



**Interreg**



**SLOVENIA – AUSTRIA**

European Union | European Regional Development Fund

**IMPLEMENTATION MANUAL FOR  
BENEFICIARIES**

**PART 1 –  
ABOUT THE PROGRAMME**

Cooperation Programme  
Interreg V-A Slovenia-Austria  
for the programme period 2014-2020  
Version 1, 18 December 2015

## **PART 1: ABOUT THE PROGRAMME**

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Implementation Manual for Beneficiaries of the Cooperation programme Interreg V-A Slovenia-Austria for the period 2014-2020, co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund

Prepared and published by the Programme's Managing Authority and Joint Secretariat in cooperation with the representatives of Slovenia and Austria (National/Regional Authority). The Managing Authority and the Joint Secretariat is hosted within the official structure of the Government office of the Republic of Slovenia for Development and European Cohesion Policy.

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## PART 1: ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

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### ABBREVIATIONS

AA	Audit Authority
AB	Audit Body
BWG	Bilateral working group
CA	Certifying Authority
CB	Cross-border
CF	Cohesion Fund
CP	Cooperation Programme
CBC Programme	Cross-border Cooperation Programme
CSF	Common Strategic Framework
CPR	Common Provision Regulation
EC	European Commission
ECP	European Cohesion Policy
EGTC	European Grouping for Territorial Cooperation
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESF	European Social Fund
ESI	European Structural and Investment Funds
ETC	European Territorial Cooperation
FLC	First Level Control
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
GODC	Government Office for Development and European Cohesion Policy
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IP	Investment Priority
JS	Joint Secretariat
LP	Lead Partner
MA	Managing Authority
MC	Monitoring Committee
NA	National Authority
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NUTS	Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics
PA	Partnership Agreement
PP	Project Partner
RA	Regional Authority
RTD	Research, Technology and Development
RTDI	Research, Technology, Development and Innovation
R&D	Research and Development
R&I	Research and Innovation
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
SO	Specific Objective
SWOT	Strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats analysis
TA	Technical Assistance
TO	Thematic Objective

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## **Implementation Manual for Beneficiaries**

# **PART 1: ABOUT THE PROGRAMME**

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### INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Manual is to assist potential applicants in project development and preparation of the application to participate in the Interreg V-A Slovenia-Austria (Interreg SI-AT) cooperation programme (CP). It provides also the information on selection, implementation and closure of the projects.

The Implementation Manual for Beneficiaries<sup>1</sup> is a part of the Application Pack and consists of different thematically parts. Overall, the Manual provides relevant and useful information on project implementation. The information on project development, partnership requirements and submission of the application is provided in Part 2 of this Manual. Part 4 provides information on eligibility of expenditure, information and communication is covered in Part 5, in Part 6 the procedures and requirements for reporting are described etc. **Applicants should therefore read the entire Manual carefully before submitting the application to the programme authorities.** The information in this Manual is notable for the preparation of a good project application, as well as for the implementation of already approved projects.

The information provided in this Manual will be, if necessary, further developed and updated during the programme implementation. The programme will also provide beneficiaries with training and exchange opportunities in the form of workshops.

Additional information and documents related to the Open Call for Proposals are available for download on the programme website [www.si-at.eu](http://www.si-at.eu).

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<sup>1</sup> The programme Interreg V-A SI-AT uses the term Lead Partner for determining the Lead Applicant in the phase of the preparation of the project and the Lead Beneficiary after the Subsidy Contract is signed.

## PART 1: ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

### 1. ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

The cross-border Cooperation Programme Interreg SI-AT is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) under the European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) objective, which supports cross-border cooperation between Slovenia and Austria during the period 2014-2020.

The overall objective of European Territorial Cooperation is to promote a harmonious economic, social and territorial development of the Union as a whole. Cross-border cooperation programmes (CBC programme) aim to tackle common challenges identified. For the participating regions of the programme deep analysis showed specific needs in the fields of research, small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), environment, resource efficiency and public administration.

The conceptual orientation of the CP Interreg SI-AT therefore follows also the ambition of the Europe 2020 strategy, with its aims at "smart, sustainable and inclusive growth". Common challenges and intervention needs shared by regions involved in the programme area are taken into account in order to better contribute to social, economic and territorial cohesion.

#### 1.1 Programme area

The programme area comprises 8 Slovenian and 9 Austrian NUTS 3 regions.



Gorenjska, Koroška, Savinjska, Podravska, Pomurska, Osrednjeslovenska, Goriška and Zasavska

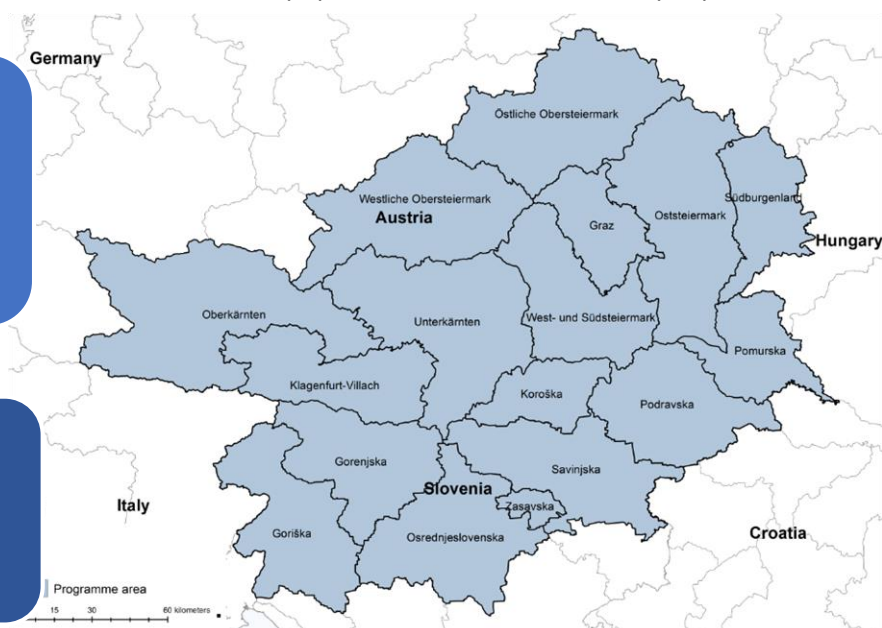


Oststeiermark, West- und Südsteiermark, Graz, Östliche Obersteiermark, Westliche Obersteiermark, Unterkärnten, Klagenfurt-Villach, Oberkärnten and Südburgenland

The programme area covers 38,353 km<sup>2</sup>, with a population of about 3,467,000 people.

