



# **Cooperation Programme Slovenia – Croatia 2014 – 2020**

(4<sup>th</sup> draft version, 19<sup>th</sup> January 2015)

CCI	
Title	<b>The Cooperation Programme Slovenia – Croatia 2014-2020</b>
Version	Draft 4, 19 January 2015
First year	2014
Last year	2020
Eligible from	
Eligible until	
EC decision number	
EC decision date	
MS amending decision number	
MS amending decision date	
MS amending decision entry into force date	
NUTS regions covered by the operational programme	HR031, HR036, HR041, HR042, HR043, HR044, HR046, HR04D, Slo11, Slo12, Slo14, Slo15, Slo16, Slo17, Slo18, Slo12, Slo24

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>SECTION 1 STRATEGY FOR THE OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE UNION STRATEGY FOR SMART, SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH AND THE ACHIEVEMENT OF ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND TERRITORIAL COHESION .....</b>	<b>6</b>
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 .....	6
1.1.1 Description of the Cooperation Programme's strategy for contribution to the delivery of the Union strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and for achieving economic, social and territorial cohesion .....	6
1.1.1.1 Profile of the Cooperation Programme area .....	6
1.1.1.2 The Cooperation Programme's strategy for contribution to the delivery of the Union strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.....	17
1.1.1.3 Contribution to the strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth .....	24
1.1.2 A justification for the choice of thematic objectives and corresponding investment priorities having regard to the Common Strategic Framework, based on 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 carried out .....	25
1.2 Justification for the financial allocation .....	27
<b>SECTION 2 PRIORITY AXES .....</b>	<b>30</b>
2.A. Description of the priority axes other than technical assistance .....	30
2.A.1. Priority Axis 1: Cross-border flood risk prevention .....	30
2.A.1.1. Priority Axis.....	30
2.A.1.2. Justification for the establishment of a priority axis covering more than one thematic objective .....	30
2.A.1.3. Fund and calculation basis for Union support .....	30
2.A.1.4. Investment priority .....	30
2.A.1.5. Specific objectives corresponding to the investment priority and expected results.....	31
2.A.1.6. Actions to be supported under the investment priority .....	32
2.A.1.6.1. 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 .....	32
2.A.1.6.2. Guiding principles for the selection of operations .....	34
2.A.1.6.3. Planned use of financial instruments (where appropriate) .....	34
2.A.1.6.4. Planned use of major projects (where appropriate).....	34
2.A.1.6.5. Output indicators (by investment priority) .....	34
2.A.1.7. Performance framework .....	34
2.A.1.8. Categories of intervention.....	35
2.A.1.9. A summary of the planned use of technical assistance (where appropriate) .....	36
2.A.2. Priority Axis 2: Protecting and promoting natural and cultural resources .....	37
2.A.2.1. Priority Axis .....	37
2.A.2.2. Justification for the establishment of a priority axis covering more than one thematic objective .....	37
2.A.2.3. Fund and calculation basis for Union support.....	37
2.A.2.4. Investment priority .....	37
2.A.2.5. Specific objectives corresponding to investment priority 6c and expected results .....	37
2.A.2.6. Actions to be supported under the investment priority.....	40

2.A.2.6.1. 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 .....	40
2.A.2.6.2. Guiding principles for the selection of operations .....	43
2.A.2.6.3. Planned use of financial instruments (where appropriate).....	44
2.A.2.6.4. Planned use of major projects (where appropriate).....	44
2.A.2.6.5. Output indicators (by investment priority).....	44
2.A.2.7. Performance framework .....	45
2.A.2.8. Categories of intervention .....	46
2.A.2.9. A summary of the planned use of technical assistance (where appropriate) .....	47
2.A.3. Priority Axis 3: Healthy, safe and accessible border areas .....	48
2.A.3.1. Priority Axis.....	48
2.A.1.2. Justification for the establishment of a priority axis covering more than one thematic objective .....	48
2.A.1.3. Fund and calculation basis for Union support.....	48
2.A.1.4. Investment priority .....	48
2.A.1.5. Specific objectives corresponding to the investment priority and expected results.....	48
2.A.1.6. Actions to be supported under the investment priority .....	50
2.A.1.6.1. 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 .....	50
2.A.1.6.2. Guiding principles for the selection of operations .....	51
2.A.1.6.3. Planned use of financial instruments (where appropriate) .....	51
2.A.1.6.4. Planned use of major projects (where appropriate).....	51
2.A.1.6.5. Output indicators (by investment priority) .....	51
2.A.1.7. Performance framework .....	51
2.A.1.8. Categories of intervention.....	52
2.A.1.9. A summary of the planned use of technical assistance (where appropriate) .....	53
<b>SECTION 3 FINANCING PLAN .....</b>	<b>53</b>
3.1. Financial appropriation from ERDF (in EUR) .....	53
3.2.A Total financial appropriation from the ERDF and national co-financing (in EUR) .....	54
3.2.B Breakdown by priority axis and thematic objective .....	55
<b>SECTION 4 INTEGRATED APPROACH TO TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT.....</b>	<b>56</b>
4.1 Community led local development (where appropriate).....	57
4.2 Integrated actions for sustainable urban development (where appropriate) .....	57
4.3 Integrated Territorial Investments (where appropriate).....	57
4.4 Contribution of planned interventions towards macro-regional and sea basin strategies, subject to the needs of the programme area as identified by the relevant Member States and taking into account, where applicable, strategically important projects identified in those strategies (where appropriate and where Member States and regions participate in macro-regional and sea basin strategies).....	57
<b>SECTION 5 IMPLEMENTING PROVISIONS FOR THE COOPERATION PROGRAMME .....</b>	<b>59</b>
5.1. Relevant authorities and bodies .....	59
5.2. Procedure for setting up the Joint Secretariat .....	60
5.3. Summary description of the management and control arrangements .....	60

5.3.1 Programme Authorities and Bodies .....	60
5.3.1.1. Programme Authorities.....	60
5.3.1.2. Programme Bodies .....	61
5.3.2 Project cycle/ Description of procedures .....	62
5.3.3. First level control system .....	65
5.3.4. Programme monitoring.....	66
5.3.5. Implementation reports .....	66
5.3.6. Programme evaluations .....	66
5.3.7. Monitoring System .....	66
5.3.8. Information and communication .....	67
5.4. Apportionment of liabilities among participating Member States in case of financial corrections imposed by the managing authority or the Commission .....	67
5.5. Use of the Euro .....	68
5.6. Involvement of partners.....	68
<b>SECTION 6 COORDINATION .....</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>SECTION 7 REDUCTION OF ADMINISTRATIVE BURDEN FOR BENEFICIARIES .....</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>SECTION 8 HORIZONTAL PRINCIPLES .....</b>	<b>79</b>
8.1 Environmental sustainability .....	79
8.2 Equal opportunities .....	80
8.3 Promotion of equality between men and women .....	81
<b>Abbreviations.....</b>	<b>82</b>

## SECTION 1

### STRATEGY FOR THE OPERATIONAL 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(1) of the CPR and point (a) of the Article 8(2) of the ETC Regulation)*

#### 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 contribution to the delivery of the Union strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and for achieving economic, social and territorial cohesion

###### 1.1.1.1 Profile of the Cooperation Programme area

#### Main features related to socio-economic development of the programme area

##### ◆ 17 NUTS 3 regions

The Cooperation Programme Slovenia-Croatia 2014-2020 comprises 17 NUTS 3 regions - statistical regions in Slovenia and counties in Croatia (hereinafter referred to as regions):

- Slovenia: Pomurska region, Podravska region, Savinjska region, Zasavska region, Posavska region, Jugovzhodna Slovenija region, Osrednjeslovenska region, Primorsko-notranjska region, Obalno-kraška region;
- Croatia: County of Primorje-Gorski Kotar, County of Istria, City of Zagreb, County of Zagreb, County of Krapina-Zagorje, County of Varaždin, County of Međimurje and County of Karlovac.

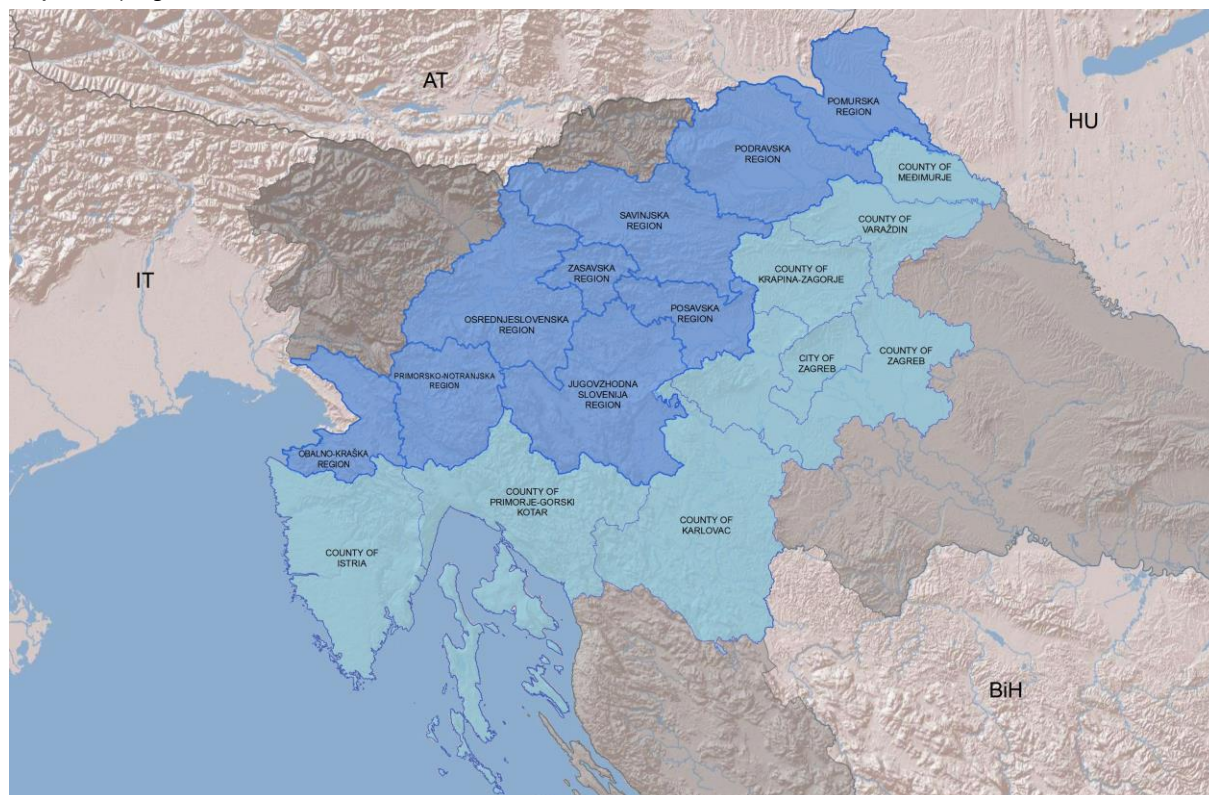
In line with Article 3 of the ETC Regulation to ensure coherence of the cross border area, Osrednjeslovenska region, City of Zagreb and Zasavska region were included to the 14 NUTS 3 regions along Slovenia-Croatia internal border. Osrednjeslovenska region and City of Zagreb were included as adjacent regions also in the cooperation period 2007-2013 for their close vicinity and concentration of the economic, research, development and educational capacities that could significantly contribute to the development of the entire cross border area. Zasavska region in Slovenia was included in order to increase the territorial coherence of the cross border area and to better seize cross border cooperation potentials.

##### ◆ Sparsely populated area - 3.285 million people living across 31,728 km<sup>2</sup>

The whole programme area covers 31,728 km<sup>2</sup>, of which 46,6 % in Slovenia and 53,4% in Croatia. With extension of the programming area, the area encompasses a significant share of the Slovenia (73%), while it presents 30% of the territory of Croatia. Apart of Grad Zagreb and Osrednjeslovenska region, the programming area is sparsely populated. The average population density of the area is 120,7 inhabitants /km<sup>2</sup>.. The most

sparsely populated are hilly and mountainous Dinaric area of Jugovzhodna Slovenija region, Primorsko-notranjska region, County of Karlovac and some parts of the County of Primorje –Gorski Kotar.

**Map 1** The programme area



◆ **2 capital cities, 332 municipalities and 8457 settlements, 45% of population live in 13 urban centres**

There are 332 municipalities and 8457 settlements located in the programme area including both capital cities, Zagreb with population of 779,145 and Ljubljana with 280,140, and six urban areas with population over 50,000: Rijeka (128,624), Maribor (112,088), Velika Gorica (63,517), Pula-Pola (57,460), Karlovac (55,705), Koper-Capodistria (54,421). As a result of the past common polycentric spatial planning concept the whole area has well developed network of middle sized towns acting as regional or sub-regional service, employment and economic centres such as Celje (48.868), Varaždin (46.946), Samobor (37.633), Novo mesto (36.333) and Velenje (32.973).

45% of all population live in these 13 urban centres, which represent the major driving force for the area. 65% of the programme area population resides in towns smaller than 30,000 populations or in scarcely dispersed rural settlements.

◆ **The programme area is relatively well accessible by international transport routes**

The programme territory is located at the intersection of the international transport routes. Sections of the of the Pan-European Transport Corridor X (Graz-Maribor-Zagreb, Salzburg-Ljubljana-Zagreb) and Corridor V (Rijeka-Zagreb-Budapest, Trieste-Ljubljana-Budapest) pass through the programme area. Both corridors have are affected by limited capacities especially in the summer tourist season. The programme area has 6 international cross border crossings (Rijeka, Zagreb, Pula/Pola, Ljubljana, Maribor, Portorož) and 7 international border crossings for maritime transport (Koper/Capodistria, Piran/Pirano, Umag/Umago, Pula/Pola, Rijeka, Mali Lošinj and Senj).

#### ◆ Internal accessibility of regions in the programme area varies

Within the regions in the programme area, there are considerable differences in accessibility. Due to geographical and topographic conditions some areas are difficult to access (parts of County of Karlovac and Primorsko-notranjska region), and the existing road infrastructure is often in poor condition because of limited funds for modernisation and maintenance, which severely increases the transport safety. Situation does not relate to remote and distant areas only, but also to connections of regional and inter-municipal centres to the main highway infrastructure and international corridors. Local and regional railway connection in the programme area is seriously underdeveloped.

#### ◆ Area of landscape diversity, great natural and cultural values

The programme territory is characterised by high geographical diversity. Three major landscapes stretch from Pannonia lowlands and hills in the east, across Dinaric Mountain range featuring Karst phenomena to the Adriatic coast with Northern Kvarner islands in the south. A dense surface and underground water system cross the area.

The programme area has a high concentration of protected areas including 8 regional and landscape parks (Slovenia) and 3 nature and 3 national parks in Croatia. Natura 2000 areas cover 39.6% of the programme area with the highest shares in County of Primorje-Gorski Kotar (96.5%), Obalno-kraška region (62.1%) and Primorsko-notranjska region (58.3%). Well-preserved natural environments as well as high density of cultural values represent two main pillars for sustainable development of the area.

#### ◆ Climate change and increased risk of natural and man-made disasters

Due to the geographical characteristic and its topography, the territory is characterized by high vulnerability. Influenced by climate change and impacts of human activities the Slovenia – Croatia border area is facing more frequent and more intense natural disasters, among which the most common are: floods, forest fires, earthquakes, heavy precipitation (rain/snow/hail/sleet), storms and drought.

Over last 3 years the border area faced severe floods on the Drava river (2012) and South Slovenian river basins (February and September 2014) with the estimated total damage exceeding 700 million €. In February 2014, freezing rain caused severe breakdown of public infrastructure and damaged approximately 6 million m<sup>3</sup> of timber in the Dinaric Mountain border area of both countries. Furthermore, both countries reported several major fires and droughts in 2012 and 2013.

#### ◆ In the period 2009-2013 the population in total decreased by 19,000 in the programme area, with an increase on the Slovene side (24,000) and a decline on the Croatian side (43,000)

In the period marked with the economic crisis 2009-2013 apart from Pomurska (-1,515) and Zasavska region (-1,248) the population increased in all regions on the Slovene side totalling net increase of 24,166 people, of which the majority was on the part of Osrednjeslovenska region (19,753). On the Croatian side the population was growing only in City of Zagreb (4,666), while in total the population in the programme area decreased by 43,154 people. Decline of the population is an alarming indicator for the programming area. The highest decrease in the number of population was recorded in County of Primorje-Gorski Kotar (9,515), County of Zagreb (9,113) and County of Istria (7,124).

#### ◆ Ageing of the population; the population aged 15 or less exceeded the population aged 65+ only in County of Zagreb and County of Međimurje

Ageing of the population is characteristic for the entire programme area. Areas with the lowest average age are County of Međimurje (40.0), followed by Osrednjeslovenska region and County of Varaždin (41.2), City of Zagreb (41.6) and Jugovzhodna Slovenija region (41.7). County of Karlovac and Pomurska region have the oldest population with an average age of 44 years and the highest ageing index 157 and 142 respectively. The



most favourable ratio have County of Zagreb and County of Međimurje, where the population aged 15 years and less exceeded the population aged 65+.

♦ **Disparities in the regional GDP and GVA; Osrednjeslovenska region and City of Zagreb created around half the programme area GDP and GVA**

GDP of the whole programme area in 2012/2011 was around 57.3 billion € and the Gross Value Added (GVA) was 49.25 billion €. Almost 50% was created in the two most dynamic regions: Osrednjeslovenska region and City of Zagreb. Looking at the GDP per capita, the highest in Osrednjeslovenska region with 24,170 € (2012) exceeds the lowest of County of Krapina-Zagorje with 6,300 € by four times. Besides Osrednjeslovenska region and City of Zagreb, above national average GDP per capita were recorded only in Obalno-kraška region, County of Primorje-Gorski Kotar and County of Istria, which are all traditional tourism regions.

Consequently the discrepancies are reflected also in average salary, which in Croatia is 26% lower compared to Slovenia. An average net salary in Croatia in 2013 reached 733 €, while in Slovenia amounted 992 €.

♦ **Services/tourism dominate in the cities and coastal parts, industry (manufacturing) in continental regions**

Regional GVA structure of economic activities shows that trade, accommodation and transport services (GHI) are most developed in Obalno-kraška region (36%), County of Zagreb (27%), County of Istria (26%), County of Primorje-Gorski Kotar (23%), Osrednjeslovenska region (22%) and City of Zagreb (22%). Some of the strongest tourism, trade, transport (Luka Koper, Luka Rijeka, Jadrolinija, Interevropa..) and communication corporations have seats within the programme area. Tourism is an important economic activity of the programme area with 9,032,797 tourist arrivals and 41,083,277 overnights generated in 2013. 80% of all accommodation capacities are provided on the Croatian side where 73% of all arrivals and 82% of overnights were generated. 'Sea and sun' is the dominant tourist product of the programme area with high concentration of tourist arrivals to coastal parts compared to non-coastal regions and hinterlands of the coastal areas.

On the other hand, share of industry in the regional GVA structure is dominant in Jugovzhodna Slovenija region (42%), Posavska region (41%), Zasavska region (40%), County of Međimurje (40%), County of Krapina-Zagorje (36%) and County of Varaždin (35%) and Primorsko-notranjska region (30%). There are several large companies operating as global players in automotive, pharmaceuticals, electric and similar appliance producers, food processing as well as metal processing and manufacturing industries. Some of the traditional industries such as textile are still present in County of Varaždin, County of Međimurje and Pomurska region, while urban university area generates higher number of start-ups and growing SMEs in ICT, multimedia and creative industries. Individual sectors are organised in clusters and supported by technology parks (e.g. Ljubljana, Varaždin,..) or technology-innovation centres (e.g. Celje, Čakovec, Rijeka). In spite of these facts and recovery of the EU economy, the performance of economic sectors in Slovenia and Croatia is still lagging behind.

♦ **Above average shares of agriculture and forestry in most parts of the programme area**

Apart from Osrednjeslovenska region, Obalno-kraška region, Zasavska region, City of Zagreb, County of Primorje-Gorski Kotar and County of Istria the share of agriculture and forestry in all other regions is above national averages. The highest share of GVA in this sector was created in County of Međimurje (9%). Small size of agricultural holdings results in a weakened economic viability of the majority of agricultural holdings. They combine income by employment in other sectors or by development of supplementary activities on farms. Organic production has increased in last years. Furthermore, food products with geographical origin and breeding of animals of indigenous origin have gained in importance.

◆ **SMEs create the largest share of all business entities in the programme area, potential for the development of entrepreneurship not exploited**

SMEs provide an important economic foundation and employment potential of the programme area, in particular outside the largest employment centres. Business support environment improved, however the entrepreneurial activities are still underdeveloped. Especially the potential of the young people is not exploited sufficiently. Internationalisation of small businesses is weak. Entrepreneurship culture measured in number of enterprises/1.000 population shows higher enterprise dynamics in most developed regions such as Osrednjeslovenska region, Obalno-kraška region, County of Istria and City of Zagreb with index around or over 80. The same index for Zasavska and Pomurska region and Counties of Varaždin, Međimurje and Karlovac is below 44 while the average for the programme area was 61 enterprises per 1.000 inhabitants in 2013.

◆ **Education and research network well developed in the main urban centres, access to R&D across the programme area limited**

Zagreb, Ljubljana, Koper, Maribor and Rijeka are the main educational centres in the programme area and the centres of the research and development infrastructure and capacities. 147,000 students and 33,500 graduates represent an important human capital of the programme area, although the number of students/1000 population is mainly below the national averages. Lifelong learning centres are relatively well spread in the area, however the share of population aged 25-64 participating in education and training in 2013 was around 3% on the Croatian side and between 11 and 14 % on the Slovene side. Socially excluded were underrepresented in lifelong learning activities.

◆ **1.462 million employed, City of Zagreb and Osrednjeslovenska region provided 43% of the programme area jobs in 2013**

Besides the capital regions, Podravska region (8%) and County of Primorje-Gorski Kotar (7%) contributed second largest share of the programme area employment. 197,000 (13%) were employed in trade, crafts or freelance. The area has 35,000 employed farmers, of which 79% on the Slovene part of the cross border area.

