen counter-measures aimed at not increasing tourism pressure on natural and cultural resources as well as GHG emissions;</li> <li>• Capacity to preserve and build a common natural and cultural heritage regardless of its immediate economic return;</li> <li>• Any heritage site or small scale investment receiving Programme support should be publicly accessible.</li> </ul>	

#### *2.A.6.3. Planned use of financial instruments*

(where appropriate)

(Reference: point (b)(iii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Investment Priority	6.c
The opportunity of the elaboration and implementation of financial instruments will be debated during the implementation of the Cooperation Programme.	

#### *2.A.6.4 Planned use of major projects*

(where appropriate)

(Reference: point (b)(iii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Not applicable

#### *2.A.6.5. Output indicators (by Investment Priority)*

(Reference: point (b)(iv) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Table 4: Common and programme-specific output indicators

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Target value (2023)	Source of data	Frequency of reporting
CO09	Increase in expected number of visits to supported sites of cultural and natural heritage and attractions	Visits/year	20.000	Programme monitoring	Annually
3.1.1	Number of investments implemented or services/products created supporting preservation/restoration of natural and cultural heritage	Number	30	Programme monitoring	Annually
3.1.2	Km bicycle path/lane completed	Km	12	Programme monitoring	Annually

#### 2.A.4. Investment Priority 6.d

(Reference: point (b)(i) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Investment Priority	6.d) Protecting and restoring biodiversity and soil and promoting ecosystem services, including through Natura 2000, and green infrastructure.
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#### 2.A.5. Specific Objective 3.2 corresponding to the Investment Priority and expected results

(Reference: points (b)(i) and (ii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

ID	3.2
Specific Objective	<b><i>Enhance the integrated management of ecosystems for a sustainable development of the territory</i></b>
Results that the Member States seek to achieve with Union support	<p>In the CBC area ecosystems, natural resources and biodiversity represent a key dimension of the quality of life and the territorial attractiveness, and constitute an important driver for a sustainable economic development. They are however confronted conflicts of use due to the urbanization process and human activities.</p> <p>The experience shows how an appropriate ecosystem-based management can help achieving multiple environmental benefits (biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation and adaptation, resilience and protection of common water resources from pollution) and a positive indirect impact in terms of energy savings and increased use of renewable energies. Projects under IP 6d shall try to decrease threats to valuable protected areas and river/marine ecosystems, through a dynamic protection and risk management (protection, conservation and connectivity of “ecosystems”), and the sustainable use and risk prevention (integration of ecosystem services). In particular, actions should focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Natura 2000 sites, joint cross-border activities;</li> <li>- Green corridors even outside Natura 2000 network, preventing and monitoring activities: identification, planning and implementation;</li> <li>- Damaged areas requiring preservation and restoration interventions for habitat and species;</li> <li>- Preserved areas needing protection measures for a better conservation;</li> <li>- Integrated water resource management and promotion of ecosystem-based approaches;</li> <li>- Green infrastructures aimed at connecting habitats;</li> <li>- Cross border approaches for ecosystem services.</li> </ul> <p>Interventions can contribute to the EU Biodiversity Strategy and to the 2020 biodiversity target.</p> <p>Linked in a transversal way to the IP 6d, is the awareness raising and cooperation among all stakeholders, both key elements as evidenced by past CBC experience.</p>

ID	3.2
Specific Objective	<b><i>Enhance the integrated management of ecosystems for a sustainable development of the territory</i></b>
	<p>The effective implementation of actions defined under the SO 3.2 depends on the full support of local stakeholders as well as on education, awareness raising and training. In order to increase people's awareness about the environment and associated challenges, to develop the necessary expertise, fostering informed decisions and responsible actions for a positive behavioural changes in a large part of the target public. Awareness raising is important also within the academic sector responsible for training and research on IP-related issues.</p> <p>Responsible behaviours and cross border awareness raising campaigns need to be addressed to both the professional sector and the general public and should provide information about the direct and indirect impacts of sustainable tourism avoiding negative impacts on biodiversity and cultural heritage.</p> <p>For this Specific Objective 3.2, the main change sought is a strengthening of the management of ecosystems and the cooperation between protected areas in order to increase environmental benefits and to provide economic and employment opportunities.</p> <p>The CBC Programme will support cooperation among various local stakeholders and managers of protected sites, focus on river basins, coastal, marine and wetland areas. Cross-border cooperation should be improved to a better share of knowledge and synergies.</p> <p>Projects shall ensure coherence and synergy with ERDF/EARFD regional and national programmes and/or other relevant regional/local plans.</p> <p><b>Expected result</b>  <i>Enhanced management of ecosystems and promoted restoration of biodiversity through green infrastructures and ecosystem services.</i></p>

Table 3: Programme-specific result indicators (by Specific Objective)

(Reference: point (b)(ii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

ID	Indicator	Measurement Unit	Baseline Value	Baseline Year	Target Value (2023)	Source of Data	Frequency of reporting
3.2.A	Level of preservation of status of habitats	Status of conservation (Habitats)	1.986	2014	1.999	Natura 2000 national and regional managing bodies (see Annex IX Methodological Note on Result and Output Indicators)	2018-2020-2023
3.2.B	Level of preservation of status of species	Status of conservation (Species)	1.851	2014	1.869	Natura 2000 national and regional managing bodies (see Annex IX Methodological Note on Result and Output Indicators)	2018-2020-2023

## 2.A.6. Actions to be supported under the Investment Priority (by Investment Priority)

### 2.A.6.1 A description of the type and examples of actions to be supported and their expected contribution to the specific objectives, including where appropriate, identification of the main target groups, specific territories targeted and types of beneficiaries

(Reference: point (b)(iii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Investment Priority	6.d
<p><b><u>Specific Objective 3.2</u></b></p> <p>According to the Specific Objective 3.2 within Investment Priority 6(d), the following types and examples of actions will be supported.</p> <p><u>Types of Actions</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Definition of common tools, protocols and plans concerning protecting and restoring biodiversity and ecosystems;</li> <li>2. Testing and implementing integrated strategies, tools and green infrastructure addressing protected and environmentally highly valuable areas, including Natura 2000 sites;</li> <li>3. Promotion of sustainable and responsible awareness and behaviours, in particular inside the protected and nature value areas.</li> </ol> <p><u>Example of actions</u></p> <p><b><u>Following examples of actions are not an exhaustive list</u></b> and may be integrated with others aiming at contributing to the achievement of selected objectives and results.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reducing and preventing the introduction of alien species and actions aimed at their eradication/control;</li> <li>• Preservation and restoration of biodiversity and habitats;</li> <li>• Management and the improved management of Natura 2000 sites;</li> <li>• Developing integrated management of Northern Adriatic Sea ecosystem and implementation of analysis on the possibilities of establishment of new joint protected areas;</li> <li>• Promoting actions against the standardization of agricultural species and products;</li> <li>• Support of the actions contained in the Prioritized Action Framework (PAFs) and the management plans of Natura 2000, favouring harmonized approaches and in line with Habitat and Bird Directive also in order to better coordinate measures in cross-border functional areas;</li> <li>• Implementation of green infrastructures (e.g. natural water retention), and establishment of ecological corridors connecting fragmented Natura 2000 habitats;</li> <li>• Identification, mapping, evaluation and enhancement of (multiple) ecosystems services;</li> <li>• Common approaches and tools to achieve good environmental status of marine waters in line with Marine Strategy Framework Directive and to achieve good conservation status of species and habitats of European importance (Sites of Community Importance and Special protection Areas) in the Programme area endeavouring to minimize the conflicts between urbanization, traffic and environment;</li> </ul>	

Investment Priority	6.d
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhancing environmental responsibility and behaviours of tourists, visitors, students, workers, local population;</li> <li>• Awareness raising and environmental education initiatives, addressing in particular the knowledge gap as regards CBC Programme area biodiversity, ecosystems and Natura 2000 sites and need of sustainable use of natural resources;</li> <li>• Promoting social participation in the definition of strategies, policies and plans concerning environment, natural resources, landscapes, biodiversity, ecosystem services also contributing to the resolution of conflicts generating from diverging interests of territorial stakeholders.</li> </ul> <p><u>Target groups</u></p> <p>Beside those defined as beneficiaries, target groups are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Decision makers, environment department, economic development departments of local, regional and national authorities;</li> <li>- Environment agencies;</li> <li>- Protected areas management organisations;</li> <li>- Land owners and land users;</li> <li>- Economic operators;</li> <li>- Citizens/ end consumers.</li> </ul> <p><u>Beneficiaries</u></p> <p>The following list contains mere examples of possible beneficiaries and is therefore not exhaustive since other actors whose activities are coherent with the objective at stake can be selected:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- National, regional and local authorities;</li> <li>- Public and private bodies dealing with environment, biodiversity, waste and water management, natural resources;</li> <li>- Protected areas, natural and cultural sites management organizations;</li> <li>- Associations and Institutions specialized in people awareness and communication;</li> <li>- NGOs, Non-Profit-Organizations and other professional and civil society associations dealing with environmental, natural resources, social and cultural issues;</li> <li>- Chambers of Commerce, business collective organizations and associations, private enterprises and clusters;</li> <li>- Enterprises, SMEs;</li> <li>- Universities and Institutions specialized in research, education, training and capacity building.</li> </ul>	



#### 2.A.6.2. Guiding principles for the selection of operations

(Reference: point (b)(iii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Investment Priority	6.d
<p>General guiding principles for the selection of operations common to every priority investments are described on Section 5.</p> <p>Both strategic and standard projects are feasible under this IP according to the financial allocation described in section 5.3.g.</p> <p>Specific selection principles for projects under this Investment Priority may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear description of the expected positive effects on environment and biodiversity;</li> <li>• Priority will be given to actions capitalizing on previous successful experiences on the relevant fields and/or with expected lasting results and possibility of further future developments.</li> </ul>	

#### 2.A.6.3. Planned use of financial instruments

(where appropriate)

(Reference: point (b)(iii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Investment Priority	6.d
Not applicable	

#### 2.A.6.4 Planned use of major projects

(where appropriate)

(Reference: point (b)(iii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Not applicable

#### 2.A.6.5. Output indicators (by Investment Priority)

(Reference: point (b)(iv) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Table 4: Common and programme-specific output indicators

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Target value (2023)	Source of data	Frequency of reporting
CO23	Surface area of habitats supported in order to attain a better conservation status (Common indicator)	Hectares	6.000	Programme monitoring	Annually
3.2.1	Tools and services developed for assessing and promoting ecosystem services	Number	7	Programme monitoring	Annually
3.2.2	Cross-border pilot actions to support biodiversity	Number	48	Programme monitoring	Annually
3.2.3	Participants to educational and divulgative events	Number	8.500	Programme monitoring	Annually

#### 2.A.4. Investment Priority 6.f

(Reference: point (b)(i) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Investment Priority	6.f) Promoting innovative technologies to improve environmental protection and resource efficiency in the waste sector, water sector and with regard to soil, or to reduce air pollution.
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#### 2.A.5. Specific Objective 3.3 corresponding to the Investment Priority and expected results

(Reference: points (b)(i) and (ii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

ID	3.3
Specific Objective	<b><i>Development and the testing of innovative environmental friendly technologies for the improvement of waste and water management</i></b>
Results that the Member States seek to achieve with Union support	<p>Growth of the green economy can offer the possibility to face the new environmental challenges posed by climate change and simultaneously provide new economic opportunities for the development of the Programme area.</p> <p>The main expected result is to improve environmental quality and ensure efficient management of the waste and water cycles through the development and diffusion of green technologies and of innovative management tools, models, and services.</p> <p>Cross-border approach ensures the construction of a consistent framework for the monitoring and the management of environmental cycles. It allows analysis of the life cycle of products and services as a tool to improve resources efficiency and allows sharing between the two countries of collaborative practices among individuals and organizations to use waste, energy and materials in a more sustainable way.</p> <p>Management of the waste cycle based on the expected hierarchy (waste prevention, re-use, recycling, recovery and disposal) allows integration of efficient resources management actions with labour-intensive industrial policies.</p> <p>A management strategy that is able to reduce the waste fraction deposited at the end of the products life cycle also produces an innovative approach to waste management. It enables a positive economic effect in terms of reducing costs, creating new job opportunities and GHG emissions reduction.</p> <p>An example is given by the regulatory framework related to waste management and traceability systems that impacts significantly on the cross-border context. From this point of view the creation of highly integrated actions with the regulations and operational practices taking place in the territory is a determining factor.</p> <p>Another relevant sector is represented by water resources management, in which innovation and new technologies may contribute in terms of reducing inefficiency and losses and of improving access to water and its quality.</p> <p>The increase in the number of inhabitants who have access to quality public water and the reduction of pollution of water resources are strategic objectives. The expected results, are</p>

ID	3.3
Specific Objective	<i>Development and the testing of innovative environmental friendly technologies for the improvement of waste and water management</i>
	<p>therefore directed to the quality and quantity of water available in a cross-border perspective, able to upgrade the quality of public services and to ensure efficient management and economic models.</p> <p><b>Expected result</b>  <i>Improved innovation in water and waste management through the experimentation and the implementation of green technologies.</i></p>

Table 3: Programme-specific result indicators (by Specific Objective)

(Reference: point (b)(ii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

ID	Indicator	Measurement Unit	Baseline Value	Baseline Year	Target Value (2023)	Source of Data	Frequency of reporting
3.3	Level of cross-border application of green technologies or processes	Total number of applications	5,76	2014	6,09	Eurostat	2018-2020-2023

## 2.A.6. Actions to be supported under the Investment Priority (by Investment Priority)

### 2.A.6.1 A description of the type and examples of actions to be supported and their expected contribution to the Specific Objectives, including, where appropriate, identification of the main target groups, specific territories targeted and types of beneficiaries

(Reference: point (b)(iii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Investment Priority	6.f
<p>According to the Specific Objective 3.3 within Investment Priority 6(f), the following types and examples of actions will be supported.</p> <p><u>Types of Actions</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Developing, demonstrating and implementing small-scale innovative environmental friendly technology investments - pilot projects.</li> </ol> <p><u>Example of actions</u></p> <p><b><u>Following examples of actions are not an exhaustive list</u></b> and may be integrated with others aiming at contributing to the achievement of selected objectives and results.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing and testing innovative technologies for waste management e.g. prevention, re-use, recycling, recovery etc.) following the concepts of industrial symbiosis and circular economy;</li> <li>• Promoting joint innovation solutions for the protection and efficient use of water resources like drip irrigation;</li> <li>• Pilot Actions for implementation of technologies aimed at contrasting marine debris (radar, sensor platform, managing of multispectral data, solutions to prevent marine debris);</li> <li>• Transfer of knowledge and exchange of experience on innovative (green) technology solutions to improve efforts of different actors in protecting the water, contingency planning and promoting the resource efficiency;</li> <li>• Use of innovative technologies aimed at the implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) and the EU Floods Directive (2007/60/EC) and the achievement of good water status of cross-border water units.</li> </ul> <p><u>Target groups</u></p> <p>In addition to those identified as Beneficiaries, target groups who may be affected by the innovations introduced through the actions listed are extensive, involving the entire population in the management of the waste cycle and the water cycle. Moreover, as identified in the cross-cutting actions, a special target group is represented by SME.</p> <p>The following target groups may be highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Subjects that have been identified as beneficiaries;</li> <li>- Citizens and companies as producers of waste;</li> <li>- Local community residents in areas prone to disruption of water and hydro-geological risk;</li> <li>- Local communities concentrated in areas presenting high urbanization level;</li> <li>- Companies, enterprises/SMEs, operating in the waste and water cycle and energy.</li> </ul> <p><u>Beneficiaries</u></p>	

