
Alpine Space programme

Cooperation programme

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SECTION 1

1.1. Strategy for the cooperation programme's contribution to the Union strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and to the achievement of economic, social and territorial cohesion

1.1.1. Description of the cooperation programme's strategy for contributing to the delivery of the Union strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and for achieving economic, social and territorial cohesion.

Policy context

The Europe 2020 Strategy puts forward three mutually reinforcing priorities:

- Smart growth: developing an economy based on knowledge and innovation;
- Sustainable growth: promoting a more resource efficient, greener and more competitive economy and
- Inclusive growth: fostering a high-employment economy delivering social and territorial cohesion.

The Alpine Space programme (ASP) encompasses these three priorities along the path of the formulation of its strategy integrating the territorial dimension of the Alpine Space to the thematic objectives (TOs) and the investment priorities in the frame of the strategic framework for aligning cohesion policy with the Europe 2020 Strategy. Further the European Territorial Agenda 2020 is paramount in defining the importance of European territorial cooperation (ETC), claiming that “territorial integration (...) is a key factor in global competition facilitating better utilisation of development potentials and the protection of natural environment”; in this manner it aims at integrating the territorial dimension within different policies at all levels of governance. Additionally, the European Territorial Agenda 2020 identifies some key challenges and potentials for territorial development. These include increased exposure to globalisation, demographic changes, social and economic exclusion, climate change, and loss of biodiversity, all relevant to the ASP and already addressed by the Strategy Development Project (Gloersen et al., “Strategy development for the Alpine Space”, 2013). Furthermore, the ASP recognises the principle of territorial cohesion, as the “binding element” of the Europe 2020 Strategy and the territories of the programme. Within the programme area, and especially in the context of priority axis 4 and in connection with

the EU Strategy for the Alpine Region (EUSALP) under preparation, the ASP takes a proactive role in pursuing harmonious, balanced, efficient, inclusive and sustainable territorial development.

Apart from the EU and transnational level, the ASP demonstrates strong operational links with a large number of national policies (see annexes) through the partnership-based formulation of the strategy and the careful scrutiny of the ex-ante evaluation; this is especially the case for the first three priority axes. The priority axis 4 “Well-Governed Alpine Space” shows a horizontal relevance to the national policies and has mainly a transnational dimension, hence applying to all of them.

Role of the territorial cooperation programme

The European Commission in its ETC regulation defines in the preamble that “transnational cooperation should aim to strengthen cooperation by means of actions conducive to integrated territorial development linked to the Union’s cohesion policy priorities” (Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013).

The ASP is in line with those principles. In the context of the programme an operative definition of territorial cooperation, transnational cooperation and cooperation in the Alpine Space is needed as a guide for the justification of the strategic choices of the programme.

The ETC support programme INTERACT developed a typology of results of ETC programmes, which reveals some crucial aspects of the ETC approach, namely:

- Integration related results, i.e. the establishment and implementation of joint territorial governance mechanisms for common assets;
- Investment related results, i.e. delivering socio-economic benefits similar to mainstream European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and European Social Fund (ESF) programmes, either by direct investments, or by preparing such investments and
- Performance related results, i.e. inducing improvements on organisational and individual performance.
- While these three categories provide a starting point, the Commission Staff Working Document “Elements for a Common Strategic Framework 2014 to 2020” suggests in Annex II a number of other characteristics of transnational (and cross-border) cooperation:

- Support the joint management and promotion of the shared major geographic features;
- Achieving a critical mass for success, especially in the field of innovation and ICT;
- Achieving economies of scale for more efficient investments in services and infrastructure;
- Providing support for the coherent planning of transport infrastructure (including TEN-T) and the development of environmentally friendly and interoperable transport modes in larger geographical areas.

Transnational cooperation is nevertheless characterised by some inherent challenges, which can be summarised as:

- Coverage of large areas with a high diversity of regions and often conflicting interests;
- Limited budgets in relation to the covered area, population and time frame, which often contradict the scope and objectives of cooperation initiatives;
- Hardly delivering direct investment effects, apart from acting as an auxiliary to mainstream programmes and
- Mainly intangible results.

On the Alpine Space programme

The cooperation area remains the same as for the ASP 2007-2013. The participating states and regions are:

- Austria: whole country;
- France: Rhône-Alpes, Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, Franche-Comté, Alsace;
- Germany: districts of Oberbayern and Schwaben (in Bayern), Tübingen and Freiburg (in Baden-Württemberg);
- Italy: Lombardia, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Veneto, Trentino-Alto Adige, Valle d'Aosta, Piemonte and Liguria;
- Liechtenstein: whole country;
- Slovenia: whole country;
- Switzerland: whole country.