New: Compared to the 2007-2013 period, the programme area covers also Goriška and Zasavska NUTS 3 regions in Slovenia.

New: Compared to the 2007-2013 period all NUTS 3 regions are part of the core programme area.



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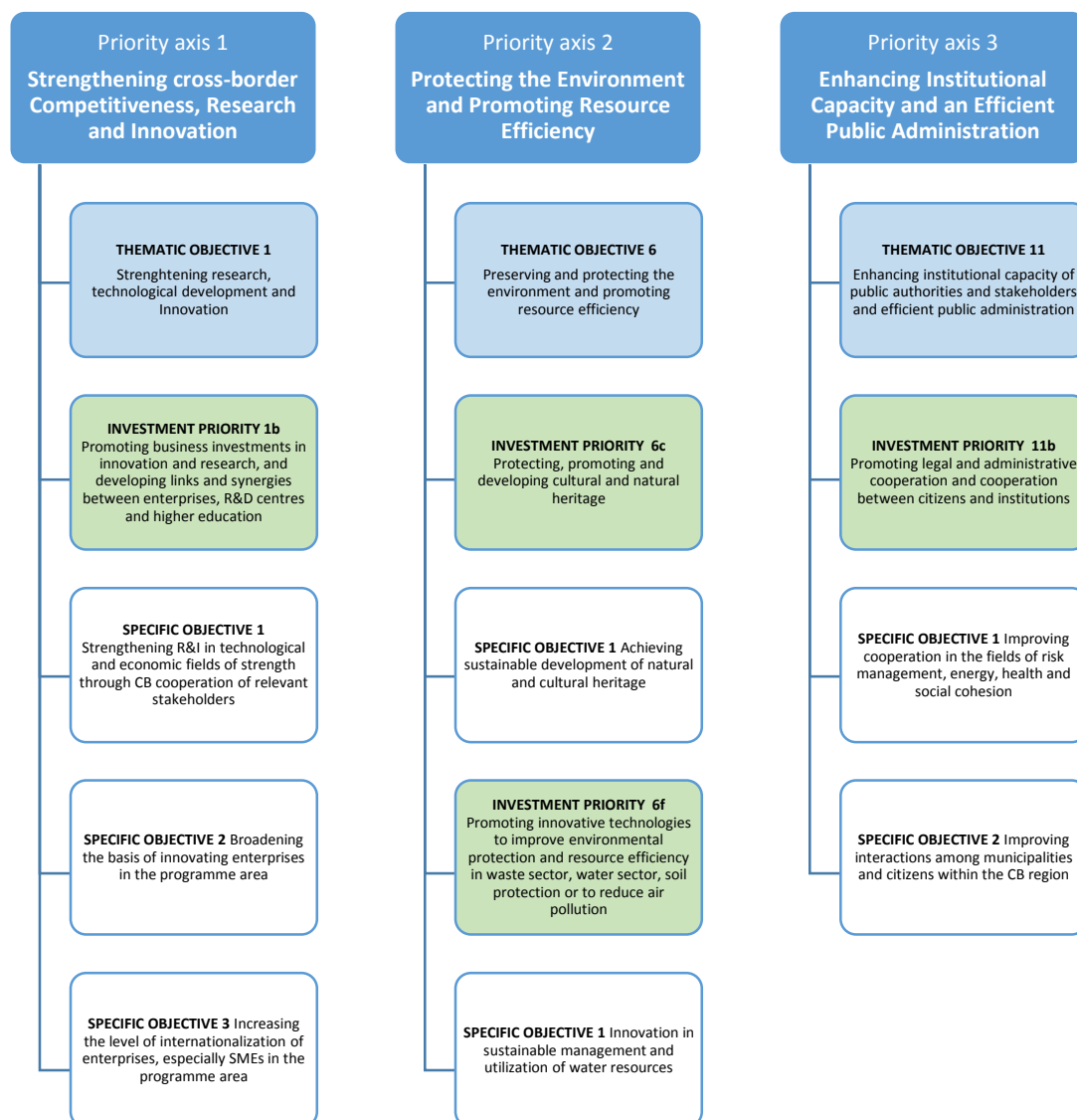
### 1.2 Investment priorities and specific objectives

The **overall objective of the Cooperation Programme** is to ensure the harmonious development of participating cross-border regions and to enable all citizens to make the best use of given natural conditions and opportunities, taking into account the specifics of each part of the programme area.

Based on the regulatory framework, which foresees thematic concentration of expenditure on a limited number of objectives and investment priorities, the CP Interreg SI-AT selected three thematic objectives (TO 1, 6 and 11) with four investment priorities and the priority axis for technical assistance (TA).

Priority axes other than technical assistance are described in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Priority axes, thematic objectives, investment priorities and specific objectives other than for technical assistance.





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For detailed information on the description of the priority axes, their objectives and main activities under each priority axis please see section 2 of the Cooperation Programme. In order to make your project compliant with the Programme it is compulsory to read and take into account the description under each priority axis provided in the Cooperation programme Interreg V-A Slovenia-Austria<sup>2</sup>.

By every type of project also the horizontal principles of the programme such as sustainable development, equal opportunities and non-discrimination and promotion of equality between men and women have to be considered. They will be specifically observed in the selection of operations, regardless of the priority axis they are proposed for. For more information on horizontal principles (see section 8 of the respective Cooperation programme and chapter 3.5 of this Part of the Manual).

### 1.3 Result and output indicators

The CP Interreg SI-AT indicators will be monitored on the programme and project level.

