



EX-POST EVALUATION OF THE OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME OF CROSS- BORDER COOPERATION SLOVENIA-AUSTRIA 2007-2013

Maribor-Pécs, November 2015

“EX-POST” EVALUATION OF THE OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME OF CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION SLOVENIA-AUSTRIA 2007–2013

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1 Introduction

This report presents the ex-post evaluation of the Operational Programme Slovenia-Austria for the period 2007–2013 (OP SI-AT 2007–2013). The evaluation was commissioned by the Republic of Slovenia, Government Office for Development and European Cohesion Policy, which operates as the Managing Authority/Joint Technical Secretariat for the Programme, and as such has primary responsibility for its preparation. Undertaking the ex-post evaluation is a regulatory requirement.

The ex-post evaluation of OP SI-AT is implemented in accordance with the provisions set out in the Operational Programme (Chapter 12 Information and publicity) and Communication Plan OP SI-AT 2007–2013. The ex-post evaluation is conducted on the basis of the provisions on evaluation and monitoring of programs that are listed in Articles 47 and 48 and 67 and Article 68 of Council Regulation (EC) No. No 1083/2006 of 11 July 2006 laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund and repealing Regulation (EC) No. 1260/1999.

The purpose of the evaluation is to evaluate the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and impact of the program OP SI- AT 2007–2013, considering the specification of the respective Terms of References.

The objectives of the evaluation are:

- Assess the effectiveness of the implementation of OP SI-AT 2007–2013. This includes an overview and an explanation of the socio-economic factors that affect the success of the program/projects as well as deviations from the strategic goals/indicators at the Programme level
- Review the effectiveness of the Programme/projects
- Assess the sustainability of achieved direct effects (and outcomes)
- Identify anticipated benefits of the Programme/project to the Programme area for the local population, as partners in projects for other target groups.

The evaluation report was prepared by Envirodual Ltd in cooperation with Logframe Ltd, the consultants were appointed in May 2015. Evaluation report was elaborated between May–Nov 2015 and updated with final programme data in 2016.

2 Methodology

An analysis of the Programme and project-level results and impacts (chapter 3) was based on the one hand on data provided by the Joint technical Secretariat (JTS), and on the other hand on the “*in-situ*” data acquired from questionnaires, filled in by the lead beneficiaries and real-world conversations with the lead beneficiaries.

Data provided by the JTS were data from the project Application Forms, project final reports, Annual Implementation Reports and summarized .xls data of the projects with contracted and realized funds.

To gain the complementary data to the data from the JTS as well as receiving primary qualitative information from the project holders, a detailed questionnaire has been prepared and sent to all the 89 lead beneficiaries in Slovenian and German languages, respectively. This action was taken place in July-August 2015. 88 out of 89 lead beneficiaries sent back the filled in questionnaires so a nearly comprehensive primary data analysis could be taken (English translation of sample of questionnaire see in Annex). Questions were raised to lead beneficiaries on their project cooperation, their achievements, their possible budgetary and timing deviations and also their opinion on application and reporting processes. Furthermore, with some of the lead beneficiaries, real-world conversations about the above mentioned issues were carried out.

For the evaluation of the Programme implementation and the relevance of the Programme results (Chapter 4), a socio-economic analysis was prepared, based on the secondary research. During this analysis the following requirements were pre-set:

- The context is presented, including all the sectors that are relevant to the Programme and avoiding unnecessary discussions on sectors that are unrelated to the Programme.
- The existing socio-economic background is presented with relevant statistics.
- The sectorial and regional characteristics of the programme area are presented in a light of the overall aims of the Operational Programme.
- To achieve this result the Eurostat Database (<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database>) was researched to find relevant regional statistics, preferably on NUTS III level, which corresponds with the description of the state-of-art analysis of the Operational Programme.

Based on this, 24 different aspects were found suitable to demonstrate the socio-economic trends of the region (see Annex charts for more detail). The timeframe for gathering data was the 2007–2013 period, and the objective was to gather data for the for the lowest NUTS classification available.

Based on the available statistics the socio-economic description was prepared, and in case of providing better arguments, percentage based indicators were calculated based on the

division of official statistical numbers. The analysis was compared to the regional/local requirements of the Operational Programme.

The conclusions on project contributions to socio-economic trends was prepared conducting a primary research among the lead projects beneficiaries. The socio-economic analysis were concluded and summarized in the seven socio-economic trends (Moving, Ageing, Restructuring sectors, Restructuring employment, Increased education, Tourist services, ICT) and lead beneficiaries were questioned about their opinion to which socio-economic trend they think their project was contributing.

Based on the answers of the questionnaires of the lead beneficiaries, a quantitative analysis was made on both, the number of projects/project partners, and funds allocated to the different socio-economic trends during the implementation of the Operational Programme. Furthermore, the extent of a contribution, based on the remarks of the lead beneficiaries on how their project contribute to a socio-economic trend of a region, was quantified and summarized. These remarks were grouped according to the socio-economic topics, in order to present the project participants opinion on how the implemented projects contributed to the overall socio-economic challenges of the cross-border region.

In the Chapters 5 and 6 external coherence and internal performance of the Programme were analysed based on EU regulations, data provided by JTS and also based on processing data of filled in questionnaires with qualitative evaluation of the programme implementation by the lead beneficiaries. For evaluating the communication activities, findings of a survey, which was carried out in the year 2013, evaluating the achievements of the goals of Communication Plan, and Annual Implementation Reports were also taken into consideration.

3 Analysis of programme results and impacts

3.1 Dynamic analysis of programme implementation

Based on the social and economic analysis of the programme area, the Operational Programme has identified the following priorities and their specific contents:

Priority 1: COMPETITIVENESS, KNOWLEDGE AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION

- SME development
- Tourism
- Framework for knowledge-based economy
- Thematic fields of strengths

Priority 2: SUSTAINABLE AND BALANCED DEVELOPMENT

- Management of natural resources
- Environment and energy
- Urban and regional development
- Social and cultural development

Priority 3: TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Projects have been selected upon two open calls for proposals (each having two submission deadlines) and a public call for project ideas for the remaining and returning funds.

In the first open call (September 2008), altogether 27 projects were approved: 20 entering at the first deadline, 7 at the second submission. While at the first deadline projects were mixed in terms of priority, from projects submitted at the second deadline only Priority 1 projects were selected for co-funding.

In the second open call (January 2010), the number of selected projects rose to 42 (21 at the first, 21 at the second deadline), in mixed priority breakdown.

The public call for project ideas (that was carried out in a two-step approach, first step done in April 2012) altogether delivered 18 projects, while another two strategic projects ('Crossborder Active 2020' and 'Inno CBC') have been co-funded from the remaining funds.

The projects' duration had to be specified within the 36 months timeframe, however, for the public call of project proposals, a final implementation deadline was set to March 2015, thus projects could last shorter time.

	Date	Projects received	Projects selected	Deadline 1	Deadline 2	Priority 1	Priority 2
1 st call	9/2008	70	27	20	7	15	12
2 nd call	1/2010	95	42	21	21	20	22
3 rd call	4/2012	25	18	n.a.	n.a.	9	9
Strategic projects	2014	2	2	n.a.	n.a.	1	1
Total		192	89			45	44

Table 1: Number of projects received and selected for support

Source: JTS.

On the basis of the projects' start and end dates, the projects' running times can be pictured as shown on Figure 1.

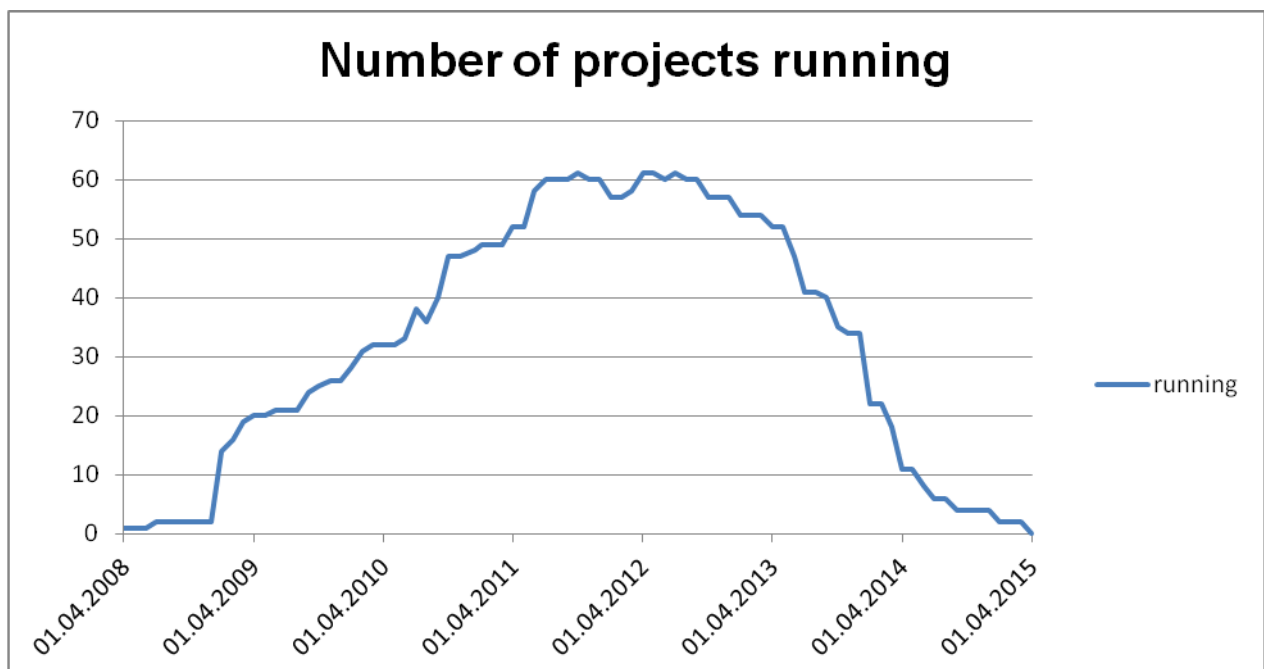


Figure 1: Number of parallel running projects during the programme duration.

Source: Own compilation upon JTS data.

This graph shows a balanced and timely performance of project and programme implementation, having a peak of 61 simultaneously running project in October 2011.

This smooth performance shows a careful fund management approach from the programme management side, and was funded on well prepared projects from the beneficiaries' side.

As dynamics of project closure took off from May 2013 on, selection of further new projects could have improved the compliance with indicator targets set in the programme.

3.2 Programme level results and achievements

3.2.1 Achievement of indicators

The overall aims of the Programme are defined in accordance with the relevant priorities set out in the ERDF Regulation (Art. 6 of Regulation (EC) 1080/2006), putting a strong emphasis on competitiveness, cooperation and sustainability. ETC-specific formulation is represented by use of key works such as in “international”, “cooperation”, “joint” and “common”.

The overall aims of the Programme are to contribute efficiently:

- to extensively fostering the international competitiveness and visibility as well as the quality of the cooperation;
- by joint development, sustainable and innovative use of the common potential and opportunities in the regions.

The Programme indicators are set in order to measure the achievements of the programme. Indicators are defined on the three levels:

- Degree of cooperation: out of the four cooperation criteria provided (joint development, joint implementation, joint staffing, joint financing) each project has to fulfil at least two criteria, while more quality projects aim at a higher degree of cooperation, fulfilling three or even four of the criteria.
- Areas of cross-border cooperation: these indicators are defined upon the number of projects successfully implemented under specific selected key areas of cooperation (infrastructure, public services, ICT, environment, education, SME development, bilingualism). As each approved project fits into one or more of these categories, the quantification threshold set with the number of projects is already reached once the respective project is successfully implemented, detailed outputs and results of each project are not reflected.
- Priority-level thematic indicators: each activity field within the two priorities has a set of indicators reflecting the nature of the activity field: here again indicators are defined as “number of projects...”, therefore, the project level indicators are already reached once the project is successfully implemented – this is analysed in the next sub-chapter.

This simple and cooperation-focused approach makes the evaluation relatively easy on the level of indicators, on the other hand in-depth analysis of project results and sustainability is more difficult. Even if it was allowed for beneficiaries to define project specific output and result indicators relevant to their project, due to their heterogeneity, the indicator-based

analysis of the evaluation was accompanied with more complex, qualitative methods (questionnaires, interviews).

The indicator system of the programme can be considered as satisfactory in terms of assessing outputs. Relevance of the output indicators can be regarded as sufficient. On the other hand, the lack of real baseline values could be noted (despite the history of co-operation in previous programme periods, all baselines were set as 0).

The system of indicators/targets has not been focused on effects of the programme on the target groups (e.g. stakeholders, local population), neither on benefits gained through cross border co-operation in terms of the 2 selected priorities. Indicators defined by the programme are rather weak in terms measuring results and impacts of the programme.

Indicators on cooperation were more focusing on the volume of the cooperation rather than on its quality.

Definition of indicator codes for the degree of cooperation:

- **Joint development:** All partners should contribute to the development of the project + Partners define how the project will operate. Joint development of objectives and outcomes, budget, timing, responsibilities and division of tasks to achieve the objectives. + Identifying knowledge and experience that each partner brings to the project and what each partner expects to get from the project.
- **Joint implementation:** The Lead Partner bears the responsibility for the overall project implementation + All partners take responsibilities for different parts of the implementation + Each project partner is responsible for the tasks foreseen for achievement of the objectives, and has to ensure that needed activities are carried out, milestones are met and unexpected challenges to implementation are dealt with.
- **Joint financing:** The project has a joint budget with funding allocated to partners according to the activities they are carrying out + The budget includes annual spending targets.
- **Joint staffing:** Joint staffing is achieved when, after the end of the project, there is one common institution with staff from both countries (long term vision).

Comparing the target and realized indicator values (see Table 2), most of the projects realized indicator 43, followed by indicator 42 and indicator 44.

Code	Indicator	Target	Realized
42	Number of projects respecting two of the following criteria: joint development, joint implementation, joint staffing, joint financing	40	9
43	Number of projects respecting three of the following criteria: joint development, joint implementation, joint staffing, joint financing	130	77
44	Number of projects respecting four of the following criteria: joint development, joint implementation, joint staffing, joint financing	4	6

Table 2: Achievement of indicators of cooperation.

Source: Own compilation upon JTS data.

It is important to point out that 6 projects have claimed in their final reports that they have fulfilled all the four criteria (indicator code 44). A closer look into the final reports reveal that they have fulfilled only three criteria, not including a joint financing (based on the definition as it was written in the OP 2007-2013).

When comparing the indicators by projects (see Figure 2), most projects belong or achieved indicator with a code 43 (84 %), followed by indicator 42 (10 %) and indicator 44 (6%). When we take a closer look to the definition of indicators 42, 43, and 44, it can be perceived that indicator 43, by definition, includes indicator 42 while indicator 44 by definition includes indicators 42 and 43. This kind of interpretation gives the result that the target value (40) of indicator 42 was not only achieved, but also exceeded for more than two times.

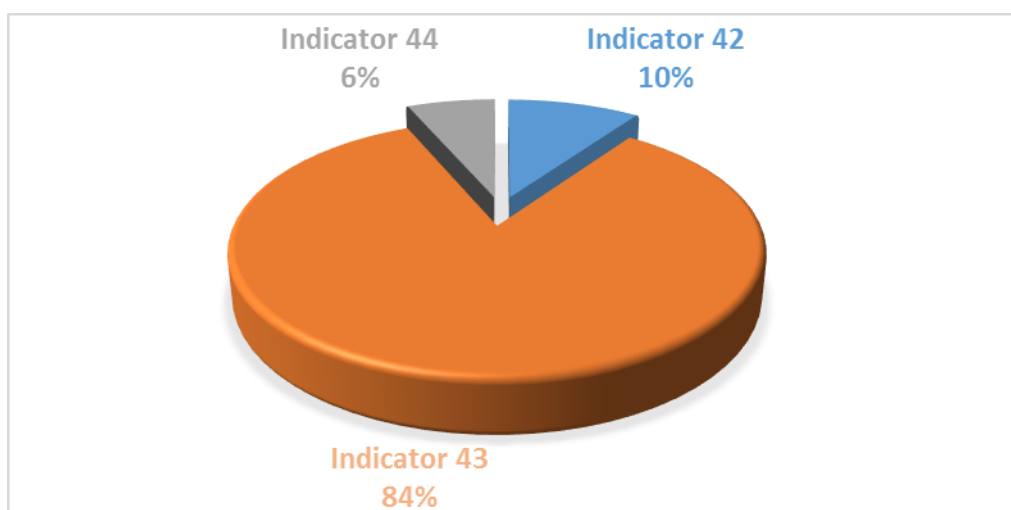


Figure 2: Distribution of projects by the indicators of the cooperation.

Source: Own compilation upon JTS data.

The target for indicator 43 was not achieved: even with the above-mentioned inclusive interpretation, only 66% of target value of indicator 43 has been met. This is due to the fact that at the beginning of the programme period, implementation of a Small Project Fund (SPF) was foreseen, therefore, the target value for indicator 43 was set high (projects with degree of cooperation with joint development, implementation and financing). During the implementation of the programme, several discussions were carried out on how to fully implement SPF and simultaneously not increase additional administration costs and burdens, and as a result, an SPF was not set up.

Considering the indicators reflecting areas of the cross border cooperation, almost all of them have been exceeded and most of them have been over performed – the only exception is the number of SME projects (see Table 3).

Code	Indicator	Target	Realized
46	Developing joint use of infrastructure	5	36
47	Developing collaboration in the field of public services	10	41
48	Reducing isolation through improved access to transport, ICT networks and services	8	28
49	Encouraging and improving the joint protection and management of the environment	15	35
50	Number of people participating in joint education or training activities	300	21998
	from which female	at least 50 %	9453 (43 %)
61	Projects involving SMEs	70	47
62	Number of projects with bilingual products	50	75

Table 3: Indicators reflecting areas of cross border cooperation.

Source: own compilation upon JTS data.

Indicators concerning areas of the cross-border cooperation have been achieved as follows:

- Indicator of developing joint use of infrastructure has been exceeded for more than seven times. There were 36 projects claiming that they have developed a joint use of infrastructure e.g. project Euroregion–healthy region a mobile consultancy has been set up assisting a healthier lifestyle and possibilities to improve health or project Together with more than 6.500 m² designed area for better urban living, actually merging and positively effecting both sides of the border.
- Indicator of developing collaboration in the field of public services has been exceeded for more than four times. There were 41 projects claiming in their final reports that they have made a contribution in this field, such as the project City Impulses, where

32 Austrian and Slovenian cities have used the project activities and results for cross-border knowledge building. In the project Vino Cool tourist signs have been placed on the vine roads.

- Indicator of reducing isolation through improved access to transport, ICT networks and services has also been exceeded compared to the Programme target value. 28 projects belong to this e.g. project MINDOC digitalized more than 200,000 pages from newspapers and other publications, presenting an added value for the access to the information. The project PROMT ICT developed an online tool for assessment of processes in SMEs and their matchmaking.
- The indicator of encouraging and improving the joint protection and management of the environment has also been overreached. 35 projects have achieved this indicator, such as project ALPA managing and revitalizing alpine pastures or Karafish project exploring trout, its genetic diversity and natural spatial peculiarity.
- Indicator of people participating in joint education or training activities has been heavily exceeded. Within all the 89 projects 21 998 individuals participated in various forms of education, e.g. vocational education and trainings, certified programs, workshops, conferences etc. This huge difference between target and realized value also indicates improper indicator setting at the programming phase.
- The “female involvement” indicator has slightly been underperformed as share of women of participating people was 43%, instead of 50% set as a target value, however this can be regarded as insignificant deviation.
- Indicator of SME involvement shows substantial deviation. The target value was 70, but only 47 has been realised. Similarly to indicator 43 this is a consequence of the unimplemented SPF.
- Most of the projects, 75 out of 89, produced bilingual products, which is way above the indicator target value.

The programme partners have taken a decision that SPF will not be implemented. This has resulted in lower number of approved projects as planned and has negatively influenced the achievement of some programme indicator targets as they were set at the beginning of the Programme.

Considering the fact that SPF was not implemented, it can be concluded that realized values of indicators on cross-border cooperation were generally successfully met or exceeded, and thereby positively influenced the achievement of objectives on the programme level.

3.2.2 Thematic extent of projects

The Operational Programme consisted of two main thematic priorities:

- Priority 1: Competitiveness, knowledge and economic cooperation

- Priority 2: Sustainable and balanced development

The priorities have not been broken down into the areas of intervention, however four “activity fields” have been defined under each priority.

Priority 1 focused on the following activity fields:

- SME development: SME cooperation, business support services, business parks, cluster development
- Tourism: tourism package development, development of specific thematic segments of tourism (like thermal spas, wine, cultural and eco-tourism)
- Framework for knowledge-based economy: fostering innovation, sustainable technologies, development of new products and services
- Thematic fields of strength: competitiveness of industrial clusters and the primary sector (agriculture, wood and renewable energy).

Priority 2 has been more focused, supporting the following activity fields:

- Management of natural resources: preservation of natural resources and the biodiversity of the programme area
- Environment and energy: safeguarding the environment against natural hazards, diminishing environmental pollution and increasing the use of renewable energy sources
- Urban and regional development: development of cross-border cooperation structures, support of communication infrastructure of a cross-border context, improving the socioeconomic linkages between urban and rural areas, actions in the field of public transport and spatial planning
- Social and cultural development: cross-border cooperation of cultural institutions, in the field of cultural heritage, development of the new cultural products/offer, cross-border cooperation of creative industries

Out of the 89 projects nearly equal share was granted through the two thematic priorities (45 projects under Priority 1 and 44 projects under Priority 2).

In terms of total funds committed Priority 2 has bigger share than Priority 1: 45,58% of the total funds were allocated for Priority 1 and 54,42% for Priority 2 projects (see Figure 3). This may imply that Priority 2 projects included more heavy investments, while in Priority 1 soft operations prevailed.

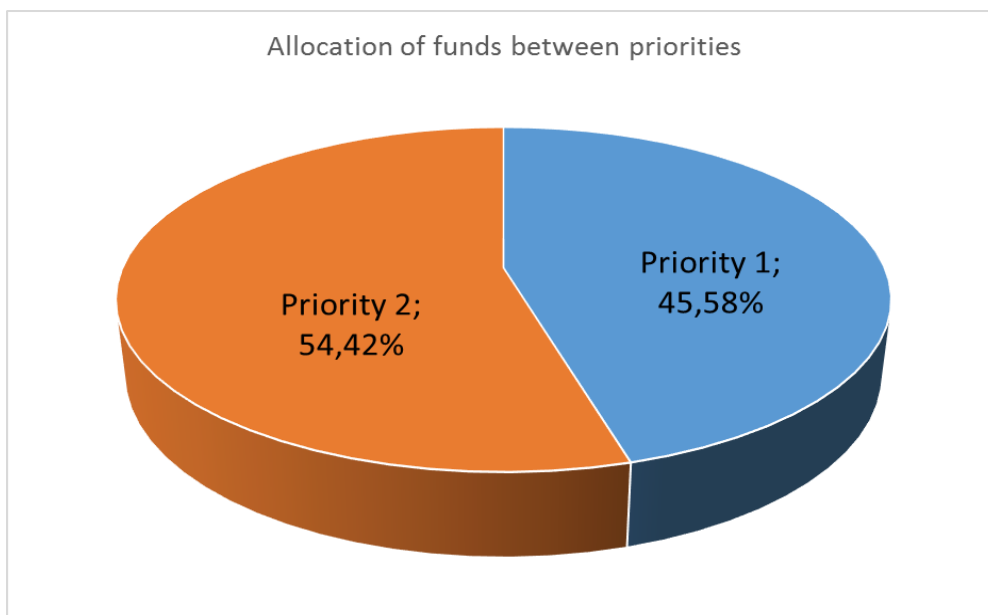


Figure 3: Allocation of funds between priorities (committed ERDF)

Source: own compilation upon JTS data.

Analysis of funds absorption by activity fields was based upon the data of the questionnaires where the lead beneficiaries were asked to link their projects to one of the activity fields their project mostly matches to – so only one activity field could have been chosen. This way thematic absorption of funds could be analysed numerically (see Table 4).

Priority	Activity field	Total committed ERDF (EUR)	Share %
1	1.1. SME development	9 796 699,29	14,47%
1	1.2. Tourism	10 293 304,66	15,20%
1	1.3. Knowledge-based economy	7 017 288,21	10,36%
1	1.4. Thematic fields of strength	3 479 905,29	5,14%
2	2.1. Management of natural resources	7 077 112,14	10,45%
2	2.2. Environment and energy	10 113 937,11	14,93%
2	2.3. Urban and regional development	8 008 111,61	11,82%
2	2.4. Social and cultural development	11 936 674,51	17,63%
Total		67 723 032,82	100,00%

Table 4: Commitment of funds by priorities and activity fields.

Source: own compilation upon analysis of questionnaires and JTS data.

Under Priority 1, SME development and tourism had the key role, two-third of the total Priority 1 committed funds were allocated to these fields of activities.

Under Priority 2, social and cultural development and environment and energy topics have achieved the biggest allocation (nearly 60% of total Priority 2 committed funds were allocated to these fields of activities).

Absorption of funds and absorption ratio could also be analysed thematically (see Table 5).

Priority	Activity field	Total committed ERDF (EUR)	Total realized ERDF (EUR)	Absorption ratio (%)
1	1.1. SME development	9 796 699,29	8 785 075,78	89,67%
1	1.2. Tourism	10 293 304,66	9 513 045,21	92,42%
1	1.3. Knowledge-based eco.	7 017 288,21	6 090 563,82	86,79%
1	1.4. Thematic fields of strength	3 479 905,29	2 994 915,59	86,06%
2	2.1. Management of natural resources	7 077 112,14	6 174 143,79	87,24%
2	2.2. Environment and energy	10 113 937,11	8 649 250,34	85,52%
2	2.3. Urban and regional development	8 008 111,61	6 841 024,86	85,43%
2	2.4. Social and cultural development	11 936 674,51	10 274 102,39	86,07%
Total		67 723 032,82	59 322 121,78	87,60%

Table 5: Absorption ratio by priorities and activity fields.

Source: own compilation upon analysis of questionnaires and JTS data.

Total absorption ratio for the total of 89 projects granted is 87,6%. Projects granted under Priority 1 show better absorption ratio (89,23%) - especially SME development and tourism, being the best performing activity fields in the entire programme. This may be caused by the good absorption of SMEs, especially those from Austria (that aspect will analysed later on).

No significant difference could be detected in the absorption of activities under Priority 2, being generally below the overall average absorption ratio (86,23% against 87,6%). This again shows that most problematic themes concerning absorption are those public developments which are usually coordinated by the public sector, including larger infrastructure projects.

Target values of priority-level thematic indicators set in the OP could be analysed based on two data types (see Tables 6, 7, 8):

- **Number of corresponding projects:** these values are derived from project application forms and project final reports where the beneficiaries could indicate one or more corresponding activity fields under each of the priorities.
- **Number of matching projects:** these data are taken from the questionnaires where the lead beneficiaries were asked to link their projects to one of the activity fields their project mostly matches to – so only one activity field could have been chosen. Values of indicator codes 63 and 69 are equal to the total number of granted projects under the Priorities 1 and 2.

Priority 1: Competitiveness, Knowledge and Economic Cooperation			
<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Target</i>	<i>Number of corresponding projects</i>	<i>Number of matching projects</i>
63 Improved competitiveness and internationalisation of industrial sector and SMEs	60	35	45
SME development			
64 Number of projects under SME development	22	33	18
Tourism			
65 Number of investment projects in the tourism sector (e.g. information systems)	10	10	7
66 Number of soft-aid measures in tourism development	21	10	10
Framework for knowledge-based economy			
67 Number of RTD – projects	20	18	11
Thematic fields of strengths			
68 Number of projects	13	21	4

Table 6: Priority-level indicators of Priority 1.

Source: own compilation upon data from project application forms, project final reports and analysis of questionnaires.

Priority 2: Sustainable and Balanced Development			
<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Target</i>	<i>Number of corresponding projects</i>	<i>Number of matching projects*</i>
69 Strengthening cooperation on regional and national level, in particular in aspects of sustainability	50	35	44
Management of natural resources			
70 Number of projects	17	13	8
Environment and energy			
71 Number of environmental projects	10	13	4
72 Number of energy projects	12	7	2
73 Number of risk prevention projects	5	4	2
Urban and regional development			
74 Number of projects in urban and regional development	20	17	5
75 Number of public transport projects	4	0	0
Social and cultural development			
76 Number of cultural cooperation projects	13	20	13
77 Number of cooperation projects in the area of health	3	9	7

Table 7: Priority-level indicators of Priority 2.

Source: own compilation upon data from project application forms, project final reports and analysis of questionnaires.

Priority 3: Technical assistance			
<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Target</i>	<i>Number of corresponding projects</i>	<i>Number of matching projects*</i>
78 Number of projects (pilot actions, concepts, studies, evaluations)	4	4	n.a.

Table 8: Priority-level indicators of Priority 3.

Source: own compilation upon JTS data.

Concerning the number of corresponding projects, the achievements in terms of activity field indicators are more or less in line with target values. Under the Priority 1, SME development projects in general have been implemented in a sufficient number. A contradictory indicator target setting could be observed in the OP concerning SME related indicators: indicator value of SME involvement concerning areas of cross-border cooperation (see indicator code 61 in

Table 3) is significantly higher (target value: 70) than value of activity field indicator: number of projects under SME development (target value: 22). In terms of tourism projects, targeting soft-aid measures in tourism development have been implemented less than a half as planned. Under indicator “thematic fields of strengths” the planned number of projects has been over exceeded, probably due to the overlapping with SME development indicator (most of project beneficiaries indicated both of these indicators). Under Priority 2, several activity field indicators were underperformed (management of nature resources, energy, urban and regional development and public transport projects). On the other hand, interest was quite high for cultural cooperation activities and a health related cooperation, where the target values were exceeded.

If we analyse data obtained from questionnaires on matching projects, most of the values are under the target values. This is presumably because the fact that in the OP the activity field indicator setting was based on the assumption that project beneficiaries would link their projects to more than one activity fields. This again shows that priority-level thematic indicators have not been specified in a sound manner, definition of these types of indicators should be done with more precise definitions.

Concerning priority-level thematic indicators the most significant deviations can be observed at the following activity fields (in close correlation with the corresponding indicators):

- Priority 1: soft-aid measures in tourism development, framework for knowledge-based economy, thematic fields of strengths;
- Priority 2: management of nature resources, environment and energy, urban and regional development.

On the contrary, indicators of SME development and social and cultural development are in line with target values – clearly showing that these activity fields were the most popular ones.

As it was possible to define **project specific indicators**, many projects specified quantifiable outputs/results indicators. Some examples are seen in the next table (see Table 9). Besides typical cross-border project outputs, some special added-value has been created through different training programmes, pilot investments, established research and competence centres, info points, purchased vehicles, equipped laboratories, certification systems, business-research collaborations and a joint venture established.

Output and result indicators	
Priority / Activity field	Typical project level output indicators
1.1 SME development	<p>Outputs: publications, events, consultancy services, webpage, good practices, case studies, analyses, plans, educational materials, movies, pilot investments.</p> <p>Results: training programmes, people trained, SME and researchers' networks, collaboration, knowledge exchanges, policy recommendations, joint ventures established, supporting schemes, research centres established,</p>

Output and result indicators	
Priority / Activity field	Typical project level output indicators
	establishment of info points.
1.2 Tourism	Outputs: meetings, photos, publications, websites, events, festivals, contests, studies, market analyses, signposts, participation at fairs and promotion events, media appearances, study tours, movies, mobile tourist guides, train wagon purchased, Results: newly developed tourism products, tourist routes, recommendations for development, SMEs trained, info points set up.
1.3 Framework for knowledge based economy	Outputs: studies, analyses, investment preparatory documents, plans, websites, meetings, media appearances, events, experiments, site visits, Results: trainers trained, company contacts established, competences developed, students trained, innovation platforms, laboratories equipped, business collaborations, value chains, product developed.
1.4 Thematic fields of strengths	Outputs: documents, plans, marketing plans, media appearances, websites, train wagon purchased. Results: certification system developed, curricula for trainers, companies networked, models, products developed.
2.1 Management of natural resources	Outputs: studies, projects, models, events, maps, media appearances, methodology, databases, competitions, vehicle purchased, good practices collected, feasibility studies. Results: regional interpretation centres, courses and trainings, laboratories set up, monitoring stations set up, competence centre set up.
2.2 Environment and energy	Outputs: studies, strategies, study visits, maps, publications, workshops, databases, models, equipment purchased, intervention plans, gene bank system developed. Results: public buildings analysed from energy efficiency point of view, educational programmes developed and implemented.
2.3 Urban and regional development	Outputs: events, analyses, concepts, studies, good practices, pilot projects, virtual presentation tool, exhibitions, publications, databases. Results: info platform, activity centres, programmes.
2.4 Social and cultural development	Outputs: films, theatre plays, websites, newspapers, events, consultancy services, publications, analyses, exhibitions, pilot investments. Results: cross-border media exchanges, consultancy networks, archives.

Table 9: Most common output indicators by priorities and activity fields.

Source: own compilation upon JTS data.

3.2.3 Geographical distribution of projects

Geographical distribution of project partners

The activity of the two partner Members States in terms of lead partnership and project partnership is relatively balanced: Austrian organisations are more active in lead partnership (50 against 39), while in terms of total number of project partners Slovenia dominated (272 against 212).

In regional (NUTS 2) terms in Austria, Kärnten were the most active regions (104 PPs, including 27 LPs), while Steiermark – in spite of the higher population density and stronger economic performance – earned a bit less: 91 PPs, including 20 project LPs. Burgenland's role is marginal (15 PPs, 3 LPs), even if considering that one third of this performance is coming from the NUTS 3 unit Nordburgenland that is not part of the programme area. Important is to point out the role of Graz, as an adjacent area: 53 PPs and 13 LPs are coming from there, justifying the relevance of involvement of adjacent regions, especially if there are strong regional economic centres. In case of Kärnten the adjacent Oberkärnten did not have a similar significance, as two third of the partners and LPs are coming from the core area of Klagenfurt-Villach.