◆ **Over 215,000 unemployed in the programme area in 2014; 92,500 jobs lost since 2007**

The economic and financial crisis contributed to the loss of 92,500 jobs and increased the number of unemployed by 150% compared to 2007. City of Zagreb (45,916), Osrednjeslovenska region (27,659), Podravska region (20,889), County of Zagreb (19,583) and Savinjska region (16,531) together amounted 55% of all unemployed in the programme area in 2013. Compared to 2007, the number of unemployed in 2013 more than doubled in Primorsko-notranjska region (211%), Jugovzhodna Slovenija region (211%), Obalno-kraška region (202%) and County of Zagreb (200%). The highest unemployment rate in 2013 was recorded in County of Karlovac (24.5%) where high level unemployment persisted already in 2007 (23%). High unemployment rates also hit County of Krapina-Zagorje (19.8%), County of Zagreb (19.7%), Pomurska region (18.9%) and Zasavska region (17.5%).

◆ **High share of young unemployed aged 15-29 in County of Međimurje, County of Zagreb, County of Krapina-Zagorje and Zasavska region in 2014**

According to the latest available unemployment data (October 2014 for Slovenia and November 2014 for Croatia, the youth unemployment is alarming. In Croatia the unemployed aged 15-29 represented approximately 25% of all unemployed on the Slovene side; on the Croatian side this share is mainly exceeding 30%. Youth unemployment is most problematic in County of Međimurje (35%), County of Zagreb (33.8%), County of Krapina-Zagorje (33.5%) and Zasavska region (31.4%). The share of unemployed aged 60+ varies from 2.2% in Zasavska region to 5.8% in County of Primorje-Gorski Kotar.

### ◆ Differences in the access to health services

The network of primary health care services and general hospitals is relatively well distributed throughout the programme area. The greatest disparities exist in availability of medical doctors per 1000 inhabitants. In 2013, with the exception of City of Zagreb (5.3), County of Primorje-Gorski Kotar (3.7), Obalno-kraška region (3.0) and Osrednjeslovenska region (3.7) all other regions/counties are below national averages (SI=2.7, HR=3.0). County of Zagreb (0.9), Primorsko-notranjska region (1.3), Zasavska region (1.7) and Posavska region (1.8) face the greatest challenges. Lack of health care workers is characteristic especially for rural areas and islands, but also small towns.

### ◆ Health inequalities across the programme area

Another characteristic of the programme area are health inequalities as a consequences of the socio-economic differences that affect the lifestyle of the population. Common concerns relate to risk behaviours of the population such as poor dietary habits, physical inactivity, smoking, misuse of alcohol and drugs. Ageing of the population and health care for the elderly as well as preserving the health of the workforce is another common challenge of the programme area.

### ◆ Social services for the elderly and excluded groups challenge for the programme area

30% of the population in Croatia and 20% in Slovenia were at the risk of poverty or social exclusion in 2013, while the EU-28 average was 24.5%. Various target groups are in need, the elderly, long-term and young unemployed, disabled persons, low-income families, single parent families and others. According to Annual report on societies 2013 (AJPES, Slovenia) and Register of societies 2014 (Croatia), the programme area has close to 46,000 organisations active in different spheres (sport, culture, social, humanitarian and others) that provide important potential for creation of community partnerships and social innovation.

### ◆ Public utility services

The water supply, wastewater treatment as well as waste management is under the responsibility of local governments. In Slovenia, a significant progress has been achieved in this field during last years due to larger investments supported by EU Cohesion funds. Similar investments cycle has already started in Croatia.

In Slovenia, % of population has access to public water supply systems while the same coverage ratio in Croatia is on average between 80-82%, with some lower shares in rural regions. Approximately 50% of Slovenian households were connected to sewage system, while 78% of all wastewater released were treated in 2013 (in 2012 only 57,7%). Highest proportions exceeding 95% are achieved in most environmentally sensitive and densely populated areas (Obalno-kraška region and Osrednjeslovenska region) and the lowest in Zasavska region (61%). In Croatia 43,65% of population is connected to sewage network while only 27% of population is covered by wastewater treatment.

The production of waste per inhabitant varies considerably between regions, from the lowest 181 kg/inhabitant in County of Međimurje, 235 kg/inhabitant in County of Zagreb and County of Krapina-Zagorje on Croatian side and 360 kg/inhabitant in Jugovzhodna Slovenija region on Slovene side to the highest 460 kg/inhabitant in Osrednjeslovenska region, 478 kg/inhabitant in Obalno-kraška region and 495 kg/inhabitant in County of Istria. The level of recycling is increasing (already more than 40% in Slovenia) while the depositing of solid waste is decreasing.

### ◆ Civil protection

With increased risk of natural and man-made disasters and considering large nature protected areas, low population density in remote border areas and increased tourism flow, the importance of cross-border co-operation in response to emergency events raises.

In Slovenia 70% (42,000) of all protection, rescue and relief forces are represented by volunteers (mainly fire-fighters) and 25% (15,000) by members of civil protection units and 5% by professional units. Within the

framework of the monitoring, notification and warning system, the central role is played by regional notification centres (10 in programming area). In Croatia, the DIP CZ (National civil protection intervention units) involves 791 professional members in 4 regional departments. Of the 61.421 Croatian operative fire-fighters, 56.415 are volunteer fire-fighters of towns and municipalities, 1.621 are volunteer fire-fighters in industrial fire-fighting units, 2.371 are professional fire-fighters in public fire fighting units, 236 are professional fire-fighters in volunteer fire-fighting units and 778 are professional industrial fire fighters. (<http://www.hvz.hr/en>). Within programme area there are 44,013 fire brigade operative volunteers being members of 1,956 fire brigade associations.

**Table 1** Cooperation Programme area – selected indicators

	Area km <sup>2</sup>	UUA ha SI- 2010 HR-2014	Forests ha SI- 2011 HR-2008	NATURA 2000 ha SI- 2014 HR-2012*	Flood areas ha SI-2014 HR-2012	Popula- tion no. 2013	Average age SI- 2014 HR-2011	Popula- tion change since 2009	Age index SI- 2014 HR-2011	GDP per capita € ** SI- 2012 HR-2011	Unemplo- yment rate 2013	SMEs no.	Tourist arrivals SI- 2013 HR-2011	Cultural heritage - registered units 2014	Vital index *** 2013
<b>Slovenia (2012)</b>	<b>20273</b>	<b>474432</b>	<b>1204177</b>	<b>778917</b>		<b>2058821</b>	<b>42.4</b>	<b>26459</b>	<b>119.6</b>	<b>17.172</b>	<b>13.5</b>	<b>181759</b>	<b>3384491</b>	<b>29615</b>	<b>109</b>
Pomurska region	1337	64076	40180	62095		118022	44.0	-1515	142.2	11872	18.9	2702	256286	1362	75
Podravska region	2170	80516	85305	61402		323238	43.2	338	137.5	14359	15.0	7629	222245	3104	87
Savinjska region	2384	67297	136738	43754		260217	42.3	1372	113.5	15730	14.2	6506	362910	4652	108
Zasavska region	264	6003	17238	5858		43502	44.1	-1248	145.3	11022	17.5	580	2644	529	79
Posavska region	885	26693	24487	16858		79211	43.1	311	125.5	14969	15.6	1993	176658	1068	91
Jugovzhodna Slovenija r.	2675	49400	179932	134918		142509	41.7	1343	105.8	15768	14.6	3215	107910	2945	116
Osrednjeslovenska r.	2555	62617	149771	63058		541718	41.2	19753	106.7	24170	11.9	8734	40175	5482	141
Primorsko-notranjska r.	1456	22240	106627	84876		52382	43.0	654	121.6	11990	12.8	1144	653216	1130	112
Obalno-kraška region	1044	13601	61800	64819		111936	43.7	3158	136.8	17550	12.6	2361	574762	1797	102
SI programme area	14770	392443	805077	537636		1663735	NA	24166	119.4	17785*	NA	34864	2396806	22069	NA
<b>Croatia (2011)</b>	<b>56549</b>	<b>1026081</b>	<b>2056200</b>	<b>2595960</b>		<b>4262140</b>	<b>41.7</b>	<b>-47656</b>		<b>10.325*</b>	<b>18.1</b>	<b>66657</b>	<b>12433727</b>	<b>8848</b>	<b>79</b>
C. of Primorje-Gorski Kotar	3588	7772	241270	346301		295067	43.9	-9515	151.5	12724*	14.0	4766	2380034	615	70
County of Istria	2813	21756	125740	132034		207608	43.0	-7124	134.7	12991*	8.9	4621	2980663	481	83
City of Zagreb	3060	6387	18240	8589		794101	41.6	4666	117.8	18503*	8.7	23976	868855	839	99
County of Zagreb	641	69799	100960	70051		318702	40.6	-9113	97.1	7786*	19.7	4713	47732	386	88
County of Krapina-Zagorje	1229	19259	39550	11894		131392	41.7	-5338	117.4	6300*	19.8	1152	75172	259	61
County of Varaždin	1262	29410	41520	20810		174854	41.2	-5770	109.2	8285*	14.6	1308	42385	312	71
County of Međimurje	729	29521	10460	13070		113545	40.0	-4535	92.3	8459*	16.4	973	45179	93	98
County of Karlovac	3636	22725	187330	116938		126299	44	-6607	157.0	7709*	24.5	1262	195971	293	57
HR programme area	16958	206629	765070	719687		2161568	NA	-43154	119.7	12860*	NA	42771	6635991	3278	NA
<b>TOTAL Programme area</b>	<b>31728</b>	<b>599072</b>	<b>1570147</b>	<b>1257323</b>		<b>3825303</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>-18988</b>	<b>119.6</b>	<b>14998*</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>77635</b>	<b>9032797</b>	<b>25347</b>	<b>NA</b>

\* Land areas considered only. \*\* Own calculation (Conversion from HKR). \*\*\*Own calculation.

**Table 2** SWOT analysis of the Cooperation Programme area

	Strengths	Weaknesses
Smart growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Established networks of business support institutions, educational, science and research centres in the capital cities and regional centres</li> <li>– Relatively well accessible area (major EU corridors, ports)</li> <li>– Tradition, knowledge and skills in manufacturing industries (mechanical and process engineering, wood processing, automotive, pharmaceuticals, food processing) with organised clusters</li> <li>– Diversity of tourist products (sun and sea, health and wellness, active tourism) with growth of (foreign) tourist arrivals, tourist infrastructure in development (thematic routes, cycling, visitor centres)</li> <li>– Quality agricultural land and favourable conditions for agriculture in eastern parts of programme area</li> <li>– Large share of SMEs</li> <li>– Growing start-up initiatives in urban centres</li> <li>– Dynamic and strong service sector (commerce, logistics and transport, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Disparities in economic development within and between regions, fragile rural, remote communities</li> <li>– Loss of jobs, in particular in traditional industries and in less developed areas</li> <li>– Fragmentation of tourism offers and weak integration of tourism offers between major tourist centres and the hinterland, low level of innovative products offering experience for specific target groups/audience, seasonality and relatively short duration of visitor stays outside of coastal regions and spa centres,</li> <li>– Lower level of access to R&amp;D outside of main centres and lack of cooperation between businesses and academic sector</li> <li>– Small average size of agricultural holdings hinders productivity and economic viability</li> <li>– Low entrepreneurship culture in some rural areas</li> <li>– Below EU average investment in R&amp;D</li> <li>– Below EU average of adult participation in lifelong learning, especially on the part of Croatia</li> </ul>
Sustainable growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Variety of landscapes and geographical features (e.g. Karst, maritime, forest, lowlands, etc.)</li> <li>– High density of water networks and underground systems in the programme area</li> <li>– Concentration of natural and cultural values</li> <li>– Large areas under protection (NATURA, parks, ecologically important areas and other)</li> <li>– Relatively well preserved biodiversity</li> <li>– Network of park management operators</li> <li>– Growth of organic agricultural production</li> <li>– Awareness and investments in energy efficiency</li> <li>– Relatively strong tourist flows</li> <li>– High number of individual tourist providers</li> <li>– Awareness on potentials offered by local resources (wood, local food self-sufficiency, ...)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Risk of loss of traditional landscapes due to plant succession and decline of agricultural production in remote areas</li> <li>– Large share of population living in areas prone to flooding</li> <li>– Different stakeholder interests hinder sustainable development of natural and cultural heritage potential (agriculture, conservation, tourism)</li> <li>– Low level of coordination related to risk protection</li> <li>– Areas with higher level of air pollution due to massive cargo and personal transport (major highway corridors, heavy traffic in the cities)</li> <li>– Poor supply of public transportation at local level and in remote CB areas</li> </ul>

Inclusive growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Tradition of cooperation between countries</li> <li>– Stable population in most part of the programme area within Slovenia</li> <li>– Relatively well established network of social, health, education, civil protection service institutions at regional level</li> <li>– Common historical base in the development of health, social, civil protection systems</li> <li>– Large number of NGOs active in social sphere</li> <li>– Growing social economy initiatives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Serious depopulation within Croatia except Grad Zagreb), Pomurska and Zasavska within Slovenia</li> <li>– Ageing of the population and growing need for social care programmes for elderly</li> <li>– High unemployment rates, especially in peripheral areas, with a high share of youth unemployment</li> <li>– Unexploited potential of youth entrepreneurship</li> <li>– Unequal access to health and social services</li> <li>– Insufficient equipment and quality of services (health, civil protection, social)</li> <li>– Growing number of groups at risk of poverty or exclusion, particularly in less developed areas</li> </ul>
Opportunities		Threats
Smart growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Stronger regional centres enable knowledge transfer for innovative growth of CB region (R&amp;D, product design, new business models)</li> <li>– Increased global development of green and creative industries</li> <li>– Capacities, marketing potential and attractiveness of main tourism centres for development of rural border areas</li> <li>– Innovation in EU tourism trends driving the use of modern technologies</li> <li>– Increase in co-operation between private and public sector in tourism</li> <li>– Synergies in joint promotion in the third markets</li> <li>– Nature protected areas available for economic and entrepreneurial developments</li> <li>– Lifelong learning sector expansion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Continuation of growth disparity trends between the most and least developed regions</li> <li>– Growing competitiveness in tourism and industrial markets at global and regional levels</li> <li>– Further gaps between the needs of the economy and competences of the workforce, further loss of jobs in industry and agriculture</li> <li>– Inability of small businesses to compete in international markets</li> <li>– Lack of trust between stakeholders from different interest groups (e.g. conservationists – businesses) and across the state border</li> </ul>
Sustainable growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– EU framework enabling joint approaches in planning, monitoring and management of nature resources</li> <li>– Global trends in valorisation of natural and cultural resources for sustainable tourism development</li> <li>– Increased market demand for sustainable tourism</li> <li>– R&amp;D potential for conservation and management of natural and cultural resources</li> <li>– Potential of nature protected areas and cultural heritage as a resource for socio-economic development using science, arts and culture, social capital resources</li> <li>– Diverting high level tourist/personal travel flows for tourism development in hinterlands</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Ineffective management in areas that attract large numbers of visitors</li> <li>– Increased risk of natural disasters as a consequence of climate change (floods, drought, freezing rain)</li> <li>– Restrictions and limitations of existing legal frameworks</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Increased awareness of population and key actors on the importance of heritage conservation and economic opportunities</li> <li>– Increased awareness of population and other actors related on natural and man made hazard risk prevention and management</li> <li>– Synergies of EU mainstream policies</li> </ul>	
Inclusive growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Growing need for diverse range of health and social services in the border area</li> <li>– Social innovation for new health and social services (mobile services, joint use of capacities, ...)</li> <li>– Emerging public institutions and civil society partnerships for tackling social &amp; health care issues</li> <li>– Increased need for creating and strengthening cross-border community (tourism, daily commuters, etc.)</li> <li>– Free movement of goods, services and people with full EU membership of Croatia</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Further growth of disparities in the socio-economic development of more developed and economically weaker regions</li> <li>– Decreasing public budgets for public services</li> <li>– Further increase of poverty or social exclusion of the elderly, the unemployed and other specific groups</li> <li>– Further outward migration, especially of youth</li> <li>– Fear of change, difficult to change people's habits</li> <li>– Restrictions and limitations of existing legal frameworks</li> </ul>

### Key needs and challenges of the Cooperation Programme area

In consideration of the situation analysis and in examining key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, the main needs and challenges of the programme area may be summarised as follows:

#### ◆ Substantial regional disparities and the rural-urban divide

Disparity in the level of development is a key characteristic of the programme area. Disparities exist between regions as well as between urban centres and rural and remote areas. Disparities are reflected in the levels of GDP/capita, population trends, levels of unemployment, entrepreneurship dynamics, poverty issues, health indicators and many other factors. The greatest differences exist between the most developed regions – Osrednjeslovenska region, City of Zagreb, Obalno-kraška region, County of Primorje-Gorski Kotar and County of Istria and the least developed regions - Pomurska, Zasavska, Primorsko-notranjska regions in Slovenia and County of Karlovac, County of Međimurje and County of Krapina-Zagorje in Croatia. Using the economic strengths of the most developed regions to create synergies and activate the potential of less dynamic regions is the programme area challenge.

#### ◆ Tackling unemployment and improving conditions for smart growth

Over the past six years, the programme area lost 95,000 jobs as compared to 2007. Peripheral areas suffered the highest unemployment rates, especially County of Karlovac, County of Zagreb, County of Krapina-Zagorje, Pomurska region and Zasavska region. Lack of jobs presents one of the key challenges, as does the high level of youth who are unemployed and whose potentials are not being exploited, resulting in out-migration. Another challenge for the programme area is tackling opportunities for increasing entrepreneurial activity and strengthening the economic base for the internationalisation of businesses.

#### ◆ Maintaining the programme area's environmental quality, diversity and identity

The programme area has an abundance of natural and cultural values and a relatively high level of preserved biodiversity. A large section of the programme area (39.6 %) is protected. This protected



area represents valuable asset that must be maintained for future generations while at the same time, it provides the potential for sustainable use and sustained economic development.

The programme area is also vulnerable to various natural and men-made hazard risks. Floods have in the recent years caused enormous damage for the populations and businesses located in these flood prone areas. It is anticipated that climate change will only increase this risk.

#### ◆ Ensuring equal access to social, health, civil protection services for populations in the programme area and making the area safe and attractive to live in

The quality of life among populations in the programme area differs and is linked to the overall socio-economic situation. The main challenges are in ensuring equal access to health care and social care services as well as increasing public transport connectivity and safety to deprived rural areas, small towns and islands. Population ageing, poverty and exclusion of certain social groups represent major challenges that can be jointly addressed. In addition, remote cross border areas and areas with a high number of tourists face an increased risk of emergency events.

### 1.1.1.2 The Cooperation Programme's strategy for contribution to the delivery of the Union strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth

#### Lessons from the previous cooperation period

Cross border cooperation between Slovenia and Croatia has been supported since 2003 under several EU instruments, starting with PHARE/CARDS (2003), trilateral Neighbourhood Programme (2004-2006), and IPA CBC (2007-2013). Administrative and implementing arrangements introduced in each of the programming period gradually improved conditions for cooperation, such as joint calls for proposals, joint projects, lead partner principle and contributed to eliminating some important obstacles. With the accession of Croatia to EU on 1 July 2013, the new cooperation period 2014-2020 opens new opportunities and challenges.

The implementation of the cross border cooperation programmes over years contributed to the **increase in capacity of the beneficiaries**. Cross border cooperation culture has developed and matured in time. The visibility of the programme and interest of the beneficiaries seems to be quite high, which is reflected in significant receipt of received applications.

Overview of the implementation in the period 2007-2013 shows strong interest for cooperation in all priorities and measures. In total 523 applications were received under 3 calls for proposals and 83+13 supported. Under Priority 1 Economic and social development the majority of 51 (+x) projects were addressing tourism and rural development issues. Under Priority 2 Sustainable management 32 (+x) projects were supported, of which xx under measure and xx under measure.

Although the potential for strengthening the economic cooperation and competitiveness of the area was identified and significant share of project proposals was received under the measure 1.2 Development of entrepreneurship the on-going evaluation showed that cooperation mainly focused on promoting entrepreneurial culture and identification of potential business ideas, while practical economic cooperation of existing business entities was addressed to a lesser extent. The potential remained unexploited, partly because SMEs were not eligible as direct beneficiaries and the understanding on the state aid rules was relatively low.

Besides, there were several successful projects addressing valorisation and restoration of individual natural and cultural heritage supported in the past. However, after project completion the results are not visible at the wider market due to absence of market led approach and integration into wider tourism products/destination.

Projects addressing social integration and mobility were addressed to a lesser extent.

**Vision of the Cooperation Programme area**

"The CP Slovenia-Croatia aims at promoting sustainable, safe and vibrant border area by fostering smart (approaches to) preservation, mobilization and management of natural and cultural resources for the benefit of the people living and working in or visiting the area."

CP Slovenia – Croatia 2014 – 2020

Connected in Green.

### Rationale for the selection of thematic objectives

Strategic choices in the selection of the thematic objectives were made on the basis of the situation analysis and identification of the key needs and challenges of the programme area. In addition, national priorities, potential cross border value added and impact as well as feasibility of implementation were observed.