The **results** are direct and immediate effects resulting from the project and from the production of the outputs. They represent what is intended to be changed by the project. The production of outputs such as organisation of events, the identification and dissemination of good practices, the production of policy recommendations are only means to achieve the results of the project. Compared to the outputs, they imply a qualitative value, an improvement compared with an initial situation. They have to be measured in physical units such as the number of policy instruments influenced.

The **outputs** are the tangible deliverables of the project which contribute to the results. They are directly deriving from the activities carried out in the project. They do not lead to a qualitative judgment on the project's results. In other words, it is not because the project organises a high number of workshops (output) that it will necessarily be successful. Outputs are typically measured in physical units such as the number of seminars, site visits, conferences, participants, publications, good practices identified, or policies addressed.

Table 1: Programme specific result indicators

	Priority axis	Investment priority	Specific result indicator
1	Strengthening cross-border Competitiveness, Research and Innovation	1(b) Promoting business investments in innovation and research, and developing links and synergies between enterprises, R&D centres and higher education	R&D Intensity <sup>3</sup>
			Number of enterprises with innovation cooperation with cooperation partners from Europe
			Number of exporting companies
2	Protecting the Environment and Promoting Resource Efficiency	6(c) Protecting, promoting and developing cultural and natural heritage	Number of overnight stays
		6(f): Promoting innovative technologies to improve environmental protection and resource efficiency in waste sector, water sector, soil protection or to reduce air pollution	Length of the cross-border river bodies with unsatisfactory water quality status

<sup>2</sup> The Cooperation programme Interreg V-A Slovenia-Austria is available on the programme website [www.si-at.eu](http://www.si-at.eu).

<sup>3</sup> This indicator measures the R&D expenditure as a percentage of GDP and is used as an indicator of an economy's relative degree of investment in generating new knowledge.

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<b>3</b>	Enhancing Institutional Capacity and an Efficient Public Administration	11(b) Promoting legal and administrative cooperation and cooperation between citizens and institutions	Level of sustainable institutional cooperation in the field of energy and risk management or health and social cohesion in the programme area <sup>4</sup>
			Level of cross-border cooperation among municipalities and citizens in the programme area <sup>5</sup>

Table 2: Common and programme specific output indicators by investment priority

Priority axis		Investment priority	Common and programme specific output indicators
<b>1</b>	Strengthening cross-border Competitiveness, Research and Innovation	1(b) Promoting business investments in innovation and research, and developing links and synergies between enterprises, R&D centres and higher education	Number of enterprises receiving support (CI)
			Number of enterprises receiving grants (CI)
			Number of enterprises receiving non-financial support (CI)
			Number of enterprises cooperating with research institutions (CI)
			Number of enterprises supported to introduce new to the firm products (CI)
			Number of joint CB R&D projects
			Number of joint CB internationalization projects involving SMEs
<b>2</b>	Protecting the Environment and Promoting Resource Efficiency	6(c) Protecting, promoting and developing cultural and natural heritage	Number of newly developed and/or improved joint CB tourist products
			Number of projects targeting geodiversity or biodiversity
			Number of sustainable tourism related services
		6(f): Promoting innovative technologies to improve environmental protection and resource efficiency in waste sector, water sector, soil protection or to reduce air pollution	Research institutions participating in CB research projects (common indicator)
			Number of jointly developed water management strategies
			Number of joint modelling, monitoring and forecasting studies and research works
			Number of joint CB flood determination, protection and control measures
<b>3</b>	Enhancing Institutional Capacity and an Efficient Public Administration	11(b) Promoting legal and administrative cooperation and cooperation between citizens and institutions	Number of institutions and/or organizations participating in joint CB initiatives
			Number of people participating in joint training schemes and programmes
			Number of joint CB pilot and demonstration projects
			Population covered by improved public services

<sup>4</sup> This indicator measures the quality and quantity of institutional cooperation in the field of energy and risk management or health and social cohesion in the programme area and will be measured with a survey.

<sup>5</sup> This indicator measures the quality and quantity of institutional cooperation among municipalities and citizens in the programme area and will be measured with a survey.

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## 1.4 Types of activities, main target groups and type of beneficiaries supported by the programme

### 1.4.1 *Investment priority 1(b) Promoting business investments in innovation and research, and developing links and synergies between enterprises, R&D centres and higher education*

Investment Priority	Specific objective
1(b) Promoting business investments in innovation and research, and developing links and synergies between enterprises, R&D centres and higher education	✓ <u>Specific objective 1</u> Strengthening R&I in technological and economic fields of strength through CB cooperation of relevant stakeholders.
	✓ <u>Specific objective 2</u> Broadening the basis of innovating enterprises in the programme area.
	✓ <u>Specific objective 3</u> Increasing the level of internationalization of enterprises, especially SMEs in the programme area

#### Type and examples of actions to be supported under specific objective 1

- ✓ Improvement of CB competitiveness and excellence in R&I (e.g. by creation of joint CB platforms for know-how and technology transfer as basis for R&I, applied science projects, etc.).
- ✓ Support of a better access and use of research infrastructure for CB research institutions and relevant stakeholders (e.g. institutional cooperation between R&D-infrastructures).
- ✓ Use of potential of researchers and their international mobility (with the purpose of increasing the competitiveness of CB area).
- ✓ Implementation of research, innovation and technology transfer projects to support the building-up of competences in common fields of strength defined by the Smart specialization strategy in both countries.
- ✓ Promotion of CB cooperation among research institutions and public administrations.

#### Type and examples of actions to be supported under specific objective 2

- ✓ Strengthening innovation processes and investment of CB clusters and networks, enterprises and other institutions cooperating across border in order to develop new or improved products, services and pilot investments.
- ✓ Support to enterprises in the phase of testing innovation (including the process of certification).
- ✓ Enhancing the transfer of developed solutions and of new knowledge to the public domain.
- ✓ Strengthening growth and development of companies and especially SMEs (and their creativity and innovativeness, investment in processes and development as well as development of capabilities of SME's to cooperate) especially by design and implementation of support programmes in common fields of strength defined by the Smart specialization strategy in both countries.
- ✓ Strengthening the innovation ability of enterprises (offering innovation support services to support innovation) or the use of new technologies in common fields of strength.