In Slovenia the geographical distribution of partnership activity is considerably more balanced. In the Eastern Slovenian NUTS 2 region Podravska (Maribor area) seems to be the driving force, accounting for nearly 30% of the total number of Slovenian partners. The near-border Gorenjska region and the capital region of Osrednjeslovenska – the two regions making up the Eastern Slovenian NUTS 2 region – (justifying again the key role of capital regions) provided 93 PPs.

In NUTS 3 terms (see Figures 4, 5, 6, more active regions are marked with darker colours) in Austria Klagenfurt-Villach was the most active region (78 PPs, including 21 LPs), while Graz – in spite of the higher population density and stronger economic performance – earned slightly less: 53 PPs, including 13 project LPs.

In Slovenia geographical distribution of partnerships is considerably more balanced. Podravska region (Maribor area) seems to be the driving force, accounting for nearly 30% of the total number of Slovenian partners (80 PPs and 13 LPs). The capital region of Osrednjeslovenska (justifying again the key role of capital regions) provided 47 PPs and 7 LPs.

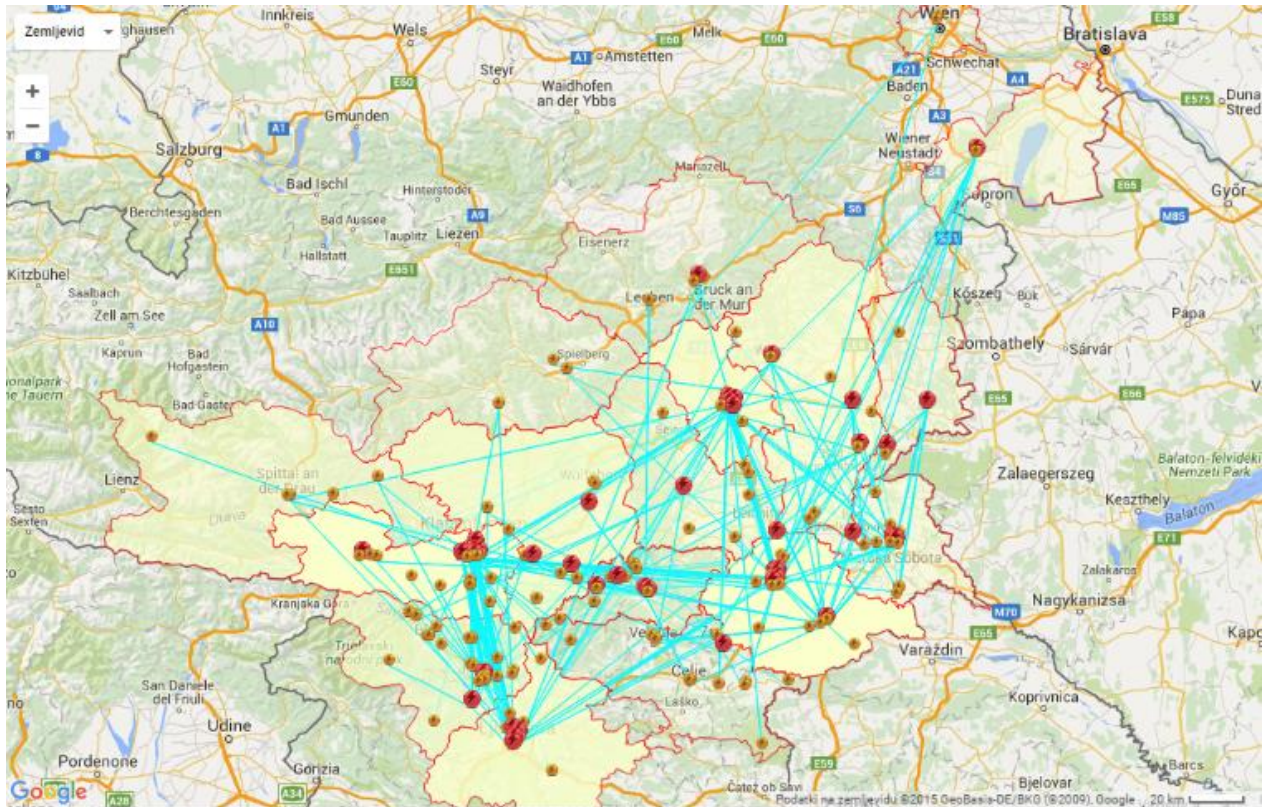


Figure 4: Geographical distribution of the project partner cooperation.

Source: own compilation upon JTS data.

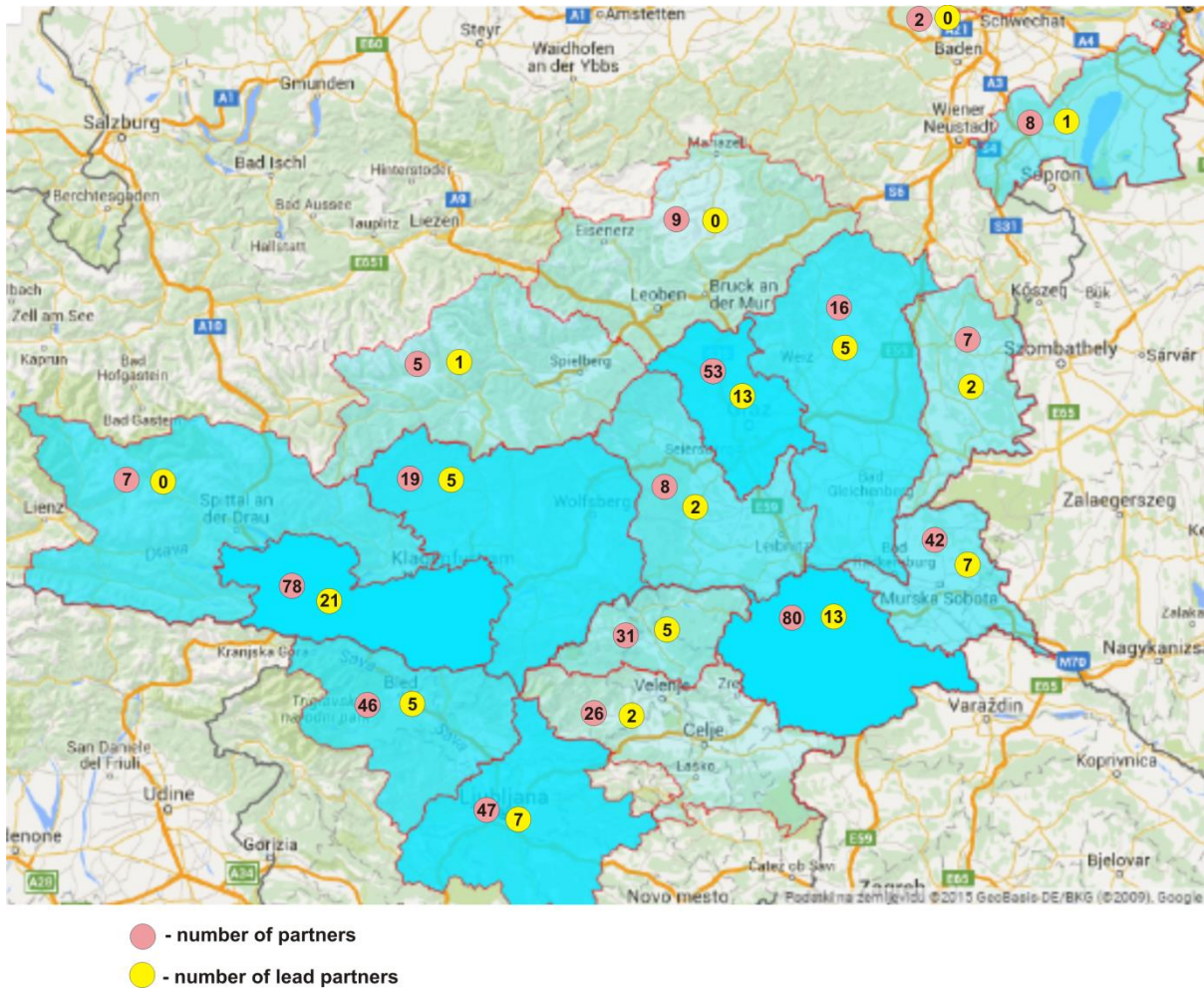


Figure 5: Geographical distribution of lead and project partners (map).

Source: own compilation upon JTS data.

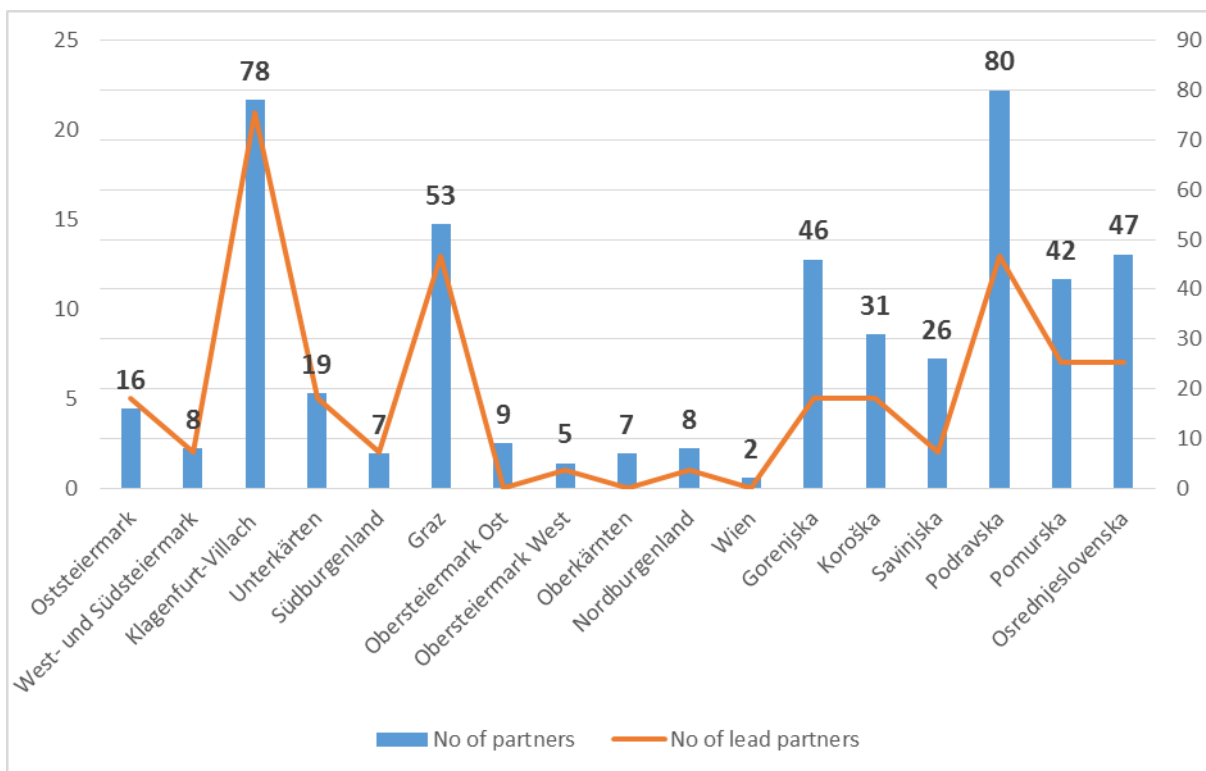


Figure 6: Geographical distribution of lead and project partners (chart).

Source: own compilation upon JTS data.

Taking a look at the most active cities and towns, important centres as Graz (50 PPs), Klagenfurt (56 PPs) are focal points of cooperation, in Slovenia Maribor has the leading position (56 PPs), followed by Ljubljana (46 PPs), Murska Sobota (26 PPs) and Kranj (18 PPs). Remarkably, Murska Sobota also performed well, considering also the fact that it is located in the most underdeveloped Pomurska region. On the other end we can see, the relative lower activity of regional centre Celje, with only 4 PPs, probably also due to its bigger distance from the border.

On the Austrian side, surprisingly the large non-capital cities have relatively underperformed (Villach 17 PPs, Leoben 4 PPs). In Slovenia, this structure is again more balanced: small towns as Kranj, Ptuj, Slovenj Gradec, Dravograd, Bled, Velenje, Ljutomer provided five or more PPs.

A relative inactivity can be observed in terms of PPs located in rural areas, especially in the vicinity of the border (see fig. 4 and 8).

Territorial allocation of funds

Contracted funding in terms of the geographical distribution is shown in Figure 7. Highest contracting amounts, above 15% were in Graz (AT – extended programme area), Klagenfurt-Villach (AT) and Podravška (SI). Further standout regions in Slovenia include Pomurska (8%), then Osrednjeslovenska and Gorenjska (7% each).

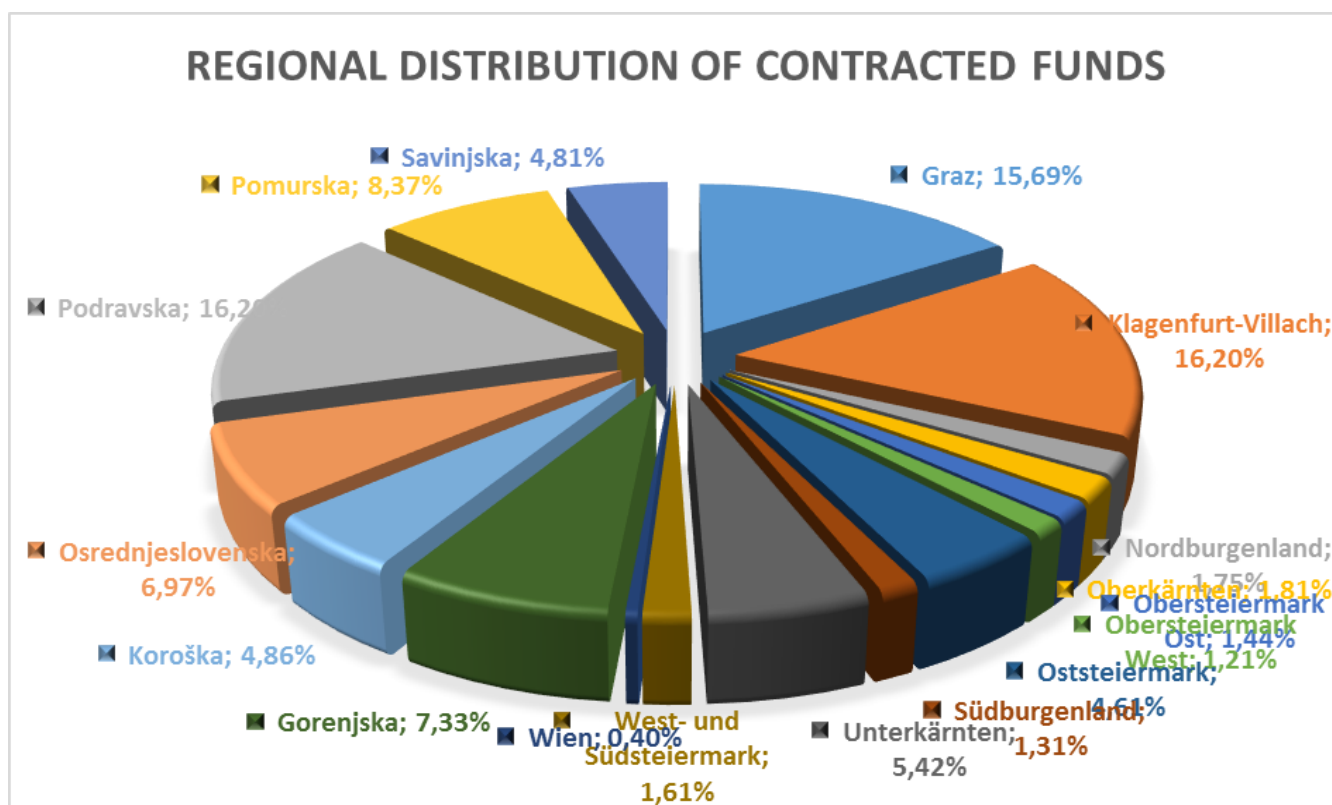


Figure 7: Regional distribution of contracted funds.

Source: own compilation upon JTS data.

The contracted funds have been also analysed by the priority and by the region (see Table 10). In Austria ERDF distribution between the priorities was in favour of Priority 1 in the following regions: Unterkärnten, Südburgenland and Obersteiermark Ost, while Priority 2 projects were dominating (regarding ERDF) in the following regions: Oststeiermark, West- und Südsteiermark, Klagenfurt-Villach, Graz, Obersteiermark West, Oberkränten, Nordburgenland and Wien. In Slovenia only Savinjska in Osrednjeslovenska regions were in favour of Priority 1, while all the other regions have drawn more funds from the Priority 2.

Country/Region	Priority 1 (in EUR)	Priority 2 (in EUR)	Total (in EUR)	Share (%)
AUSTRIA	16 178 440,91	18 664 785,17	34 843 226,08	51,45%
<i>AT- core programme area</i>	9 394 895,71	10 346 107,88	19 741 003,59	29,15%
Oststeiermark	898 096,90	2 225 010,96	3 123 107,86	4,61%
West- und Südsteiermark	491 697,64	599 250,00	1 090 947,64	1,61%
Klagenfurt-Villach	4 657 589,99	6 310 997,75	10 968 587,74	16,20%
Unterkärnten	2 699 256,75	972 670,67	3 671 927,42	5,42%
Südburgenland	648 254,43	238 178,50	886 432,93	1,31%
<i>AT-extended programme area</i>	6 198 065,56	7 448 465,01	13 646 530,57	20,15%
Graz	4 610 232,49	6 017 036,80	10 627 269,29	15,69%
Obersteiermark Ost	977 793,66	0,00	977 793,66	1,44%
Obersteiermark West	171 961,80	645 517,80	817 479,60	1,21%
Oberkärnten	438 077,61	785 910,41	1 223 988,02	1,81%
<i>AT - outside PA</i>	585 479,64	870 212,28	1 455 691,92	2,15%
Nordburgenland	585 479,64	596 538,16	1 182 017,80	1,75%
Wien	0,00	273 674,12	273 674,12	0,40%
SLOVENIA	14 686 519,23	18 193 287,51	32 879 806,74	48,55%
<i>SI - core programme area</i>	12 196 271,05	15 964 930,30	28 161 201,35	41,58%
Gorenjska	983 491,39	3 981 268,05	4 964 759,44	7,33%
Koroška	1 609 527,46	1 682 660,87	3 292 188,33	4,86%
Savinjska	2 349 441,04	910 143,38	3 259 584,42	4,81%
Podravska	5 109 533,83	5 864 372,70	10 973 906,53	16,20%
Pomurska	2 144 277,33	3 526 485,30	5 670 762,63	8,37%
<i>SI - extended programme area</i>	2 490 248,18	2 228 357,21	4 718 605,39	6,97%
Osrednjeslovenska	2 490 248,18	2 228 357,21	4 718 605,39	6,97%
TOTAL	30 864 960,14	36 858 072,68	67 723 032,82	100,00%
Technical Assistance (TA)			4 026 689,00	
TOTAL incl. TA			71 749 721,82	

Table 10: ERDF contracted according to NUTS 3 regions.

Source: own compilation upon JTS data.

In terms of realised (disbursed) funds, regional distribution shows a considerable concentration in regions having the highest share of the contracted funding (Klagenfurt-Villach and Graz from Austria and Podravska from Slovenia). Out of the three standout regions only Graz could gain a higher share in terms of the realised funding (16,13% against 15,69%), while Podravska and Klagenfurt-Villach have suffered some minimal loss during the project implementation.

The absorption rate is the most important indicator showing the best way of the regional activity (see Figure 8 and Table 11).

No significant difference in absorption rate is shown between the two countries evaluated (88,25% for Austria and 86,90% for Slovenia).

Very good above-95-percent absorption rates have been achieved by Oststeiermark (96,92%), Südburgenland (95,45%) and Obersteiermark West (97,52%). Especially the two latter figures demonstrate good quality project planning and/or high skills of project management. It has to be kept in mind that the two latter regions were relatively minor players, representing only 1,44% and 1,35%, of the total absorption, respectively. The weakest performance has been shown by two partners coming from the capital Vienna region (67,76%), caused by an exceptional underperformance of an NGO and an average fund use by a national non-profit body. Klagenfurt-Villach had a below-average absorption (83,38%), similarly the key player Podravska from Slovenia used less than 83% of the funds.

When calculating absorption figures, special attention has to be paid to regions located outside the programme area. In Nordburgenland 8 PPs were involved (out of those 5 was the regional non-profit body "Technologieoffensive Burgenland"), in Vienna (Wien) 2 PPs. Analysing the projects concerned, for projects of Nordburgenland a typical statistical effect has occurred: both partner bodies were registered in the regional capital of Eisenstadt, but project activities took place in fact in Südburgenland, therefore figures of Nordburgenland have been taken into the consideration as of Südburgenland. In case of the two projects with partners from Vienna, identification of the regional absorption is more complicated. In case of EXPAK AT.SI two partners from Klagenfurt-Villach and one from Graz was involved; while in case of Murman one partner from Graz, another one from Oststeiermark participated. In order to get an estimation, computing figures were used: absorption of the Vienna-based partners were proportionally added to the programmes area regions' figures. Correction of this data resulted a decrease in the performance of Südburgenland (to 88,89%), but no significant change was resulted by the Vienna-based bodies' performance added to the respective regions. (Table 12). Final absorption figures shown on Figures 8 and 9 were generated by these adjusted regional data.

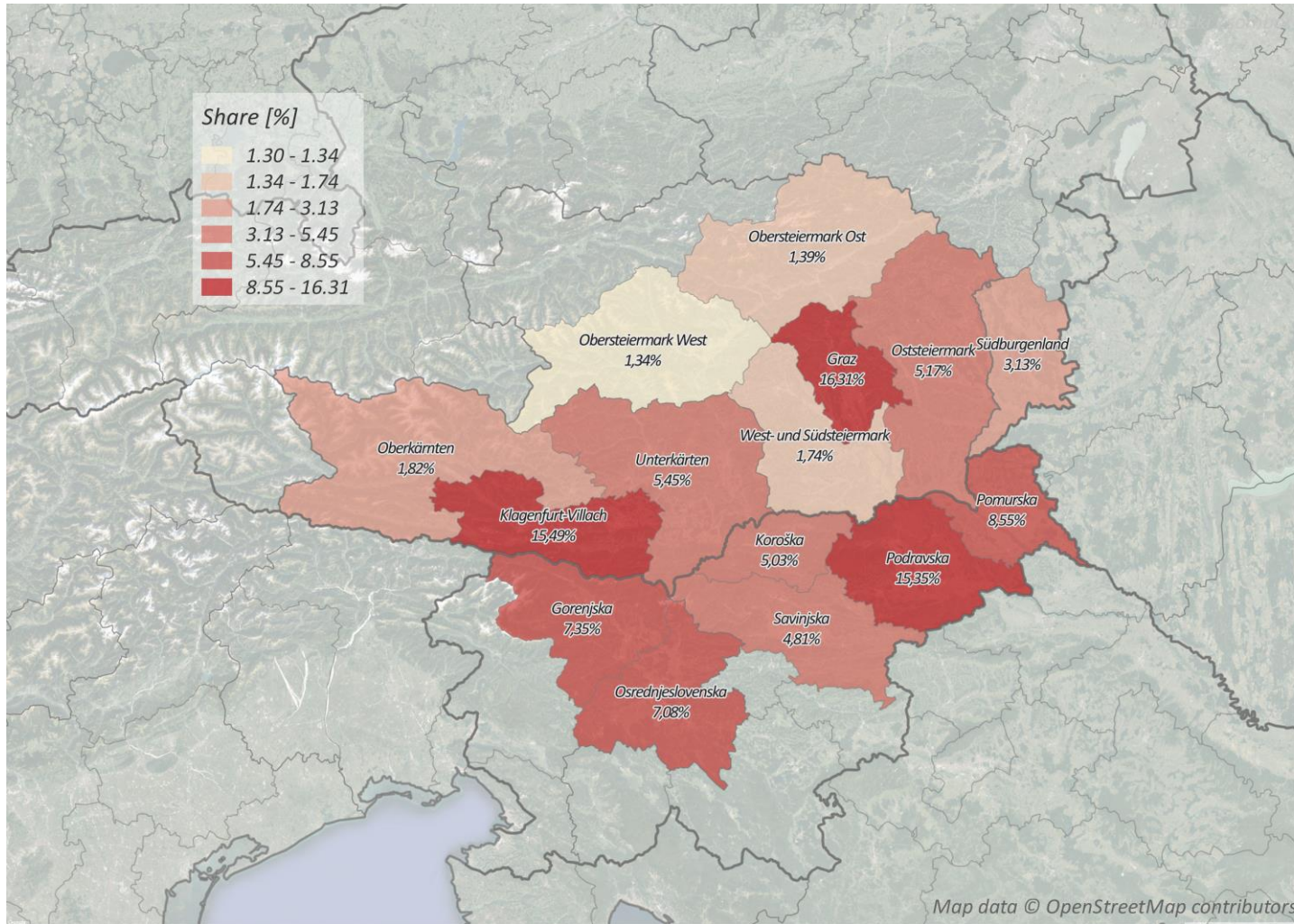


Figure 8: Regional absorption capacity.

Source: own compilation upon JTS data.

Country/Region	Number of PPs	Total ERDF committed (EUR)	Share (%)	Average ERDF committed per PP (EUR)	Total ERDF realised (EUR)	Share (%)	Average ERDF realised per PP (EUR)	Total deviation (EUR)	Average deviation per PP (EUR)	Absorption rate (%)
AUSTRIA	212	34 843 226,08	51,45%	164 354,84	30 750 109,19	51,84%	145 047,68	4 093 116,89	19 307,16	88,25%
<i>AT- core prg area</i>	128	19 741 003,59	29,15%	154 226,59	17 281 771,89	29,13%	135 013,84	2 459 231,70	19 212,75	87,54%
Oststeiermark	16	3 123 107,86	4,61%	195 194,24	3 027 015,43	5,10%	189 188,46	96 092,43	6 005,78	96,92%
West- und	8	1 090 947,64	1,61%	136 368,46	1 032 068,71	1,74%	129 008,59	58 878,93	7 359,87	94,60%
Klagenfurt-Villach	78	10 968 587,74	16,20%	140 622,92	9 145 458,67	15,42%	117 249,47	1 823 129,07	23 373,45	83,38%
Unterkärnten	19	3 671 927,42	5,42%	193 259,34	3 231 146,92	5,45%	170 060,36	440 780,50	23 198,97	88,00%
Südburgenland	7	886 432,93	1,31%	126 633,28	846 082,16	1,43%	120 868,88	40 350,77	5 764,40	95,45%
<i>AT- extended prg area</i>	74	13 646 530,57	20,15%	184 412,58	12 269 684,61	20,68%	165 806,55	1 376 845,96	18 606,03	89,91%
Graz	53	10 627 269,29	15,69%	200 514,51	9 570 979,69	16,13%	180 584,52	1 056 289,60	19 929,99	90,06%
Obersteiermark Ost	9	977 793,66	1,44%	108 643,74	821 734,36	1,39%	91 303,82	156 059,30	17 339,92	84,04%
Obersteiermark West	5	817 479,60	1,21%	163 495,92	797 195,65	1,34%	159 439,13	20 283,95	4 056,79	97,52%
Oberkärnten	7	1 223 988,02	1,81%	174 855,43	1 079 774,91	1,82%	154 253,56	144 213,11	20 601,87	88,22%
<i>AT - outside PA</i>	10	1 455 691,92	2,15%	145 569,19	1 198 652,69	2,02%	119 865,27	257 039,23	25 703,92	82,34%
Nordburgenland	8	1 182 017,80	1,75%	147 752,23	1 013 209,13	1,71%	126 651,14	168 808,67	21 101,08	85,72%
Wien	2	273 674,12	0,40%	136 837,06	185 443,56	0,31%	92 721,78	88 230,56	44 115,28	67,76%
SLOVENIA	272	32 879 806,74	48,55%	120 881,64	28 572 012,59	48,16%	105 044,16	4 307 794,15	15 837,48	86,90%
<i>SI - core prg area</i>	226	28 161 201,35	41,58%	124 607,09	24 374 833,46	41,09%	107 853,25	3 786 367,89	16 753,84	86,55%
Gorenjska	46	4 964 759,44	7,33%	107 929,55	4 359 278,20	7,35%	94 766,92	605 481,24	13 162,64	87,80%
Koroška	32	3 292 188,33	4,86%	102 880,89	2 984 170,71	5,03%	93 255,33	308 017,62	9 625,55	90,64%
Savinjska	26	3 259 584,42	4,81%	125 368,63	2 853 012,94	4,81%	109 731,27	406 571,48	15 637,36	87,53%
Podravska	80	10 973 906,53	16,20%	137 173,83	9 107 258,62	15,35%	113 840,73	1 866 647,91	23 333,10	82,99%
Pomurska	42	5 670 762,63	8,37%	135 018,16	5 071 112,99	8,55%	120 740,79	599 649,64	14 277,37	89,43%
<i>SI - extended prg area</i>	46	4 718 605,39	6,97%	102 578,38	4 197 179,13	7,08%	91 243,02	521 426,26	11 335,35	88,95%
Osrednjeslovenska	46	4 718 605,39	6,97%	102 578,38	4 197 179,13	7,08%	91 243,02	521 426,26	11 335,35	88,95%
TOTAL	484	67 723 032,82	100,00%	139 923,62	59 322 121,78	100,00%	122 566,37	8 400 911,04	17 357,25	87,60%

Table 11: ERDF committed, realised and absorption capacity by NUTS 3 regions.

Source: own compilation upon JTS data.

Country/Region	Number of PPs	Total ERDF committed (EUR)	Share (%)	Average ERDF committed per PP (EUR)	Total ERDF realised (EUR)	Share (%)	Average ERDF realised per PP (EUR)	Total deviation (EUR)	Average deviation per PP (EUR)	Absorption rate (%)
AUSTRIA	212	34 843 226,08	51,45%	164 354,84	30 750 109,19	51,84%	145 047,68	4 093 116,89	19 307,16	88,25%
<i>AT - core prg area</i>	128	21 057 166,65	31,09%	164 509,11	18 375 974,26	30,98%	143 562,30	2 681 192,39	20 946,82	87,27%
Oststeiermark	16	3 168 075,51	4,68%	198 004,72	3 065 844,21	5,17%	191 615,26	102 231,29	6 389,46	96,77%
West- und	8	1 090 947,64	1,61%	136 368,46	1 032 068,71	1,74%	129 008,59	58 878,93	7 359,87	94,60%
Klagenfurt-Villach	78	11 057 765,35	16,33%	141 766,22	9 187 623,13	15,49%	117 790,04	1 870 142,23	23 976,18	83,09%
Unterkärnten	19	3 671 927,42	5,42%	193 259,34	3 231 146,92	5,45%	170 060,36	440 780,50	23 198,97	88,00%
Südburgenland	7	2 068 450,73	3,05%	295 492,96	1 859 291,29	3,13%	265 613,04	209 159,44	29 879,92	89,89%
<i>AT - extended prg area</i>	74	13 786 059,43	20,36%	186 298,10	12 374 134,93	20,86%	167 218,04	1 411 924,50	19 080,06	89,76%
Graz	53	10 766 798,15	15,90%	203 147,13	9 675 430,01	16,31%	182 555,28	1 091 368,14	20 591,85	89,86%
Obersteiermark Ost	9	977 793,66	1,44%	108 643,74	821 734,36	1,39%	91 303,82	156 059,30	17 339,92	84,04%
Obersteiermark West	5	817 479,60	1,21%	163 495,92	797 195,65	1,34%	159 439,13	20 283,95	4 056,79	97,52%
Oberkärnten	7	1 223 988,02	1,81%	174 855,43	1 079 774,91	1,82%	154 253,56	144 213,11	20 601,87	88,22%
<i>AT - outside PA</i>	10	0,00	0,00%	0,00	0,00	0,00%	0,00	0,00	0,00	...
Nordburgenland	8	0,00	0,00%	0,00	0,00	0,00%	0,00	0,00	0,00	...
Wien	2	0,00	0,00%	0,00	0,00	0,00%	0,00	0,00	0,00	...
SLOVENIA	272	32 879 806,74	48,55%	120 881,64	28 572 012,59	48,16%	105 044,16	4 307 794,15	15 837,48	86,90%
<i>SI - core prg area</i>	226	28 161 201,35	41,58%	124 607,09	24 374 833,46	41,09%	107 853,25	3 786 367,89	16 753,84	86,55%
Gorenjska	46	4 964 759,44	7,33%	107 929,55	4 359 278,20	7,35%	94 766,92	605 481,24	13 162,64	87,80%
Koroška	32	3 292 188,33	4,86%	102 880,89	2 984 170,71	5,03%	93 255,33	308 017,62	9 625,55	90,64%
Savinjska	26	3 259 584,42	4,81%	125 368,63	2 853 012,94	4,81%	109 731,27	406 571,48	15 637,36	87,53%
Podravska	80	10 973 906,53	16,20%	137 173,83	9 107 258,62	15,35%	113 840,73	1 866 647,91	23 333,10	82,99%
Pomurska	42	5 670 762,63	8,37%	135 018,16	5 071 112,99	8,55%	120 740,79	599 649,64	14 277,37	89,43%
<i>SI - extended prg area</i>	46	4 718 605,39	6,97%	102 578,38	4 197 179,13	7,08%	91 243,02	521 426,26	11 335,35	88,95%
Osrednjeslovenska	46	4 718 605,39	6,97%	102 578,38	4 197 179,13	7,08%	91 243,02	521 426,26	11 335,35	88,95%
TOTAL	484	67 723 032,82	100,00%	139 923,62	59 322 121,78	100,00%	122 566,37	8 400 911,04	17 357,25	87,60%

Table 12: ERDF committed, realised and absorption capacity by NUTS 3 regions (with correction of the statistical effect of regions located outside the programme area).

Source: own compilation upon JTS data.

