

PRIORITY AXES

The structure of the programme consists of three priorities with in total seven fields of activity. Priorities 1 and 2 are oriented towards Lisbon as well as Gothenburg principles and take into consideration the cross cutting issues of equal opportunities, regional governance, cross border co-operation and sustainability.

Priority axis 1 “socio economic development, tourism and know how transfer” includes four fields of activity business related infrastructure (indirect business support), tourism, human resources development as well as health risk and social risk prevention. It has a lot of elements oriented at the implementation of the Lisbon strategy but at the same time sustainable aspects, which clearly refer to the Gothenburg principles.

Priority axis 2 “regional accessibility and sustainable development” includes three fields of activity transport and regional accessibility, environmental subjects as well as sustainable networks and institutionalised co-operation structures. It refers as well to the aspects of the Lisbon and the Gothenburg principles.

Additionally there will be implemented activities under **Priority axis 3 “Technical Assistance”**.

Structure of the Operational Programme Objective 3 Territorial Co-operation Austria – Czech Republic:

<i>Priority axis 1 – socio-economic development, tourism and know-how transfer</i>	<i>Priority axis 2 – regional accessibility and sustainable development</i>
Activity fields: AF 1 – Business and Innovation related Environment and Services AF 2 – Tourism, Culture and Leisure Economy AF 3 – Human Resources Development, Labour Market, Education and Qualification AF 4 – Social Integration, Health and Social Risk Prevention	Activity fields: AF 5 – Transport and Regional Accessibility AF 6 – Environment and Risk Prevention AF 7 – Sustainable Networks and Institutional Co-operation Structures
<i>Priority axis 3 - Technical Assistance</i>	

The fields of activity below the priority level are coherent thematic intervention areas. The programme management does the co-ordination between these fields of activity. The concrete activities included in the fields of activity form a broad variety and options for programme implementation in 2007-2013. Nevertheless, as this is an open formulated list of possible activities, further eligible activities can be supported and cofinanced, which are in line with the programme objectives and will arise during the programme implementation period. The programme takes on the well-established parts and procedures of the

last programme and adds some new established principles (e.g. lead partnership) as well as additional topics (health, risk prevention etc.). The new structures provided by the programme guidelines should give optimised implementation possibilities.

Priority axis 1: socio-economic development, tourism and know how transfer

Objective:

Enhancement of economic attractiveness of the territory, creation of conditions for know-how transfer and promotion of tourism

Context:

The cross border region Austria – Czech Republic is characterised by a heterogeneous economic structure especially in the rural and peripheral areas, a high share of SME and low shares of innovation. The region is still subject to structural changes. By cross border support of business related activities the region should be put in a stronger position and further developed towards an integrated region. All this will be especially achieved by co-operative structures and networks, which should provide the basis and inputs to meet the challenges, making most of the chances and concrete activities. This can be implemented either under the territorial co-operation programme or other national and European initiatives. This is in line with the strategy and will be achieved by:

- Intensification of business and service related support environment
- Intensification and creation of tourism opportunities, improvement and management of cultural heritage
- Development of human resources as well as
- Improvement of living conditions and social integration

Business and innovation related environment and services

Context

The region has to secure its position in the long run as an innovative and high-ranking location in comparison to other regions. The conditions have to be further developed in innovative and demand oriented way, to give access to relevant locations, to modern know-how and to business related services. The frame for regional actors should be improved by intensification of cross border co-operation of business related services, of innovative centres as well as improvement of the innovative and business related environment (co-operation and projects for internationalisation, innovation, research, network activities as well as supporting structures).

In particular the following indicative directions of support should be regarded:

- Giving access to and providing business related infrastructure
- Enforcing innovation and R&D
- Preparation of regional actors, organisations and institutions for competition

- Improvement, bundling and co-ordination the access to specialised public services (centres, networks etc.) and the existing business related and research infrastructure to close gaps as well as to improve the situation of the existing peripheral regions
- Focus activities and resources in certain fields of strengths/activities, clusters and networks
- Improvement of know how, knowledge and technology transfer between economy, science and administration
- Securing and improvement of the (esp.) economic situation in the border area
- Development and concentration of existing business related potentials
- Development of common core competencies and trade marks for the region
- Improved accessibility, utilisation and extension of existing research and technology networks, also with respect to equal opportunities
- Intensifying the co-operation between regional economy (esp. SME), universities, research institutions and other organisations
- Intensification of the integrated and innovation oriented regional support structures – to generate, adopt and successfully use innovations in business and society
- Development and intensification of technology and know how transfer and co-operation among universities, scientific and research institutions
- Cross border connection of economy, science and public administration
- Support regional supply chains and supply chain management
- Increase of cross border co-operation of business related services, of innovative centres as well as innovative and business related infrastructure

