

Priorities – Objectives and Targets

In order to reach the **overall goal** and the **specific objectives** of the programme **priority axes** have been established. They are based on inputs from the regional analysis, SWOT-analysis and from workshops and discussions regional representatives and the programming group. Correspondence with the principles of the EU and coherence with other EU and national programmes is an important precondition for a sound programme.

The programme consists of two thematic **priority axes** and a horizontal priority axis (Technical Assistance). The thematic priorities are oriented to Lisbon as well as to Gothenburg principles and take into consideration the cross cutting issues of gender mainstreaming and sustainability. They include several fields of activities. The Technical Assistance is focused on the sound management of the programme.

Innovation, integration and competitiveness (Priority 1)

Objectives

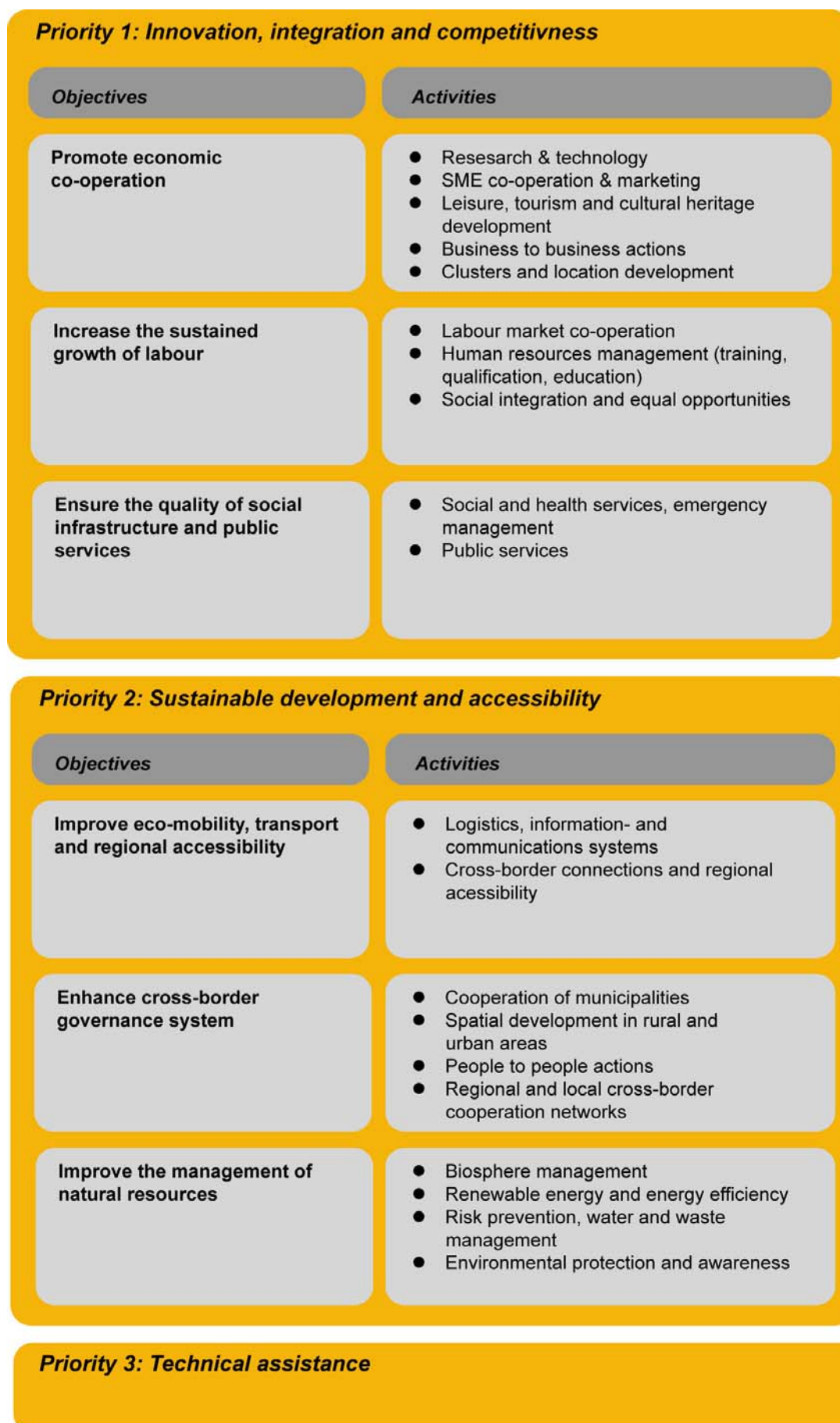
The objective of priority 1 is to **improve the competitiveness of the whole region and to stimulate co-operation and innovation among its economic and social actors**. This requires interventions and activities