	Thematic objective	Relevance for the programme area
Smart Growth	01. Strengthening research, technological development and innovation	The key research and technological development institutions present in the programme area. Limited funds would not make a significant impact. Seen as a horizontal component within other thematic objectives. Thematic objective well covered by national ESI fund programmes and the centralised programme (Horizon 2020).
	02. Enhancing access to and use and quality of ICT	Internet penetration in the programme area is relatively high. Thematic objective covered by the national ESI fund programmes. Use and application of ICT shall be promoted across all investment priorities.
	03. Enhancing the competitiveness of SMEs	Relevant for the programme area. CBC cooperation between SMEs was limited in the previous period and focused on entrepreneurial culture. Thematic objective well covered by national ESI fund programmes linked to smart specialization. Centralised EU programme COSME for competitiveness of Enterprises ad SME provides additional option. This objective has potential to be partly addressed in the TO 6 through mobilisation of cultural and natural heritage for tourism development.
	04. Supporting the shift towards a low-carbon economy in all sectors	Limited funds would not make a significant impact to the programme area. Thematic objective well covered by national ESI fund programmes.
Sustainable growth	05. Promoting climate change adaptation, risk prevention and management	Programme area vulnerable and has already suffered from flooding and other natural and man-made disasters. Need for cross border-coordinated action in risk prevention and management of flood risk areas. Direct cross border effect expected and synergies with national measures anticipated. Thematic objective covered by the national ESI Funds programme, though not concentrating on the border river basins of the programme area (Kolpa/Kupa, Sotla/Sutla and Dragonja river basin).
	06. Preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency	Natural and cultural values present important potential of the programme area and are already well recognised between the beneficiaries. Important resource for the economic development of areas that lag behind including hinterlands of well recognised coastal areas. Direct cross border effect and synergies expected. Thematic objective also supported within national ESI programmes.
	07. Promoting sustainable transport and removing	The programme area is well integrated into international corridors with exception of distant areas (remote rural areas, islands). Limited funding hinders any substantial result.

	Thematic objective	Relevance for the programme area
	bottlenecks in key network infrastructures	Thematic objectives covered by national ESI Funds programmes focusing on strategic investments that also cover the programme area. Funds also allocated separately for urban areas. This area has potential to be partly addressed in TO11 through supporting cross border partnerships addressing connectivity and sustainable mobility issues in distant cross border areas.
Inclusive growth	o8. Promoting sustainable and quality employment and supporting labour mobility	Thematic objective of significant importance for the programme area. Strongly supported within national ESI Funds programmes and by the flagship initiatives Youth on the Move and Agenda for new skills and jobs.
	o9. Promoting social inclusion, combating poverty and any discrimination	Thematic objective of significant importance for the programme area, especially in remote and distant areas. This objective has potential to be partly addressed by TO11 through supporting cross border partnerships in addressing social inclusion, social innovation and health promotion. Strongly supported within national ESI Funds programmes.
	10. Investing in education, training and vocational training for skills and lifelong learning	Thematic objective of importance for the programme area and seen as a horizontal issue for other thematic objectives tackled in the programme. Thematic objectives supported within national ESI Funds programmes.
	11. Enhancing institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders and efficient public administration	Significant relevance for the programme area, particularly in social care, health care, public transport services due to limited access in cross border area and in remote areas where resources and capacities could be shared and new business models jointly developed. Thematic objectives supported within national ESI Funds programmes.

As evident above, all thematic objectives are relevant for the programme area. However, considering limited financial means and the need for thematic concentration, the Cooperation Programme has focused on areas where:

- Issues that have a direct cross border effect can be tackled;
- A history of successful cross border cooperation and interest has been identified;
- Potentials within the Cooperation Programme area can be strengthened and common weaknesses can be reduced for the benefit of the population.

The following **thematic objectives** were selected:

- Promoting climate change adaptation, risk prevention and management (TO5);
- Preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency (TO6);
- Enhancing the institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders and efficient public administration (TO11).

A more detailed overview of the programme area's potentials, challenges and needs related to the selected thematic priorities/priority axes is presented below:

### Priority axis 1: Cross-border risk prevention (TO 5)

The border area between Slovenia and Croatia is extremely rich in river networks and underground water systems. Three main international rivers cross the area (Sava, Drava, Mura) while several smaller river basins spread along the border (Dragonja, Kolpa/Kupa and Sotla/Sutla).

Due to geomorphological features, water system is ecologically sensitive, particularly in the river floodplains and Karst areas. Most smaller river networks in the border area are protected as natural heritage or their surroundings are designated as NATURA 2000 sites.

As the majority of the area along the border is mountainous or hilly, settlements and agricultural regions tend to be located in the river valleys. Over the last several decades, local inhabitants have begun to invest in river tourism and campsites, the restoration of traditional water mills and the exploitation of water resources for small hydro energy production plants. However, the further development of these projects is often limited due to an absence of flood prevention plans and concrete prevention measures at the local level. A further difficulty lies in the fact that flood prevention measures as well as water management regulations often differ between Slovenia and Croatia for the same river.

Overall, it is estimated that xx% (xx ha) of the programme area is at risk of frequent flooding and xx% (xx ha) is at risk of catastrophic flooding. In total, xx households (% population) are located within these areas.

The border area recently faced severe flooding along the Drava and South Slovenian river basins. The threat of flood is increased by the lack of a reliable system for common hydrological forecasting regarding cross-border rivers, timely information on water flows, data exchange and cooperation with respect to early warning systems.

#### The main needs and common challenges to be addressed by the programme:

- Increasing the knowledge base and planning on operational micro river basin level, especially on border rivers for which flood risk assessments and mitigation plans do not exist
- Increasing the level of integration and harmonisation of planning, management and forecasting/ monitoring in the cross border area river basins
- Improving the level of flood protection in cross border areas that are not addressed within national priorities
- Activating the potential of riverbanks for the development of sustainable tourism.

### Priority axis 2: Preserving and promoting natural and cultural resources (TO6)

Well-preserved natural environments as well as a high density of cultural values represent two of the main pillars and a strong potential for sustainable development of the area:

- Eight regional and landscape parks in the Slovenian section of the programme area (covering 1995.3 km<sup>2</sup>) as well as three national parks and three nature parks in the Croatian section;
- A high share of Natura 2000 areas – 39.6% in programming area, 36.4 %, in Slovenian side of the programming area and 42.4% on Croatian side<sup>1</sup>. Natura 2000 areas are present both within and outside of protected areas. The highest shares of Natura 2000 are found in the

---

<sup>1</sup> Land areas considered.

County of Primorje-Gorski Kotar (96.5%), Obalno-kraška region (62.1 %) and Primorsko-notranjska region (58.3%).

- UNESCO protected sites (Škocjan caves - World Natural Heritage Site, prehistoric pile dwellings at Ljubljansko barje , early Christian Euphrasius Basilica Complex in Poreč – World Cultural Heritage)
- The programme area is known for the rich cultural heritage of not only its urban centres, but also of its rural components. In total, there are 25,347 registered cultural heritage sites in the programme area, including 22,069 in Slovenia (74% of all Slovenian heritage sites) and 3,278 in Croatia (37% of all Croatian heritage sites). Among these, 262 are of national importance (10 in Croatian regions and 252 in Slovenian regions).

Diverse and rich natural and cultural heritage represents the main identity element. However, as is evident from the situation analysis, many cultural and natural sites are in poor condition, lacking attractive content and sustainable management. From this situation, it follows that there is a realistic threat of losing some significant historical values and traditions. Although some of the most advanced tourism destinations of both countries (e.g. Istria, spa resorts, capital cities) are located in the programme area, the opportunities offered by heritage, traditional knowledge, nature parks and landscapes of rural hinterlands and smaller historic towns are not visible or exploited. There is an obvious lack of integration among museums, castles, nature sites, traditional events, etc., where the local economy could develop joint cross-border products/services or destinations that could compete on international markets. The level of innovation and involvement of cultural and creative industries in the development of cultural heritage-based tourism products remains low.

#### The main needs and challenges to be addressed in the programme:

- Ensuring favourable status of the biodiversity and habitats in the programme area;
- Increasing the level of coordination and harmonisation of protection measures in the cross border areas;
- Increasing knowledge base on the existence of ecosystem services and awareness on their importance for the programme area;
- Preserving cultural heritage that faces the threat of being lost;
- Ensuring the right balance between the conservation and sustainable use of natural and cultural values;
- Seizing the potential of nature protected areas and cultural heritage for sustainable economic development of the programme area, in particular with regards to sustainable tourism (the greening<sup>2</sup> of existing destinations, development of new and innovative products/services and improvement of existing ones) for existing and new target groups;
- Improving links between the most advanced tourist destinations and attractions and centres of local importance/hinterlands and increasing the presence of the area on third markets.

#### **Priority axis 3: Healthy, safe and accessible border areas (TO11)**

The situation analysis revealed serious regional disparities as well as an urban – rural divide regarding the accessibility of citizens to (public) services that are of greatest importance for the vitality of the border area. Several indicators reveal disparities ranging from socio-economic to health and poverty.

---

<sup>2</sup> Greening: introducing environmentally friendly/green practices to the existing tourist offers, e.g. promotion of soft/sustainable mobility (slow travel, more cycling and hiking instead of using motor vehicles, use of e-vehicles, ...); increase in availability of local food and services (short supply chains), promotion of eco-tourism standards, increase in use of alternative energy sources for tourism services, and similar), increase in use of recycled materials, etc.

Public service institutions (health care, social care, civil protection and others) have traditionally been well connected across the border due to historically common organisation systems. Public services are relatively well distributed at the regional level, while differences in the scope and quality of services differ locally also as a result of lack of human resources and adequate funds.

Certain parts of the programme area face challenges in adequate health care service capacities during tourism peaks, when the number of visitors/tourists increases. In connection with the increased number of visits to natural protected areas and due to relatively difficult to access areas, the risk of fires, accidents and the need for rescue and other interventions increases.

Poor availability or non-existence of public transport services in remote and immediate cross border areas increases unsustainable transport modes, but also hinders the potential for their economic development of these areas (daily work commuting, access to formal education and lifelong learning opportunities, attracting tourists and visitors flows to such areas).

The programme area has the potential to activate relevant social capital in related sectors, increase access and quality of services and foster social innovation. Non-governmental organizations in the programme area represent an essential actor, particularly in the field of civil protection but also in the provision of social care and in promotional activities related to health care.

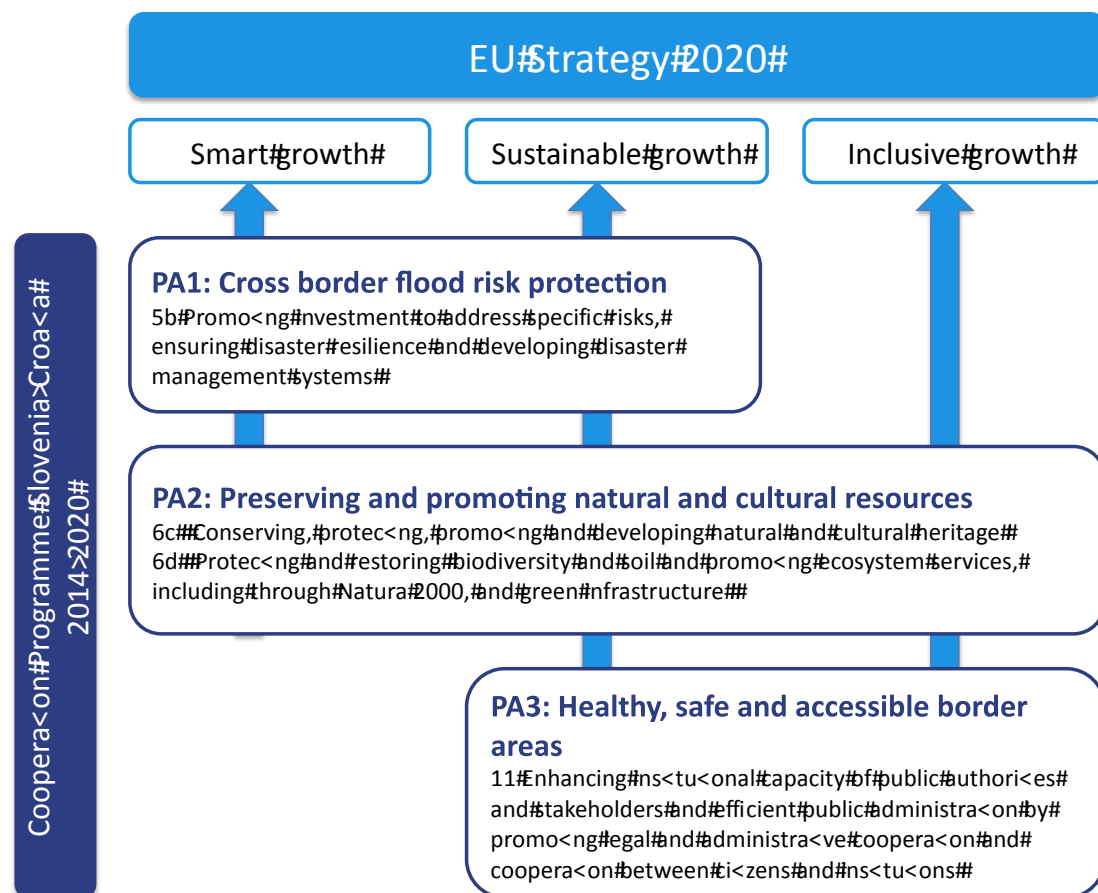
The main needs and common challenges to be addressed in the programme:

- **Civil protection:** equalising the skills between professional and volunteer members of civil protection, improving the skills and team work for a common response in CB disaster events and modernization of rescue and protection equipment;
- **Health and social care:** Improving the range and accessibility of social care and health promotion services and programmes, particularly in rural and remote cross border areas, improving the range, quality and efficiency of services and social care programmes by fostering community services, decreasing health inequalities and health promotion;
- **Connectivity and mobility:** increasing sustainable mobility in the border areas and improving public transport connectivity of remote areas and areas of more concentrated cross border tourism flows.

### 1.1.1.3 Contribution to the strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth

#### Contribution to the EU 2020

**Figure 1** Structure of the programme and its contribution to Europe 2020 strategy



The Cooperation Programme is expected to contribute most to the sustainable growth objectives, followed by smart and inclusive growth.

1. **Sustainable growth** - Promoting a more resource efficient, greener and more competitive economy:

The Cooperation Programme contribution to sustainable growth is focused on two issues – adapting to climate change and accelerating greener economy.

Among several natural hazards, floods represent the highest threat and need for urgent cross-border intervention. Increased risks of floods in the programme area will be addressed by strategically chosen activities aiming at increased coordination between the authorities, planning and observation of river basins and by introducing concrete measures to increase the safety of the population, businesses and heritage in the border area (e.g. joint improvement of the knowledge base, improvement of tools for detection, early warning and alert systems, awareness raising and capacity building and pilot implementation of measures).

The programme area potential for promoting the development of green economy will be supported in particular by mobilising the natural and cultural heritage for economic development and by preserving its natural values and biodiversity (e.g. revitalisation of the cultural heritage, development



of sustainable integrated tourist products, awareness raising and concrete conservation activities). In addition, the programme intends to focus activities to the areas where these potentials were exploited to a lesser extent (e.g. hinterland and surroundings of most visited tourist centres, NATURA 2000 areas).

2. **Smart growth** - Developing an economy based on knowledge and innovation:

Education, training and lifelong learning, innovation and digital society are expected to better address all investment priorities. However, specific contribution of the programme to smart growth is expected in particular through development of new business models in the field of flood protection and mobilisation of cultural and natural resources. Research and ICT support as well as culture and creative industry sector is expected to raise the quality and range of new tourist products, improved interpretation and the development of new audiences. Research and innovation will also support activities aiming at planning, monitoring and conserving the biodiversity in the area.

3. **Inclusive growth** - Fostering a high-employment economy delivering social and territorial cohesion:

Specific territorial issues relate to accessibility of public service in different parts of the programme area as well as differences in the situation of particular groups. Contribution to inclusive growth is expected in particular through improved cooperation and exchange between public authorities and regional actors aiming at tackling common challenges related to social and health inequalities, accessibility, safety and vitality of the border area. Social innovation and developing partnerships between public and civil society, better utilisation of existing resources and capacity building are examples of contribution.

1.1.2 A justification for the choice of thematic objectives and corresponding investment priorities having regard to the Common Strategic Framework, based on 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 carried out

**Table 3** Justification for the selection of thematic objectives and investment priorities

Selected Thematic Objective	Selected Investment Priority	Justification for selection
5	5b	<p>The programme area is characterised by dense and environmentally sensitive water networks with the same run-off flow into the Adriatic and Black seas. Although both countries have elaborated management plans for the two river basin districts and co-operate within bilateral water commissions, cross-border cooperation that deals with integrated water management and flood risk prevention is not at a satisfactory level, as well indicated by recent occurrences and flooding in both Slovenia and Croatia. The same weaknesses may be observed in the last European Commission report on implementation of the Water Directive Framework Slovenia (14.11.2012, SWD (2012) 379, 27/30). The absence of practical solutions at the local level jeopardises the socio-economic development of border areas.</p> <p>The needs of this area underline the necessity for integrating planning</p>

Selected Thematic Objective	Selected Investment Priority	Justification for selection
		<p>and management as well as developing cross-border observation and forecasting systems at the concrete river basin level that are supported by the implementation of practical sustainable measures.</p> <p>Investment priority 5b thus addresses a strategic and integrated approach towards water management and flood risk prevention while targeting implementation measures on select common border river basins ("area based approach"). This issue has never before been addressed in the framework of the CP Slovenia-Croatia.</p> <p>In this way, CP Slovenia-Croatia will contribute to the strengthening of capacities for disaster prevention and response as one of the key EU 2020 targets for sustainable growth.</p>
6	6c	<p>The border region has major natural and cultural assets that attract guests from urban zones as well as international tourists and which represent an untapped potential for accelerated economic development, especially in rural areas.</p> <p>As evident from the previous programme period, there exist numerous cross-border initiatives and heritage sites that require investments in preservation as well as innovative presentations. Lack of heritage integration into market driven products and destinations and a low visibility in international markets also holds back business development in this field.</p> <p>Investment priority 6 c thus focuses on the promotion of sustainable tourism that is based on a smart balance between conservation and mobilisation of natural and cultural heritage. Particular emphasis is given to the activation of heritage in order to encourage not only attractive utilisation but also to stimulate entrepreneurship and job creation.</p> <p>A final but integral point is that the explicit proof of economic benefits from heritage utilization shall distinguish this investment priority from other investment priorities within this CP as well as from the past programme measures.</p>
6	6d	<p>The Slovenia – Croatia border region shares the same landscape features, unique biodiversity and diverse ecosystems. These factors collectively represent a living environment for similar habitats and facilitate dynamic circulation of species in the area. Maintaining and improving ecological diversity significantly depends on a cross-border approach while it decisively contributes to the long-term stability and resilience of cross-border ecosystems.</p> <p>However, the analysis indicates that not all habitats and species which dwell in the border area have attained favourable conservation status. This may be understood as the result of human activities, climate change, insufficient cross-border measures from conservation authorities and a low understanding of the benefits that nature brings to people's lives. Existing cooperation activities in the field of environmental protection represent a potential for further in-depth and more strategic collaboration.</p> <p>Investment priority 6d therefore primarily focuses on the conservation</p>

Selected Thematic Objective	Selected Investment Priority	Justification for selection
		<p>and restoration of biodiversity for future generations and on raising awareness of the role that nature plays in the well-being of populations and for long-term risk prevention.</p> <p>A preserved environment is namely also a prerequisite for quality of life and promotes the attractiveness of the area for sustainable tourism, which is set as a focus of investment priority 6c.</p>
11		<p>The Slovenia - Croatia border area displays some major demographic and socio-economic disparities between urban and rural border areas. Population ageing, poorer public health, unequal access to health care and social care services, the threat of social exclusion and, at the same time, increased aspirations for tourism, require more targeted and client tailored service provision.</p> <p>The analysis identified a sound network of institutions and human resources along the border. However, the range and quality of services dramatically decreases the further a region's distance from an urban centre. In some fields, there is an evident absence of cross-border co-operation (e.g. social care, health care, public transport).</p> <p>Investment priority 11 focuses on increasing institutional capacity in the provision of services in the fields of health care, social care, safety (against man-made and natural disasters) and public transport.</p> <p>Administrative structures and other service providers will need to exploit the opportunities and synergistic effects of cross-border collaboration, align procedures, and diminish eventual barriers in cross-border service delivery in order to better meet the border area's population and visitor needs.</p>

## 1.2 Justification for the financial allocation

The overall programme budget comprises of 54,251,992 € (with ERDF contribution of 46,114,193 €) as described in Section 3.

The financial allocation to the selected thematic objectives reflects:

- The estimated financial size of the projects foreseeing for each priority axis based on different types of actions and considering past experience of 2007-2013 period;
- The estimated institutional and financial capacity of potential beneficiaries in the border area;
- The coherence with the priority needs expressed in the border regions;
- The estimation of costs of strategic project under 5b investment priority;
- The opinion of stakeholders expressed during the consultation process;
- The strategic focus as set by this Co-operation programme.

For the each priority axis a number of potential project and potential average project size was estimated. In principle, a combination of few larger strategic projects targeting whole or larger part of the border area and several smaller size projects with local border character are expected. The expected size varies between the investment priorities.

- **Priority axis 1 (TO5):** the planned ERDF allocation to Priority Axis 1 is 10,026,557 €, corresponding to 21.7% of the total ERDF allocation. The financial allocation is justified by the evident absence of concrete joint efforts in flood risk prevention in the past and foreseen long term socio-economic benefits invested in prevention measures. This priority axis will be implemented preferably through a single strategic project, which shall be elaborated during the programme preparation and preferably approved in the first by Monitoring Committee (MC) meeting. The financial allocation was made on preliminary cost estimation of key actions needed.
- **Priority axis 2 (TO6):** the planned ERDF allocation to Priority Axis 2 is 28,074,358 €, corresponding to 60.9% of the total ERDF allocation. The financial allocation to this priority is in line with the programme emphasises to smart preservation and utilisation of heritage for growth. On the other hand it reflects the exceeded needs in previous programming period and high demand expressed by the border regions development programmes. Support to this priority axis was encouraged also during the consultation process. The higher allocation considers also the fact that enterprises will be for the first time eligible to participate in the programme Slovenia-Croatia programme (6c only). There are approximately 70 projects foreseen within this priority axis with an estimated average size of 400,000 € ERDF support.
- **Priority axis 3 (TO11):** the planned ERDF allocation to Priority Axis 3 is 5,053,384 €, corresponding to 10.9% of the total ERDF allocation. Since mostly soft and lower costs projects are expected and while the topic of administrative capacity building in selected services is new to the cross-border programme area the smaller allocation of funds is foreseen for this priority axis. Furthermore, there are only approximately 20 projects foreseen within this priority axis being of significantly smaller size. Average estimated project size of 250,000 € ERDF support is expected.