In this given geographic area the ASP is systemically characterised through its development path by the following aspects:

1. For a long time existing structures of transnational governance and cooperation (e.g. ARGE ALP, Alpine Convention and its treaties, CIPRA etc.). This long record gives the ASP a much broader role additional to “market driven” project generation, selection and funding, i.e. in “(...) promoting debates and dialogues on Alpine strategies and encourage networking among Alpine stakeholders (...)” (Gloersen et al., p. 95). At the same time, the ASP can build upon a set of basic principles (e.g. sustainability and resilience, territorial cohesion, equity, cultural diversity and social solidarity) enjoying a broad consensus. This is a rare case among transnational programmes.

2. The ASP, in its role as a policy driver regards policy as a cyclical process, which undergoes a path of inception (policy formulation), maturation and broad implementation. Because the context is continually changing, policies have to be reviewed and reshaped occasionally on the basis of the impact they produced. In this cycle three types of projects are identifiable, strategic policy development, exploration/piloting and (broad) implementation. Many of the issues pursued in the former programming periods have reached the level of broad implementation in the “policy cycle”, where no significant contribution from the ASP 2014-2020 can be expected; they have to “move on” in their national surroundings. Hence, there might be topics that are relevant to the Alpine Space, where the ASP 2014-2020 decides not to deal with. This might appear as an odd choice; it is however derived by the specificities of transnational cooperation described further above.

3. In the past a gap between the projects and ASP was identified, which left the relation of project outcomes and programme impacts unclear. In order to reduce this gap and the dependence of the programme on a “market of project initiators”, the expert report of the Strategy Development Project proposes to strengthen the strategic orientation and to better balance the functions of the ASP (Gloersen et al., p. 39, 149, 159).

4. Predominant patterns of different co-operation levels (with increasing cooperation intensity):

4.1 Exchange of data, information, knowledge and experience.

4.2 Joint elaboration of policy recommendations, guidelines, handbooks and similar tools.

4.3 Establishing joint structures and joint implementation of actions continuing beyond project end.

So far, the focus has been on the levels (4.1) and (4.2), endeavours in level (4.3) have been rare.

Last but not least, the EUSALP should be mentioned. At the time of the drafting the programming document (March 2013 to May 2014) the macro-regional strategy was at an early stage of development. In its conclusions from 19/20 December 2013, the European Council invited the Commission and the Partner States to elaborate an “EU Strategy for the Alpine Region” by June 2015.

The ASP defines its relation to the EUSALP, outlines its own focus and encompasses the dialogue necessary to “promote the notion of plural alps” in the context of the EUSALP as described in Section 4.

On the thematic level, transnational cooperation in the Alpine Space is meaningful in particular in the context of the Alpine topography and the related natural resources. Starting from this common ground, cooperation in the Alpine Space has always had specific connotations:

- The Alpine Space is facing specific opportunities and threats deriving from external driving forces (see further below);
- The Alpine Space has specific natural resources valuable not only for the Alpine core area, but also for the surrounding lowlands and mountain areas and for Europe as a whole: water, wood, biodiversity, cultural landscapes, ecosystem services, renewable energy potentials;
- Natural resources and Alpine topography constitute specific economic systems: Alpine agriculture and forestry, combination of summer and winter tourism, specific industrial and handicraft traditions based on regional resources, specific building traditions and techniques, exploitation of renewable energy resources (especially water);
- Due to the topography and climate conditions, the Alpine Space is facing specific vulnerabilities: natural risks, climate change, and environmental problems, such as noise and air pollution;
- Transalpine connections exist along river systems, transport systems, wild life corridors, but are dependent on the topography of the area;
- Various functional relations and complementarities exist with the surrounding lowlands and metropolitan areas: recreation area, water supply, out-migration and

social relations between population in the Alpine core and the surrounding lowlands, second home area, various added value chains, etc.

From the actions' and outputs' point of view, and taking into account the programme strategy, the available means as well as the potentials defined in the transnational cooperation in the Alpine Space, the ASP is delivering:

- Transnational cooperation structures, i.e. those structures which accommodate transnational cooperation and enable the generation of added value compared to national and regional structures, like associations, agreements, frameworks, platforms and networks, which consist of a number of partners that sufficiently cover the Alpine Space area in terms of regional coverage, thematic relevance and institutional completeness. These have at least one feature which can “make a difference” on the transnational level (e.g. legislation mandate, PR-presence, scientific excellence etc.)
- Transnational strategic elements: like formal or informal documents and papers which jointly identify new fields of action among the Alpine Space regions (future), coordinate and enhance existing mainstream policy tools (present) or evaluate and draw conclusions from past actions in order to lead to coordinated or joint action in the future. The more concrete such an output is, the better it is (e.g. detailed action and time plan, resources allocation, evaluation plan).
- Transnational implementation elements, i.e. those which define the “way to do things right in transnational terms” like jointly developed methodologies and tools, pilot actions, investment preparations which support the operation and implementation of the two groups above by reinforcing their innovation and cost-effectiveness. Therefore the “added value” of developing such elements in transnational projects is emphasised.