Tourism, culture and leisure economy

Context

Tourism is a very important sector in the region. The natural resources and cultural heritage are the common potentials. The cross border area directly offers potential for its effective exploitation in tourism as well as its potential for recreation. The branches connected with tourism represent sectors in which new job opportunities can be created and give a possibility to increase dynamics of the whole region development.

However, it is important that the tourist development pursues in a balanced way and promotes the border region values. Namely environment and cultural heritage protection is important as well as protection of all sources representing a fundamental wealth of the border region.

Together with improved service this should provide a solid basis for future tourism development in the region. Support of territorial co-operation and of soft activities is also provided by the development of tourism and leisure economy in rural and peripheral areas. A significant cross-reference of the mentioned fields of activity exists to neighbouring activities (e.g. culture) and activities outside the programme, especially in employment and adjustment of qualification, because there is always needed qualified and flexible workforce in an innovation-oriented economy.

In particular the following indicative directions of support should be regarded:

- Increase the quality of tourism services and develop and present tourism products and cultural heritage in an optimal way
- Design of promotion materials and marketing strategies developing a picture of tourism and the ideal opening up of (socially modified) markets
- Attract new tourists from the area outside the border region
- Better exploitation of the existing potential for economic activation of the region
- Creation of sustainable opportunities for tourism
- Create cross border tourism co-operation and network the cross border supply
- Enhancement of competitiveness and capacities in the field of tourist offer in compliance with ecological and social limitations
- Consideration of gender aspects in working conditions and tourism supply, integration of gender and target group point of view in product development
- Improve the quality of cross border infrastructure in the field of tourism
- Sustainable forms and products for tourism, culture and leisure economy
- Improvement of the quality of standards for visitors of historical and cultural sights
- Extension of harmonised tourist activities in and around nature protected areas
- Specialising of new transboundary extensive and attractive approaches for nature and landscape tourism
- Linkages between recreation tourism, nature tourism and business tourism
- Relevant organisational structures

Human resources development, labour market, education and qualification

Context

The cross border region still is affected, even after a decade of starting co-operation, by the passed period of closed borders. New relationships have been established, which are also a result of this cross border co-operation process in the last programming periods and have been increased by the accession of the Czech Republic to the European Union. Nowadays new exchange processes and new relationships on the labour market exist. Nevertheless the challenge of the future regional/urban and cross border labour market has to be met and initiated by this programme. The already changed situation on the labour market leads towards increase of demands of the population as well as for the suppliers of education, vocational training, qualification, research and innovation.

In particular the following indicative directions of support should be regarded:

- Development of education, qualification and human resources (qualification possibilities adopted to the needs of the economy etc.)
- Development of cross border labour markets should be supported and prepared in co-operation with the relevant actors in the fields of labour market, education and integration

- Improved integration of women and other disadvantaged groups
- Development and co-operation in the regional and cross border labour market and employment
- Decrease of restraints in the education, qualification and social systems as well as in the field of development of human resources
- Increase and accessibility to know how and knowledge
- Enhancement of mobility of work force and students
- Strengthen the co-operation in field of education and qualification, esp. joint qualification in the context of clusters and business co-operation
- Improve the quality of cross border infrastructure in the field of education and qualification

Health and social risk prevention, social integration

Context

According to the ageing of the society, the change in life cycle and living standards and the change in the population structure due to migration changes it is necessary to notice the change of the situation in this field of activity and to identify, evaluate and adjust the existing regional and national systems. These facts are also very much linked to the changes in labour markets and economy in general several aspects, social integration of disadvantaged groups of the population, migrants, life expectancy, different social and health systems and security systems have to be taken into consideration.