- **to promote economic co-operation,**
- **to increase the sustained growth of labour and**
- **to improve social infrastructure and public services.**

The **strategy** for reaching these objectives by interventions and activities can be summarized as follows:

- encouraging entrepreneurship, in particular the development of SMEs, tourism, culture, cross-border trade and environmental techniques to secure the competitiveness;
- strengthening research and technology generally with co-operation, marketing and cluster development to increase the regions innovation capacity;
- enhancing the cross-border labour market in respect to know-how transfer and integration;
- fortifying human resource management and equality generally in the fields of training, qualification and education as well as scientific exchange and know-how transfer;
- deepening existing and development of future cross-border co-operation networks and structures;
- developing collaboration, capacity and joint use of infrastructures in particular in sectors such as culture, environmental friendly tourism and education;
- ensuring and enhancing social infrastructure as well as public services by co-operation.

Figure 1: Priorities AT-HU CBC programme 2007-2013



Main areas of intervention/Fields of activity

Three objectives and a number of different activities support the implementation of the development strategy within priority 1 – innovation, integration and competitiveness:

Promote economic co-operation

This aims to enhance the innovative development of the **SMEs** through research and technology, co-operation and marketing. Furthermore the **leisure** and **tourism** sector should be stimulated by different activities. The **research and technology** should be based and strengthened on the already existing elements like regional impulse centres, innovation centres and industrial parks, with a special emphasis on their cross-border activities.

To strengthen the regional market more cross-border **co-operation's in the SME** sector are needed. Especially the regional chains of economic goods and a co-operate **marketing** are to be enhanced in order to support the sustainable use of resources. Referring to the regional analysis especially the topics of **leisure, tourism and cultural heritage** play an important role. Within the region there is a broad range of existing tourist and leisure facilities, co-operation in tourism is seen as a basis for developing cross-border activities, including networking, destination marketing, further development of tourist and leisure facilities (e.g. interregional bicycle routes). The development of attractive location areas and the contribution for compensating or adjusting regional economic disparities have to be supported.

To overcome inhibitions in the start up of new co-operations the **business to business actions** support the first steps across the border on a small scale and unbureaucratic way. Networks and **clusters** are flexible instruments to support co-operation along research, development, qualification institutions and additional centres of competence that build competitiveness to close supply linkages and cooperative relationships. To take into account the future economic development also new **locations** need to be developed within the region. These instruments provide an effective framework for small and large **local and regional** organisations that complement each other to enhance the economic power of the region. Additionally they exploit potential synergy effects with other sectors.

Specific goals to promote economic co-operation:

- To increase the innovation, integration and competitiveness of enterprises (especially SMEs) by more focus on research and technology;
- To improve R&D capacity especially in the fields of renewable energy, organic materials and link it with SMEs;
- To develop a regional market and exploit potential synergy effects with other economic sectors;
- To enhance cross-border tourism, regional networks of active tourism (e.g. cycling, hiking, ...) and cultural heritage development, leisure time facilities, products and services to make them more attractive;
- To screen for potential fields of co-operation and first contacts and strengthen existing co-operations;
- To develop and optimise co-operation between SMEs in the border region;
- To develop networks and clusters on regional and local level to strengthen cross-border integration and more intense economic, social and cultural contacts;
- To create an infrastructure for sustainable products/technologies/clusters, cross-border business centres and major locations and develop stronger regional competencies.

Strengthening these activities will increase the competitiveness and innovation capacity of the border region on the international and not only on the regional level.

Indicative activities:

- R&D activities in research centres (01⁹);
- R&D infrastructure (including physical plant, instrumentation and high-speed computer networks linking research centres) and centres of competence in a specific technology (02);
- Technology transfer and improvement of co-operation networks between small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs), between these and other businesses and universities, post-secondary

⁹ Code number of the contribution to the Funds

education establishments of all kinds, regional authorities, research centres and scientific and technological poles (scientific and technological parks, technopoles etc.) (03);

- Advanced support services for firms and groups of firms (05);
- Other measures to stimulate research and innovation and entrepreneurship in SMEs (09),
- Services and applications for SMEs (e-commerce, education and training, networking etc.) (14);
- Promotion of natural assets (55);
- Protection and development of natural heritage (56);
- Other assistance to improve tourist services (57);
- Protection and preservation of the cultural heritage (58).