Stakeholders

On the participation of different stakeholders an important distinction should be noted:

Target groups are those groups and individuals who will use the outputs of the projects or will experience a change in their activities because of those projects.

Beneficiaries are those bodies and organisations which will be directly involved in the projects funded by the ASP and will be the ones to conceive, discuss and develop the deliverables described above. In this context the ASP underlines the importance of new

stakeholders, among them those from the private sector. Whenever relevant, private public cooperation will be encouraged by the programme. The programme primarily aims at improving territorial framework conditions. In the context of the “Quadruple Helix” approach an increase of the participation of the private sector in terms of percentage of project partners and share of private co-financing is expected and welcome. The progress of the programme in this respect shall be monitored on a regular basis.

Geographical coverage and analysis of the situation

The area of the ASP is dominated by the Alps and their surrounding lowlands, parts of the Mediterranean and the Adriatic seas and the river valleys of Danube, Po, Adige, Rhône and Rhine.

This centrally located area is also the meeting place of the German, Latin and Slavic cultural and linguistic continua, incorporating a very diverse and vivid natural and cultural landscape.

It is home to almost 66 million people, which operate one of the most dynamic economic growth areas in Europe generating a total GDP of EUR 2.340 billion (2011, Eurostat 2014).

While the Alps dominate the area, it is all but homogenous in its internal structure; high mountains and lowlands, remote areas and European crossroads, global cities and backward rural areas coexist in a fairly limited space creating a complex pattern of preconditions for social and economic development.

Hence the Alpine Space is composed of territories with contrasted demographic, social and economic trends and a great cultural and linguistic diversity. This diversity goes along with a great variety of governance systems and traditions. Both the common specificities of the Alpine Space and its variety and diversity call for cooperation.

The expert report of the Strategy Development Project (Gloersen et al., p.43), which has delivered a comprehensive work of analysis for the present programme, has categorised this spatial diversity in five territorial types:

- Alpine metropolises of at least 750.000 residents in the functional urban areas enjoying high quality connections to high speed transport networks, sufficient ICT endowment and R&D centres of global significance. They are located at the periphery of the Alps and highly integrated in global economic processes, while significantly influencing their hinterlands. Examples are Lyon, Milano, Munich and Vienna.

- Alpine cities of at least 50.000 residents in the functional urban areas, enjoying well connected to high speed transport networks allowing for a large commuting area. They are located either at the edge of the Alps or in larger Alpine valleys and are drivers of economic growth with high attractiveness and quality of life. They interrelate with their adjacent metropolises, but can also have a global position, usually through specialised SMEs and specific R&D centres. Examples are Bolzano, Innsbruck, Salzburg, St. Gallen, Konstanz, Annecy and Grenoble.
- Stable or growing rural areas are symbiotic to the larger cities, offering high quality of live and affordable opportunities for the commuting labour forces and are thus usually well connected to the urban centres. They are stable or growing and usually have lower GDP/capita rates than the average due to their economic and population structure.
- Declining and shrinking rural areas are peripheral areas with low accessibility, hence with little opportunities to connect to the growth poles. Population is ageing, income is lower than the average and they are in a vicious circle of decline.
- Tourism areas, usually in the core of the Alps, where tourism is the main economic activity with high seasonal fluctuations. These areas are characterised by high quality infrastructure for the influx of visitors, high revenues from “externals” and high environmental sensibility and material inputs in their production patterns.

These territorial types, which can be seen as universally present in the entire programme area, are based on functional relations and dominant patterns or trends (e.g. related to demographic developments or the significance of tourism as an economic activity). Hence, they are not clearly defined geographical regions but rather categories for the analysis of the Alpine Space.

This dense and potent area is, however, only a small regional part of the EU, subject to external determinants of global processes. The expert report of the Strategy Development Project (Gloersen et al., p. 42f) has identified a number of global driving forces, which affect the Alpine Space as an entity, but also in a different manner for each territorial type. These are:

- Climate change, which is of particular importance for the mountain areas that are more sensitive to expected impacts like the intensification of the hydrological cycle, glacier retreat, increase in extreme events, destabilisation of soils, etc. Apart from the effects which will influence each territorial type of the area in a different way and

require different responses (i.e. the adaptation side of climate change action), the need to contribute to the fulfilment of climate protection objectives is also of relevance (i.e. the mitigation side of climate change action). In the case of the ASP, the heterogeneity of the area means that those areas most affected by the climate change impacts are usually not of the same territorial type, a fact that can contribute mostly to mitigation.