In particular the following indicative directions of support should be regarded:

- Inclusion of marginalized and disadvantaged groups (youth, women, migrants, any kind of minorities etc.) with significant know how potential in social structures and dynamics in the development process
- Improving social life in the border region
- Enhancement of public participation as means to raise social capital
- Improving living conditions and social cohesion in urban and rural areas
- Reducing social disparities
- Increase activities and efficiency of social risk prevention systems and social infrastructure
- Maintaining and improving co-operation, competencies and capacities of organisations, institutions and communities in this working field
- Elaboration of a cross border activity programme for social risk prevention and social integration for various target groups (disadvantaged groups and persons, minorities, young people)
- Taking diversity of cultures, religions and lifestyles into account at planning and activity level
- Field of social integration, health and social risk prevention with cross border significance (public hospitals, youth organisations)
- Supply of social services for disadvantaged groups of the population
- Integrated rescue system and emergency services for the cross border region

Priority axis 2: regional accessibility and sustainable development

Objective:

Improvement of the accessibility of the border region and enhancement of the environment quality

Context:

Further development of the cross border region and a possibility to make use of chances stemming from its geographical position in the middle of Europe are determined by improvement of the traffic accessibility of this territory. This refers to the development and modernisation of the existing infrastructure, which is of cross border importance as well as the transportation infrastructure in general.

Natural and landscape assets contribute indisputably to the attraction of the cross border region. The state of the environment (of nature and landscape) represents realisation conditions for economic activities, investment allocation and also contributes to further tourism development.

Institutional co-operation even though already developed needs ongoing harmonisation and further initiation. This is intended by

- Improvement of the accessibility of the region
- Improvement of the environment and risk prevention, valorisation/management of nature and natural heritage and alternative energy use as well as
- Improvement of institutional cooperation structures

Transport and regional accessibility

Context

A precondition for cross border socio-economic activities, co-operation and becoming “really one region” is the improvement of the transport situation and the accessibility in the cross border region. The improvement of the innerregional transport system is a very important precondition for the mobility of persons and goods especially in the peripheral areas. Problems and handicaps arise due to insufficient connection between the regions and of the region with high-ranking transport infrastructure. This fact also applies to the level of quality and availability of the telecommunication infrastructure.

The improvements taking into consideration environmental and sustainability aspects, should lead to an optimisation of the accessibility in the areas of transport and telecommunication infrastructure, it should enhance the traffic accessibility in the border region and improve mobility of inhabitants.

In particular the following indicative directions of support should be regarded:

- Building-up and modernisation of the traffic infrastructure with emphasis on improving the quality of the interconnections in the cross border region (local and regional networks)
- The modernisation of the communication system and the telecommunication infrastructure interconnections of border regions
- Improvement of transregional, cross border/regional/local accessibility with cross border impact
- Optimal use of public and alternative transport modes
- Improved IT access, also for peripheral areas, to create equal development opportunities

- Improvement of traffic accessibility to cultural sites in the border region
- Accessibility of the region by introducing and implementing integrated transport system
- Shifting traffic towards more environmental friendly systems – optimisation of combinations with alternative means of transport (e.g. public transport)
- Support to different mobility needs according to equal opportunities aspects
- Achieving synergies by co-ordination of plans and programmes and allowing better conditions for information and communication technologies to become a real cross border instrument
- Using the creation of an equal standard of supply for information and communication technology (ICT) for raising the local development possibilities in the region
- Use of telematic applications in transport for the efficient use of existing transport infrastructure and the existing network of logistic centres
- Development of logistic related projects – multi modal split for the reduction of road traffic
- Transboundary environmental impact assessment (EIA)/SEA for infrastructure activities

Environment and risk prevention

Context

There is a need for co-ordination of the different types of space utilisation (settlements, population, socio-economic conditions, spatial development, protection of nature, soil management etc.) for the benefit of the variety and the sensibility of nature in the cross border region, which has to be oriented towards sustainability. The development and the use of environmental friendly technologies, renewable energies and renewable primary products also contribute to this fact.

This could be achieved by increasing cross border co-operation in terms of sustainable development in space, environment and economy as well as utilisation of regional resources, especially renewable primary products and energies. Co-ordinated activities of active and passive measures as well as improved warning systems should minimise the probability of natural disasters.