Investment Priority	6.f
<p>The following list contains mere examples of possible beneficiaries and is therefore not exhaustive since other actors whose activities are coherent with the objective at stake can be selected:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- National, regional and local authorities;</li> <li>- Public and private bodies dealing with environment, biodiversity, energy, waste and water management, natural resources;</li> <li>- Protected areas, natural and cultural sites management organizations;</li> <li>- Associations and Institutions specialized in people awareness and communication;</li> <li>- NGOs, Non-Profit-Organizations and other professional and civil society associations dealing with environmental, energy, natural resources, social and cultural issues;</li> <li>- Chambers of Commerce, business collective organizations and associations, innovation incubators, private enterprises and clusters;</li> <li>- Universities and Institutions specialized in research, education, training and capacity building.</li> </ul>	

#### 2.A.6.2. Guiding principles for the selection of operations

(Reference: point (b)(iii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Investment Priority	6.f
<p>General guiding principles for the selection of operations common to every priority investments are described on Section 5.</p> <p>Both strategic and standard projects are feasible under this IP according to the financial allocation described in section 5.3.g.</p> <p>Specific selection principles for projects under this Investment Priority may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on practical applications and solutions related to green technologies;</li> <li>• Possible trickle-down effects;</li> <li>• Actions in line with the national bilateral Water Commission Agenda.</li> </ul>	

#### 2.A.6.3. Planned use of financial instruments

(where appropriate)

(Reference: point (b)(iii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Investment Priority	6.f
Not applicable	

#### 2.A.6.4 Planned use of major projects

(where appropriate)

(Reference: point (b)(iii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Not applicable

#### 2.A.6.5. Output indicators (by Investment Priority)

(Reference: point (b)(iv) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Table 4: Common and programme-specific output indicators

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Target value (2023)	Source of data	Frequency of reporting
C020	Population benefiting from flood protection measures (Common indicator)	Persons	1.111	Programme monitoring	Annually
3.3.1	Number of innovative green technologies tested and implemented	Number	13	Programme monitoring	Annually
3.3.2	Number of enterprises applying new green innovation solutions	Number	7	Programme monitoring	Annually



## 2.A.7. Performance framework

(Reference: point (b)(v) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013 and Annex II of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)

Table 5: Performance framework of the Priority Axis

Priority Axis	Indicator type	ID	Indicator or key implementation step	Measurement unit, where appropriate	Milestone for 2018	Final target (2023)	Source of data	Explanation of relevance of indicator, where appropriate
Priority Axis 3	Output	CO09	Increase in expected number of visits to supported sites of cultural and natural heritage and attraction	Visits/year	5.000	20.000	Programme Monitoring	N/A
	Financial	F3	Payment certified and declared to the EC (Priority Axis 3)	EUR	€ 3.342.732,47	€ 32.088.805	Programme Monitoring	N/A

Additional qualitative information on the establishment of the performance framework

## 2.A.8. Categories of intervention

(Reference: point (b)(vii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Categories of intervention corresponding to the content of the Priority Axis, based on a nomenclature adopted by the Commission, and indicative breakdown of Union support.

Tables 6-9: Categories of intervention

Table 6: Dimension 1 Intervention field		
Priority Axis	Code	Amount (€)
3	017 Household waste management (including minimisation, sorting, recycling measures)	822.214,31
3	018 Household waste management (including mechanical biological treatment, thermal treatment, incineration and landfill measures)	822.214,31
3	019 Commercial, industrial or hazardous waste management	822.214,31
3	020 Provision of water for human consumption (extraction, treatment, storage and distribution infrastructure)	822.214,30
3	021 Water management and drinking water conservation (including river basin management, water supply, specific climate change adaptation measures, district and consumer metering, charging systems and leak reduction)	1.033.333,33
3	022 Waste water treatment	822.214,30
3	075 Development and promotion of commercial tourism services in or for SMEs	1.480.449,43
3	077 Development and promotion of cultural and creative services in or for SMEs	976.127,20
3	084 Integrated pollution prevention and control (IPPC)	1.150.000,00
3	085 Protection and enhancement of biodiversity, nature protection and green infrastructure	3.064.674,00
3	086 Protection, restoration and sustainable use of Nature2000 sites	2.650.000,00
3	090 Cycle tracks and footpaths	1.383.225,09
3	091 Development and promotion of the tourism potential of natural areas	2.514.546,46
3	092 Protection, development and promotion of public tourism assets	2.514.546,46
3	094 Protection, development and promotion of public cultural and heritage assets	3.024.001,21

Table 6: Dimension 1 Intervention field		
Priority Axis	Code	Amount (€)
3	095 Development and promotion of public cultural and heritage services	3.788.183,29

Table 7: Dimension 2 Form of finance		
Priority Axis	Code	Amount (€)
3	01 Non-repayable grant	27.690.158,00

Table 8: Dimension 3 Territory type		
Priority Axis	Code	Amount (€)
3	01 Large Urban areas (densely populated > 50 000 population)	4.250.000,00
3	07 Not applicable	23.440.158,00

Table 9: Dimension 6 Territorial delivery mechanisms		
Priority Axis	Code	Amount (€)
3	03 Integrated Territorial Investment – Other	4.250.000,00
3	07 Not applicable	23.440.158,00

2.A.9. A summary of the planned use of technical assistance including, where necessary, actions to reinforce the administrative capacity of authorities involved in the management and control of the programmes and beneficiaries and, where necessary, actions for to enhance the administrative capacity of relevant partners to participate in the implementation of programmes (where appropriate)

(Reference: point (b)(vi) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

<b>Priority Axis</b>	3
Not applicable	

### 2.A.1. Priority Axis 4

<b>ID</b>	<b>Priority Axis 4</b>
<b>Title</b>	<b>Enhancing capacity building and cross-border governance</b>

<input type="checkbox"/> The entire Priority Axis will be implemented solely through financial instruments
<input type="checkbox"/> The entire Priority Axis will be implemented solely through financial instruments set up at Union level
<input type="checkbox"/> The entire Priority Axis will be implemented through community-led local development

### 2.A.2. Justification for the establishment of a Priority Axis covering more than one Thematic Objective

(Reference: Article 8(1) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Not applicable

### 2.A.3. Fund and calculation basis for Union support

<b>Fund:</b>	<b>ERDF</b>
Calculation basis (total eligible expenditure or eligible public expenditure)	€ 15.230.402,00 Total eligible expenditure

### 2.A.4. Investment Priority 11 ETC

(Reference: point (b)(i) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

<b>Investment Priority</b>	11 ETC Enhancing institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders and efficient public administration by promoting legal and administrative cooperation and cooperation between citizens and institutions.
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**2.A.5. Specific Objective 4.1 corresponding to the Investment Priority and expected results**  
(Reference: points (b)(i) and (ii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

<b>ID</b>	<b>4.1</b>
<b>Specific Objective</b>	<b><i>Strengthen the institutional cooperation capacity through mobilizing public authorities and key actors of the Programme area for planning joint solutions to common challenges</i></b>
<b>Results that the Member States seek to achieve with Union support</b>	<p>Cooperation between the various institutions operating in the area is an horizontal issue that crosses all Priority Axes and which enables the achievement of several specific results. Closer integration and understanding of the legislative framework and administrative practices implemented in the two countries is a key success factor for the competitiveness of the entire area.</p> <p>TO 11 may cover different sectors of activities, provided that the capacity building aspect is the main focus. Through the SO 4.1 the Programme wants to focus the attention on several sectors, in which cross-border cooperation could actively contribute in terms of improving structures and processes.</p> <p>For these reasons the Specific Objective addresses in particular the need of a closer correlation and consistency in the processes of governance between the two countries, in order to counter the emerging social disintegration, more effectively safeguard the cultural and environmental resources, prevent the risks associated to climate change and strengthen competitiveness in the international markets.</p> <p>Interventions may concern regulatory frameworks, functional networks, common structures, coordination of policies and investments, agreements specifying modalities of the cooperation across the border, development of common approaches to common problems, exchange of experience.</p> <p>The Programme area is characterized by some unbalances in different territories, in particular in terms of services related to social inclusion and welfare systems. The process of aging of the population, which covers the entire territory, albeit with uneven character, is a factor that, in the medium term will have a significant impact on health policy and social inclusion. This aspect is aggravated by the effects produced by the economic crisis in terms of an increase in the unemployment rate, even against older workers. The specific expected result is the strengthening of institutional and administrative capacity to implement services addressing social needs and health issues, and to allow active aging to be socially cohesive and economically competitive. To this end intervention on human capital and the administrative processes related to qualifying education are strategic. This calls for innovative procedures and standards shared beyond national boundaries.</p> <p>A challenge that requires further cooperation efforts is the construction of an institutional level able to rule climate change and the consequent natural risks management. Common risk prevention and better coordination of emergency systems require in fact unified procedures for intervention across the border, as well as the establishment of joint information systems on risks related to floods or other natural catastrophes etc.</p>

ID	4.1
Specific Objective	<i>Strengthen the institutional cooperation capacity through mobilizing public authorities and key actors of the Programme area for planning joint solutions to common challenges</i>
	<p>Other strengths to be enhanced through SO 4.1 are high level of participation to ETC Programmes for both the two sides of the area and the ability to capitalize on past experiences during the last programming period. For this reason, an additional specific result is expected to improve cross-border institutional capacity, even in the management and implementation of the cohesion policies. Great importance must be also attributed to stakeholders and citizenship participation and involvement in public development policies.</p> <p><b>Expected result</b>  <i>Increased intensity of CBC between citizens and institutions in the programming area.</i></p>

Table 3: Programme-specific result indicators (by Specific Objective)

(Reference: point (b)(ii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

ID	Indicator	Measurement Unit	Baseline Value	Baseline Year	Target Value(2023)	Source of Data	Frequency of reporting
4.1	Capacity of public authorities and stakeholders in cross-border cooperation and governance	Scores	0,78	2016	0,86 (+10%)	Survey	2018-2019-2023

## 2.A.6. Actions to be supported under the Investment Priority (by Investment Priority)

### 2.A.6.1 A description of the type and examples of actions to be supported and their expected contribution to the Specific Objectives, including where appropriate, identification of the main target groups, specific territories targeted and types of beneficiaries

(Reference: point (b)(iii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Investment Priority	11 ETC
<p>In line with the Specific Objective 4.1, within Investment Priority 11 (Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013), the following types of actions will be implemented. Following actions are not an exhaustive list and may be integrated with others aiming at contributing to the achievement of selected objectives and results.</p> <p><u>Types of Actions</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Operations addressing institutional capacity building aimed at development of structures, systems and tools;</li> <li>2. Operations addressing the human potential and needs.</li> </ol> <p><u>Example of actions</u></p> <p><b>Following examples of actions are not an exhaustive list</b> and may be integrated with others aiming at contributing to the achievement of selected objectives and results.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop cross-border models for the design, testing, up-scaling, comparison and evaluation of innovations in the field of public administration, such as: administrative procedures, harmonization of regulations, practices and methodological tools concerning the key issues of the Programme area (e.g. harmonization of the legal framework regulating free access of enterprises and people, standardization of port operations, maritime monitoring systems, spatial planning, environmental protection, job security, sustainable transport system, sustainable tourism, air quality plans etc.);</li> <li>• Setting up of a common framework/models and pilot actions for the cooperation in the field of education, public health, health and social care in order to foster an efficient use of human potential and management of public resources and to promote development of joint capacities and coordinate delivery of services such as domestic and pilot actions for home rehabilitation;</li> <li>• Elaboration of common guidelines and share of experiences for the creation of level energy-balances and SEAP (private and public sector);</li> <li>• Setting up of a common framework and pilot actions in the field of natural risk management and civil protection to promote the reduction of environmental risks and common management of the emergencies (e.g. elaboration of action plans for the climate change adaptation, joint information system of risks related to floods and other natural risks);</li> <li>• Setting up of a common framework/models/tools and pilot actions for the mitigation of the effects originated by contaminated sites;</li> <li>• Planning and organization structure for cross border river basin management in the context of support of WFD and Flood Directive;</li> <li>• Supporting projects addressing the human potential by promoting cultural diversity, including national minorities and language knowledge of the neighbouring country in order to mobilize a wider public for building up CB partnerships;</li> <li>• Harmonization of vocational education systems (dual education and Work based Learning) for meeting the needs of SMEs and the joint labour market (e.g. resulting in mutual acceptance of qualifications).</li> </ul>	



Investment Priority	11 ETC
<p><u>Target groups</u></p> <p>In addition to the listed beneficiaries, actions will affect the groups involved in strengthening of public services, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enterprises and SMEs engaged in the sectors most exposed to international competition and innovation;</li> <li>- Civil protection and organization of environmental risk management;</li> <li>- Subjects living in areas at risk of natural disasters;</li> <li>- Elderly at risk of poverty;</li> <li>- Subjects vulnerable to high health risk;</li> <li>- Operators in the field of health;</li> <li>- Low skilled unemployed.</li> </ul> <p><u>Beneficiaries</u></p> <p>The following list contains mere examples of possible beneficiaries and is therefore not exhaustive since other actors whose activities are coherent with the objective at stake can be selected:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Policy Makers and Public Managers, Public Training providers;</li> <li>- National, regional and local authorities;</li> <li>- Regional and Local Development Agencies;</li> <li>- Protected areas, natural and cultural sites management organizations;</li> <li>- NGOs, Non-Profit-Organizations and other professional and civil society associations;</li> <li>- Universities, Research centers, Scientific and Technology Parks Institutions specialized in research, education, training and capacity building;</li> <li>- Enterprises, SMEs;</li> <li>- Public bodies dealing with environment, natural risks, energy, health, social inclusion.</li> </ul>	