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- ✓ Support to services for innovative (innovation in services, creative industries, product innovation, etc.) entrepreneurs/companies and potential entrepreneurs to enable the start-up of business.
- ✓ Support to development of new CB business models and integrated models of business processes.
- ✓ Promotion and development of new (social) entrepreneurship models (innovative companies with potential of global growth, companies in CB areas facing the development challenges (problem areas).
- ✓ Support to CB SME/networks to develop new or improved products, services or to enter new markets and improve their export potential.
- ✓ Encouragement and support to technology and know-how transfer (of best practices) between research, technology, educational institutions and/or institutions of the cultural and creative sector with enterprises for the development, adaptation and marketing of new technologies, products or services.
- ✓ Support to exchange of experiences in the field of business and innovation development.

### Type and examples of actions to be supported under specific objective 3

- ✓ Support to creation of awareness towards internationalisation by promotion of enterprises (SMEs) in common fields of strength defined by the Smart specialization strategy in both countries (in the field of manufacturing, ICT, tourism and health and social work activities), especially for high-growth enterprises and enterprises with a potential to grow in the programme area.
- ✓ Increasing CB cooperation of companies for competitiveness, internationalization and export, e.g. by supporting networking/clusters of enterprises, joint investments, joint participation on the market, etc.
- ✓ Implementation of services for knowledge intensive start-ups with the strong potential to internationalize.

### Main Target Groups to be supported under the investment priority 1(b)

- ✓ Institutions relevant for research and education, technology and infrastructure.
- ✓ Innovation leaders.
- ✓ Enterprises being at the threshold to innovation activities.
- ✓ Universities and other academic and education institutions.
- ✓ R&D institutions.
- ✓ Company founders and young entrepreneurs.
- ✓ Local business community.
- ✓ Business support mechanisms.
- ✓ Technology/business/university parks.

### Types of beneficiaries to be supported under the investment priority 1

- ✓ Private and public business support institutions (incubators, technology parks, science parks, competence centres, business support centres).
- ✓ Enterprises (including SMEs).

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- ✓ Clusters and networks (including clusters and networks of SMEs).
- ✓ Tourism institutions, associations and agencies.
- ✓ Research institutions.
- ✓ Universities and other academic and higher education institutions as well as technology and business oriented high schools.
- ✓ Training and education organisations and institutions.
- ✓ Institutions and organisations representing economic and social interests of employees/ employers.
- ✓ National, local and regional (public) authorities.
- ✓ Local/regional institutions, development organisations and networks.

### 1.4.2 *Investment priority 6(c) Protecting, promoting and developing cultural and natural heritage*

Investment Priority	Specific objective
6(c) Protecting, promoting and developing cultural and natural heritage	Achieving sustainable development of natural and cultural heritage

#### Type and examples of actions to be supported under specific objective

- ✓ Development and practical implementation of necessary joint strategies and action plans for management and active conservation of natural heritage in terms of bio- and geodiversity as well as cultural heritage sites (e.g. Natura 2000 sites, cultural monuments etc.).
- ✓ Sustainable utilization and management of natural and cultural heritage, including nature protection measures.
- ✓ Conservation, protection, restoration, development and valorisation of cultural and natural heritage sites as well as public visitor infrastructure for their utilization in the field of sustainable tourism.
- ✓ Support of know-how transfer, training and capacity building as well as awareness-raising for relevant stakeholders for development of corresponding skills.
- ✓ Joint development of new/improved products and services in the field of sustainable tourism in order to preserve/valorize the natural/cultural heritage in an appropriate way and/or to increase the attractiveness of the programme area (e.g. accommodations, tours, transportation, recreational activities, development of joint quality standards in tourist services).
- ✓ Development and improvement of long-term approach and measures for cultural heritage protection through comparative studies of risk-preparedness tools and mechanisms (e.g., recording, monitoring, risk assessment, etc.).
- ✓ Investments for improvement of Natura 2000 species and habitat types, functioning of ecosystems (e.g. restoration of ecosystems and habitats, control of invasive alien species), their sustainable utilization and management.
- ✓ Promotion of awareness-raising with the direct involvement of local communities (including investments in nature interpretation infrastructure).

#### Main Target Groups to be supported under the investment priority 6(c)

- ✓ Public and private institutions as well as owners and managers responsible for natural and cultural heritage.

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- ✓ Local and regional public and state administrations.
- ✓ Institutions in the field of tourism.
- ✓ Citizens.

### Types of beneficiaries to be supported under the investment priority 6(c)

- ✓ Local, regional and national authorities and organisations<sup>6</sup> (e.g. ministries, local communities, public institutes and services).
- ✓ Institutions, organisations, associations and NGOs in the field of nature protection and conservation, environment, spatial planning, public transport, culture and tourism.

### 1.4.3 Investment priority 6(f) Promoting innovative technologies to improve environmental protection and resource efficiency in waste sector, water sector, soil protection or to reduce air pollution

Investment Priority	Specific objective
6(f): Promoting innovative technologies to improve environmental protection and resource efficiency in waste sector, water sector, soil protection or to reduce air pollution	Innovation in sustainable management and utilization of water resources

### Type and examples of actions to be supported under specific objective

- ✓ Development and practical implementation of joint sustainable water strategies to set out long-term plans for improving the quality status and securing the water future of the programme area.
- ✓ Development and practical implementation of joint modelling, monitoring and forecasting studies and research works with the inclusion of climate change implications and action plans for reducing the overall water and wastewater footprint.
- ✓ Development and practical implementation of integrated flood determination, protection and control measures as well as river restoration measurements.
- ✓ Practical implementation of joint monitoring activities (qualitative and quantitative) to assess the status and impacts of the measures incorporated.
- ✓ Preparation and implementation of construction and non-construction anti flood measures in line with the flood risk management plan.

### Main Target Groups to be supported under the investment priority 6(f)

- ✓ Local, regional and national authorities and organisations (e.g. ministries, local communities, public institutes and services).
- ✓ Bilateral CB commissions.
- ✓ Institutions and organisations in the field of water management, nature protection, environment and risk prevention, spatial planning.
- ✓ Research institutions.