**Table 4** Overview of the investment strategy of the Cooperation Programme

Priority axis	ERDF support in €	Proportion (%) of the total Union support to the Cooperation Programme (by Fund)			Thematic objective	Investment priority	Specific objective corresponding to the investment priority	Result indicators corresponding to specific objective
		ERDF	ENI	IPA				
1	10,026,557	21.7			5	5b	Establishment of common cross-border knowledge base and reduction of flood risk in the border river basins	Population benefiting from flood protection measures  Area of border river basin covered by joined flood risk protection measures
2	28,074,358	60.9			6	6c	Mobilizing natural and cultural heritage for sustainable development	Visitors to cultural and natural heritage sites in the programme area

Priority axis	ERDF support in €	Proportion (%) of the total Union support to the Cooperation Programme (by Fund)			Thematic objective	Investment priority	Specific objective corresponding to the investment priority	Result indicators corresponding to specific objective
		ERDF	ENI	IPA				
						6d	Protecting and restoring biodiversity and promoting ecosystem services	Natura 2000 species and habitat types improved the degree of representativity
3	5,013,278	10.9			11		Building partnerships between public authorities and stakeholders to improve health, safety and accessibility in the border area	(Rural) Population covered by (improved or CB) services
4 TA	3,000,000	6.5					? MA	? MA

## SECTION 2

### PRIORITY AXES

(Reference: points (b) and (c) of the Article 8(2) of the ETC Regulation)

#### 2.A. Description of the priority axes other than technical assistance

(Reference: points (b) and (c) of the Article 8(2) of the ETC Regulation)

Three priority axes have been chosen alongside the technical assistance:

- Priority Axis 1: **Cross-border flood risk prevention**
- Priority Axis 2: **Preserving and promoting natural and cultural resources**
- Priority Axis 3: **Healthy, safe and accessible border areas**

Furthermore, investment priorities were determined in line with the corresponding thematic objectives. Priority axis 1 includes one investment priority - 5(b) corresponding to the thematic objective 5 (Promoting climate change, risk prevention and management). Priority axis 2 includes two investment priorities - 6(c) and 6(d), both corresponding to the thematic objective 6 (Preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency). Priority axis 3 includes one investment priority – 11 corresponding to the thematic objective 11 (Enhancing institutional capacity and efficient public administration).

#### 2.A.1. Priority Axis 1: Cross-border flood risk prevention

##### 2.A.1.1. Priority Axis

ID of the priority axis:	1
Title of the priority axis:	Cross-border Flood Risk Prevention

##### 2.A.1.2. Justification for the establishment of a priority axis covering more than one thematic objective

Not applicable

##### 2.A.1.3. Fund and calculation basis for Union support

Fund	ERDF
Calculation basis (total eligible expenditure or eligible public expenditure)	Total eligible expenditure

##### 2.A.1.4. Investment priority

Investment priority	5b Promoting investment to address specific risks, ensuring disaster resilience and developing disaster management systems
---------------------	--

## 2.A.1.5. Specific objectives corresponding to the investment priority and expected results

ID	5b-SO-1
Specific objective	<b>Establishment of a common cross-border knowledge base and reduction of flood risk in the border river basins</b>
The results that the Member States seek to achieve with Union support	<p>The programme area has an abundance of river networks and underground water systems. Floods are one of the major natural hazards in the area, therefore, the development of the border area is often limited due to an absence of flood risk assessments, prevention plans and concrete mitigation measures on border rivers. Several natural hazards and resulting damages were reported in the programme area last year.</p> <p>This investment priority builds on existing efforts and the co-operation of bilateral commissions for water system management and civic protection that exist between Slovenia and Croatia. However, these efforts have always been limited by insufficient financial resources, ad hoc solutions and lack of co-operation at the local level.</p> <p>The threats and opportunities that arise from the high density of the common hydrological network require improvements in cross-border co-operation on river basins management and flood prevention. Similar weaknesses were reported in the 3<sup>rd</sup> country (Slovenia) report to the European Commission for the Implementation of the Water Framework Directive, River Basin Management Plans, 2012.</p> <p>While the <b>national ESI Fund programmes</b> of Slovenia and Croatia target areas that are of highest flood risk (as identified in preliminary national flood risk assessments), <b>CP Slovenia – Croatia</b> focuses on <b>increasing the level of integration</b> of cross-border planning, management, forecasting/observation of water networks alongside the border. Furthermore, joint sustainable implementation measures are to be demonstrated at three select smaller cross-border river basins (Dragonja, Kolpa/Kupa and Sotla/Sutla, <b>Drava</b>) that pass through remote, rural and declining regions of Slovenia and Croatia.</p> <p>As a result, the programme is to deliver <b>a common strategic approach and a knowledge base</b> for more coordinated, coherent and strategic planning, management and observation of river basins in the border area. A common approach is a pre-condition for integrated river basins management and more effective long-term flood prevention along Slovenian/Croatian border areas.</p> <p>An improved knowledge base <b>and understanding</b> coupled by the pilot implementation of a set of construction and non-construction measures that follow an ecosystem-based approach are expected to result in <b>a reduced risk of floods in the border river basins of Dragonja, Kolpa/Kupa, Sotla/Sutla (and Drava)</b>. The foreseen tailor-made, sustainable and locally-based actions are of particular importance for the enhancement of the socio-economic development of the respective border area.</p> <p>In addition to the increased <b>safety of the population, businesses and heritage</b> situated in the target area, concrete measures and coordinated</p>

	<p>planning will enable the <b>use of the river potential</b> for the development of sustainable tourism and similar small businesses that are situated along the riverbanks.</p> <p>Moreover, the results will contribute to the implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive (Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a framework for the Community action in the field of water policy, OJ L 327, 22.12.2000) and national Flood Risk Management Plans (under preparation further to Directive 2007/60/EU, prior to 22.12.2015) at the local level within the international river basins between Slovenia and Croatia.</p>
--	---

**Table 5** Programme specific result indicators

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline value	Baseline year	Target value (2023)	Source of data	Frequency of reporting
5b-RI-1 (CI – 20)	Population benefiting from flood protection measures (Alternative: Population living in flood risk areas)	Number	? ARSO, Hrvatske vode	2014	? ARSO, Hrvatske vode	SI: ARSO, HR: Hrvatske vode	2018, 2023
5b-RI-2	Area of border river basin covered by joined flood risk protection measures (Alternative: Area under flood risk)	Km <sup>2</sup> or %	? ARSO, Hrvatske vode	2014	? ARSO, Hrvatske vode	SI: ARSO, HR: Hrvatske vode	2018, 2023

## 2.A.1.6. Actions to be supported under the investment priority

2.A.1.6.1. 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

Investment priority	5b
<b>Indicative actions to be supported</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) <b>In the target area</b> of river basins along the Slovenian/ Croatian border indicative activities include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <b>Development and improvement of joint knowledge base and tools for water and flood risk management</b> such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Collection, exchange and management of data required for integral water and risk management,</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Upgrading hydrologic and hydro-morphologic observation and mathematical modeling for floods forecasting (HFS – Hydrologic forecasting systems), including standardization of warning procedures in the border river basins,</li> <li>○ Flood risk mapping (detailed flood maps),</li> <li>○ Improvement of tools for detection, early warning and alert systems,</li> <li>○ Improvement of tools for flood observation, analysis of flood events and impact assessment of flood risk measures,</li> <li>○ Compliance of damage risk assessment methodologies and collection and exchange of data for damage risk assessments.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <b>Coordination and capacity building</b> of actors responsible for flood risk prevention and river basin management (e.g. hydro-meteorology service, bilateral commission for water management, civil protection, water management authorities, ...);</li> <li>– <b>Awareness rising and capacity building activities for citizens, businesses, farmers, land owners and public institutions</b> to understand nature processes, measures for flood risk prevention, water management and adequate response during flood nature disasters;</li> <li>– <b>Elaboration of strategic plans (master/management plans) and documentation for introduction of joint flood risk mitigation measures aiming at identified critical points on selected river basins using sustainable and integrated approaches towards river basin management and flood prevention:</b> analysis, hydrological studies, technical project designs, EIA, landscaping and rehabilitation studies, project designs, feasibility studies, etc.</li> </ul> <p><b>b) In the target area</b> of a river basins Dragonja, Kolpa/Kupa, Sotla/Sutla, <b>Drava</b> indicative activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <b>Pilot implementation of measures</b> consisting of construction, retention or other non-construction measures with emphasis on environmentally sustainable and ecosystem based adaptation solutions (e.g. stone river barriers, consolidation of river banks, formation of natural retention fields, purchase of land for retention fields or similar sustainable measures, communication and observation equipment on the spot, ...)</li> </ul>
Target groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Municipalities</li> <li>– Spatial planners</li> <li>– Local population living in the target border river basin areas</li> <li>– Businesses located in the target border river basin areas</li> <li>– Agriculture households located in the target border river basin areas</li> <li>– Public institutions located in the target border river basin areas</li> <li>– Land owners in the influential area of target border river basin</li> <li>– Institutions and NGOs active in the field of environment, spatial planning, risk prevention, civic protection, nature and cultural heritage protection, agriculture and other activities related to the water management and flood risk prevention</li> </ul>
Indicative types of beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– National, <b>regional and local</b> authorities responsible for water management, flood risk prevention, hydrometeorology and civic protection</li> </ul>
Specific territories targeted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– River basins along the Slovenian/ Croatian border area (knowledge base type of actions only)</li> <li>– River basins Dragonja, Kolpa/Kupa, Sotla/Sutla, <b>Drava</b> (knowledge base type of actions and pilot investments)</li> </ul>

## 2.A.1.6.2. Guiding principles for the selection of operations

Investment priority	5b
General principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Direct grant award of project/s by Monitoring Committee in accordance to Article 12 of the ETC regulation and following the standardised set of criteria as outlined in the “Guiding principles for the selection of operations under the investment priorities” in Section 5.</li> </ul>
Specific principles for IP 5b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Complementarity, co-ordination and synergies with mainstream programmes of Slovenia and Croatia under European Structural and Investment Funds, particularly with the European Agriculture Fund for Rural Development and Cohesion Fund.</li> </ul>

## 2.A.1.6.3. Planned use of financial instruments (where appropriate)

-

## 2.A.1.6.4. Planned use of major projects (where appropriate)

-

## 2.A.1.6.5. Output indicators (by investment priority)

**Table 6** Programme specific output indicators

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Target value (2023)	Source of data	Frequency of reporting
5b-OI-1	Population benefiting from awareness rising activities	Number	20% of people living in the flood risk areas or target area (? Baseline 2014)	Monitoring/ Project reports	Annually
5b-OI-2	Area of the border river basins covered by joint strategic plans (or detailed flood risk maps/ models)	Km <sup>2</sup>	ARSO/HV to provide information	Monitoring/ Project reports	Annually
5b-OI-3	Number of joint tools for observation, forecasting and modelling border river basins (or for flood risk management and damage risk assessment)	Number	3 (1 for each of 3 river basins)	Monitoring/ Project reports	Annually
5b-OI-4	Number of pilot implementations for flood risk prevention	Number	2	Monitoring/ Project reports	Annually

## 2.A.1.7. Performance framework

**Table 7** 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	Evaluation of the relevance of the indicator, where appropriate
1	Financial	5b-FI-1	Payments: certified and declared to EC	%	5%	100%	Monitoring	
1	Output	5b-OI-1	Population benefiting from awareness raising activities	Number	5% of x	20% of all in target area	Monitoring/Project reports	
1	Output	5b-OI-2	Area of the border river basins area covered by joint strategic plans	Km <sup>2</sup>	2	X	Monitoring/Project reports	
1	Output	5b-OI-3	Number of joint tools for observation, forecasting and modelling border river basins	Number	0	3	Monitoring/Project reports	
1	Output	5b-OI-4	Number of pilot implementations for flood risk prevention	Number	0	X	Monitoring/Project reports	

### 2.A.1.8. Categories of intervention

**Table 8** Dimension 1 Intervention field

Priority axis	Code	Amount (EUR)
1	21 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 – 40% <sup>3</sup> )	may go out
1	85 Protection and enhancement of biodiversity, nature protection and green infrastructure - 40%	may go out
1	86 Protection, restoration and sustainable use of Natura 2000 sites – 40%	may go out
1	87 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 – 100%	
1	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 – 0%	

<sup>3</sup> Coefficient for the calculation of support to climate change objectives

**Table 9** Dimension 2 Form of finance

Priority axis	Code	Amount (EUR)
1	01 (Non-repayable grant)	10,026,557

**Table 10** Dimension 3 Territory type

Priority axis	Code	Amount (EUR)
1	02 (Small Urban areas (intermediate density > 5 000 population))	
1	03 (Rural areas (thinly populated))	

**Table 11** Dimension 4 Territorial delivery mechanisms

Priority axis	Code	Amount (EUR)
1	07 (Not applicable)	10,026,557

#### 2.A.1.9. A summary of the planned use of technical assistance (where appropriate)

-

## 2.A.2. Priority Axis 2: Protecting and promoting natural and cultural resources

### 2.A.2.1. Priority Axis

ID of the priority axis:	2
Title of the priority axis:	Protecting and promoting natural and cultural resources

### 2.A.2.2. Justification for the establishment of a priority axis covering more than one thematic objective

Not applicable

### 2.A.2.3. Fund and calculation basis for Union support

Fund	ERDF
Calculation basis (total eligible expenditure or eligible public expenditure)	Total eligible expenditure

### 2.A.2.4. Investment priority

Investment priority	6c Conserving, protecting, promoting and developing natural and cultural heritage
	6d Protecting and restoring biodiversity and soil and promoting ecosystem services, including through Natura 2000, and green infrastructure

### 2.A.2.5. Specific objectives corresponding to investment priority 6c and expected results

ID	6c-SO-1
Specific objective	<b>Mobilizing natural and cultural heritage for sustainable development</b>
The results that the Member States seek to achieve with Union support	<p>Diverse and rich natural and cultural heritage represents the major identity element and at the same time the main untapped advantage of the Slovenia - Croatia programme area. However, as is evident from the analysis, many cultural and natural sites are in poor condition, lacking attractive content and sustainable management. This situation points to the realistic threat of degradation or losing some significant natural/historical values and traditions.</p> <p>Although the most advanced tourist destinations of both countries are located in the programme area, many opportunities for connecting them with protected areas and natural and cultural assets in the surrounding/hinterland areas have not been sufficiently seized.</p> <p>Sustainable tourism<sup>4</sup> that derives from the right balance of preservation</p>

<sup>4</sup> **Sustainable tourism** that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities ( Source: Making Tourism More Sustainable – A Guide for Policy Makers, UNEP and UNWTO, 2005, p.11-12, <http://sdt.unwto.org/content/about-us-5>.) **Sustainable tourism development** requires the informed participation of all relevant stakeholders, as well as strong political leadership to ensure wide participation and consensus building. Achieving sustainable tourism is a continuous process and it requires constant monitoring of impacts, introducing the necessary preventive and/or corrective measures whenever

and the sustainable but efficient use of natural and cultural assets provides an important driving force for job creation and the socio-economic development of the border areas.

Heritage and traditions shall be promoted also as inspiration for innovation and small business development in local cuisine, local product design, crafts and arts and other such similar activities that are in line with positioning the Slovenian/Croatian border area as a sustainable cross-border tourist destination. In addition, there is an obvious need for increasing awareness and a knowledge base among the local populations regarding current, potential and future challenges offered by heritage (e.g. value chains, ICT tools, etc.) without jeopardizing heritage itself.

In the framework of this specific objective, natural and cultural heritage is understood in a broader sense of the term, including registered tangible and intangible cultural and natural heritage as well as other recognised cultural habits, natural resources, traditional knowledge, etc.

This investment priority builds on the high number of actors (beneficiaries), joint initiatives and common needs in the field of heritage and tourism and on the needs that have been identified in the previous programme period. Yet, both countries have set sustainable tourism as a strategic orientation for the future.

Thus, a smart approach towards the long-term preservation and at the same time, the mobilisation and management of natural and cultural resources for the benefit of the people living in, working in or just visiting the border areas, lies at the focus of the CP Slovenia – Croatia 2014 – 2020.

The results that are to be delivered by the projects shall be derived from the identity and natural /cultural heritage of the region, ensuring that it is preserved, utilised, packaged, connected and at the same time competitive and **visible on the market as a sustainable tourism destination.**

As a result, the border area will not only **preserve some of its most important cultural and natural heritage sites, but will also increase their quality, sustainability and attractiveness.** Through different cooperative structures, heritage sites shall integrate tourism and tourism-related actors across the border area to establish a set of distinctive products/services and cross-border micro destinations that will be recognisable on international markets. This shall lead to increased visits of the programme area heritage sites and the deliver a higher quality visitor experience. In this way and by increasing the capacities of existing and potential small businesses and heritage management, the **economic potential of cultural and natural heritage shall be seized.**

In order to achieve best results, it is recommended that projects combine several actions within one project - from preservation to creativity and

necessary. Sustainable tourism should also maintain a high level of tourist satisfaction and ensure a meaningful experience to the tourists, raising their awareness about sustainability issues and promoting sustainable tourism practices amongst them. (Source: World Tourism Organization, 2004. <http://www.sustainabletourism.net/definitions.html>).

	cross-border product networking to market access. At the same time, it is encouraged that research institutions from major urban centres as well as stakeholders with marketing experience and potentially major tourist destinations enter project partnerships and support the preservation and mobilisation efforts of individual initiatives in peripheral areas.
--	---

ID	6d-SO-1
Specific objective	<b>Protecting and restoring biodiversity and promoting ecosystem services</b>
The results that the Member States seek to achieve with Union support	<p>The Slovenia – Croatia border region is characterised by a unique natural environment and rich biodiversity. The diverse ecosystems of the Drava and Mura lowlands to the Karst areas of the Dinaric Mountains and the maritime ecosystems of the Adriatic sea are rich with species and habitat types, many of which are endemic to the region. The entire programme area shows the highest concentration of nature parks and Natura 2000 sites in Europe. 39,6 %<sup>5</sup> of the programme area is represented by Natura 2000 areas while 145.386 ha or 4,6% of the whole programme area are designated as nature parks. Because of their size and diversity, these areas serve as provider of several ecosystem services (water supply, biomass, recreation). Unfortunately, the awareness and understanding of ecosystem concepts is still rather low.</p> <p>Uncontrolled pressures on land (i.e. construction), increased visitation of areas that are under highest protection, climate change and the introduction of invasive plant species pose a serious threat to the conservation status and functioning of indigenous habitats, species-and ecosystems of the programme area.</p> <p>Only half of the habitats and 60% of the region's species have attained favourable conservation status in Slovenia. In Croatia, the conservation status of habitats and species has not yet been assessed. In the programming area, grassland ecosystems and wetlands of Dinaric Mountains, floodplain forests, lowland wet meadows, freshwater as well as marine ecosystems are most common Natura 2000 sites of habitats and species in need for improved conservation status and management.</p> <p>In order to preserve these high natural values, this specific objective is primarily focused on the <b>conservation and restoration of biodiversity</b> for future generations and <b>raising awareness of the role that nature plays in the wellbeing of populations</b> and for the purpose of long-term risk prevention (ecosystem services<sup>6</sup>).</p> <p>While mainstream national programmes target the policy level and strategic measures, CP Slovenia-Croatia will concentrate on issues that can be addressed only, or that can be addressed more efficiently, through a co-ordinated cross-border approach.</p>

<sup>5</sup> Land areas only.

<sup>6</sup> **Ecosystem services** are the benefits people obtain from nature. These include provisioning services such as food and water; regulating services such as flood and disease control; cultural services such as spiritual, recreational, and cultural benefits; and supporting services, such as nutrient cycling, that maintain the conditions for life on Earth. (Source: Ecosystems and Human Well-being: A Framework for Assessment, 2003. [http://www.unep.org/maweb/documents/document\\_300.aspx.pdf](http://www.unep.org/maweb/documents/document_300.aspx.pdf)).

	At the programme level, actions should result in reducing the risk of loss or devastation of biodiversity of Natura 2000 species and habitat types. This will be achieved through improved knowledge on species and habitats, new cross-border approaches established from a bottom-up and the demonstration of preservation measures at the practical operational level. A significant contribution to the preservation of biodiversity is expected from concrete actions in the nature such green infrastructure and the increased acceptance and understanding on the importance of preserving biodiversity and ecosystems among local populations and visitors of the programme area.
--	---

**Table 12** Programme specific result indicators

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline value	Baseline year	Target value (2023)	Source of data	Frequency of reporting
6c-RI-1	Visitors to cultural and natural heritage sites in the programme area <sup>7</sup>	Number	4,785,842 <del>4,314,235</del> <del>4,432,053</del> <del>4,71,607</del>	2012 <del>2012</del> <del>2013</del> <del>2012</del>	5,000,000 (4,5% increase)	SI: SURS, Skupnost naravnih parkov Slovenije HR: Muzejski dokumentacijski centar, Državni zavod za zaštitu prirode	2018, 2023
6d-RI-2 CI - 23	Natura 2000 species and habitat types improved the degree of representativity (from B to A or from C to B) <sup>8</sup>	Number or %	0	2014		SI: Zavod RS za varstvo narave HR: Državni zavod za zaštitu prirode	2018, 2023

#### 2.A.2.6. Actions to be supported under the investment priority

2.A.2.6.1. 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

Investment priority	6c
<b>Indicative actions to be supported are:</b>	
<b>Joint development of products and services on the basis of cultural and natural heritage</b>	

<sup>7</sup> The indicator includes registered visits in museums and galleries for cultural heritage and registered visit in regional and national parks located in the programme area (Slovenia: Kozjanski regijski park, Logarska dolina, Regijski park Škocjanske jame, Naravni rezervat Škocjanski zatok, Krajinski park Sečoveljske soline, Krajinski park Strunjan, Krajinski park Kolpa, Notranjski park, Krajinski park Ljubljansko barje and Krajinski park Goričko,; Croatia: NP Brijuni, NP Risnjak, PP Učka, PP Žumberak – Samoborsko gorje, PP Medvedica).