Increase the sustained growth of labour

This aims to improve human resources management in training, education and qualification. Individuals, enterprises and the border region as a whole are to be prepared for future challenges and a common labour market. Social integration and equality fosters the mutual tolerance, multiculturalism and acceptance of minorities as important components of an open-minded society and provides equal opportunities to secure the economic prosperity of the region.

Labour market co-operation as well as a common **human resource management** enhances the job opportunities and the competitiveness within the border region. To secure the sustainable development special attention is paid to the promotion and application of **social integration and the equal opportunities** principle in general - all activities undertaken take into account the different needs of the target groups.

Specific goals to promote the sustained growth of labour:

- To develop a common labour market and promote more intense collaboration between labour market institutions;
- To promote the integration of the labour market; improve education and job opportunities for the young;
- To promote more intense co-operation between education and qualification institutions;
- To promote scientific exchange, education and know-how transfer across the border;
- To provide assistance in the integration of the society and equal opportunities into the labour market.

The imbalances of human resources are to overcome and to develop an integrated regional labour market and a knowledge based society on both sides of the border in order to reduce regional unemployment.

Indicative activities:

- Services and applications for SMEs (e-commerce, education and training, networking etc.) (14);
- Development of life-long learning systems and strategies in firms; training and services for employees to step up their adaptability to change; promoting entrepreneurship and innovation (62);
- Development of specific services for employment, training and support in connection with restructuring of sectors and firms, and development of systems for anticipating economic changes and future requirements in terms of jobs and skills (64);
- Modernisation and strengthening of labour market institutions (65);
- Implementing active and preventive measures on the labour market (66);
- Measures encouraging active ageing and prolonging working lives (67);
- Measures to improve access to employment and increase sustainable participation and progress of women in employment to reduce gender-based segregation in the labour market and to reconcile work and private life, such as facilitating access to childcare and care for dependent persons (69);
- Pathways to integration and re-entry into employment for disadvantaged people; combating discrimination in accessing and progressing in the labour market and promoting acceptance of diversity at the workplace (71);

- Design, introduction and implementation of reforms in education and training systems in order to develop employability, improving the labour market relevance of initial and vocational education and training, updating skills of training personnel with a view to innovation and a knowledge based economy (72);
- Measures to increase participation in education and training throughout the life-cycle, including through action to achieve a reduction in early school leaving, gender-based segregation of subjects and increased access to and quality of initial vocational and tertiary education and training (73);
- Developing human potential in the field of research and innovation, in particular through post-graduate studies and training of researchers, and networking activities between universities, research centres and businesses (74);
- Promoting partnerships, pacts and initiatives through the networking of relevant stakeholders (80).

Ensure the quality of social infrastructure and public services

This aims to support the maintenance of social infrastructures and public services also in remote and sparsely populated parts of the programme area. According to the regional analysis the quality of social infrastructure and social services is deteriorating especially in rural parts of the region.

The field of co-operation in **social services** is assumed to be of increasing importance, especially in terms of the development of **health care co-operation**, and the co-operation in **emergency cases**. It is also referring to the co-operation of institutions for childcare, schools and universities. Economic and social integration of the border region puts emphasis on intensive social co-operation in a wider context.

The objective is to support co-operation and exchange of information and best practices between the relevant partners also to ensure the presence of **public services** in less favoured areas of the programme region. To encourage cross-border co-operation it is necessary to establish structures, know-how and organisations facilitating the activities of enterprises, local governments, NGOs and other non-profit organisations who want to be active with respect to both parts of the border region. The co-operation and organisational structures serve as a backbone to the initiation, development and maintenance of cross-border co-operations and initiatives. The purpose is to establish demand-driven organisational structures which support the strengthening and further development of already existing and well functioning institutional structures into a cross-border dimension.

Specific goals to ensure the quality of social infrastructure and public services:

- To exploit synergy effects in social services and health care co-operation by strengthening, developing and optimising co-operations between local and regional organisation in the border region;
- To develop common structures to secure the presence of public services in the border region;
- To improve domestic and public services for disadvantaged groups;
- To improve and institutionalize the co-operation of different actors from both sides of the border in cases of emergency.