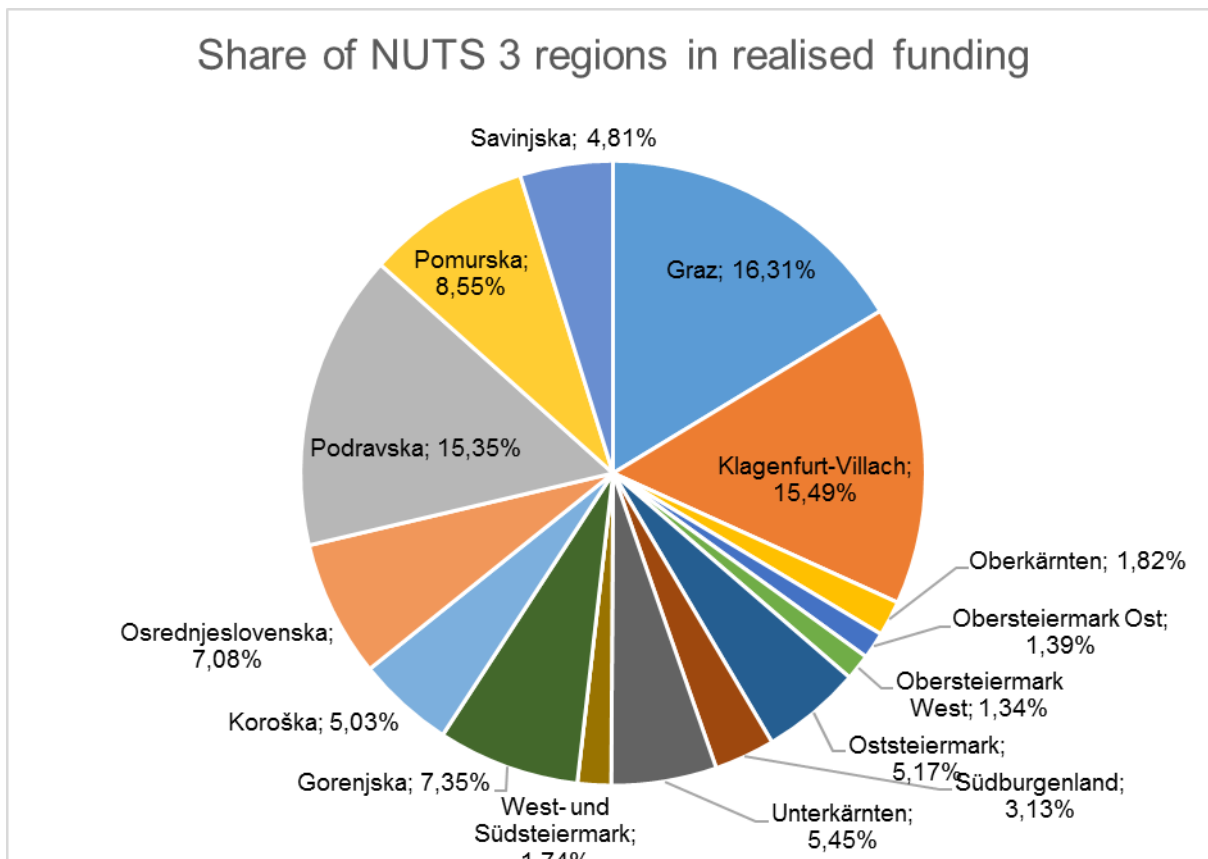


Figure 9: Share of NUTS 3 regions in realised funding.

Source: own compilation upon JTS data.

Besides the analysis of distribution of absorbed funding at the regional level, lead beneficiaries were asked in the evaluation questionnaire to indicate the level of geographical impact of results/outputs of their projects (see Figure 10).

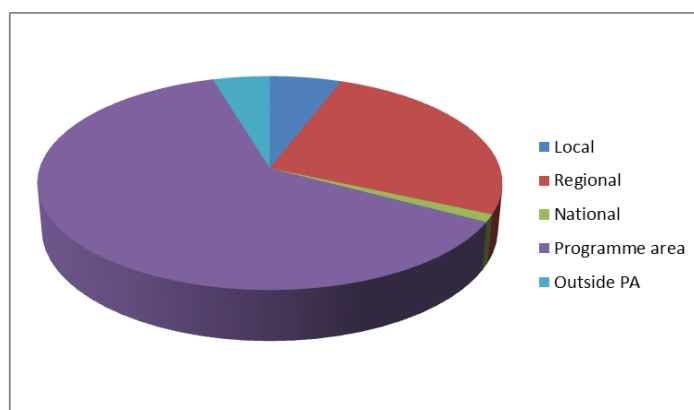


Figure 10: Geographical impact of projects.

Source: analysis of questionnaires.

It is clearly visible from Figure 10 that a vast majority (nearly two-third) of project holders consider their project to have impact on the level of the whole programme area. Apart from this, a quarter of projects were judged as having regional impact.

Comparing regarded impact of project results of Priority 1 and 2 projects (see Figure 11).

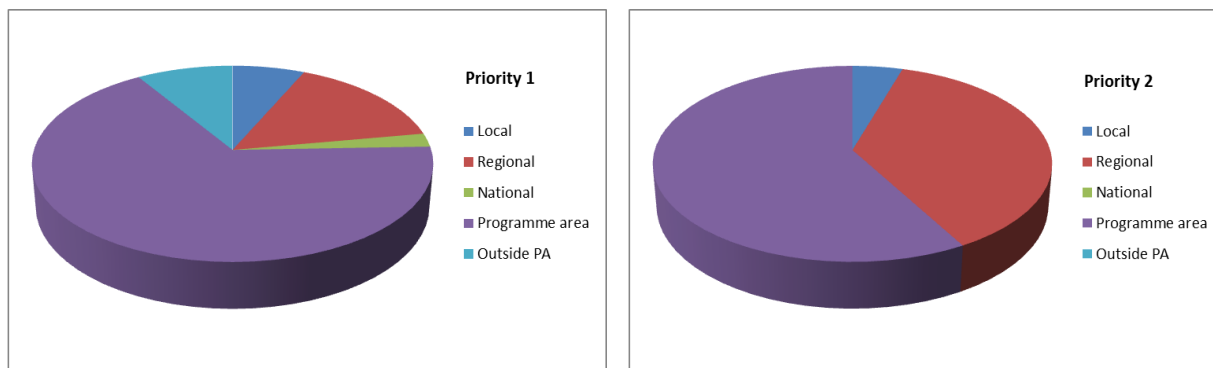


Figure 11: Geographical impact of projects by priorities.

Source: analysis of questionnaires.

Priority 1 projects were regarded as having broader, geographically more extended impacts than Priority 2 projects, the latter projects were considered to be much more regional ones. This means that projects with an economic development focus were less locally tied while non-profit, public and infrastructure-oriented developments were much more regionally based, having an impact on their closer surroundings.

3.2.4 Main characteristics of partnership structure of projects

Analysis of partnership structure

A good partnership is a prerequisite for good cross-border cooperation projects: each project had to have at least one partner from both countries involved in the programme.

Analysing the scope of partnerships: in the total of 89 projects, 484 partners were collaborating, 212 from Austria and 272 from Slovenia. 256 partner organisations participated in only one project, while 86 contributed to more projects. 9 partners out of 86 have participated in five or more projects, some partners have even led three projects. Most frequent partners are shown in Table 13.

The most active partners were two regional governments from Austria (Kärnten – 10 PPs, Steiermark – 6 PPs – both represented by different departments). They were followed by the BSC Business Support Centre from Kranj, E-Zavod from Ptuj, Maribor Development Agency (6 PPs each). Vocational School of Carinthia (including their Villach branch with one project) and the Slovenian Economy Chamber (including the 3 projects of regional branch GZS Koroško) had 5 projects. Similar activity was shown by Pomurje Technology Park and Technology Offensive Burgenland (5 PPs each).

As general finding, it can be stated that in Austria regional (NUTS 2) administrations were the most active players, while in Slovenia – due to lack of administrative regions – business support structures, dominantly operating on NUTS 3 level, played a key role.

A special attention has to be paid to the activity of universities in the border area. Since universities in Slovenia are registered by faculties, aggregating their activities at the university level, Maribor University would be the leading beneficiary: participating in 18 projects altogether (8 different faculties), Ljubljana university with 7 projects (5 different faculties). Austrian universities showed considerably lower activity in cross-border cooperation: Karl-Franzens-Universität Graz had 3 projects, while Technische Universität Graz participated in 4 projects. Klagenfurt University had four successful operation.

No.	Partner name/Country	No. of projects participating
1	Amt der Kärntner Landesregierung (AT)	10
2	Amt der Steiermärkischen Landesregierung (AT)	6
3	BSC Kranj (SI)	6
4	E-Zavod (SI)	6
5	Mariborska razvojna agencija (SI)	6
6	Fachhochschule Kärnten (AT)	5
6	Gospodarska zbornica Slovenije (including Območna zbornica Koroška – SI)	5
7	Pomurski tehnološki park (SI)	5
8	Technologieoffensive Burgenland (AT)	5

Table 13: The frequency of the partners participating in five or more projects.

Source: own compilation upon JTS data.

The average number of partners per projects is 5,43, however, it is important to point out that average is influenced by some extreme large partnerships: 40 projects have above-average number of partners (6 or more), while 10 projects had ten or even more organisations involved.

From the number of the partners' perspective the following regions prevailed: Klagenfurt-Villach and Graz in Austria and Podravska, followed by Osrednjeslovenska and Gorenjska in Slovenia (see Figure 12).

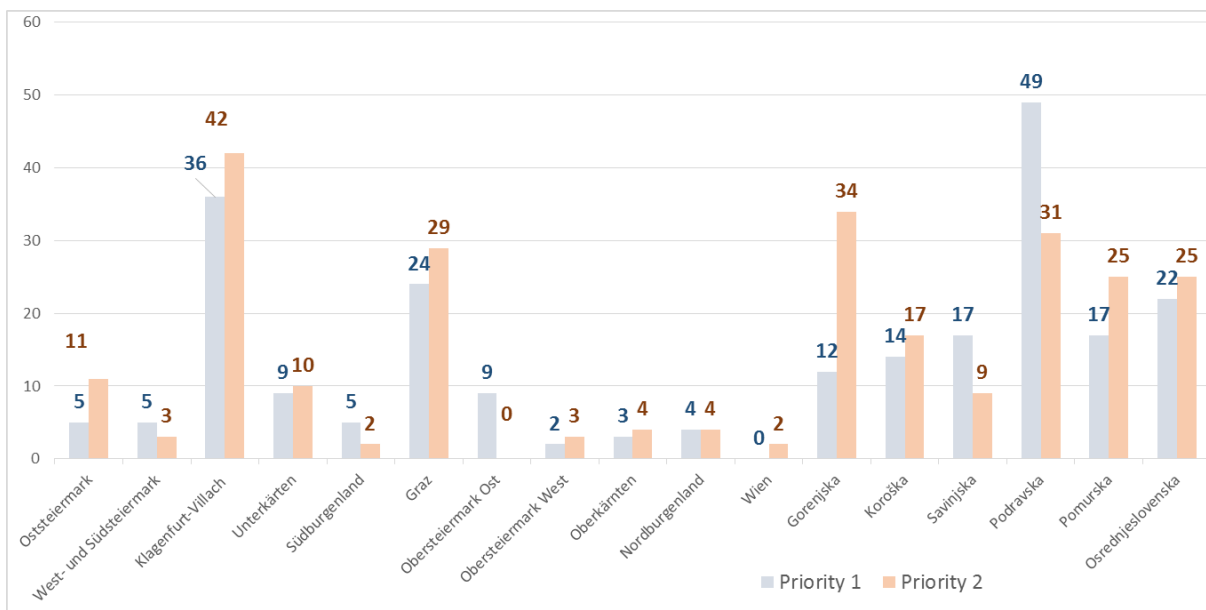


Figure 12: Number of project partners per region and per priority.

Source: own compilation upon JTS data.

The organisational setting is a key factor in activities of cross-border cooperation projects: local decision making capacities are essentially important for recognizing the opportunities in the project generation phase and they provide smooth basis for a successful project implementation.

During the evaluation process 11 categories have been defined for the types of partners, as following:

- (1) Non-governmental organization: an organization neither a part of a government nor a conventional profit business. According to the Slovenian law of NGOs, the NGO should fulfil the following conditions:
 - It was funded as an association, society, institution or other legal entity;
 - Its funders or shareholders are exclusively domestic or foreign natural persons or legal entities of private law;
 - Is a non-profit;
 - It is independent from state bodies, political parties or commercial entities;
 - It is not organized as a political party, religious community, trade union or professional association.
- (2) Non-profit company (local): non-profit companies with activities on the local level.
- (3) Non-profit company (regional): non-profit companies with activities on the regional level.

- (4) Non-profit company (national): non-profit companies with activities on the national level.
- (5) Other education and training institutions: this group all the primary, secondary, upper-secondary and vocational-education and training institutions were included, excluding universities (a tertiary level of education).
- (6) Profit oriented companies: including SMEs and large companies, which main activity is to make a profit.
- (7) Public administration (local): municipal authorities (e.g. municipalities, municipal governments), towns and cities.
- (8) Public administration (regional): regional authorities (e.g. regional governments).
- (9) Public administration (national): national authorities (e.g. ministry).
- (10) Research institute: private or public entity, which main activity is research.
- (11) Universities and higher education institutions: educational institutions, providing tertiary level of education.

The number of LPs and PPs is proportional in the case of all organisation types. Most significant were the profit-oriented companies, with 20,66% of the PPs – being the only organisation type where LP status is more apparent than the simple partner role. They are followed by NGOs (17,56% of PPs), regional non-profit bodies (13,84% of PPs), and local governments (11,16% of PPs). Notably, local governments had less inclination in taking up the LP role (only 6,74% of LBs). Involvement of research, high education and other educational institutions combined amounted only to 19,21% of PPs. Least represented are national level public administration bodies (e.g. ministries, national public agencies – 1,24% – Table 14), showing that cross-border cooperation in the area is dominantly a regionally and locally operated development tool.

A more detailed analysis on the distribution of different partner types shows that within profit-oriented companies, there were 93 SMEs, presenting 19,21% and 7 large companies, representing 1,45% from all the 484 project partners. There were also 75 R&D institutions and universities, representing 15,50% of all the project partners and comprehending research institutions and universities, due the fact that also at the universities, research work is carried out.

Table 14 also presents a distribution of the different types of partner organisations from the country perspective. Austria was mostly represented with profit-oriented companies (28,77%), followed by NGOs (22,17%) and regional public administration (10,38%). On the other hand Slovenia was mostly represented in the partnerships with non-profit companies, acting on regional level (17,65%), followed by public administration, acting on municipal level (15,07%) and profit-oriented companies (14,34%). In Austria public administration on national level was not represented, low share was provided by non-profit companies on national level (3,30%) and non-profit companies on municipal level (3,30%). From Slovenia no regional level public administration was represented, due the fact that Slovenia does not

have regional government bodies. Furthermore, it was only minimally represented with other education and training institutions (1,10%), and national level public administration (2,21%).

Type of partner	Number of PP	Share %	Number of PP (AT)	Share % (AT)	Number of PP (SI)	Share % (SI)
NGO	85	17,56%	47	22,17%	38	13,97%
Non-profit company (local)	31	6,40%	7	3,30%	24	8,82%
Non-profit company (regional)	67	13,84%	19	8,96%	48	17,65%
Non-profit company (national)	26	5,37%	7	3,30%	19	6,99%
Other education or training institution	18	3,72%	15	7,08%	3	1,10%
Profit oriented company	100	20,66%	61	28,77%	39	14,34%
Public administration (local)	54	11,16%	13	6,13%	41	15,07%
Public administration (regional)	22	4,55%	22	10,38%	0	0,00%
Public administration (national)	6	1,24%	0	0,00%	6	2,21%
Research institute	38	7,85%	11	5,19%	27	9,93%
University and higher education institution	37	7,64%	10	4,72%	27	9,93%
TOTAL	484	100,00%	212	100,00%	272	100,00%

Table 14: Number of project partners by type of partner and country.

Source: own compilation upon JTS data.

The majority of projects (61,8%) have a heterogeneous partnership structure: public bodies cooperate with private institutions (for-profit or NGO). Although one might think SME development and knowledge economy issues would result in more intensive participation of private bodies, there is no significant difference between the two priorities (60-63% of mixed partnerships).

Questionnaires sent to beneficiaries aimed also to find out what were the target groups of the single projects (see Figure 13).

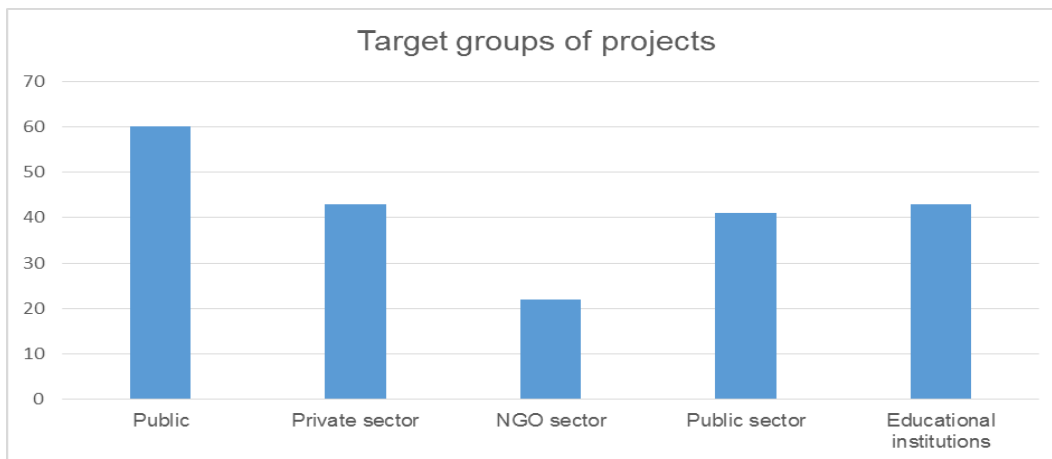


Figure 13: Target groups of projects defined by beneficiaries.

Source: own compilation upon analysis of questionnaires.

More than two-third of the projects (60 out of 88) stated the general public (citizens) as target group. The private sector – along with educational institutions – was addressed by nearly 50% of the projects. The NGO sector remains the less targeted, in case of 25%. Applicants were also possible to define which target groups they focused. Projects with specialised target groups focused on carpenters and wood technicians (Alpe Adria Holz/Les), cave tourists and tour operators (Cavetours), researchers and technicians dealing with ultralight vehicles (CESLA) and companies in supply chain management (SCIS).

Absorption of partner types

Analysing absorption performance of the different types of institutions, no large differences can be detected (see Table 15, Figure 14).

Generally we can state that Austrian partner organisations have contracted larger project parts, especially for profit-oriented companies and universities. Slovenian organisations were more ambitious when it's about other educational institutions and national non-profit bodies.

In terms of absorption capacity, the commitment ratios are similar to the distribution of PPs. Non-profit companies (especially local and regional ones) have somewhat higher absorption ratio than the average. While on the other hand local and regional public administration bodies have the worst performance. Research institutes and universities are having high absorption in general, while in case of profit-oriented companies the Austrian partners have a very high rate, while Slovenian counterparts seemed to be less exercised.

The weakest absorption performance is given by local public administrations in Austria (74,94%), followed by national non-profit companies (78,24%). In Slovenia national public administration bodies had the weakest performance (79,56%). Weak performance of public administrations is a general phenomenon. Comparing this data with the much better performance of municipal non-profit companies (especially in Austria) may justify that cross-border cooperation projects may be implemented more effective in a form of a non-profit company than by the public institution itself.

Taking into account some project level figures, for-profit beneficiaries generated the highest number of outliers: among them one can find a very high performance and an extreme low as well that resulted several cases of partner changes, or shifting activities from one partner to another (Alpe Adria Coworking). Similar situation has been occurred with research institutions and universities were also involved ("Poly Region Pro.Act" project) where absorption performance shows significant differences between partners.

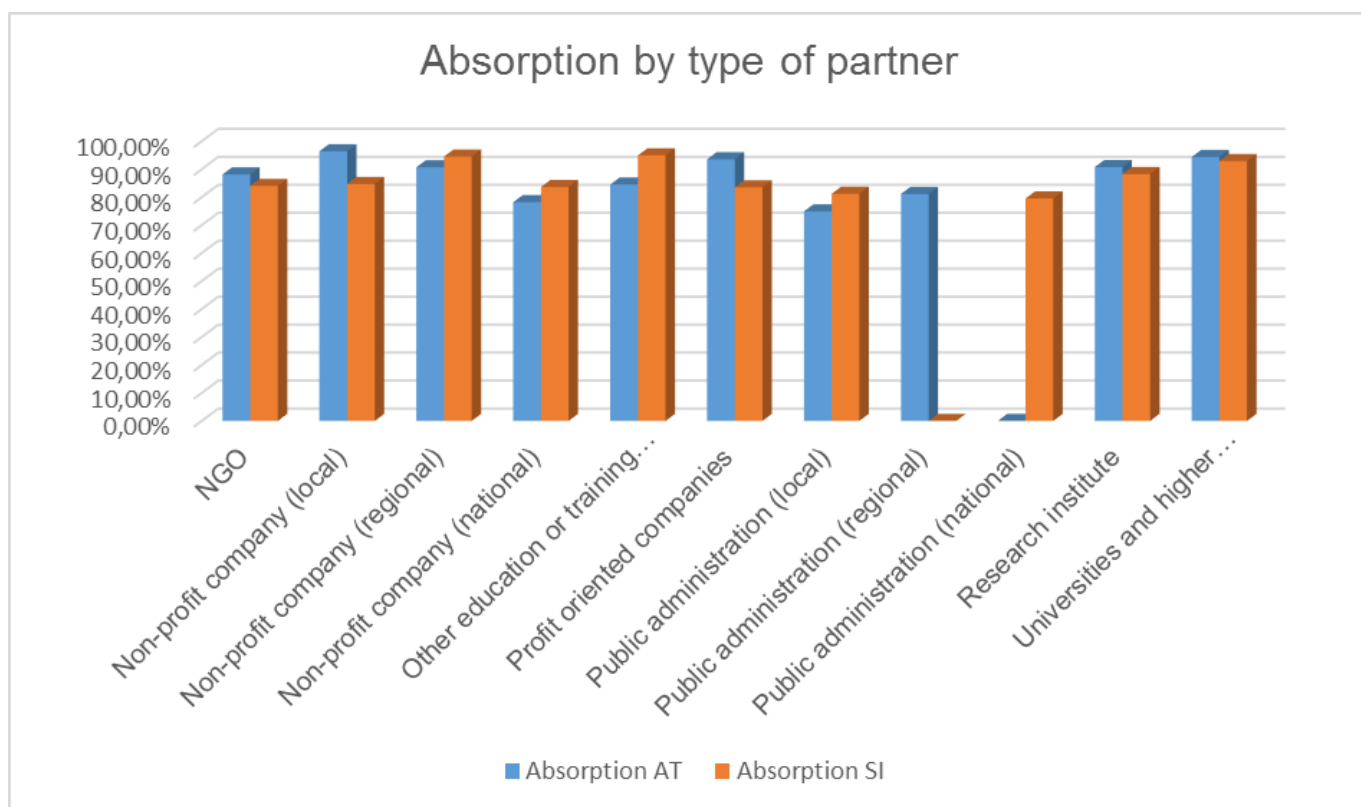


Figure 14: Absorption by type of partner (chart).

Source: own compilation upon JTS data.

Type of partner	Committed AT (EUR)	Committed SI (EUR)	Realised AT (EUR)	Realised SI (EUR)	Absorption AT	Absorption SI	Absorption total
NGO	6 045 473,58	3 474 056,54	5 328 968,29	2 919 010,04	88,15%	84,02%	86,64%
Non-profit company (local)	811 265,58	2 272 000,75	782 248,26	1 925 117,56	96,42%	84,73%	87,81%
Non-profit company (regional)	2 713 240,90	6 051 734,14	2 460 710,70	5 720 471,28	90,69%	94,53%	93,34%
Non-profit company (national)	853 876,41	2 863 380,23	668 092,76	2 395 532,38	78,24%	83,66%	82,42%
Other education or training institution	2 041 287,97	765 563,71	1 725 499,14	726 829,80	84,53%	94,94%	87,37%
Profit oriented companies	11 681 566,66	4 805 536,93	10 931 188,25	4 013 789,73	93,58%	83,52%	90,65%
Public administration (local)	2 823 520,67	5 215 414,44	2 116 073,44	4 237 626,64	74,94%	81,25%	79,04%
Public administration (regional)	4 925 331,90	0,00	3 997 345,08	0,00	81,16%	...	81,16%
Public administration (national)	0,00	685 862,40	0,00	545 649,16	...	79,56%	79,56%
Research institute	1 191 274,24	3 892 180,80	1 081 607,06	3 436 396,60	90,79%	88,29%	88,88%
Universities and higher education institutions	1 756 388,17	2 854 076,80	1 658 376,21	2 651 589,40	94,42%	92,91%	93,48%
TOTAL	34 843 226,08	32 879 806,74	30 750 109,19	28 572 012,59	88,25%	86,90%	87,60%

Table 15: Absorption by type of partner (table).

Source: own compilation upon JTS data.

3.3 Project-level achievements within the programme

3.3.1 Tangible results of projects

Within the scope of this evaluation, also project results have been assessed. A special attention has been given to identify tangible results. The notion “tangible” is defined as capable of touch or feel, having real substance and physical existence¹.

Thus, the following categorization of results were not considered as tangible:

- Studies (expert studies, analyses, concepts, methodologies, feasibility studies, strategies, recommendations, etc.)
- Workshops
- Meetings, including project partners meetings
- Project webpage/project LinkedIn profile/project Facebook page etc.

The following results were considered to be tangible:

- Results/outputs in physical form (e.g. new road, reconstructed urban area)
- Competence building (designed and implemented new study courses, trainings, etc.)
- Platform, not only with informational purpose, but allowing networking opportunities or capacity building
- Transfer of policies, best practices, technologies, know-how
- New market products and/or services
- Other e.g. documentary movies, TV presentations, creating new companies, informational or technology transfer offices, etc.

Project beneficiaries were asked to indicate which kind of results/outputs their project produced, in line with the classification of project results/outputs listed above. On the basis of these answers as well as project final reports a tangibility of projects results/outputs was examined (see Figure 15).

¹ Oxford Dictionaries Online: <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/>

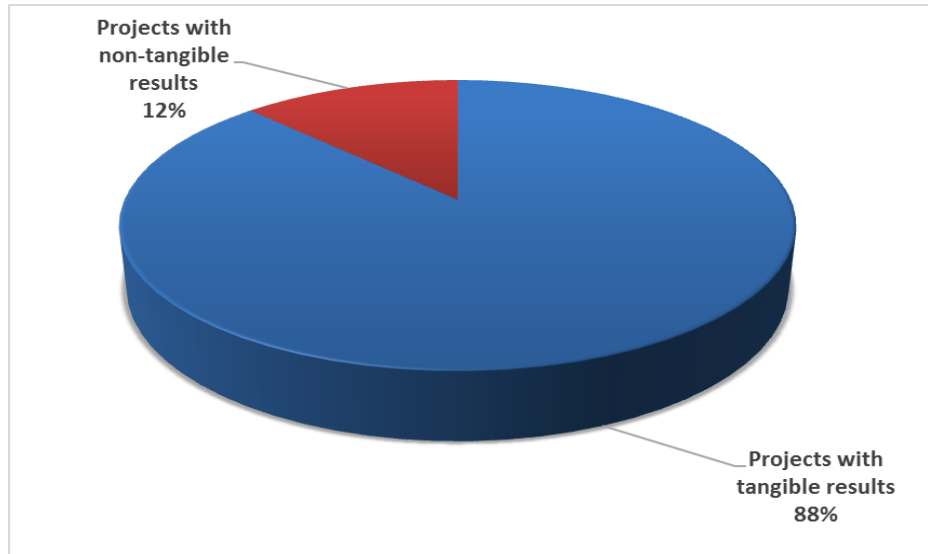


Figure 15: Tangibility of project results.

Source: own compilation upon analysis of questionnaires.

As shown, 12 % of projects (11 projects) did not produce any tangible results according to the used definition. The results of these projects were studies, methodologies and workshops.

A vast majority - 88 % - of projects had tangible results (78 projects).

Several projects had substantial tangible results, having significant sustainable positive impact and added value for the citizens of the local/regional area. These projects were the following:

- Grenzenlos/brezmejnost: production of a documentary movie "Borderliner"
- Euro Region – Healthy Region: establishment of mobile info points/consultancies about more active and healthier life, published 2 books for children "Cycling from a childhood on" and "Miha and the shoes from the vegetable garden"
- Innovation 2020: creating 11 new companies
- Vino Cool, Turkult, Family Centres, AIN-DJN: development of new touristic products
- Alpe Adria Holz/les: design and production of 12 new wooden products, selling under a common umbrella brand
- Regio Vitalis: 19 new developed models and 38 pilots implemented for health tourism
- Geopark: investments, 2 informational offices, geological educational paths
- Skupaj: new build and renovated public spaces in Gornja Radgona and Bad Radkersburg
- Mindoc: digitalization of more than 200.000 pages of articles and publications

- Tedusar: construction of 2 modern robots
- Brod na Muri/Murfähre: renovated boat on Mura river
- Alpa: overgrowth has been removed of 80 hectares of alpine pastures
- CUL-Energy 4 Kids: implementation of 10 energy-optimized children's playground equipment in 4 regions

3.3.2 Typical project outputs and added values

European Territorial Cooperation projects often have to follow a standardised approach in implementation: studying (analysing and learning) – testing (selection of solutions) – capitalising (implementation). Even though a cross-border cooperation is methodologically less strict and provides more space for local initiatives and solutions, outputs of projects are very similar to those in case of transnational and interregional projects, however often they are coupled with local investment activities.

According to the questionnaires filled-in by lead beneficiaries, 85% of projects produced studies, 86% included different workshops, 81% various meetings (see Figure 16). New products, services have been developed by 34% of the projects, which is a considerably high figure. Beneficiaries under “other” mentioned new elements of built infrastructure, technical documents, databases, new cultural products.

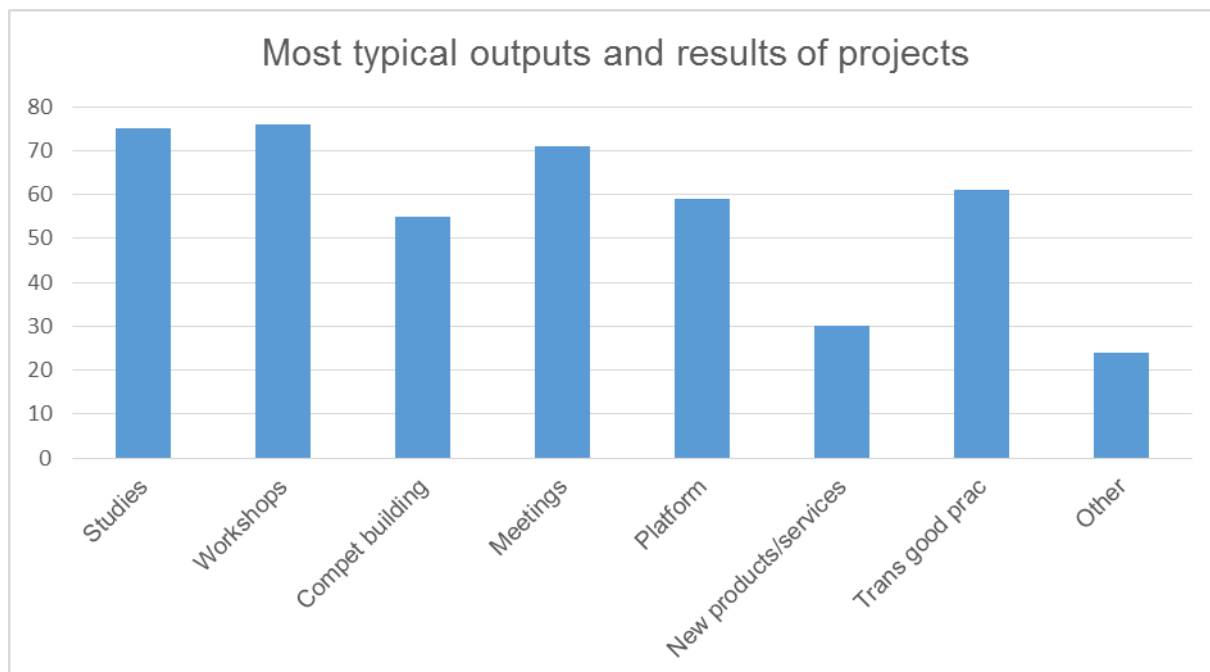


Figure 16: Most typical project outputs and results.

Source: own compilation upon analysis of questionnaires.

Lead beneficiaries were also asked about their assessment on achieving their project targets.

90% of lead beneficiaries claimed to have achieved their targeted results completely. The rest 10% quoted various hindering reasons, inter alia financial problems such as bankruptcy (3 projects), and other internal or external organisational problems (e.g. not completely reaching the required target group).

Almost 40% of the projects exceed their planned results: most of these figures are caused by successful attraction of the target groups (e.g. more attendees at events, trainings), more events organised than planned, extra promotional activities carried out (additional copies of materials and more media appearances). In some cases additional results were obtained through an early realisation of some activities that were originally planned for the sustainability period, since these were originally not included into the target values.

The lead beneficiaries were also asked to score the importance of different types of added values of the cross-border cooperation (to a minor or larger degree) – see Figure 17.