#### 2.A.6.2. Guiding principles for the selection of operations

Investment Priority	11 ETC
<p>General guiding principles for the selection of operations common to every priority investments are described on Section 5.</p> <p>Both strategic and standard projects are feasible under this IP according to the financial allocation described in section 5.3.g.</p> <p>Specific selection principles for projects under this Investment Priority may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• perspectives of lasting relationship networks;</li> <li>• ability of contributing to a more cohesive Programme area.</li> </ul> <p>The actions will be implemented throughout the territory involved in the programme.</p> <p>An approach addressed to the whole territory is particularly effective for the types of actions within this IP because of their general impact.</p> <p>In particular, the actions related to the construction of an institutional system capable of reducing environmental risks and disaster prevention must take into account most vulnerable territories.</p> <p>With regard to interventions related to the construction of an institutional system capable of responding to emerging questions about health policy and social inclusion, it is important to evaluate the different effects that a long-lasting unemployment has caused on the territories of reference.</p>	

#### 2.A.6.3. Planned use of financial instruments

(where appropriate)

(Reference: point (b)(iii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Investment Priority	11 ETC
<p>The opportunity of the elaboration and implementation of financial instruments will be debated during the implementation of the Cooperation Programme. In case of positive decision by the Programme Authorities the MC will approve this possibility.</p>	

#### 2.A.6.4 Planned use of major projects

(where appropriate)

(Reference: point (b)(iii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Not applicable

#### 2.A.6.5. Output indicators (by Investment Priority)

(Reference: point (b)(iv) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Table 4: Common and programme-specific output indicators

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Target value (2023)	Source of data	Frequency of reporting
4.1.1	Cross-border agreement and protocols signed	Number	10	Programme monitoring	Annually
4,1,2	Joint solutions increasing integration, coherence, harmonization of the Programme area governance (shared politics, legislative frameworks or regulations, joint strategic documents, e-government tools, etc.)	Number	11	Programme monitoring	Annually
4.1.3	Number of beneficiaries participating in joint training schemes	Number	400	Programme monitoring	Annually
4.1,4	Number of cross-border medical-social teams full-formed and operational	Number	5	Programme monitoring	Annually

## 2.A.7. Performance framework

(Reference: point (b)(v) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013 and Annex II of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)

Table 5: Performance framework of the Priority Axis

Priority Axis	Indicator type	ID	Indicator or key implementation step	Measurement unit, where appropriate	Milestone for 2018	Final target (2023)	Source of data	Explanation of relevance of indicator, where appropriate
Priority Axis 4	Output	4,1,2	Joint solutions increasing integration, coherence, harmonization of the Programme area governance (shared politics, legislative frameworks or regulations, joint strategic documents, e-government tools, etc.)	Number	2	11	Programme monitoring	NA
	Financial	F4	Payment certified and declared to	EUR	€ 2.456.351,35	€ 18.336.460,00	Programme monitoring	NA

			the EC (Priority Axis 4)					
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Additional qualitative information on the establishment of the performance framework.

## 2.A.8. Categories of intervention

(Reference: point (b)(vii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Categories of intervention corresponding to the content of the Priority Axis, based on a nomenclature adopted by the Commission, and indicative breakdown of Union support.

Tables 6-9: Categories of intervention

Table 6: Dimension 1 Intervention field		
Priority Axis	Code	Amount (€)
4	053 Health infrastructure	3.896.497,75
4	055 Other social infrastructure contributing to regional and local development	779.299,55
4	081 ICT solutions addressing the healthy active ageing challenge and e-Health services and applications (including e-Care and ambient assisted living)	1.203.010,10
4	087 Adaptation to climate change measures and prevention and management of climate related risks e.g. erosion, fires, flooding, storms and drought, including awareness raising, civil protection and disaster management systems and infrastructures	779.299,55
4	112 Enhancing access to affordable, sustainable and high-quality services, including health care and social services of general interest	3.896.497,75
4	119 Investment in institutional capacity and in the efficiency of public administrations and public services at the national, regional and local levels with a view to reforms, better regulation and good governance	2.337.898,65
4	120 Capacity building for all stakeholders delivering education, lifelong learning, training and employment and social policies, including through sectorial and territorial pacts to mobilize for reform at the national, regional and local levels	2.337.898,65

Table 7: Dimension 2 Form of finance		
Priority Axis	Code	Amount (€)
4	01 Non-repayable grant	15.230.402,00

Table 8: Dimension 3 Territory type		
Priority Axis	Code	Amount (€)
4	01 Large Urban areas (densely populated > 50 000 population)	4.250.000,00
4	07 Not applicable	10.980.402,00

Table 9: Dimension 6 Territorial delivery mechanisms		
Priority Axis	Code	Amount (€)
4	03 Integrated Territorial Investment – Other	4.250.000,00
4	07 Not applicable	10.980.402,00

2.A.9. A summary of the planned use of technical assistance including, where necessary, actions to reinforce the administrative capacity of authorities involved in the management and control of the programmes and beneficiaries and, where necessary, actions for to enhance the administrative capacity of relevant partners to participate in the implementation of programmes (where appropriate)

(Reference: point (b)(vi) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

<b>Priority Axis</b>	<b>4</b>
Not applicable	

## Section 2.B. Description of the Priority Axis for Technical Assistance

### 2.B.1. Priority Axis 5

<b>ID</b>	<b>Priority Axis 5</b>
<b>Title</b>	<b>Technical Assistance</b>

### 2.B.2. Fund and calculation basis for Union support

<b>Fund:</b>	<b>ERDF</b>
Calculation basis (total eligible expenditure or eligible public expenditure)	€ 4.675.797,00 Total eligible expenditure

### 2.B.3. Specific Objectives and expected results

(Reference: points (c)(i) and (ii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

<b>ID</b>	<b>5.1</b>
<b>Specific Objective</b>	<b><i>To ensure the efficient management and implementation of the Programme.</i></b>
<b>Results that the Member States seek to achieve with Union support</b>	<p>The main objective is to guarantee a sound management and control system and the timely and efficient execution of all the key implementation steps, according to the established rules and procedures.</p> <p>As outlined by the mid-term evaluation, it is necessary to remove the main obstacles encountered during the past programming period (lack of human resources, delay in the first call launching and long and difficult decision making processes for the selection of operations, etc.).</p> <p>This means multiple efforts in simplification, harmonization and smoothening of administrative procedures.</p> <p>This is possible providing adequate support and facilities to the structures involved in the management of the Programme (Cf. Section 5), in order to contribute to the faster and higher level of effectiveness in the implementation of their tasks.</p> <p>The successful performance of the Cooperation Programme also depends on the capacities of the beneficiaries to develop and present quality projects that are able to carry on their efficient implementation and to achieve the envisaged results.</p> <p>A special attention will be reserved to improve selected and potential beneficiaries to actively participate to the Programme, taking in due consideration the Code of Conduct principles (Commission Delegated Regulation No. 240/2014).</p> <p>For this reason, the Programme will encourage a wide involvement of the relevant partners and, it will contribute to upgrade their</p>



ID	5.1
Specific Objective	<i>To ensure the efficient management and implementation of the Programme.</i>
	<p>capacity building in projects presentation and implementation. As requested (cf. Section 7), the Programme will put in place ad hoc measures for the reduction of the administrative burden for beneficiaries.</p> <p>Moreover it is necessary to enable management bodies in the evaluation of the Programme performance and in the development of activities for the communication, dissemination and capitalization of the results.</p> <p><b>Expected result</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Improved effective and efficient management of the Programme over the 2014-2020 period;</i></li> <li>- <i>Strengthened capacities of beneficiaries and applicants to present and effectively implement projects in line with the objectives and results set by the Programme.</i></li> </ul>

#### 2.B.4. Result indicators

Not applicable

#### 2.B.5. Actions to be supported and their expected contribution to the Specific Objectives (by Priority Axis)

##### 2.B.5.1. Description of actions to be supported and their expected contribution to the Specific Objectives

(Reference: point (c)(iii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Priority Axis 5	<i>Technical Assistance</i>
<p>According to the Specific Objective 5.1, the following types of actions will be implemented.</p> <p><u>Types of Actions</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Actions for the improvement of the effective and efficient management of the Cooperation Programme;</li> <li>2. Actions strengthening capacities of beneficiaries and applicants to present and effectively implement projects.</li> </ol> <p><b>1. Actions for the improvement of the effective and efficient management of the Cooperation Programme</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Setting up and managing of a Joint Secretariat supporting the Managing Authority and assisting the Monitoring Committee in the implementation and day-to-day management of the Programme;</li> <li>- Preparing and implementing calls for proposals, including the development of guidance documents setting out the conditions for the support of operations;</li> <li>- Setting-up and implementing procedures for the quality assessment, monitoring and control of operations implemented under the Cooperation Programme;</li> </ul>	

Priority Axis 5	<i>Technical Assistance</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Collecting data concerning the progress of the Programme in achieving its objectives, as well as financial data and data relating to indicators and milestones, and reporting to the Monitoring Committee and the European Commission;</li> <li>- Drafting and implementing the Programme communication strategy, including the setting up and implementation of information and communication measures and tools in line with Article 115 of the EU Regulation No. 1303/2013;</li> <li>- Drafting and implementing the Programme evaluation plan and follow-up of findings of independent Programme evaluations;</li> <li>- Setting up, running and maintaining a computerized system to record and store data on each operation necessary for the monitoring, evaluation, financial management, verification and audit (including data on individual participants in operations where applicable, in compliance with electronic data exchange requirements provided for in Article 122(3) of the EU Regulation No. 1303/2013 and in related implementing acts) and contributing to the reduction of administrative burden for beneficiaries;</li> <li>- Setting up a network of national/regional authorities/Info point/ financial controllers, coordinated by the Joint Secretariat, with the purpose of exchanging information and best practices at cross-border level;</li> <li>- Setting up and executing audits on the Programme management and control system as well as on operations.</li> </ul> <p><b>2. Actions strengthening capacities of beneficiaries and applicants to present and effectively implement projects</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Drafting of information documents for applicants and beneficiaries to guide them in the preparation of applications and the implementation, evaluation, control and communication of approved operations;</li> <li>- Organizing consultation, information, training and exchange events to strengthen the capacity of applicants to develop applications directly contributing to the Programme-specific objectives and expected results;</li> <li>- Organizing trainings on specific implementation issues such as project and financial management, reporting, control, audit, communication and networking to strengthen the capacity of beneficiaries to implement approved operations, new EU legislation on public procurement;</li> <li>- Developing information and exchange tools (e.g. analytical documents, bilateral meetings, targeted events, etc.) and organization of cross-border and national events to strengthen the involvement of relevant partners in the implementation of the Programme (also including authorities involved in the development or implementation of macro-regional strategies, joint legal bodies operating in the Programme area and umbrella organizations);</li> <li>- Executing studies, reports and surveys on strategic matters concerning the Programme that can contribute to the sustainability and take up of results and achievements into policies, strategies, investments or that are of public interest, making use of experts when necessary.</li> </ul>	

#### 2.B.5.2. Output indicators expected to contribute to results (by Priority Axis)

(Reference: point (c)(iv) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Table 11: Output indicators

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Target value (2023)	Source of data
5.1,1	Number of projects committed and finished	Number	42	Programme Monitoring
5.1,2	Number of major publicity events for beneficiaries and applicants	Number	6	Communication Strategy's Work Plans
5.1,3	Number of employees (FTEs) whose salaries are co-financed by technical assistance	Number	7	Programme Monitoring

## 2.B.6. Categories of intervention

Corresponding categories of intervention based on a nomenclature adopted by the Commission, and an indicative breakdown of the Union support.

Table 12-14: Categories of intervention

Table 12: Dimension 1 Intervention field		
Priority Axis	Code	Amount (€)
5	121 Preparation, implementation, monitoring and inspection	4.021.185,42
5	122 Evaluation and studies	280.547,82
5	123 Information and communication	374.063,76

Table 13: Dimension 2 Form of finance		
Priority Axis	Code	Amount (€)
5	01 Non-repayable grant	4.675.797,00

Table 14: Dimension 3 Territory type		
Priority Axis	Code	Amount (€)
5	07 Not applicable	4.675.797,00

## **SECTION 3. FINANCING PLAN**

(Reference: point (d) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

### **3.1. Financial appropriation from the ERDF (in €)**

(Reference: point (d)(i) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Table 15

Fund	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total
ERDF	0,00	9.509.372,00	8.059.971,00	14.644.918,00	14.937.817,00	15.236.572,00	15.541.304,00	77.929.954,00
Total		9.509.372,00	8.059.971,00	14.644.918,00	14.937.817,00	15.236.572,00	15.541.304,00	77.929.954,00

### 3.2.A. Total financial appropriation from the ERDF and national co-funding (in €)

(Reference: point (d)(ii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Table 16: Financing plan

Priority Axis	Fund	Basis for the calculation of Union support (Total eligible cost or public eligible cost)	Union Support (a)	National counterpart (b) = (c) + (d)	Indicative breakdown of the national counterpart		Total funding (e) = (a) + (b)	Co-financing rate (f) = (a)/(e) (2)	For information	
					National public funding (c)	National private funding (d)			Contributions from third countries	EIB contributions
1	ERDF	Total	18.671.150,00	3.294.909,00	3.104.909,00	190.000,00	21.966.059,00	85 %	NA	NA
2	ERDF	Total	11.662.447,00	2.058.079,00	1.988.079,00	70.000,00	13.720.526,00	85 %	NA	NA
3	ERDF	Total	27.690.158,00	4.886.499,00	4.706.499,00	180.000,00	32.576.657,00	85 %	NA	NA
4	ERDF	Total	15.230.402,00	2.687.718,00	2.657.718,00	30.000,00	17.918.120,00	85 %	NA	NA
5	ERDF	Total	4.675.797,00	1.731.023,00	1.731.023,00	0,00	6.406.820,00	73 %	NA	NA
Total	ERDF	Total	77.929.954,00	14.658.228,00	14.188.228,00	470.000,00	92.588.182,00	84 %	NA	NA
Grand Total			77.929.954,00	14.658.228,00	14.188.228,00	470.000,00	92.588.182,00	84 %	NA	NA

(1) To be completed only when Priority Axes are expressed in total costs.

(2) This rate may be rounded to the nearest whole number in the table. The precise rate used to reimburse payments is the ratio (f).

### 3.2.B. Breakdown by Priority Axis and Thematic Objective

(Reference: point (d)(ii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Table 17

Priority Axis	Thematic Objective	Union support (€)	National counterpart (€)	Total funding (€)
1	Strengthening research, technological development and innovation	18.671.150,00	3.294.909,00	21.966.059,00
2	Supporting the shift towards a low-carbon economy in all sectors	11.662.447,00	2.058.079,00	13.720.526,00
3	Preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency	27.690.158,00	4.886.499,00	32.576.657,00
4	Enhancing institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders and an efficient public administration	15.230.402,00	2.687.718,00	17.918.120,00
<b>Total</b>		<b>73.254.157,00</b>	<b>12.927.205,00</b>	<b>86.181.362,00</b>



Table 18: Indicative amount of support to be used for climate change objectives

(Reference: Article 27(6) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)

Priority Axis	Indicative amount of support to be used for climate change objectives (€)	Proportion of the total allocation to the Programme (%)
1	374.063,78	0,48%
2	10.029.023,05	12,87%
3	4.542.428,02	5,83%
4	779.299,55	1,00%
Total	15.724.814,40	20,18%

## SECTION 4. INTEGRATED APPROACH TO TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT

(Reference: Article 8(3) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

As highlighted in Section 1, the cooperation area shows several territorial development patterns closely linked to the characteristics of the socio-economical but also political context. One particular example is the area comprised within the municipalities of Gorizia, Nova Gorica and Sempeter-Vrtojba whose entire development model has been based on the presence of a shared border that during its existence has offered a different degree of openness.

