Objective 3 – Territorial Cooperation

Guide for Applicants
Version no. 1

CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION
SLOVENIA – AUSTRIA 2007–2013

1st Draft, June 2007

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1. ABOUT THE GUIDE

The purpose of this Guide is to assist potential applicants in project development and preparation of the application to successfully participate in the Cross-border Cooperation Programme Slovenia – Austria 2007-2013.

This Guide is a **binding part of the application pack**. The whole application pack consists of the following documents:

- Call for project ideas
- Operational Programme Cross border cooperation Slovenia – Austria 2007-2013
- Guide for project applicants (this document)
- Project Outline/Application Form with Annexes
- Draft ERDF contract
- National/regional co-financing contract
- Sample partnership agreement

All documents referred to are available on the programme web site: www.at-si.net

How to use the Guide?
In the first part you will find essential information on the present cross border programme including indication of major differences compared to the Interreg IIIA. Furthermore, information on conditions for participation in the programme is presented.

As it is important to establish a sound cross border partnership and develop the project idea jointly, a few recommendations related to project development and related support available from the programme management bodies is presented.

Detailed information on how to turn your project into application form is presented in Chapter 5. Furthermore, information on submission of applications, selection process as well as key responsibilities and requirements of the cross border partnership in the project implementation is included.

Should this Guide be revised, a new version shall be provided on the website. Any changes shall be indicated in this chapter.

Where to start?
Before filling in the Application Form, we strongly recommend you to read carefully the Operational Programme and this Guide. Both documents will help you develop quality cross border projects contributing to the programme objectives and respect the requirements and conditions for participation in the cross border programme.

2. ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

2.1 What's new?

In the period 2007-2013 the cross border cooperation is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund under the European Territorial Objective. Beside the cross border cooperation, this objective includes transnational and interregional cooperation.

The cross border cooperation programme between Austria and Slovenia started in 1995. As we are entering the third programming period, the objectives and intensity of cooperation are becoming more ambitious. Much effort has also been put to provision of more favourable conditions on both sides of the border to support such cooperation.

In the table bellow you can find a short overview of what's new compared to cross border cooperation practice between Slovenia and Austria in the past programming period. The major differences are presented in the light of the implementation of the Community Initiative Interreg IIIA in both countries (2004-2006) and the new period.

Table 1: What's new?

	Interreg IIIA (2004-2006)	Objective 3 (2007 – 2013)
Programme area	NUTS III regions along the internal border as the core programme area, plus adjacent regions: Graz, …. in Austria and Municipality Kamnik in Slovenia. Total population:	The programme area has been widened with more adjacent NUTS III regions – Osrednjeslovenska in Slovenia, and…. in Austria. Total population:
Share of Community co-financing (ERDF)	The overall share of the co-financing from the ERDF funds was up to 75% of the total eligible costs.	The share of Community funding is max. 85% of the total eligible costs.
Eligible project applicants and partners	In Slovenia only non for profit organisations with the seat or branch office located in the programme area were eligible to participate in the programme. In Austria, in certain cases also organisations from the profit sector were eligible project partners.	The programme is open to legal entities, both profit and non for profit, established either by public or private law. In justified cases participation of project partners located outside of the programme area is possible in accordance with the Article 21(2) of the EC no 1083/2006.
Lead Beneficiary/Lead Partner	Not applied. Each project owner responsible to the contracting authority in its country, functional lead partner approach possible.	The Lead Partner / Lead Beneficiary principle fully applied.
Submission of applications	Application forms unified to a certain extent. In Slovenia, applications submitted in Slovene on the basis of calls for proposals. In Austria a rolling system was used. Applications submitted in German. Mirror or joint project was to be submitted by applicants both in	The call for project ideas with deadlines for submitting applications during a longer time span, eg. 3 years proposed. An option to prepare and submit the Project Outline and get feedback on the project idea before submitting the full project proposal available. The bilingual application is submitted to Joint Technical Secretariat by the Lead

	Slovenia and in Austria.	Partner only.
Project selection process	Common selection criteria agreed. Differences in the pre-assessment of project proposals existed. The final decision on project approval made by the Joint Steering Committee.	The project selection process and selection criteria agreed and applied jointly between the partner states. Decision on the projects to be funded from the programme shall be taken by the Joint Monitoring Committee.
Contracting	In each country, a separate contract for the ERDF funding was signed with the project applicant. Public co-financing?	The ERDF contract is signed between the Managing Authority and the Lead Partner that is representing the whole project partnership. The contract for national co-financing shall be signed between RCB and the Lead partner or project partner concerned.
Project implementation	The project implementation was the responsibility of the project applicant on each side of the border. Due to different systems joint implementation was sometimes hindered.	The project implementation is based on the same conditions. Besides the EU rules, the national legislation shall be respected. The Lead Partner bears the overall responsibility for the project implementation as agreed in the contract.
Project financial controls	In Slovenia, the first level control has been a centralised service of the National Authority. In Austria, ….	For all Slovene project partners or Lead Partners, the first level control shall be provided by the Financial control department of the Government Office. In Austria, the financial control for the public law bodies shall be organised by the Regional Coordination Bodies, while the private law bodies will have to appoint an external auditor certified by the RCB.

2.2 Programme area

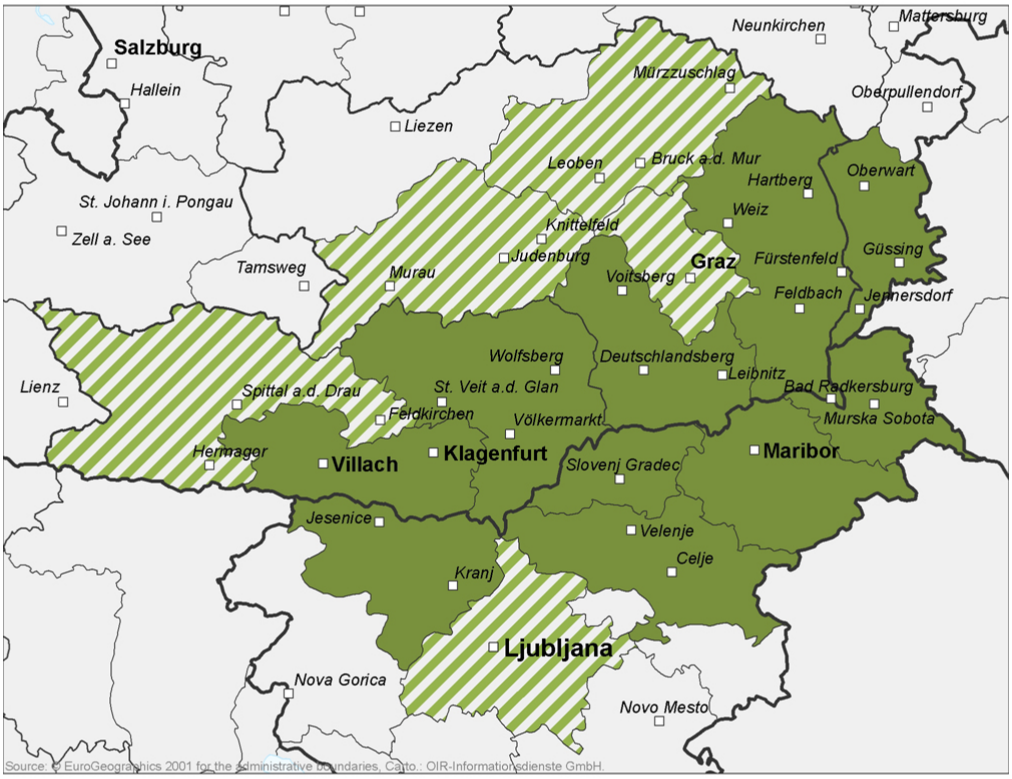
The programme area of the Cross-border Cooperation Programme Slovenia – Austria 2007-2013 includes the following territorial units on the NUTS III level:

- **in the Republic of Slovenia**: Gorenjska statistical region, Savinjska statistical region, Koroška statistical region, Podravska statistical region, Pomurska statistical region and Osrednjeslovenska statistical region

- **in the Republic of Austria:** Oststeiermark, West- und Südsteiermark, Graz, Obersteiermark Ost, Obersteiermark West, Unterkärnten, Klagenfurt-Villach, Oberkärnten, Südburgenland.