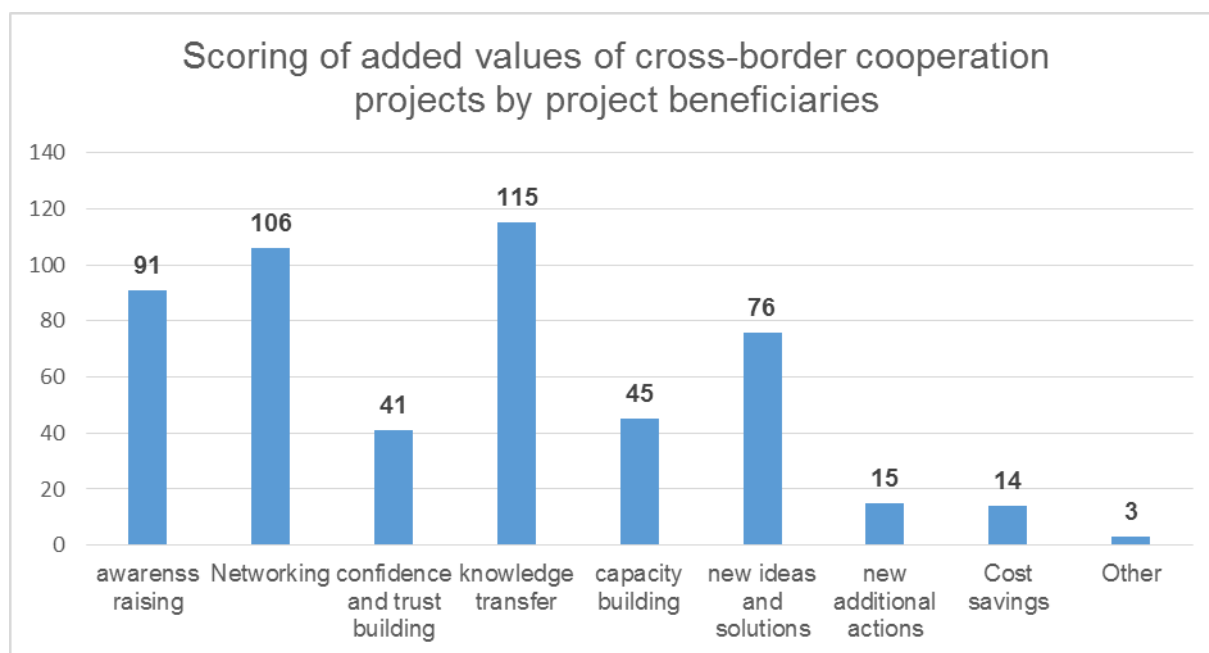


Figure 17: Scoring of added values of cross-border cooperation projects.

Source: own compilation upon analysis of questionnaires.

According to respondents' opinion the main added value of cross-border cooperation within their projects lies in extended networks (75,51%) and knowledge transfer (79,63%). 47% of the respondents considered awareness raising as important, where 75,61% of the projects generated added value on a larger extent. A development of new ideas and solutions has been important in more of the half of the projects, whose 49% could generate considerable added value in this regard. A capacity building has been important in 32% of the projects, whose 46% stated they could generate a positive change. An interesting fact is that cost saving was mentioned by only 8% of the respondents, but out of the 7 projects 6 said they could make an added value. A conclusion could be made that a cross-border cooperation is

an important tool in a knowledge transfer through networks as well as by development of new ideas and solutions. On the other hand, the economy of scale is hardly generated through such cooperations, however some good examples exist (e.g. the SCIS project on supply chain management).

3.3.3 Cost efficiency of projects

There are difficulties in examining cost efficiency of the projects. This is mainly because the cost efficiency of projects as well as the whole programme should be based on the realization of the indicators set in the Operational Programme in a comparison to the amount of funds allocated. As it was mentioned in chapter 3.2.1. the Operational Programme has nearly exclusively comprised indicators with the same value type of 'number of projects'.

No real output and result indicators have been defined in the programming phase, making it problematic to measure effectiveness and especially cost effectiveness of the programme and its priorities.

Taking into consideration the above-mentioned problem, cost efficiency was analysed in the following ways:

- cost effectiveness by indicators
- cost effectiveness by priorities and activity fields
- cost effectiveness by partnership structure

Cost effectiveness by indicators

Considering the three levels of indicators of the Operational Programme, an analysis of the cost effectiveness in terms of a contribution to the key areas of cross-border cooperation (indicator codes 46-62, see chapter 3.2.1) could be regarded as sensible, due the fact that these different types of indicator codes represent different key thematic areas worth comparing to each other.

Figure 18 shows the average realized cost of projects contributing to the different key areas of cooperation.

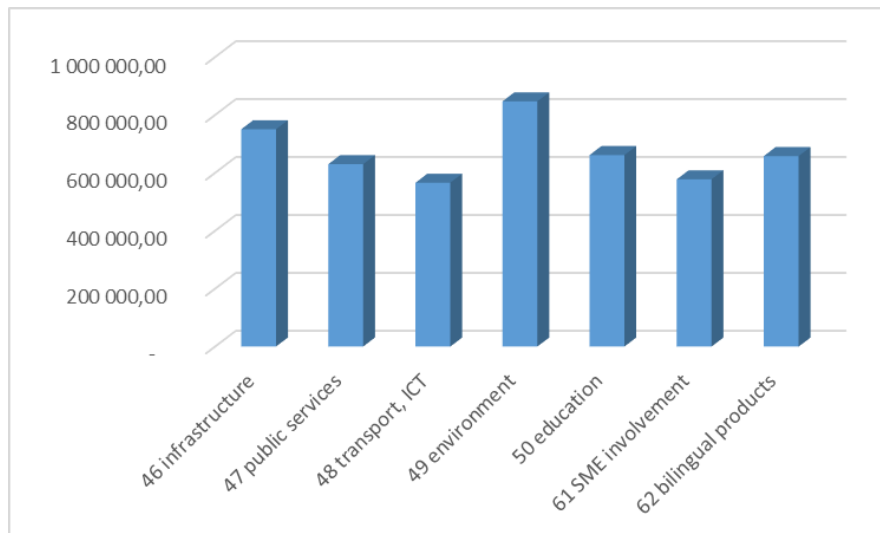


Figure 18: Average project costs by indicators.

Source: own compilation upon JTS data.

It can be perceived that the investment-oriented areas required more funds (especially infrastructure development), while projects belonging to the transport and ICT area had the lowest average project cost, reaching their project achievements most cost effectively (note: most of these projects consisted of ICT or marketing-oriented elements, only a few projects dealt with the transportation issues). Also projects focused on SME development were relatively cost-effective.

Cost effectiveness by priorities and activity fields

Figure 19 shows average project sizes of projects belonging to the different thematic priorities.

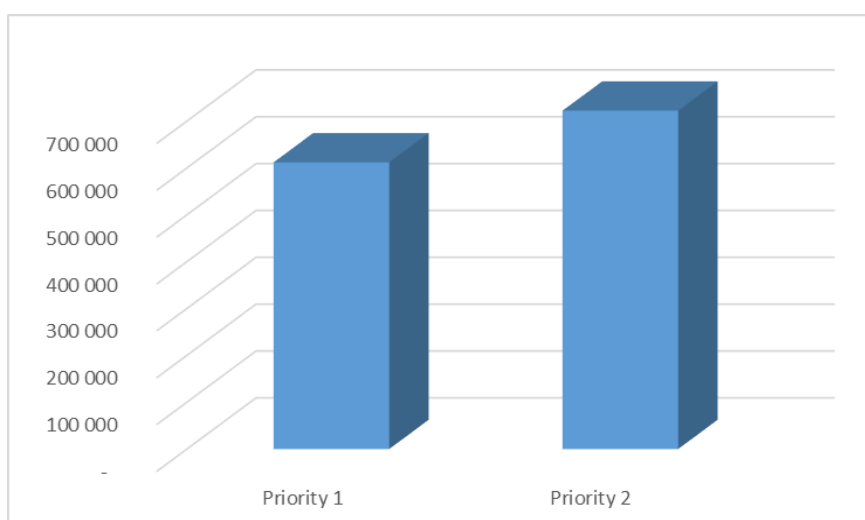


Figure 19: Average project costs by priorities.

Source: own compilation upon JTS data.

The average project size of Priority 2 projects was nearly 20% higher than of Priority 1 projects. It is mainly because Priority 2 projects more often comprised infrastructure and 'hard' development elements than economic development oriented Priority 1 projects.

The same phenomenon could be observed analysing average project costs of different activity fields (see Figure 20).

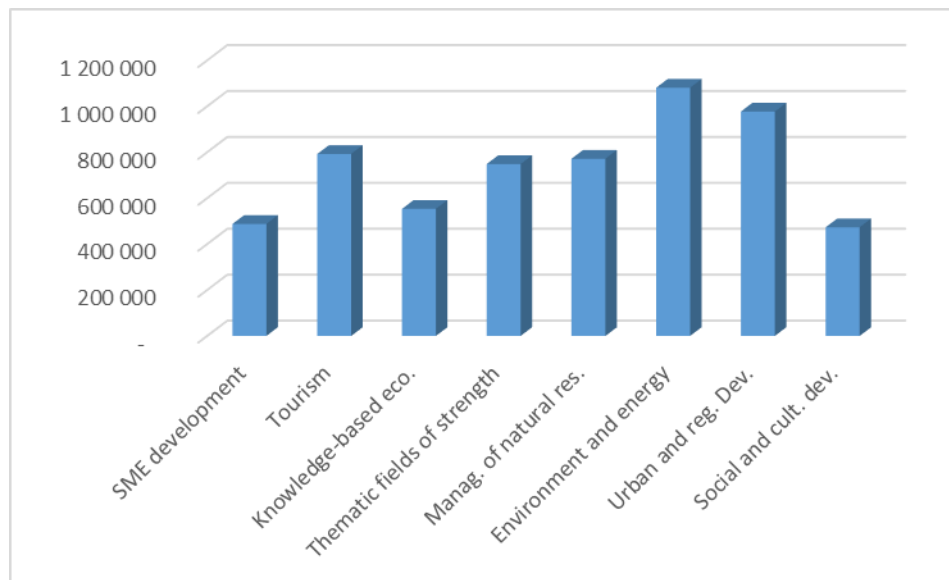


Figure 20: Average project costs by activity fields.

Source: own compilation upon JTS data and analysis of questionnaires.

SME development projects could be regarded as the most cost effective ones, but soft-oriented social and cultural development projects also have low project sizes. Contrary, investment oriented activities like environment, energy and urban and regional developments required more funding (these were approx. twice as big projects than SME development ones).

Cost effectiveness by partnership structures

Table 16 shows the averages of contracted ERDF support by the types of a partner. Six groups of partners, such as non-governmental organizations, non-profit companies (local), public administrations (national) were significantly below the average, also research institutes, and universities and higher education institutions have somewhat lagged behind. On the other hand, non-profit companies at the national level, other education and training institutions, profit oriented companies, public administration at the local and regional level contracted above-average funds. The highest average of contracted ERDF funds per project belongs to public administration bodies at regional level, which managed to contract 60% above the average.



Type of a partner	Average ERDF contracted in EUR	Absorption (%)
Non-governmental organization	111 994,47	86,64%
Non-profit company (local)	99 460,20	87,81%
Non-profit company (regional)	130 820,52	93,34%
Non-profit company (national)	142 971,41	82,42%
Other education and training institution	155 936,20	87,37%
Profit oriented company	164 871,04	90,65%
Public administration (local)	148 869,17	79,04%
Public administration (regional)	223 878,72	81,16%
Public administration (national)	114 310,40	79,56%
Research institute	133 775,13	88,88%
University and higher education institution	124 607,16	93,48%
Overall average	139 923,62	87,60%

Table 16: Average contracted ERDF funding per type of partner.

Source: own compilation upon JTS data.

Lessons can be learnt by comparing average partner costs to their absorption ratio, respectively. It can be stated that local/regional non-profit companies and universities used their allocated funds the most effective way: their average partner cost was under the average with fairly good absorption ratio. Contrary, regional public administration organisations were the most ineffective ones with more than twice as big partner costs and with nearly 20% unspent funds.

Cost effectiveness could also be examined by the number of project partners per project (see Figure 21).

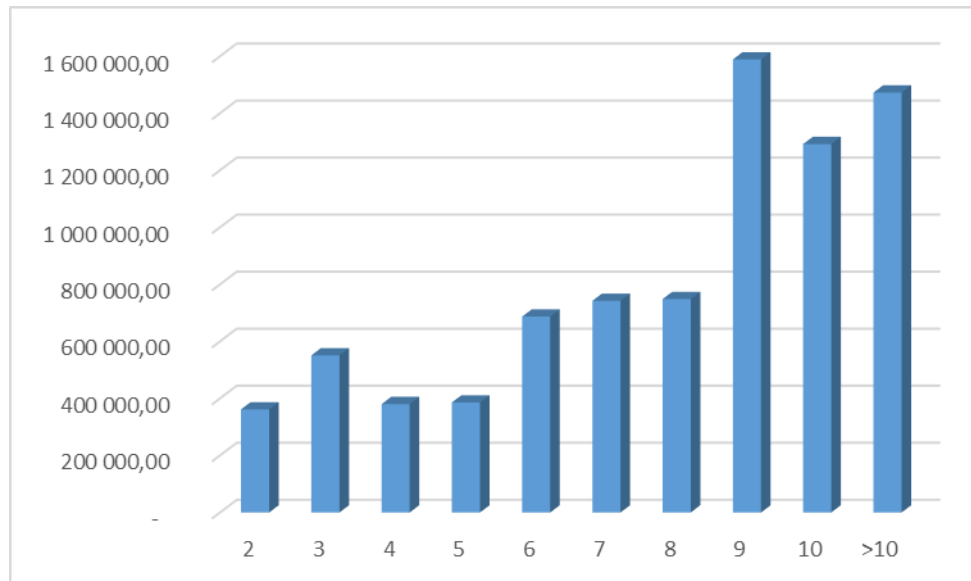


Figure 21: Average project costs by number of partners.

Source: own compilation upon JTS data.

It would be evident that as the number of partners rises, average project size increases as well – but it is not fully true.

Projects with 4-5 partners have the lowest average project size – this type of a partnership structure could be named as the most cost effective one. It is also clear, how average project costs rapidly rise at projects with more than 8 partners. This partner size could be regarded as the inflexion point: bigger partnerships are much less cost effective.

3.3.4 Deviations in project implementation

Deviations from originally planned and contracted costs during project implementation have been examined by looking at absorption ratios (realized / contracted project costs). Absorption ratios were previously analysed in details by activity fields, geographically and also by the partner types.

In this chapter, a focus was given on deviations in terms of project costs and timing in the project implementation phase. The data for this analysis were extracted from the questionnaires filled-in by projects' lead beneficiaries.

Cost deviations

Lead beneficiaries were asked if there were significant deviations according to the main budget categories.

Nearly half of projects had remarkable cost deviations (42 from 89 projects). Cost deviations have occurred in connection to all four main cost categories (see Figure 22).

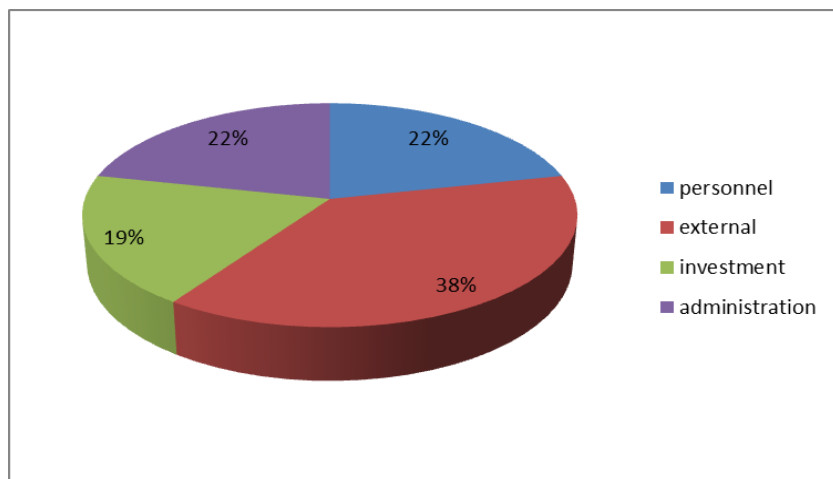


Figure 22: Cost deviations by budget categories.

Source: own compilation upon analysis of questionnaires.

A change of personnel costs most often meant an increase. Reasons for this were extensions of project duration which needed additional personnel costs, cost reallocations to personnel costs during project implementation and several times under-planning of staff needs during project preparation phase which caused an increase in the implementation phase.

The external cost budget category prevailed within the categories in terms of cost deviations, but with an opposite trend. A vast majority of deviations occurred because of decreasing this cost category during implementation. Within several projects it was done by the reallocation to the personnel costs as project partners decided to deliver some activities on their own instead of involving outside contractors. A reduction of external costs at some cases happened because there were non-eligible costs planned or because of public procurement problems in the implementation phase which concluded in omission of some external cost items. Some of the reductions were simply because lower prices were achieved owing to the public procurement process.

All the changes concerning investment costs were reductions. Among the reasons we find similar reasons to external cost decrease: omission of investment or lower costs because of public procurement. At some projects, reductions in investment costs were made because of project budget reductions while pre-financing problems of project partners could lead to not carry out investments, too.

Administration costs used to be the lowest costs of all the cost categories, and most of times deviations meant reductions. This happened because non-eligible costs were planned and

because unused administration costs due to the high documentation requirements of these type of costs. This latter highlights the need for easier financing rules to be applied for administration costs in future.

Timing deviations

Lead beneficiaries were also asked if there were any delays in project implementation.

Majority of projects indicated delays (49 from 89 projects).

Main reasons or delays in project implementation were as follows:

- partner change during project implementation
- personal changes in project partners
- pre-financing problems
- delays with reporting duties
- problems with establishment of infrastructure
- public procurement problems
- problems with land procurement issues
- stop of project financing occurred

These delays usually caused 1-6 months of project extension, but at some projects even longer extensions have happened (1-1,5 years).

Project holders could also indicate if there were any delays of fund transfers. It is important to highlight that more than two-thirds of the projects reported fund transfer delays (69 from 89 projects).

Main reasons for financial delays were as follows:

- delays of project partners with reporting
- pre-financing problems of project partners
- delays of FLC
- organisational problems with JTS
- delays with grants transfer
- stop of project financing – several lead beneficiaries complained about the stop of financing at the programme level

Serious complains were received several times because of delays of FLC activities and because of programme stop – these reasons should be very carefully handled in the future for smoother financing.

3.3.5 Sustainability of projects

Based on the self-assessment questionnaires filled in after the projects' closure by the beneficiaries, all project lead partners intend to maintain results of the project in some way after its closure (see Figure 23).

They intended to do it predominantly by means that don't require additional financial resources (making available for the public, dominantly through project webpages and platforms – 92%; benefits will be sustained – 89%; outputs and results will be further used – 87,5%, also among members of the target groups – 83% and will be used for further projects – 72%). On the other hand only 58% of the beneficiaries said they have enough resources for maintaining the results. 19% of project beneficiaries said there are external factors influencing sustainability of their projects (Figure 23), however they did not detail these circumstances, only financial issues were mentioned.

Projects with tangible results – e.g. SKUPAJ with a renovated urban area in Bad Radkersburg and Gornja Radgona – will obviously be maintained by the partners. Among mentioned sustained benefits, newly developed touristic offers, new tourist products, packages (e.g. project AIN-DJN), wooden products (produced further e.g. in the project Alpe Adria Holz), educational material (e.g. project Euro region-Healthy region), information office/centre (e.g. projects: Business region LK, DUO Kunsthandwerk), and Youth Incubators (e.g. project: EXP-ERT 2020) are to be mentioned. Further use of project results/outcomes may will obviously happen by the target groups, these projects will form a basis for preparing further projects.

Sustainability problems are more likely to occur in case of projects where no funds are available (49%), no further projects are planned (37%) or simply not even the benefits will be sustained (22%).

Regarding the sustainability of partnership, 87% of the project lead applicants stated that partnership is going to be sustained, but only partners of 6 projects formalized their further collaborations in a form of signed document for further collaboration (MOVE project), or a letter of collaboration (TRILOC project), agreed to have meetings every six months (CESLA project), or set up a network (BRIDGE project); signed an agreement (“Future ideas Karawanks” project), or initiated a formal discussion of continuing with partnership (UL4C project). Partners in project Brod na Muri agreed to proceed with operating the partnership on informal level.

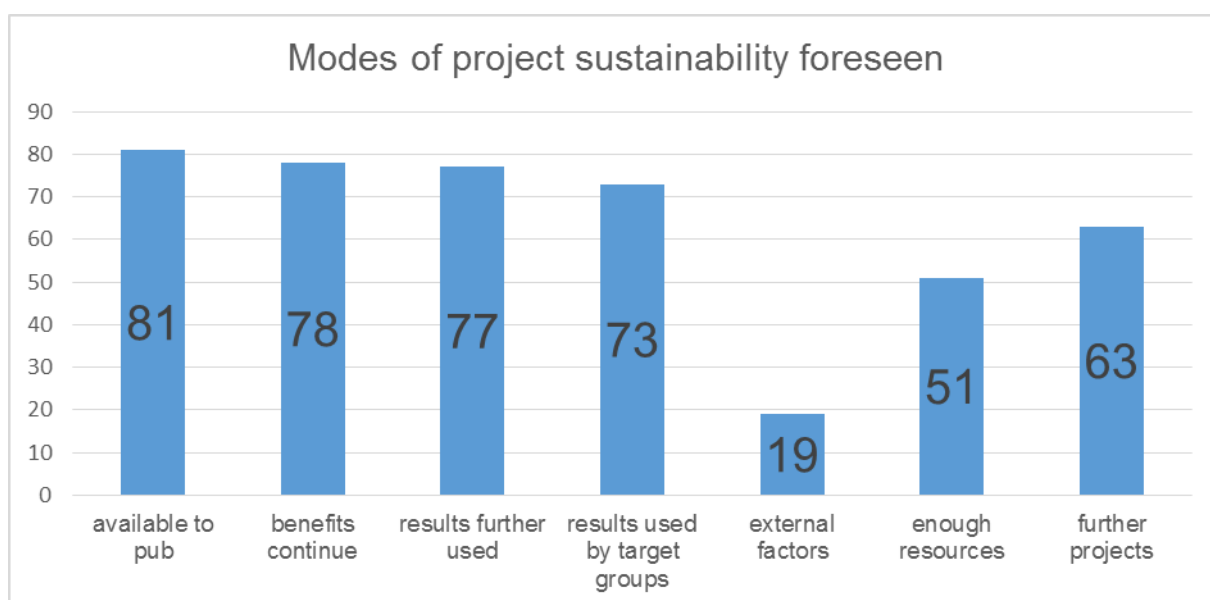


Figure 23: Foreseen ways of sustaining project results by beneficiaries.

Source: own compilation upon analysis of questionnaires.

3.3.6 Contribution of projects to horizontal themes and EU policies

The Slovenia-Austria Cooperation Programme required the coherence with national policies and sustainable development (economic, environmental and social). Beneficiaries were asked to give details in which horizontal policies their project generated achievements (see Figure 24). 70 out of the 88 respondents said their project had an added value in terms of networking, while innovation and especially human resources lagged behind. In terms of EU policies, sustainable development has been addressed by 74% of the projects (being a more or less compulsory policy to align with), equality was addressed by half of the projects, while ICT remained at 37,5%. 6 projects mentioned they targeted other EU policies, but a more in-depth analysis of the given answers shows that these contributions were also in line with EU policies, mainly sustainable development and ICT.

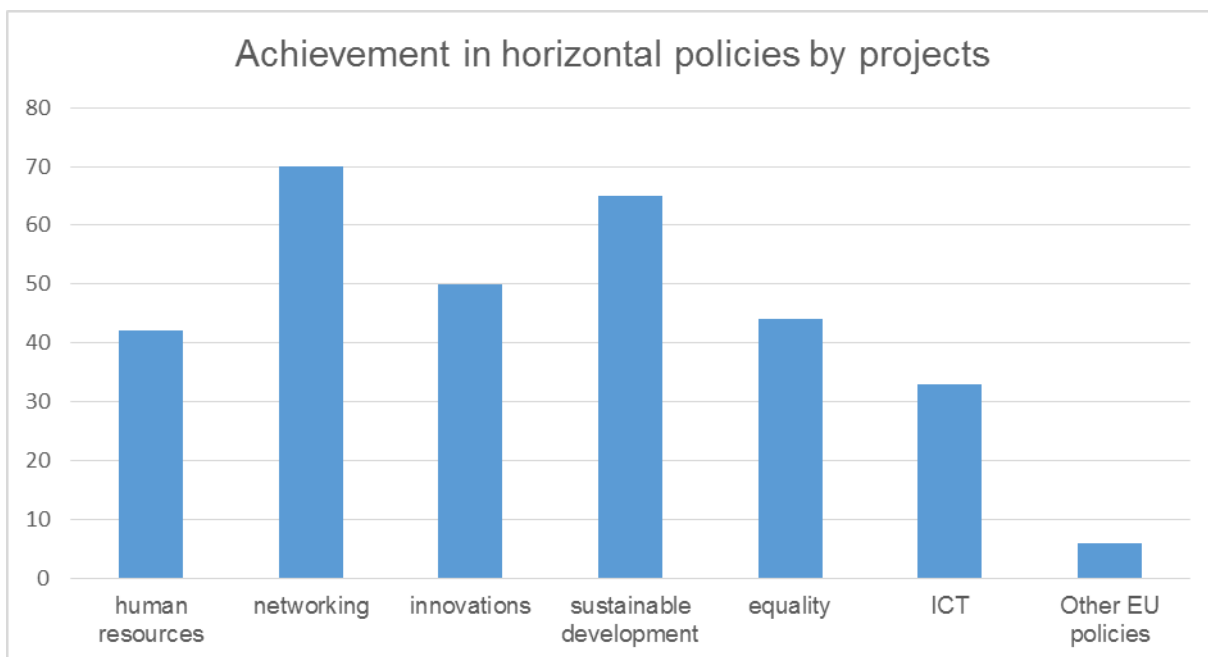


Figure 24: Contribution to horizontal policies.

Source: own compilation upon analysis of questionnaires.

3.3.7 Most remarkable projects

During the present evaluation, 5 best-practice projects were selected. The criteria taken into the consideration were the following:

- Tangibility of results and broader impact on the living conditions of citizens, considering EU dimensions
- Quality of cross-border cooperation
- Financial performance in terms of realized funds

From the tangibility and cross-border perspective 3 projects were selected, which actually had a broader impact and improved living conditions for regional inhabitants as well as clearly contributed to the European dimension and the regional cohesion.

Skupaj/Together

Gornja Radgona and Bad Radkersburg have been working together for many years before, but after Slovenia has joined the EU the cooperation between these two municipalities became even stronger and strategic. After the completion of the Skupaj/Together project the cities (municipalities) will be entry connected in their old city centers from the architectural and spatial-planning perspectives and spatially re-united as a one city. The project underlined the common history of a space and cultural value of the area. Both cities obtained new public spaces that give an added value to the touristic products, also increasing cross-border infrastructure and recognisability of the area. Cross-border collaboration has been

emphasized through common use of infrastructure and common management of environmental resources. Joint spatial and urban planning with a direct impacts on natural and urban space of Mura river will give both cities development opportunities for all citizens and visitors to enable a genuine contact with the river and take an advantage of the river as a development opportunity, which is because of demographics issues in the area rather jeopardized.

Grenzenlos/Brezmejnosti

The project addressed the circumstances of life along the border between Carinthia and Slovenia. Culture is a substantial instrument to appeal to people in their awareness and feelings. There is no real physical border anymore, but still borders in people's minds exists, having a negative influences on dialogue and authentic cross-border identity. The theatre project "Prežih's Dream" addressed the beginning of the story – the impact of a new border drawn in 1918. The documentary movie "Borderliner" revealed the effects of re-vanishing of the border, truly expressing a European dimension of a one nation. The project has had a positive impact on social and cultural life, its cross-border dimension was emphasized with a common use of infrastructure.

Alpe Adria Holz/les

The aim of the project was to connect SMEs, working in the field of wood processing. A common Slovenian-Austrian umbrella brand Collignum for wooden products was established under which several new wooden products were designed and produced, combining tradition and modern design. A cross-border dimension was perceived in a form of a common use of infrastructure. A carpenter association Collignum was set up, uniting Slovenian and Austrian carpenters, which were commonly developing new, innovative wooden products under the umbrella brand.

SCIS

A collaboration between partners led to the project results/outputs, which can be summarized as developed approach for identification and focused elimination of excess consumption of resources in all parts of supply chain. The project presented a concept of functional and technological design of information system for improving the supply chain, the concept of supply chain management, and internet portal for publication of results of the project and open exchange of knowledge in this field. With the establishment of the internet portal SCIS, the project has long-term eased and fostered cross-border cooperation and exchange of specific knowledge within the field of value chains among various subjects of the programme area: industrial enterprises, service companies, educational and R&D institutions.

VAINNO

The objective of the project was to establish a cross-border network of Value Analysis (VA) with two competence centers and a web supported platform for exchange of knowledge and further method development. These two competence centers act as networking institutions, ensuring cross-border cooperation. A tool for VA was developed and introduced in 24 pilot projects in SMEs, 2 trainers and 24 mentors were educated. A common regional strategy for

development and promotion of SMEs through VA was fostered with a long term objectives for the regional economy.

From the financial performance perspective the absorption ratio was considered and, in addition to their good content and quality, the following projects had outstanding absorption performance, as well: project SKUPAJ had the biggest ratio (98,67%), followed by SCIS project (98,49%) and VAINNO (98,12%).

4 Socio-economic impact of the programme

4.1 Brief socio-economic analysis of the programme area

The core programme area includes the eligible NUTS III regions Oststeiermark, West- and Südsteiermark, Klagenfurt-Villach, Unterkärnten and Südburgenland on the Austrian side, and the NUTS III regions of Gorenjska, Koroška, Savinjska, Podravska and Pomurska on the Slovenian side. The NUTS III areas Graz, Obersteiermark Ost, Obersteiermark West and Oberkärnten in Austria and Osrednjeslovenska in Slovenia are included in the programme on the basis of Art 21 (1) of the Regulation No 1080/2006 on the European Regional Development Fund, whereby expenditure incurred by implementing operations or parts of operations in the adjacent NUTS III areas may be financed from the ERDF up to a limit of 20% of the amount of its contribution to the operational programme.²

Within the social and economic area evaluation part of the Operation Programme, the following socio-economic factors were quantified, indicating their relevance:

- Population of the programme area (inhabitants, aging index)
- Employment (number of persons employed, share of employment of industry, services and agriculture)
- GDP per capita
- Business subjects, enterprises (number of business subjects and their composition)
- Employment
- Education level - share of population with higher education
- Tourism (Overnight stays, share of domestic tourists and tourists from abroad)
- Renewable energy
- Household access to internet

The alterations in the main socio-economic factors in the 2007-2013 period can be presented as follows:

Population of the programme area

During the programme period, the population of the programme area stayed steady, only a restructuring in the population toward Graz and Osrednjeslovenska (which includes Ljubljana) can be seen. These are actually the big cities of the region, and not part of the

² Operational Programme - CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION SLOVENIA-AUSTRIA 2007-2013, CCI Number: 2007CB163PO054 as approved by the Commission Decision no. C(2007) 6607 as of 21/12/2007

core programme area, so it is an important role of the cross-border projects to slow the pace of population movement toward the knowledge hubs of the region (see Chart 1 in Annex).

By analysing the age composition of the inhabitants of the region, it can be concluded that during the programme period the population became older. 11 % more elderly people live in the programme area than in 2007. This phenomenon is more characteristic in Austria than in Slovenia. The only exception is the Osrednjeslovenska region of Slovenia, where the population became younger (see Chart 2 in Annex).

Gross domestic product and economic performance

By evaluating the GDP growth in the region, one can conclude that while in euro, both regions have shown economic development (11 % in Austria and 3 % in Slovenia), but calculating this in purchasing power standard, the growth in Slovenia disappears and a 1 % setback can be seen (see Chart 3 and 4 in Annex).

The effect of the 2008-2009 crisis was different in the two countries. The regions of Austria have only suffered minor setbacks in 2009 and were able to continue their economic growth afterwards, the Slovenian regions were unable to reach their GDP producing level of 2008 till 2012. This resulted in a huge difference in the the growth trend of the GDP per inhabitant in Austria (10 %) and in Slovenia (1 %). Calculating this in Purchasing Power Standard, the Slovenian regions have suffered a 3 % setback, while Austria developed with 7 %, so the gap between the two countries has risen to 10 % (see Chart 5 and 6 in Annex).

When comparing the economic performance of the programme regions in relation to other regions of the EU, one can see that the situation of the Austrian regions has risen significantly (with 7-8 %), while the Slovenian regions were only able to preserve their position. This is true even when calculating in euro or in Purchasing Power Standard (see Chart 7 and 8 in Annex). When analysing the Gross value added at basic prices in the region, the same conclusions as with the GDP can be made (see Chart 9 in Annex).

When, in addition, examining the composition of this Gross added value, it can be concluded that there was a clear shift towards services from industry, while the performance and share of the agriculture has stayed the same (see Chart 10 in Annex).

Analysis of regional enterprises

Looking at the number of enterprises in the region, one can conclude that there were different trends in the two countries. While in Austria, the number of enterprises stayed unchanged, there was a steady increase in the number of enterprises in Slovenia (see Chart 11 in Annex).

When analysing the restructuring of enterprises during the programme period, firstly the existing composition of the enterprises has to be examined, where the predominant sectors are services, especially wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles and professional scientific and technical activities; administrative and support service activities (see Chart 12 in Annex).

When examining the sectors of the newly born enterprises, compared to the present structure, it can be concluded that Information and communication, Professional scientific and technical activities; administrative and support service activities, Arts, entertainment and recreation; other service activities, Education, human health and social work and Construction sectors are the ones, where entrepreneurship is the most active (see Chart 13 in Annex).

By examining also how many of the enterprises established in the sectors survive over three business years, one can conclude that Construction, Professional, scientific and technical activities; administrative and support service activities, Information and communication sectors have better chances, while enterprises in the other evolving sectors (e.g.: Education, human health and social work activities) are more likely to terminate their activity at an early stage (see Chart 14 in Annex).

Apart from entrepreneurship, by examining the employment capability of regional enterprises, one can see a different picture, Industry, Transportation and storage and Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles sectors have the biggest chance for increasing the level of regional employments (see Chart 15 in Annex).

When analysing the innovation potential of regional enterprises, it can be concluded that the Austrian enterprises are four times as likely to be innovative as the Slovenian ones; the least innovative regions are Pomurska and Podravska and the most innovative is Graz (see Chart 16 in Annex).