The entrance of Slovenia into the European Union first and the adoption of Schengen Treaty afterward have indeed increased the opportunities but had also constituted an immediate challenge for an area so strongly tied to a “border based” economy. Additionally, the context of financial crisis has reduced public investments for local services and there is a need for pooling resources and share costs whenever possible.

For the above-mentioned reasons, the three municipalities have decided to prepare jointly a territorial development strategy, based on an integrated approach, considered most appropriate to tackle the different needs and challenges of the area. At the same time, in order to fully exploit the opportunities offered by the shared EU context and framework, Gorizia, Nova Gorica and Sempeter-Vrtojba have set up, in February 2011, a European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (GECT GO/EZTS GO) based in Gorizia and that is in charge for the implementation of the joint strategy.

In the context of the Programme, the following needs and challenges will be tackled:

- promote the natural and cultural sites of the area in a better integrated and coordinated manner;
- answer adequately to raising demand of citizens and enterprises for joint services while developing new tools and networks increasing coordination and cooperation in order to improve territorial cohesion of the area;
- define cross-border solutions improving natural and cultural resources management, promoting their potential as development factor while stimulating eco-friendly behaviours of citizens and tourists;
- encourage cross-border cooperation at different levels (institutional, political and administrative) to converge decision makers' attention on common issues.

In November 2013 the Assembly of the GECT GO/EZTS GO has approved a strategic plan selecting three pilot measures. The integrated approach will be achieved by the implementation of these pilot actions coordinated by the GECT GO/EZTS GO while involving a wide partnership of the two countries including multilevel governance and civil society.

The pilot action “**Isonzo - Soča**” will contribute to the achievement of SO 3.1 “Conserving, protecting, restoring, and developing natural and cultural heritage” seeking the change for valorization of a valuable cross border natural site through sustainable tourism, environmental protection and green growth.

The pilot action “**Health**” will contribute to the achievement of SO 4.1 “Strengthen the institutional cooperation capacity through mobilizing public authorities and key actors of the Programme area for planning joint solutions to common challenge” seeking the change for a closer integration and understanding of the legislative framework and administrative practices implemented in the two countries while paving the way for a joint use of the health systems of the target area that could be furthered to the whole cooperation area and beyond.

#### 4.1. Community-led local development (where appropriate)

*Not relevant*

#### 4.2. Integrated actions for sustainable urban development (where appropriate)

(Reference: point (b) of Article 8(3) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

*Not relevant*

Table 19: Integrated actions for sustainable urban development - Indicative ERDF amount

Indicative ERDF amount (in EUR)
0,00

#### 4.3. Integrated Territorial Investment (ITI) (where appropriate)

(Reference: point (c) of Article 8(3) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

The Programme will apply the approach outlined in Art. 36 of the Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013. ITI will constitute a significant implementation tool for the area comprised within the municipalities of Gorizia, Nova Gorica and Šempeter-Vrtojba.

Several elements ensure the coherence of the activities carried out under the coordination of the GECT GO/EZTS GO under the ITI framework with the overall Programme Strategy:

- the GECT GO/EZTS GO is acknowledged as the most advanced form of cross-border territorial cooperation unfolding its potentials by supporting joint management and modernization in health, environment and infrastructural sector, urban transport, logistics, energy and economic development initiatives;
- the pool of pilot actions proposed in the GECT GO/EZTS GO development strategy have been recognized by the stakeholders of the target area as the most appropriate to tackle the needs and challenges as identified in Section 1;
- the involvement of the decision making level at early stage of the process (presentation and endorsement of the GECT GO/EZTS GO strategic Plan to Autonomous Region Friuli Venezia Giulia President and Republic of Slovenia President on December 6th 2013 - Joint Declaration signed by Italian and Slovenian Government on May 27th) is ensuring the sustainability of the outcomes of the ITI;
- there is a clear link of the proposed pilot actions with a number of strategic operations of the past Italy - Slovenia programming period 2007 - 2013 whose achievements have demonstrated to be successful and worth to be capitalized for furthering impacts;
- the results achieved will unfold their impacts beyond the target area as the outputs of the actions are envisaged as replicable in other parts of the Programme area.

ITI will be mono-fund and multi-axis since the strategic programming of the GECT GO/EZTS GO area needs interventions in different Thematic Objectives and Investment Priorities to tackle the common future challenges of a joint economic and social growth.

The ITI will constitute the main instruments for the implementation of the territorial development strategy of the target area, taking into account its three main pillars:

- capitalization of the experiences and outcomes of previous Italy - Slovenia Programmes in order to ensure highest efficiency and effectiveness of public investments;
- revitalization of the “border based” economy while supporting its reconversion by use of identified strengths and assets;
- improvement of the quality of life of residents of the area by fostering the use of joint CB services.

The ITI will be managed and implemented by the Office for Intermediate Body (OIB), a separated and functional independent Unit of the GECT GO/EZTS GO that will act as intermediate body in

line with the provisions of Art. 11 of the Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013. Rules and responsibilities of the parties involved will be detailed in a specific agreement between the OIB of the GECT GO/EZTS GO and the Managing Authority and in the Description of the Management and Control System (DMCS) approved according to Art. 124 of the Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013.

The agreement will consider the detailed tasks, as referred in Art. 125 of the Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, delegated by the MA to the OIB of the GECT GO/EZTS GO, in relation to the support of information to the MC, the selection of operations as well as the financial management and control in the framework of ITI implementation.

The total funding allocated to ITI actions is € 10 million.

Table 20: Indicative financial allocation to ITI other than those mentioned under point 4.2 (aggregate amount)

Priority Axis	Indicative financial allocation (Union support) (€)
1 - Promoting innovation capacities for a more competitive area	0,00
2 - Cooperating for implementation of low carbon strategies and action plans	0,00
3 - Protecting and promoting natural and cultural resources	4.250.000,00
4 - Enhancing capacity building and cross-border governance	4.250.000,00
<b>Total</b>	<b>8.500.000,00</b>

#### 4.4. Contribution of planned interventions towards macro-regional and sea basin strategies, subject to the needs of the Programme area as defined by the relevant Member States and taking into account, where applicable, strategically important projects identified in those strategies (where appropriate)

(Reference: point (d) of Article 8(3) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

The overall eligible area of the Programme is included in two macro-regional strategies: the **EU Strategy for Adriatic-Ionian Region (EUSAIR)** and the **EU strategy for the Alpine Region (EUSALP)**, which is still being processed.

Besides, it is worth to remind that a third macro-regional strategy, the **Danube Strategy (EUSDR)**, affects the Programme area even though it does not cover the whole of it, Italy not being part of it.

The intersection of two areas of macro-regional strategies is therefore a major challenge for the Programme.

Taking into consideration the EC Report concerning the governance of macro-regional strategies<sup>7</sup>, the Programme will contribute to the implementation of the macro-regional strategies through the following actions:

<sup>7</sup> COM(2014) 284 final.

- continuous coordination and good information flow with Italian and Slovenian national contact points;
- specific monitoring, reporting and evaluation actions aiming at verifying the concrete contribution to the strategies;
- inclusion of dedicated information and publicity actions to the Programme stakeholders within the Communication Strategy.

### *EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR)*

The European Council of 13-14 December 2012 requested the European Commission to present a new EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region before the end of 2014.

The results of the extensive consultation with stakeholders, alongside with the public consultation launched by DG REGIO, supported the preparation of the Strategy. On 17<sup>th</sup> June 2014 the Commission adopted the Communication on the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian region (COM(2014) 357 final) - accompanied by an Action Plan - which has been endorsed by European Council on October 2014<sup>8</sup>.

The Adriatic-Ionian Region covers 4 EU countries (Croatia, Greece, Italy and Slovenia) and 4 non-EU countries (Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia).

The general Objective of the new Strategy is:

*“To promote sustainable economic and social prosperity of the Region through growth and jobs creation, by improving its attractiveness, competitiveness and connectivity, while preserving the environment and ensuring a healthy and balanced marine and coastal ecosystems.”*

There are clear synergies in the Programme strategy related to the implementation of EUSAIR Action Plan. In fact, all the Programme Specific Objectives present evident linkages with the 4 pillars that have been identified:

1. Blue growth: SO 1.1 and SO 4.1 will contribute to EUSAIR fostering research activities and knowledge transfer even in the sectors connected to Blue growth and improving cooperation activities among maritime and marine governance and services such as standardization of port operations and maritime monitoring systems;
2. Connecting the region (concerning maritime transport, intermodality and energy network): SO 2.1, even if with small scale interventions will intervene promoting low carbon development models improving sustainability in the energy and in the transport sectors and SO 4.1 will contribute in the implementation of shared management tools;
3. Environmental quality: especially with SO 3.2 and also with SO 3.3 and 3.4 EUSAIR strategy will be served improving management and protection measures in order to decrease threats to valuable protected areas and river/marine ecosystems, provide ecosystems services and promote a better conservation status of local biodiversity. Environment will be also preserved implementing new green technologies among which those contrasting marine debris;
4. Sustainable tourism: a very strong connection can be evidenced with SO 3.1 and SO 3.3, which will respectively promote the sustainable use of natural and cultural resources, valorizing their role as development assets and provide information about the direct and indirect impacts of sustainable tourism and encourage to avoid negative impacts of human activities on biodiversity and cultural heritage.

Moreover, "Strengthening R&D, Innovation and SMEs", as well as "Capacity Building, including communication" are two EUSAIR cross-cutting aspects involving the area. This is in line with the choice of introducing horizontal dimensions in the Programme strategy which consistently fits with the others (ICT, Education and SME) favouring synergic actions enhancing the above mentioned objectives.

<sup>8</sup> Endorsement of the European Union Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR), European Council, Brussels, 23-24 October 2014 and Council conclusions on the European Union Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR), General Affairs Council meeting, Brussels, 29 September 2014

### *EU Strategy for the Alpine Region (EUSALP)*

The EU Strategy for the Alpine Region will involve 7 countries: Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Liechtenstein, Slovenia and Switzerland. The main added value of the Strategy for the Alpine Region will consist of a new relationship between metropolitan, piedmont, and mountain areas. According to the political resolution adopted by the representatives of the 7 Alpine States and 15 Alpine Regions in Grenoble in October 2013, the new strategy will focus on 3 thematic priorities<sup>9</sup>. The Commission adopted a Communication and an Action Plan on the EU Strategy for the Alpine Region on 28 July 2015<sup>10</sup>.

The Strategy will build upon three general action-oriented pillars:

- Pillar 1. Growth and Innovation;
- Pillar 2. Mobility and Connectivity;
- Pillar 3. Environment and Energy.

Considering its declared objectives the Alpine Strategy will be properly embedded in the Programme. The main linkages may be envisaged for: the SO 1.1 and S.O. 3.4 (Pillar 1) contributing to innovation transfer and to the implementation of green technologies; SO 2.1 (Pillar 2) fostering environmental-friendly modes of transports and PA 2, 3 and 4 (Pillar 3) aiming at low carbon energy measures, natural and cultural resources protection and management and climate change adaptation actions. A notable contribution will be provided also through the actions of the cross-cutting themes of SME (Pillar 1), Education (Pillar 1) and ICT (Pillar 1 and 2).

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<sup>9</sup> 1. Ensuring sustainable growth and promoting full employment, competitiveness and innovation by consolidating and diversifying specific economic activities with a view to reinforcing mutual solidarity between mountain and urban areas;

2. Promoting a territorial development that is focused on an environmentally friendly mobility, reinforced academic cooperation, development of services, transports and communication infrastructures policy;

3. Promoting sustainable management of energy and natural and cultural resources and protecting the environment and preserving biodiversity and natural areas.

<sup>10</sup> COM(2015) 366 final.

## SECTION 5. IMPLEMENTING PROVISIONS FOR THE COOPERATION PROGRAMME

(Reference: Article 8(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

### 5.1 Relevant authorities and bodies

(Reference: Article 8(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Table 21: Programme authorities

(Reference: point (a)(i) of Article 8(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Authority/body	Name of authority/body and department or unit	Head of authority/body (position or post)
Managing Authority	Autonomous Region Friuli Venezia Giulia Central Directorate for Finance, Property, Coordination and Programming of Economic and EU Policies European Territorial Cooperation, State Aid and General Affairs Office	Manager of the organizational Unit
Certifying Authority	Autonomous Region Friuli Venezia Giulia Central Directorate for Finance, Property, Coordination and Programming of Economic and EU Policies Tributes, Fiscal Fulfilments, Personnel and EU Programming Expenditure Documents Control Office	Office Director
Audit Authority	Autonomous Region Friuli Venezia Giulia Presidency of the Region Directorate General Audit Office	Office Director



The body to which payments will be made by the Commission is:  
(Reference: point (b) of Article 8(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

- ☐ the Managing Authority
- ☒ the Certifying Authority

Table 22: Body or bodies carrying out control and audit tasks  
(Reference: points (a)(ii) and (iii) of Article 8(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Authority/body	Name of authority/body and department or unit	Head of authority/body (position or post)
Body or bodies designated to carry out control tasks Body or bodies designated to carry out control tasks	REPUBLIC OF ITALY: Autonomous Region Friuli Venezia Giulia/EU Structural Funds FLC Unit	Manager of the organizational Unit
	REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA: Government Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Development and European Cohesion Policy Control Division - ETC, IPA and IFM Programmes	Manager of the organizational Unit
Body or bodies designated to be responsible for carrying out audit tasks Body or bodies designated to be responsible for carrying out audit tasks	Autonomous Region Friuli Venezia Giulia / Presidency of the Region / Directorate General/Audit Office	Office Director
	Republic of Slovenia - Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Slovenia, Budget Supervision Office of the RS	Office Director

## 5.2 Procedure for setting up the joint secretariat

(Reference: point (a)(iv) of Article 8(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

In accordance with Article 23(2) of the Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013, the Managing Authority (MA), after consultation with participating Member States, shall set up the Joint Secretariat (JS) to support and assist the MA and the Monitoring Committee (MC) in carrying out their respective functions.