Note:
On the map bellow, the extended programme area is marked with green-white stripes. According to the article 21(1) of the ERDF regulation, the NUTS III regions adjacent to the core programme area can receive max. 20% of the ERDF contribution.

Objective 3 Austria - Slovenia



Programme area

Core programme area in line with article 7(1) of the general Structural Funds regulation

Extended programme area in line with article 21(1) ERDF regulation

Administrative boundaries

NUTS 0

NUTS 1

NUTS 2

NUTS 3

Cities

Draft:
OIR-Managementdienste GmbH

2.3 Objectives of the Programme and expected impact

The **overall aim of the programme** is 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 economic key 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.

The table bellow represents a brief overview of priorities, action fields and specific horizontal contents.

Table 2: Content of the programme

Horizontal themes, tools and principles: **Human resource development, Networking, Innovation** **Information and communication technology** **Sustainable development, Equal opportunities**	
Priority 1: **COMPETITIVENESS, KNOWLEDGE AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION**	**Priority 2:** **SUSTAINABLE AND BALANCED DEVELOPMENT**
SME development	**Management of natural resources**
Tourism	**Environment and energy**
Framework for knowledge-based economy	**Urban and regional development**
Thematic fields of strengths	**Social and cultural development**
Priority 3: **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**	

Specific objectives of the Priority 1:

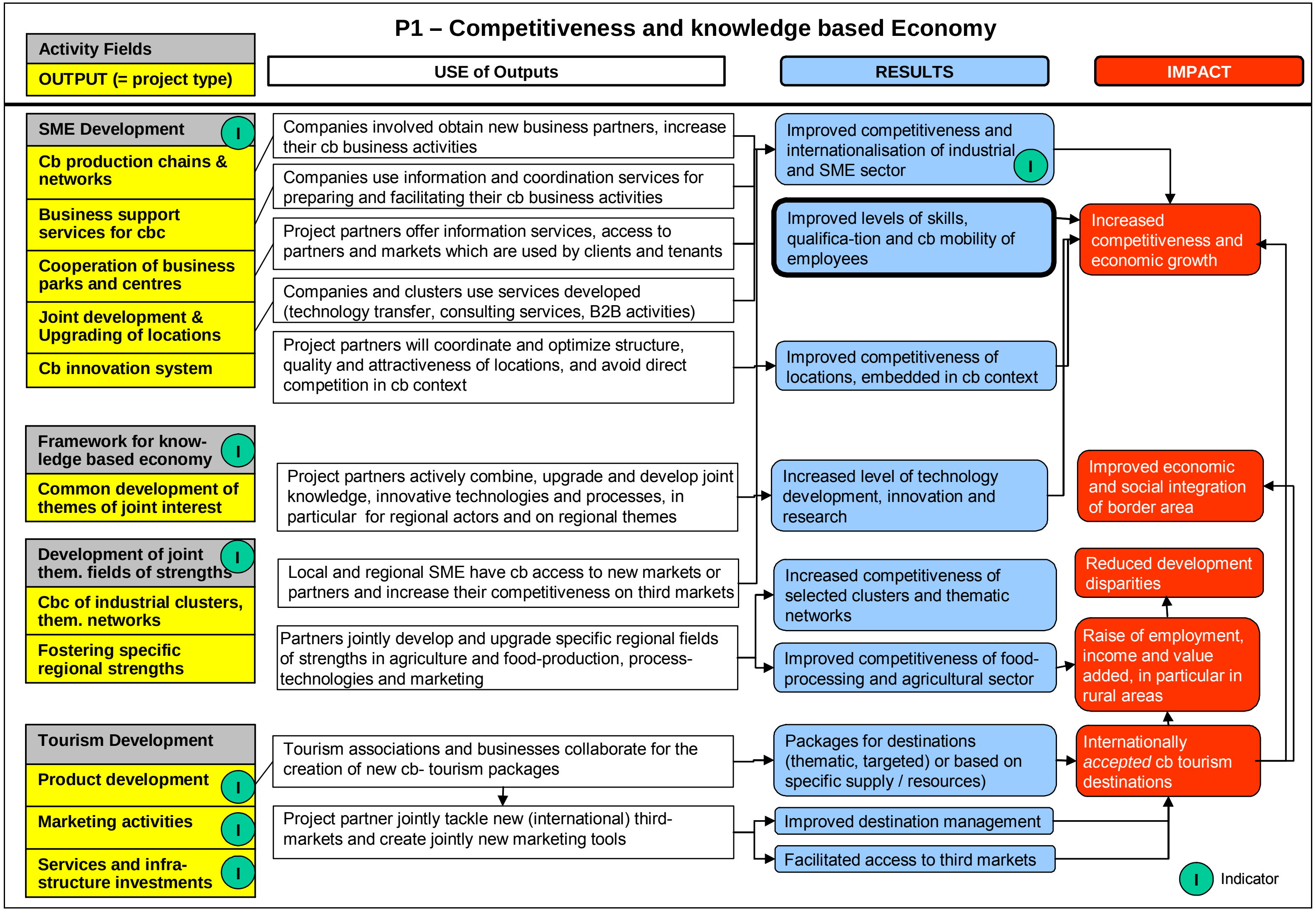
- to support CB-development of the industrial and SME sector, improvement of its competitiveness and internationalisation of its activities
- to contribute to the increase of the level of CB-technology development, innovation and research focusing to fields of competencies
- to improve the level of skills and qualification of employees and the mobility, in particular with regard to cross-border cooperation
- to foster CB-tourism by improving international visibility and developing CB-packages and destinations in order to facilitate attraction of visitors from third markets
- to improve the competitiveness of business locations and the use of synergies in the trans-border context
- to strengthen the cross-border integrated approach in particular in rural areas and their potential in the field of manufacturing industry, tourism, agriculture, food processing and others