Strengthening these activities will increase the quality of life in the border region.

Indicative activities:

- Information and communication technologies (access, security, interoperability, risk-prevention, research, innovation, e-content etc.) (11),
- Services and applications for the citizen (e-health, e-government, e-learning, e-inclusion etc.) (13);
- Pathways to integration and re-entry into employment for disadvantaged people; combating discrimination in accessing and progressing in the labour market and promoting acceptance of diversity at the workplace (71);
- Education infrastructure (75);
- Health infrastructure (76);
- Childcare infrastructure (77);
- Other social infrastructure (79).

Sustainable development and accessibility (Priority 2)

Objectives

The objective of priority 2 is to **foster sustainable development as well as to improve the accessibility of the region and the equality within the region**. This requires interventions and activities

- **to improve eco-mobility, transport and regional accessibility;**
- **to enhance the cross-border governance system** and
- **to improve the management of natural resources.**

The improved (internal and external) accessibility of the AT-HU border-region in transport infrastructure and public transport is an important precondition for its further economic integration and development. To achieve this objective, increased capacities and effective management of the transportation infrastructure and public transport will be vital.

There are strong links and interconnections between the quality of environment and the economic development. There is evidence that sustainable development – balanced economic, social and environmental development – is a common feature of those regions which are most effectively utilising knowledge and (technological) innovations.

The **strategy** for reaching these objectives by interventions and activities can be summarized as follows:

- encouraging and improving the joint protection and management of natural and cultural resources as well as the prevention of natural and technological risks;
- supporting sustainable links between urban and rural areas;
- enhancing accessibility through improved access to sustainable transport, information and communication networks and services, and cross-border water, waste and energy systems and facilities;
- enhancing equal opportunities for underprivileged groups on all levels;
- developing collaboration, capacity and joint use of infrastructures in particular in sectors such as health, risk prevention and emergency management;
- deepening existing and development of cross-border co-operations, structures and regional governance with a special focus on people to people actions.

Main areas of intervention/Fields of activity

Three objectives and a number of different activities support the implementation of the development strategy within priority 2 – sustainable development and accessibility:

Improve eco-mobility, transport and regional accessibility

Cross-border economic development and co-operation as well as more intense cross-border activities and relationships require an expanded ecological friendly, sustainable regional transport infrastructure and organisation. The main focus within this field of activity are soft measures like the enhancement of the cross-border **logistics, information- and communications systems** as well as border **connections**, especially the improvement of the public transport systems. The common approaches aim the more efficient use of the existing capacities and exploitation of new opportunities with feasibility studies and lobbying in the border region.

Specific goals to ensure the improvement of eco-mobility, transport and regional accessibility

- To improve cross-border mobility and accessibility (concentrate on better connections for peripheral areas and better north-south and east-west connections in the border region) with a special focus on public transport;
- To improve cross border logistics management;
- To create and expand information and communications structures;
- To establish more border crossings and improve cross border public transport;
- To improve the regional accessibility and the mobility within the region in a sustainable way by innovative solutions, public transport and multi-modality.
- To improve connectivity between larger cities in the region.

The enhancement of the regional transport infrastructure and organisation helps to reduce the disparities within the programme area and to intensify the cross-border activities and relationships.

Indicative activities:

- Information and communication technologies (access, security, interoperability, risk-prevention, research, innovation, e-content etc.) (11);
- Railways (16);
- Regional and local roads (23);
- Cycle tracks (24);
- Multimodal transport (26);
- Intelligent transport systems (28),
- Airports (29);
- Ports (30);
- Inland waterways (regional and local) (31);
- Promotion of clean urban transport (52).

Enhance cross-border governance system

The field of social and cultural co-operation is assumed to be of increasing importance referring to the co-operation of institutions. A close co-operation for the common development of the region is required. The fields of activities cover a wide range from the **co-operation of municipalities to people to people actions** taking into account the cultural heritage, natural and human resources.

Small and medium sized cities play a vital part in the overall development of the region, therefore co-operation is supported. In accordance with polycentric settlement structure within the region a cross-border perspective of **spatial development** supports the integration of cities and regions as well as the preservation of the cultural heritage. Co-operation in the field of **risk prevention** enhances the protection. To overcome inhibitions in the start up of new co-operations **people to people actions** support the first steps across the border on a small scale and unbureaucratic way. These small scale co-operations are necessary for a positive co-operation climate in the region.