<sup>8</sup> A Excellent representativity, B good representativity, C significant representativity, D non significant presence



**following the concepts of sustainable tourism, bottom-up and integrated approach**

- Conservation, restoration and preservation of (public) cultural and natural heritage including content development for smart utilization and sustainable management
- Investments in (public) visitor infrastructure improving accessibility and visitor experience of cultural and natural heritage (e.g. visitor centres, bike trails and rentals, adaptations to persons with special needs,...)
- Development of new contents and interpretation concepts (e.g. storytelling) of natural and cultural heritage considering new audience development<sup>9</sup> and trends (e.g. innovative exhibitions, cross border festivals,...)
- Development of new/improved joined tourism products and services<sup>10</sup> in the field of sustainable tourism connecting heritage with arts, local suppliers, SMEs, research, innovation, technology, ICT tools and e-services and market trends (e.g. thematic tours, packages, itineraries, routes, tourism offer, ...)
- Joint design of new/improved products and services based on tradition, cultural heritage and natural resources in businesses supporting sustainable tourism development (e.g. crafts ,...)

**Cross-border destination (or area, sites) co-operation, management and promotion**

- Set up, positioning and promotion of cross-border destinations<sup>11</sup>, value chains, clusters or networks of cultural heritage sites, parks, businesses, destination managements or other partners with common interest in sustainable tourism (e.g. studies, cross-border co-operation structures, cross-border protected areas, ..)
- Support to internationalisation and market access of cross border tourism products/destinations (e.g. market entry support, joint development and piloting of marketing concepts and plans, participation at international events and fairs at third markets,...)
- Design and implementation of innovative promotion of the cross-border destinations, including use of ICT, smart technologies, social media, etc.

**Improvement of knowledge base and capacities:**

- Trainings, mentoring, advisory services, awareness rising, exchange of good practices, studies, practical expertise and similar activities supporting all stages necessary for preservation, conservation and maintenance of heritage and traditional skills and strengthening the area's cultural identity (e.g. info points and guidelines for restoration of heritage and introduction of modern architecture, transfer of traditional knowledge,...)
- Trainings, mentoring, advisory services, awareness raising, exchange of good practices, studies, practical expertise and similar activities supporting all stages of mobilising the heritage for economic development and job creation in sustainable tourism and related businesses (e.g. start up handy-craft centres, training programmes for new skills and

<sup>9</sup> **Audience development** describes activity which is undertaken specifically to meet the needs of existing and potential visitors and to help cultural/nature park management organisations to develop on-going relationships with visitors. In a broader term it can include activities which stimulate interest and improves access for target groups who are not likely to visit the heritage site. Main aspects of audience development are related to programme adaptation (improving the quality of experience), marketing, communication and customer care (introducing new approaches to visitors). (Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Audience\\_development](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Audience_development)).

<sup>10</sup> **Tourism product** means a set of tourism attractions/services/accommodation/transportation/entertainment which take the form of a cross-border route/itinerary/trail/offer/package,..., either physical (based on physical infrastructure) or conceptual (linking places/destinations/attractions/experiences) and which all share a common link/feature/topic/theme. Each element of the tourism product is prepared to satisfy the need of the tourist/visitor and provide a quality of experience. The product shall cover/be developed in both countries and promote a concrete (not general) cross-border product having an international market potential. (Source: <http://lokatourconsultant.blogspot.com/2013/04/tourism-product-definition.html> and different documents of EC on sustainable tourism).

<sup>11</sup> **Tourism destination** is the country, region, city or town which is marketed or markets itself as a place for tourists to visit. (Source: <http://media.unwto.org/en/content/understanding-tourism-basic-glossary>).

	<p>competences development for SMEs, managers in tourism and culture in sustainable tourism, interpretation skills, thematic tour guides,...)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Developing and testing new business models for management of cultural and natural heritage (e.g. management and marketing of historic towns, ...)</li> <li>- Elaboration and implementation of visitor management plans (e.g. visitor counting, visitor survey, audience development concepts, offers for visitors,..)</li> <li>- <del>Integrated management models of specific areas (e.g. coastal area and coast hinterland,...)</del></li> </ul>
Target groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tourists/ visitors</li> <li>- Local population</li> <li>- Owners of heritage sites</li> <li>- Businesses, their employees and potential start-ups connected with the utilization cultural or natural heritage or sustainable tourism</li> <li>- Also those groups listed under the capititation " Indicative types of beneficiaries"</li> </ul>
Indicative types of beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Local, regional or national authorities</b> (e.g. municipalities, counties,..)</li> <li>- <b>Non-profit organisations established by public or private law - legal persons</b> acting in the field of cultural or natural heritage, sustainable tourism development or related services (e.g. museums, protected areas management authorities, regional development agencies, tourism destination management organisations, NGOs...)</li> <li>- <b>Profit organisations established by private law (legal persons)</b></li> </ul>
Specific territories targeted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Programme area</li> </ul>

Investment priority	6d
<p><b>Indicative actions to be supported are:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Development of joined co-ordinated approaches, methods, tools and new solutions</b> in planning, monitoring and management of Natura 2000 species and habitat types, areas and protected areas (e.g. data exchange, integration of planning and monitoring methods, co-ordination of management approaches, cross-border bio corridors,...)</li> <li>- <b>Implementation of monitoring surveys of Natura 2000 habitat types or species</b> relevant for cross-border area including introduction of <b>new monitoring tools &amp; technologies</b> (e.g. connecting R&amp;D and innovation)</li> <li>- <b>Practical demonstration actions in nature aiming at improving conditions and protection</b> Natura 2000 habitat types and species <b>(as well as autochthonous plant and animals)</b></li> <li>- <b>Establishing green infrastructure<sup>12</sup> supporting the protection and conservation of habitat types and species, reduction of risks of biodiversity loss</b> (e.g. re-naturalisation, setting up wildlife corridors, restoration of Natura 2000 and biodiversity sites, ...)</li> <li>- Identification, mapping and evaluation of <b>ecosystem services</b> with joint pilot studies of ecosystem values and development of methodologies for regional green accounting or other PES<sup>13</sup> systems</li> </ul>	

<sup>12</sup> **Green infrastructure** is to be understood as "a strategically planned network of natural and semi-natural areas but also other environmental features designed and/or managed so as to deliver a wide range of ecosystem services. (Source: Draft thematic guidance fiche for desk officers Biodiversity, green infrastructure, ecosystem services and Natura 2000, version 2 - 20/02/2014)

<sup>13</sup> **PES** Payment for Ecosystem Service

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <b>Capacity building</b> actions for increasing the participation, awareness, knowledge and acceptance among target groups on <b>nature protection</b> and <b>ecosystem services</b></li> <li>– <b>Elaboration and implementation of visitor management plans</b> supporting other actions and aiming at preserving Natura 2000 sites (e.g. visitor counting, visitor channelling, visitor survey, ...)</li> </ul>	
Target groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Local population</li> <li>– Visitors/ tourists</li> <li>– Local communities</li> <li>– Farmers</li> <li>– Owners of land in NATURA 2000 and protected areas</li> <li>– Businesses</li> <li>– Teachers, students, pupils, children</li> <li>– Also those groups listed under the captionation "Indicative types of beneficiaries"</li> </ul>
Indicative types of beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Local, regional or national authorities (e.g. municipalities, counties,..)</li> <li>– Non-profit organisations established by public or private law - legal persons in the field of nature protection (e.g. nature park management authorities, conservation authorities, NGOs, R&amp;D institutions, regional development agencies, forest institutes, rural development centres, ...)</li> </ul>
Specific territories targeted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Programme area</li> </ul>

#### 2.A.2.6.2. Guiding principles for the selection of operations

Investment priority	6c
General principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– The general guiding principles for the selection of operations under the investment priority are outlined in section "Guiding principles for the selection of operations under the investment priorities" in Section 5.</li> </ul>
Specific principles for IP 6c	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Each project shall demonstrate its <b>contribution to sustainable tourism development</b> of the border area.</li> <li>– Heritage restoration and all other investment projects shall be complemented with the content development, assuring sustainable management, economic impacts and have to be <b>publically accessible</b>.</li> <li>– Each project shall demonstrate <b>integration to a wider cross-border tourism product or destination</b>.</li> <li>– Tourist products which can be <b>booked on-line as packages</b> are highly recommended.</li> </ul>

Investment priority	6d
General principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– The general guiding principles for the selection of operations under the investment priority are outlined in section "Guiding principles for the selection of operations under the investment priorities" in Section 5.</li> </ul>
Specific principles for IP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Each project shall include practical activity or demonstration in</li> </ul>

6d	nature.
----	---------

## 2.A.2.6.3. Planned use of financial instruments (where appropriate)

-

## 2.A.2.6.4. Planned use of major projects (where appropriate)

-

## 2.A.2.6.5. Output indicators (by investment priority)

**Table 13** Programme specific output indicators

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Target (2023)	value	Source data	of	Frequency of reporting
6c							
6c-OI-1 CI-9	Expected visits to supported sites of cultural and natural heritage and attractions <sup>14</sup>	Number	10% average increase		Monitoring/ Project reports		Annually
6c-OI-2	Natural and cultural heritage sites preserved and mobilised for sustainable development	Number	10		Monitoring/ Project reports		Annually
6c-OI-3	Newly developed and/or improved cross-border tourism products and destinations	Number	15		Monitoring/ Project reports		Annually
6c-OI-4	Persons participating in capacity building activities	Number	500		Monitoring/ Project reports		Annually
6d							
6d-OI-1	Natura 2000 habitat types or species addressed <i>(by degree of representativity)</i>	Number	X Line ministries		Monitoring/ Project reports		Annually
6d-OI-2	Practical demonstration actions in nature improving conditions of Natura 2000 species and habitat types	Number or area covered	10		Monitoring/ Project reports		Annually
6d-OI-3	Projects promoting ecosystem services <i>(alternative Surface of evaluated and promoted ecosystem services)</i>	Number	3		Monitoring/ Project reports		Annually
6d-OI-4	Population benefiting from awareness rising activities	Number	200,000 (cca 5% of the programme area population)		Monitoring/ Project reports		Annually

<sup>14</sup> Comparing number of visits to a site in the year following project completion. Includes sites with or without previous tourism activity.

## 2.A.2.7. Performance framework

**Table 14** 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	Evaluation of the relevance of the indicator, where appropriate
2	Financial	6c,d -FI-1	Payments: certified and declared to EC	%	10%	100%	Monitoring	
6c								
2	Output	6c- OI-1 CI-9	Expected visits to supported sites of cultural and natural heritage and attractions <sup>15</sup>	Number	0	10% average increase	Monitoring/ Project reports	
2	Output	6c- OI-2	Natural and cultural heritage sites preserved and mobilised for sustainable development	Number	1	10	Monitoring/ Project reports	
2	Output	6c- OI-3	Newly developed and/or improved cross-border tourism products and destinations	Number	2	15	Monitoring/ Project reports	
2	Output	6c- OI-4	Persons participating in capacity building activities	Number	50	500	Monitoring/ Project reports	
6d								
2	Output	6d- OI-1	Natura 2000 habitat types or species addressed	Number	0	X	Monitoring/ Project reports	
2	Output	6d- OI-2	Practical demonstration actions in nature improving conditions of Natura 2000 species and	Number or area covered	1	10	Monitoring/ Project reports	

<sup>15</sup> Comparing number of visits to a site in the year following project completion. Includes sites with or without previous tourism activity.

Priority axis	Indicator type	ID	Indicator or key implementation step	Measurement unit, where appropriate	Milestone for 2018	Final target (2023)	Source of data	Evaluation of the relevance of the indicator, where appropriate
			habitat types					
2	Output	6d-OI-3	Projects promoting ecosystem services	Number	0	3	Monitoring/ Project reports	
2	Output	6d-OI-4	Population benefiting from awareness rising activities	Number	40,000 (cca 1% of pop.)	200,000 (cca 5% of pop.)	Monitoring/ Project reports	

### 2.A.2.8. Categories of intervention

**Table 15** Dimension 1 Intervention field

Priority axis	Code	Amount (EUR)
2	043 Clean urban transport infrastructure and promotion (including equipment and rolling stock) – 40%	<i>may go out</i>
2	031 Other reconstructed or improved road (motorway, national or local) -0%	<i>may go out</i>
2	055 Other social infrastructure contributing to regional and local development - 0%	<i>may go out</i>
2	062 Technology transfer and university-enterprise cooperation primarily benefiting SMEs – 0%	<i>may go out</i>
2	063 Cluster support and business networks primarily benefiting SMEs – 0%	<i>may go out</i>
2	065 Research and innovation infrastructure, processes, technology transfer and cooperation in enterprises focusing on the low carbon economy and on resilience to climate change - 100%	<i>may go out</i>
2	066 Advanced support services for SMEs and groups of SME (including management, marketing and design services) – 0%	<i>may go out</i>
2	071 Development and promotion of enterprises specialised in providing services contributing to low carbon economy and to resilience to climate change (including support to such services) -100%	<i>may go out</i>
2	074 Development and promotion of commercial tourism assets in SMEs – 0%	
2	075 Development and promotion of commercial tourism services in or for SMEs - 0%	
2	076 Development and promotion of cultural and creative services in or for SMEs – 0%	
2	079 Access to public sector information (e-Tourism) -0%	
2	85 Protection and enhancement of biodiversity, nature protection and green infrastructure - 40%	
2	86 Protection, restoration and sustainable use of Natura 2000 sites – 40%	

Priority axis	Code	Amount (EUR)
2	90 Cycle track and footpaths – 100%	
2	91 Development and promotion of the tourism potential of natural areas -0%	
2	92 Protection, development and promotion of public tourism assets – 0%	
2	93 Development and promotion of public tourism services -0%	
2	94 Protection, development and promotion of public cultural and heritage assets -0%	
2	95 Development and promotion of public cultural and heritage services -0%	
2	104 Self-employment, entrepreneurship and business creation including innovative micro, small and medium sized enterprises -0%	<i>may go out</i>
2	106 Adaptation of workers, enterprises and entrepreneurs to change -0%	<i>may go out</i>

**Table 16** Dimension 2 Form of finance

Priority axis	Code	Amount (EUR)
1	01 (Non-repayable grant)	28,074,358

**Table 17** Dimension 3 Territory type

Priority axis	Code	Amount (EUR)
2	01 Large urban areas (densely populated > 50 000 population)	
2	02 Small Urban areas (intermediate density > 5 000 population)	
2	03 Rural areas (thinly populated))	

**Table 18** Dimension 4 Territorial delivery mechanisms

Priority axis	Code	Amount (EUR)
1	07 (Not applicable)	28,074,358

#### 2.A.2.9. A summary of the planned use of technical assistance (where appropriate)

-

## 2.A.3. Priority Axis 3: Healthy, safe and accessible border areas

### 2.A.3.1. Priority Axis

ID of the priority axis:	3
Title of the priority axis:	Healthy, safe and accessible border areas

### 2.A.1.2. Justification for the establishment of a priority axis covering more than one thematic objective

Not applicable

### 2.A.1.3. Fund and calculation basis for Union support

Fund	ERDF
Calculation basis (total eligible expenditure or eligible public expenditure)	Total eligible expenditure

### 2.A.1.4. Investment priority

Investment priority	Enhancing institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders and efficient public administration by promoting legal and administrative cooperation and cooperation between citizens and institutions.
---------------------	--

### 2.A.1.5. Specific objectives corresponding to the investment priority and expected results

ID	11-SO-1
Specific objective	<b>Building partnerships between public authorities and stakeholders to improve health, safety and accessibility in the border area</b>
The results that the Member States seek to achieve with Union support	<p>The Slovenia – Croatia border area has traditionally been well connected across the border. However, the situation analysis emphasises serious regional disparities and an urban–rural divide as regards to citizens’ accessibility to the (public) services that are most important for the vitality of the border area.</p> <p>Conversely, with population ageing, outward migration, defined ambitions in tourism development and identified threats of natural and man-made hazards, the <b>challenges of vitality, health, safety and accessibility/connectivity</b> are primarily addressed within this specific objective.</p> <p>Continuously shrinking public spending requires new approaches, innovation and the development of alternative and more effective solutions in service provision.</p> <p>This investment priority builds on a historically common administration system, low language barriers between the countries and new circumstances arising from Slovenia – Croatia border being an internal EU border, which are considered as an opportunity to strengthen the delivery and use of services also in the cross-border framework (meaning cross-border service delivery).</p> <p>Supported projects shall result in <b>enhanced capacities of public authorities and stakeholders to provide efficient and effective (public)</b></p>



**(cross-border) service delivery in areas** with significant service delivery gaps. New approaches, management models and the successful involvement of citizens (clients focus) shall allow **better utilization of existing administrative resources and improve the quality, diversity and accessibility of services**. The established institutional cross-border partnerships are expected to be able to demonstrate new or improved public health care, social care services, safety (civil protection) and cross-border sustainable mobility services.

Focusing the efforts of this priority axis towards specific target groups (e.g. the elderly and other groups that are at risk of poverty or social exclusion), CP Slovenia-Croatia will contribute to reducing inequalities, fostering improved living conditions and/or a higher quality of life for citizens of the region (e.g. improved health care for specific population groups, etc.) as well as safer and more accessible tourist destinations for those visiting the area.

Moreover, the results will contribute to the implementation of the EU Directive 2011/24/EU of the EU parliament and of the Council of 9 March 2011 on the application of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare. The purpose of the directive is to enable EU citizens' access to safe and high quality cross border health care.

**Table 19** Programme specific result indicators

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline value	Baseline year	Target value (2023)	Source of data	Frequency of reporting
11-RI-1	(Rural) Population covered by (improved or CB) services	Number	No information available. <sup>16</sup>	2015	382.500 (10% of the population of the programme area)	Survey and Monitoring Reports	2018, 2023
Alternative	Population using CB public services in the field of health and, social care, public transport and safety	Number of Share	No information available. <sup>17</sup>	2015	10% Increase	Survey	2018, 2023
Alternative	Average number of daily cross-border commuters using public (bus, rail)	Number	No single data source. All providers of transport services shall be approached.	2014	5% increase	?	2018, 2023

<sup>16</sup> No information available as the issue has never been addressed before. A survey will be elaborated in the first year of programme implementation

<sup>17</sup> No information available as the issue has never been addressed before. A survey will be elaborated in the first year of programme implementation

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline value	Baseline year	Target value (2023)	Source of data	Frequency of reporting
	transport						
Alternative	Number of users of cross-border health-care services	Number	Data on national level might be available from national health care insurance	2014	5% increase	?	2018, 2023
11-RI-2	Institutions providing CB services in the field of health and social care, public transport and safety	Number	No single data source available. Could be collected for the purpose of CP, but would not represent an official data.	2014	10% increase	Monitoring Reports	2018, 2023

## 2.A.1.6. Actions to be supported under the investment priority

2.A.1.6.1. 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

Investment priority	11
<p><b>Indicative actions to be supported</b> in the field <u>of public health and health-care, social care services, safety (civil protection) and cross-border transport/ sustainable mobility services:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Setting up cross border <b>cooperation (structures)</b> of public institutions and other stakeholder, <b>their plans and governance models</b> in improving access and efficient provision of services in the border region (e.g. collaboration models and network between elderly homes or daily care centres, hospitals and health care centres,...; elaboration of joint cross-border strategies and programmes, technical teams co-operation and reduction of administrative barriers, information exchange high-speed connections in the occurrence of health risks, alignment of intervention procedures, joint action plans for better connections/accessibility to “gravitation centres” in the border area,..)</li> <li>- <b>Developing new or improving quality and diversity/ scope of existing (CB) public services and programmes, including demonstration actions</b> (e.g. tailor made health promotion services, socio-economic integration of vulnerable groups, social innovation, optimising processes, diversification of the channels for delivery, co-operation with non-governmental bodies, inter-service delivery, adjustment of time tables and integration of public transports across the border, one-stop shops and e-services, mobile health info units, developing specific rescue services and relevant equipment,..)</li> <li>- <b>Actions increasing skills and competences for provision of cross-border public services</b> (e.g. new training methods, joined trainings, mentoring, placements for young graduates and internship, best practice exchange, cross-border exchanges and placements of staff and members and other activities increasing the quality of service provision, increasing operational skills and capacities for cross-border interventions)</li> <li>- Actions <b>promoting the a.m. services</b> and active <b>involvement of different groups of citizens</b> in improving their use and quality and intensifying the cross-border collaboration (e.g. specialised</li> </ul>	

events, awareness and promotion campaigns,..)	
Target groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Local population</li> <li>– Tourists/visitors</li> <li>– Service providers</li> <li>– Also those groups listed under the capitation “ Indicative types of beneficiaries”</li> </ul>
Indicative types of beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– National, regional and local authorities</li> <li>– Non-profit organisations established by public or private law - legal persons (e.g. health centres, social care organisations, NGOs, elderly centres, regional development agencies, social enterprises,...)</li> </ul>
Specific territories targeted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Programme area</li> </ul>

#### 2.A.1.6.2. Guiding principles for the selection of operations

Investment priority	11
General principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– The general guiding principles for the selection of operations under the investment priority are outlined in section “Guiding principles for the selection of operations under the investment priorities” in Section 5.</li> </ul>
Specific principles for IP 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Each project shall target one of the priority services.</li> <li>– Any service, structure or model developed shall be accompanied by a demonstration action.</li> </ul>

#### 2.A.1.6.3. Planned use of financial instruments (where appropriate)

-

#### 2.A.1.6.4. Planned use of major projects (where appropriate)

-

#### 2.A.1.6.5. Output indicators (by investment priority)

**Table 20** Programme specific output indicators

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Target (2023)	value	Source data	of	Frequency of reporting
11-OI-1	Joint structures (newly set up) for improved delivery of services	Number	10		Monitoring/ Project reports		Annually
11-OI-2	New/improved /extended services	Number	15		Monitoring/ Project reports		Annually
11-OI-3	Number of persons with improved skills and competences in service delivery	Number	150		Monitoring/ Project reports		Annually