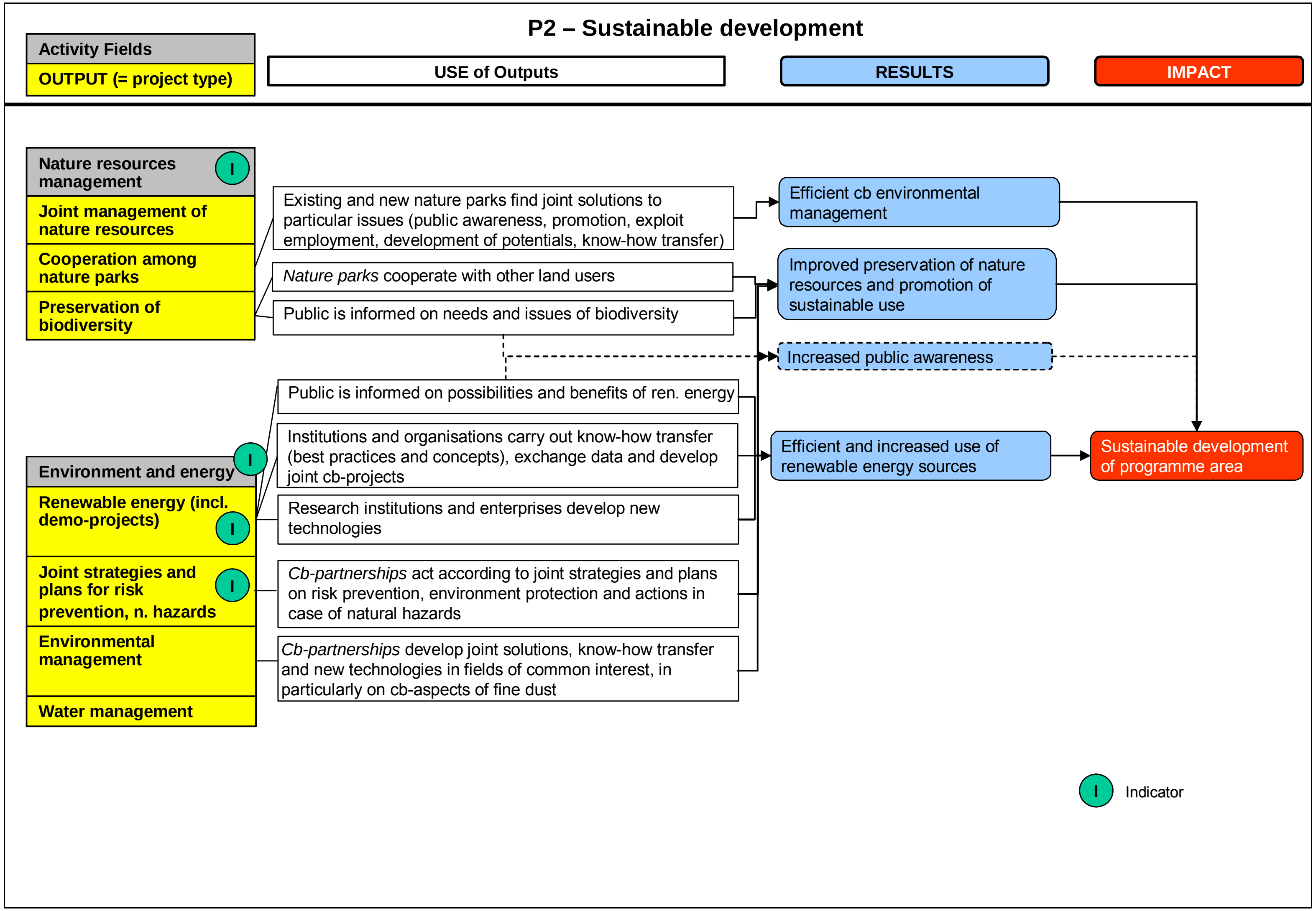
Specific objectives of the Priority 2:

- to contribute to CB-preservation of natural resources and promotion of their sustainable use
- to promote energy efficiency and increase in the use of renewable energy sources
- to contribute to efficient CB-environmental management
- to support improvement of accessibility of the border regions and to promote sustainable and balanced spatial and regional development, including social aspects
- to strengthen cross-border cooperation at local and regional levels
- to strengthen cultural identity and exploit the cultural potential of border regions
- to contribute to improving the quality of life and links between urban and rural areas

For detailed information on the strategy and contents to be supported under the programme, please refer to the Operational Programme, chapters 5 and 6.

See also the impact diagrams prepared by the ex-ante evaluation experts DI Richard Hummelbrunner and Tanja Božinac Mohorčič. They will give you an overview of type of projects and expected outputs and their use, expected results and impacts on the programme level.


P1 – Competitiveness and knowledge based Economy
Activity Fields
OUTPUT (= project type)
USE of Outputs
RESULTS
IMPACT
SME Development
Cb production chains & networks
Business support services for cbc
Cooperation of business parks and centres
Joint development & Upgrading of locations
Cb innovation system
Companies involved obtain new business partners, increase their cb business activities
Companies use information and coordination services for preparing and facilitating their cb business activities
Project partners offer information services, access to partners and markets which are used by clients and tenants
Companies and clusters use services developed (technology transfer, consulting services, B2B activities)
Project partners will coordinate and optimize structure, quality and attractiveness of locations, and avoid direct competition in cb context
Improved competitiveness and internationalisation of industrial and SME sector
Improved levels of skills, qualifica-tion and cb mobility of employees
Improved competitiveness of locations, embedded in cb context
Increased competitiveness and economic growth
Framework for know-ledge based economy
Common development of themes of joint interest
Project partners actively combine, upgrade and develop joint knowledge, innovative technologies and processes, in particular for regional actors and on regional themes
Increased level of technology development, innovation and research
Improved economic and social integration of border area
Development of joint them. fields of strengths
Cbc of industrial clusters, them. networks
Fostering specific regional strengths
Local and regional SME have cb access to new markets or partners and increase their competitiveness on third markets
Partners jointly develop and upgrade specific regional fields of strengths in agriculture and food-production, process-technologies and marketing
Increased competitiveness of selected clusters and thematic networks
Improved competitiveness of food-processing and agricultural sector
Reduced development disparities
Raise of employment, income and value added, in particular in rural areas
Tourism Development
Product development
Marketing activities
Services and infra-structure investments
Tourism associations and businesses collaborate for the creation of new cb- tourism packages
Project partner jointly tackle new (international) third-markets and create jointly new marketing tools
Packages for destinations (thematic, targeted) or based on specific supply / resources)
Improved destination management
Facilitated access to third markets
Internationally accepted cb tourism destinations
I
Indicator


P2 – Sustainable development
Activity Fields
OUTPUT (= project type)
USE of Outputs
RESULTS
IMPACT
Nature resources management
Joint management of nature resources
Cooperation among nature parks
Preservation of biodiversity
Existing and new nature parks find joint solutions to particular issues (public awareness, promotion, exploit employment, development of potentials, know-how transfer)
Nature parks cooperate with other land users
Public is informed on needs and issues of biodiversity
Efficient cb environmental management
Improved preservation of nature resources and promotion of sustainable use
Increased public awareness
Environment and energy
Renewable energy (incl. demo-projects)
Joint strategies and plans for risk prevention, n. hazards
Environmental management
Water management
Public is informed on possibilities and benefits of ren. energy
Institutions and organisations carry out know-how transfer (best practices and concepts), exchange data and develop joint cb-projects
Research institutions and enterprises develop new technologies
Cb-partnerships act according to joint strategies and plans on risk prevention, environment protection and actions in case of natural hazards
Cb-partnerships develop joint solutions, know-how transfer and new technologies in fields of common interest, in particularly on cb-aspects of fine dust
Efficient and increased use of renewable energy sources
Sustainable development of programme area
I
Indicator

2.4 Legal framework

Projects selected and implemented under the Programme, must comply with EU rules governing the Structural Funds, the national legislation, and must show coherence and complementarities with regional, national and sectoral development programmes.