- Tensions on the energy market are closely related to the climate change process. Stable energy prices are considered as a prerequisite of competitiveness especially for “traditional”, energy intensive industries. On the other side, global demand for energy and the pressure of meeting greenhouse gas emissions objectives mean that energy prices can be expected to go up. On the positive side, price rises in the “conventional” energy sources open up a high potential for innovation in energy efficiency and renewable energy production.
- Economic globalisation is seen as a source of competition, but also as a possible demand resort, in the light of saturated and shrinking European markets. For the Alpine Space, the latter means an opportunity to rely on high quality, unique products, for which a strong industrial base already exists. On the other hand, the area may open itself to a competitiveness race which can damage public goods and increase externalities.
- The rise of the information society and the knowledge economy can also be seen as one of the characteristics of globalisation. Since the regions of the Alpine Space area can hardly win the competitiveness race on a cost basis, taking in account the high environmental and social quality achieved, the logical choice is the investment in the knowledge economy and in innovation, attempting to maintain the R&D edge but also attracting the “best minds” at a global level.
- Socio-demographic change can be seen as a European trend with similar horizontal influence as climate change, since its impacts are more subtle. In the case of the Alpine Space area these impacts are “global”, i.e. ageing population but also intra-regional, with younger people leaving the peripheral areas in favour of the larger cities and the metropolises. The former has also an effect on the future form of public and social services but also products, in order to satisfy the needs of an ageing society. The latter leads to novel lifestyles, which enrich the cultural heritage, but is also dependent on high energy and material inputs to be sustained.
- Last but not least increased mobility of goods and persons is a development formed by low energy prices, globalisation, European and global migration trends and

popular lifestyles. While transport investments remain popular as growth preconditions, it is also known that they strengthen polarisation effects, while also generating additional demand, hence entering a vicious circle.

The importance of these driving forces is underlined by their magnitude and time horizon of 20 to 30 years. They will still be in their heyday at the time the programme will deliver its full impact shortly after 2020. All territorial types are affected, albeit in a different manner. The ASP can offer only a response to certain aspects of them.

Based on the Strategy Development Project, a SWOT analysis of the Alpine Space has been developed, along the three priorities of the Europe 2020 Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

Considering Smart Growth the area has the following features:

Strengths:

High R&D expenditure;

Universities and research centres with strong capacity;

One of the most innovative places in Europe;

Good ICT endowment compared with the global level;

Excellent endowment of infrastructure and connections in the metropolitan areas;

SMEs, medium-sized cap companies and large enterprises are leaders in their field and enjoy a high innovation competitive edge at the regional and local level with sustainable economic cycles;

Tourism as a global “basic sector”.

Weaknesses:

Limited inter-Alpine research & innovation cooperation;

Limited research on topics of specific Alpine importance;

Limited visibility and awareness and thus uptake of existing research & innovation results;

Spatially fragmented local markets;

Significant intra- and interregional and social disparities in innovation, funding opportunities, ICT and services of general interest;

Strong outmigration in rural areas due to poor endowment with infrastructure;

Limited capitalisation of applied research results;

Growth poles are suffering from agglomeration disadvantages;

High competition for securing the basic production factors;

Tourism favours seasonal “monocultures” while simultaneously areas with favourable conditions for tourism lack alternatives, hence creating a positive feedback to the monoculture creation;

Dependency on few big global players.

Opportunities:

Challenges related to global processes like climate change (e.g. on water and energy supply), are an urge for sustainability. There are opportunities related to the provision of consulting and engineering in energy efficiency, tapping energy potential, natural hazard defences, risk management, health and medical research and services for an ageing society and new products in the tourism sector, etc.;

Concerning economic globalisation a chance for high-quality, high added-value sectors arises;

Global pool of mobile highly skilled persons could be attracted, due to the high standard of living offered;

Scope for ICT applications, products and services is very large;

Socio-demographic trends open new fields related to social services and infrastructure, quality of life and “ambient living”. The same applies to tourism areas which can and must attract different, more affluent target groups than the ones addressed today.

Threats:

Climate change threats regarding the viability of smaller communities and winter tourism areas;

Competitive markets (e.g. in Asia) or laxer administrative, environmental and labour market constraints of other countries are a threat to the location of global players and their headquarters and also for the more traditional sectors;

Risk of losing some competitive edge in front of new global competitors especially taking in account the lack of an Alpine specific approach and capitalisation;

Fragmented governance systems and administrative discordance can reduce the potential for transnational exploitation of the Alpine Space strengths and opportunities.