### Types of beneficiaries to be supported under the investment priority 6(f)

- ✓ Local, regional and national authorities and organisations<sup>7</sup> (e.g. ministries, local communities, public institutes and services).

<sup>6</sup> This term includes not only public authorities but also other private and public institutions.

<sup>7</sup> This term includes not only public authorities but also other private and public institutions.

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- ✓ Institutions and organisations in the field of water management, nature protection, environment and risk prevention, spatial planning and other research organizations.
- ✓ Associations and NGOs in the field of water, nature protection, bio-/geodiversity and environment.

### 1.4.4 Investment priority 11(b) promoting legal and administrative cooperation and cooperation between citizens and institutions

Investment Priority	Specific objective
11(b): promoting legal and administrative cooperation and cooperation between citizens and institutions	✓ <u>Specific objective 1</u> Improving cooperation in the fields of risk management, energy, health and social cohesion
	✓ <u>Specific objective 2</u> Improving interactions among municipalities and citizens within the CB region

#### Type and examples of actions to be supported under specific objective 1

- ✓ Developing and implementing CB tools and services (e.g. analytical tools, management tools, technical tools, software tools, etc.) for the purpose of risk management prevention (e.g. joint monitoring, etc.).
- ✓ Joint programming, project preparation and demonstration actions of local governments, non-profit organizations, development and energy agencies in the field of renewable energy and energy efficiency.
- ✓ Active awareness-raising among key stakeholders as well as the wider public (e.g. information sheets, public information events, brochures, etc.).
- ✓ Developing and implementing training programmes and schemes (in order to intensify future CB cooperation as well as to build up capacities and skills needed for the CB labour market (e.g. intercultural communication and qualification trainings, language courses, joint schemes to support transfers of best practices and know-how, study visits, vocational training).
- ✓ Strengthening cooperation within CB networks on local/regional level as well as the cooperation of institutions providing public services, training and educational institutions, cultural associations, etc. (e.g. capacity building, knowledge exchange and networking activities).
- ✓ Developing and implementing CB tools and services (e.g. analytical tools, management tools, technical tools, software tools, etc.) for the purpose of emergency interventions (e.g. information about hospital beds, availability of ambulances and medical workers, etc.).
- ✓ Developing human skills and knowledge (including language skills) enabling institutions to continue and intensify CB cooperation
- ✓ Developing new services and products regarding important regional topics in order to ensure closeness to citizens and the visibility of the programme (e.g. trainings, consultancies).
- ✓ Joint development of common approaches to identified common problems such as social inclusion and employment promotion for marginalized groups.
- ✓ Joint improvement of basic health and social services in the border region by the use of ICT technologies.



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- ✓ Better harmonization of the demand and supply side of the labour market such as creation of sub- or micro-regional employment pacts or collection of labour market information and data.
- ✓ Developing and delivering shared labour market information and guidance for the employers and potential employees in the CB region (with special attention also to the age group of 55 to 64).
- ✓ Formulation of bottom up, multi-stakeholder partnerships in order to develop territory based integrated solutions on employments.

### Type and examples of actions to be supported under specific objective 2

- ✓ Strengthening public institutional cooperation among regions, municipalities and citizens as well as key institutions involved in regional development activities (e.g. exchanging practices, knowledge, know-how, services, development strategies, etc.).
- ✓ Improving interaction among municipalities by improving coordination, tools and methods for evidence-based policy making, mechanisms for public participation, tools for increased transparency and accountability, etc.
- ✓ Improving the quality of services by reforms for reducing administrative burden, integration of services (focus on e.g. e-government/ e-justice, etc.).
- ✓ Organizing meetings and seminars for the exchange of experiences, information in order to identify common development issues, ideas and structures.

### Main Target Groups to be supported under the investment priority 11(b)

- ✓ Local and regional public and state administrations.
- ✓ Other types of public and private organizations/institutions interested in CB cooperation (e.g. training and educational institutions, institutions and organizations in the field of risk management, health, energy, qualification and labour market, etc.).
- ✓ NGOs and associations of socially excluded.
- ✓ Citizens.

### Types of beneficiaries to be supported under the investment priority 11(b)

- ✓ Local and regional public and state administrations.
- ✓ Other types of public and private organizations/institutions interested in CB cooperation (e.g. training and educational institutions, institutions and organizations in the field of risk management, health, energy, qualification and labour market, NGOs and associations of socially excluded, associations for children, etc.).

## 1.5 Financial framework

The total value of the Programme amounts to 57,213,193 EUR, of which the ERDF contribution amounts to 47,988,355 EUR. 3,000,000 EUR of ERDF will be allocated to the priority axis for the Technical Assistance.

The total value of the Programme available for funding of projects under Priority axes 1, 2 and 3 is 52,9 mio EUR, of which 85% is financed by the ERDF, while 15% shall be contributed by other funding.

In the Table 3 the division of funds available for projects by priorities other than Technical Assistance is presented.



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Table 3: Division of funds available for projects by priorities other than TA

Priority axis	Union support	National counterpart	Total funding	Co-financing rate
Priority axis 1	15,023,809	2,651,261	17,675,070	85 %
Priority axis 2	17,564,263	3,099,576	20,663,839	85 %
Priority axis 3	12,400,283	2,188,286	14,588,569	85 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>44,988,355</b>	<b>7,939,123</b>	<b>52,927,478</b>	<b>85 %</b>

### 1.6 Programme language

The official languages of the Interreg SI-AT programme are Slovene, German and English. The official written communication with the JS or MA is in principle to be carried out bilingually in Slovene and German. All JS members speak Slovene and German, therefore the communication with Project Partners in both languages is ensured.

The working language of the Programme structures is English.

### 1.7 Management structure

The CP Interreg SI-AT is a joint programme of the two Member States, Slovenia and Austria. While Slovenia is represented at national level, Austria is represented at national and regional level (by its regions Styria, Carinthia and Burgenland).