Basic EU rules to be observed

- Council Regulation (EC) **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
- Commission Regulation (EC) **No 1828/2006** of 8 December 2006 setting out rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 laying down general provisions on the ERDF, ESF and the Cohesion Fund and of Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the ERDF
- Council and the European Parliament Regulation (EC) **No 1080/2006** of 5 July 2006 on the European Regional Development Fund and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1783/1999
- Council decision **No 11807/2006** of 18 August on Community strategic guide on cohesion
- Council and the European Parliament Regulation (EC) **No 1082/2006** of 5 July 2006 on a European grouping of territorial cooperation (EGTC)

National legislation

In this place we would like to highlight the following acts, which will have to be observed:

- act on public procurement
- legislation ruling infrastructural investments
- state aid and competition rules

Besides, acts and regulations valid in the participating country from the fields to which a certain project refers to (for example: legislation in the field of environmental interventions, natural and cultural heritage etc.) should be respected in preparing and implementing the projects.

National, regional and sectoral strategies and programmes

The applied projects have to comply with the regional development programmes of individual statistical regions and national programmes, as well as strategies from the area an individual project refers to.

2.5 Financial framework

The total value of the Programme is close to 79 mio Euros, of which 85% presents the Communuity funding from the European Regional Development Fund, while 15% shall be contributed by the national public funding.

In the following tables you will find the division of funds by priorities..

Table 3: Total available programme funding per priorities

Priority axes by source of funding (in euros)				
	Community funding (a)	**National public funding (b)**	**Total funding = (a) + (b)**	**Co-financing rate = (a)/(d)**
1st Priority Axis - Competitiveness, knowledge and economic cooperation	28,293,931.00	4,993,046.64	33,286,977.64	**0.85**
2nd Priority Axis - Sustainable and balanced development	34,790,857.00	6,139,562.99	40,930,419.99	**0.85**
3rd Priority Axis – Technical assistance	4,026,689.00	710,592.18	4,737,281.18	**0.85**
Total	**67,111,477.00**	**11,843,201.81**	**78,954,678.81**	**0.85**

The amount of funds to be allocated for the period 2007-2009 is presented. This amount corresponds to the maximum amount of funds to be committed for the projects in the period….

Table 4: Available programme funding for the first three years

Year	**Community funding (a)**	**National public funding (b)**	**Total funding = (a) + (b)**
2007 - 2009	27.848.359,00	4.914.416,3	32.762.775,30

How is the national/regional co-financing published?

3 HOW TO PARTICIPATE

3.1 Who can participate?

The participation in the programme is open to legal entities located within the programme eligible area.

If the project partnership includes a partner located outside of the programme area, the role of this partner and its specific contribution to the benefit of the participating regions should be justified accordingly.

The minimum partnership requirement is to have at least one project partner from both Austria and Slovenia. The partners decide among themselves who is to be the Lead Partner (see chapter 8 for more details on Lead Partner's responsibilities).

All project partners need to have legal, financial and operational capacity to participate in the programme. For more details see annexes to the application form: Lead Partners Statement and Partnership Statement.

In terms of type of organisations, the following applicants and partners are considered to be eligible to participate under each priority:

Priority 1:
- private and public business support institutions (incubators, technology parks, science parks, competence centres, business support centres)
- enterprises, clusters and networks
- national, local and regional authorities
- research institutions
- universities and technology and business oriented high schools
- tourism institutions, associations and agencies
- local and regional development organisations
- training and education organisations and institutions
- institutions and organisations representing economic and social interests of employees, employers, cities and/or municipalities

Priority 2:
Local, regional and national authorities and organisations
- enterprises, clusters and networks
- institutions and organisations in the field of nature protection and conservation, environment and risk prevention, emergency management, spatial planning, public transport
- institutions and organisations in the field of renewable energy and energy efficiency
- institutions and organisations in the field of culture, health, medicine, education and training, rural development, tourism, social affairs, labour market
- associations and NGO in the field of nature protection, environment, culture, education, social issues, rural development, tourism, sports and leisure
- institutions and organisations representing economic and social interests of employees, employers, cities and/or municipalities
- research institutions

- universities and high schools
- associations and agencies
- local and regional development organisations
- training and education organisations and institutions

3.2 What kind of projects can be supported?

In order to define the possible project activities that can be implemented under the programme, refer to description of activity fields under each priority including horizontal themes as presented in the Operational Programme, Chapter 6.

Do we need to say more on activity fields? Actually they should read the OP.

3.3 Project size, financing and project duration

- Project size

The projects eligible for participation in the programme are those with the total eligible projects costs higher than 30.000 Euro. Projects of a smaller scale should apply for the Small Projects Fund.

- Financing

The Community financing from the European Regional Development Fund can amount to max. 85% of total eligible costs; 15% is to be ensured from the public co-financing. The participation of the profit sector is regulated by the state aid rules.
ANY info on state aid?

Partners are requested to provide at least 10% as own contribution to financing of the total eligible project costs.

- Project duration

The recommended project duration is up to 3 years. Should the implementation period be longer, consider revising the project in two or more phases.

When calculating the project duration period, take into account that the start of the project is the date when fully completed project outline is submitted to the Joint Technical Secretariat. The project end is the date when the last payment has been executed by the project partners.

The final date for completion of the projects is 30 March 2015.

3.4 Cross border cooperation criteria

New cooperation requirements have been introduced for the 2007-2013 period! All project partners must work together actively and ensure that cooperation is needed for achieving the outcomes and results of the project.

The following cross border cooperation criteria have been established, of which **at least two must be fulfilled to have the project eligible for funding**. Note that in this programme a higher standard of the joint staffing criteria was set.

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 and responsibilities for archieving the milestones and 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 overall responsibility for the project; all partners take responsibilities for different parts of the implementation.
- Each project partner responsible for his tasks forseen for archevement of a milestone, ensures that planned activities are carried out, interim targets are met and unexpected challenges to implementation are dealt with.
- Several partners contribute to each milestone.

Joint staffing

- All project partners have a defined role and allocate staff to fulfil this role.
- Staff members coordinate their activities with others involved in the activities and exchange information regularly.
- There should be no unnecessary duplication of functions in different partner organizations.
- **Joint staffing is achieved when, after the end of the project, there is one common institution with staff from both countries (long term vision)**

Joint financing

- The project has a joint budget with funding allocated to partners according to the activities they are carrying out (the budget split reflects partner responsibilities).
- The budget includes annual spending targets and spending targets per milestone.
- The project has a joint bank account for the ERDF contribution.
- Generally, all partners contribute with co-financing.

3.5 Eligible expenditure

– Has to be added

1. Eligible period
2. Eligible area – see chapter 2.2

2.Eligible expenditure

3. Ineligible expenditure
4. Revenues

4 DEVELOPMENT OF CROSS BORDER PROJECTS

4.1 Project development

In order to prepare relevant and coherent cross border projects reflecting a high degree of cross border cooperation, it is wise to consider the following:

- Read the Operational Programme and get familiar with the programme objectives – your project needs to make a contribution to their achievement.

- Think of the cross border dimension – what are the problems and challenges that you and your potential project partners have recognised in the border area? What are the reason for and consequences of these problems? What is the state-of-the-art? Whom is the project meant for – who are the target groups, beneficiaries? Do you know what their needs are? What opportunities and possible solutions have you identified? Is this all relevant in the light of the Operational Programme?