Considering Sustainable Growth the area has the following features:

Strengths:

Very rich natural and cultural heritage, which is fully exploited as a production input (tourism);

Land uses integrated in the cultural landscape;

Environmental protection and cultural preservation are political mainstream in many regions of the Alpine Space;

Rich resources of renewable energy sources;

“Ecosystem” of numerous innovative, globally leading SMEs in the field of energy efficiency and renewable energy sources;

Overall climate change adaptive capacity is high as a result of good governance;

Reliable and extensive transport network.

Weaknesses:

The ASP area is a zone of high environmental sensitivity affected by general pressure due to human activities (including land-take, air pollution etc.) and accentuated by climate change;

Severe spatial constraints are affecting the potential for practically all interactions between nature and economic activity; land use conflicts among economic uses are frequent, retention and safety zones are scarce; exploitation of energy potentials stresses the environment instantaneously while negative effects of spatially concentrated emissions (e.g. NOx, PM etc.) are reinforced by the Alpine topography;

Tourism creates a broad-scale, often non reversible pressure and alienation on nature and space;

The topography limits options for trade-offs among land uses, in particular as regards transport;

The topography and spatial interaction patterns of human activities accentuate the risks of natural hazards such as droughts, floods, erosion etc.;

Some regions are dependent on energy-demanding industry and economy and on energy-intensive mobility patterns (commuting);

Governance systems for environmental protection and sustainability issues are fragmented and have a diverging range of responsibilities among and within countries; the application of results of transnational best practices and tools has been weak.

Opportunities:

Multitude, interdependency and complexity of threats and risks demand transnational cooperation as an attempt to meet the challenges;

Momentum for a “low carbon”/“low emission” economy through high level political support, such as the Strategic Energy Technology Plan or the Clean Air Policy Package;

Climate change causes a paradigm shift in economy leading to resilient “less material input” production and similar environmental-friendly methods. Climate change is also a positive booster for so called “no regret measures” and a significant motivator for innovation and new businesses with a high location focus, hence ensuring regional chains of supply;

Interventions for a “low carbon” and “less material input” economy bear significant benefits also for the reduction of air pollution and the preservation of ecosystems, creating positive feedback loops for tourism, cultural heritage, agriculture and forestry.

Significant potential for energy savings, especially in transportation;

Economic globalisation is expected to affect energy demand and thereby raising prices for conventional energy, hence making renewable and flexible energy sources more attractive;

Potential and demand for application of climate change action and energy efficiency at the local level and in small communities;

Socio-demographic trends in conjunction to globalisation will also offer new global target groups for “moderate” tourism demanding “pristine nature”.

Threats:

Climate change impact could raise costs for risk prevention and rehabilitation and will demand additional material inputs for the restoration of the status quo ante. It could also affect the fragile mountain ecosystems, causing loss of biodiversity, erosion and degradation of eco-services;

Innovative developments in the energy sector are dependent on public support in the initial phase. Public funds and renewable energy potentials are not spatially congruent;

There are path dependencies (e.g. settlement and employment patterns) which make the shift to a lower carbon economy difficult or impossible without what might be perceived as a loss of “quality of life”;

Socio-demographic trends will place new challenges in the areas affected by the climate change, especially rural areas with ageing population.

Considering Inclusive Growth the area has the following features:

Strengths:

Employment and share of university students are above EU average, overall level of education is very high especially in the metropolises and the larger cities;

Labour markets can cater for the needs of the industries; the dense network of smaller cities widens the scope of local labour markets;

Public and social services are of high quality and widely available within the framework of universal social security;

Numerous high-end universities, research institutes and vocational training centres are located in the area;

High quality public administration has a long record of cooperation.

Weaknesses:

Labour markets are heavily dependent on commuting, especially the peripheral areas on cars commuting;

Lack of available labour force in some branches and communities is covered by seasonal workers from outside. This spatial mismatch is also relevant to the absence of educational institutions “near the demand”, especially in tourism regions;

Overall mismatch between academic supply, capitalisation and local needs and little life-long-learning concepts for special target groups;

Gradual development of a low qualified service sector substituting better paid jobs in the production sector;

Poverty pockets do exist especially in declining rural areas, areas with seasonal occupation and “displacement zones”, i.e. zones collecting those who cannot afford (any longer) the high quality/high demand growth poles;

Mix of governance system in the countries poses limits to the potential for cooperation (federal vs. centralised states);

Migrants, females and regionally marginalised groups are subject to negative pressures related to the factors mentioned above.

Opportunities:

All developments expected in the other priorities (e.g. related to research, tourism, energy, etc.) pose also opportunities for the educational system;

Climate change is expected to offer new opportunities regarding R&D capacities on climate change challenges, energy production and management, adaptation etc.;

Society is becoming diverse, multicultural, open and pluralistic.