Specific goals to enhance cross-border governance system:

- To strengthen the co-operation of municipalities in order to support a common development perspective of the region;
- To support the strategy building of CENTROPE;
- To enhance the quality of life in small cities and rural parts of the region;
- To screen for potential fields of co-operation and first contacts and strengthen existing co-operations;
- To reinforce networking and exchange of experience among regional and local authorities;
- To develop and optimise co-operation between organisations and institutions in the border region;
- To support people to people actions as a backbone of cultural co-operation.

The social and cultural co-operation and organisational structures serve as a backbone for the initiating, developing and maintenance of cross-border co-operation and initiatives. With the support and establishment of demand-driven organisational structures with cross-border dimension and further development of already existing and well functioning structures the sustainable development of the region is guaranteed.

Indicative activities:

- Protection and preservation of the cultural heritage (58);
- Development of cultural infrastructure (59);
- Other assistance to improve cultural services (60);
- Integrated projects for urban and rural regeneration (61);

- Promoting partnerships, pacts and initiatives through the networking of relevant stakeholders (80);
- Mechanisms for improving good policy and programme design, monitoring and evaluation at national, regional and local level, capacity building in the delivery of policies and programmes (81).

Improve the management of natural resources

The overall goal is the sustainable use of resources. To enable a simultaneous **protection** and **utilization** of natural resources and cultural landscape values it is necessary to exchange information, approaches and practices. Furthermore existing systems must be improved and cross-border concepts developed. To secure the sustainable use of resources activities in raise **awareness** are helpful. **Renewable energy** is a growing economic sector with a high positive contribution to sustainable development within the region. Therefore it is important to improve the energy efficiency. All considerations must take into account the regional differences in for example the infrastructure requirements with respect to the technical infrastructure and organisation (e.g. **risk prevention, water management, waste management, noise reduction**) in the border region.

Specific goals to improve the management of natural resources:

- To enhance the sustainable use, protection and preservation of the high quality of the nature, natural resources and landscape conditions;
- To improve the energy efficiency and to use renewable energy more intensely;
- To maintain the great variety of biodiversity and extend the Biosphere growth concept;
- To improve the efficiency and quality of public services through synergies in water and waste management;
- To encourage the protection and joint management of the environment;
- To reduce and avoid the negative effects of economic activities on the environment;
- To reduce natural risks by co-operation in water management;
- To protect and enhance environmental quality by making it an economic factor (improve competitiveness of regional sustainable products).

The transnational influences of the environment as well as the impacts of economic activities call for a close co-operation on both sides of the border in order to develop a sound system for management of natural resources to sustain the high standard of living.

Indicative activities:

- Renewable energy solar (40);
- Renewable energy biomass (41);
- Renewable energy hydroelectric, geothermal and other (42);
- Energy efficiency, co-generation, energy management (43);
- Management of household and industrial waste (44);
- Management and distribution of water (drink water) (45);
- Water treatment (waste water) (46);
- Air quality (47);
- Integrated prevention and pollution control (48),
- Mitigation and adaptation to climate change (49);
- Promotion of biodiversity and nature protection (including Natura 2000) (51);
- Risk prevention (including the drafting and implementation of plans and measures to prevent and manage natural and technological risks) (53);
- Other measures to preserve the environment and prevent risks (54).

Technical assistance (Priority 3)

To ensure an effective programme management and information flow the technical assistance goal is to improve the quality of cross-border co-operation and management tools. According to Article 45-46 of the General Regulation following fields of activity are supported:

- assistance for projects preparation and appraisal, including with the EIB through a grant or other forms of co-operation, as appropriate;
- studies linked to the drawing up of the Community Strategic Guidelines on cohesion, the Commission's reporting on cohesion policy and the three-yearly cohesion report;
- evaluations, expert reports, statistics and studies, including those of a general nature concerning the operation of the Funds, which can be carried out where appropriate by the EIB or the EIF through a grant or other forms of co-operation;
- measures aimed at the partners, the beneficiaries of assistance from the Funds and the general public, including information measures;
- measures to disseminate information, networking, raise awareness, promote co-operation and exchange experiences throughout the Community;
- the installation, operation and interconnection of computerised systems for management, monitoring, inspection (first-level control) and evaluation;
- improvements in evaluation methods and the exchange of information on practices in this field.

Indicative activities:

- Preparation, implementation, monitoring and inspection (85);
Evaluation and studies; information and communication (86).