- Involve project partners at an early stage of the project idea development – it will help you better plan the project and create joint project ownership and real commitment of the partners. Think of competence and experience that each partner can contribute to achievement of jointly defined project objectives. Make sure that project partners have adequate financial and operational capacity to implement their tasks. Is the core project team motivated and competent?

- What would be the value added of the cross border cooperation compared to implementing the project within the national framework only? What are the benefits of the cross border partnership?

- Search for innovative solutions and approaches. Take into account the results of previous projects and experience gained. Think how the project will contribute to national and regional strategies defined.

- What will be achieved in a project? How will you ensure sustainability of the project results? Who is going to use the project results, what resources (human, financial, material) will be available after the project end? What impacts can be expected? Why would it be worth supporting the project?

- Plan realistically. Check the coherence between the project justification, objectives, proposed activities and expected outputs and their use. You can use the logical framework matrix to help you structure the project.

- Make sure the proposed budget is prepared on real costs and is coherent with the proposed activities and partner roles and tasks.

- Define sources of financing and make sure you have secured the requested co-financing. Be aware of specific regulations related to the state aid and revenues generated by the project.

- Read the selection criteria and try to assess the project on your own. Try to improve the weaknesses identified before submitting the application.

- Development of a good quality cross border project takes time. You should take it, too. Do not hesitate to ask for help and support at any stage of the project development or preparing the application.

- Be aware of responsibilities connected to the project implementation.

4.2 Project development support

To assist potential applicants in project development, a network of **Regional Cooperation Bodies** (RCBs) was set up. They organise support in assessment of the project idea, search for cross-border partners and clarifying requirements for the first check for regional/national co-financing.

Information and support shall also be provided by the **Joint Technical Secretariat**:
- organisation of informative workshops (see website for planned dates and programme)
- provision of information concerning the application form and submission of applications
- publication of frequently asked questions and answers on the programme website.

Table 6: Contacts of the RCB and JTS

Joint Technical Secretariat	Government Office for Local Self-Government and Regional Policy, Department for support for cross-border programmes Maribor, Svetozarevska 6, SI-2000 Maribor Contact person: tel. e-mail: **www.at-si.net**
Regional Coordination Bodies (RCBs)	**Slovenia** Government Office for Local Self-Government and Regional Policy, Department for support for cross-border programmes Maribor, Svetozarevska 6, SI-2000 Maribor Contact person: tel. e-mail: with a representative in Government Office for Local Self-Government and Regional Policy, Kotnikova 28, SI-1000 Ljubljana Contact person: tel. e-mail:

Austria

R M B - Regionalmanagement Bgld GmbH
Marktstraße 3, Technologiezentrum Eisenstadt, A-7000 Eisenstadt
Contact person:
tel.
e-mail:

Amt der Steiermärkischen Landesregierung
Abt. 16 - Landes- und Gemeindeentwicklung
Stempfergasse 7, A-8010 Graz
Contact person:
tel.
e-mail:

KWF Kärntner Wirtschaftsförderungsfonds
Heuplatz 2,
9020 Klagenfurt
Contact person:
tel.
e-mail:

In cooperation with

Amt der Kärntner Landesregierung
Abt. 20 – Landesplanung
Contact person:
tel.
e-mail:

5 HOW TO FILL IN THE APPLICATION FORM

5.1 Basic information

Application consists of the following documents:
- Application Form
- Annex 1 – Budget
- Annex 2 – Indicators
- Annex 3 – Lead Partner Statement
- Annex 4 – Partnership Statement
- Annex 5 – Co-financing Statement
- Annex 6 – State aid

When preparing the application, consider the following:

- the application documentation is prepared in a bilingual format and has to be filled in Slovene and German language.
- The Application Form is to be used for preparation of the Project Outline as well. If you would like to receive a feedback on your project outline before completing the full application, fill in the sections indicated as necessary for the Project Outline and submit it without annexes.
- focus on answering the questions in the Application Form precisely
- write clearly and simply
- respect the maximum length of text when so requested
- provide answers to all of the questions in the Application Form
- make sure that you have prepared, signed and attached all the requested annexes when submitting the fully completed application – see the check list.

5.2 How to fill in the individual sections of the Application Form and Annexes?

As there are some instructions already provided in the Application Form itself, we would like to draw your attention to several points only. For further assistance check the Programme's website or ask the JTS or RCB.

5.2.1 Section 1 – General Information

1.2 When choosing the project title, keep in mind that it should tell about the essence of the project. Avoid the title being too long or complicated.

1.4 Select one priority only. It is possible that the project addresses one or more activity fields within the priority. Try to focus to a specifically defined problem rather than trying to address too many issues in one project.

5.2.2 Section 2 – Project Content

2.1 This is the starting point of the project. Include information that is relevant. Indicate solutions. When describing target groups and beneficiaries, estimate the number of those directly or indirectly included in the project.

2.2. State those objectives of the project that can be achieved within the project implementation and not through subsequent development.

2.3 Focus on the most important outputs/deliverables of the project. Describe them properly in order to give information on what concretely shall be produced within the project.

2.4 Make connection to the previous question and provide information for all outputs mentioned. The explanation should help understand who and how shall be using the project outputs. What benefits shall be achieved for them?

2.5.1 Make sure that you mark the objectives within the priority that you have selected in point 1.4. of the Application Form. Select priority objectives that your project can directly contribute to.

2.6 Present the main activities. To make it more transparent, you may group activities into work packages. It is important to present what needs to be done to produce the outputs. Do not forget about project management and activities related to information and publicity. Keep in mind that activities need to be planned properly in order to calculate costs, but when describing them, do not get lost in too many details.

2.9 When planning the milestones and duration of the project, take into account possible specifics of your project (eg. seasonality) and put some reserve in case that some activities could not be implemented in the planned time (eg. failure of the public procurement procedure).

2.10 In case of the investment projects it is to be highlighted, that investments should be prepared and later on implemented in accordance with the valid national legislation and EU rules.

Maybe we should add some more explanation on investment.

5.2 3 Section 3 – Partnership

3.1 and 3.2 Provide exact and accurate information on all project partners.

3.3 Describe the partnership from the requested points of view. Make sure that each partner has proper competence to perform the agreed role and tasks. Make connections to the proposed activities and provide specific, not just general information on partner's role. Indicate also how the partners agreed to manage the project and perform information and publicity actions.

5.2.4 Section 4 - Area of expected impact

Select the NUTS III areas in which impact of the project is expected.

5.2.5 Section 5 – Description of Cross Border Cooperation

The minimum requirement is to have at least two of the cooperation indicators fulfilled; otherwise the project will be rejected. For more information on cooperation indicators see point 3.5 of this Guide.

5.2.6 Section 6 – Expected Project Costs and Financing

For submission of the Project Outline it is required to prepare an estimation of project costs and sources of financing, while for the submission of the full application more detailed information shall be required; see Annex 1 - Budget.

6.1.1 After you have defined the outputs and related activities, partners' roles and tasks, you can start preparing the project budget. Read carefully point 3.5 of this Guide on eligible costs. Plan the budget on real costs and check consistency between description of the content in Section 2 and the budget.

If necessary, insert additional columns to provide data for all project partners.

6.1.3 If there are any revenues planned to be generated with the project, describe how they will occur and estimate the amount. Note that revenues shall be deducted from the eligible costs.