Analysis of regional employment

Similar to the economic performance, the trend of regional employment was different in Austria and Slovenia. While the Austrian regions could increase their employment level, the Slovenian regions showed a decline compared to their performance before the 2008-2009 economic crisis (see Chart 17 in Annex).

Looking at the composition of employment by business sectors, the same tendency as in the case of the added value becomes evident, the work opportunities shift from industry towards the service sector. The only difference is that while the economic performance of the agriculture stayed steady, the same economic value was produced with less employment (there is a 1 % decrease of the employment level of agriculture), so job opportunities in the rural region further decreased in the programme period. This also supports the migration trend towards the bigger cities as highlighted in the demography section (see Chart 18 in Annex).

Performance of other relevant sectors (education, tourism, energy, info-communication)

When analysing the regional education statistics, it can be concluded that the percentage of the population having tertiary education level has risen significantly during the programme period. The rise was more significant among females than males (see Chart 19 in Annex).

By analysing the regional tourism statistics in the programme period, the total number of nights spent in the programme area increased for 10 %, the Slovenian regions were better in this aspect, but the Austrian regions have significantly more visitors. The type of

accommodation was mainly hotels, this slightly decreased during the programme period, and half of the visitors were residents, and the other half non-resident (see Chart 20, 21 and 22 in Annex).

By analysing the regional energy production in the programme period, it can be concluded that the renewable energy production share in total production has risen in both countries. But since in the Austria the base value was relatively high, the biggest increase was in Slovenia. It can also be concluded that the Austrian regions of the cross-border area are almost only producing renewable energy (see Chart 23 in Annex).

The analysis of the regional internet access in the programme period shows that in both countries it has risen for 30 % and it is just slightly higher in Austria than in Slovenia (see Chart 24 in Annex).

4.2 Compliance of programme results with requirements of cross-border cooperation

According to the Operational Programme the overall aims of the programme are to contribute efficiently to extensively fostering the international competitiveness and visibility as well as the quality of the cooperation by joint development, sustainable and innovative use of the common potential and opportunities in the regions.

More in operative terms:

- increasing competitiveness in key economic sectors including tourism and agriculture, improving the research & knowledge base, and upgrade the infrastructure, qualification and employment opportunities
- increasing the quality of life in the programme area by promoting cooperation in the field of culture, health and social affairs
- promoting sustainable cross-border projects to facilitate cooperation, particularly in the field of environment, sustainable energy and management of the area's natural resources
- strengthening and improving the quality of cross-border cooperation at local and regional levels.

Comparing the socio-economic analysis of the region with the overall aims, the programme contribution can be estimated as follows:

Contributing to the competitiveness in key economic sectors

The programme has contributed to economic development of the programme area, especially in terms of SME development, as 46,4 % of total committed funds were allocated for Priority 1 (competitiveness, knowledge and economic cooperation) – see Chapter 3.2.2.

These investments were well placed based on the following reasons:

- The negative trend of migration towards big knowledge hubs, due to the loss of employment in the rural agricultural and local industry sectors, has been helped to

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counterbalance by the programme, supporting local SMEs in the star sectors, where most of the new enterprises of the region were born (i.e.: Information and communication, professional, scientific and technical activities; administrative and support service activities, arts, entertainment and recreation; other service activities, education; human health and social work activities). These activities were very important as the enterprises established in these sectors are less likely to improve their employment from their own financial resources in contrast to the enterprises established in the industry, construction and retail sectors.

- Tourism has improved significantly (the number of nights spent in the border region has risen by 10 %), the programme clearly contributed to that.
- The joint research and knowledge based projects have also contributed to mobilising the common innovation potentials, since the enterprises on the Austrian side of the cross-border region are still 3-4 times more innovative than on the Slovenian side of the programme area (based on the number of international patterns per million inhabitants). So this knowledge and innovative culture can only be shared with the Slovenian enterprises if they keep on intensifying co-operations and work closely together with their Austrian partners.

Increasing the quality of life in the programme area

The programme has contributed to increase of quality of life with the following investments in the key sectors (see Table 17):

Prior	Activity field	Total ERDF realized	Share of total ERDF realized (%)
2	3 (Urban and regional development)	10 786 714,80	18%
2	4 (Social and cultural development)	6 436 532,94	11%

Table 17: Contribution to increasing quality of life

Source: own compilation upon JTS data and analysis of questionnaires.

These developments were well placed based on the following reasons:

- In education; human health and social work activities and arts, entertainment and recreation; other service activities sectors, 1,93 % more enterprises have been established (based on the available 2010 data) in the region than it should be concluded from the trends in number of active enterprises in these sectors. Meanwhile, these enterprises are not competitive enough to sustain their activities for a longer period, since the enterprises surviving three business years are -0,23 % less in these sectors than it should be concluded from the number of active enterprises in these sectors (based on the available 2007-2010 data).

- Since their services are essential for the society, it is an added value of the cross-border programme to support these enterprises and help them from and operate during the difficult times of their first years of operation.

Promoting sustainability in cross-border projects

The programme has contributed to sustainability with the following investments in the key sectors (see Table 18):

Prior	Activity field	Total ERDF realized	Share of total ERDF realized (%)
2	1 (Management of natural resources)	13 953 310,32	24%
2	2 (Environment and energy)	14 114 418,21	24%

Table 18: Contribution to sustainability

Source: own compilation upon JTS data and analysis of questionnaires.

These developments were well placed based on the following reasons:

- In the case of sustainable energy, the Austrian part of the area excels, since 95 % of energy produced in this region was renewable (compared to the 73 % for Austria in total).
- On the other hand, in Slovenia, the share of renewable energy in energy production was just 20 % in the beginning of the programme period. When projecting the statistical trends for the whole programme period, Slovenia was able to increase the share of renewable energy in energy production by 28 % and the renewable energy production reached a 26 % share.
- Cross-border cooperation was contributing to achieve this balancing effect. Further investments and transfer of knowledge are still needed in this area, since there is still a huge gap between the performance of these two neighbouring countries. Sharing of best practices can one of the effective tools to overcome this difference.

Strengthening and improving the quality of cross-border cooperation

The 2008-2009 economic crisis showed that the region is still divided in terms of economic growth potentials. During the programme period - compared to other areas of Europe - the purchasing power of the Austrian regions of the cross-border area has risen by 7 % and the purchasing power of the Slovenian regions has declined by 3 %. As it was stated in chapter 3.2.1, all projects of the Operational Programme have involved two or more aspects of joint

cross-border cooperation (see Table 2). By improving the quality of cross-border cooperation, the programme contributed to bridging this gap and decreasing the difference in the economic trends of the bordering regions.

By improving the quality of cross-border cooperation, the programme contributed to bridging this gap and decreasing the difference in the economic trends of the bordering regions.

4.3 Programme contribution to socio-economic trends

Based on the socio-economic trends state-of-the-art analysis of the previous chapter, the following seven socio-economic trends could be identified for the cross-border region:

1. Moving of population to bigger towns .
2. Ageing of the population.
3. Restructuring of the economic performance of sectors from industry towards services.
4. Restructuring of employment of sectors from industry and agriculture towards services.
5. The local population became more educated, significantly.
6. Developing and restructuring of tourism services.
7. Development of Info-communication services

The project lead beneficiaries were questioned to identify whether their project contributed to tackle any of the challenges related to the above socio-economic trends of the programme area in the period 2007-2013.

4.3.1 Analysis of the quantity of contribution

Only a small part of the projects claimed to having contributed to the first three trends (see Table 19). An overwhelming majority of the project claimed to having contributed to education, tourist services and development of the info-communication services of the region.

No	Socio-economic trends	Number of projects involved	Share of all projects (%)
1.	Moving	8	9,0%
2.	Ageing	8	9,0%
3.	Restructuring sectors	6	6,7%
4.	Restructuring employment	10	11,2%
5.	Increased education	40	44,9%
6.	Tourist services	26	29,2%
7.	ICT	16	18,0%

Table 19: Contribution to socio-economic trends by projects.

Source: own compilation upon analysis of questionnaires.

We can see the same distribution pattern in the number of partners as well (see Table 20).

No	Socio-economic trends	Number of partners involved	Share of all partners (%)
1.	Moving	28	5,8%
2.	Ageing	41	8,5%
3.	Restructuring sectors	33	6,8%
4.	Restructuring employment	49	10,1%
5.	Increased education	219	45,2%
6.	Tourist services	153	31,6%
7.	ICT	85	17,6%

Table 20: Contribution to socio-economic trends by partners.

Source: own compilation upon analysis of questionnaires.

If we also analyse the origin of the partners (see Tables 21, 22), we can conclude, that in general more Slovenian partners claimed to contribute to tackle these social economic trends (except for the first, moving to bigger town trend), but compared to the total number of participants, the distribution of partner is in line with the number of projects regarding both countries.

No	Socio-economic trends	Number of partners involved from Slovenia	Share of all involved partners (%)	Share of all Slovenian partners (%)
1.	Moving	13	46,4%	4,8%
2.	Ageing	24	58,5%	8,8%
3.	Restructuring sectors	17	51,5%	6,3%
4.	Restructuring employment	29	59,2%	10,7%
5.	Increased education	132	60,3%	48,5%
6.	Tourist services	94	61,4%	34,6%
7.	ICT	48	56,5%	17,6%

Table 21: Contribution to socio-economic trends by partners – Slovenia.

Source: own compilation upon analysis of questionnaires.

No	Socio-economic trends	Number of partners involved from Austria	Share of all involved partners (%)	Share of all Austrian partners (%)
1.	Moving	15	53,6%	7,1%
2.	Ageing	17	41,5%	8,0%
3.	Restructuring sectors	16	48,5%	7,5%
4.	Restructuring employment	20	40,8%	9,4%
5.	Increased education	87	39,7%	41,0%
6.	Tourist services	59	38,6%	27,8%
7.	ICT	37	43,5%	17,5%

Table 22: Contribution to socio-economic trends by partners – Austria.

Source: own compilation upon analysis of questionnaires.

Regarding the financial contribution, the distribution of funds follows the same pattern as in case of the number of projects (see Table 23). A small part of the fund claimed to be spent on the first three trends, and the majority of the funds contributed to education, tourist services and development of the info-communication services of the region. The distribution of funds was also equal between the two participating countries (see Tables 24, 25).

No	Socio-economic trends	Realized ERDF in EUR	Share of all realized ERDF (%)
1.	Moving	2 932 783,10 €	4,9%
2.	Ageing	3 531 575,75 €	6,0%
3.	Restructuring sectors	3 580 819,94 €	6,0%
4.	Restructuring employment	6 605 975,50 €	11,1%
5.	Increased education	28 559 726,88 €	48,1%
6.	Tourist services	19 310 648,95 €	32,6%
7.	ICT	13 612 498,49 €	22,9%

Table 23: Contribution to socio-economic trends by realized ERDF.

Source: own compilation upon analysis of questionnaires.

No	Socio-economic trends	Realized ERDF in EUR from Slovenia	Share of realized ERDF of all involved projects (%)	Share of all Slovenian realized ERDF (%)
1.	Moving	1 072 417,16 €	36,6%	3,8%
2.	Ageing	1 823 769,16 €	51,6%	6,4%
3.	Restructuring sectors	1 656 466,40 €	46,3%	5,8%
4.	Restructuring employment	2 984 484,25 €	45,2%	10,4%
5.	Increased education	13 830 302,68 €	48,4%	48,4%
6.	Tourist services	9 823 812,02 €	50,9%	34,4%
7.	ICT	6 417 643,79 €	47,1%	22,5%

Table 24: Contribution to socio-economic trends by realized ERDF – Slovenia.

Source: own compilation upon analysis of questionnaires.

No	Socio-economic trends	Realized ERDF in EUR from Austria	Share of realized ERDF of all involved projects (%)	Share of all Austrian realized ERDF (%)
1.	Moving	1 860 365,94 €	63,4%	6,0%
2.	Ageing	1 707 806,59 €	48,4%	5,6%
3.	Restructuring sectors	1 924 353,54 €	53,7%	6,3%
4.	Restructuring employment	3 621 491,25 €	54,8%	11,8%
5.	Increased education	14 729 424,20 €	51,6%	47,9%
6.	Tourist services	9 486 836,93 €	49,1%	30,9%
7.	ICT	7 194 854,70 €	52,9%	23,4%

Table 25: Contribution to socio-economic trends by realized ERDF – Austria.

Source: own compilation upon analysis of questionnaires.

4.3.2 Analysis of the quality of contribution

Within their answers to the questionnaire, projects also self-assessed the nature of their contribution to socio-economic trends. The verification of these contributions would need ex-post project-level evaluation exercises that is beyond the scope of the current evaluation.

Therefore, in the following, we summarized the contributions formulated by the lead beneficiaries, without further analysis. Some contributions have been claimed to apply to more trends, in this case the remark is enlisted in all trends covered.

Moving:

- Opening new job possibilities in tourism sector, new touristic services.

- Development and re-structuring of tourist services - project has promoted ultralight electric vehicles on bigger touristic events.
- With the renovation of road this road become more attractive for the tourists.
- New developed programmes and techniques are added to the well being of the inhabitants and are a part of the preventive programmes in the health area; services in the preventive health area are representing unused potential.
- The project has focused on the rural not urban areas; one of the goals was to spur the development of services sectors.
- Better access to the services with a web-platform.
- Competence raising in the field of innovations.
- Competence building through excursions, new tourist offers.
- New knowledge, social and cultural exchange, especially for children.
- Higher qualifications of local inhabitants, developed cross border touristic offers in natural adventures.
- Within the vulnerable groups there is a lot of unemployed individuals, which have been educated in herb production, new employment opportunities; and new market opportunities.
- Giving information about the project, brochures, publications, conferences; ICT: informational platform.
- Potential art and crafts producers has been trained in the field of design, arts.
- Development of ICT competences.
- Awareness raising; new competences in the field of health care.
- In the project younger persons (usually they migrate to bigger cities) have been included and their competences have been improved; ICT - webpage, facebook.
- Topic and learning experiences.
- Marketing activities were scattered according to the target audience in certain cities, districts.
- Tourism providers had to deal with the set of criteria and to improve their skills accordingly.
- The segment family holiday (about 25% of the guests are families) considered as a future market. Accordingly, providers develop their offer, because the importance was recognized. Fostering the importance of cultural heritage in regional and by younger population; production of touristic cards for 7 municipalities.
- Start-ups in the rural areas have been promoted.
- New educational programme has been developed; educational programme for unemployed women.
- Through cultural offers the trend of migration will slow down.

Ageing:

- Opening new job possibilities in tourism sector, new touristic services.
- Development and re-structuring of tourist services-project has promoted ultra light electric vehicles on bigger touristic events.
- New developed programmes and techniques are added to the well being of the inhabitants and are a part of the preventive programmes in the health area; services in the preventive health area are representing unused potential.

- Fostering the importance of cultural heritage in regional and by younger population ; production of touristic cards for 7 municipalities.
- Through cultural offers the trend of migration will slow down.
- Better medical service; ICT: e-card for medical services for inhabitants.
- Ambient assistant living.

Restructuring sectors:

- In the mine in Mežica, Kanu tour and adventure park was established; for first time there was a comprehensive touristic offers (transport, guiding, overnights, meals, etc.) in the Slovenian and Austrian side.
- Project activities were focused to re-structuring the business region. Virtual community supports the collaboration and transfer of innovative business ideas and innovative solutions; promotion of business opportunities in the cross-border region.
- Opening new job possibilities in tourism sector, new touristic services.
- New developed programmes and techniques are added to the well being of the inhabitants and are a part of the preventive programmes in the health area; services in the preventive health area are representing unused potential.
- The project has focused on the rural not urban areas; one of the goals was to spur the development of services sectors.
- Competence raising in the field of innovations.

Restructuring employment:

- Restructuring of employment - with local inhabitants new business models have been developed for new touristic services; increased education: awareness raising, about environmental protection, sustainable development: development and restructuring of touristic services: new business models have been developed.
- The project is about new working formats, and gives new perspectives to the youth; a lot of employees in co-working work in the ICT sector.
- Project activities were focused to re-structuring the business region. Virtual community supports the collaboration and transfer of innovative business ideas and innovative solutions; promotion of business opportunities in the cross-border region.
- Opening new job possibilities in tourism sector, new touristic services.
- Within the vulnerable groups there is lot of unemployed individuals, which have been educated in herb production, new employment opportunities; and new market opportunities.
- Topic and learning experiences.
- New educational programme has been developed; educational programme for unemployed women.
- New touristic services, more tourists came to the region, recognition of the area; education through the individual work in touristic centre, development of comprehensive hiking and biking product, developed informational platform and web page for tourists.
- Knowledge transfer and public info sharing.

Increased education:

- With the project employees become more qualified.
- Trainings for employees in the tourism field; new developed products in the tourism service sector.
- Restructuring of employment - with local inhabitants new business models have been developed for new touristic services; increased education: awareness raising, about environmental protection, sustainable development: development and restructuring of touristic services: new business models have been developed.
- Informing the public about the danger of non-native species in vegetation.
- Archaeological sites are open for the public and supports better understanding about the common past; database has a possibility to be further developed.
- Trainings for the SMEs.
- Project activities were focused to re-structuring the business region. Virtual community supports the collaboration and transfer of innovative business ideas and innovative solutions; promotion of business opportunities in the cross-border region.
- Development and re-structuring of tourist services-project has promoted ultra light electric vehicles on bigger touristic events.
- Competence building through excursions, new tourist offers.
- Higher qualifications of local inhabitants, developed cross border touristic offers in natural adventures
- Within the vulnerable groups is lot of unemployed individuals, which have been educated in herb production, new employment opportunities; and new market opportunities.
- Giving information about the project, brochures, publications, conferences; ICT: informational platform.
- Potential art and crafts producers has been trained in the field of design, arts.
- Awareness raising; new competences in the field of health care.
- In the project younger persons (usually they migrate to bigger cities) have been included and their competences have been improved; ICT - webpage, face book
- topic and learning experiences.
- Marketing activities were scattered according to the target audience in certain cities, districts.
- Tourism providers had to deal with the set of criteria and to improve their skills accordingly.
- The segment family holiday (about 25% of the guests are families) considered as a future market. Accordingly, providers develop their offer, because the importance was recognized.
- Fostering the importance of cultural heritage in regional and by younger population ; production of touristic cards for 7 municipalities.
- New educational programme has been developed; educational programme for unemployed women.
- New touristic services, more tourists came to the region, recognition of the area; education through the individual work in touristic centre, development of comprehensive hiking and biking product, developed informational platform and web page for tourists.

- Open sources of digital databases, about a common history; gives opportunity for further development.
- 12 Slovenian and 14 Austrian practical cases have been carried out, knowledge has been transferred from the research institutions to the businesses.
- Development and implementation of bilingual training with 500 training units and 17 participants in Klagenfurt, Kranj and Dravograd.
- Project results will have an impact on the education of local inhabitants and will have easier access to the publications; it is important to have a digitalized access to the publications.
- A lot of information for the public and experts on how to achieve energy efficiency and RES.
- Better competences and qualifications for local inhabitants; developed cross-border offers for natural experiences.
- Through workshops and trainings - competence building.
- Knowledge transfer and public info sharing.
- Further education and training in quality management in tourism; development of services.
- Workshops that have been adjusted to the target groups.
- Trainings for employees.
- Awareness about cultural heritage, developed e-applications.
- Expert documentation; symposia; new knowledge on how to maintain small monuments.
- Implementation of workshops and getting a new knowledge; newly developed programme Team Olympiad presents new offer in the tourism and sport sector.
- With the promotional activities the project has made a contribution to the new knowledge, especially students and researcher.
- Education of instructors and moderators has led to improved capability of experts and improved employment possibilities.

Tourist services:

- the mine in Mežica, Kanu tour and adventure park was established; for first time there was a comprehensive touristic offers (transport, guiding, overnights, meals, etc.) in the Slovenian and Austrian side.
- Trainings for employees in the tourism field; new developed products in the tourism service sector.
- Restructuring of employment - with local inhabitants new business models have been developed for new touristic services; increased education: awareness raising, about environmental protection, sustainable development: development and restructuring of touristic services: new business models have been developed.
- Archaeological sites are open for the public and supports better understanding about the common past; database has a possibility to be further developed.
- Renovation of a small boat (brod) a new touristic service has been developed and more tourists arrived.
- Opening new job possibilities in tourism sector, new touristic services.
- Development and re-structuring of tourist services-project has promoted ultra light electric vehicles on bigger touristic events.

- With the renovation of road this road become more attractive for the tourists.
- Competence building through excursions, new tourist offers.
- Higher qualifications of local inhabitants, developed cross border touristic offers in natural adventures.
- Within the vulnerable groups is lot of unemployed individuals, which have been educated in herb production, new employment opportunities; and new market opportunities.
- Marketing activities were scattered according to the target audience in certain cities, districts.
- Tourism providers had to deal with the set of criteria and to improve their skills accordingly.
- The segment family holiday (about 25% of the guests are families) considered as a future market. Accordingly, providers develop their offer, because the importance was recognized.
- Fostering the importance of cultural heritage in regional and by younger population ; production of touristic cards for 7 municipalities.
- New touristic services, more tourists came to the region, recognition of the area; education through the individual work in touristic centre, development of comprehensive hiking and biking product, developed informational platform and web page for tourists.
- Ambient assistant living.
- Open sources of digital databases, about a common history; gives opportunity for further development.
- Within the project an emphasis has been given to natural preservation of Karavanke and development of nature-friendly touristic products; 12 smaller investments have been carried out.
- Better competences and qualifications for local inhabitants; developed cross-border offers for natural experiences.
- With a project adrenalin touristic offer has been developed, including promotions.
- Touristic offers could be within the project further developed and modernized.
- New touristic products.
- Usage of newly build public spaces in both municipalities.
- Implementation of workshops and getting a new knowledge; newly developed programme Team Olympiad presents new offer in the tourism and sport sector.
- Development of new cultural touristic services.

Info-communication services:

- The project is about new working formats, and gives new perspectives to the youth; a lot of employees in co-working work in the ICT sector.
- Trainings for the SMEs.
- Better access to the services with a web-platform.
- Giving information about the project, brochures, publications, conferences; ICT: informational platform.
- Development of ICT competences.
- In the project younger persons (usually they migrate to bigger cities) have been included and their competences have been improved; ICT - webpage, face book.



- Better medical service; ICT: e-card for medical services for inhabitants.
- New touristic services, more tourists came to the region, recognition of the area; education through the individual work in touristic centre, development of comprehensive hiking and biking product, developed informational platform and web page for tourists.
- Project results will have an impact on the education of local inhabitants and will have easier access to the publications; it is important to have a digitalized access to the publications.
- Possibility to recognize processes to be improved.
- Awareness about cultural heritage, developed e-applications.
- Strengthening ICT in industrial sector.
- Combination of classical newspaper and online newspaper project wants to comprehend general public.

5. External coherence of the programme

5.1 Regulatory compliance

The OP has been elaborated in accordance with the following regulations:

- Council Regulation laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund (EC) No 1083/2006 of 11 July 2006
- Regulation of the European Parliament and the Council on the European Regional Development Fund (EC) No 1080/2006 of 5 July 2006
- The Financial Regulations governing the establishment and implementation of the EU budget and the control of the European Communities' finances.³

The management and control system of the OP has been set up respecting community eligibility rules specified in regulations 1828/2006, 1080/2006 and 1083/2006.

National eligibility rules for ERDF according to Article 56 (4) of Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006) have been specified in both Slovenia and Austria. In Austria, these have been also published in a form of a Manual for beneficiaries and control bodies by the Austrian Federal Chancellery Division IV/4, as a national level coordinating control body. The manual covers all aspects of eligibility, makes detailed references to EU, national and regional legislation and defines tasks and responsibilities of actors involved in reporting and control.

Programme eligibility rules (according to Article 21 and 22 of Regulation (EC) No 1828/2006): as specified in the OP, detailed guidelines and manual for invoicing, the eligibility of costs, reporting and other aspects of project implementation has been provided by the MA/JTS for project partners and controllers. The MA/JTS made regular efforts to explain and clarify these rules during consultations with potential applicants and beneficiary partners.

Organisational structures and procedures have been set up in compliance with EU and national level regulations. The Managing Authority, the JTS provided detailed guidelines for potential applicants and beneficiaries on how to apply these during project implementation.

5.2 Coordination with other Structural Funds programmes

Complementarity with other instruments is stipulated in Art. 9(2) of Council Regulation (EC) 1083/2006. The process of selecting projects within the OP SI-AT 2007-2013, as well as reporting and control activities have been organised in a way that risks of double financing can be avoided.

³ Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 of 25/06/2002 regarding the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities has been in force until 31.12.2012. From 1.12.2013 Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union and repealing Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 came into force.

Besides the OP SI-AT, GODC is the Managing Authority in operational programmes for Objective 3 (OP SI-HU 2007-2013 and OP SI-HR 2007-2013) and for Objective 1, and is responsible for ensuring that assistance from different programmes and funds is complementary to other financial instruments of the Community. In order to ensure the co-ordination across Operational Programmes, the Head of the MA participates at the JMC meetings of all three cross-border programmes in which the GODC is the MA.

The selection and assessment process of the programme, as well as the checking of the approved projects has been organised in a way that double financing is supposed to be avoided. Moreover, Regional Bodies assessed the applications and applicant partners also in terms of their involvement in other programmes. They also coordinated on a daily basis with the JTS during project lifetime. First and second level control bodies have had the responsibility to ensure that control of the operations financed excluded possible double financing of project activities. Frequent desk checks, sample site visits and on the spot checks have been carried out by the programme bodies to support the control of possible overlapping with other instruments

Bilateral, transnational and interregional ETC programmes as well as other programmes financed by the Structural Funds provide support for projects with overlapping geographical coverage in their programme areas. While management and control systems in place ensure avoiding double financing, further coordination arrangements can help to ensure

- added value of territorial cooperation programmes in relation to Objective 1 and 2,
- achieve synergies with other ETC and other programmes,
- transfer of ideas and experiences beyond the immediate programme area.

Coordination arrangements at national level

Coordination with other bilateral ETC programmes, as well as with transnational and interregional programmes are operational in Austria, where the Austrian Conference on Spatial Planning (ÖROK), an organisation established by the federal government, the Länder and municipalities to coordinate spatial development at the national level is responsible for operating a Working Group for this purpose. Regular members of the group are bodies responsible for programme management, e.g. Managing Authorities, Joint Technical Secretariats, Regional Bodies and line ministries. Certifying and Audit Authority representatives also participate occasionally, but are not regular members of the group.

The Working Group has regular meetings at least twice a year, the scope of their coordination encompasses:

- thematic discussions on intervention fields targeted by the programmes,
- avoiding overlaps, building synergies among projects supported by different programmes
- specific administrative and managements aspects of programme implementation

On the Slovenian side, coordination at national level is ensured by the body hosting the Managing Authority of the programme, the Government Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Development and European Cohesion Policy. The Government Office coordinates, defines

and monitors the functioning of ministries, government offices and other authorities and services that are included in the implementation of the EU Cohesion Policy. This office is also hosting the Managing Authority functions for the SI-HU and SI-HR bilateral programmes, and participates in the Monitoring Committees of other Structural Fund programmes, as well.

There was also an attempt from INTERACT to make use of synergies between bilateral ETC programmes by launching a coordinated cross-programme evaluation of ETC programmes in South-East Europe in 2010. This has allowed the forwarding of country-specific experience to various ETC stakeholders in order to compare and learn from planning and implementation activities from other countries.

Coordination arrangements at regional level

Regional Bodies have contributed to programme implementation with delivering publicity and information tasks as well as guidance to potential applicants on application procedures (together with the JTS). They also assisted the JTS in checking applications in terms of cross border cooperation, cross border impact as well as compliance with regional policy strategies. This mechanisms helped to avoid overlaps in regions that were targeted by more than one bilateral ETC programme.

On the Austrian side, Regional Bodies have had regular informal coordination meetings in this topic. In addition, regional management of EAFRD (LEADER) is done within the same organisations that are hosting the Regional Bodies on the Austrian side. Regular meetings are held with the involvement of responsible regional management departments and LEADER Local Action Groups to coordinate projects and funding at regional and sub-regional levels.

Examples for synergies achieved with coordination are the initiatives extending from the bilateral border area, like projects City Cooperation and PILGRIMAGE. Both received funding from the programmes Slovenia-Austria and Austria-Hungary and were implementing common initiatives of a network of partners that has covered three border areas of three countries (SI-AT, SI-HU, AT-HU).

The project PILGRIMAGE is also a good example of co-ordination with transnational programmes, since the two cross-border PILGRIMAGE projects were based on a touristic concept elaborated within a transnational project and has been developed and implemented in coordination with the THETRIS project financed by the CENTRAL programme.

Using the established management and control structures and procedures within the programme and with support of the Government Office for Development and European Cohesion Policy (SI) and ÖROK (AT), the Managing Authority and the JTS ensured necessary complementarity and coordination with other ETC and other Structural Fund programmes.

Coordination between national, regional and ETC programmes was organized in each country and has been assessed also by programme stakeholders as very effective.

Synergies with national/regional programmes is more difficult to evaluate, deeper analysis could be carried out to identify potential synergies in sectors targeted by more programmes.

A more deep analysis of regional and sectoral strategies and projects planned/implemented on both sides within the different OPs in those sectors could be a basis of a process where ETC projects could build up synergies with those financed by other programmes.

However, additional synergies could be achieved as well by enhancing contacts and information flows with other ETC programmes and their target groups through:

- a mutual exchange of information with other ETC programmes (at national level or in a trilateral border area), leading potentially to an increased awareness about the possibilities for collaboration
- meetings of actors involved in the management of ETC programmes in a trilateral border area
- inviting project owners/partners of other cross-border cooperation programmes to programme events
- organizing thematic, sector specific partner search, project development and capitalization fora in topics of interest for a larger (trilateral or bigger) area, also using new media, internet online forums, etc.
- making efforts to reduce formal obstacles in order to allow for the implementation of more trilateral projects

6. Internal performance of the programme

6.1 The overall governance and management system of the programme

6.1.1 Programme Bodies

Managing Authority (MA)

The Slovenian and Austrian programme partners designated the responsibility of the Managing Authority (MA) to the Government Office for Local Self-Government and Regional Policy (Slovenia), represented by the Unit for Managing of Cross-border Programmes Maribor.

According to Article 60 of Council Regulation (EC) No. 1083/2006, the Managing Authority has been responsible for managing and implementing the operational programme in accordance with the principle of sound financial management, and, besides the responsibilities mentioned in the Council Regulation, the MA is responsible for Contracting ERDF with the lead partners with a standard frame contract on the basis of a partnership agreement between the project partners and the formal performing of all relevant project changes, preparing all relevant standardized forms for project application, evaluation and decision following the decisions of the JMC, collection of the final reports from the lead partners and submission of the cost statement to the CA regarding all EU-regulations.

Joint Technical Secretariat

The JTS has been installed right at the start of programme implementation and its main role was to assure effective support of the MA and the JMC as well as assessment of applications in collaboration with the RBs.

The JTS has been placed within a unit of the MA in the border area, the Government Office for Local Self-Government and Regional Policy of Slovenia, represented by the Unit for Managing of Cross-border Programmes in Maribor. The JTS has assisted applicants with the implementation of the 89 operations supported by the programme.

In line with Article 14 Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006, the JTS has been responsible for the joint programme management tasks, in particular for the following: preparation of the agreements based on a Memorandum of Understanding between the MA and the programme partners, the setup, regular maintenance and updating of the monitoring system ISARR, drafting of standardised forms for project applications and for project assessments, receiving project outlines and submit those to programme partners, receiving project applications and register them into the ISARR system, formal check of project applications in terms of administrative compliance and eligibility, preparation of the quality assessment in cooperation with the MA and programme partners, delivery of project information and summarised information on submitted projects as well as programme budget information to the JMC, safeguarding the coherence between the ERDF-contract and the contract for national/regional co-financing, collection of progress project reports from the Lead partners in terms of content and costs, preparing changes of ERDF-contracts based on project changes

applied from the lead partners in accordance with the regional and national funding authorities, monitoring of project and programme implementation.

Joint Monitoring Committee

In line with Article 11 and 63 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006, the Joint Monitoring Committee has been set up in the beginning of 2008, composed of Austrian representatives from national and Länder level, Slovenian representatives from national and regional level as well as representatives from the NGO sector and social partners. It has worked as the bilateral platform for steering and monitoring programme implementation. The JMC has adopted its own Rules of Procedure in agreement with the Managing Authority. The JMC has performed its functions taking decisions in consensus, as set out in the Regulation and the OP.

The monitoring system ISARR was developed in 2008 and has been operating since. It was adjusted and refined according to the needs of both sides, the MA/JTS provided a manual and trainings for controllers and beneficiaries on how to use the system.

Certifying Authority (CA)

The OP specified the Public Fund for Regional Development (Slovenia) as the body responsible for tasks of the Certifying Authority (CA) in accordance with Article 59 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006.

Besides the responsibilities mentioned in the Council Regulation (most importantly drawing up and submitting to the Commission certified statements of expenditure and applications for payment), the CA has been responsible for collection of the cost statements submitted by the MA, checking requests and releasing funds, receiving the ERDF funds from the EC and transferring the co-financing to the lead partner through the paying unit.

Representatives of Certifying Authority took part at the Bilateral Programming Group Meetings and Joint Monitoring Committee meetings which contributed to smooth programme implementation.

Audit Authority (AA)

The function of the Audit Authority responsible for the OP in line with Article 59 lit. and Article 62 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 has been designated to by the Ministry of Finance (Slovenia), represented by Budget Supervision Office, Ministry of Finance. The Audit Authority has been assisted by a representative of the Federal Chancellery (Austria), Division IV/3., forming a group of auditors, details of the system have been described in the Audit Strategy of the programme. The AA carries out its tasks in accordance with Article 62 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006, it prepared 7 Annual Control Reports.

In compliance with the Audit Strategy for the CBC Programme Slovenia-Austria 2007-2013 in this period, the system audit of the NCU in Slovenia and two system audits of the NCUs in Carinthia (Austria) were performed. No systemic problems were identified during the system audits of the national FLC in Slovenia. During the first system audit in Austria, serious deficiencies were detected with systemic nature in the implementation of the first level control

in Carinthia. Necessary financial corrections could be defined and implemented, as reported in the Annual Implementation Report 2014.