The JS is set up under the responsibility of the MA. For the JS recruitment, the MA shall aim at ensuring compliance with the principles of equal treatment, equality between men and women and non-discrimination. The staff composing the JS will be employed by Friuli Venezia Giulia Autonomous Region according to the Italian, National and Regional legislative framework and full time contracted under the rules set out for the Italian Public Administrations. The JS shall have



an appropriate staff (including a Head) and shall be hosted by the MA offices located in the premises of the Friuli Venezia Giulia Autonomous Region seat in Trieste (Italy).

The JS selection procedures shall be open to the citizens of the EU, with sound knowledge of the two National languages and English.

The JS will become fully operational as soon as the Cooperation Programme (CP) has been approved by the European Commission.

### 5.3 Summary description of the management and control arrangements

(Reference: point (a)(v) of Article 8(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

#### 5.3.1 Programme authorities and structures

According to the Regulation No. 1303/2013 there are no substantial changes in the functions of Programme authorities regarding the 2007-2013 period. Core Programme authorities will remain the same, ensuring institutional stability and smooth transition. In accordance of the Article 21-25 of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013, for the management and control of the Programme the following authorities and structures have been designated:

- MA: responsible for the management and the implementation of the Programme towards the European Commission;
- CA: responsible for certifying the declarations of expenditure and the applications for payment before their submission to the European Commission;
- AA: responsible for verifying the effective functioning of the management and control system. The AA will be assisted by a Group of Auditors composed by representatives of both MS participating in the Programme;
- MC: responsible for supervising and monitoring the Programme implementation and for selecting the operations;
- OIB: responsible for the management and implementation of the ITI. The role and functions of the OIB of the GECT GO/EZTS GO are described in Section 4;
- JS: it assists the MA and the MC in carrying out their respective functions;
- Representatives of MSs: National/Regional Authorities.

Following the positive 2007-2013 experience, the Slovene Info Point and regional support in Italy shall provide information to potential beneficiaries in their own territories.

More detailed provisions, relating to the management and control activities according to Article 124 of the Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 will be included in the DMCS and in the Programme guidance documents which will be adopted by the MC.

#### 5.3.1.a Managing Authority

The MA, assisted by the JS, is responsible for managing the Programme in accordance with the principle of sound financial management as described in Article 125 and 132 of the Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 and Article 23 of the Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013. It will ensure that the different Programme authorities and structures interact in a smooth way. MA role and functions are included in a specific organizational Unit functionally independent and separated from the other Authorities and FLC bodies in the Friuli Venezia Giulia Region.

#### 5.3.1.b Certifying Authority

The CA will carry out its functions in compliance with Article 126 of the Regulation (EU) 1303/2013. The CA shall receive the payments made by the Commission (pre-financing, interim payments and the payment of the final balance as defined in art. 77(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, and shall make payments to the lead beneficiary in accordance with Article 21 (2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013.

#### 5.3.1.c Audit Authority

The AA will carry out its functions in accordance with Articles 72, 122, 124, 127 and 128 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 and Articles 20, 21 and 25 of the Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013.

The AA will ensure that audits are carried out on the proper functioning of the management and control system and on an appropriate sample of projects in compliance with Article 127 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013. In accordance with Article 25 (2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013 the MSs agree that the AA will not be authorized to carry out directly the audit functions in the whole territory of the Programme. Each MS shall ensure and be responsible for the audits carried out on its territory with its own auditors and responsible for providing factual elements relating to expenditure on its territory that are required by AA in order to perform its assessment. The AA will be assisted by a GoA, comprising representatives of the MSs participating to the Programme, carrying out the duties provided for in Article 127 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013.

#### Group of Auditors

In line with Article 25(2) of the Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013, the AA shall be assisted by a GoA composed of representatives from each MS participating in the Programme and carrying out the functions provided for in Article 127 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013. On the basis of art. 25 (3) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013, the auditors shall be functionally independent of controllers who carry out verifications under Article 23 of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013. The GoA shall be set up within three months of the decision approving the Programme. It shall draw up its own rules of procedure and will be chaired by the AA for the Programme. Where MSs decide that audits on operations and on management and control system are carried out by a body other than the AA, the AA shall ensure that such bodies have the necessary functional independence as established by EU Regulation. On the basis of Articles 72(f) and 127(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, the decision on the body carrying out the system audits and the checks on expenditure will be taken by the AA, after consultation with the GoA, during the process of designing the audit strategy of the Programme.

#### 5.3.1.d Monitoring Committee

According to Article 47 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, within three months from the date of the notification of the EC decision adopting the Programme, both MSs participating in the Programme, in agreement with the MA, will set up a joint MC. The two MSs agreed to designate an equal number of voting and non-voting members with a transparent approach. The partnership principle laid down in Article 5 of the Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 will be ensured and MSs will aim to promote gender balance and equal opportunity in the membership of the MC. EC will be member of the MC in advisory capacity.

Detailed MC functioning provisions will be drawn up in the MC's Rules of Procedure to be adopted on its first meeting. As general rule, each MS has one vote on the basis of principle "One country one vote" and decisions are taken by consensus, the MC will be legally convened and decisions can be taken when 50%+1 voting members from each MS are present at the meeting. MC meetings will be held and chaired on a yearly rotational basis/alternatively by each MS. In order to enhance the legality and transparency of the MC procedures, to preserve the confidentiality of its work and to avoid any conflict of interests in the decision making process the MA shall request to MC members to sign a statement acknowledging their obligations.

Partners involved in the climate change shall be invited to MC meetings and shall be directly involved in defining project selection. The main MC functions are those described and listed in Article 49 and Article 110 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013. Among them, the MC shall examine and approve the methodology and criteria for selection of operations and select the projects financed by the Programme according with Article 12 of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013.

The MC may set up a PMG as bilateral technical working group to facilitate its decision-making process.

#### 5.3.1.e Intermediate Body (OIB)

In line with Article 11 of the Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013, the Intermediate Body for carrying out the management and implementation of an ITI as referred to in Article 36(3) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 shall be the OIB, a specific Unit functionally independent within the EGTC named “GECT GO/EZTS GO”. Its activities and functions will be ruled in a specific governance agreement signed by the MA and the OIB of the GECT GO/EZTS GO.

The OIB of the GECT GO/EZTS GO will:

- a) apply in the implementation of the ITI appropriate selection procedures and criteria approved by MC;
- b) support the work of the MC referred to in Article 47 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 and provide detailed data on the overall progress of the ITI;
- c) ensure that the beneficiaries are provided with a document setting out the conditions for support for each operation including the specific requirements concerning the products or services to be delivered under the operation, the financing plan, and the time-limit for execution;
- d) ensure that the data is collected, entered and stored in the monitoring system;
- e) support the MA in drawing up the annual and final implementation reports referred to in Article 50 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013.

#### 5.3.1. f Joint Secretariat (JS)

The main role of the JS is to closely cooperate with the MA on delivery of the Programme and effectively support the MC and CA in performing their tasks. The JS undertakes the day-to-day implementation of the Programme and provides information to potential beneficiaries about funding opportunities under the Programme and assists beneficiaries in the implementation of operations. The main tasks requested for JS functions/activities shall be detailed in a related Manual.

#### 5.3.1.g Representatives of Member States: National/Regional Authorities

MSs contribute to the Programme by respective National/Regional Authorities (Info Point, setting the First level Control system), representing the MSs and as such participating in the MC and taking part in the implementation of the Programme.

In line with the 2007-2013 experience, the **Slovenian Info Point** located in Štanjel (Slovenia) and established by National Authority - GODCP, shall support the MA in spreading the information on the implementation stages of the Programme across the Slovenian territory. The staff of the Info Point shall work in close coordination with the JS in the implementation of the following tasks:

1. act as a first “contact point” for potential beneficiaries to provide information and advice to the Project Partners in the Slovenian territory;
2. support the MA in the implementation of communication activities (including events, info-days, Communication Strategy);
3. advise and assist beneficiaries participating in approved operations;
4. inform stakeholders on achievements of the Programme;
5. support Programme management.

In Italy, the **Friuli Venezia Giulia Autonomous Region** and the **Veneto Region** shall support the MA in spreading the information on the implementation stages of the Programme across their territories.

Tasks to be carried out at local level in both regions crucially include project generation and contribution to partnerships building. The office in charge for these activities in Friuli Venezia Giulia will be functionally separated from the Managing Authority. The Veneto Region, given its geographical distance from the land border, will also be in charge of developing effective strategic approaches for a wider involvement of key actors of Venice area to the achievement of the overall Programme goal of a more cohesive cooperation area through information, communication and

widespread promotion activities targeted to potential new local beneficiaries and to the regional partnership of the content of the Programme as well as of the foreseen participation procedures (under the coordination of the JS).

In order to follow through the above outlined duties, both the Slovenian Info Point and Italian Regions will directly manage an appropriate share of TA resources.

### 5.3.2 Project cycle and procedures

#### 5.3.2.a Project generation and typologies

In the light of the 2007-2013 Evaluation Reports and in consideration of the new restricted Programme area, projects shall strengthen cohesion and contribute to the smart, sustainable and inclusive growth targeted by the Europe 2020 strategy.

Operations funded by the Programme will generally comply with the lead beneficiary principle as stated in the Art. 13 of the Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013. In case of EGTC, including Italian and Slovenian organisations, the GECT GO/EZTS GO can potentially apply as sole beneficiary, in its role of structure functionally independent from the OIB.

Following the positive 2007-2013 experience, the Programme relevant authorities and structures will provide information and support to potential project applicants also in findings cross border Project Partners. Wide information will be given to public procurement rules (new Directive 2014/24/EU). Possible adopted tools might be: a) reference to European guidelines on public procurement in the calls for tenders; b) ongoing training for some selected people in the MA; c) publication on the Programme website of the key- points of the guidelines; d) contact person in charge of solving beneficiaries' doubts about public procurement guidelines application. For such purpose, thematic workshops and seminars will be organized in the Programme area.

The Programme will support 3 typologies of projects as follows:

**1) Strategic projects**, which assume a greater relevance in terms of implementation of the EU and Programme strategies concentrating efforts for a stronger cohesion of the new eligible area. By concentrating significant resources on specific thematic issues, strategic projects aim at producing positive and long-lasting outcomes in the entire cooperation area, strengthening cooperation opportunities and fostering joint experimentation and implementation. These projects ask for specific and increased institutional and technical competences in order to ensure deeper impact and benefits for the whole cooperation area.

A limited number of strategic projects will be implemented in a top down approach under Priority axes 1, 2, 3 and 4 for a total allocation amount of € 27.000.000 (ERDF) with the following breakdown:

- Priority 1 (TO 1, IP 1b): 6 M€ for 2 projects;
- Priority 2 (TO 4, IP 4e): 6 M€ for 2 projects;
- Priority 3 (TO 6, IP 6c): 7,5 M€ for 3 projects;
- Priority 3 (TO 6, IP 6d): 2,5 M€ for 1 project;
- Priority 3 (TO 6, IP 6f): 2,5 M€ for 1 project;
- Priority 4 (TO 11): 2,5 M€ for 1 project focused on civil protection.

Strategic projects will be based on the principle of **equal partnership**, i.e. each project will include at least two Italian Partners (one from Friuli Venezia Giulia Region and one from Veneto Region) and two Slovenian. The principle shall be applied only for this type of projects. Given their strategic nature, strategic projects will be selected through an institutional **top-down** approach through which **focused themes** will be identified in order to foster their expected impact and contribution to the overall Programme strategy. Each strategic project will count on financial amounts ranging approximately between 1.5 and 4 M€.

**2) Standard projects** with an amount of about € 37.000.000 (ERDF) will be implemented in a bottom up approach under Priority Axis 1, 2, 3, 4 **through public calls**. Quality assessment will be based on standardized forms and scores guaranteeing transparency, equal treatment and ensuring an objective use of selection criteria. Lessons learnt from evaluation report of the previous Programme period underline that excessively wide partnerships caused both coordination problems at project level and administrative costs to the Programme management. Following such consideration, the Programme will limit the number of Project Partners up to 6, only in well justified cases bigger partnerships will be allowed. The suggested financial size for a standard project ranges from 1 to 1.5 M€.

**3) Projects for the ITI implementation**, in the scope of Priority Axes 3 and 4 for a total amount of € 8.500.000 (ERDF). In principle, Project generation principles and procedure within the ITI will be ruled in agreement by the OIB, a specific Unit functionally independent within the GECT GO/EZTS GO and the MA, according to what set in paragraph 5.3.1.e. In principle, projects under the ITI could be implemented also by the EGTC “GECT GO/EZTS GO” in its role of beneficiary as structure functionally independent from the OIB .

#### 5.3.2.b Projects application

The MA, with the support of the JS, launches official calls for proposals via relevant information channels.

The information and application package will include the necessary guidance to assist partnerships in the preparation of their application (selection criteria and assessment process included).

Documentation for beneficiaries will be always available in Italian and Slovene versions.

ITI Projects will be managed by the OIB of the “GECT GO/EZTS GO” as ruled in the contract with the MA.

The application process will be carried out in an on-line system and will foster the use of the Harmonized Implementation Tools (HIT).

#### 5.3.2.c Strategic and standard projects selection and assessment

The selection of projects proposals will be carried out in line with Article 12 of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013 through predetermined assessment procedures - one for each project typology - based on clear, objective, and transparent criteria, in line with Article 18 of the ETC Regulation and Regulation N. 481/2014.

Selection criteria for the assessment of strategic and standard projects will be approved by the MC during the earliest stage of the Programme.

The aim of the selection process is to select projects that contribute the most to achieving Programme objectives. This process begins when the project applications are received and ends with selection of the projects. Project application will be submitted by the Lead Partner (LP) in electronic form to the JS, who will ensure transparency and traceability of the entire process.

There will be four phases within strategic and standard projects selection process:

1. call for proposals with received project proposals;
2. assessment process divided in two main steps:
  - a. administrative and eligibility check;
  - b. quality assessment;
3. decision and approval of ranking lists by the MC;
4. contracting of selected projects.

The entire procedure shall last 8 months, from the deadline for submitting project proposals to the MC approval of the final ranking list and MA contracting.

For each project application an **administrative and eligibility check** will be carried out by the JS in order to verify its compliance to the requirements of the related call. Administrative and eligibility criteria will be defined and approved by the MC and will concern the formal check of the submitted project applications such as:



- submission within the deadline;
- completeness of project application package;
- requirements for the partnership and geographical eligibility;
- compliance with the Programme objectives and indicators;
- requirements related to the financial amount of the budget and project duration;
- financial capacity of the Project Partners;
- evidence of no double funding of activities.