Note: According to Art 55 of EC No …… Revenue-generating projects means any operation involving investment in infrastructure the use of which is subject to charges borne directly by users or any operation involving the sale or rent of land or buildings or any other provision of services against payment.

6.2.1 In the table you need to present, from which sources the total eligible project costs of each partner are going to be financed:

1. *Requested public financing* is the amount requested from the OP programme.

2. *Own contribution* is the amount of co-financing ensured by project partners, which can be either from public or private sources.
For project partners it is requested that at least 10% of the total eligible project costs is covered by own contribution.
In case of the cooperation of the profit sector, take into account regulations concerning state aid and max. rates of programme funding possible.

3.Total - Check that the amounts equal to amounts in table 6.1.1, row *7. Total eligible costs according to VAT status.*

We recommend contacting your Regional Coordination Body to clarify possible regional/national co-financing of the project.

6.3 In case you have already ensured support for the proposed project from any other Community or national programme or fund, be aware that the expenditure for the same activities can not be double-financed.

5.2.7 Section 7 – Contribution and consistency with Community policies, national/regional strategies and synergy with other projects

7.1 Provide information on project title, programme or fund under which the project was supported, results achieved and the project owner. The question does not relate to cross border projects only; it includes also other relevant projects or initiatives, on which the existing proposal is based on.

7.2 Refer to relevant strategies and programmes. Avoid copying texts from these documents. Name the document, the priority or measure addressed and explain the main contribution of the proposed project to achievement of the objectives set in the referred document.

7.3. Mark relevant fields under points 7.3.1 to 7.3.3 and comment. If it is expected that the project will have neutral effect to any of stated dimensions, write it in the text box. If positive effects are expected, describe them specifically. Note: Projects indicating negative economic, social or environmental effects shall not be supported.

5.2.8 Section 8 – Sustainability of project results

Keep in mind that sustainability of project results is one of the important criteria observed in the project assessment. Describe properly, how you plan to keep the produced outputs in function and how the necessary conditions shall be ensured: who will be responsible and how you plan to finance activities in the future.

5.2.9 Section 9 - Annexes

Annex 1 – Budget

The annex consists of two sheets. In the first one provide information on project partnership and sources of financing. Before filling in the latter, prepare the project budget.

Provide information on project costs within basic budget categories. Again, refer to point 3.5 of this Guide to observe rules on eligibility of project costs. Present costs in such detail that you will be able to allocate individual project line per project partner. In the last column indicate to which partner the cost is allocated.

Under budget items 1-4 insert eligible costs only. Take into account possible different statuses of partners regarding reimbursement of VAT.

If there are revenues expected to be generated in the project, insert the estimated amount under budget item 6.

Under budget item 8, insert ineligible cost that may occur, eg. VAT that can be reimbursed.

Table on eligible expenditure per partner will be generated automatically.

In the last table, estimate expenditure per quarters of the year throughout the project duration period.

Annex 2 – Indicators

We should define what does different indicators mean?

Indicator can be defined as the measurement of an objective to be met, a resource mobilised, an effect obtained, a gauge of quality or a context variable. An indicator should be made up by a definition, a value and a measurement unit.[1]

Indicators will serve to monitor and evaluate the effects of the programme on different levels. In the point 1 and 2 of the Annex select indicators, to which your project contributes both on the programme and priority level. Check that selection of indicator on priority level corresponds to the priority you have selected in the Application Form, Section 1.

In the point 3, present indicators that you have developed for your project. Make sure there is coherence between this indicator list and the text under Section 2 of the Application Form. Select the most important indicators that will help monitor achievements of the project. Under description of an indicator provide also the measurement unit, eg. *no. of cross border tourist products developed* and provide expected value, eg*. 3.*

Annex 3 – Lead Partner Statement

Lead Partner Statement is to be signed by the statutory representative of the Lead Partner. Before signing the statement, read carefully the content and make sure you fulfil the requirements.

This document also serves as a co-financing statement of the Lead Partner. Insert the amount that Lead Partner has ensured as own contribution to financing eligible project costs. The amount needs to correspond to the amount stated in the Annex 1 – Budget.

[1] Indicators for monitoring and evaluation. A practial guide, draft working paper, January 2006

Annex 4 – Partnership Statement

Project partner(s) stated in the Section 3 of the Application Form must sign the Partnership Statement together with the Lead Partner, each partner organisation on a separate form. Before signing, read the content carefully.

This document also serves as a co-financing statement of the partner organisation. In the event of co-financing eligible project costs, insert the amount.

Annex 5 – Co-financing Statement

In case your project shall be co-financed by other public institution(s) which is/are not project partners (eg. ministries, länder, public agencies or funds, municipalities), then Annex 5 should be prepared. Each institution should fill in a separate form for the amount to be co-financed.

Annex 6 – State aid

We should check what data are needed except those in the AF.

6. HOW TO SUBMIT THE APPLICATION

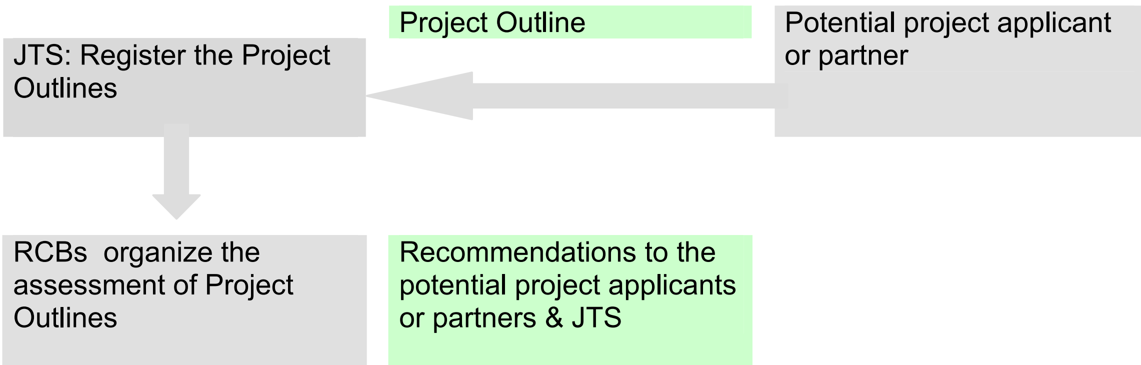
6.1 Submission of the Project Outline

There is a possibility for the project partnership to receive feedback on the project idea before completing the full application. In this case, the Lead Partner should submit the Project Outline to the Joint Technical Secretariat. Note that this is not a binding procedure, but it is recommended. It's purpose is to assist in developing relevant and quality cross border projects as well as ensuring public co-financing.

What documents need to be completed?
Electronic format of the Application Form completed with sections required for the Project Outline (see instructions in the Application Form itself). No Annexes need to be attached.

Where to send it?
e-mail:
www.

What happens next?
Coherence of the submitted project outlines will be checked and the idea will be discussed by the RCBs. They will provide a written feedback about the achievements of this discussion to the applicant. **This feedback is to be taken as a recommendation only and not a binding decision.**



Note: The eligibility of project costs starts with the date when fully completed project outline is received by JTS.

How does the lead partner get the feedback on the project Outline?

6.2 Submission of the complete application

The submission of full application is running on an "open basis". Several deadlines shall be given each year for submission of applications in order to organise assessment and selection procedures.

What documents need to be submitted and how?