Regional Bodies (RB)

RBs have been involved in supporting the JTS in its information and publicity work about the programme, in assessing the applications' compliance with regional policy strategies, fulfilment of organisational, legal, technical and economic requirements, expected outputs of operations, quality, cross border cooperation and cross border impact.

They also supported the process by monitoring the implementation of the operations and providing support to the project partners when preparing their reports.

Bilateral Programming Group

The Bilateral Programming Group has been operated by the MA to discuss operational tasks, schedules and open questions of programme implementation. Representatives of the JTS, Regional Bodies, as well as the Certifying and Audit authorities participated on the meetings.

6.1.2 Programme procedures

Co-funding rules

The co-funding rules were set up in accordance with the Council Regulation; the costs for the programme were paid as unrecoverable assistance (grant) from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). In both countries it represented 85% of the eligible costs at maximum.

Application procedures, project selection

The programme has been open for applications for legal entities, both profit and non-profit, established either by public or private law and sole proprietors. A joint application procedure has been applied and managed by the Joint Technical Secretariat, using open calls for applications. The Lead Partner principle has been applied throughout the programme.

The assistance provided to the applicants included detailed information provided by the Managing Authority, JTS and RBs about the programme's objectives, the prerequisites for obtaining ERDF funds and the individual procedures to be followed during planning, implementation and follow-up of projects. Active public relations work has been carried out by these bodies to raise awareness about the programme and to communicate rules and procedures to follow. A detailed Guideline for Applicants as well as a guideline covering implementation and reporting rules have been prepared and made available on the programme website.

Project applicants had also the possibility to submit a project outline to the JTS, which checked the coherence of these project outlines, discussed them in a common joint Regional Body group and provided a non-binding feedback for potential applicants. This possibility was used by 40 partnerships till the end of 2009. The reason for this was that the frequency

of the open Calls was concentrated to this programme period. After that, the project applicants did not submit any project outlines anymore; but submitted their final project applications within the deadlines foreseen in the Call.

Support provided to potential applicants also included the Regional Bodies that helped to find cross-border project partners, clarify application procedures, requirements for funding in co-operation with the JTS and MA.

The selection procedures were managed by the JTS, project applications, also in electronic form, had to be submitted through a bilingual Application Form to the JTS, with all required annexes. Each complete application which fulfils the necessary formal requirements for ERDF-funding (cross-border impact, administrative compliance, eligibility, etc.) has been reported by the JTS to the ISARR system. All information on the changes of applications have been available to programme partners via the ISARR system.

Selection criteria together with criteria for administrative and eligibility check have been defined in the Guide for Applicants and have been used for project selection. The selection criteria combined the three dimensions of relevance, quality of cross-border co-operation and quality of content, as follows:

Relevance:

- Relevance of the problem addressed and contribution to achievement of the programme overall and priority objectives.
- Impact to the programme area: location, sectors, beneficiaries
- Effect on the sustainable development - economic, environmental, socio-cultural
- Value added - joint solutions beyond present practice in the field/sectors - advantage of a cross-border compared to national approach only

Quality of cross-border cooperation:

- Quality of cross-border partnership: relevance of partnership, number of partners, competence, roles, previous experience, capacities
- Quality of cross-border co-operation: joint development, joint implementation, joint staffing, joint financing

Quality of content:

- Contribution to national/regional policy: compliance, synergies
- Soundness of the project: coherence and logic between the project justification, objectives, outputs
- Outputs: appropriateness, feasibility, concrete and measurable/identifiable, expected use of outputs: feasibility, benefit provides to future users
- Activities: feasibility, appropriateness to achieve the planned outputs, feasibility of timeframe, eligibility of costs and value for money

Regional Bodies were involved in supporting the JTS assessing the applications' compliance with regional policy strategies, fulfilment of organisational, legal, technical and economic requirements, expected outputs of operations, quality, cross border cooperation and cross border impact.

In order to obtain the financial support of the programme, all projects had to meet at least minimum standards in all of these dimensions. A high share of the projects was able to meet such criteria altogether 192 applications within two Open Calls, the Public Call for Project Ideas and the procedure for approval of the strategic projects were funded in the frame of the OP SI-AT 2007–2013 (see Table 1).

Considering also the financial performance of the programme that means, the above criteria and process allowed a selection of good quality projects for the funding available. At the end of the application process, the JTS has prepared the final list of recommended projects for a submission to the JMC.

The questionnaires filled in by the project partners showed that very few project partners experienced difficulties during the application phase (see Figure 25).

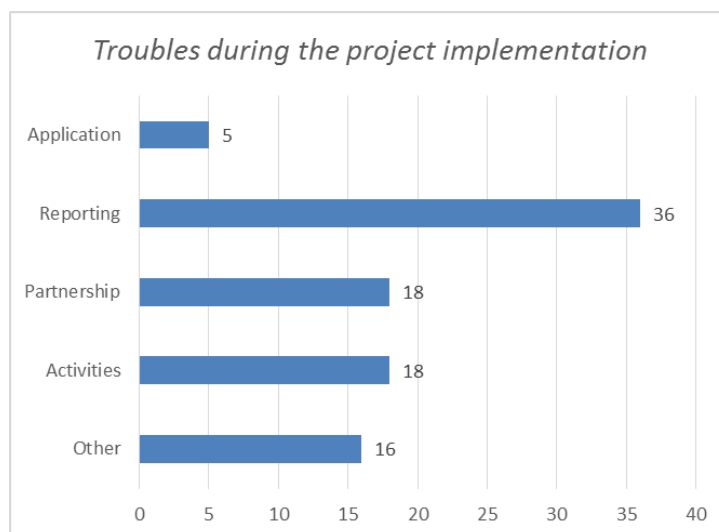


Figure 25: Troubles during project implementation.

Source: own compilation upon analysis of questionnaires.

Collaboration with the MA/JTS as well as regional bodies has been also rated as good during the survey, only a low share of beneficiaries experienced problems with these bodies (see Figure 26 rating quality of collaboration from 1 to 4).

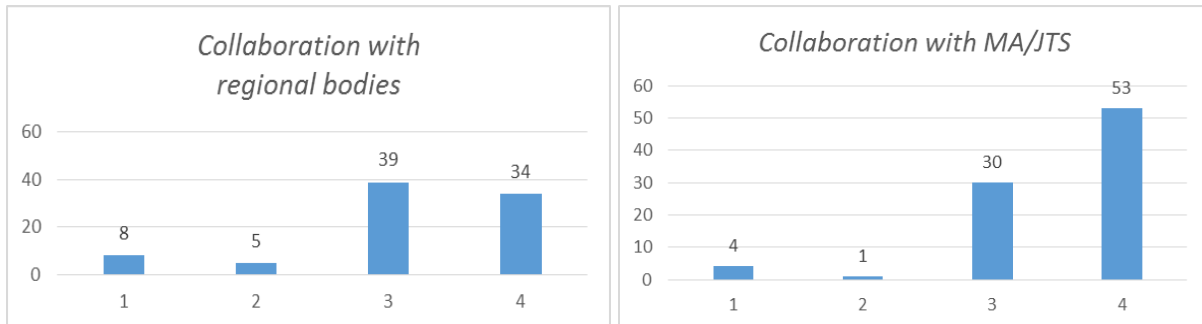


Figure 26: Collaboration problems.

Source: own compilation upon analysis of questionnaires.

Contracting

Upon decision taken by the JMC, lead beneficiaries have been notified by the Managing Authority about the approval or rejection of the proposed project. The ERDF contract was issued by the MA on the basis of a bilingual standard ERDF frame contract, which was identical to the regional/national co-financing contract in all main chapters. It was also possible that JMC set conditions which needed to be fulfilled prior to the project approval. In this case the Managing Authority (supported by the JTS and RBs) negotiated with the Lead Partner. It was also compulsory that Lead Partners and project partners sign a Partnership Contract (a sample has been provided in the Application pack), in which their rights and obligations were determined.

The JTS was also responsible for preparing changes of ERDF-contracts based on project changes applied from the lead partners and approved by the MA in accordance with the regional and national funding authorities.

Based on the filled-in questionnaires, as shown in Figure 25, there were few problems on the beneficiary side with signing and changing contracts. Only one project partner reported difficulties in that respect out of 89 projects.

Reporting and financial control

To ensure validation of expenditures as set out in Article 16 (1) (EC) 1080/2006, both Slovenia and Austria as Member States designated first (FLC) and second level controllers responsible for verifying legality and regularity of expenditures declared by each beneficiary in the programme. All in all 4 bodies (1 in Slovenia, and 1 in Burgenland, Carinthia and Styria, each) have been designated. The national FLCs were also responsible for providing information to project partners about eligibility of costs, cost statements, national legislation and other reporting requirements including the information system ISARR. In each member state the FLCs performed the on-the-spot checks on the project partners participating in operations, too.

Detailed guidelines for a common understanding of the eligibility of costs has been elaborated by the MA for project partners and Controllers. In order to ensure transparent and sound implementation, a Manual for Verification and Validation of Expenditures has also been elaborated at the start of the programme period.

The reporting periods depended on project duration, as a general rule, a progress report had to be elaborated every six months. For each accounting period, a report package (consisting of a progress report, a financial report and a statement of costs in national language) had to be submitted by each project partner to its responsible controller for assessment and to the LP for information. After certification, project partners had to forward their certificate of expenditure to the LP, who was in charge of collecting all certifications for the common bilingual project level report. The lead partner submitted the joint report including information on the actual cooperation, activities, results, impacts and eventual changes of the project plan to the JTS for final check. The JTS had to cross-check the report in terms of certified activities and project progress.

After having checked the overall report, the MA issued the cost statement and submitted it to the Certifying Authority. On the payment request of the Certifying Authority, the EC checked the request and released the funds to the CA, and finally the paying unit of the CA transferred the ERDF funds to the lead partner. Regional bodies supported the process by monitoring the implementation of the operations and providing support to the project partners when preparing their reports.

The programme faced an interruption of payments by the EC in 2013, due to irregularities detected by the AA due to exceeding the threshold of the permitted 2%, the AA detected 9,87% of irregularities in the frame of the audits. During the interruption, the programme received only partial payments, the affected funds have only been released by the EC only at the end of December 2014. This created severe pre-financing problems at the level of the projects and the operation of the beneficiaries.

Figure 25 shows that a large number of project partners experienced problems during reporting. 36 out of 89 projects reported troubles with this activity. In a high number of projects, beneficiaries experienced problems with the FLC, 29 projects rated their level of cooperation with the FLC to lower end (see Figure 27, rating quality of collaboration from 1 to 4).

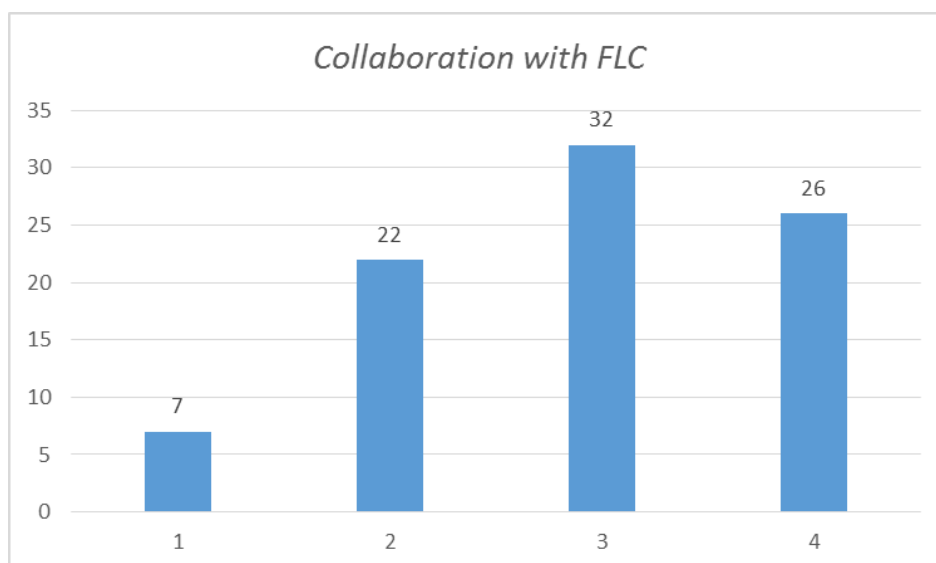


Figure 27: Quality of collaboration with JTS, source: own compilation upon analysis of questionnaires

Most frequent problems mentioned were delays in control processes, the high administrative workload required to complete reports, changes in FLC staff, differences at various FLCs causing misunderstandings.

On the other hand, as shown in Figure 26, collaboration with the MA and the JTS has been rated as good, noting also that this collaboration also comprises the application and contracting phases.

Furthermore, a significant share of incoming suggestions for improving programme implementation have targeted issues linked to reporting and monitoring (see Figure 28).

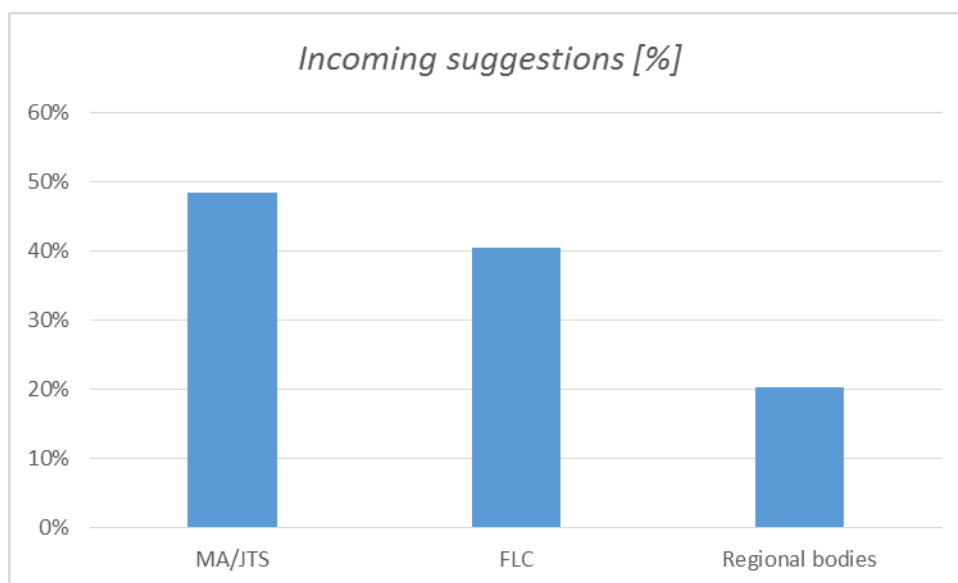


Figure 28: Target of suggestions of project beneficiaries

Source: own compilation upon analysis of questionnaires

In this case, suggestions on more quick and flexible reporting/monitoring procedures have also been targeted towards the MA/JTS. Another large set of suggestions included the provision of some kind of pre-financing by the programme, since a high share (18 out of 89) projects experienced problems with implementing their activities, partly because of pre-financing problems. The complete list of changes suggested by respondents has been provided for the MA/JTS by the evaluators.

Main findings of the survey carried out in 2013 related to OP management structures⁴

As detailed in chapter 6.2, a survey was carried out in the year 2013 to evaluate the achievements of the goals of the Communication Plan, this survey also asked questions focusing on the assessment of the satisfaction of the respondents with MA/JTS, RBs and FLC units.

⁴ <http://www.si-at.eu/images/uploads/Analysis%20of%20the%20survey.pdf>

Majority of respondents was satisfied with the work of all three institutions while a minority of respondents was not. There were more respondents being not satisfied with work of the FLC in comparison to the responses given for the other two type of institutions. Lowest overall satisfaction rates could be detected with the Slovenian FLC (36%), while this figure was 71% for Austrian FLCs. On the other hand, only 12% (SI) and 11% (AT) of respondents were not satisfied with services of the FLC, these figures were 6% and 8% for the MA/JTS and the Regional Bodies, respectively.

Respondents of this survey have proposed similar improvements to the ones gathered by the survey carried out in the framework of this evaluation, e.g.: to simplify the application and reporting procedures, 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 information system which should be available also in German language, to introduce an e-monitoring system, to provide more information on the approved projects and their results (on the homepage, at events), to pre-finance the project activities by the programme structures, to provide clear and general guidelines that will not be changed during the programme period, to introduce a small project fund or the possibility of strategic projects in the frame of the programme, to put greater emphasis on the content and added value of projects, to provide more assistance (also on-the-spot) during the application and implementation process (especially questions concerning the eligibility of funds) and to provide a higher level of transparency (especially in the assessment and decision-making process).

The management and control systems of the OP have been set up by the MA and programme partners in time, and started their operation in 2008. Besides informing potential applicants and beneficiaries about the programme, emphasis has been given to provide all support to elaborate applications and implement projects (manuals, workshops, consultations, etc.). Based on surveys, it can be stated that a vast majority of beneficiaries are clearly satisfied with the work and activities of the MA/JTS and regional bodies on both sides, while satisfaction with the services of the Slovenian FLC lag behind.

Regular coordination and project implementation review meetings among JTS and FLC units could help to avoid bottlenecks and contribute to even more uniform FLC practices.

6.2 Evaluation of communication activities of the programme

The communication plan of the OP SI-AT was prepared in April 2008 and submitted for the EC for approval. The plan has been elaborated based on the provisions that have been laid out in European regulations (EC) 1828/2006, section 1 (art. 2 to 10) for the implementation of the EU regulations (EC) 1083/2006 (art. 69) and 1080/2006 regarding information and publicity. The plan was approved by the European Commission on 23 June 2008.

The plan covered all necessary aspects detailed in EC Regulation 1828/2006 :

- aims and target groups

- strategy and content of the publicity and information measures to be taken
- indicative budget for the plan's implementation
- responsible bodies for its implementation
- details on how the MA shall monitor the fulfilment of objectives of the communication plan

The plan has been changed once during the period with further specification of target groups and indicators. The performance of communication activities has been monitored by the MA and has been reported to the EC in the Annual Implementation Reports (AIRs). These reports included detailed information (topic, date, nr. of participants) on workshops, seminars and informative events organized by the Managing Authority, the Joint Technical Secretariat as well as Information and PR activities in the programme area 2011 by the Regional bodies. The AIRs also reported on progress in terms of indicators set in the communication plan as well as qualitative information gathered through surveys and financial information about publicity measures of the programme.

The main target groups of the communication actions were the potential applicants and the interested public in the programme area. The communication plan defined 3 sets of measures to be implemented: promotional, information and support measures.

Promotional measures

Activities defined in the Communication Plan within this measure were the formation of the visual image, a slogan, programme website, advertising in mass media, events (conferences, round tables, forums, symposiums, etc.) hanging of the European flag in front of the MA for 1 week starting on 9 May, promotional products. Programme communication activities have been launched in 2008 in a timely manner, setting up the above tools and organizing kick off events and workshops by both MA/JTS and the Regional Bodies. Continuous promotional activities included:

- Updating the joint programme website, programme intranet with relevant information and guides regarding calls, different aspect of project implementation, news, press releases, events etc.
- Creating and updating mailing lists, publishing e-newsletters (9 were published).
- Organizing events and workshops for potential applicants and beneficiaries.
- Purchasing promotional materials (pens, pencils, notebooks, post-its, USB-sticks, reflective bands, bags, hats, T-shirts, bottles, first-aid kits, etc.) and distributing them among beneficiaries, programme partners and the participants of the workshops and annual events.

Information measures

Activities delivered under information measures included the programme kick-off event and yearly major information events, publication of the list of the beneficiaries on the programme website, operating the JTS call centre, online publications, direct e-mail messages subscribers of the mailing lists, thematic seminars in order to increase the cooperation of potential beneficiaries. Major annual events were organized in harmony with other cross-border programmes in the area during the European co-operation day.

Support measures

Activities carried out under support measures included workshops, internal meetings of employees of the MA and JTS, who handle information and publicity of the OP SI-AT, opinion polls on cross-border cooperation (in 2nd half of 2013) and the programme and publishing the guidelines on implementation of information and publicity measures (in 2009).

According to the Communication Plan, MA shall provide help by external advisers to efficiently implement the Communication Plan by studies or by opinion polls concerning the influence of communication measures on various target groups. Several studies have been done in 2010 and 2011, in the frame of the programme. The JTS carried out an internal analysis of the 1st Open Call (March 2010) and an internal analysis of the Open Calls in the frame of the OP SI-AT (December 2011). The programme participated in the two cross-programme studies on thematic and operative aspects of cross-border cooperation: »Thematic aspects of cross-border cooperation in Central and South-Eastern Europe: Understanding the added value« and »Operational aspects of cross-programme cooperation in Central and South-Eastern Europe – Support mutual learning« (both in July 2010). Furthermore In 2013, the JTS prepared an online survey on the cross-border cooperation between Slovenia and Austria, which consisted of three parts (general questions, information and publicity in the frame of the OP SI-AT and questions concerning the New Financial Perspective 2014-2020).

Training of MA/JTS staff: Workshops were intended primarily to staff involved in the implementation of the OP SI-AT with the goal of providing expert support and training concerning the management system of the programme, along with skills necessary for successful carrying out of activities. Following activities have been carried out:

- workshop on the usage of the intranet and website (organizer: ILAB d.o.o.)
- workshop on the ISARR system (internal workshop)
- workshop on the usage of excel sheets (internal workshop)
- workshop on Lotus Notes/SPIS (internal workshop)
- thematic workshops organized by the INTERACT programme (the MA and each JTS member attended approx. 1-2 workshops a year from his/her thematic area, e.g. project selection, reporting and monitoring, information and publicity, etc.)

Furthermore, applicants were continuously provided with supporting information. Activity managers of the JTS were acting as responsible phone/e-mail contact points for applicants throughout the period, so the JTS has been continuously informing and assisting beneficiaries over email, phone and with personal consultations at the JTS office in Maribor. Guidelines, instructions and manuals were elaborated and constantly updated in order to assist potential applicants and beneficiaries.

Promotional and information events

A very high number (85) of promotional and information events have been organized and conducted by the MA/JTS and regional bodies reaching 6677 persons (see Table 26).

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Cumulative number of information events	0	19	37	55	68	71	80	85
Cumulative number of participants (appr.)	0	1005	1575	2520	2991	6024	6522	6677

Table 26: Promotional and information events.

Source: Source: Annual Implementation Report of the OP SI-AT, 2014.

Feedback forms have been used on most of the workshops for beneficiaries carried out in the frame of the OP SI-AT. These showed generally good satisfaction rates, results and suggestions gathered have been used to improve communication activities through different channels (mainly the website, e-newsletters and events). Online evaluation has been used during the survey carried out in 2013 (see below).

Primary media channels used by the OP SI-AT to communicate were the internet site of the Programme (www.si-at.eu) and the internet site of the Managing Authority institution (www.svlr.gov.si and www.mgrt.gov.si). The website of the programme www.si-at.eu was launched in October 2008 and has been constantly updated with the latest programme information, information on the implementation of operations, announcements of events, press releases and other relevant programme news, information and documents have been provided in Slovenian, German and English languages. A programme intranet for programme partners has been set up, and was updated continuously, mailing lists have also been created, updated and used continuously by the JTS.

Achievement of results targeted in the Communication Plan

Table 27 has been taken from the AIR for year 2014 and shows the progress in terms of indicators and targets set in the communication plan.

Indicator	Indicator Type	Unit of Measurement	Initial Value	Value 2007	Value 2008	Value 2009	Value 2010	Value 2011	Value 2012	Value 2013	Value 2014	Target value at the end of programme period
Number of visitors to the website	Indicator of result	Visits	0	0	8.721	20.333	28.355	69.338	74.144	104.813	NA	80.000
Number of different visitors	Indicator of result	Visitors	0	0	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	43.171	NA	8.000
Number of events/workshops performed	Indicator of result	Events	0	0	3	7	14	18	19	21	26	8
Number of publications – printed	Indicator of output	Issues	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3.000
Number of mailing list members	Indicator of result	Addressee	0	0	122	247	334	387	428	462	497	450
Number of submitted electronic messages with informative contents	Indicator of result	Messages	0	0	9	28	44	63	75	94	119	80
Studies and opinion polls (analyses of questionnaires etc.)	Indicator of result	Issues	0	0	0	0	0	4	4	4	4	4

Table 27: Progress of communication plan⁵

Source: Annual Implementation Report of the OP SI-AT, 2014

Table 27 shows that all targets except for publications have been reached and exceeded by far. Visits to the website reached over 100.000, number of different visitors exceeded the target by 5 times, since programme bodies have been very active to organize publicity, information and support events.

Main findings of the survey carried out in 2013⁶:

In accordance with the Communication Plan of the OP SI-AT, a survey was carried out in the year 2013 to evaluate the achievements of the goals of Communication Plan. It was distributed among programme and project partners in Slovenia and Austria, the members of the JMC, all programme partners and all co-workers at the MEDT as well as all German or Slovenian speaking JTSs, the INTERACT point in Vienna and was published on different

⁵ Note: publications planned were not yet realized, since handbooks, guidelines, programme information, newsletters have been prepared and disseminated in electronic formats that proved to be an effective means of communication. The indicator “Number of publications – printed” will be reached in 2015, as the final publication containing information on the results of the projects will be prepared and published.

⁶ <http://www.si-at.eu/images/uploads/Analysis%20of%20the%20survey.pdf>

websites (the programme website, the website and Facebook page of the MEDT, partner websites, tc.), too. The main part of the survey addressed questions on information and publicity (questions on events, the programme homepage, the programme logo, etc.).

Survey results showed that the main medium of hearing about the OP SI-AT was the internet (33%), followed by the Lead and Project Partners (18%) as well as the programme and project events (16%).

When asked about their participation in programme/project events, most of the respondents replied that they attended the workshops for applicants in the frame of the OP SI-AT, tightly followed by events in the frame of the 17 projects of the OP SI-AT, workshops for beneficiaries on reporting and the ISARR system and annual events of the OP SI-AT, all in all 68% of respondents participated on a programme event organised by the MA/JTS.

Majority of respondents were familiar with the programme's homepage (81%) and they rated it positively (58,3% in average) according to six content-related criteria. More than 48 % of respondents have registered on the programme's homepage for receiving the e-news of the programme (news that are uploaded on the programme's homepage), and 67 % of these respondents have already read at least one issue of the e-newsletter of the programme "OP-S-A" which contain relevant information on the programme implementation (events, projects, etc.) Concerning the programme logo, the vast majority of respondents 83 % rated it as being recognizable.

Although 36% of respondents have never participated in EU funded programmes or projects before, the survey showed a good knowledge of the programme and projects financed thanks the information and publicity activities of the programme and the projects.

Activities of beneficiaries relating to information and publicity measures for the public

The management and control system of the programme has been set up in a way to ensure the compliance with Article 8 EC Reg. No. 1828/2006. Informational activities carried out by the operations themselves have been reported and checked. The MA/JTS supported some of these activities with issuing relevant guidelines, and participation at the events.

Figure 29 shows the usage of different communication tools by the projects supported by the programme, based on the questionnaires of the lead beneficiaries.

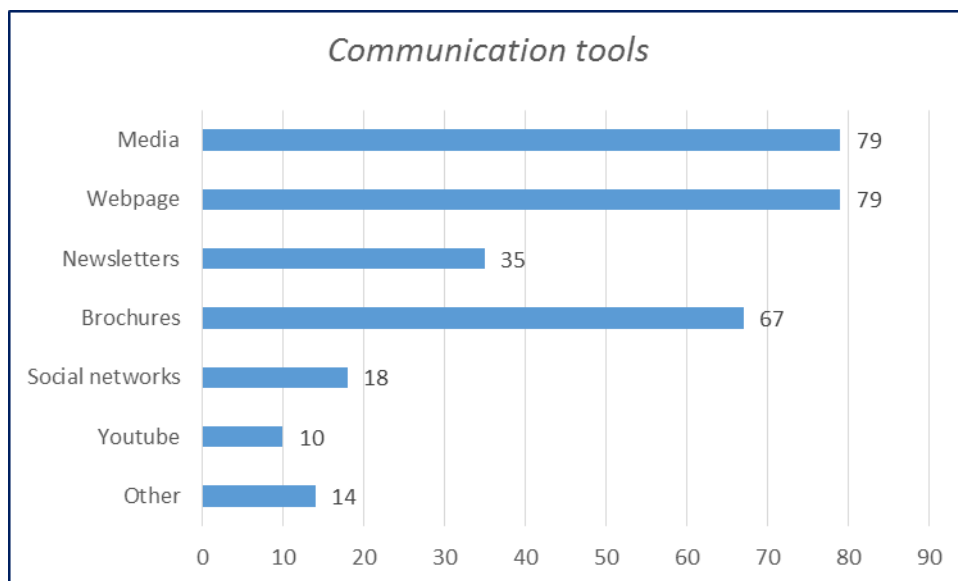


Figure 29: Usage of communication tools

Source: own compilation upon analysis of questionnaire

It can be concluded that most projects used “classic” media tools to promote their initiatives and their results, less than a fifth of projects used new or social media for that. Good examples included:

- Facebook pages: Adventure Petzen, Alpe Adria Coworking, Crossborder ACTIVE 2020, CUL-Energy 4 Kids, DUO Kunsthandwerk, EXP-ERT 2020, FAMILY CENTRES, InterArch-Steiermark, POLYREGION and a Facebook campaign by project UL4C;
- Virtual community created by the project Business region LK;
- Youtube videos: Alpe Adria Coworking, Amc Promo BID, MOVE, SI-K Exportcoop SEE and UL4C

Several projects used other direct communication tools to reach their target groups with:

- dissemination workshops, open space events, symposia, expert discussions - CULTH:EX CAR, GOR INNO CBC, MOVE and REACT;
- organising and/or participating on conferences presenting the project - CROSS INNO, Karawanks@future.eu, KOOP FLEXIBE AUTOMATION, PROMT-ICT and QILK;
- mobile exhibitions, excursions - Spomeniki/Denkmäler and REACT
- Distribution of promotional objects – VAINNO and Recovery

The Managing Authority fulfilled its tasks as described in EC Reg. 1828/2006, Art.5-7. The communication strategy and its implementation responded to the information needs of the target audiences as shown by high number of website hits, by high attendance at programme events and positive feedbacks gathered by the surveys.

Tools and messages chosen were in line with the objectives of the communication plan and OP strategy. Programme communication proved to be effective in improving awareness and

knowledge about cross border co-operation and the OP SI-AT itself. As shown in the survey of 2013, the programme has reached a high number of people that were not involved in cross-border cooperation programmes and projects before.

Considering the high performance in terms of results and the fact that expenditures for information and publicity activities has reached only 64,1% (EUR 153.849,86) of the total budget of EUR 240.000 planned for this purpose by the end of 2014, these programme activities can be evaluated as highly effective.

Future programme communication activities could increase their added value through measures like the following recommended activities:

- organizing area specific forums targeting relatively passive territorial areas (like some areas in the immediate vicinity of the border) and PP types (e.g. local municipalities) through targeted interactive events for information transfer, networking and project generation.
- organizing thematic/sector specific forums for capitalization of completed projects, networking, partner search and project development in topics of interest for a larger (trilateral or bigger) area also
- besides newsletters, using more new media, internet online forums not only to promote the programme but to motivate participation with frequent reports and other information on ongoing projects' activities and results.

A summary and recommendations of this evaluation in terms of programme communication are shown in the table below, using a 3-level classification (see Table 28).

	Compliance with communication objectives	Efficiency of management	Efficiency of budget	Effectiveness of distribution	Effectiveness of targeting
Media communication	Provide more information on approved projects and their results	Good cooperation among MA/JTS and RBs	Highly effective	Press conferences and press releases distributed to media	Unified visual identity
Online tools	Provide more information on approved projects and their results	All documents and guidelines available Newsletter subscription	Highly effective	Mailing lists Newsletters are effective	Simplify navigation on the site
Publications	Set up objectives for publication activities Publish publications more frequently to raise awareness about the programme	Define and keep a timely editorial plan		Define rules of distribution to programme and project partners	
Events	High number of people reached	Use unified online feedback forms for programme events	Highly effective	Usage of online tools (homepage, e-newsletters, mailing lists) has been effective for preparing events and disseminating their outcomes	High number of events Involvement of Regional Bodies Unified visual identity

Table 28: Evaluation of programme communication – good room for improvement unsatisfactory

Source: Own compilation.

7 Final conclusions

The Slovenia-Austria Cross-border Cooperation Programme 2007-2013 has been launched on a “promising” border of one of the most developed “old” member states, Austria and the most developed new member state, Slovenia in 2007. This new programme could base on the results and experiences of the former successful INTERREG IIIA Programme, so cross-border cooperation has not been a novelty here.

Target areas of the programme include dominantly mountainous Alpine territories, especially in the west of the region, being dominantly rural areas. In spite of the dominance of the Alpine landscape and the rural features, the programme area involved some strong urban areas, including federal state capitals of Graz, Klagenfurt, the city of Villach from Austria; in Slovenia the two largest cities, Ljubljana and Maribor. Besides these urban nodes further micro-regional centres are weak urban areas. This balanced geographical setting may imply a balanced distribution of activities and funding between the two sides. Even if both countries belong to the more developed in the EU, a very considerable development difference is seen, in favour of Austria.

Programme priorities were defined in order to leave thematic coverage as wide as possible, in order to make a cross-border cooperation present in all areas of regional development. This approach, on the other hand, resulted a relatively unfocused programme, with vaguely defined priorities.

Priority 1 focused on competitiveness, knowledge and economic cooperation, including SME development, tourism, education and training activities and promotion of economic activities of regional strengths. Priority 2, sustainable and balanced development, focused on natural resources, environment, energy, urban and regional development, social and cultural development. Programme priorities were defined in order to leave thematic coverage as wide as possible and to make a cross-border cooperation present in all areas of a regional development. This approach was resulting in a relatively unfocused programme, with rather vaguely defined priorities. The lack of a real thematic focus allows a broad adjustment to the socio-economic development, thus calling for a clarified and tailor-made selective thematic priority areas, that could result in more focused projects with even more tangible and sustainable results.