Threats:

The ASP area is highly attractive. Highly qualified economic immigrants will mostly settle in larger agglomerations or in the periphery thereof, thus accentuating the “competition” for affordable housing and commuting space with the “native population”;

Medium sized cities near metropolises would be the “winners”, rural areas the “losers”;

Brain drain from rural areas is expected to continue;

Labour markets depending on car commuting could face significant constraints, especially considering costs but also social acceptance;

Poverty effects are expected to be deepened, e.g. by higher energy prices and shrinking public resources;

Labour market situation is deteriorating without signs of upcoming relief;

Climate change could cause structural shifts in the labour market e.g. disrupting employment patterns, especially in the areas of winter tourism.

Based on the SWOT, the programme extracts options for policy responses, either combining strengths with opportunities (going for a so-called “expansionary” strategy aiming at economic growth acceleration and the exploitation of comparative advantages) or weaknesses and threats (formulating a so-called “preventive strategy” aiming at the precaution and mitigation of negative developments). The “gap” between the current situation and the final stage formulated by the policy response defines what still needs to be done and, thus, the needs of the area.

Selection of thematic objectives

The ASP selected four TOs and translated them into four priority axes: Innovative Alpine Space, Low Carbon Alpine Space, Liveable Alpine Space and Well Governed Alpine Space.

The cornerstones for the selection of the TOs were:

- The characteristics of the programme area in form of a summarising SWOT at the level of the three priorities of the Europe 2020 Strategy;
- The INTERACT typology of results of ETC programmes;
- The specificities of transnational cooperation; and
- The development path and lessons learnt of the ASP in the former programming periods.

Based on the situation described in the SWOT, the questions to be asked are:

- What is a possible policy reaction to the constellation of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for each TO?
- What is the political “feasibility filter” imposed by the frame of transnational cooperation?
- What is the scope of addressing a specific TO in the ASP 2014-2020?

Based on the analysis of the situation the following TOs have been chosen:

(1) *Strengthening research, technological development and innovation*

The area is characterised by a strong R&D base and many innovative companies and clusters. The weak points are the weak connections between research, business and administration, the ensuing limited capitalisation of research results and the lack of inter-Alpine cooperation.

Driving forces such as climate change are expected to create strong demand for innovative products, processes and technologies. The same applies to the pressure of economic globalisation, which cannot be addressed by cost cuts only. Demographic change is also creating a market for “innovation at home”.

The needs deriving out of this situation are diverse: inter-Alpine cooperation of innovation and research players should be strengthened; the competitive, broad and diverse SME base should be engaged in the innovation and the capitalisation process and at the same time start-ups should be encouraged, while the administration should provide for the improvement of the “enabling environment”. The definition of common

themes of Alpine Space importance – ranging from tourism and cultural heritage to health services – could assist in achieving a critical mass at a global level. Capitalisation of research outcomes and knowledge diffusion should be improved, social and public services need to find more efficient and effective delivery mechanisms.

A possible policy response is a structural strategy which addresses the weaknesses (lack of capitalisation and weak inter-Alpine cooperation) in order to exploit the opportunities generated by the major driving forces.

A transnational cooperation programme cannot fund R&D infrastructure. It can however support actions of coordination, cooperation, transfer, networking and diffusion.

The ASP in particular can build on the experience from the period 2007-2013 and guide the process in those fields which are accentuated by the driving forces (i.e. related to economic globalisation, mobility, demographic change etc.).

(4) *Supporting the shift towards a low-carbon economy in all sectors*

The area is characterised by a significant renewable energy potential, strong SMEs in the field and good adaptive capacity. On the weak side the spatial constraints generate many conflicts in the exploitation of low carbon energy and the fact that many economic and spatial interaction patterns are based on “cheap” fossil fuels.

Climate change is also a “promoter” of a low carbon economy by the need to cut greenhouse gas emissions. The same applies to economic globalisation and the higher energy prices.

In the Alpine Space area, the needs mainly derive from the spatial confinement and the intense land use and dense interaction, settlement and mobility patterns and ensuing bottlenecks. Any solutions must take in account the need for integrated collective approaches within these constraints.

The area needs also to build upon existing capacities in energy savings, energy use, energy-efficiency and emissions-reducing technologies and innovation. It needs to harvest the potentials of green energy drive and finally it needs to mediate between the different interests of e.g. industry, agriculture, households etc., the necessities imposed by the global drivers, the overall limits of energy consumption and the impact on the environment and the society.

Possible policy responses are either an expansionary strategy or a preventive strategy. The first strategy for example can address the strong basis of renewable energy potential and capable SMEs in order to exploit the opportunities of renewable energy demand. A preventive strategy addresses possible solutions related to the weakness of the dependence on fossil energy sources due to established economic and spatial interaction patterns and the threats imposed by rising global demand and climate change effects.