Complete application consists of fully completed Application Form and Annexes (Annexes 1 – 4 for all projects; Annex 5 in case of any public co-financing ensured by institutions which are not part of the project partnership; Annex 6 for private companies).

The Lead Partner submits **one printed original and electronic format**. Note that electronic format must contain all documents (Application Form including scanned Annexes).

Make sure that the e-version of application is identical to printed one.

Where to submit the application?
Joint Technical Secretariat
Address, contacts

Expected deadlines for submission of applications

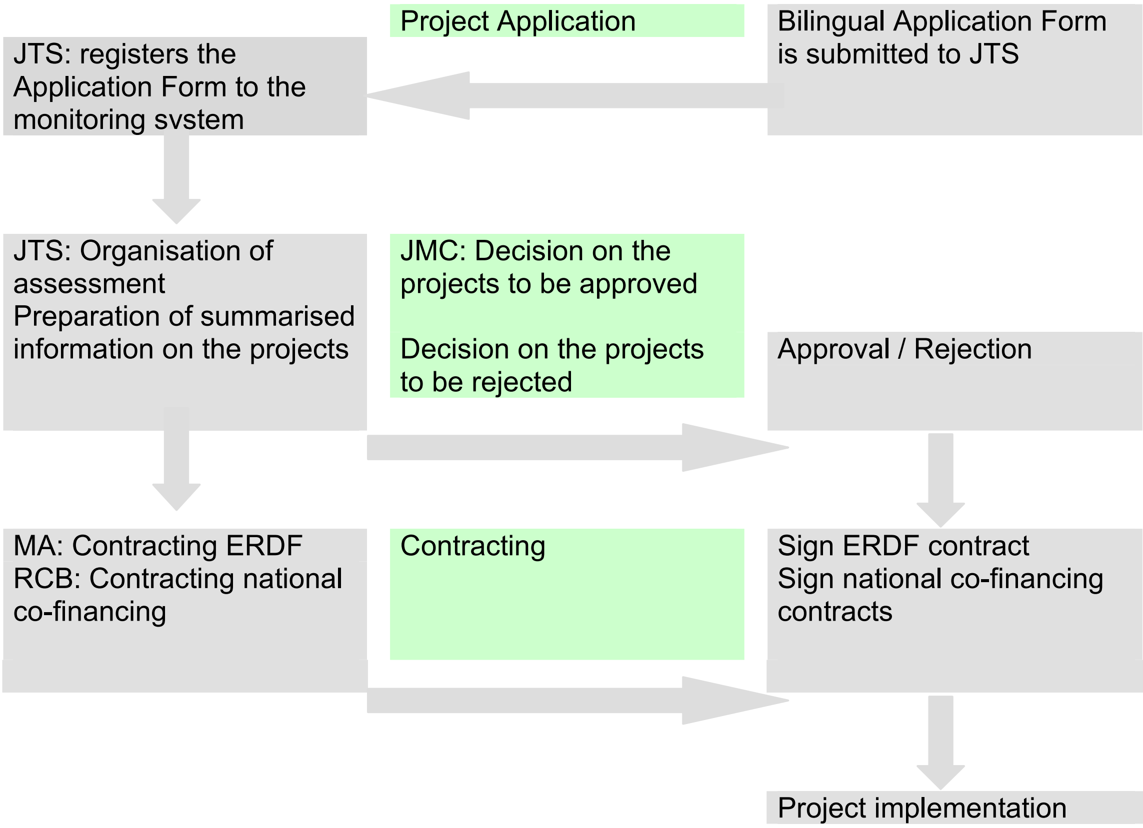
Year	Dates		
2007	xx	xx	xx
2008			
2009			

The dates in the above table are provisional. For any changes check the website or consult the JTS or your RCB.

7 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

7.1 Assessment and Selection process

The assessment and selection of submitted project proposal consists of several steps.



7.1.1 Administrative and eligibility check

After registration of the received project applications, the JTS shall perform the administrative and eligibility check. In case of missing documents or clarifications needed, the Lead Partner shall be contacted. Project proposal that pass this check shall be further assessed for their quality.

7.1.2 Assessment of the project quality based on the project selection criteria

Assessment of projects shall be made by representatives of the RCBs, line ministries and länder on both sides of the border. The assessment results shall be discussed bilaterally and JTS shall prepare summarised information on projects and their assessment for the project selection and approval.

7.1.3 Selection and approval of projects

The Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) formally decides on the approval of the project and on the ERDF contribution. The JMC meets at least twice a year.

After the formal decision is made, the applicant is informed about the approval/rejection of the project application with an official letter by the Managing Authority (MA). Moreover, further information about the next steps for contracting as well as about the main regional/national contact authority for the implementing phase is provided within this letter.

7.2 Eligibility check and Selection criteria

In the table bellow you will find the conditions and criteria under which your project proposal shall be checked and assessed. Examine them carefully and take them into account when preparing the proposal. Improve identified weaknesses.

7.2.1 Administrative and Eligibility Check

Description	Yes/ no / not appr.	Notes
Administrative check		
1. Application is submitted in one printed original and electronic form including scaned documents on a CD-rom or submitted by e-mail		
2. Electronic version is identical to original		
3. Application is complete, requested original documents are provided. Application is filled in.		
☐ Application form/project outline ☐ Annex 1 - Budget ☐ Annex 2 - Indicators ☐ Annex 3 - Lead Partner Statement - original ☐ Annex 4 - Partnership Statement – original for each partner ☐ Annex 5 - Co-financing statement /if appropriate/ – original ☐ State Aid Check ☐ Revenue generating infrastructure		
Eligibility of Partnership and CBC criteria		
4. There is at least one partner from both Austria and Slovenia		
5. The cooperation of partner located outside of the programme area is justified.		
6. At least two CBC criteria marked in Section 5 - Description of the CBC.		
Budget and financing		
7. Financing plan is balanced to the project costs		
8. At least 15% of public co-financing is secured?		
9. The total eligible project costs are higher than 30.000 Eur		
Project duration		
10. Project will be finalised within the programme period (end date: 30 March 2015)		

7.2.2 Evaluation/Selection Criteria

Description	Yes /Partly/No	Comments	App. form
1. Relevance			
Relevance of the problem addressed and contribution to achievement of the programme overall and priority objectives	No-out		2.5, 2.2
Impact to the programme area - location, sectors, beneficiaries	No-out		2, 4
Effect on the sustainable development - economic - environmental - social	Negative-out		7.3
Value added - joint solutions beyond present practice in the field/sectors - advantage of a cross border compared to national approach only	No-out		2.3, 2.4, overall
2. Quality of Cross Border Cooperation			
Quality of CB partnership - relevance of partnership - number, competence, roles, previous experience			3
Quality of CB cooperation - joint development - implementation - staff - financing			5
3. Quality of content			
Contribution to national/regional policy - compliance - synergies	No-out		7
Soundness of the project - Coherence/logic between the project justification, objectives, outputs	No-out		2.1 – 2.4
Outputs - appropriatenes - feasible, concrete and measurable/identifiable	No-out		2.3
Expected use of outputs - feasible - provide benefit to users	No-out		2.4
Activities - feasible - appropriate to achieve the planned outputs (involve target groups, other users)	discuss		2.6
Time frame – it is feasible to complete the project in the planned time	discuss		2.7, 2.9
Value for money - project cost are reasonable to achieve the expected outputs	discuss		6 and Annex 1
Sustainability of project results	No-out		8

Note the conditions set in the Column 2. Should the criteria marked “*No-out*” not be met, the proposal shall be rejected. When criteria marked with *“discuss”* are not met, there may be a possibility to negotiate about the project.