Programme impact

Programme impact assessment has been based on the following aspects of the programme performance:

- achievement of indicators;
- thematic analysis of projects;
- geographical distribution of funds;
- analysis of partnership structure;
- tangible project results;
- cost efficiency of projects;
- deviations in project implementation;
- sustainability of projects;
- contribution to horizontal policies.

Indicators were defined at three levels:

- Degree of cooperation: out of the four cooperation criteria provided (joint development, joint implementation, joint staffing, joint financing) each project has to fulfil at least two criteria, while more quality projects aim at a higher degree of cooperation, fulfilling three or even four of the criteria.
- Areas of cross-border cooperation: these indicators are defined upon the number of projects successfully implemented under specific selected key areas of cooperation (infrastructure, public services, ICT, environment, education, SME development, bilingualism).
- Priority-level thematic indicators: each activity field within the two priorities has a set of indicators reflecting the nature of the activity field, projects were linked to 4-4 activity fields under each priority.

The priority system has been accompanied with an indicator system focusing nearly exclusively on numbers of projects financed under the single thematic areas. **The indicator system can be considered as satisfactory in terms of assessing outputs. Relevance of the output indicators can be regarded as sufficient.** On the other hand, the lack of baseline values could be noted (despite the history of co-operation in previous programme periods, all baselines were set as 0).

The system of indicators/targets has not been focused on effects of the programme on the target groups (e.g. stakeholders, local population), neither on benefits gained through cross border co-operation in terms of the 2 selected priorities. Indicators defined by the programme are rather weak in terms measuring results and impacts of the programme. **Indicators on cooperation were more focusing on the volume of the cooperation rather than on its quality.**

The **main weakness of programme level indicators was the lack of real result and impact indicators**, hampering also a sound evaluation of achievements. All the indicators set in the programme were numerical ones e.g. “number of projects”. Indicators set were not suitable to cover outcomes of the programme and/or reflect the defined specific objectives.

Furthermore, from the content perspective the **programme indicators were overlapping with each other** (e.g. indicators with codes 42, 43, and 44), making a specific indicator-oriented analysis even more difficult, and encourage misunderstanding by the beneficiaries in the application as well as in the reporting phase. The analysis was also limited by the fact that project beneficiaries could link their projects to one or more of the activity fields under each priority. This means priority-level thematic indicators could not be analysed separately analysed due to their overlapping. This again shows that content of priority-level thematic indicators had insufficient specificity; definition of these types of indicators should have been done more precisely.

Indicators concerning areas of cross-border cooperation show a fairly good ratio of realisation, most of target values have been achieved, several times they were even exceeded. Indicator for projects involving SMEs was the only cooperation area which was

under performed – this clearly shows the missing of the unimplemented small project fund initiative originally planned in the programme.

The most significant deviations from target values could be observed at the following thematic activity fields:

- Priority 1: soft-aid measures in tourism development, framework for knowledge-based economy, thematic fields of strengths;
- Priority 2: management of nature resources, environment and energy, urban and regional development.

Target values set for the indicators might be perceived as low (in almost all the cases indicators were exceeded target values, although Small project fund was not implemented), On the other hand, values for indicators of SME development and social and cultural development are in line with target values – clearly showing that these activity fields were the most popular ones.

As a general remark, it can be concluded that the **funding resources were spent in line with the program objectives**, but the project results were not in all cases in line with the socio-economical program objectives and needs of the region. The project achievements should be measured against predefined specific targets. In this case the indicators had low targets.

The **financial allocations are reasonably balanced** across the thematic priorities. Concerning absorption ratio the overall average was 87,6% – this means that project beneficiaries could not use approx. 12,4% of their granted allocation. Deeper analysis of absorption ratios shows that most **problematic themes concerning absorption are those public developments which are usually coordinated by the public sector** (even under SME development activity field where SME partners showed good absorption while their public sector partners had serious absorption problems).

In geographical terms number of project partners (PP) and lead partners (LP) show a balanced distribution, however a significantly higher number of LPs participated from Austria. **Regions with highest number of partners were areas of large urban centres** – in Austria regional capitols of **Graz and Klagenfurt-Villach, in Slovenia Podravska** region (Maribor area). In Austria areas of small towns showed a relatively weak performance, while in Slovenia less populated NUTS 3 region centres raised more activity. Similar picture is shown by contracted amounts of funding: Podravska (Maribor), Klagenfurt-Villach and Graz amount to 48% of total funding committed, other regions show a significantly less concentrated distribution. In terms of absorption figures, out of the regions with the highest share of committed funding, Graz could gain an even higher level of absorption, while highest absorption was produced by regions with low number of total funding.

Most active partners included the two Austrian regional governments – Carinthia (10 PPs) and **Styria** (6 PPs) – followed by **regionally active development non-profit bodies from Slovenia** (BSC Kranj, E-Zavod and Maribor Development Agency – 6 PPs each). Although universities were registered separately by their faculties, combined figures would

result the **outstanding performance of Maribor University (18 PPs) and Ljubljana University (7 PPs)**. Average number of project partners per project is at 5,43.

Project partnerships were usually mixed in both priorities. **Profit-oriented companies represented a significant share, often acting as lead partners**, but providing very mixed absorption figures, due to prevalent partner changes and occasional financial difficulties. **Local public administration units showed low activity** in lead partnership and absorption as well. Due to public administration characteristics of the two countries, regional public authorities participated exclusively from Austria, while national public authorities only from Slovenia.

Project level analysis – that has been facilitated by a questionnaire filled in by 88 out of the 89 project lead partners – showed that despite of active participation of SMEs, **majority of projects targeted the public, the public sector and the educational institutions**.

Although soft types of outputs were the most typical, a vast majority of the projects could produce tangible results. In this regard the programme could provide several good practices in form of info points, new business entities, new tourism and other products, small scale local tourism infrastructure. Cross-border cooperation is a key tool in knowledge transfer and networking, however economies of scale are rarely achieved. 90% of lead beneficiaries stated they have reached or over-performed the project targets.

As the programme had not defined result and impact indicators and target values, analysis of programme level cost efficiency meant a methodological challenge. The analysis of the cost effectiveness in terms of a contribution to the key areas of cross-border cooperation (indicator codes 46-62) showed that the investment-oriented areas (like environment, energy and urban and regional developments) required more funds, while projects belonging to the **ICT area had the lowest average project cost**, reaching their project achievements most cost effectively. **SME development projects could be regarded as the most cost effective ones, but soft-oriented social and cultural development projects also had low project sizes**. Contrary, investment oriented activities required more funding (these are approx. twice as big projects than SME development ones).

Cost effectiveness could also be examined by the number of project partners per project. **Projects with 4-5 partners had the lowest average project size** – this type of a partnership structure could be considered as the most cost effective one. Partner size of 8 partners could be regarded as the inflexion point: bigger partnerships are much less cost effective.

Deviations from originally planned and contracted costs during project implementation were examined by looking at the absorption ratios and replies of the questionnaires filled in by lead beneficiaries. **Nearly half of projects had remarkable cost deviations** (42 from 89 projects). A change of personnel costs most often meant increase. Contrary vast majority of external and investment cost changes were reductions. Most regular reasons for this were problems with public procurement and also pre-financing problems. Also majority of projects indicated **time delays** (49 from 89 projects). Several reasons were mentioned for this, main reasons were partner and personal changes, public procurement problems. Even more

projects reported **fund transfer delays (approx. 2/3 of projects)**. Serious complains were received several times for delays of FLC and of programme stop.

Accordingly to responds of lead partners via questionnaires, **projects face good sustainability perspective, especially in case of projects with tangible results**, generally about 80% of the project lead partners intend to maintain the results, dominantly by various “soft” ways, as only half of the project coordinators have sufficient resources for that. Continuing cooperation in form of new projects is planned by 65%.

In terms of **horizontal objectives, networking and sustainable development** were the mostly tackled by the projects, however these objectives were also promoted by the two programme priorities as well.

Main findings:

- Programme priorities were defined in order to leave thematic coverage as wide as possible and to make cross-border cooperation present in all areas of regional development. This approach, on the other hand, resulted a relatively unfocused programme, with broadly defined priorities. Overall, even if the programme could not completely fulfil its objectives in terms of indicators and the number of selected projects; reported data and the survey showed that the **selected projects could significantly contribute to the development of the border region, resulting a balanced cooperation** of the institutions from both sides, without major faults, with quite balanced spending performance of the partner bodies, producing tangible and sustainable results.

Main weakness of the programme lies in the lack of real thematic focus: indicator system should have been more tailor-made to some selected thematic priority areas, providing better conditions for measurement and resulting in even more focused projects with even more tangible and sustainable results.

- The priority system has been accompanied with **an indicator system focusing on output indicators and nearly exclusively on numbers of projects financed** under the single thematic areas. Although one project could contribute to several thematic indicators, focus of projects is essentially limited to few thematic issues, thus only a limited number of indicators could be improved by the one project.

- **89 projects were selected for funding which is much lower than it was expected in the programming phase.** The planned small project fund (with the aim to boost number of contracted projects) was not launched. Thus, indicator-based evaluation of the programme shows mixed results. **Indicators on areas of cross-border cooperation have generally been met, but priority level indicators have been partially underperformed**, especially in thematic areas with lower number of larger projects (e.g. **tourism, natural resources, urban development, public transport**).

- In geographical terms **large urban centres dominated**, especially in Austria (Graz, Klagenfurt-Villach). In case of Slovenia the area of Maribor (Podravska) has been the most active.

- Most typical project outputs and results are studies, workshops, meetings, good practices. However, project results show a promising picture in terms of tangibility and sustainability, including added values evaluated by the project beneficiaries.
- **Most cost effective projects were ICT and SME development projects** and projects with **limited number of partners**. Contrary all types of investment related projects had much bigger average project costs.
- **Significant cost and time deviations occurred** during programme implementation due to internal (partner, personnel) and external (public procurement, fund transfer delays) reasons.
- **Co-ordination with other Structural Funds programmes:** The processes of selecting projects within the OP SI-AT 2007-2013, as well as reporting and control activities have been organised in a way that risks of double financing could be avoided. Using the established management and control structures and procedures within the programme and with support of the Government Office for Development and European Cohesion Policy (SI) the Regional Bodies (SI and AT) and ÖROK (AT) the Managing Authority and the JTS ensured necessary complementarity and national/regional level coordination with other ETC and other Structural Fund programmes.
- **Regulatory compliance:** The OP has been elaborated, the programme bodies as well as the monitoring system have been set up according to the regulations 1080/2006 and 1083/2006 in a timely manner. The management and control system of the OP has been set up respecting community eligibility rules. National eligibility rules for ERDF according to Article 56 (4) of Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006) have been specified in both Slovenia and Austria. Organisational structures and procedures have been set up in compliance with EU and national level regulations. The Managing Authority and the JTS provided detailed guidelines for potential applicants and beneficiaries on how to apply these during project implementation.
- **Overall governance and management system** of the programme: Programme bodies, the monitoring system ISARR and programme procedures have been set up according regulations 1080/2006, 1083/2006 and national level regulations, in a timely manner. To ensure smooth programme implementation, the MA and the JTS provided detailed guidelines for potential applicants and beneficiaries on how to apply these during project implementation. Regular informative events, the programme website, mailing lists, consultation possibilities and other forms of support by the JTS and the Regional Bodies were provided for potential applicants and project holders. Collaboration of beneficiaries with the MA/JTS as well as with regional bodies have been both rated as good during the survey, only a low share of beneficiaries experienced problems with these bodies (see the summary charts below rating quality of collaboration from 1 to 4).
- **Project selection, contracting:** A joint application procedure has been applied and managed by the Joint Technical Secretariat, using open calls for applications. The Lead Partner principle has been applied throughout the programme. The selection criteria combined the three dimensions of relevance, quality of cross-border co-operation and quality of content. Considering also the financial performance of the programme that means, the

applied criteria allowed a selection of good quality projects for the funding available. Very few applicants experienced problems during the application phase or contract management.

- **Reporting and financial control:** Detailed guidelines, manuals have been elaborated at the start of the programme period. On the other hand, the survey showed that a large number of project partners experienced problems during reporting. In a high number of projects, beneficiaries experienced problems with the FLC (control processes, the high administrative workload required to complete reports, changes in FLC staff, differences at various FLCs causing misunderstandings.). Reporting problems were especially rated as a substantial burden related to the period when the programme faced an interruption of payments by the EC in 2013 creating severe pre-financing problems at the level of the projects and their beneficiaries.

- **Programme communication activities:** The MA/JTS fulfilled its tasks as described in EC Reg. 1828/2006, Art.5-7. The communication strategy and its implementation responded to the information needs of the target audiences as shown by high number of website hits, by high attendance at programme events and positive feedbacks gathered by the surveys. All targets of the communication plan except for publications have been reached and exceeded by far. Programme communication proved to be effective in improving awareness and knowledge about cross border co-operation and the OP SI-AT itself. As shown by the targeted survey in 2013 done by the JTS, the programme has reached a high number of people that were not involved in cross-border cooperation programmes and projects before. Expenditures for information and publicity activities have reached only 64,1% of the total budget planned for this purpose by the end of 2014, programme communication activities can be evaluated as highly effective.

Recommendations:

- In order to establish a link between results and objectives, **the program objectives should be set with respect to the SMART criteria** (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Time bound). This means that the indicators of objectives have to be specific enough, to give a clear guidance for projects, what kind of results are expected of them.

- **The socio-economic trends, program objectives and their quantification should be revised periodically.** This is especially important, if there is an economic crisis during the implementation period. Midterm evaluations are necessary to monitor, which progress has been made towards the program objectives and what further achievements can be made within the implementation period. If the direction proves to be inappropriate, there should be a correction mechanism implemented.

- There would be **high need for specific project generation/development activities** for the future in order to raise the attention to **thematic areas** with lower interest and also to mitigate absorption problems of certain **target groups**. Especially local and regional public administration produced rather low absorption ratio which should be improved in the next programming period.

- Also **geographically focused project development support would be recommended** for boosting project generation activities in relatively passive areas especially in regions Steiermark, Kärnten and Koroška as well as Savinjska .
- The **flexibility in the scope of financial issues** (because of lower absorption ratio there were calls for strategic projects) should be maintained.
- **The improvements will be needed from the reporting system**, considering a new reporting tool, which would be functioning better.
- Besides social trends, **more attention should be given to regional demographic and economic trends** when setting the objectives. If high quality project results are only generated in connection with social trends, does not support a balanced development of the area.
- Analysis of cost effectiveness was hampered by lack of result and impact indicators, but average cost based calculations pointed out that **higher emphasis** is suggested to be given to more **cost effective non-investment oriented projects**, while **large and complicated partnership structures should be avoided**.
- There were remarkable cost and time deviations during programme implementation, **most prevalent reason for time deviations were fund transfer delays** – this **should be very carefully handled in the future for smoother financing**. Regular coordination and project implementation review meetings among JTS and FLC units can help to avoid bottlenecks and contribute to even more uniform FLC practices.
- **Further coordination arrangements could help to ensure added value of the SI-AT territorial cooperation programme** in relation to Objective 1 and 2, to achieve synergies with other ETC or other programmes, as well as to transfer of ideas and experiences beyond the immediate programme area.
The following activities could help to enhance contacts and information flows with other ETC programmes:
 - mutual exchange of information with other ETC programmes (at national level or in a trilateral border area), leading potentially to an increased awareness about the possibilities for collaboration
 - meetings of actors involved in the management of ETC programmes in a trilateral border area
 - inviting project owners/partners of other cross-border cooperation programmes to programme events
 - organizing thematic partner search, project development and capitalization and forums in topics of interest for a larger (trilateral or bigger) area also using new media, internet online forums, etc.
 - making efforts to reduce formal obstacles in order to allow for the implementation of more trilateral projects
- **Recommendations on programme communication** have been summarized in Table 28.

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REPUBLIKA SLOVENIJA
SLUŽBA VLADE REPUBLIKE SLOVENIJE ZA RAZVOJ
IN EVROPSKO KOHEZIJSKO POLITIKO



Naložba v vašo prihodnost
Operacijo delno financira Evropska unija
Evropski sklad za regionalni razvoj

9 Annexes

An Evaluation of the CROSS-BORDER OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME SLOVENIA-AUSTRIA 2007-2013

A Questionnaire for the Lead Partners

Introduction

A questionnaire is a part of the ex-post evaluation process of the Operational Programme Slovenia-Austria 2007–2013 and is intended to provide a feedback for programme authorities on how project partners contributed to the programme goals, communication activities, partnership etc. Furthermore, this questionnaire will also help to improve future funding mechanisms of cross-border co-operation in the programme area.

Answers provided on the questions below have to be based on project self-assessment and in line with facts and documents delivered during the project implementation, with a possible follow-up check by the MA/JTS of the programme.

Project partners are asked to look at their projects with fresh eyes focusing on the most important features and achievements of their project and providing as objective feedbacks as possible. Please do not hesitate to contact the evaluators (Envirodual Ltd – Ms. Rebeka Lukman) for advice and assistance needed when filling in the questionnaire.

Thank you for your time and contribution!

1. Project ID

1.1 P Project title – Please write the title of the project

1.2 Project acronym - Please use the same project acronym as used in programme system (Application Form/ Subsidy Contract).

2. Cooperation during project implementation

2.1 Cooperation status

	To a minor degree ←		→ To a large degree	
	1	2	3	4
Does the project build on an already cooperating/existing partnership (in ETC or on your project theme)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To what extent is the cooperation important for the project results (added value)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will cooperation activities continue after this project?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2.2 Added value of the cross-border cooperation at the project level

Please specify additional effects of the cooperation for your partnership. Choose **maximum 3 effects** and rank them. Number 1 is the lowest and number 4 the highest score.

Effect	To a minor degree ←		To a large degree →	
	1	2	3	4
Awareness – raising	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Extended networks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Confidence and trust building	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Knowledge transfer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Capacity building	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Development of new ideas and solutions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commitment to new / additional actions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cost savings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify): _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If possible, please also specify these effects (describe what exactly happened or will happen based on the project results, in max 300 characters).

3. Project achievements and implementation

3.1 Project results/outputs

Did your project produced any results/outputs	Results/outputs	Please check, if yes
	1. Studies (expert studies, analyses, concepts, methodologies, feasibility studies, strategies, policy recommendations, or any other studies in a form of a report)	<input type="checkbox"/>
	2. Workshops	<input type="checkbox"/>
	3. Trainings for capacity building (including training programmes)	<input type="checkbox"/>
	4. Meetings (not including project management or project partners meetings)	<input type="checkbox"/>
	5. Platform (informational platform in a digital form)	<input type="checkbox"/>
	6. New products and/or services	<input type="checkbox"/>
	7. Transfer of good practice(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
	8. Other (please specify):	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.2 Achievement of the project results/outputs

Degree of achievement	Please check, if yes
Project results/outputs were fully achieved by 100 %) as stated in the application form	<input type="checkbox"/>
Project results/outputs were partially achieved as stated in the application form	<input type="checkbox"/>

If your project has not fully achieved project results/outputs, please list the obstacles or reasons (max. 300 characters).

3.3 Did your project exceeded planned results/outputs and why (max. 300 characters)?

3.4 Contribution of project achievements to the challenges of the programme area

Did your project contribute to tackle or gain one of the following socio-economic trends of the programme area in the period 2007-2015?	Trend	Please check, if yes	If yes, how? (max 200 characters)
	1. Moving of population to bigger towns.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	2. Ageing of the population	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	3. Restructuring of the economic performance of sectors from industry towards services.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	4. Restructuring of employment of sectors from industry and agriculture towards services.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	5. The local population became more educated, significantly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	6. Developing and restructuring of tourism services.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	7. Info-communication service.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

3.5 Achievements in terms of horizontal principles and EU policies, as identified in the programme

Did your project address the horizontal principles of the programme?	Horizontal principles / EU policies	Please check, if yes	If yes, how? (max 200 characters)
	Challenges for human resources, in particular upgrading qualification structures	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Networking	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Innovation, to work on new competitive and/or sustainable solutions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Did your project address EU policies?	Sustainable development	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Gender equality and equal opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Information and communication technology	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Other EU policies (please specify in right column)	<input type="checkbox"/>	

3.6 Were there emerging any problems during the project implementation?

Problems during the project implementation	Please check, if yes
Project application	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reporting	<input type="checkbox"/>
Partnership (including partner communication)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Execution of project activities/tasks	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.7 Target group(s)

Here we would like to ask you to indicate which groups you have been targeting. If possible please specify which specific target groups these might be (e.g. bilingual elementary schools, environmental experts).

Which are the main target groups that might benefit from project outcomes? Please choose all relevant target groups.	General public (citizens)	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Private sector	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Non-governmental organisations	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Public sector	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Educational institutions	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.8 Please specify the impact/influence of the project activities on the target groups (max. 300 characters).

3.9 A theme of main project achievement

Please **select only one theme**, which the main achievement(s) of your project contributes to. It may happen that the achievement is relevant for more than one theme, but only one primary theme should be selected.

Type of main achievement of your project	Please check, if yes
SME development	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tourism development	<input type="checkbox"/>
Framework for a knowledge-based economy	<input type="checkbox"/>
Development of joint thematic fields of strengths	<input type="checkbox"/>
Management of natural resources	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environment and energy	<input type="checkbox"/>
Urban and regional development	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social and cultural development	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.10 Geographical impact

Please indicate the geographical effect of a project's results/outputs. **Only one answer can be selected here.**

Geographical impact levels	
Local level	<input type="checkbox"/>
Regional level	<input type="checkbox"/>
National level	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programme area	<input type="checkbox"/>
Outside the programme area	<input type="checkbox"/>
It is not yet possible to know	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.11 Sustainability of the project and its results – Please check one or more of the following options

Sustainability of project results	If yes, please check	If yes, how? Please specify (max 200 characters)
Information on project outputs and results will be available for the public after project completion	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Benefits caused by the project will continue after project closure	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Project outputs and results will be used by project holder and partners after project closure	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Project outputs and results will be used by project target groups after project closure	<input type="checkbox"/>	
There are outside factors that can influence the sustainability of project results	<input type="checkbox"/>	
The project holder and its partners have the resources to sustain project results	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Project results will form the basis of further cross-border cooperation projects/activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	

4. Budget and timetable

4.1 Deviations from planned achievements

Please indicate if a significant deviation has occurred during project implementation according to the main budget categories. Significant deviation means at least 10% difference between realised and planned budget.

Budget category	If significant deviation occurred, please check	If yes, why? Please specify (max 200 characters)
Personnel costs	<input type="checkbox"/>	
External costs	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Investment costs	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Administration costs	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Income	<input type="checkbox"/>	

4.2 Was a project carried out based on the timetable as stated in the application form or where there any delays in terms of implementation?

Project was in line with the time table and application form	Please check	If no, please specify the reasons (max 200 characters)
Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	
No	<input type="checkbox"/>	

4.3 Were during the project implementation any delays of the fund transfers?

Fund transfer delays	Please check	If yes, please specify the reasons (max 200 characters)
Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	
No	<input type="checkbox"/>	

5. Application and reporting processes

5.1 A level of satisfaction with the work of MA/JTS and the first level control.

A level of satisfaction with the work of the MA/JTS and a first level control?	To a minor degree ←		→ To a large degree	
	1	2	3	4
Satisfaction with MA/JTS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Satisfaction with the first level control	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Satisfaction with the regional bodies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5.2 What would you suggest to the MA/JTS and a first level control, respectively, in order to improve the application/reporting/funding etc. procedures?

Suggestions to the MA/JTS:

Suggestions to the first level control:

Suggestions to the regional bodies:

5.3. Which communication tools did you use during the project implementation?

Tools	If yes, please check	If yes, how? Please specify (max 200 characters)
Media (newspaper, TV, radio, press releases)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
webpage	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Newsletters	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Brochures, leaflets, ...	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Social networks (Facebook, LinkedIn, Flickr, ...)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Youtube	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other (specify _____)	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Dear lead partner,

For the ex-post evaluation purposes of the OP SI-AT 2007-2013 and in the name of Managing Authority we would kindly ask you **to fill in the enclosed form** (Form 1). The information will be used in a brochure of the OP SI-AT 2007-2013 that will be used in a publication prepared by the Managing Authority.

Furthermore, we would kindly ask you to send us **a project final report with all the required annexes.**

Thank you for your contribution!

*Please return the filled questionnaire and required information to Ms. Rebeka Lukman, Envirodual Ltd:
rebeka.lukman@envirodual.com*

For any further queries you can contact us on the email above or phone + 386 31 724 173.

Chart 1

Population on 1 January (persons), source: Eurostat										
GEOGRAPHICAL AREA	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Average	Change (pers)	Change (2007 =100 %)
Südburgenland	97 463	97 260	97 671	97 595	97 554	97 721	97 530	97 542	67	100%
Klagenfurt-Villach	273 328	274 537	275 475	275 707	276 005	276 915	277 846	275 688	4 518	102%
Oberkärnten	129 931	129 632	129 117	128 387	127 649	126 936	126 187	128 263	-3 744	97%
Unterkärnten	156 134	155 546	154 870	153 904	153 064	152 176	151 440	153 876	-4 694	97%
Graz	386 423	390 138	393 586	396 995	401 229	405 473	410 094	397 705	23 671	106%
Östliche Obersteiermark	170 113	168 976	167 991	166 634	165 505	164 468	163 272	166 708	-6 841	96%
Oststeiermark	268 212	268 060	267 583	267 150	266 831	266 662	266 394	267 270	-1 818	99%
West- und Südsteiermark	190 658	190 560	190 506	190 325	190 155	190 020	189 889	190 302	-769	100%
Westliche Obersteiermark	106 120	105 426	104 750	103 972	103 271	102 776	102 282	104 085	-3 838	96%
AUSTRIA	1 778 382	1 780 135	1 781 549	1 780 669	1 781 263	1 783 147	1 784 934	1 781 440	6 552	100%
Pomurska (NUTS 2010)	122 068	120 023	119 537	119 548	119 145	118 988	118 022	119 619	-4 046	97%
Podravska (NUTS 2010)	319 706	322 266	322 900	323 343	323 119	323 534	323 238	322 587	3 532	101%
Koroška (NUTS 2010)	73 619	72 427	72 481	72 812	72 494	72 364	72 100	72 614	-1 519	98%
Savinjska (NUTS 2010)	258 480	256 339	258 845	260 025	259 726	260 253	260 217	259 126	1 737	101%
Osrednjeslovenska (NUTS 2010)	503 935	510 763	521 965	529 646	533 213	536 484	541 718	525 389	37 783	107%
Gorenjska (NUTS 2010)	199 902	199 923	201 779	202 903	203 427	204 057	203 984	202 282	4 082	102%
SLOVENIA	1 477 710	1 481 741	1 497 507	1 508 277	1 511 124	1 515 680	1 519 279	1 501 617	41 569	103%
REGION TOTAL	3 256 092	3 261 876	3 279 056	3 288 946	3 292 387	3 298 827	3 304 213	3 283 057	48 121	101%

Chart 2

Aging index on 1 January (persons older then 65 / younger than 15*100), source: Eurostat										
GEOGRAPHICAL AREA	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Average	Change (absolute)	Change (2007 =100 %)
Südburgenland	147,79	149,13	151,67	154,30	155,55	156,70	160,71	153,69	12,92	109%
Klagenfurt-Villach	123,36	127,99	132,01	137,19	139,47	144,41	148,08	136,07	24,72	120%
Oberkärnten	118,79	123,89	129,19	134,54	138,26	144,46	150,19	134,19	31,40	126%
Unterkärnten	118,47	121,75	125,55	128,95	131,11	135,81	139,93	128,80	21,46	118%
Graz	115,95	118,90	120,96	123,75	124,65	127,04	129,11	122,91	13,17	111%
Östliche Obersteiermark	171,71	179,05	185,51	191,61	193,87	198,17	202,76	188,95	31,06	118%
Oststeiermark	110,77	114,40	118,00	121,40	122,54	125,71	130,04	120,41	19,27	117%
West- und Südsteiermark	115,52	119,96	123,84	128,12	130,62	135,44	139,27	127,54	23,76	121%
Westliche Obersteiermark	133,22	139,03	144,19	149,00	151,36	156,31	161,23	147,76	28,01	121%
AUSTRIA	123,99	128,08	131,81	135,80	137,62	141,47	145,18	134,85	21,19	117%
Pomurska (NUTS 2010)	118,76	123,16	128,17	130,86	132,99	135,86	138,98	129,82	20,22	117%
Podravska (NUTS 2010)	122,58	128,12	131,10	133,21	133,34	134,68	135,64	131,24	13,07	111%
Koroška (NUTS 2010)	103,29	107,18	110,93	113,00	114,54	116,00	118,43	111,91	15,14	115%
Savinjska (NUTS 2010)	102,52	106,00	108,31	110,08	109,96	111,01	111,96	108,55	9,43	109%
Osrednjeslovenska (NUTS 2010)	109,31	110,46	109,11	107,88	105,76	105,85	105,95	107,76	-3,36	97%
Gorenjska (NUTS 2010)	106,46	108,34	109,59	110,31	108,87	110,01	111,69	109,32	5,23	105%
SLOVENIA	110,80	113,70	114,91	115,54	114,70	115,53	116,41	114,51	5,61	105%
REGION TOTAL	118,15	121,65	124,12	126,43	126,88	129,15	131,36	125,39	13,21	111%

Chart 3

Gross domestic product (GDP) at current market prices - Million euro, source: Eurostat								Change (2007 =100 %)
GEOGRAPHICAL AREA	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Average	
Südburgenland	52 626	53 977	52 417	53 806	56 793	58 316	54 656	111%
Klagenfurt-Villach	9 394	9 660	9 323	9 695	10 278	10 365	9 786	110%
Oberkärnten	3 015	3 065	3 045	2 950	3 116	3 158	3 058	105%
Unterkärnten	3 796	3 881	3 652	3 777	3 996	4 097	3 867	108%
Graz	15 915	16 431	16 190	16 359	17 380	18 132	16 735	114%
Östliche Obersteiermark	5 250	5 250	4 990	4 970	5 320	5 524	5 217	105%
Oststeiermark	6 078	6 232	6 205	6 565	6 728	6 995	6 467	115%
West- und Südsteiermark	4 354	4 442	4 199	4 492	4 831	4 737	4 509	109%
Westliche Obersteiermark	2 602	2 690	2 520	2 671	2 763	2 813	2 677	108%
AUSTRIA	103 030	105 628	102 541	105 285	111 205	114 137	106 971	111%
Pomurska (NUTS 2010)	1 362	1 432	1 367	1 359	1 417	1 412	1 392	104%
Podravska (NUTS 2010)	4 644	5 030	4 746	4 710	4 807	4 684	4 770	101%
Koroška (NUTS 2010)	989	1 049	957	954	997	997	991	101%
Savinjska (NUTS 2010)	3 926	4 300	4 059	4 129	4 260	4 147	4 137	106%
Osrednjeslovenska (NUTS 2010)	12 742	13 773	13 428	13 393	13 585	13 376	13 383	105%
Gorenjska (NUTS 2010)	3 008	3 216	2 935	2 970	3 029	2 973	3 022	99%
SLOVENIA	26 671	28 800	27 492	27 515	28 095	27 589	27 694	103%
REGION TOTAL	129 701	134 428	130 033	132 800	139 300	141 726	134 665	109%

Chart 4

Gross domestic product (GDP) at current market prices - Million PPS (purchasing power standard), source: Eurostat								
GEOGRAPHICAL AREA	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Average	Change (2007 =100 %)
Südburgenland	49 225	49 464	46 704	48 805	51 293	52 913	49 734	107%
Klagenfurt-Villach	8 787	8 852	8 307	8 794	9 282	9 404	8 904	107%
Oberkärnten	2 820	2 808	2 714	2 676	2 814	2 865	2 783	102%
Unterkärnten	3 551	3 557	3 254	3 426	3 609	3 718	3 519	105%
Graz	14 886	15 057	14 425	14 839	15 697	16 452	15 226	111%
Östliche Obersteiermark	4 910	4 811	4 446	4 508	4 805	5 012	4 749	102%
Oststeiermark	5 685	5 711	5 529	5 955	6 077	6 347	5 884	112%
West- und Südsteiermark	4 073	4 070	3 741	4 075	4 363	4 298	4 103	106%
Westliche Obersteiermark	2 434	2 465	2 245	2 423	2 496	2 552	2 436	105%
AUSTRIA	96 371	96 795	91 365	95 501	100 436	103 561	97 338	107%
Pomurska (NUTS 2010)	1 756	1 764	1 595	1 617	1 696	1 745	1 696	99%
Podravska (NUTS 2010)	5 988	6 194	5 539	5 604	5 755	5 789	5 812	97%
Koroška (NUTS 2010)	1 275	1 292	1 117	1 135	1 194	1 232	1 208	97%
Savinjska (NUTS 2010)	5 063	5 295	4 737	4 913	5 100	5 125	5 039	101%
Osrednjeslovenska (NUTS 2010)	16 429	16 962	15 674	15 937	16 262	16 530	16 299	101%
Gorenjska (NUTS 2010)	3 879	3 960	3 426	3 534	3 625	3 674	3 683	95%
SLOVENIA	34 390	35 467	32 088	32 740	33 632	34 095	33 735	99%
REGION TOTAL	130 761	132 262	123 453	128 241	134 068	137 656	131 074	105%