The joint implementation structure of the programme includes the following programme authorities: Managing Authority assisted by the Joint Secretariat, Certifying Authority and Audit Authority. In the efficient and smooth implementation of the Cooperation programme also National/Regional Authorities and National Controllers are involved.

#### Managing Authority (MA)

The Managing Authority is responsible for the management and the implementation of the programme in accordance with the principle of sound financial management and in line with EU regulations ruling the ERDF fund.

#### Joint Secretariat (JS)

The Joint Secretariat assists the Managing Authority and the Monitoring Committee in carrying out their respective functions and undertakes the day-to-day implementation of the programme. It also provides information and guidance to project applicants and partners.

#### Certifying Authority (CA)

The Certifying Authority certifies the Claims for Reimbursement and Applications for Payment before they are sent to the Commission. The Certifying Authority shall make payments to the Lead Partners or in exceptional cases to Project Partners (*if applicable*).

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### **Audit Authority (Second Level Control)**

The Audit Authority is assisted by the Group of auditors comprising of a representative of both Member States participating in the Cooperation programme. The Audit Authority is responsible for verifying the sound operation of the management and control system of the Cooperation programme. Audits on projects will be spread during the entire programme lifetime.

### **Representatives of the Member States**

The representatives of the Member States (National/Regional Authorities) are providing information to applicants in order to obtain quality projects that will meet the Cooperation programme objectives and indicators, as well as assisting the MA and JS in organising the support for potential applicants in finding CB Project Partners.

For the Carinthian Project Partners the Regional Authorities in Carinthia are responsible in their own funding area to provide the appropriate regional co-financing.

### **National controllers (First Level Control)**

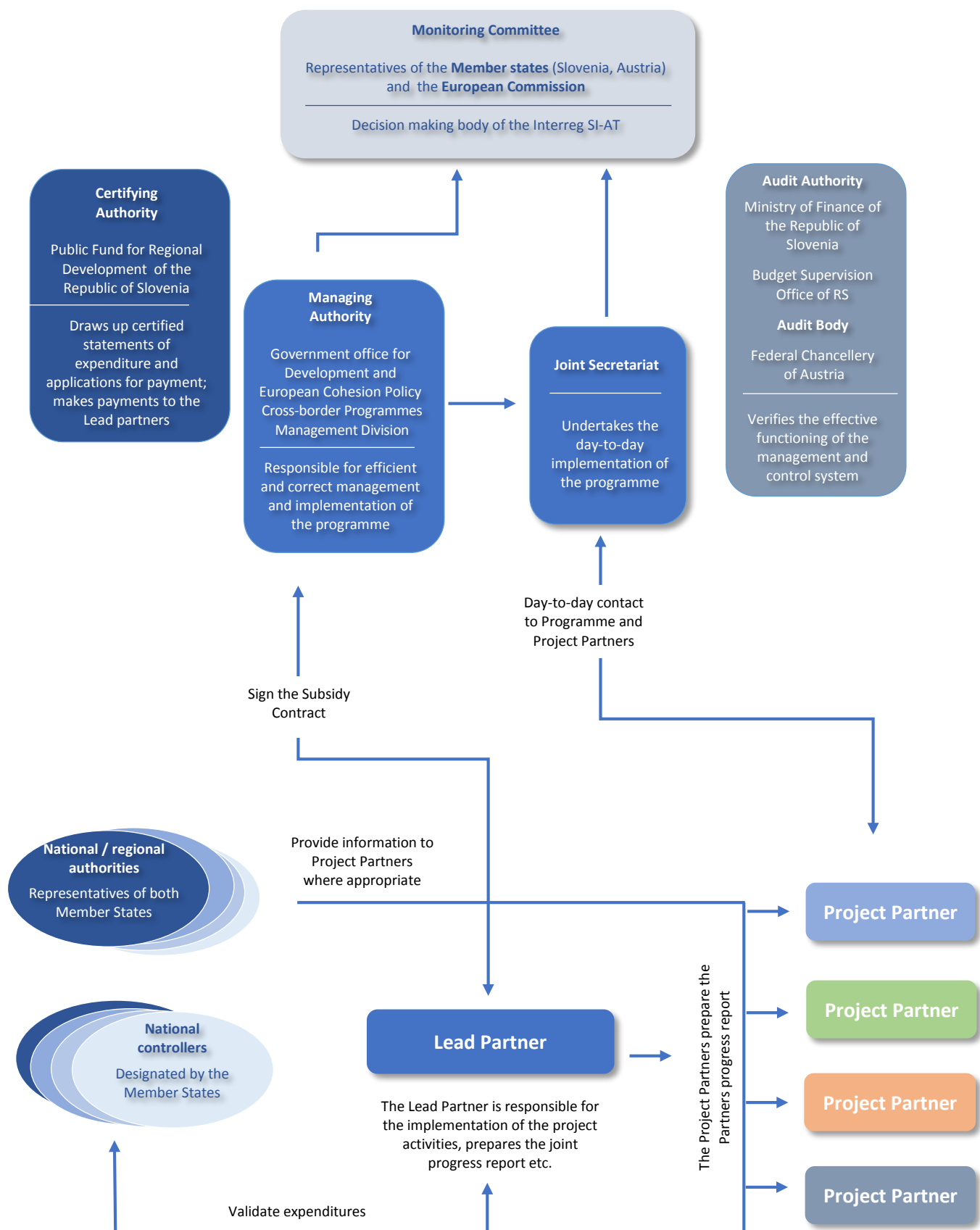
The National Controllers verify the delivery of the products and services co-financed, the soundness of the expenditure declared and the compliance of such expenditure with EU rules, programme rules and national rules. For this purpose, each Member State has designated controllers that are responsible for verifying the legality and regularity of the expenditure declared by each Lead and Project Partner participating in a project located on its territory.

### **Monitoring Committee (MC)**

The Monitoring Committee steers the programme, supervises the quality and effectiveness of its implementation and decides on the approval or rejection of the projects for funding. It is composed of representatives of both Member States, Slovenia and Austria. The list of the Monitoring Committee members is available on the programme website.