7.3 Contracting

More details for the applicants:

1. receives letter from MA
2. if any conditions – negotiations
3. ERDF contract signed with …
4. Natonal co-financing contract signed with …
5. When do the partnership agreements have to be signed?
6. 1st interim report after the contract is signed
7. what is included in the contract?
8. Provisional timeframe

The Lead Partner shall sign the contract for the total ERDF funds. The ERDF contract is issued by the MA. Before signing the ERDF contract, the MA will assure the correctness of the Controllers responsible for verifying the legality and regularity of the expenditure declared by each beneficiary in the project.

The national/regional funding bodies issue the national/regional co-financing contracts linked to the ERDF-contract to the project partners.

See the draft contract in the application pack.

8 WHAT SHOULD YOU KNOW ABOUT IMPLEMENTING CROSS BORDER PROJECTS?

8.1 Key responsibilities of the Lead Partner and project partners

Responsibilities of the Lead Partner (Lead Beneficiary) and the other beneficiaries (partners) are laid down in Article 20 of Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006. The project partners appoint the Lead Partner for the project among themselves. The Lead Partner assumes the following responsibilities

- It shall lay down the arrangements for its relations with the project partners participating in the operation in an agreement comprising, inter alia, provisions guaranteeing the sound financial management of the funds allocated to the project, including the arrangements for recovering amounts unduly paid;
- It shall be responsible for ensuring the implementation of the entire project;
- It shall ensure that the expenditure presented by the partners participating in the operation has been incurred for the purpose of implementing the project and corresponds to the activities agreed between those partners;
- It shall verify that the expenditure presented by the partners participating in the project has been validated by the controllers;
- It shall be responsible for transferring the ERDF contribution to the partners participating in the project.

Beside the responsibilities mentioned in the Council Regulation, the Lead Partner is responsible for:

- Collecting the information from the project partners, cross-checking the certified activities with the progress of the project and submitting the reports to the JTS;
- Signing the ERDF contract;
- Harmonizing the project changes with the RCB and formally submitting those via the JTS to the MA for approval.

The project partners are responsible to implement the agreed tasks and ensure proper management of the project on their part as described above.

Each project partner participating in a project needs to:

- Assume responsibility in the event of any irregularity in the expenditure which it has declared;
- Inform the Member State in which it is located about its participation in an operation in the case that this Member State as such is not participating in the operational programme concerned
- Send the statement of costs and content report to the CU-unit;
- Submit the certification of costs and information to the lead partner.

8.2 Accounting records, audit trail and retention of project documentation

All project partners need to set up a transparent system of accounting records about the project and its implementation. It has to enable clear presentation of business events related to projects and their distinction from other business events.

Separate accounting evidence.

Data and documentary archive ensures appropriate audit trail if it enables ex-post and full:

- documentary and data reconstruction of business event and
- justifies payment claims with evidence of individual expenditures (received invoices and processed payments) supported by proving documents which were the basis for issuing the invoices

Such an archive base has to be accessible to control bodies, while final beneficiaries have to provide all administrative support and appropriate room.

The Lead Partner and all project partners are obliged to keep all project documentation until >insert date< for possible controls or audits to be executed by authorised bodies.

8.3 Monitoring, reporting and control

In order to be able to assess the progress of the project and to react in time to unforeseen developments, it is advisable to develop your own monitoring and evaluation system built on the milestones and project indicators set in the Application Form. You may observe the following aspects of implementation:

- progress towards the achievements of the project objectives
- effectiveness and efficiency of implementation: is the project progressing in line with the initial time plan presented in the Application Form? Is the budget plan being implemented and are allocations per budget categories being observed? How do the project's achievements relate to the encountered expenditure (cost-benefits)?
- quality of the management and coordination: are management and coordination procedures efficient and are resources used in this process sufficient?

Having a project monitoring well in place will help the Lead Partner in preparing the progress report that will accompany Payment Claim in order to get the eligible project expenditure reimbursed.

Reports shall be submitted to the JTS on agreed periods. They will consist of technical and financial part. The expenditure of each partner will have to be checked and certified by the first level controllers before submitting the Payment Claim. Before signing of the contract, controllers for each partner will have to be known.

Check: financial control in Austria for non public bodies – External controllers? – project costs??

The purpose of controls is to verify the administrative, financial, technical and physical aspects of the project. Verifications shall ensure that:

- expenditure declared is real,
- the products and services are delivered in accordance with the approval decision,
- the applications for reimbursement by the Lead Partner are correct and
- the operations and expenditure comply with the Community and national rules.

The following forms of control shall take place:

- administrative verifications in respect of each application for reimbursement
- on the spot verifications.

What happens if the partner comes out of the eligible area?

8.4 Payments

More details for the applicant:

- steps what has to be done by the partners and the lead partner
- what documents they receive and in which stage
- how long does it take?

After having checked the overall report, the Managing Authority (MA) issues the cost statement and submits it to the Certifying Authority (CA). On the payment request of the CA, the EC checks the request and releases the funds to the CA. The paying unit of the CA transfers the ERDF funds to the lead partner.

The lead partner is responsible for transferring the ERDF share to the project partners according to the contract and certified costs. On behalf of the lead partner direct transfers from the CA to the project partners are also possible.

The national/regional funding bodies will release the national co-financing to the project partners/lead partner.

8.5 Competition and Public Procurement

The purchase of goods and services as well as ordering of works is subject to national and Community rules. Beside public bodies, these rules are also applicable to companies, associations, and other organisations when operating with public or EU funds. The procurement rules aim at securing transparent and fair conditions for competing on the common market and should be followed by the project partners when commissioning the above services, works or deliveries. Rules differ depending on the kind of goods and/or services to be purchased, as well as the value of the purchase.

8.6 State aid

The EU state aid rules are applicable in all cases where assistance from public funds is involved. State aid is regarded as incompatible with the Common Market if it distorts, or has the potential to distort, competition within the European Union. Community rules on State Aid limit the support, which may be provided from public funding to assist projects in the commercial sector.

ADD – de minimis, other?

8.7 Information and Publicity

Do we need to say more?

All projects implemented with the Community assistance need to comply with the rules on information and publicity as defined in EC No1828/2006.

The Lead Partner is responsible for informing the public about the assistance obtained from the Funds. It also has to ensure that those taking part in the project have been informed of the funding.

Any document, including attendance or other certificate, concerning such project shall include a statement to the effect that the project has been selected under the operational programme Cross border cooperation Slovenia – Austria, co-financed by the ERDF.

For projects where the public contribution exceeds 500.000 Euros permanent explanatory plaques needs to be put up no later than 6 months after completion.

All information and publicity measures shall include the emblem of the EU in accordance with the graphic standards and reference to the European Union. Furthermore, the reference to ERDF and a statement “Investing in your future” should be applied. For the small promotional objects, the requirement in the latter sentence shall not apply.

It is recommended to prepare information and publicity plan to be implemented throughout the project duration. Think of specifics of your target audience and adapt the approaches accordingly.

8.8 Project changes

The JMC defines the rules for project changes. In certain cases, the MA can delegate the responsibility for approval of project changes.

More details:
Who approves which project change; a list and responsible institutions?

8.9 Project closure

To be added.

9 GLOSSARY