The **quality assessment** may be carried out by external experts. Quality selection criteria will be used to assess project applications that have passed the administrative and eligibility check. Such assessment will be based on some common set of general criteria, among which:

**1. Strategic assessment criteria:**

- cross-border relevance;
- compliance with relevant regional, national and European strategic and regulatory framework;
- clear intervention logic, especially in terms of choice of project goals and foreseen actions as well as of target setting in relation to target groups;
- inclusive approach strengthening the cohesion of the whole Programme area and thus consolidating the corresponding EU policy;
- possible complementarity with projects funded by LIFE programme 2014-20;
- positive and lasting effects for the growth of the Programme area;
- concrete outputs and sustainable measurable results;
- being in line with the principle of sustainable development as set out in article 8 CPR.

**2. Operational assessment criteria:**

- compliance with principles of sound financial management, in particular value for money, cost-effectiveness, and economic expediency;
- partnership relevance, size and coherence in terms of complementary competencies of partners and of their relevance according to the objectives of the project;
- focus on measurable results;
- in case of studies/strategies/analyses or concepts, their necessity must be illustrated and the probability of their actual implementation must be high;
- sound project communication strategy and tools.

Moreover the **three horizontal principles** - sustainable development; equality of opportunities and discrimination avoidance; and gender equality - have to be considered and actively applied in the generation and implementation of every project, furthermore green public procurement will be privileged where applicable. Wide information will be given to public procurement rules (new Directive 2014/24/EU).

After the quality assessment phase, the provisional ranking list will be elaborated. The Programme will respect State Aid legal framework (such as GBER and De Minimis rules). The JS will technically check the data consistency of the provisional ranking list and prepare the shortlist of applications that have gained the highest score and whose relevancy for the State Aid rules will be assessed. Afterwards, the JS will complete the provisional ranking list and submit it to the MC as basis for the ERDF funding decisions.

In order to ensure an adequate timing to all selection procedures, MC will engage itself to approve the relevant ranking lists within the required time-frame agreed from their first presentation.

Approved and rejected Lead beneficiaries will receive formal communication about the outcomes of the selection process with the description of the procedure on how to request a review of the decision.

Within this paragraph general methods and principles of project assessment and selection are described while specific guiding principles are given under description of each of investment priorities in Section 2.

#### 5.3.2.d ERDF Subsidy Contract

Following the decision of projects approval, the MA will use a standard form of subsidy contract approved by the MC and lay down further details concerning the responsibilities and liabilities of the beneficiaries. The subsidy contract is signed by the MA and will be addressed to the project Lead beneficiary (hereinafter referred to as Lead Partner).

In order to ensure a solid legal basis for a smooth project implementation and the compliance of the project with legal provisions on EU and National level, the MA will provide the projects with a partnership agreement template approved by the MC. The submitted and signed partnership agreement, which the Lead Partner has made with its Project Partners, is the prerequisite for the MA to prepare the subsidy contract.

The contract for the ERDF commitment regulates, at least, the following aspects:

- legal framework of the commitment of funding;
- conditions specific project (ERDF amount, project budget, project start, the end of the project);
- terms and conditions of eligibility of expenditure;
- requirements for the changes in costs;
- deadlines for the accounts and the disbursement of funds;
- yearly expenditure target and related provisions for withdrawal of funds;
- recovery of benefits paid without justification (of sums unduly paid);
- monitoring requirements (legally binding commitments, expenditure, indicators);
- information and communication requirements;
- compliance with the Communication Strategy of the Programme.

Moreover, the National co-financing to each project beneficiary, up to 15%, will be ensured by the MSs depending on the legal status of each beneficiary and following the rules that will be drawn up in the description of the Management and Control System.

#### 5.3.2.e Resolution of complaints

##### **Complaints related to selection and assessment procedures**

The final decision about the selection and assessment of projects lies with the MC. Project lead applicants will be formally informed about the reasons why an application was not eligible or approved.

Any complaints in relation to decisions made by the MA/JS during project implementation on the basis of the subsidy contract or MC decision shall be submitted by the project Lead Partner to the MA/JS that will examine and provide the answer (in cooperation with the MC if necessary).

##### **Complaints related to the National control system**

Project Lead Partners or Project Partners that have complaints related to the National control system set up in accordance with Article 23(4) of the Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013, can file the complaint to the institution responsible for the financial control of the relevant Member State following national/regional procedures put in place in accordance with Article 74(3) of the Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 and inform the MA accordingly.

##### **Other complaints**

Other complaints (i.e. general complaints from citizens, NGOs, civil society organisations, etc.) will be also treated, according to the subject.

Further information on the procedure for the submission of complaints will be laid down in the relevant Programme documents properly communicated to applicants, beneficiaries and general public.

#### 5.3.3 Financial control of beneficiaries, First Level Control

According to Article 23 (4) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 and considering that the MA will not carry out verifications under Article 125 (4) (a) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 throughout the whole Programme area, each MS designates the bodies responsible for carrying out such verifications in relation to beneficiaries on its territory (FLCs).

Each MS shall set up a control system in order to verify the delivery of the co-financed products and services, the soundness of the declared expenditure for operations or parts of operations implemented on its territory, and the compliance of such expenditure and of related operations, or parts of those operations, with Community rules and National rules.

For this purpose each MS shall designate controllers responsible of the verification of the legality and regularity of the expenditure declared by each beneficiary participating in the operation. Where the delivery of the co-financed products and services can be verified only with respect to the entire operation, the verification shall be performed by the controller of the MS where the lead beneficiary is located.

For the Republic of Slovenia, the responsibility of the FLC lies with the Government Office for Development and EU Cohesion Policy/Control Division - ETC, IPA and IFM Programmes in Ljubljana. In Italy, FLCs will be carried out by the Autonomous Region Friuli Venezia Giulia EU Structural Funds FLC Unit in Trieste that is a separated and functional independent Unit from the MA.

First level controls for projects funded under the ITI will be carried out by the First Level Control structure competent for the territory where their beneficiaries are located.

The above mentioned FLCs will bear responsibility for the setting up and the execution of the control system in order to validate the expenditures at the regional/national level (including first level control of expenditures incurred at the national level and compliance of operations with the national law and EU regulation).

Each MS will do its utmost to ensure that the expenditure is verified and confirmed by the controllers in due time after the end of each reporting period in order to allow the Lead beneficiary to submit the progress report to the MA/JS at the date set in the subsidy contract and so that the CA can regularly claim for reimbursement of the expenditure to the EC.

With regard to technical assistance payments to the MA/JS, the MA ensures that the expenditure is certified in line with the control system set up by the Member State on whose territory the MA has been designated.

In order to help ensuring the effective Programme implementation, the MA will organize periodical meetings among MA, JS, CA and, if needed, AA, representatives of the MSs and National controllers.

Further details on the control systems will be provided in the description of the Management and Control System.

#### **5.3.4 Reporting procedure and reimbursement to beneficiaries**

According to provisions of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, the MA is responsible for the proper implementation of the Programme as well as for its monitoring. To this end, beneficiaries will provide project-specific technical and financial information through progress and final reports that will be delivered by means of the on-line project reporting systems referred to in paragraph 5.3.n of this CP.

The reporting will be provided by the Lead Partner on behalf of the whole partnership, giving evidence, at least, of project management, partners' involvement, development of work packages, timing, target groups reached along with project's main outputs and results. Additional topics may be identified by the MC during Programme implementation, according to Programme's evaluation requirements.

As far as reimbursement is concerned, modalities for reporting project-related expenditures will be defined in the subsidy contract. Requests for reimbursement shall include information about methodology of calculation of co-financing, details on expenses and relating shares among partners. In accordance with Art. 132 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, all expenses have to be duly certified by appropriate supporting documents.

The MA, assisted by the JS, will ensure to beneficiaries all suitable information on reporting and reimbursement procedures. Project implementation documents will be published on the Programme website.

#### **5.3.5 Annual and final implementation reports**



In accordance with Article 14 of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013, the MA will submit to the Commission the implementation reports in line with the requirements of Article 50 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013. The MC will approve the implementation reports before their sending to the Commission. A final report on implementation will be submitted to the Commission by 31 December 2023.

The closure of the Programme will be carried out in compliance with Article 141 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 by the competent Programme Authorities of the 2014-2020 Programme. The Programme closure will be prepared to a maximum within the eligibility period of the 2014-2020 Programme to limit the closure activities and costs to be financed by the MSs or afterwards, by the following 2021-2027 Programme.

#### **5.3.6 Programme evaluation**

The Programme has been subject to an independent ex-ante evaluation with the aim of improving the overall quality of the Programme and to optimize the allocation of budgetary resources and the quantification of target values in the performance framework. In accordance with Articles 56 and 114 of the Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, the MA will draw up an evaluation plan for the Programme. The evaluation plan shall be submitted to the first meeting of the MC.

One or several evaluations will be carried out to assess effectiveness, efficiency and impact of the Programme on the basis of the evaluation plan. All evaluations will be examined by the MC and sent to the Commission.

By 31 December 2020, the MA will submit to the Commission a report summarizing the findings of evaluations carried out during the programming period, including an assessment of the main outputs and results of the Programme.

#### **5.3.7 Computerized exchange of data and Programme monitoring**

Computerized systems for the management and monitoring of Programme and project data will be set up in time for the launch of first call and in any case by 31 December 2015. Online project reporting systems will be set up in compliance with the requirements set out in Article 122(3) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013. These systems will allow exchanges of information among beneficiaries and the MA, CA, AA and FLCs to be carried out by means of electronic data exchange systems. The system will facilitate interoperability and allow beneficiaries to submit all information as referred to in Article 122 (3) only once.

The development of the Programme computerized systems will take into consideration the database and online functions already implemented in the context of the 2007-2013 Programme, upgrading all functions in order to fulfil the E-Cohesion requirements and to foster the harmonization with the HIT Tools.

#### **5.3.8 Contribution of the Member States to the financing of Technical Assistance**

The Technical Assistance (TA) is jointly financed by the MSs participating to the Programme. In accordance with Article 17 of the Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013, TA is financed by a maximum of 6% of the total ERDF amount allocated to the Programme and co-financed by the MSs participating in the Programme. Details on the TA budget are laid out in Section 3.

The amount of the National co-financing of the TA budget will be guaranteed according to the quota detailed in the agreement signed by the Members States in compliance to Art. 8 (9) of the EU Regulation No 1299/2013 and further detailed in the TA project/s. Technical and financial details for the TA expenditures will be laid out in the TA Manual.

#### **5.3.9 Information and communication**

In line with Articles 115 and 116 of the Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, a Communication Strategy will be drafted and submitted to the MC no later than 6 months after the adoption of the Programme to ensure transparency and information to relevant partners and stakeholders.

The Strategy will define specific communication objectives, target audiences, messages as well as tactics and tools to support the achievement of Programme goals. It will take into account Article 115 and Annex XII of the Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013. The Strategy will be valid for the whole programming period, complemented by annual work plans. All Programme and project communication activities might be branded consistently to a harmonized branding introduced on a voluntary basis by the Programme.

The MSs shall support the MA to ensure effective application of the information and communication requirements by taking appropriate steps to disseminate information and provide publicity within their territory. In this regard, the Slovenian Info Point as well as the two Italian Regions will provide support in fulfilling the communication tasks and provisions.

As first step of the Programme Communication Strategy, the TF joined the INTERACT initiative related to the joint branding.

The working language mainly used among the Programme structures is English. All approved Programme documents for beneficiaries will be available in Slovene and Italian.

#### 5.3.10 Anti-fraud measures

In line with Article 125 paragraph 4, letter c, of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 providing for the establishment of effective and proportionate anti-fraud measures, the MA shall carry out periodic assessments of the risk of fraud, considering the complexity of the Programme.

In particular, measures shall take into account the total amount of the budget; the amount of each investment priority; the nature of the beneficiary, the frequency and scope of check on the spot carried out, the outcome of reviews of FLC and Second Level Control.

Following evaluation of the risk of fraud, the MA has in place a number of effective and proportionate measures to reduce risks to an acceptable level, structured approach to the fight against fraud on the basis of four key elements of the cycle (i.e. Fraud prevention, detection, correction and prosecution). Additional details will be included in the DMCS.

#### 5.4 Apportionment of liabilities among participating Member States in case of financial corrections imposed by the Managing Authority or the Commission

Without prejudice to the Member States' responsibility for detecting and correcting irregularities and for recovering amounts unduly paid according to Article 122(2) of the Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, the MA shall ensure that any amount paid as a result of an irregularity is recovered from the Lead Partner. In accordance with Article 27 of the Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013, the Project Partners shall repay the Lead Partner any amounts unduly paid.

If the Lead Partner does not succeed in securing repayment from a Project Partner or if the MA does not succeed in securing repayment from the Lead Partner, the Member State on whose territory the Project Partner concerned is located shall reimburse the MA the amount unduly paid to that Project Partner according to Article 27(3) of the Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013. The MA is responsible for reimbursing the amounts recovered to the general budget of the Union, in accordance with the apportionment of liabilities among the participating Member States as laid down below. The MA will reimburse the funds to the Union once the amounts are recovered from the LP/PP/MS.

Should the MA bear any legal expenses for recovery recourse proceedings - initiated after consultation and in mutual agreement with the respective MS - even if the proceedings are unsuccessful it will be reimbursed by the MS hosting the LP or PP responsible for the said procedure.

Since Member States have the overall liability for the ERDF support granted to LPs or PPs located on their territories, they shall ensure that - prior to certifying expenditure - any financial corrections required will be secured and they shall seek to recover any amounts unduly paid as a result of an irregularity caused by a beneficiary located in their territory. Where appropriate according to its legislation and in line with Directive 2011/7/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 February 2011, a MS may also charge interest on late payments.

In accordance with Article 122(2) of the Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, irregularities shall be reported by the Member State in which the expenditure is paid by the Lead Partner or Project Partner implementing the project. The Member State shall, at the same time, inform the MA and the AA. Specific procedures in this respect will be laid down in the Description of the Management and Control System.

The Member States will bear liability in connection with the use of the Programme ERDF funding as follows:

- each Member State bears liability for possible financial consequences of irregularities caused by the Lead Partners and Project Partners located on its territory;
- for a systemic irregularity or financial correction on Programme level that cannot be linked to a specific Member State, the liability shall be jointly borne by the Member States in proportion to the ERDF claimed to the European Commission for the period, which forms the basis for the financial correction;
- for Technical Assistance expenditure incurred by the MA, the liability related to administrative irregularities shall be borne by the MA;
- for the Technical Assistance expenditure incurred by the Member States the liability shall be borne by the Member State concerned.

Moreover, in order to ensure the Programme implementation and enhance its highest effectiveness and on the basis of the 2007-2013 experience, the MC shall approve some strict management rules in order to prevent any de-commitment of Programme funds.

### 5.5 Use of the Euro (where applicable)

Not applicable.

### 5.6 Involvement of partners

The consultation process has followed the general principles of the European Code of Conduct on Partnership (EC Delegated Reg. No. 240/2014). Thus the Programme has ensured that the principles of transparency and accountability, effectiveness and coherence have been applied when consulting its stakeholders.