In particular the following indicative directions of support should be regarded:

- Quality improvement of the environment – protection of natural species, flood prevention and modernisation of the environmental infrastructure (e.g. waste management.)
- Use of environmental friendly technology (e.g. transport system, energy)
- Prevention of environmental and technological risks (prevention and awareness)
- Respecting the principle of environment friendliness and sustainability
- Efficient use of natural resources and renewable energies to achieve regional value added (e.g. supply of fuels, substitution of fossil energy, increase independence from imported fossil energy) and reach the goals for protection of climate and environment
- Renaturation of rivers and improved rescue systems should lead to improved risk prevention (natural hazards, floods etc.)
- Preservation of high-quality landscape and nature management

- Protection from natural disasters and disposal of harms to the environment
- Improved co-ordination (bottom up, exchange of experience) in spatial development and environmental planning
- Strengthen the quality of life and nature by the extension of technical infrastructure as well as co-operation and co-ordination of the responsible institutions and organisations
- Reduction of environmental pollution
- Support the uptake of Environmental Management Systems (e.g. ISO, EMAS, Eco labels) as well as awarding systems
- Cross border strategy for waste management
- Management in the field of „protected species“ and habitat protection (biotopes)
- Realisation and co-ordinated implementation of NATURA 2000 conception
- Harmonisation of SEA regulations
- Flood forecast and flood control measures and joint co-ordination of activities
- Sustainable use of regional water resources
- Socio-economic risk management approaches
- Joint activities in the field of nature and landscape protection (e.g. management plans for valuable localities in term of nature and culture or for landscape complexes)
- Increase of awareness for environment standards, which will lead towards higher attractiveness and better marketing possibilities
- Improve protection of ecosystems
- Developments and improvements related to alternative energies
- Foster technology transfer activities in line with innovation processes to reach “best available technologies”
- Strengthen environmental education and training

Sustainable networks and institutional co-operation

Context

In the last decade organisations and institutions with cross border character, networks for exchange of experience and know how transfer have been established as well as common strategies and projects have been initiated.

The intensification of contacts since the change of the political systems and their intensification during the implementation of the cross border co-operation programmes in last two programming periods there is still space for improvement in the field of informal and official cross border contacts at all levels.

Regional and spatial planning as a cross cutting issue covering sector, horizontal and bottom up aspects uses national, regional and local network or has established own networks for the co-operation, co-ordination and harmonisation of the development of the region under several aspects. These structures already showed reasonable impact during the last programming periods and should be kept in place or

even enforced for upcoming tasks (e.g. transport issues, common use and preservation of natural resources, end of the transition period in labour market and for services, prevention of floods).

The focus is on activities in the non-investment area, which should support the success of regional policies, e.g. awareness raising, information, support in getting new contacts, innerregional organisation and co-operation (communities, organisations, regional actors etc.) and activities related to 1082/2006 EGTC, European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation.

In particular the following indicative directions of support should be regarded:

This field of activities should be supported by the creation and further development of co-operation structures on different levels (administration, communities, professionals etc.) e.g.:

- Strengthen the institutional network
- Creation of regional governance structures to improve the regional and cross border co-operative organisation structures (including communities, regional/local/cross border initiatives, as well as organisations and regional actors) for a co-ordinated and sustainable regional and spatial development
- Enable people to people co-operation to increase small scale direct integration and cohesion activities
- Improvement and development of communication and co-operation (infra)structure
- Strengthen bottom up and the partnership principle, cross border integration, raise of the endogenous potential
- Improved co-operation of innovative and regional actors by implementing a better regional governance of the relevant policies
- Preservation and further development of the regional consulting and co-ordination network
- Integrated planning and environmental assessment (if requested) for strategic projects and processes, sustainable spatial development
- Establish participation structures (e.g. AGENDA 21)
- Exchange, support, planning and monitoring of cross border regional and spatial planning systems, aspects and perspectives
- Support a common cross border spatial planning perspective, to enable the integration of cities, functional urban regions and regions across the border as well as better connection of the urban centres with peripheral areas.
- Co-operation among cities of similar size, urban and suburban co-operation
- Co-operation networks (networking of cities and in the culture, youth etc.)
- Development of “European Regions”, foster CBC between Euregios and to “European Regions”
- Small Project Fund
- Co-operation projects in order to reduce social disparities between urban and rural areas