A transnational programme can address certain pivotal aspects of a low carbon economy. It can either address the demand side, i.e. related to spatial settlement patterns and economic activity, or enhance the supply side by acting as a demonstration, dissemination and networking platform of low carbon policy instruments.

(6) *Protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency*

The area is characterised by a very rich natural and cultural heritage. Environmental protection is an accepted political objective. On the weak side, spatial constraints are leading to unavoidable conflicts of use of resources and lead to habitat degradation, fragmentation etc.

Climate change is known to affect the ecosystems and to increase their vulnerability. On the positive side, economic globalisation and demographic change could create demand for a pristine environment, especially from areas more severely affected by climate change impacts.

Needs are multiple. All regions recognise the need to preserve biodiversity on the one side, but also to provide for the sustainable use of the natural environment, efficiently managing natural and manmade risks and impacts. Further issues are related to the protection of attractive locations and customs as a development factor, the promotion of green sustainable growth, the protection and connection of ecosystems as a truly transnational task and the management of risks imposed by the natural conditions and the global driving forces. These needs can only be addressed through mechanisms of cooperation, mediation and compromise among stakeholders. Last but not least the need for climate change adaptation and for mainstreaming risk prevention and risk management has horizontal application scope.

The TO of environment and resource efficiency is by definition suitable for a transnational programme. In the case of the ASP this is especially the case by the

interaction and interdependency of the landscapes (e.g. mountains and valleys), the continuity of habitats and ecosystems across borders and the “Alpine Space” brand.

(11) *Enhancing institutional capacity and an efficient public administration*

The area is characterised by high quality public administration with a good and long record of cooperation. This certainly contributes to knowledge transfer and cooperation among many networks of administrations already present in the area. Weaknesses are created by the mosaic of different governance systems and the need for a multi-level governance system.

Many good practices of public administration and governance systems already exist in the Alpine Space. However, new challenges arising from driving forces like climate change, globalisation, socio-demographic change, need to engage and empower the local level and scarcity of public funds call for new forms of decision-making. These challenges translate into the need for public administrations to “re-invent” themselves, their services and processes and to engage in multilevel and transnational governance interfaces.

The opportunity – and, at the same time, threat – for the area is the same: the need to confront the challenges imposed by the driving forces, which are beyond the capabilities of isolated national or regional administrations, while taking into account the difficulty to establish interfaces across the given Alpine Space governance mosaic.

The policy response of the ASP is an accelerating/stabilisation strategy. The programme can build on the strengths of the status quo in order to exploit the possibilities offered by multilevel and transnational governance in the Alpine Space and address the threats imposed by the driving forces and their impacts beyond the national borders. The EUSALP and the ASP offer the opportunities to be exploited building on the high level of administration systems and going a step further in forming, developing and evaluating multi-level and transnational governance in the Alpine Space. The ASP accommodates this development by addressing those issues through activation of TO 11 within a dedicated priority axis.

The above mentioned TOs constitute the strategic choice of the ASP and are structured in the following priority axes and investment priorities:

- Priority Axis 1 “Innovative Alpine Space” addressing Investment Priority 1b;
- Priority Axis 2 “Low Carbon Alpine Space” addressing Investment Priority 4e;

- Priority Axis 3 “Liveable Alpine Space” addressing Investments Priorities 6c and 6d;
- Priority Axis 4 “Well-Governed Alpine Space” addressing TO 11.
- Priority Axis 5 Technical Assistance.

There are additional thematically relevant topics from the eleven TOs of the EU Framework. It was, however, decided not to address them for the following reasons:

- TO 2 “Enhancing access to and use and quality of ICT”: This is a mature topic with a significant investment component. It is not suitable for a transnational programme, since it neither fits in the logic of the ASP as a policy driver nor the budget of the ASP allows for a meaningful infrastructure intervention. As a general rule, however, the ASP considers ICT a horizontal principle, while operations are required to consider also other initiatives such the Satellite Voucher Scheme.
- TO 3 “Enhancing the competitiveness of SMEs”: The ASP covers specific and niche aspects of the SME competitiveness, e.g. issues related to the capacity of local SMEs to engage themselves in innovation processes (product, process, and technology and promotion innovation), which can be better approached under TO 1.
- TO 5 “Promoting climate change adaptation, risk prevention and management”: The ASP has supported several projects on the topic, which have reached such a level of maturity in the policy cycle that climate change adaptation can be seen as an issue to be mainstreamed in every project and not an objective per se.
- TO 7 “Promoting sustainable transport”: Experience has shown that only a small number of high quality projects on transport evolve in the transnational frame. In most cases necessary funding are beyond the means of ASP. The ASP can address aspects on technological and process innovations in the field of transport (e.g. under the TOs 1 or 4).
- TO 8 “Promoting employment and supporting labour mobility”: The core of the needs related to this TO is better addressed at the regional or local level in the ESF context. As a general rule, the ASP considers employment and job creation a horizontal principle.
- TO 9 “Promoting social inclusion and combating poverty”: The core of the needs related to this TO is better addressed at the regional or local level. However there are certain tasks in that area that will be addressed by the ASP, eventually in the context of social innovation under TO 1.