#### 2.A.1.7. Performance framework

**Table 21** 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	Evaluation of the relevance of the indicator, where appropriate
1	Financial	11-FI-1	Payments: certified and declared to EC	%	10%	100%	Monitoring	
1	Output	11-OL-1	Joint structures (newly set up) for improved delivery of services	Number	2	10	Monitoring/ Project reports	
1	Output	11-OL-2	New/improved /extended services	Number	3	15	Monitoring/ Project reports	
1	Output	11-OL-3	Number of persons with improved skills and competences in service delivery	Number	30	150	Monitoring/ Project reports	

### 2.A.1.8. Categories of intervention

**Table 22** Dimension 1 Intervention field

Priority axis	Code	Amount (EUR)
3	44 Intelligent transport systems (including the introduction of demand management, tolling systems, IT monitoring, control and information systems – 40%	<i>May go out</i>
3	55 Other social infrastructure contributing to regional and local development – 0%	<i>May go out</i>
3	87 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 – 100%	<i>May go out</i>
3	88 Risk prevention and management of non-climate related natural risks (i.e. earthquakes) and risks linked to human activities (e.g. technological accidents), including awareness raising, civil protection and disaster management systems and infrastructures – 0%	
3	110 Socio-economic integration of marginalised communities such as the Roma – 0%	<i>May go out</i>
3	112 Enhancing access to affordable, sustainable and high-quality services, including health care and social services of general interest – 0%	

Priority axis	Code	Amount (EUR)
3	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 – 0%	

**Table 23** Dimension 2 Form of finance

Priority axis	Code	Amount (EUR)
3	01 (Non-repayable grant)	5,013,278

**Table 24** Dimension 3 Territory type

Priority axis	Code	Amount (EUR)
3	01 Large Urban areas (densely populated > 50 000 population)	
3	02 (Small Urban areas (intermediate density > 5 000 population)	
3	03 (Rural areas (thinly populated))	

**Table 25** Dimension 4 Territorial delivery mechanisms

Priority axis	Code	Amount (EUR)
3	07 (Not applicable)	5,013,278

#### 2.A.1.9. A summary of the planned use of technical assistance (where appropriate)

-

## SECTION 3

### FINANCING PLAN

#### 3.1. Financial appropriation from ERDF (in EUR)

**Table 26** Annual support from ERDF in EUR

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total
ERDF	2.305.709	3.227.993	4.611.419	8.761.697	8.761.697	9.222.839	9.222.839	46.114.193
IPA								
ENI								
<b>Total</b>	<b>2.305.709</b>	<b>3.227.993</b>	<b>4.611.419</b>	<b>8.761.697</b>	<b>8.761.697</b>	<b>9.222.839</b>	<b>9.222.839</b>	<b>46.114.193</b>

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

**Table 27** Financing plan in EUR

Priority axis	Fund	Basis for calculation of Union support (Total eligible costs or public 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)	For information	
					National public funding (c)	National private funding (d) (1)			Contribution from third countries	Contribution from EIB
Priority Axis 1	ERDF	Total eligible cost	10.026.557	1.769.392	1.769.392		11.795.949	85%	NA	NA
Priority Axis 2	ERDF	Total eligible cost	28.074.358	4.954.298	3.468.009	1.486.290	33.028.656	85%	NA	NA
Priority Axis 3	ERDF	Total eligible cost	5.013.278	884.696	707.757	176.939	5.897.974	85%	NA	NA
Priority Axis 4/ TA	ERDF	Total eligible cost	3.000.000	529.412	529.412		3.529.412	85%	NA	NA
<b>Total</b>		<b>Total</b>	<b>46.114.193</b>	<b>8.137.799</b>	<b>6.474.570</b>	<b>1.663.229</b>	<b>54.251.992</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>o</b>	<b>o</b>

(1) 30% of private co-funding is expected within Priority Axis 2 and 20% within Priority Axis 3.

*Note: Figures are revised according to more detailed numbers provided by SVRK. The proportions between PA remain the same.*

### 3.2.B Breakdown by priority axis and thematic objective

**Table 28** Breakdown of the financial plan in EUR

Priority axis	Thematic objective	Union support	National counterpart	Total funding
Priority Axis 1	TO 5	10.026.557	1.769.392	11.795.949
Priority Axis 2	TO 6	28.074.358	4.954.298	33.028.656
Priority Axis 3	TO 11	5.013.278	884.696	5.897.974
Priority Axis 4	TA	3.000.000	529.412	3.529.412
<b>Total</b>		<b>46.114.193</b>	<b>8.137.799</b>	<b>54.251.992</b>

**Table 29** Indicative amount of support to be used for climate change objectives

Priority axis	Indicative amount to be used for climate change objectives	Proportion of the total allocation to the programme (%)
Priority Axis 1	6.818.059	14,8%
Priority Axis 2	5.053.384	11,0%
Priority Axis 3	350.929	0,8%
Priority Axis 4	0	0,0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>12.222.373</b>	<b>26,5%</b>

## SECTION 4

### INTEGRATED APPROACH TO TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT

*(Reference: Article 7(2) of the ETC Regulation and Article 174(3) TFEU)*

The Situation Analysis of the Slovenia-Croatia programme area has identified disparities between urban growing poles (e.g. Zagreb/Ljubljana; ports Rijka/Koper; well established tourism destinations) and declining peripheral areas (mainly rural and hilly-mountain areas, islands, small and medium sized towns) as a major bottleneck for sustainable development of the border area. On the contrary, the preserved natural and cultural resources of the rural areas and human and market potential of the growing poles on the other hand provide a main development potential.

Thus, the CP Slovenia-Croatia strategy for 2014 – 2020 focuses on activation of endogenous resources of the rural and peripheral border territories while using the research potential and capacities of the growing poles. The multi-dimensional thinking, promotion of cross-sector co-operation and emphasis on concrete placed based solutions represent the backbone of the programme approach. Only in this way, we can achieve the most efficient response to the socio-economic and environment challenges and improve territorial cohesion of border area within the given resources.

Through indicative actions, the programme stimulates different means, which support integrated approach to the territorial development.

**Priority Axis 1: Cross-border Flood Risk Prevention (TO 5)** concentrates to a specific border river basin's territories within the programming area where only cross-border and territorial based approach can lead to effective flood risk prevention results. Planning documents and pilot implementation shall respect integrated approach considering economic development, climate change, long term spatial planning and sustainable solutions for flood risk mitigation and water management.

**Priority Axis 2: Protecting and promoting natural and cultural resources (TO 6)** strives towards preserved biodiversity, nature and cultural heritage and improved quality, competitiveness and visibility of the programme area as a sustainable tourism destination. In order to archive that bottom-up and integrated approach linking different sectors (conservation-tourism-agriculture/forestry) and stakeholders (destination managements, forest/ nature park managements, R&D institutions, local communities,..) on a territorial / micro-destinations or product base is requested. The actions shall be focused to mobilising natural and cultural potentials of hinterland rural areas and small and medium sized towns of border area and thus strengthen their economic stability.

**Priority Axis 3: Healthy, safe and accessible border areas (TO 11)** aims at enhancing institutional capacities and cross-border networks to provide efficient service delivery in areas with significant delivery gaps. Again the priority axis is encouraging institutions placed in urban centres to improve the access and quality of health, social, safety and mobility services in the peripheral areas. The actions proposed shall reduce decimation and promote social inclusion and socio-economic stability of the most sensitive groups of people living in peripheral communities.



The proposed priority axes are fully in line with the Partnership Agreements of Slovenia<sup>18</sup> and Croatia<sup>19</sup>. The CP Slovenia – Croatia 2014 – 2020 takes into account the specific context and challenges of the programming area while avoiding the thematic objectives, which are better addressed by mainstream programmes. Thus, the CP will contribute to reduction of regional disparities that both countries set as one of the key strategic objectives.

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

Not applicable.

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

Not applicable.

#### 4.3 Integrated Territorial Investments (where appropriate)

Not applicable.

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

The CP Slovenia – Croatia 2014 – 2020 is affected by EU Strategy for the Danube region (EUSDR), EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR) and EU Strategy for the Alpine region (EUSALPS). Thus, the selected thematic objectives and investment priorities of the CP Slovenia – Croatia consider the priority topics of all three macro-regional strategy aiming to maximise thematic synergies and value added of specific territorial co-operation programme.

Like CP Slovenia – Croatia 2014 – 2020, all macro-regional strategies support sustainable development of the territories highlighting the need for preservation of natural and cultural resources and identifying sustainable tourism as their main focus of socio-economic development.

This allows for co-ordination also during the programme planning and implementation through mechanisms such as:

- Mutual information and best practice exchange;
- Participation in cross-border, transnational and interregional co-operation through established committees (e.g. ..., International Sava River Basin Commission); working groups (e.g. ....) and other co-operation platforms (e.g. National co-operation platform for EUSDR);

<sup>18</sup> Partnership Agreement Republic of Slovenia, 2014Sl16M8PA001-1.3.

<sup>19</sup> Partnership Agreement Republic of Croatia, 2014HR16M8PA001.1.3

- Organising joined events;
- Networking of stakeholders, partners and projects addressing the same thematic field within different programmes and macro-strategies.

It is noteworthy that a co-laboration with EUSAIR will be eased as one of programme co-ordination points will be set in Portorož, Slovenia (Slovenia- Croatia programme area).

**Table 30** Synergies with macro-regional strategies

Macro-regional strategy	Main pillars	Potential for creation of synergies (Priority axis, topic)
<b>EU Strategy for the Danube Region EUSDR (Slovenia, Croatia)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Connect the region</li> <li>- Protecting the environment</li> <li>- Strengthening the region</li> <li>- Building prosperity</li> </ul>	PA 03 – Culture and tourism PA 05 – Environmental risks PA 06 – Biodiversity, landscapes, quality of air and soils PA 10 – Institutional capacity and coordination
<b>EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region EUSAIR (Slovenia, Croatia)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Blue growth</li> <li>2. Connecting the region</li> <li>3. Environmental quality</li> <li>4. Sustainable tourism</li> </ol>	Topic 1.3 – Maritime and marine governance and services Topic 2.2 Intermodal connections to the hinterland Topic 3.1 The marine environment Topic 3.2 Transnational terrestrial habitats and biodiversity Topic 4.1 Diversified tourism offer Topic 4.2 Sustainable and responsible tourism management (innovation and quality)
<b>EU Strategy for the Alpine Region EUSALPS (Slovenia)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Competitiveness, prosperity and cohesion</li> <li>2. Accessibility and connectivity</li> <li>3. Environmentally sustainable and attractive</li> </ol>	PA 2.2 Improve sustainable accessibility for all Alpine areas; PA 2.3 A better connected society in the region PA 3.1 Reinforcing Alpine natural and cultural resources as assets of a high quality living area PA 3.3 Alpine risk management including risk dialogue, to tackle potential threats, such as those of climate change

## SECTION 5

### IMPLEMENTING PROVISIONS FOR THE COOPERATION PROGRAMME

#### 5.1. Relevant authorities and bodies

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

**Table 31** Programme authorities

Authority/body	Name of authority/body and department or unit	Head of the authority/body (position or post)
Managing Authority (MA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Government Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Development and European Cohesion Policy (GODC), European Territorial Cooperation and Financial Mechanism Office, Cross-border Programmes Management Division</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Head of MA</li> </ul>
Certifying Authority, where applicable (CA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Public Fund for Regional Development of the Republic of Slovenia</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Head of CA</li> </ul>
Audit Authority (AA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Slovenia, Budget Supervision Office of the RS</li> <li>- Croatia</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Head of AA</li> </ul>

The body to which payments will be made by the Commission is:

#### Certifying authority

**Table 32** Body or bodies carrying out control and audit tasks

Authority/body	Name of authority/body	Head of the authority/body
Body or bodies designated to carry out control tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Government Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Development and European Cohesion Policy (GODC), Control office, Control division ETC, IPA and IFM programmes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Head of the Control Division ETC, IPA and IFM Programmes</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Regional Development Agency of the Republic of Croatia, Directorate for Financial Management and Accounting, Service for First Level Control</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Director</li> </ul>

Authority/body	Name of authority/body	Head of the authority/body
Body or bodies designated to be responsible for carrying out audit tasks	- Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Slovenia, Budget Supervision Office of the RS	- Director of the Budget Supervision Office of the RS
	- Agency for the Audit of EU Programmes Implementation System, Croatia	- Director

## 5.2. Procedure for setting up the Joint Secretariat

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

After consultations with the Members States and the Managing Authority shall set up the Joint Secretariat (JS) in compliance with the Article 23 of the Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013 (ETC Regulation). The JS shall assist the Managing Authority and the Monitoring Committee (MC) in carrying out their respective functions.

The Joint Secretariat and the head of the JS will remain in Ljubljana, within the official structures of the GODC. The JS will have two info points in Croatia.

**Table 33** Joint Secretariat and its info points

	Name	Address/e-mail
<b>Joint Secretariat</b>	- Government Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Development and European Cohesion Policy (GODC),  European Territorial Cooperation and Financial Mechanism Office, Cross-border Programmes Management Division	Kotnikova 5 SI-1000 Ljubljana
<b>Info Points</b>	- Info Point Croatia 1: name of the body	address
	- Info Point Croatia 2: name of the body	address

## 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 Bodies

#### 5.3.1.1. Programme Authorities

The joint implementation structure is built on the following programme authorities: **Managing Authority (MA), Certifying Authority (CA) and Audit Authority (AA)**.

According to the Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 (Common Provisions Regulation, hereinafter referred to as 'CPR') there are no substantial changes in functions of the programme authorities as well as the MC and the JS in regard to the period 2007 – 2013.

The following articles of the CPR and the ETC Regulation describe functions of the programme authorities:

- Article 125 of the CPR and Article 23 of the ETC Regulation: Managing Authority;
- Article 126 of the CPR and Article 24 of the ETC Regulation: Certifying Authority;
- Article 127 of the CPR and article 25 of the ETC Regulation: Audit Authority/Group of Auditors.

The Audit Authority will be assisted by a Group of Auditors comprising a representative of both Member States participating in the cooperation programme.

Bilateral technical meetings will be organised by the MA in order to contribute effective and qualitative programme implementation. Managing Authority, Joint Secretariat, National Authorities (NA), Certifying Authority and when applicable also Audit Authority and First level Control (FLC) will participate at the meetings. The meetings will be chaired by the MA.

More detailed provisions, relating to the internal control environment, risk management, management and control activities, and monitoring will be included in the description of the functions and procedures for the Managing Authority and the Certifying Authority according to Article 124 of the CPR and the programme **guidance documents**. Guidance documents will be adopted by the Monitoring Committee.

### 5.3.1.2. Programme Bodies

#### ◆ Monitoring Committee (MC)

Within three months of the date of notification to the Member State of the Commission decision adopting a programme, the Member States participating in the programme, in agreement with the Managing Authority, will set up a Monitoring Committee. The composition of the Monitoring Committee shall be agreed by Member States. The participating Member States are voting members of the MC. Details of the voting procedure will be set out in the MC's Rules of Procedure.

The main functions of the monitoring committee are described in the Article 49 of the CPR.

Modalities of the Monitoring Committee work will be defined in the MC's Rules of Procedure while taking into account the general rule that each country has one vote and that decisions are taken in consensus. Monitoring Committee will be chaired by the Managing Authority. Meetings will be held alternatively in both Member States.

Member States shall aim to promote gender balance and equal opportunity in the membership of the monitoring committees.

#### ◆ Joint Secretariat (JS)

The Joint Secretariat shall assist the Managing Authority and the Monitoring Committee in carrying out their respective functions. The Joint Secretariat shall also provide information to potential beneficiaries about funding opportunities under cooperation programme and shall assist beneficiaries in the implementation of operations.

The JS is placed within the GODC and will have two info points in Croatia.

#### ◆ National Authorities (NA) – representatives of the Member States

NAs contribute to the programme by:

- Setting up the First level control system as set out in Article 74 of the CPR and 23 (4) of the ETC regulation;

- Representing the Member States and as such participating in the MC;
- Taking part in the implementation of the programme.

**Table 34** National authorities

	Name of the body	Address/e-mail
<b>National Authority in Slovenia</b>	- Government Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Development and European Cohesion Policy (GODC),  European Territorial Cooperation and Financial Mechanism Office, Cross-border Programmes Management Division	Kotnikova 5 SI-1000 Ljubljana
<b>National Authority in Croatia</b>	- Ministry of Regional Development and EU Funds Directorate for Regional Development Sector for Regional Development Policy Service for International Territorial Cooperation	Račkog 6 HR-10 000 Zagreb

#### First Level Control Bodies (FLC Bodies)

As regards the verifications of expenditure in relation to beneficiaries, both Member States will designate the First Level Control Bodies as set out in Article 74 of the CPR and Article 23 (4) of the ETC regulation.

### 5.3.2 Project cycle/ Description of procedures

The administrative work involved in the procedures for granting assistance to the individual projects will be described in the programme guidance documents ~~in a separate application manual~~, agreed between the programme authorities and bodies.

#### ◆ Project generation

Pro-active project generation is a basic principle of the Cooperation Programme, as it leads to projects with a clear added-value in the cross-border approach and achievement of the implementation steps, financial and output and result indicators, as set out in the performance framework.

The programme relevant authorities and bodies will provide information, support and assistance in partner-search to potential project applicants ~~interested in becoming a project partner~~. For this purpose thematic workshops and/or seminars will be organised in the programme area.

The NAs shall assist the MA/JS in organising the support of potential project applicants in finding cross-border project partners.

#### ◆ Project application

The programme will operate on the basis of the **Open Call system**. This means that project holders can submit project applications continuously after opening the Call which is open until all programme funds are disbursed. Applications received in due time before each MC and fulfilling all requirements will be subject to MC decision.

The application process will be carried out completely in an **online system** using the Harmonized Implementation Tools (HIT). Project applications shall be submitted by the Lead Partner (LP) in electronic

form to the JS.

Lead Partner will have the opportunity to select one of the programme languages (Slovene or Croatian) in which the Applicant wishes to submit the application.

In addition to call for proposals generation of **strategic projects** shall be allowed.

#### ◆ Project assessment and selection (*Guiding principles for project selection*)

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

Methodology for project assessment will be defined by the MA in cooperation with the NAs and approved by the MC. The MA will propose common standards for the eligibility and selection criteria which will be subject to the approval of the MC. The selection criteria will be made available in the application pack. Details on the assessment process will be set out in the programme guidance documents.

The MA/JS has the overall responsibility of organising the assessment of project applications. **The NAs will take part in the assessment procedure.** For parts of the assessment, independent external experts may be consulted based on the decision of the MC.

The results of the assessment in a form of a report and a ranking list will be presented by the MA/JS to the MC for its final decision. This report will cover all the project applications which were received by the MA/JS, and will provide recommendations for decision – consistently taking reference to the selection criteria given by the guidance documents.

Strategic projects are subject of the same assessment and selection criteria.

The programme authorities and bodies ensure clear, transparent and traceable assessment and selection process. Selection will be based on **eligibility** and **selection** criteria.

A set of **administrative compliance and eligibility criteria** will be defined to ensure compliance of all project applications with formal requirements. This part of the assessment will especially focus on the following points:

- Submission in due time;
- Completeness of the submitted project application package;
- ~~— Financial capacity of the project partners;~~
- Adequate funding sources (presented costs are in line with the funding sources) (Better: Sufficient co-funding sources);
- No evidence for funding by other resources (double financing) at this stage of assessment
- Requirements for the partnership and geographical eligibility
- Compliance with the CP specific objectives and indicators
- Partnership agreement

~~Those project applications that fully comply with the administrative compliance and eligibility criteria will be subject to quality assessment.~~

**Selection criteria** will be used to assess the quality of those project applications that have passed the administrative compliance and eligibility check. They are designed to rate the compliance of applications regard to strategic and operational aspects.

Quality assessment aims at assessing the relevance and feasibility of the project. This is reflected in two types of assessment criteria. **Strategic assessment criteria** are meant to determine the extent of the project's contribution to the achievement of the programme objectives. A strong focus is given to the result orientation of a project with the demand for visible outputs and concrete and sustainable results.

**Operational assessment criteria** review the viability and feasibility of the proposed project, as well as its value for money in terms of resources used versus ~~results~~ outputs delivered.

All projects receiving funds have to meet the following quality requirements:

- Cross-border relevance;
- Compliance with national strategies **for each partner** separately;
- Partnership relevance;
- Concrete and measurable results;
- Concrete outputs and sustainable results;
- Coherent approach;
- Sound project communication strategy and tools;
- Effective management ;
- Cost effective budget.

Projects focussing on purely academic cooperation or basic research or aiming at mere networking and exchanging of experience and/or not demonstrating the translation of outputs arising from "soft" actions (surveys, studies, networks etc.) into concrete and sustainable results will not be supported by the Cooperation Programme.

#### ◆ Project decision for ERDF funding

The MC decides on the approval of the projects and on the ERDF contribution. MC has the possibility to approve **strategic projects**. The decision can only be taken by the voting members. The MC meets at least once a year; in urgent cases a programme ~~partner~~ authorities and bodies can ask for an additional MC or a written procedure for project decisions. After the formal decision is made, the applicant will be informed about the decision on the submitted project application by the MA/JS.

#### ◆ Contracting

Following the decision of the MC, the MA/JS will draft a Subsidy Contract by using a standard template approved by the MC. The Subsidy Contract lays down details concerning the responsibilities and liabilities of all contracting parties. It is addressed to the Lead Partner and signed by the legal representative of the Lead Partner and the MA. **The national funding bodies issue the national co-financing contracts linked to the Subsidy Contract to the project partners (if applicable).**

Besides the general legal framework, the Subsidy Contract will lay down among other: the subject and duration of the contract, budgetary allocation (maximum ERDF funding), procedures and obligations regarding reporting and payments, obligations within the partnership, general conditions for the eligibility of costs, procedures for project changes, obligations regarding validation of expenditure and audit of operations, recovery obligations and procedures, information and publicity requirements, closure arrangements, rules for amendments to the contract and liability clauses **in line with national legal requirements of the MA**. The over-commitment of the ERDF funds should also be considered in order to optimise the disbursement process. **Pre-financing of ERDF funds to Lead partner will be used if funds are available**

#### ◆ Resolution of complaints

The complaints are differentiated according to the object of the complaint.