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Figure 2: Programme management structure



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### 1.8 Electronic Monitoring System (eMS)

For the monitoring of the implementation, including the application process and reporting, the Cooperation Programme Interreg SI-AT will use the eMS information system. The eMS is a monitoring system with communication portal to support submission, approval, management and administration of projects. The system supports collection of all information on submitted and approved projects, their assessment, implementation and achievements as well as modifications and closure.

In comparison to 2007-2013 period, instead of the ISARR Monitoring System, the eMS will be used for submission of the applications and reporting of expenditure.

## 2. LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND PROGRAMME RELATED DOCUMENTS

Projects implemented under the programme must comply with EU rules governing the Structural Funds, the national legislation, and must show coherence and complementarities with regional, national and sectoral development strategies/programmes. The documents listed below (not exhaustive list) are provided on the programme website [www.si-at.eu](http://www.si-at.eu).

### Relevant programme documents

- ✓ Cooperation programme Interreg V-A Slovenia-Austria (approved by the European Commission Decision, No C (2015) 6470 on 16 September 2015)

### Key regulations for the European Structural and Investment funds (basic EU Regulations for the period 2014-2020)

- ✓ Common provisions regulation (CPR)

Regulation (EU) **No 1303/2013** of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and laying down general provisions on the European Regional development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006, with all amendments

- ✓ ETC Regulation

Commission Regulation (EU) **No 1299/2013** of the European Parliament and of the council of 17 December 2013 on specific provisions for the support from the European Regional Development Fund to the European territorial Cooperation goal, with all amendments

- ✓ ERDF Regulation

Commission Regulation (EU) **No 1301/2013** of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on the Regional Development fund and on specific provisions concerning the Investment for growth and jobs goal and repealing regulation No 1080/2006, with all amendments

- ✓ EGTC Regulation

Regulation (EU) **No 1302/2013** of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 amending Regulation (EU) No 1082/2006 on a European grouping of territorial cooperation (EGTC) as regards the clarification, simplification and improvement of the establishment of such groupings, with all amendments

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### Strategic framework

- ✓ Europe 2020: A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, Communication from the Commission, COM(2010)2020 final
- ✓ Danube Strategy: European Union strategy for the Danube region, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and social Committee and the Regions, COM(2010) 715 final
- ✓ The European Union Strategy for the Alpine Region (EUSALP, 2015)

### National/regional basic rules

Besides EU rules and rules of the Cooperation Programme, also the national rules have to be respected. We would like to highlight some examples:

- ✓ **Procurement of goods and services:** Nevertheless, the beneficiary is public or private, they all have to act in accordance with the public procurement rules applicable for the public beneficiaries.
- ✓ **State aid:** if the project or its activities are subject to State aid rules, the ceilings of public funding or aid intensity will have to be respected.
- ✓ Valid national legislation ruling **specific fields addressed by the project**, e.g. environmental interventions, natural and cultural heritage, construction, etc., has to be respected in preparing and implementing the projects.

## 3. INTERREG SI-AT KEY PRINCIPLES

### 3.1 Result orientation

The strong focus in this programme period will be given to the result orientation of a project with the demand for visible outputs and concrete results. The result-oriented approach is reflected in the new programme, as well as project intervention logic.

#### Programme intervention logic

In the 2014-2020 funding period the European Union requires from the programmes to set in place a **result-oriented** intervention logic, demonstrating their clear contribution to the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy and to the achievements of economic, social and territorial cohesion. Programmes are to fund projects, which demonstrate the translation of outputs arising from “soft” actions (surveys, studies etc.) into concrete, visible and sustainable results. Those have to lead to a change (improvement) of the initial situation.

The intervention logic of the programme Interreg SI-AT consists of four priority axes (including the axis for the Technical assistance) and related specific objectives. For each specific objective expected results are defined which reflect changes that the programme seeks to achieve for the entire programme area through the implementation of projects. Results and related changes are measured through result indicators linked to each programme specific objective.

#### Project intervention logic

Projects have to strictly apply a result-oriented approach, clearly defining the results the project is striving for and linking them with the territorial challenges and needs (see also chapter 2.2 in Part 2 on developing the project intervention logic).

**The coherence of the project intervention logic** (i.e. the project specific objectives, activities, outputs and expected results) **with the targeted specific objective of the programme is a pre-condition for a project to be funded.** Projects not showing a clear link to a programme

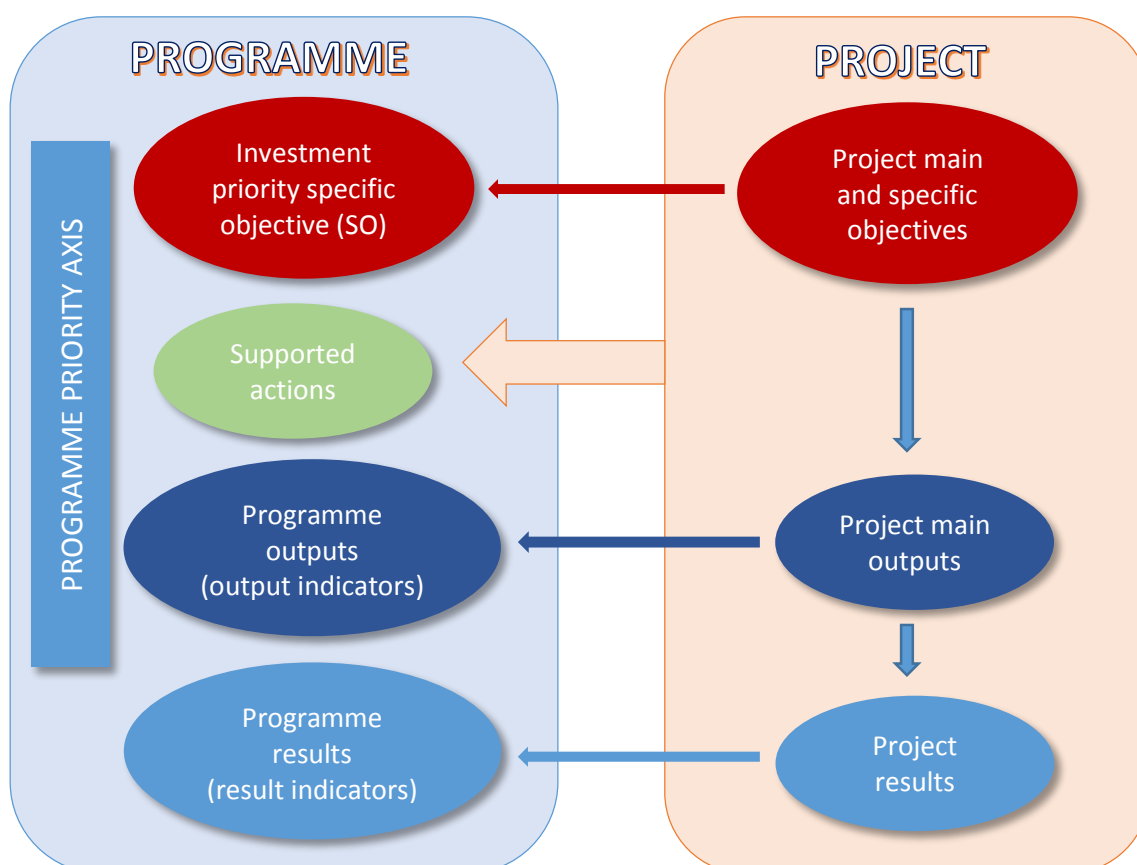
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specific objective and/or not contributing to the respective expected programme result will not be supported by the Interreg SI-AT programme.