In order to support a more pro-active involvement of the relevant partners in the programming phase, a public consultation process for potential stakeholders was carried out to define the new strategy for the Programme.

The public consultation process has been a great opportunity in order to verify challenges and needs, collect perceived situation of the CBC area and desired changes, suggestions and strategic recommendations to be expected in the Programme.

The consultation phase consisted of the following steps:

1. the kick-off meeting about the consultation process in order to share the stakeholders consultation methodology and approve the timetable of activities;
2. consultation of the Programme Partners through the launch of an ad hoc written procedure concluded on May 2014;
3. the on-line consultation through the publication of an on-line survey on the dedicated web page in order to promote the pro-active involvement of potential stakeholders in the building of the new Programme strategy at an early stage of the process.

Ad-hoc guidance document was elaborated summarizing the set of Thematic Objectives and Investment Priorities for building the strategy and the intervention logic of the Cooperation Programme.

The survey has been launched on June 18<sup>th</sup> until July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2014 and the notification about the survey has been sent out by e-mail to 964 addresses.

264 recipients answered the survey corresponding to about 28% of the total questioned partners. More than 1500 individual comments were treated.

Also climate change partners have been involved in stakeholders consultation (See annex 6).

The partners were asked to fill the survey grid including two main sections:

- Selection and ranking - indicating the degree of relevance (high, medium, low) -among the 11 TOs and 36 IPs as defined by the legislative package, with the option to add personal comments justifying that choice;
- Suggestions for the next CP improvements (about main development changes, needs to be satisfied, actions to be implemented and stakeholders to be involved).

Before starting the programming the relevant authorities of both countries set up a Task Force (TF) in order to prepare the INTERREG V-A Italy-Slovenia 2014-2020 Programme and supervise the programming procedures.

The first TF official meeting took place in Trieste on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2013, and was followed by other 12 meetings before the formal submission of the CP to the European Commission. The TF consists of representatives of National and Regional authorities from both Member States. Representatives of the Commission were regularly invited and participated in the programming group sessions as member in advisory capacity. Moreover, in order to support the work of the TF for particular issues, ad-hoc Working Groups have been established and met 10 times continuously leading to new proposals and improvements of the Programme.

During the programming process, the Technical Assistance and the ex-ante evaluator took part in several meetings. At the start of the process, a data and policy analysis of the Programme area and a result analysis of CBC Programme Italy-Slovenia 2007-2013 projects were drafted and discussed. The outcomes of these two analyses gave input to a SWOT analysis of the Programme area.

Ex-ante and SEA report were conducted alongside the programming process, which enabled that their recommendation were fully considered in the final Programme.

This partnership approach will continue during the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Programme.

The partnership principle will be properly applied also in the process of implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Programme. At CP level the partnership concerning monitoring and evaluation will be enabled through the membership in the Monitoring Committee. Many of the partners currently involved in the preparation of the CP are foreseen to be involved in the MC in the future.

## SECTION 6: COORDINATION

In compliance with Art. 10 and Annex I of the Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, coordination and use of synergies with other European Structural and Investment (ESI) Funds as well as with other relevant Union policies, strategies and instruments, including those in the framework of the Union's External Action Member States, have to be pursued.

Mechanisms and bodies established in the Member States to ensure effective coordination in Italy and Slovenia are as follows:

### 6.1 Coordination in Slovenia

In Slovenia<sup>11</sup> the **Government office for Development and European Cohesion Policy (GODCP)** coordinates the development documents, monitors the implementation of development policies and its programmes and is responsible also for the coordination of documents pertaining to development planning and compliance of national development planning programmes and the European Union and other international organisations' development documents. European Territorial Cooperation and Financial Mechanism Office, European Territorial Cooperation Division is also placed within GODCP. Through ETC cross-border programmes, Slovenia will favour common development strategies.

The contents common to all cross-border programmes and to transnational programmes in the vast majority have their place among the measures of the Danube, the Adriatic-Ionian and Alpine future macro-regions.

The coordination of the preparation of the Partnership Agreement, the Operational Programme for Cohesion Funds and cross-border cooperation programmes takes place within one institution, which both in the documentation preparation stage and during implementation provides for the complementarities and synergies of various funds at national and regional levels. At NUTS 3 level, Slovenia prepares regional development programmes in accordance with balanced regional development legislation to be used with investments from different sources of financing in key development areas based on territorial challenges and opportunities.

The coordination of the preparation of macro-regional strategies is the responsibility of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, while the coordination and implementation of individual elements of strategies and the preparation of projects are the responsibility of individual ministries.

According to Partnership Agreement between Slovenia and European Commission for the period 2014-2020 (30/10/2014) the **Inter-ministerial Coordination Committee** will provide for coordination between ESI funds that are being indirectly implemented with other EU instruments as well as other national instruments and the EIB. Membership of the Inter-ministerial Coordination Committee will be represented by the MAs of all the Funds and participating ministries.

### 6.2 Coordination in Italy

About the national governance for cohesion policy, Italy will ensure coordination with reference to the following regulatory framework.

According to article 10 of Law Decree no. 101/2013 ratified with amendments by Law n. 125/2013, in order to ensure the achievement of the objectives set out in Article 119, fifth paragraph of the Italian Constitution and strengthen the action of planning, coordination, monitoring and supporting of the cohesion policy, the Agency for territorial cohesion has been established under the supervision of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers. Functions related to cohesion policy are divided between the Presidency Council of Ministers and the Agency.

<sup>11</sup>Information about coordination in Slovenia is based on the following documents: »Partnership Agreement between Slovenia and European Commission for the period 2014-2020« (30/10/2014) and "Responsibilities of Government office for development and European cohesion policy" available at: [http://www.svrk.gov.si/en/about\\_the\\_office/responsibilities/](http://www.svrk.gov.si/en/about_the_office/responsibilities/)



At national level, the Italian Partnership Agreement, adopted on 29th October 2014 by the European Commission confirms the Strategic coordination group for the ETC (established by decree of the Head of Department DPS no. 33 of 27th April 2010, amended by Decree no. 9 of 12th April 2011) and the establishment of national committees accompanying Italy's participation in the territorial cooperation programmes, one for each of the interregional and transnational programmes in which Italy participates and one for the Italy-Croatia Cross-border Cooperation Program, because of the wide cooperation area and the number of eligible Italian regions.

### **6.3 Coordination during the implementation of the Programme**

The following activities have and will be undertaken by the Programme to ensure coordination with other ESI-funded programmes:

- When submitting project proposals the applicants will have to take responsibility that the proposed project is not financed by other ESI-funded programmes and will have to describe if and how the project is linked with other community, national and regional programmes and policies;
- During the process of project evaluation additionally, synergies and possible overlapping of the submitted project proposals with other projects and programmes will be checked. The Programme authorities and structures will communicate and spread the results and outputs of projects funded by the Cooperation Programme as will be set out in the Communication Strategy. The Programme authorities and structures will have frequent contacts with representatives of other ETC programmes in the cooperation area and with the INTERACT programme to ensure an active exchange of information and experience about diverse projects and initiatives. The macro-regionals strategies, which will be set up for the Programme area, will also help to better coordinate the Programme with other ESI-funded programmes;
- Regarding the EAFRD and the EMFF, the Programme is not developing significant activities dedicated to agriculture or fisheries; however, the objectives of sustainable development, the protection of the natural environment, conflicts of use of land or at sea, interventions related to ports and maritime activities or the diversification of tourism constitute relevant issues for projects of the Programme. Taking into account the fact that the Programme is not specifically dedicated to ESF priorities, the coordination with ESF programmes will be less systematic and will concern in particular actions regarding social inclusion, education, vocational training and cross-border labour market;
- The Programme Partners will take respective measures to coordinate activities under the Cooperation Programme with other ESI-funded programmes covering their territory.

### **6.4 Coordination with other European Union instruments**

In the implementation of projects, it will be considered the consistency of contents with the programmes Horizon 2020, COSME and SME's Instrument. In particular the consistency will be supervised with regard to issues such as research and innovation and competitiveness of SMEs (Axis 1). Projects related to protection of biodiversity, territorial geology, climate and environmental protection and safeguard (Axes 1, 3 and 4) will be also evaluated for their consistency with the LIFE programme as well as with LIFE integrated projects.

In Slovenia Horizon 2020 will be accompanied in its implementation by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport while LIFE programme will be accompanied by the Ministry for Agriculture and the Environment.

In Italy the Agency for the Promotion of European Research, in close cooperation with "Ministry of Education, University and Research (MIUR)", will provide advice, support and assistance for participation in national and European programmes with particular reference to Horizon 2020 while the Ministry of the Environment and Protection of Land and Sea (MATTM) will handle the implementation of LIFE Programme.

When submitting a project proposal, applicants will have to describe the coherence and complementarities of their project with other Union instruments of relevance for the topics addressed by their proposals.

At Programme level coordination and complementarities shall be achieved by clearly communicating, especially in the terms of reference, and by taking into account in the phase of project evaluation that the Programme will not supplement the above mentioned programmes but support projects that provide for a cross-border dimension of these issues.

### 6.5 Coordination with national and regional funding instruments

The projects supported by the Programme have the potential to improve national, regional and local policies and related funding instruments. With regard to the principle of proportionality and within the given limits the Programme will seek to coordinate with national and regional funding instruments.

The Member States will take respective measures to coordinate activities under the Programme with national and regional funding instruments in place in their territory.

In order to ensure coherence and complementarities with national and regional policies in the projects evaluation phase, appropriate selection criteria assessing compliance with the provisions of national and regional planning documents will be activated. For instance, as for Friuli Venezia Giulia is concerned it will be assessed the coherence with the *Regional Strategy S3* (adopted by Decision of the Regional Government n. 708, dated April 17, 2015) and its priorities and technological trajectories, in relation to Axis 1; as well as with the provisions given by the *Plan of Administrative Strengthening* adopted by the Regional Administration on 30 December 2014 and currently still in progress, with regard to Axis 4, and also with the six strategic priorities of the *Plan of Regional Performance* (Decision n.1332 dated 11 July 2014) with regard to all 4 Axes of the Programme, as well as the national and regional strategies for the Internal Areas (so called, *ITI Internal Regional Areas*).

With regard to the measures implemented to ensure coordination between the different levels national, regional and territorial, the Regional Administration of Friuli Venezia Giulia has adopted the approach of integrated and cross-cutting programming in order to strengthen synergies arising from the integration with other programmes and complementarities among ESI Funds providing tools of multi-level governance.

With reference to the Veneto Region, the United Planning Section is in charge of coordination and integrated programming of ESI Funds in the Europe 2020 and European Regulation frameworks. The Section also supports all those general partnership consultation activities dealing with cross-cutting themes as well as renders technical and operative assistance on discussion and negotiating tables according to the partnership code of conduct provisions.

Also, regular meetings shall be held with the Managing Authorities of other neighbouring Interreg V-A Programmes. In particular, there could be the involvement of MAs of Programmes Austria-Italy, Italy-Croatia, Slovenia-Hungary and Slovenia-Austria in order to focus on issues such as programme implementation, common management procedures, project implementation and also in order to create synergies and avoid double financing.

## SECTION 7. REDUCTION OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE BURDEN FOR BENEFICIARIES

Thanks to Cohesion Policy Reform, European Commission promotes a better simplification of ESI Funds management, focusing on administrative burden reduction for beneficiaries, asking for ad hoc measures to be defined into the Programmes.

Pursuing this relevant aim, the Programme intends to put in place adequate actions related to the main administrative obstacles encountered during the past programming period.

As outlined in the EC report *“Measuring the impact of changing regulatory requirements to administrative cost and administrative burden of managing EU Structural Funds (ERDF and Cohesion Funds)”*, the highest contribution to the overall burden at the EU-level comes from preparation and submission of the funding application. While, within the activities performed for project administration, financial management and monitoring were considered as the greatest burden, followed by activities related to publicity requirements, record keeping, and verification/audits.

In the 2007-2013 programming period, an administrative burden for the beneficiaries was the lack of harmonization among national eligibility rules, which caused disparities among Project Partners. Moreover, non-harmonized budget line definitions caused several constraints to beneficiaries involved in more than one ETC Programme, due to very different approaches followed by the Programmes.

The on-going evaluation of the CBC Programme Italy-Slovenia 2007-2013 identified the main administrative requirements imposed on beneficiaries for the Programme implementation. Moreover, during consultation process, stakeholders have underlined the main problems they have met. In particular:

- Long-time selection procedures;
- Many changes in the applicable rules during the implementation period;
- Need for a wider and more homogenous information and communication;
- Lack of web-based tools;
- Considerable percentage of ineligible projects proposal mainly due to eligible criteria not fulfilled;
- Monitoring system not always updated.

A light set of rules and simple administration procedures are pre-conditions for an effective Programme driving the expected changes in the Programme area. This makes the reduction of administrative burden a key target.

Management and control requirements applicable to structural funds call for a careful handling of the public spending processes and a good balance between simplification and control has to be achieved by:

- Learning from previous experiences, especially focusing on simplification and standardization of the selection procedures;
- Using of the Harmonized Implementation Tools (HIT) and other projects developed by the INTERACT Programme in cooperation with ETC Programmes in order to simplify and streamline Programme implementation among them;
- Applying to the possible extent the simplified cost options available for the 2014-2020 period;
- Applying E-Cohesion principles to the overall Programme procedures;
- Simplification of the monitoring system, application procedure and reporting.

### Learning from past experiences



According to the lessons learnt during 2007-2013 implementation, the Programme should tackle the following challenges to speed up administrative processes:

- early approval of the MC Rules of Procedures (pre-agreement at TF level). Such rules will include a set of clear provisions to implement faster procedures and to preserve the legality at decision making level, as well as strict financial and implementing rules at project level;
- pre-agreement at TF level on the selection criteria and on a provisional action plan for the multi-annual planning of the public calls before the CP adoption by the European Commission, to be formally approved by the MC at its first meeting;
- set up and convene the MC within 1 month from the date of notification to the MS of the Commission decision adopting the Programme;
- setting up a “Programme Management Group” in order to facilitate the decision-making process;
- continuity of the role played by Programme structures, such as Info Point in Slovenia and regional support in Italy, in supporting beneficiaries;
- enhancing the current cooperation between the Italian and Slovene FLCs units, by increasing the exchange of information and sharing solutions on common issues;
- organizing targeted meetings with LPs to improve the knowledge and the practical implementation of the Programme procedures;
- different sets of simplification measures will be released and applied following the Programme life cycle ( e.g. application, implementation, reimbursement, closure, etc.).

### **Harmonized Implementation Tools (HIT)**

The Harmonized Implementation Tools, promoted and implemented by INTERACT Programme, represent a set of simplification measures aimed at reducing administrative burden both for beneficiaries and Programme management structures.

The INTERACT HIT (application form, reporting forms, administrative, eligibility and assessment criteria, etc.) will ensure that the focus of the documentation lies on the essential components, for a good cooperation project.