Chart 5

Gross domestic product (GDP) at current market prices - Euro per inhabitant, source: Eurostat								
GEOGRAPHICAL AREA	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Average	Change (2007 =100 %)
Südburgenland	29 900	30 600	29 700	30 500	32 200	33 000	30 983	110%
Klagenfurt-Villach	34 300	35 100	33 800	35 100	37 200	37 400	35 483	109%
Oberkärnten	23 200	23 700	23 600	23 000	24 500	25 000	23 833	108%
Unterkärnten	24 300	25 000	23 700	24 600	26 200	27 000	25 133	111%
Graz	41 000	41 900	41 000	41 000	43 100	44 500	42 083	109%
Östliche Obersteiermark	31 000	31 200	29 800	29 900	32 300	33 700	31 317	109%
Oststeiermark	22 700	23 300	23 200	24 600	25 200	26 300	24 217	116%
West- und Südsteiermark	22 800	23 300	22 100	23 600	25 400	24 900	23 683	109%
Westliche Obersteiermark	24 600	25 600	24 100	25 800	26 800	27 400	25 717	111%
AUSTRIA	29 949	30 659	29 758	30 549	32 284	33 093	31 049	110%
Pomurska (NUTS 2010)	11 200	11 900	11 400	11 400	11 900	11 900	11 617	106%
Podravska (NUTS 2010)	14 500	15 700	14 700	14 600	14 900	14 500	14 817	100%
Koroška (NUTS 2010)	13 400	14 400	13 100	13 100	13 700	13 800	13 583	103%
Savinjska (NUTS 2010)	15 100	16 700	15 600	15 900	16 400	15 900	15 933	105%
Osrednjeslovenska (NUTS 2010)	25 100	26 700	25 500	25 200	25 400	24 900	25 467	99%
Gorenjska (NUTS 2010)	15 000	16 000	14 500	14 600	14 900	14 600	14 933	97%
SLOVENIA	17 960	19 334	18 252	18 220	18 569	18 197	18 422	101%
REGION TOTAL	24 508	25 514	24 503	24 895	25 989	26 249	25 277	107%

Chart 6

Gross domestic product (GDP) at current market prices - Purchasing Power Standard per inhabitant, source: Eurostat								
GEOGRAPHICAL AREA	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Average	Change (2007 =100 %)
Südburgenland	27 900	28 000	26 500	27 700	29 100	30 000	28 200	108%
Klagenfurt-Villach	32 100	32 200	30 100	31 900	33 600	33 900	32 300	106%
Oberkärnten	21 700	21 700	21 100	20 900	22 100	22 600	21 683	104%
Unterkärnten	22 800	22 900	21 100	22 300	23 600	24 500	22 867	107%
Graz	38 300	38 400	36 500	37 200	38 900	40 400	38 283	105%
Östliche Obersteiermark	29 000	28 600	26 600	27 200	29 100	30 600	28 517	106%
Oststeiermark	21 200	21 300	20 700	22 300	22 800	23 800	22 017	112%
West- und Südsteiermark	21 400	21 400	19 700	21 400	23 000	22 600	21 583	106%
Westliche Obersteiermark	23 000	23 500	21 500	23 400	24 200	24 900	23 417	108%
AUSTRIA	28 010	28 098	26 522	27 730	29 151	30 020	28 255	107%
Pomurska (NUTS 2010)	14 400	14 700	13 300	13 500	14 200	14 700	14 133	102%
Podravska (NUTS 2010)	18 700	19 300	17 100	17 400	17 800	17 900	18 033	96%
Koroška (NUTS 2010)	17 300	17 700	15 300	15 600	16 500	17 000	16 567	98%
Savinjska (NUTS 2010)	19 500	20 500	18 200	18 900	19 600	19 700	19 400	101%
Osrednjeslovenska (NUTS 2010)	32 400	32 900	29 800	30 000	30 400	30 700	31 033	95%
Gorenjska (NUTS 2010)	19 300	19 700	16 900	17 400	17 800	18 000	18 183	93%
SLOVENIA	23 168	23 799	21 299	21 687	22 209	22 459	22 437	97%
REGION TOTAL	25 813	26 145	24 137	24 959	25 965	26 546	25 594	103%

Chart 7

Gross domestic product (GDP) at current market prices - Euro per inhabitant in percentage of the EU average, source: Eurostat								
GEOGRAPHICAL AREA	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Average	Change (2007 =100 %)
Südburgenland	116	118	122	121	124	125	121	108%
Klagenfurt-Villach	133	136	139	139	143	141	139	106%
Oberkärnten	90	92	97	91	94	94	93	104%
Unterkärnten	94	97	97	97	101	102	98	109%
Graz	159	162	168	162	166	168	164	106%
Östliche Obersteiermark	120	120	123	118	124	127	122	106%
Oststeiermark	88	90	95	97	97	99	94	113%
West- und Südsteiermark	89	90	91	93	98	94	93	106%
Westliche Obersteiermark	95	99	99	102	103	104	100	109%
AUSTRIA	116	119	122	121	124	125	121	108%
Pomurska (NUTS 2010)	43	46	47	45	46	45	45	105%
Podravska (NUTS 2010)	56	61	60	58	57	55	58	98%
Koroška (NUTS 2010)	52	56	54	52	53	52	53	100%
Savinjska (NUTS 2010)	59	64	64	63	63	60	62	102%
Osrednjeslovenska (NUTS 2010)	97	103	105	99	98	94	99	97%
Gorenjska (NUTS 2010)	58	62	60	58	57	55	58	95%
SLOVENIA	70	75	75	72	71	69	72	99%
REGION TOTAL	95	99	101	98	100	99	99	104%

Chart 8

Gross domestic product (GDP) at current market prices - Purchasing Power Standard per inhabitant in percentage of the EU average, source: Eurostat								
GEOGRAPHICAL AREA	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Average	Change (2007 =100 %)
Südburgenland	108	108	109	109	112	113	110	105%
Klagenfurt-Villach	124	124	124	126	129	128	126	103%
Oberkärnten	84	84	87	83	85	86	85	102%
Unterkärnten	88	89	87	88	91	93	89	106%
Graz	149	149	150	147	150	153	150	103%
Östliche Obersteiermark	112	110	109	107	112	116	111	104%
Oststeiermark	82	82	85	88	88	90	86	110%
West- und Südsteiermark	83	83	81	85	88	86	84	104%
Westliche Obersteiermark	89	91	88	92	93	94	91	106%
AUSTRIA	109	109	109	110	112	114	110	105%
Pomurska (NUTS 2010)	56	57	55	54	55	56	56	100%
Podravska (NUTS 2010)	72	75	71	69	68	68	71	94%
Koroška (NUTS 2010)	67	69	63	62	63	64	65	96%
Savinjska (NUTS 2010)	75	79	75	75	75	74	76	99%
Osrednjeslovenska (NUTS 2010)	126	127	122	118	117	116	121	92%
Gorenjska (NUTS 2010)	75	76	70	69	68	68	71	91%
SLOVENIA	90	92	88	86	85	85	88	95%
REGION TOTAL	100	101	99	99	100	100	100	100%

Chart 9

Gross value added at basic prices - Million euro, source: Eurostat								
GEOGRAPHICAL AREA	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Average	Change (2007 =100 %)
Südburgenland	1 709	1 774	1 783	1 868	1 944	1 991	1 845	117%
Klagenfurt-Villach	8 382	8 621	8 299	8 630	9 153	9 216	8 717	110%
Oberkärnten	2 690	2 735	2 711	2 626	2 775	2 808	2 724	104%
Unterkärnten	3 387	3 464	3 251	3 362	3 559	3 643	3 444	108%
Graz	14 200	14 664	14 412	14 562	15 478	16 122	14 906	114%
Östliche Obersteiermark	4 684	4 685	4 442	4 424	4 738	4 912	4 648	105%
Oststeiermark	5 423	5 562	5 524	5 844	5 992	6 220	5 761	115%
West- und Südsteiermark	3 885	3 964	3 738	3 999	4 302	4 212	4 017	108%
Westliche Obersteiermark	2 322	2 401	2 243	2 378	2 461	2 501	2 384	108%
AUSTRIA	46 682	47 870	46 403	47 693	50 402	51 625	48 446	111%
Pomurska (NUTS 2010)	1 194	1 254	1 196	1 184	1 234	1 226	1 214	103%
Podravska (NUTS 2010)	4 071	4 404	4 151	4 105	4 187	4 067	4 164	100%
Koroška (NUTS 2010)	867	918	837	832	868	866	865	100%
Savinjska (NUTS 2010)	3 441	3 765	3 551	3 599	3 710	3 600	3 611	105%
Osrednjeslovenska (NUTS 2010)	11 167	12 060	11 747	11 674	11 831	11 612	11 682	104%
Gorenjska (NUTS 2010)	2 637	2 816	2 567	2 589	2 637	2 581	2 638	98%
SLOVENIA	23 376	25 216	24 049	23 983	24 468	23 952	24 174	102%
REGION TOTAL	70 058	73 086	70 452	71 676	74 870	75 577	72 620	108%

Chart 10

Gross value added at basic prices - composition for the total region in %, source: Eurostat							
SECTOR OF EMPLOYMENT	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Decrease / increase in composition
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	2,20%	1,99%	1,81%	2,03%	2,26%	2,24%	0,03%
Industry (except construction)	27,41%	26,10%	24,25%	24,49%	25,45%	25,88%	-1,53%
Construction	7,67%	7,87%	7,64%	6,99%	6,66%	6,64%	-1,03%
Wholesale and retail trade; transport; accommodation and food service activities; information and communication	22,02%	22,46%	22,71%	22,69%	22,56%	22,51%	0,49%
Financial and insurance activities; real estate activities; professional, scientific and technical activities; administrative and support service activities	20,74%	21,17%	21,42%	21,70%	21,56%	21,10%	0,37%
Public administration and defence; compulsory social security; education; human health and social work activities; arts, entertainment and recreation, repair of household goods and other services	19,96%	20,42%	22,15%	22,10%	21,50%	21,63%	1,67%
TOTAL	100,00%	100,00%	100,00%	100,00%	100,00%	100,00%	

Chart 11

Population of active enterprises, source: Eurostat (red numbers are estimation based on previous ternds)										
GEOGRAPHICAL AREA	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2011	2013	Average	Change (absolute)	Change (2007 =100 %)
Südburgenland	3 538	3 556	3 587	3 610	3 628	3 646	3 664	3 604	126	104%
Klagenfurt-Villach	13 732	13 745	13 788	13 783	13 796	13 808	13 821	13 782	89	101%
Oberkärnten	5 832	5 809	5 775	5 741	5 718	5 696	5 673	5 749	-159	97%
Unterkärnten	6 010	6 012	6 040	6 019	6 021	6 024	6 026	6 022	16	100%
Graz	21 074	21 027	21 019	20 885	20 838	20 790	20 743	20 911	-331	98%
Östliche Obersteiermark	5 915	5 909	5 913	5 891	5 885	5 879	5 873	5 895	-42	99%
Oststeiermark	9 642	9 695	9 805	9 854	9 907	9 960	10 013	9 839	371	104%
West- und Südsteiermark	7 691	7 698	7 742	7 719	7 726	7 733	7 740	7 721	49	101%
Westliche Obersteiermark	4 104	4 125	4 174	4 188	4 209	4 230	4 251	4 183	147	104%
AUSTRIA	77 538	77 576	77 843	77 690	77 728	77 766	77 804	77 706	266	100%
Pomurska (NUTS 2010)	4 812	4 978	5 198	5 476	5 642	5 808	5 974	5 413	1 162	124%
Podravska (NUTS 2010)	17 062	17 745	19 042	19 795	20 478	21 162	21 845	19 590	4 783	128%
Koroška (NUTS 2010)	3 612	3 712	3 912	4 013	4 113	4 214	4 314	3 984	702	119%
Savinjska (NUTS 2010)	13 437	13 893	14 784	15 262	15 718	16 175	16 631	15 129	3 194	124%
Osrednjeslovenska (NUTS 2010)	42 379	43 892	46 599	48 431	49 944	51 457	52 970	47 953	10 591	125%
Gorenjska (NUTS 2010)	11 860	12 396	13 329	14 003	14 539	15 074	15 610	13 830	3 750	132%
SLOVENIA	93 161	96 616	102 864	106 980	110 435	113 889	117 344	105 898	24 183	126%
REGION TOTAL	170 699	174 192	180 707	184 670	188 163	191 655	195 148	183 605	24 449	114%

Chart 12

Composition of active enterprises in 2010, source: Eurostat										
GEOGRAPHICAL AREA	Industry (except construction)	Construction	Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	Transportation and storage	Accommodation and food service activities	Information and communication	Financial and insurance activities; real estate activities except activities of holding companies	Professional, scientific and technical activities; administrative and support service activities	Education; human health and social work activities	Arts, entertainment and recreation; other service activities
Südburgenland	11,94%	12,22%	21,83%	4,54%	15,48%	2,69%	2,55%	13,49%	7,37%	8,01%
Klagenfurt-Villach	7,96%	7,15%	20,50%	3,73%	15,36%	3,71%	4,12%	20,62%	9,13%	7,75%
Oberkärnten	10,70%	11,44%	18,27%	4,09%	27,26%	1,71%	2,93%	12,25%	5,52%	5,89%
Unterkärnten	13,52%	10,67%	21,35%	4,04%	17,71%	1,91%	2,69%	14,39%	7,41%	6,38%
Graz	5,70%	6,23%	18,58%	4,01%	8,20%	6,24%	4,96%	26,59%	11,63%	7,87%
Östliche Obersteiermark	9,62%	9,17%	22,56%	4,21%	16,19%	3,19%	2,67%	16,58%	8,18%	7,67%
Oststeiermark	13,59%	11,32%	24,72%	3,53%	13,95%	2,42%	2,23%	15,04%	6,31%	6,94%
West- und Südsteiermark	12,06%	11,96%	23,19%	3,65%	13,03%	3,30%	2,50%	15,26%	7,54%	7,53%
Westliche Obersteiermark	11,82%	16,79%	20,96%	4,66%	15,14%	2,24%	2,65%	12,13%	6,47%	7,23%
AUSTRIA	9,63%	9,41%	20,93%	3,95%	14,14%	3,73%	3,48%	18,79%	8,59%	7,39%
Pomurska (NUTS 2010)	14,54%	14,08%	18,74%	6,36%	10,79%	3,85%	2,96%	16,09%	4,31%	8,29%
Podravska (NUTS 2010)	12,34%	13,87%	19,80%	6,19%	6,93%	4,29%	3,77%	19,84%	4,78%	8,17%
Koroska (NUTS 2010)	18,66%	14,40%	17,02%	7,25%	6,75%	3,86%	3,29%	17,02%	4,06%	7,68%
Savinjska (NUTS 2010)	15,13%	15,42%	18,88%	7,79%	6,24%	3,47%	2,73%	17,87%	4,62%	7,85%
Osrednjeslovenska (NUTS 2010)	10,51%	14,59%	17,51%	5,39%	4,28%	5,75%	3,49%	24,78%	4,85%	8,86%
Gorenjska (NUTS 2010)	15,74%	18,53%	16,01%	5,49%	6,96%	4,32%	2,14%	17,62%	4,54%	8,64%
SLOVENIA	12,70%	15,06%	17,97%	6,01%	5,83%	4,80%	3,22%	21,21%	4,71%	8,48%
REGION TOTAL	11,41%	12,68%	19,22%	5,14%	9,33%	4,35%	3,33%	20,19%	6,34%	8,03%

Chart 13

Composition of newly born enterprises in 2010, source: Eurostat										
GEOGRAPHICAL AREA	Industry (except construction)	Construction	Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	Transportation and storage	Accommodation and food service activities	Information and communication	Financial and insurance activities; real estate activities except activities of holding companies	Professional, scientific and technical activities; administrative and support service activities	Education; human health and social work activities	Arts, entertainment and recreation; other service activities
Südburgenland	7,66%	14,47%	22,98%	2,98%	15,74%	1,70%	2,13%	16,17%	5,11%	11,06%
Klagenfurt-Villach	4,85%	7,68%	21,87%	5,08%	15,48%	3,78%	5,44%	19,03%	8,39%	8,39%
Oberkärnten	6,60%	16,50%	15,51%	2,97%	21,12%	2,97%	4,29%	18,15%	6,93%	4,95%
Unterkärnten	8,81%	11,55%	21,58%	2,43%	16,72%	4,56%	3,95%	15,50%	7,60%	7,29%
Graz	3,69%	7,81%	17,65%	3,95%	9,22%	6,23%	4,21%	32,48%	7,64%	7,11%
Östliche Obersteiermark	8,92%	6,46%	22,77%	2,77%	15,38%	2,77%	2,77%	23,08%	7,38%	7,69%
Oststeiermark	7,03%	12,45%	27,91%	2,21%	15,66%	4,02%	2,41%	17,47%	5,42%	5,42%
West- und Südsteiermark	7,69%	14,10%	22,22%	1,50%	13,89%	3,85%	2,99%	19,66%	6,84%	7,26%
Westliche Obersteiermark	6,51%	11,11%	23,75%	2,30%	17,62%	3,07%	4,21%	16,48%	8,43%	6,51%
AUSTRIA	6,06%	10,31%	21,28%	3,29%	14,33%	4,22%	3,88%	22,07%	7,29%	7,27%
Pomurska (NUTS 2010)	11,15%	12,12%	18,58%	3,07%	7,75%	6,46%	2,58%	19,71%	7,27%	11,31%
Podravska (NUTS 2010)	7,59%	12,95%	19,58%	3,71%	7,46%	5,32%	3,53%	22,76%	6,54%	10,55%
Koroska (NUTS 2010)	10,82%	13,18%	16,71%	2,59%	7,06%	6,12%	2,82%	24,47%	4,47%	11,76%
Savinjska (NUTS 2010)	9,76%	12,91%	19,03%	4,36%	6,73%	5,39%	3,09%	22,30%	6,24%	10,18%
Osrednjeslovenska (NUTS 2010)	5,88%	13,53%	15,91%	3,64%	4,43%	7,56%	2,79%	29,36%	7,08%	9,83%
Gorenjska (NUTS 2010)	8,58%	18,63%	14,92%	2,82%	7,76%	6,64%	2,06%	21,68%	6,29%	10,63%
SLOVENIA	7,60%	13,98%	17,09%	3,57%	6,10%	6,57%	2,86%	25,28%	6,66%	10,29%
REGION TOTAL	7,18%	12,98%	18,23%	3,49%	8,34%	5,93%	3,14%	24,41%	6,83%	9,46%
Difference compared to existing composition	-4,23%	0,30%	-0,99%	-1,65%	-0,98%	1,58%	-0,19%	4,22%	0,49%	1,44%

Chart 14

Composition of newly born enterprises established in 2007 and survived till 2010, source: Eurostat										
GEOGRAPHICAL AREA	Industry (except construction)	Construction	Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	Transportation and storage	Accommodation and food service activities	Information and communication	Financial and insurance activities; real estate activities except activities of holding companies	Professional, scientific and technical activities; administrative and support service activities	Education; human health and social work activities	Arts, entertainment and recreation; other service activities
Südburgenland	10,49%	13,29%	23,78%	3,50%	9,09%	5,59%	3,50%	14,69%	6,29%	9,79%
Klagenfurt-Villach	6,79%	7,56%	20,37%	3,09%	13,12%	4,48%	5,09%	21,60%	8,18%	9,72%
Oberkärnten	11,57%	17,77%	16,53%	3,31%	19,42%	1,24%	5,37%	15,29%	2,48%	7,02%
Unterkärnten	9,80%	9,02%	18,04%	2,75%	14,12%	3,92%	4,31%	21,57%	8,24%	8,24%
Graz	4,37%	6,65%	16,94%	5,20%	8,32%	6,86%	6,44%	30,87%	7,69%	6,65%
Östliche Obersteiermark	5,91%	12,20%	21,65%	5,51%	20,08%	4,33%	3,15%	15,75%	3,54%	7,87%
Oststeiermark	10,30%	11,67%	26,32%	2,52%	12,59%	3,20%	2,75%	20,14%	2,75%	7,78%
West- und Südsteiermark	7,08%	13,31%	22,66%	3,40%	13,60%	3,40%	1,70%	21,53%	5,10%	8,22%
Westliche Obersteiermark	7,94%	12,62%	21,03%	4,21%	15,42%	2,80%	3,27%	14,95%	7,48%	10,28%
AUSTRIA	7,30%	10,09%	20,24%	3,88%	12,77%	4,53%	4,48%	22,41%	6,21%	8,10%
Pomurska (NUTS 2010)	8,61%	17,22%	19,21%	4,30%	7,95%	6,62%	5,96%	18,54%	4,97%	6,62%
Podravska (NUTS 2010)	8,65%	15,20%	15,43%	5,22%	6,31%	5,85%	5,85%	22,53%	6,00%	8,96%
Koroska (NUTS 2010)	11,32%	18,87%	17,36%	8,68%	4,91%	5,66%	4,53%	16,23%	7,17%	5,28%
Savinjska (NUTS 2010)	9,05%	21,63%	17,11%	4,42%	7,84%	4,97%	3,31%	17,99%	5,85%	7,84%
Osrednjeslovenska (NUTS 2010)	6,04%	21,79%	13,45%	4,20%	3,82%	7,16%	3,82%	25,64%	5,34%	8,75%
Gorenjska (NUTS 2010)	9,12%	26,09%	11,88%	4,03%	6,89%	6,04%	2,97%	18,66%	6,36%	7,95%
SLOVENIA	7,67%	20,81%	14,50%	4,57%	5,47%	6,39%	4,14%	22,40%	5,73%	8,33%
REGION TOTAL	7,55%	17,18%	16,44%	4,34%	7,94%	5,76%	4,25%	22,40%	5,89%	8,25%
Difference compared to existing composition	-3,86%	4,50%	-2,78%	-0,81%	-1,38%	1,41%	0,92%	2,21%	-0,45%	0,23%

Chart 15

Composition of high growth enterprises in 2010 measured in employment (growth by 10% or more), source: Eurostat										
GEOGRAPHICAL AREA	Industry (except construction)	Construction	Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	Transportation and storage	Accommodation and food service activities	Information and communication	Financial and insurance activities; real estate activities except activities of holding companies	Professional, scientific and technical activities; administrative and support service activities	Education; human health and social work activities	Arts, entertainment and recreation; other service activities
Südburgenland	23,81%	19,05%	14,29%	0,00%	9,52%	0,00%	0,00%	19,05%	14,29%	0,00%
Klagenfurt-Villach	14,93%	8,96%	22,39%	1,49%	8,96%	5,97%	5,97%	17,91%	13,43%	0,00%
Oberkärnten	10,00%	23,33%	20,00%	10,00%	16,67%	3,33%	0,00%	10,00%	6,67%	0,00%
Unterkärnten	29,63%	14,81%	3,70%	7,41%	7,41%	3,70%	0,00%	22,22%	7,41%	3,70%
Graz	7,64%	5,56%	17,36%	3,47%	13,89%	4,17%	1,39%	27,78%	13,89%	4,86%
Östliche Obersteiermark	24,24%	9,09%	27,27%	9,09%	0,00%	6,06%	0,00%	18,18%	6,06%	0,00%
Oststeiermark	22,58%	14,52%	12,90%	6,45%	14,52%	1,61%	1,61%	9,68%	11,29%	4,84%
West- und Südsteiermark	16,33%	20,41%	18,37%	8,16%	10,20%	8,16%	0,00%	4,08%	12,24%	2,04%
Westliche Obersteiermark	18,18%	9,09%	18,18%	0,00%	18,18%	0,00%	0,00%	9,09%	27,27%	0,00%
AUSTRIA	15,54%	11,71%	17,57%	4,95%	11,49%	4,28%	1,58%	18,02%	12,16%	2,70%
Pomurska (NUTS 2010)	27,27%	4,55%	22,73%	13,64%	13,64%	4,55%	0,00%	13,64%	0,00%	0,00%
Podravska (NUTS 2010)	18,89%	17,78%	28,89%	7,78%	6,67%	4,44%	4,44%	10,00%	1,11%	0,00%
Koroska (NUTS 2010)	30,77%	15,38%	7,69%	23,08%	7,69%	7,69%	0,00%	0,00%	7,69%	0,00%
Savinjska (NUTS 2010)	33,33%	7,94%	23,81%	12,70%	3,17%	3,17%	6,35%	6,35%	3,17%	0,00%
Osrednjeslovenska (NUTS 2010)	14,40%	12,06%	24,12%	7,39%	5,45%	7,39%	7,00%	16,73%	1,95%	3,50%
Gorenjska (NUTS 2010)	20,93%	2,33%	23,26%	18,60%	2,33%	6,98%	0,00%	20,93%	4,65%	0,00%
SLOVENIA	19,26%	11,48%	24,39%	9,84%	5,53%	6,15%	5,33%	13,93%	2,25%	1,84%
REGION TOTAL	17,49%	11,59%	21,14%	7,51%	8,37%	5,26%	3,54%	15,88%	6,97%	2,25%
Difference compared to existing composition	6,08%	-1,09%	1,92%	2,37%	-0,96%	0,91%	0,21%	-4,31%	0,63%	-5,77%

Chart 16

International patent classification (IPC) - total per million inhabitants, source: Eurostat							
GEOGRAPHICAL AREA	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Average
Südburgenland	85,88	115,16	110,37	89,96	51,25	17,91	78,42
Klagenfurt-Villach	142,58	122,35	266,23	116,79	125,32	103,25	146,09
Oberkärnten	113,14	109,85	80,01	50,63	105,76	62,24	86,94
Unterkärnten	64,43	122,15	118,68	43,66	93,23	39,30	80,24
Graz	312,97	353,29	399,38	396,60	328,49	224,41	335,86
Östliche Obersteiermark	155,19	185,71	200,01	157,29	183,26	100,02	163,58
Oststeiermark	93,47	110,24	124,22	103,39	90,77	85,05	101,19
West- und Südsteiermark	155,93	170,39	190,07	210,96	142,94	86,99	159,55
Westliche Obersteiermark	144,46	117,81	110,74	169,47	71,85	74,63	114,83
AUSTRIA	162,83	180,71	215,92	181,53	161,86	111,34	169,03
Pomurska (NUTS 2010)	16,38	11,66	4,18	2,76	11,16	:	9,23
Podravska (NUTS 2010)	20,18	7,60	17,10	13,45	25,16	20,96	17,41
Koroška (NUTS 2010)	7,20	41,97	6,90	29,53	13,79	25,29	20,78
Savinjska (NUTS 2010)	59,31	60,51	73,79	50,03	34,07	24,98	50,45
Osrednjeslovenska (NUTS 2010)	101,84	128,65	109,53	80,90	78,58	34,43	88,99
Gorenjska (NUTS 2010)	42,17	59,17	27,51	27,35	20,65	18,13	32,50
SLOVENIA	56,89	67,45	58,99	45,24	43,29	24,60	49,41
REGION TOTAL	114,75	129,26	144,25	119,03	107,44	71,49	114,37

Chart 17

Employment (in 1000 persons), source: Eurostat								
GEOGRAPHICAL AREA	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Average	Change (2007 =100 %)
Südburgenland	40	41	41	41	41	41	41	102%
Klagenfurt-Villach	148	150	149	150	152	153	150	103%
Oberkärnten	55	56	55	55	55	55	55	100%
Unterkärnten	68	69	67	66	67	68	67	100%
Graz	244	250	248	252	258	260	252	107%
Östliche Obersteiermark	75	75	74	72	73	73	74	98%
Oststeiermark	122	125	124	125	128	128	125	105%
West- und Südsteiermark	78	81	79	80	81	81	80	103%
Westliche Obersteiermark	46	47	46	46	47	47	46	102%
AUSTRIA	875	892	881	887	902	905	890	103%
Pomurska (NUTS 2010)	49	50	47	46	45	45	47	90%
Podravska (NUTS 2010)	144	149	144	141	139	138	142	96%
Koroška (NUTS 2010)	31	31	30	29	28	28	30	92%
Savinjska (NUTS 2010)	123	128	125	120	119	117	122	95%
Osrednjeslovenska (NUTS 2010)	311	320	320	314	309	313	315	101%
Gorenjska (NUTS 2010)	82	83	81	80	80	78	81	95%
SLOVENIA	741	760	746	729	721	720	736	97%
REGION TOTAL	1 616	1 653	1 627	1 616	1 622	1 625	1 626	101%

Chart 18

Employment (in 1000 persons) - composition for the total region in %, source: Eurostat							
SECTOR OF EMPLOYMENT	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Decrease / increase in composition
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	9,00%	8,65%	8,56%	8,34%	8,24%	8,05%	-0,96%
Industry (except construction)	21,29%	20,88%	19,64%	18,96%	19,22%	19,37%	-1,92%
Construction	7,60%	8,02%	8,02%	7,72%	7,30%	7,12%	-0,47%
Wholesale and retail trade; transport; accommodation and food service activities; information and communication	24,98%	25,06%	25,43%	25,45%	25,39%	25,34%	0,35%
Financial and insurance activities; real estate activities; professional, scientific and technical activities; administrative and support service activities	13,94%	14,09%	14,17%	14,81%	15,07%	15,18%	1,23%
Public administration and defence; compulsory social security; education; human health and social work activities; arts, entertainment and recreation, repair of household goods and other services	23,18%	23,29%	24,17%	24,71%	24,79%	24,95%	1,78%
TOTAL	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	

Chart 19

Population aged 25-64 with tertiary education attainment percentage of total population, source: Eurostat									
GEOGRAPHICAL AREA	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Average	Change (2007 =100 %)
Burgenland	13,2	14,1	15,1	14,8	14,8	13,9	15,8	14,5	120%
Kärnten	16,0	16,2	17,2	16,6	16,3	17,2	17,3	16,8	107%
Steiermark	15,9	15,6	16,6	15,5	16,8	17,9	17,5	16,7	112%
Vzhodna Slovenija (NUTS 2010)	18,2	18,4	19,1	19,5	21,2	22,2	23,5	20,7	128%
Zahodna Slovenija (NUTS 2010)	27,1	27,6	28,3	28,5	29,5	31,2	32,9	29,7	119%

Males aged 25-64 with tertiary education attainment percentage of total males, source: Eurostat									
GEOGRAPHICAL AREA	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Average	Change (2007 =100 %)
Burgenland	16,3	16,3	17,4	16,9	17,3	15,8	17,3	16,8	106%
Kärnten	18,9	18,1	19,2	19,3	18,8	18,9	17,5	18,6	97%
Steiermark	18,8	18,1	18,8	16,4	18,5	20,0	19,5	18,6	108%
Vzhodna Slovenija (NUTS 2010)	14,4	15,2	15,1	15,2	16,4	17,3	18,6	16,3	122%
Zahodna Slovenija (NUTS 2010)	24,0	23,4	23,5	24,4	24,7	25,5	27,4	24,8	117%

Females aged 25-64 with tertiary education attainment percentage of total females, source: Eurostat									
GEOGRAPHICAL AREA	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Average	Change (2007 =100 %)
Burgenland	10,1	11,8	12,7	12,6	12,3	12,1	14,4	12,3	143%
Kärnten	13,1	14,3	15,1	14,0	13,9	15,5	17,0	15,0	119%
Steiermark	13,0	13,2	14,3	14,7	15,1	15,7	15,5	14,8	117%
Vzhodna Slovenija (NUTS 2010)	22,1	21,7	23,3	24,1	26,2	27,4	28,6	25,2	132%
Zahodna Slovenija (NUTS 2010)	30,2	31,9	33,1	32,7	34,5	37,1	38,5	34,6	121%

Chart 20

Nights spent, total in all type of accomodation, source: Eurostat									
GEOGRAPHICAL AREA	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Average	Change (2007 =100 %)
Burgenland	2 379 555	2 474 767	2 529 421	2 581 588	2 607 258	2 617 668	2 549 486	2 534 249	107%
Kärnten	10 799 314	10 998 768	10 816 952	10 438 031	10 678 729	10 888 704	10 821 533	10 777 433	100%
Steiermark	8 397 374	8 804 087	8 911 822	9 087 786	9 286 510	9 463 090	9 619 986	9 081 522	115%
AUSTRIA	21 576 243	22 277 622	22 258 195	22 107 405	22 572 497	22 969 462	22 991 005	22 393 204	107%
Vzhodna Slovenija (NUTS 2010)	3 384 890	3 855 823	3 801 693	3 765 892	3 917 611	4 074 219	3 956 817	3 822 421	117%
Zahodna Slovenija (NUTS 2010)	4 607 820	5 014 325	4 754 429	4 658 849	4 942 717	5 331 790	5 514 754	4 974 955	120%
SLOVENIA	7 992 710	8 870 148	8 556 122	8 424 741	8 860 328	9 406 009	9 471 571	8 797 376	119%
REGION TOTAL	29 568 953	31 147 770	30 814 317	30 532 146	31 432 825	32 375 471	32 462 576	31 190 580	110%

Chart 21

Nights spent total - composition for the total region in %, source: Eurostat								
TYPE OF ACCOMODATION	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Decrease / increase in composition
Hotels and similar accommodation	70,34%	70,92%	70,49%	70,86%	70,47%	69,07%	68,63%	-1,72%
Holiday and other short-stay accommodation	18,00%	17,37%	17,58%	17,84%	17,80%	19,13%	19,46%	1,46%
Camping grounds, recreational vehicle parks and trailer parks	11,66%	11,71%	11,93%	11,30%	11,72%	11,80%	11,91%	0,25%
TOTAL	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	

Chart 22

TYPE OF RESIDENCY	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Decrease / increase in composition
Total nights spent by residents	49,54%	49,47%	51,43%	51,88%	51,24%	49,96%	49,25%	-0,28%
Total nights spent by non-residents	50,46%	50,53%	48,57%	48,12%	48,76%	50,04%	50,75%	0,28%
TOTAL	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	

Chart 23

Energy: primary production percentage of renewable energy from the total energy produced, based on energy oil equivalent share, source: Eurostat (red numbers are estimates based on previous trends)									
GEOGRAPHICAL AREA	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Average	Change (2007 =100 %)
AUSTRIA	73,04%	74,48%	74,59%	75,11%	75,62%	76,14%	76,66%	75,09%	104,96%
Burgenland	99,64%	95,92%	96,93%	96,03%	95,12%	94,22%	93,31%	95,26%	97,28%
Kärnten	95,93%	95,14%	95,48%	95,32%	95,17%	95,02%	94,86%	95,16%	99,71%
Steiermark	97,33%	94,31%	97,09%	97,01%	96,93%	96,85%	96,77%	96,50%	102,62%
SLOVENIA	21,38%	23,12%	24,94%	26,12%	27,31%	28,49%	29,67%	26,61%	128,34%

Chart 24

Households with access to the internet at home - Percentage of households, source: Eurostat									
GEOGRAPHICAL AREA	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Average	Change (2007 =100 %)
AUSTRIA	60	69	70	73	75	79	81	72	135%
Burgenland (AT)	not available	67	69	72	70	75	79	72,0	118%
Kärnten	52	62	64	69	72	77	77	70,2	124%
Steiermark	56	66	63	73	71	78	82	72,2	124%
SLOVENIA	58	59	64	68	73	74	76	69	129%