**A clear result-oriented approach contributing to a specific objective of the Interreg V-A Slovenia-Austria is required by the projects.**

- ✓ Project objectives have to clearly target one single programme specific objective within the chosen priority axis.
- ✓ The contribution of the project to the respective programme result (and the related indicator) has to be clearly demonstrated.
- ✓ Project activities and outputs have to be logically linked to the targeted specific objective.

Figure 3: Links between the programme and project intervention logic



### 3.2 Territorial relevance

Territorial relevance is one of the key quality requirements for a project to be funded. The cross-border relevance needs to be clearly demonstrated throughout the entire project, meaning that the problems identified cannot be solved efficiently by individual Member States:

- ✓ solutions are jointly developed by organizations in different counties/regions working together in a project, thereby showing a clear cross-border added value going beyond the mere results independently achievable in the involved countries/regions;
- ✓ project outputs should be embedded in a cross-border working approach;

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- ✓ projects have to demonstrate an integrated approach to regional development by combining thematic and territorial approach.

### 3.3 Partnership relevance

In order to achieve tangible project results it is essential to involve partners who are most relevant and competent for the development, implementation, communication as well as capitalization of the planned project outputs and results. In this respect, for designing a relevant partnership the thematic competence and expertise, geographical and institutional relevance have to be considered.

The partnership should reflect the integrated territorial approach to regional development to be set in place by the project. All partners have to be involved in a way that demonstrates the joint implementation and the cross-border added value of the project.

### 3.4 Sustainability

The sustainability of project outputs and results is crucial for ensuring territorial impact and long-term benefits which continue after the project end in order to reach the project's overall objectives.

Therefore, projects have to ensure that outputs obtained and results achieved are durable and suitable to be continued after project closure.

In order to achieve sustainability, projects need to adopt from the beginning a longer-term, strategic perspective that leads to desired results for the target groups over an extended time frame. In order to achieve such long-term benefits, it is essential to consider needs of key stakeholders as well as the institutional context already when planning the project. In particular, key stakeholders should be actively involved from the early stages of the project development.

A distinction between the following dimensions of sustainability should be made: financial sustainability (financing of follow-up activities and investments, resources for covering future operating and maintenance costs, etc.), institutional sustainability ("ownership" of project outputs - which structures will allow the results of the project to continue to be in place after the project end).

### 3.5 Horizontal principles

A horizontal principle is a principle that must be integrated throughout the programme and in all projects. Therefore, every project approved by the Interreg SI-AT programme is required to contribute to the following horizontal principles.

#### 3.5.1 Sustainable development

Sustainable development is integrated as horizontal principle in the Cooperation programme. Therefore, all projects supported by the programme will have to respect the relevant policies and rules. Applicants have to describe the contribution to sustainable development, explaining how the sustainability principle is anchored within the project design and planned activities.

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### 3.5.2 *Equal opportunities and non-discrimination*

Projects have to ensure that the activities implemented are in line with the principle of equal opportunities and do not generate discrimination of any kind (sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation).

Applicants have to describe the contribution to equal opportunities and non-discrimination, explaining how the equal opportunity principle is anchored within the project design and planned activities.

Besides actions of projects which explicitly address the reduction of disparities, all projects submitted under any priority axis are encouraged to incorporate measures for promoting equal opportunities and preventing any discrimination, for example by actively tackling concerns of demographic change and inequality. All projects will be encouraged to integrate measures, which actively seek to diminish the specific challenges identified in the programme area (e.g. better social inclusion of disadvantaged groups). Projects are also encouraged to integrate the principle of barrier-free accessibility at all levels.

### 3.5.3 *Equality between men and women*

Projects have to ensure that the activities implemented are in line with the principle of equality between men and women and do not generate discrimination of any kind.

Applicants have to describe the contribution to this principle, explaining how the equality principle is anchored in the project design and planned activities.

Projects submitted under any priority axis are encouraged to incorporate measures for integrating the gender perspective, for example by integrating equal participation of women and men and/or actively promoting gender mainstreaming.

In general, projects submitted under any priority axis are strongly encouraged to incorporate also activities for tackling environmental concerns and **reducing their environmental impact**, for example by:

- ✓ Contribution to reduced transport and mobility related air pollution (in particular for short travel distances)
- ✓ Contribution to the development of green infrastructures and technologies.
- ✓ Contribution to more employment opportunities, training and education possibilities as well as support services regarding environmental protection and sustainable development.
- ✓ Application of green public procurement in a methodological way.
- ✓ Considering online meetings instead of face-to-face meetings where possible
- ✓ Organising conferences and events in a sustainable way (e.g. by combining different meetings in one place, reducing printing and using recyclable materials, using video conference facilities, etc.)