Furthermore, since many Programmes will use the same HIT approach, it will be useful for applicants applying for funding from different ETC Programmes. The HIT will be taken into account in drafting calls for proposals and application packages.

### **Simplified cost options**

A simple set of rules and procedures are pre-conditions for an effective Programme implementation. The adoption of the simplified cost options deriving from the ESI Regulations, merged with the experience of the 2007-2013 period, will contribute to a more correct use of Funds, reducing the time and workload spent on verification and control procedures.

To widespread the knowledge of such simplified options among beneficiaries the MA, in cooperation with the FLCs and other relevant bodies, will provide guidelines on eligibility of costs, which will be drafted in line with the EU Regulation No 481/2014 with reference to budget items and specifically staff and administrative costs as well as with specific application of Art. 19 of Regulation (EU) N. 1299/2013.

### **E-Cohesion**

With the aim to reduce administrative burdens, electronic data exchange systems will be implemented in line with E-cohesion requirements to allow electronic data exchanges among beneficiaries and Programme authorities.

Since 2013 MA has implemented an interactive web-based function allowing reporting procedures and their monitoring, both at project and Programme level, that will be linked to the new functions in order to comply with the new EC requirements (i.e. the only once encoding principle, the interoperability, the compliance of the electronic audit trail, the data integrity and

confidentiality and the authentication of the sender and storage in compliance with defined retention rules).

Moreover, an electronic signature system for formal communication by MA and JS is already in place and available in the 2014-2020 period, in compliance with the Directive 1999/93/EC.

## SECTION 8. HORIZONTAL PRINCIPLES

### 8.1 Sustainable development

Sustainable development and safeguard and protection of the environment cannot be reduced to a specific intervention, but is considered a horizontal approach throughout the whole Programme. From this point of view, within the Thematic Objectives, apart from their own defined expected results, adequate levels of environmental protection, resource efficiency, climate change mitigation and adaptation, biodiversity, disaster resilience and risk prevention and management, shall be ensured in line with Art. 8 of the Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013.

A special attention will be paid to the sectors highly affecting environment such as tourism and transport, whose impacts require particular concentration on environmental mitigation strategies and on a more efficient use of natural resources.

Having regards to the PA, PA 2 and 3 have a direct impact on sustainable development in the area, and PA 1 and PA 4 have a significant impact on the basis of the expected results and of envisaged actions.

The choice of the TO 4 "Supporting the shift towards a low-carbon economy in all sectors" comes from the awareness that it is essential to integrate in a cross-border way specific policies impacting on the sustainability of human activities and improving environmental-friendly services and practices (in particular of public administration).

In this framework, the interventions included in IP 4.e, promoting energy efficiency and sustainable mobility planning, will undoubtedly produce positive effects - also in the long term - on improving the definition of low-carbon oriented public policies.

The concentration of the largest amount of resources on the TO 6 "Protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency", demonstrates a specific strategic vision mostly contributing to the Sustainable Growth Goal.

The existing needs of the CB area require a reflection on the sustainability of sectors which significantly affect the natural environment and produce high costs in terms of resources depauperation. The Programme Strategy intends, on the one hand, encouraging environment protection and a more sustainable and efficient use of resources, on the other hand, promoting the development of green growth and technologies and the valorization of natural assets as development and competitiveness drivers.

The selection of IPs planned under the TO 6 - 6.c, 6.d and 6.f follows this logic.

The choice of orienting TO 11 to sustainability as one of the primary drivers of the action has been defined taking into account the importance, for public administration, to tackle climate change challenge and considering the added value of the CB cooperation in the environmental governance. The Programme recognizes the importance to enhance, thorough the CB approach, the effectiveness of public actions in addressing natural risks prevention and management, in harmonizing procedures and legislation and in managing shared natural areas and ecosystems (e.g. river and sea basins, etc.). From this point of view it is essential investing in the CB coordination and cooperation in order to deeply understand how the practices and policies implemented by authorities are effective to ensure environmental sustainability.

With reference to the TO 1 "Strengthening research, technological development and innovation" specific actions will be devoted to improve research activities and technology transfer to the business sector in different fields of application particularly focused on sustainable development: agri-food, engineering and sustainable construction, automotive and vehicle manufacturing, smart materials, Bio-sectors, Sustainable Living & Smart home of the future, Smart Maritime Economy and Power and energy systems.

In an integrated way, the identified cross-cutting issues (ICT, Education, SME, Social Inclusion, Employment) will complete the above mentioned priorities fostering ICT tools for environmental monitoring, green jobs creation and reduction of the ecological footprint of the production cycles. The proposed actions will be oriented to maximize the impact in terms of environmental sustainability of the Programme thanks to specific constraints (selection criteria, application

forms, monitoring procedures, etc.) that will be provided in the implementation phase and which will take into consideration the suggestions came from the SEA consultation.

Finally the Programme management will put in place specific procedures to ensure and enhance the adoption of a sustainable approach by beneficiaries and Programme authorities and structures, such as procedures for the dematerialization of documents and communications, organization of most eco-friendly types of events and meetings (conference call, videoconference, use of low-carbon transports to achieve the locations of events, etc.). The sustainable development principle will be ensured implementing sustainable development policy throughout CP phases: programming, management, monitoring and evaluation of operations. MA will cooperate with involved Environmental Authorities in order to ensure the right application of EU, national and regional environmental legislation.

According to Italian Partnership Agreement, the MA will be involved<sup>12</sup> in the work of the Italian Environment and Cohesion Network (Rete), aiming at the definition of sustainable development objectives, criteria and indicators.

## 8.2 Equal opportunities and non-discrimination

The principle of equal opportunity and non-discrimination requires an integrated action addressing vulnerable or at-risk of discrimination target groups involved both as participants/beneficiaries of specific operations, both as a subject indirectly affected by the Programme. The Cooperation strategy aims ensuring the principle of equal opportunities, as stated in Art. 7 of the Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, also fighting against the causes of discrimination expressed under Art. 19 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union ("combat discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation"). The approach consists of taking into account, in the definition and in the implementation of the whole strategy, socio-economic disparities, ethnic/religious/linguistic minorities and specific needs of particular target groups.

It is important to note that, during the programming phase, the context analysis led to the identification of specific needs and challenges concerning social inclusion and an easier access to equal opportunities by different categories of population. In particular, the progressive aging of the population imposes new challenges to the construction of a welfare system responding to the growing needs of the elderly in terms of autonomy and active aging, as stated in paragraph 5.5 of Annex I to the Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013. In this direction, the possible actions envisaged under Axis 4 can have a direct impact on the promotion of equal opportunities, for example strengthening the cooperation in the field of public health and health care and in the field of vocational and long-life learning.

The implementation of Priority Axes 2 and 3 and the strong focus on GHG emissions reduction and on the protection and conservation of environmental assets also produce a direct impact on the healthy life of the most exposed targets.

The economic crisis that invested also the Programme area in recent years has significantly increased the population exposure to the poverty risk and social exclusion, especially for some vulnerable targets (**NEETs, long-lasting unemployed, migrants, women**, etc.). The concentration of resources in Priority Axis 1 will be invested in building competitiveness and new jobs opportunities based on a non-discriminatory growth, producing an indirect impact on the principle of non-discrimination and of equal opportunities. Priority Axis 4 will instead enhance harmonization of vocational education systems and the joint labour market taking into due consideration specific needs enabling equal opportunities.

Moreover the cross-cutting issues (ICT, Education, SME, Social Inclusion, Employment) will certainly focus on creating basic conditions for job creations and access to education avoiding any discrimination.

With reference to disabled people, in accordance with the provision of the Common Strategic Framework (Annex I to the Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, 5.3 Accessibility), it will be taken

<sup>12</sup> Ref: par. 1.5.3 of the Italian Partnership Agreement.

appropriate steps to prevent any discrimination based on disability, providing full accessibility of the funded outputs to all citizens including those with disabilities. In particular, accessibility to the physical environment, transport, ICT in order to promote inclusion of disadvantaged groups, including persons with disabilities, shall be ensured. Specific actions in the Priority Axes 2 and 3 will contribute to a barrier-free environment for persons with disabilities, investing in better mobility services and ITS Systems, improving the accessibility to natural and cultural sites and to other touristic destinations, promoting access of remote and mountain areas to functional urban services. Priority Axis 4 also includes specific actions on domotics and home rehabilitation for particular diseases.

Due to demographic and historical characteristics of the area, it was given adequate importance to existing minorities (including linguistic). In fact, Priority Axis 4 defines actions promoting cultural diversity, including national minorities and language.

During implementation, specific monitoring indicators will be defined in order to measure the impact produced by projects on the identified target groups. Ad hoc evaluation or studies activities will be implemented to assess the application of the equal opportunities and non-discrimination principle, finalized to suggest additional measures.

In the selection phase of operations it will be evaluated to identify specific criteria that can strengthen the principles of non-discrimination. Where relevant, specific requests may be addressed to the beneficiaries so that they could provide information or data on the application of the principle of non-discrimination and ensure actions increasing equal opportunities for vulnerable targets.

### 8.3 Equality between men and women

According to Art. 7 of the Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, *“the Member States and the Commission shall ensure that equality between men and women and the integration of gender perspective are taken into account and promoted throughout the preparation and implementation of programmes, including in relation to monitoring, reporting and evaluation”*.

The application of this principle means not merely eliminating inequalities and promoting equality between men and women, but also introducing the integration of the gender perspective in the whole strategy and in its implementation. The gender perspective looks at the impact of gender on people's opportunities, social roles and interactions, influencing the process of social development. This is why the successful implementation of the Programme and project goals is directly affected by the impact of gender.

The Mid-term Evaluation Report of 2007-2013 Italy-Slovenia Programme, assessing the application of the horizontal principle, asked for:

- a monitoring system considering the effects produced by funded projects on gender equality and equality and non-discrimination;
- introducing the measurement of these effects as a binding request for all beneficiaries.

Gender mainstreaming will be pursued in the Cooperation Programme through the following actions:

- Management: ensuring the equality between men and women in terms of Programme management organization and procedures;
- Selection process: identifying specific selection criteria for projects quality assessment and asking applicants to describe the contribution to this principle in the application form;
- Monitoring system: selecting specific indicators and collecting data on the effects produced by projects on gender equality (e.g. the number of involved men and women into projects activities);
- Evaluation: focusing specific evaluation demands, questioned to the external Evaluator, or self-assessment exercises, carried on by management bodies, on this issue.

Provided that equality between men and women is an horizontal principle to be applied throughout the implementation of the strategy, the Programme will mainly contribute to its observation with:

- Priority Axis 1, favouring women participation to R&I, knowledge and technology transfer, entrepreneurship projects;
- Priority Axis 4, through actions promoting an easier access to social and health services, conciliation between professional and family activities, gender opportunities in the context of labour market and equal participation for both women and men in all spheres of public and political life.

## SECTION 9. SEPARATE ELEMENTS

### 9.1 Major projects to be implemented during the programming period

(Reference: point (e) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Table 23: List of Major projects

Project	Planned notification / submission date (year, quarter)	Planned start of implementation (year, quarter)	Planned completion date (year, quarter)	Priority axes / Investment priorities
Not applicable				

### 9.2. Performance framework of the Cooperation Programme

Table 24 Performance framework (summary table)

Priority Axis	ID	Indicator or key implementation step	Measurement unit, where appropriate	Milestone for 2018	Final target (2023)
Priority Axis 1	CO42	Number of research institutions participating in cross-border projects	Organisations	5	27
	F1	Payment certified and declared to the EC	EUR	2.594.680,41	22.003.752,00
Priority Axis 2	2.1.1	Number of implemented actions towards the decrease of annual primary energy consumption in existing public buildings	Number	4	25
	F2	Payment certified and declared to the EC	EUR	1.356.969,35	13.752.345,00
Priority Axis 3	CO09	Increase in expected number of visits to supported sites of cultural and natural heritage and attractions	Visits/year	5.000	20.000
	F3	Payment certified and declared to the EC	EUR	3.342.732,47	32.088.805,00
Priority Axis 4	4.1.2	Joint solutions increasing integration, coherence, harmonization of the Programme area governance (shared politics, legislative frameworks or regulations, joint strategic documents, e-government tools)	Number	2	11
	F4	Payment certified and declared to the EC	EUR	2.456.351,35	18.336.460,00

### **9.3. Relevant partners involved in the preparation of the Cooperation Programme**

#### **The public consultation process**

The stakeholders involved in the partners consultation process covered a wide range of different backgrounds and specifically:

- National and regional authorities;
- Local authorities and Cities;
- Local and regional development agencies/ Public development bodies/ public operators;
- Chambers of Commerce, Trade and Business Organizations;
- SMEs, Economic operators, Networks and clusters;
- Universities/ Research Centres/ Technological Centres/ Scientific Parks/ Training Centres;
- Non-governmental organizations and associations;
- Health Care Facilities.

For more details see Annexes 6 and 7.

### **9.4. Applicable programme implementation conditions governing the financial management, programming, monitoring, evaluation and control of the participation of third countries in transnational and interregional programmes through a contribution of ENI and IPA resources**

Not applicable



## ANNEXES

(uploaded electronic data exchange systems as separate files)

1. Draft report of the ex-ante evaluation, with an executive summary (mandatory) (Reference: Article 55(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013) (as approved by the European Commission with Decision No. 9285 of December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015)
2. Confirmation of agreement in writing to the contents of the Cooperation Programme (mandatory) (as approved by the European Commission with Decision No. 9285 of December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015)  
(Reference: Article 8(9) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)
3. A map of the area covered by the Cooperation Programme (as approved by the European Commission with Decision No. 9285 of December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015)
4. A citizens' summary of the Cooperation Programme (as approved by the European Commission with Decision No. 9285 of December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015)
5. Glossary (as approved by the European Commission with Decision No. 9285 of December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015)
6. List of relevant stakeholders involved in the partner consultation process (as approved by the European Commission with Decision No. 9285 of December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015)
7. Partner consultation: the survey grid (as approved by the European Commission with Decision No. 9285 of December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015)
8. Logical Framework (as approved by the European Commission with Decision No. 9285 of December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015)
9. Methodological Note on Result and Output Indicators (amended as approved by the Programme Monitoring Committee via 2<sup>nd</sup> written procedure on June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016)
10. Valutazione Ambientale Strategica - RAPPORTO AMBIENTALE (in Italian) (as approved by the European Commission with Decision No. 9285 of December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015)
11. Celovitapresojavplivovnaokolje - OKOLJSKO POROČILO (in Slovene) (as approved by the European Commission with Decision No. 9285 of December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015)
12. List of acronyms (as approved by the European Commission with Decision No. 9285 of December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015)
13. Table summarizing the overlapping 3S areas and the types of actions included (as approved by the European Commission with Decision No. 9285 of December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015)