- **Complaints related to assessment and selection:**

Project lead applicants will be informed in writing about the reasons why an application was not eligible or approved. Any complaint related to the assessment shall be submitted by the lead applicant to the MA/JS that, in collaboration with the MC, if necessary, will examine and provide its position regarding the merit of the complaint.

- **Complaints related to decisions made by the MA/JS:**



Any complaints in relation to decisions made by the MA/JS on the basis of the Subsidy contract or MC decisions shall be submitted by the project applicant/beneficiary to the MA/JS that will examine and provide in due time an answer (in collaboration with the MC, if necessary). Where courts, public prosecution offices or other national institutions are competent in relation to the object of the complaint, the applicant/beneficiary has the right to turn also to these authorities in Slovenia.

- **Complaints related to the First Level Control (FLC):**

Project Lead Partners or partners that have complaints related to the First level control system set up in accordance with Article 23(4) of the ETC Regulation, can file the complaint to the institution responsible for the financial control of the relevant Member State following national procedures set in place in accordance with Article 74(3) of the CPR.

Further information on the procedure for the submission of complaints will be laid down in the relevant programme documents communicated to applicants and beneficiaries.

♦ **Project reporting and reimbursement to beneficiaries**

In accordance with Article 13 of ETC Regulation, for each project, project partners shall appoint a Lead Partner (LP). The LP shall assume overall responsibility for the implementation of the project, including the handling of ERDF funds and taking any judicial and administrative procedures to recover amounts unduly paid to the project partners.

All project expenditure has to be pre-financed by the project partners. Expenditure of all partners have to be validated by First Level Control (FLC) in line with Article 125 (4) of CPR. The LP collects certificates of all project partners that are issued by the FLC after verification of expenditure. These certificates will be included in activity and financial progress reports that the LP periodically presents to the MA/JS. In these documents, the LP reports about progress achieved in project implementation and on related validated expenditure. This will be the basis for the project's claim for reimbursement. On the basis of the submitted reports, the JS/MA monitors the progress of the projects both in financial terms and in terms of activities implemented. When assessing the reports, the JS considers the use of ERDF and the progress in implementation of the project in order to monitor the proper implementation of the project compliant with the Subsidy Contract.

Based on checks of the reports undertaken by the JS and in accordance with Article 21 (2) of ETC Regulation and Article 132 of CPR, the CA shall make payments to the LP who is responsible for transferring the ERDF contribution to the partners participating in the project. On behalf of the LP direct transfers from the CA to the project partners could also be an option but the overall financial responsibility lies with the LP. The option selected, has to be mentioned in the partnership agreement and – if the project is approved – also in the Subsidy Contract.

In line with Article 132 of CPR, MA ensures that beneficiaries, subject to the availability of ERDF funds, receive payments in full and in due time, no later than 90 days from the date of submission of the LP Application for payment. No deduction, retention or further specific charges which would reduce the amount of the payment shall be made. The payment deadline may be interrupted by the MA in duly justified cases as described in Article 132 (2) of CPR.

### 5.3.3. First level control system

In accordance with Article 125 (4) of CPR and Article 23 (4) of ETC Regulation each Member State shall designate the First Level Control Body for carrying out verifications in relation to beneficiaries on its territory. The control system is set up to verify the delivery of the products and services co-financed, the soundness of the expenditure declared for operations and the compliance with EU rules, programme rules and its national rules.

Both countries in the Cooperation Programme set up centralised system of First Level Control.

In order to ensure coherence among all controllers responsible, standard templates such as control certificate and report will be used in the programme e-Monitoring System (e-MS). Furthermore, a network of controllers will be established to ensure harmonization, regular exchange of knowledge and good practices.

#### 5.3.4. Programme monitoring

The monitoring of this programme will provide information on the implementation. It will cover financial issues and achieved results considering the targets fixed for the different milestones in the performance framework.

Programme data will be recorded and stored in the programme e-M S and will be used, together with additional information on the financial implementation of the programme, for drafting the annual and final implementation reports.

The monitoring data shall be available to the MA, CA, AA, JS, FLC and NAs as well as to the European Commission (EC) on a regular basis.

#### 5.3.5. Implementation reports

In accordance with Article 14 of ETC Regulation, the MA will submit implementation reports (annual implementation reports and final implementation report) to the EC in accordance with the requirements stipulated in Article 50 of the CPR and respecting the deadlines set in Article 14 of ETC Regulation.

The annual implementation reports will be drafted by MA/JS on the basis of programme monitoring data and data provided by the beneficiaries in their progress and final reports and other programme bodies. The annual implementation reports of the programme will be submitted to the MC for approval prior to sending to the EC.

#### 5.3.6. Programme evaluations

The Cooperation Programme has been subject to an ex-ante evaluation of independent evaluators with the aim of improving the overall quality of the programme and to optimise the allocation of budgetary resources.

In accordance with Article 56 and 114 of the CPR, the MA will draw up an evaluation plan, which will be approved by the MC prior to sending to the EC. The evaluations will be carried out to assess effectiveness, efficiency and impact of the programme. All evaluations, recommendations and follow-up actions will be examined and approved by the MC.

By 31 December 2022, the MA will submit to the EC a report summarising the findings of evaluations carried out during the programming period, including an assessment of the main outputs and results of the programme.

In compliance with Article 57 and 114 of the CPR, the ex-post evaluation lies in the responsibility of the EC together with the Member States.

#### 5.3.7. Monitoring System

On the side of the programme, the e-MS according to Article 72 of CPR shall provide data and information needed to fulfil management, monitoring and evaluation requirements. As stipulated in Articles 74 and 112 of CPR, data exchange with the EC will be carried out electronically (by means of SFC2014). In accordance with

Article 122 of CPR, the Programme will ensure that no later than 31 December 2015, all exchanges of information between beneficiaries and the MA/ CA and AA can be carried out by means of an electronic data exchange system.

The e-MS will comply with the following aspects:

- Data integrity and confidentiality;
- Authentication of the sender within the meaning of Directive 1999/93/EC<sup>4</sup>;
- Storage in compliance with retention rules defined in Article 140 of CPR;
- Secure transfer of data;
- Availability during and outside standard office hours (except for technical maintenance activities)
- Accessibility by the MSs and the beneficiaries either directly or via an interface for automatic synchronisation and recording of data with national, regional and local computer management systems;
- Protection of privacy of personal data for individuals and commercial confidentiality for legal entities with respect to the information processed (according to Directive 2002/58/EC concerning the processing of personal data and the protection of privacy in the electronic communications sector and Directive 1995/46/EC on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data).

### 5.3.8. Information and communication

According to Articles 115 and 116 of CPR, a communication strategy will be drafted and submitted to the MC not later than 6 months after adoption of the programme. Any revision of the communication strategy will be discussed and approved by the MC.

In line with Article 116 (3) of CPR, the MA will inform the MC at least once a year on the progress in the implementation of the communication strategy and its assessment of the results, as well as on the planned information and communication activities to be carried out in the following year.

The aim of the communication strategy is two-fold, to inform potential applicants about funding opportunities under the cooperation programme and to communicate achievements of Cohesion Policy to the general public by focusing on the results and impacts of the programme and its projects. The cooperation programme will use harmonised branding introduced on a voluntary basis by ETC programmes for the period 2014-2020.

The communication strategy will be implemented within the JS that will be responsible for information and communication activities at the level of the programme area. Publicity and information tasks on national level **will be additionally** carried out by NAs. A budget for the implementation of the communication strategy will be made available as part of the programme's budget for technical assistance.

The programme working language is English. All documents relevant for the beneficiaries will be provided in Slovene and Croatian language.

### 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 CPR, the MA shall ensure that any amount paid as a result of an irregularity is recovered from the LP. In accordance with Article 27 of ETC Regulation, the project partners shall repay the LP any amounts unduly paid.

If the LP does not succeed in securing repayment from a Project Partner (PP) or if the MA does not succeed in securing repayment from the LP, the Member State on whose territory the PP concerned is located shall reimburse the MA any amounts unduly paid to that beneficiary. The MA shall be responsible for reimbursing the amounts concerned to the general budget of the Union.

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 Member State 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 lost as a result of an irregularity or negligence caused by a beneficiary located in their territory. Where appropriate a Member State may also charge interest on late payments.

In accordance with Article 122 (2) of CPR, irregularities shall be reported by the Member State in which the expenditure is paid by the LP or PP implementing the project. The Member State shall at the same time, inform the MA, CA and the AA.

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 LPs and PPs 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 equal proportions (50:50).
- For technical assistance expenditure incurred by the MA/JS, the liability related to administrative irregularities shall be borne by the MA/JS.
- For technical assistance expenditure incurred by the CA, the liability shall be borne by the CA.
- For technical assistance expenditure incurred by the AA, the liability shall be borne by the AA.
- For technical assistance expenditure incurred by the Member States the liability shall be borne by the Member State concerned.

## 5.5. Use of the Euro

Expenditure incurred in a currency other than the euro shall be converted into euro by the beneficiaries using the monthly accounting exchange rate of the Commission in the month during which that expenditure was submitted for verification to the controller.

## 5.6. Involvement of partners

Developing programmes according to the “partnership principle” is a distinct requirement by EU legislation. Programming of CP Slovenia – Croatia 2014 – 2020 was implemented according to Article 5 of the CPR and the new European code of conduct on partnership<sup>20</sup> in the framework of the ESI funds.

### ♦ The programming process and role of partners

The programming process was managed and steered by the **Task Force (TF)**, which had the mandate to elaborate the programme document for submission to the European Commission. The TF was composed of

<sup>20</sup> Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 240/2014 of 7 January 2014 on the European code of conduct on partnership in the framework of the European Structural and Investment Funds

representatives of National Authorities of both Member States, the MA, the JS and observers. External experts supported the drafting of the Programme. Experts were also contracted for the Ex-ante evaluation and the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA report).

The programming process was launched with the first meeting of the TF on 10.10.2012.

In early 2014 programme stakeholders and regional development agencies from both member States were approached to provide recommendations, proposals and policy frameworks for the respective programme area. In Croatia, regional and policy specific needs were collected through an on-line questioner, while in Slovenia regions and line ministries proposed inputs following a LogFrame matrix. These, together with results of on-going evaluation of the past programme (2007-2013), the situation analysis and revision of mainstream policies and macro-regional strategies, represented a solid baseline for the definition of the strategy and identification of key thematic objectives and investment priorities for the programme area.

External experts together with the representative of the MA and JS developed generic log-frame matrix of the programme and several draft documents as inputs for the discussion of the Task Force. In parallel, experts from different line ministries and agencies of both MS were consulted on specific topics. During the whole process, close co-operation and co-ordination between the drafting team and ex-ante evaluators was established in order to assure the optimal quality of the process and sound and coherent CP strategy.

In January 2015, a series of **workshops** with relevant stakeholders and potential beneficiaries were organised at four different locations along the Slovenia – Croatia border. 244 participants from various local and regional governments, museums, schools, chambers, associations, NGOs and other organisations located in the programming area provided valuable inputs for the justification of the selected thematic objectives, fine tuning of indicative actions and setting realistic indicators.

An official **consultation process** on the final draft document was carried out in February 2015 through public publication of the draft programme. 10 individuals and organisations from wide range of sectors and regions posed comments. All recommendations and concerns were analysed and considered in the final stage of the programming.

Over 10 meetings the Task Force reached the consensus on the strategy formulation and implementation arrangements for the programming period 2014-2020 and in April 2014 submitted the CP to EC for approval.

**Ex-ante and SEA report** were conducted alongside the programming process however their consultation process was/is prolonged for few months due to legal procedural requirements.

#### ♦ Role of partners in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the CP

The programme authorities and bodies commit themselves to the partnership principal as laid down in the Article 5 of the CPR and will therefore involve relevant stakeholder and key actors not only in programming phase, but also in the programme implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Representatives of National Authorities and other relevant stakeholders such as JS will be invited to nominate members of the Monitoring Committee (as well as working groups that will be set up in the course of the programme implementation).

JTS and MA will pay particular attention to involve various actors and stakeholders in the programme implementation through different awareness rising and information activities.

## SECTION 6

### COORDINATION

*(Reference: point (a) of Article 8(5) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)*

Common objectives of the EU Strategy 2020 provides the potential of the CP Slovenia-Croatia 2014-2020 has to create complementarity and synergies with other EU supported programmes, in particular with nationally implemented ESI Funds, ETC programmes and other centralised EU programmes.

The CP Slovenia-Croatia programme territory is partly (e.g. cooperation programmes of Slovenia with Italy, Hungary, Austria, and cross border programmes of Croatia with Italy, Hungary, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro) or entirely eligible under other programmes (e.g. Danube programme, Adriatic Ionian programme, Central Europe and others) supporting the same topics and challenges. The programme intends to avoid overlapping and increase complementarity and coherence with the priority investments and activities of those programmes.

Overview of potential overlapping of thematic objectives/activities shows the main potential for creation of synergies under Priority axis 2 – Preserving and promoting natural and cultural resources. Important synergies can be created also within Priority Axis 1 – Cross border risk prevention, especially with the Danube programme 2014-2020 which will address flood risk prevention and alert systems and can increase international coordination. A number of programmes address Thematic Objective 11, focusing on different aspects of institutional capacity building. Exchange on social innovation, sector policies and capacity building can support the development of local cross border partnerships addressing health, social care, sustainable mobility and connectivity of border areas.

In general, it is expected that the CP Slovenia-Croatia will address concrete challenges with practical field solutions and demonstration actions, while further cooperation at transnational or interregional level can be complemented in a wider territorial context and at the level of increased exchange and improved coordination related to policy development and management.

To achieve complementarity and synergies across programmes, efficient coordination in project generation, project selection and implementation different is necessary. As a general guidance, applicants will need to demonstrate coherence and complementarities with national and regional ESI supported programmes.

Specific focus will be given to ESI Funds and ETC programmes through different mechanism and bodies. The MA and JS will seek exchanges with other ES programmes regarding questions concerning efficient programme management; furthermore they will also seek to the contact with the programme to avoid duplication and to activate synergies.

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

#### ♦ Slovenian approach

In Slovenia<sup>21</sup> the Government office for Development and European Cohesion Policy (GODC) is coordinating the development planning. The office coordinates the development documents of the Republic of Slovenia, 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

<sup>21</sup>Information about coordination in Slovenia is based on the following documents: »Partnership Agreement between Slovenia and European Commission for the period 2014-2020« (10/04/2014) 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/)

planning programmes and the European Union and other international organisations' development documents. GODC is also managing the preparation and coordination of the strategic documents with the European Union.

Through ETC cross-border programmes, Slovenia will favour common development strategies.

The contents common to all cross-border programs (with Italy, Austria, Hungary and Croatia) 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.

Coordination of the preparation of the Partnership Agreement, the Operational Programme for **the implementation of** European Cohesion Policy and of cross-border cooperation programmes takes place within one institution, which both in the documentation preparatory stage and during implementation provides for the complementarity and synergies of various funds. At NUTS III level (statistical regions), Slovenia prepares regional development programmes in accordance with the Balanced Regional Development Law to be used with investments from different sources of financing in key development areas based on territorial challenges and opportunities.

Coordination of the preparation of macro-regional strategies is the responsibility of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, while the coordination and implementation of individual parts of strategies fall under the responsibility of individual ministries. For the period after 2014, an enhanced role of inter-ministerial coordination of macro-regional strategies has been envisaged within the committee framework, where all ESI funds are to be considered with a view to achieving better complementarity and synergy effects as a result of participation in the EU macro-regional strategies.

According to Partnership Agreement between Slovenia and European Commission for the period 2014-2020 (10/04/2014) the Inter-ministerial Coordination Committee will provide for coordination between ESI Funds that are being indirectly implemented (ERDF, ESF, CF, EAFRD) and other EU instruments as well as other national instruments and the EIB. Membership of the Inter-ministerial Coordination Committee will be represented by the Managing Authorities of all the Funds and participating ministries. Inter-ministerial coordination has already been established for the 2007-2013 period charged with planning and monitoring of the implementation (ERDF, ESF, CF) and will be upgraded through inclusion of the other two Funds (EAFRD, EMFF).

Key functions of the Inter-ministerial Coordination Committee are the following:

- Coordination and approval of Partnership Agreement revisions;
- Monitoring of the progress as regards fulfilment of PA objectives and discussion and approval of PA progress reports;
- Review of implementing plans and delivery of opinion thereon;
- Provision of counselling services on matters of content and organisation/implementation based on evaluation findings and analysis results.

With the aim to ensure Slovenia's contribution to the realization of the individual thematic objectives the MA will establish relevant Expert Groups at the working level under the OP ECP 2014-2020 to provide for coordinated preparation of expert bases. The latter will be composed of representatives of intermediate bodies, national authorities of European Territorial Cooperation, information points for direct EU programmes and, if necessary, external experts.

For the absorption of the 2014-2020 Cohesion Policy Structural Funds, Slovenia has prepared a single Operational Programme as the contribution to the realisation of the EU Strategy for Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Growth – the operational programme strategy is in accordance with the common strategic framework and the content of the Partnership Agreement.

The OP ECP 2014-2020 encompasses the two cohesion regions and the ERDF, the ESF, the Cohesion Fund, and other relevant forms of implementing instruments.

Due to the regional development potential in Slovenia in this programming period a greater emphasis will be

laid on the coordinated action between national and regional levels, based on the intersection between the development documents at national and regional level. In the context of the preparation of the regional development programmes at the level of the statistical regions Slovenia also concentrated on the identification of the region's specialisation as a method of concentration and activation of the region's potential. Regions will therefore promote development based on their comparative advantages (geographic, cultural, natural, economic and social). Integration between regions and the creation of joint projects and initiatives to achieve synergies in several regions simultaneously will also be promoted. In this context the complementarity of EU Funds and other available resources is of key importance.

As already mentioned particularly HORZION 2020 and LIFE are relevant for the selected objectives of the programme. In Slovenia HORZION 2020 will be accompanied in its implementation by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport while LIFE programme will be accompanied by the Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning. The thematic objective 6 (environment and resource efficiency) will be addressed in the Cooperation Programme, where an adequate attention will be paid to the connection with LIFE.

#### ◆ Croatian approach <sup>22</sup>

The Government of the Republic of Croatia established the Coordination Committee for the preparation of programming documents for the financial period of the EU 2014-2020 and designated MRDEUF as the body responsible for the overall coordination in preparation of strategic documents and operational programmes for the use of ESI funds 2014-2020. This role is continued under the role of the Coordinating Body (CB), designated by the Act on Establishment of Institutional Framework for the Use of European Structural and Investment Funds in the Republic of Croatia in the 2014-2020 periods. In addition to coordination of activities at the national level of other bodies designated in the management and control system for the use of ESI funds to ensure harmonised application of applicable EU and national legal acts, the role of the MRDEUF will continue to be the overall coordination and monitoring of the implementation of ESI Funds and other Union and relevant national funding instruments. In order to ensure evaluation of programmes under common evaluation arrangements, overall coordination of evaluation activities will also continue to be one of the functions of the CB.

Following the completion of the programming exercise, the Coordination Committee (supported by the work of Technical Working Groups, hereinafter TWG) will be used as a permanent coordination mechanism in the form of National Coordinating Committee (hereinafter NCC), ensuring overall coordination and monitoring of implementation of ESI funds (mainstream operational programmes under the ERDF, ESF, Cohesion Fund, EMFF and EAFRD and cooperation programmes under the IPA and ERDF) and other Union and relevant national funding instruments. TWGs, established in line with European Code of Conduct for Partnership, which were used during the programming process as a core programming group, are intended to be used as support to the work of the NCC in increasing the impact and effectiveness of the funds through (a) ensuring demarcation on one hand and complementarity on other, (b) identification and preparation of projects, (c) matching identified projects to sources of financing (and different mechanisms of delivery of funds such as Financial Instruments, Community Led Local Development, Integrated Territorial Investments), (d) planning, steering and monitoring overall absorption of funds and (e) coordinating evaluation activities.

NCC supported by the TWGs and technical secretariat provided by the MRDEUF will progressively substitute (where necessary by undertaking/merging part of the resources of) other currently existing coordination and monitoring platforms.

The Decree on the Bodies of the Management and Control Systems for the European Social Fund, European Regional Development Fund and Cohesion Fund, related to Investment for Growth and Jobs Goal (Decree IGJ), MRDEUF is designated as the Managing Authority (MA) for the ERDF and Cohesion Fund programme under the Investment for Growth and Jobs Goal. By Decree on the Bodies of the Management and Control

<sup>22</sup> Information about coordination in Croatia is based on the Partnership Agreement between Croatia and European Commission for the period 2014-2020



Systems for the European Regional Development Fund, Related to European Territorial Cooperation Goal (Decree ETC), Agency for Regional Development of the Republic of Croatia (ARD), an in-house body of the MRDEUF, shall bear the role of MA for 2014-2020 territorial cooperation programmes in which Croatia is hosting the programme bodies. Single unit to perform the function of National Authority for 11 cooperation programmes and coordinate the participation of the Republic of Croatia in 13 territorial cooperation programmes is placed within the MRDEUF.

Close internal coordination mechanisms between the Goal 1 and Goal 2 programmes is ensured through day-to-day work within MRDEUF and ARD as well as regular, weekly meetings, of heads of sectors. Coordination between other stakeholders involved in the implementation of different programmes is currently ensured through the work of National Committee for Coordination of Croatian Participation in Transnational and Interregional Programmes as well as Macro regional Strategies of the EU (hereinafter NC), which has been established as one of the platforms for coordination and monitoring of implementation in the 2014 – 2020 period. For the purpose of further streamlining of coordination and monitoring activities, NC, representing stakeholders from public bodies, non-governmental organizations, social and economic partners and academic society, synergizing the political and operational dimension of Macro regional Strategies, is intended to be progressively merged with the NCC.

As for the cross-border cooperation programmes, all the relevant stakeholders are or will be involved in the monitoring committees directly. In 2007-2013 periods, Croatia introduced informal meetings of the Croatian members of the monitoring committees in order to align and consolidate national positions and opinions as well as to update members of potential new development in the policy areas. These meetings will be kept informal.

Furthermore, NCC shall have a crucial role with regards the macro-regional strategies Croatia participates in. As the overall coordinator of all instruments and funds NCC shall have advisory role for the financing of the projects which contributes to the achievement of the macro-regional strategies goals.

**Table 35** Coordination of CP Slovenia – Croatia 2014 – 2020 with other EU programmes

EUROPEAN STRUCTURAL AND INVESTMENT FUNDS 2014-2020							
	Slovenia			Croatia			
CP Slovenia - Croatia	OP for the Implementation of the EU Cohesion Policy	Rural Development Programme Slovenia	Operational Programme for Maritime and Fisheries Fund	Operational Programme Competitiveness and Cohesion	Operational Programme Efficient Human Resources for Croatia	Rural development programme of the Republic of Croatia	Operational Programme for Maritime and Fisheries Fund
<b>PA 1: Cross border risk prevention</b> /TO5 - Climate change adaptation, risk prevention and management	5 Flood risk protection			1 Research, 5 Flood risk prevention			To be completed.
<b>PA 2: Preserving and promoting natural and cultural resources/</b> TO6 - Environment and promoting resource efficiency	3 SME - innovative tourism products 6 d- protecting biodiversity	6 B local development of rural areas LEADER	SO3 – protection and restoring water biodiversity and ecosystems CLLD	3 SME, internationalization (tourism) 6 c cultural and natural heritage, 6d biodiversity	10 Lifelong learning	P4: Biodiversity P6: Social inclusion, LEADER	To be completed.
<b>PA 3: Healthy, safe and accessible border areas</b> /TO11- Institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders	9 – Affordable, sustainable and quality services, health and social infrastructure 10 Lifelong learning	6B local development of rural areas LEADER	CLLD	9a Health and social infrastructure 10 LLL	9(4) Affordable, sustainable and quality services 10 LLL	P6: Social inclusion	To be completed.

■ Considerable overlapping ■ minor overlapping □ limited or no overlapping

CROSS BORDER COOPERATION PROGRAMMES 2014-2020						
	Slovenia			Croatia		
CP Slovenia - Croatia	CP Slovenia-Austria	CP Italy-Slovenia	CP Slovenia-Hungary	CP Croatia-Hungary	CP Italy-Croatia	IPA Croatia-Bosnia and Herzegovina-Montenegro
<b>PA 1: Cross border risk prevention</b> /TO5 - Climate change adaptation, risk prevention and management (5b)		To be completed.			5a adapting to climate change 5b disaster resilience, disaster management systems	
<b>PA 2: Preserving and promoting natural and cultural resources /</b> TO6 - Environment and promoting resource efficiency (6c, 6d)	6 c Conserving, protecting, promoting and developing cultural and natural heritage 6 d Protecting and restoring biodiversity	To be completed.	6 c Conserving, protecting, promoting and developing cultural and natural heritage	PA 2 –Sustainable use of natural and cultural resources	6 c Conserving, protecting, promoting and developing cultural and natural heritage 6 d Protecting and restoring biodiversity	TP 2- environment protection and biodiversity TP4 – tourism, protecting natural and cultural heritage
<b>PA 3: Healthy, safe and accessible border areas</b> / TO11- Institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders	11 Health, risk management	To be completed.	11 Social services, healthcare, civil protection	PA 3 – Cooperation – Enhancing institutional cooperation and an efficient public admin.		TP 1 – quality of social and health care services

■ Considerable overlapping ■ minor overlapping □ limited or no overlapping

MACRO REGIONAL AND SEA BASIN STRATEGIES, TRANSNATIONAL/INTERREGIONAL PROGRAMMES 2014-2020											
Macro-regional strategies				Transnational/interregional programmes							
CP Slovenia - Croatia	EU Strategy for the Danube Region EUSDR	EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region EUSAIR	EU Strategy for the Alpine Region EUSALPS (Slovenia)	Central Europe	Mediterranean	Danube programme	Adriatic Ionian programme	Alpine space	ESPON	URBACT	INTERREG EUROPE
<b>PA 1: Cross border risk prevention</b> TO5 - Climate change adaptation, risk prevention and management	PA 5: Environmental risks		3.3 Alpine risk management including risk dialogue, to tackle potential threats, such as those of climate change			2.3 Transnational water management and risk prevention 2.4 Preparedness for disaster risk management 6d					
<b>PA 2: Preserving and promoting natural and cultural resources</b> TO6 - Environment and promoting resource efficiency	PA 3 – Culture and tourism PA 6 - Biodiversity, landscapes, quality of air and soils	3.1 The marine environment 3.2 Transnational terrestrial habitats and biodiversity 4.1 Diversified tourism offer 4.2 Sustainable and responsible tourism management	3.1 Reinforcing Alpine natural and cultural resources as assets of a high quality living area	6 c Conserving, protecting, promoting and developing cultural and natural heritage	PA 3: Protecting and promoting Mediterranean natural and cultural resources	2.1 Sustainable use of natural and cultural resources (6c) 2.2 Restoring and managing ecological corridors (6d)	PA2: Sustainable region 6c, 6d	Liveable 6c.1 Sustainably valorize Alpine Space cultural and natural heritage 6d.1 Enhance the protection, the conservation and the ecological connectivity of Alpine space ecosystem		TO 11 – focus on protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency (rural-urban links)	6 c Conserving, protecting, promoting and developing cultural and natural heritage (policy learning)
<b>PA 3: Healthy, safe and accessible border areas</b> TO11- Institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders	PA 10 Institutional capacity and coordination	2.2 Intermodal connections to the hinterland	2.2 Improve sustainable accessibility for all Alpine areas 2.3 A better connected society in the region			4.1 increase institutional capacities to tackle major societal challenges	11 Toward a better governance of the EUSAIR	Well governed 11.1 increase the application of multilevel and transnational governance in the Alpine Space	11 Institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders	11	

■ Considerable overlapping ■ minor overlapping □ limited or no overlapping

EU PROGRAMMES 2014-2020						
CP Slovenia - Croatia	HORIZON 2020	COSME	LIFE	CREATIVE EUROPE		
<b>PA 1: Cross border risk prevention</b> / TO5 - Climate change adaptation, risk prevention and management	12 Climate action, environment, resource efficiency and raw materials		LIFE Climate action			
<b>PA 2: Preserving and promoting natural and cultural resources</b> / TO6 - Environment and promoting resource efficiency	13 – Inclusive, innovative and reflective societies (cultural heritage)		Nature and biodiversity	Cooperation projects CCI sector		
<b>PA 3: Healthy, safe and accessible border areas</b> / TO11- Institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders	8 – Health, demographic change and wellbeing					

■ Considerable overlapping   ■ minor overlapping   □ limited or no overlapping

## SECTION 7

### REDUCTION OF ADMINISTRATIVE BURDEN FOR BENEFICIARIES

*(Reference: point (a) of Article 8(5) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)*

The reduction of the administrative burden has been a key principle for the whole programming. During the period 2007-2013 the main challenge for the partners was the financial reporting and the time requested from the moment a cost occurred to when it was paid out. Although all of the programme structures strived to make the checking and the process of payment as fast as possible, the problems related to the delays occurred due to several facts; the reporting periods were frequent (for majority of the projects every 6 months), during the programme implementation not enough staff resources had been reserved and assured for the monitoring and checking within the JS and national control units. The payment process involves many levels (technical admissibility check, financial check, content monitoring, Certifying Authority check) and therefore takes time.

Beside the long lasting payment process, the beneficiaries had to meet impediments concerning the long decision making process, delays in contract signing as well as in validating the expenditures by FLC, complex reporting requirements. The specifics of the ETC programmes represented also some challenges for the complex monitoring system.

According to the experience the programme should tackle the following challenges:

- to simplify the application and reporting procedures (simplification of documentation),
- to reduce bureaucracy/administrative barriers,
- to implement faster procedures (shortening of the decision-making procedures for the approval of projects, shortening of the reporting and reimbursement procedures, faster checking of reports by the first level control, etc.)
- to introduce a user-friendly (adapted to the needs of the programme) information system in both programme languages
- to put greater emphasis on the content and added value of projects etc.

Thereupon, programme partners and beneficiaries are in favour of as much simplification measures as possible that will help to reduce the administrative burden in order to ensure a smooth project application and implementation process. The following measures for the reduction of administrative burden will be implemented in the period 2014-2020:

#### ◆ Use of the Harmonized Implementation Tools (HIT)

Using the INTERACT Harmonized Implementation Tools (application form, reporting forms, administrative, eligibility and assessment criteria, etc.) is especially useful for applicants applying for funding from different funds as many funds will use the same approach, questions or rules, which are then familiar for the partnership. In addition, the use of the Harmonised Implementation Tools enables the exchange of good practices from different ETC programmes and ensures that the focus of the documentation lies on the essential components, which are needed for a good cooperation project.

#### ◆ Extended use of simplified cost options and rules on eligibility of expenditure at the EU level

The simplified cost options (e.g. unit cost, lump sums, flat rate, shared costs etc.) that have been made available by the ESI Regulations are planned to be used. The aim of the simplified cost options is to reduce the amount of needed paperwork and to speed up the reporting, verification and control procedures. When deciding on the eligibility rules and simplified cost options on the programme level, as defined in regulations

and the delegated acts<sup>23</sup>, the experience of the MA, CA and JS of the current period as well as that of the FLC's will be taken into account.

In support of project partners, with the aim of harmonized approach at the level of programme area, the MA in cooperation with the FLCs and other involved parties, will provide guidelines on eligibility of costs to the programme partners.

#### ◆ Simplification of the monitoring system (e-MS)

The new programme monitoring system is prepared based on the INTERACT Harmonized Implementation Tools and in cooperation with INTERACT and other ETC programmes. The templates and processes are based on the most essential elements and the structure has been based on an analysis of best practices from several ETC programmes. Also the fact that a lot of programmes use the same templates will simplify for beneficiaries applying for projects from several funding instruments.

The online monitoring system will also be an important multi-lingual tool (English, Croatian, Slovene) for reducing the administrative burden for beneficiaries. It eliminates the need to send documents in paper and with signatures. It also allows for streamlined and efficient handling of any changes required to the project application as both the project and JS/MA can access the same information in the database. It allows for interactive and/or pre-filled forms by the system on the basis of the data which is stored at consecutive steps of the procedures, for automatic calculations preventing mistakes and speeding up the work, where appropriate, automatic embedded controls which reduce as much as possible back-and forth exchange of documents, system generated alerts to inform the beneficiary of the possibility to perform certain actions and on-line status tracking meaning that the beneficiary can follow up the current state of the project, which results in more transparency. Due to the principle of information inserted only once the beneficiaries avoid doing extra work. The e-Monitoring System also greatly reduces the amount of documents that need to be signed and sent in.

#### ◆ Simplification and acceleration of the application as well as reporting procedure

The mentioned simplifications will significantly simplify and accelerate application and reporting process. It includes a simplification of the administering and reporting documentation as well as of the corresponding procedures, like the shortening of the decision-making process of the approval of projects (decision on the submitted projects will be taken at least once a year, the decision of the MC will be taken as general rule within 6 months from the submission of the application). Also the tasks of the JS, national controllers and the functions of Certifying Authority will be reviewed and a simpler implementation process will be set up.

#### ◆ Introduction of E-Cohesion

Exchanges of information carried out by electronic data between beneficiaries and programme structures will be gradually introduced to ensure a frictionless information and data flow. Moreover, such an approach would reduce the necessity for the submission of hard copy documents and alleviate the submission of electronic based documentations as well as to avoid excessive manual handling of the data.

---

<sup>23</sup> COMMISSION DELEGATED REGULATION (EU) No 481/2014 of 4 March 2014 supplementing Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council with regard to specific rules on eligibility of expenditure for cooperation programmes

## SECTION 8

### HORIZONTAL PRINCIPLES

*(Reference: Article 8(7) of the ETC Regulation No. 1299/2013)*

#### 8.1 Environmental sustainability

The programme authorities shall undertake actions throughout the programme lifecycle, to avoid or reduce environmentally harmful effects of interventions and ensure results in net social, environmental and climate benefits. Actions to be undertaken may include the following:

- Directing investments towards the most resource-efficient and sustainable options;
- Avoiding investments that may have a significant negative environmental or climate impact, and supporting actions to mitigate any remaining impacts;
- Taking a long-term perspective when 'life-cycle' costs of alternative options for investment are compared;
- Increasing the use of green public procurement.

The programme area is geographically diverse and has richness of natural and cultural values. Large proportion of the area is under different forms of nature protection for its exceptional biodiversity. On the other hand the programme territory is ecologically sensitive and consequences of the climate change are becoming more evident. Preserving, protecting and improving the quality of the environment are put at the core of the programme strategy. Environmental sustainability is strongly reflected in the programme vision and slogan 'Connected in Green'.

Environmental aspects and objectives are directly reflected in all three priority axes. Action proposed under Priority Axis 1 aim at mitigating climate change effects and natural disasters due to increased risk of flooding and will address improvement of common knowledge base and capacities, joint planning and coordination. Concrete investments in flood prevention measures based on environmentally sustainable and ecosystem-based solutions are expected in the Kolpa/Kupa and Sotla/Sutla river basins. The Priority Axis 2 focuses on preserving natural and cultural resources of the programme area with particular emphasis on restoration and mobilisation of cultural heritage for sustainable tourism and protecting and restoring of biodiversity. Actions will again address improvement common knowledge base, joint planning, development and implementation of concrete investments in protection, restoration and promotion of cultural and natural values, especially in the nature protected areas, hinterlands and remote areas. The Priority Axis 3 supports creation of partnerships between public authorities and stakeholders aiming at improving health, safety and accessibility of border areas. Actions include cooperation and capacity building of rescue services to increase preparedness and coordinated actions in the event of natural or man made hazards (e.g. fires). Actions aiming at reducing gaps in accessibility of public services may include energy efficient solutions related to provision of mobile services in remote areas, introduction of e-services or increase in the efficiency of infrastructure in the border area or similar.

All operations supported under the programme including technical assistance have potential to consider environmental elements, such as greening the cross border events, increasing the level of recycling, use of local food and service chains, giving priority to purchase of long-lasting materials, reducing the need for travels by using online communication channels, reducing the need for printing and similar.

The beneficiaries shall be encouraged to include research and development and innovation related to environment protection, sustainable use of resources and resource efficiency in the development and implementation of operations supported under all three priority axes.

Selected result indicators will measure the progress in increase of the environmental sustainability as indicated in Section 2.

Environmental protection and sustainability will be specifically observed in the selection of operations. Operations with any substantial negative effect on the environment shall not be supported. Particular attention will be placed on avoiding possible negative environmental effects as identified by the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). Operations will have to be compliant with the respective environmental legislation.

Operations with specific contribution to environmental, climate change adaptation and risk prevention and management shall be promoted. The contribution shall be clearly demonstrated in the application and will be monitored and reported during the implementation of the operation and on its completion.

## 8.2 Equal opportunities

The programme authorities pursue the objective of equality between men and women and shall take appropriate steps to prevent any discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation during the preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of operations.

The programme area identified significant regional disparities in the overall socio-economic development as well as between specific areas (remote areas and immediate border areas, islands). Urban-rural divide is evident in differences in the accessibility of public services, connectivity, poverty issues, out-migration and depopulation of certain areas, health inequalities and others. Specific target groups in need of particular attention include elderly, the young unemployed, population living in remote and underdeveloped areas, disabled persons, low-income families and others. Inclusion and diversity is therefore an important objective to be pursued in the programme.

Inclusive development will be addressed in particular under Priority axes 3 and 2. Actions of the Priority axis 3 focus on developing partnerships between public bodies and stakeholders for increasing the health, safety and accessibility of services in the areas with significant service delivery gaps. Health care and health promotion, social care services, civil protection, mobility and connectivity are areas to be specifically addressed targeting the groups at a disadvantage. Unemployment and lack of entrepreneurial initiatives are further challenges of the programme areas. Opportunities for the unemployed and population in particular in the rural areas will be addressed in Priority Axis 2. Actions aiming at restoration and mobilisation of cultural and natural heritage will namely promote development of new sustainable tourism products and services and thus increasing employment opportunities and access to new knowledge and capacity building. On the other hand, investments in the natural and cultural heritage have to consider possibilities for ensuring accessibility for people with disabilities and elderly to the restored and new infrastructure and services. Developing products and services for new audiences may include target groups at the risk of exclusion.

All priority axes will also support building of the social capital of the area by supporting knowledge and skills development of the target groups in priority axis related topics/themes. Moreover, products, services, infrastructure delivered with the support of the programme shall be accessible to all citizens.

Equal opportunities will be observed in the selection of operations. Generally, all beneficiaries will be obliged



to avoid discrimination of any kind and to ensure that their activities comply with the principles of equal opportunities. Partnerships should encourage diversity amongst the membership and where appropriate involve community members and offer training and support where needed to build confidence.

### **8.3 Promotion of equality between men and women**

The programme authorities pursue the objective of equality between men and women and shall take appropriate steps to prevent any discrimination during the preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of operations in the programme.

Main differences between men and women in the programme area similar to national levels generally relate to the level of employment or unemployment, payment for equal job, participation of women in high management positions, involvement in politics and many others. The share of unemployed women in the programme area exceeds those of the men.

All priority axes have potential to include actions promoting gender equality, in particular 2 and 3. Under Priority axis 3 actions may relate to issues connected to the equality of opportunity of men and women to take positions in specific services (e.g. civil protection or health care professions), examination of employment opportunities for women and men in provision of social care services for the elderly in remote areas. Issues related to health indicators and health promotion may be addressed in a way to take into account differences and specific needs of men and women. Under Priority axis 2, employment opportunities for women in nature protected and rural areas related to sustainable tourism can be promoted. Protection and promotion of intangible cultural heritage may also develop specific talents of both men and women.

Beneficiaries shall be encouraged to examine gender-based differences where appropriate and consider activities in support of promotion of equal opportunities in the operations. All beneficiaries will be obliged to avoid discrimination of any kind and to ensure their activities promote equal participation of women and men. It is important that supported operations would unintentionally not create new gender-based barriers.

Equality between men and women shall also be considered in the programme management arrangements. The programme authorities will ensure there is no gender-based discrimination in the appointment of personnel as well as in all other activities. Where appropriate, gender disaggregated data may be collected through monitoring (e.g. indicators related to capacity building and awareness raising activities, health care promotion, social care and health care services). Evaluation activities may specifically devote to gender issues where appropriate.

## Abbreviations

AA	Audit Authority
ARSO	Slovenian Environment Agency
CA	Certifying Authority
CB	Cross-border
CBC	Cross-border co-operation
CI	Common Indicator
CP	Cooperation Programme Slovenia – Croatia 2014 - 2020
CPR	Common Provisions Regulation, according to the Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013
e-MS	e-Monitoring System
ERDF	European regional development fund
ESI	European Structural and Investment Funds
ETC	European Territorial Co-operation
ETC Regulation	The Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013
EUSAIR	EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region
EUSALPS	EU Strategy for the Alpine Region
EUSDR	EU Strategy for the Danube Region
FI	Financial Indicator
FLC	First Level Control
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GODC	Government Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Development and European Cohesion Policy
GVA	Gross Value Added
HIT	Harmonized Implementation Tools
HR	Croatia
HFS	Hydrologic forecasting systems
ICT	Information and communication technologies
IP	Investment priority
JS	Joint Secretariat
KiS	Key Implementation Step
LP	Lead Partner
MA	Managing Authority
MC	Monitoring Committee
MS	Member State

NA	National Authority
OI	Output Indicator
PES	Payment for Ecosystem Service
RI	Result Indicator
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SI	Slovenia
SME	Small and medium-sized enterprises
SO	Specific Objective
TFEU	Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union
TO	Thematic objective
UAA	Utilised agricultural area

## List of tables

Table 1 Cooperation Programme area – selected indicators .....	13
Table 2 SWOT analysis of the Cooperation Programme area .....	14
Table 3 Justification for the selection of thematic objectives and investment priorities .....	25
Table 4 Overview of the investment strategy of the Cooperation Programme .....	28
Table 5 Programme specific result indicators .....	32
Table 6 Programme specific output indicators .....	34
Table 7 Performance framework of the priority axis .....	34
Table 8 Dimension 1 Intervention field .....	35
Table 9 Dimension 2 Form of finance .....	36
Table 10 Dimension 3 Territory type .....	36
Table 11 Dimension 4 Territorial delivery mechanisms .....	36
Table 12 Programme specific result indicators .....	40
Table 13 Programme specific output indicators .....	44
Table 14 Performance framework of the priority axis .....	45
Table 15 Dimension 1 Intervention field .....	46
Table 16 Dimension 2 Form of finance .....	47
Table 17 Dimension 3 Territory type .....	47
Table 18 Dimension 4 Territorial delivery mechanisms .....	47
Table 19 Programme specific result indicators .....	49
Table 20 Programme specific output indicators .....	51
Table 21 Performance framework of the priority axis .....	52
Table 22 Dimension 1 Intervention field .....	52
Table 23 Dimension 2 Form of finance .....	53

Table 24 Dimension 3 Territory type .....	53
Table 25 Dimension 4 Territorial delivery mechanisms .....	53
Table 26 Annual support from ERDF in EUR .....	53
Table 27 Financing plan in EUR .....	54
Table 28 Breakdown of the financial plan in EUR .....	55
Table 29 Indicative amount of support to be used for climate change objectives .....	55
Table 30 Synergies with macro-regional strategies .....	58
Table 31 Programme authorities .....	59
Table 32 Body or bodies carrying out control and audit tasks .....	59
Table 33 Joint Secretariat and its info points .....	60
Table 34 National authorities .....	62
Table 35 Coordination of CP Slovenia – Croatia 2014 – 2020 with other EU programmes .....	74

## List of maps

Map 1 The programme area .....	7
--------------------------------	---

## List of figures

Figure 1 Structure of the programme and its contribution to Europe 2020 strategy .....	24
--	----