- TO 10 “Investing in education, skills and lifelong learning by developing education and training infrastructure”: The core of the needs related to this thematic objective is better addressed at the regional or local level. There are elements which will be addressed in the ASP, e.g. the enhancing the mobility for researchers on Alpine issues, enhancing the openness and relevance of education systems etc. However these are niche elements, which can hardly justify the selection of the TO. As a general rule, the ASP considers education, qualification and skills a horizontal principle.

Additionally to this vertical thematic orientation, the ASP aims to address certain horizontal thematic aspects, which are discussed in Section 8.

1.1.2. Justification for the choice of thematic objectives and corresponding investment priorities, having regard to the Common Strategic Framework, based on an analysis of the needs within the programme area as a whole and the strategy chosen in response to such needs, addressing, where appropriate, missing links in cross-border infrastructure, taking into account the results of the ex-ante evaluation

Table 1: Justification for the selection of thematic objectives and investment priorities

Selected thematic objective	Selected investment priority	Justification for selection
1	1b	<p>The area is characterised by strong R&D and innovation and by weak connections between research, business and administration and limited capitalisation of research results and lack of inter-Alpine cooperation.</p> <p>The needs underline the necessity of cooperation for innovation. Research players and the competitive SME base should be engaged in the innovation and capitalisation process. The administration should provide for the “enabling environment”. The definition of themes of common importance can be facilitated. Capitalisation of research outcomes and knowledge diffusion for business (especially SME), social services and services of general interest can be improved. The ASP can build on previous experience and further guide the process in the fields accentuated by the driving forces.</p> <p>IP 1b covers a broad range of topics with an emphasis on developing links and synergies between innovation players using the “Quadruple Helix” approach, which can be enhanced by transnational cooperation.</p>
4	4e	<p>The area is characterised by high energy consumption and at the same time by a high potential for energy savings, energy efficiency and emissions reducing technologies and innovation.</p> <p>In the confined space of the area energy efficiency and reduction of carbon emissions are related to the integrated spatial development and the arrangement of land uses, energy generation, and consumption systems architecture and mobility patterns. The ASP addresses the demand side, i.e. activities related to spatial settlement patterns and economic activity, as well as the mobility options (the supply side), by acting as a demonstration, dissemination and networking platform of low carbon policy instruments. Low carbon policy instruments, including sustainable mobility and transport systems, can be regional and transnational and can become a role model at European level.</p> <p>The IP 4e is addressing an “area based” approach which is essential to the ASP, due the need for integrated joint approaches.</p>
6	6c	<p>The Alpine Space is an area where many different cultures meet in a relatively limited space. The combination of the cultural and natural diversity makes the Alpine Space an attractive place for inhabitants, newcomers and visitors. Common challenges caused by external driving forces such as demographic change, economic globalisation, increased mobility of persons and goods can better be addressed in a transnational framework, through mechanisms of cooperation, mediation and compromise among stakeholders either through exchange or through joint actions.</p>

		<p>The ASP can provide a framework for the exchange and interaction of organisations involved in the protection, valorisation and utilisation of natural and cultural heritage. These topics are covered explicitly by IP 6c.</p>
	6d	<p>The area features exceptional landscapes and biodiversity providing quality of life and global attractiveness. Due to its topography, the area is also characterised by a high environmental vulnerability strongly influenced by impacts of human activities and climate change.</p> <p>IP 6d topics are by definition suitable for a transnational programme due to the interaction and interdependency of the landscapes (e.g. mountains and valleys), the continuity of habitats and ecosystems.</p> <p>These topics are best dealt through mechanisms of cooperation, negotiation and exchange (due to connectivity, interdependency and magnitude of impacts). Last but not least, the need for climate change adaptation has horizontal application scope.</p> <p>The trans-Alpine co-operation potential for this IP has not been fully exploited in the previous programme periods. The ASP can provide the frame for common trans-Alpine tools and methodologies, combination of knowledge bases, but also for common responses.</p>
11	-	<p>The area is characterised by high quality public administration with a good and long record of cooperation. However, new challenges underline the importance of the effort of public administrations to “re-invent” themselves, their services and processes (beyond the capabilities of isolated national or regional administrations) and to engage in multilevel and transnational governance initiatives for that purpose.</p> <p>The EUSALP offers also opportunities to be exploited. The ASP accommodates this development by addressing those issues through activation of TO 11 within a dedicated priority axis.</p> <p>The programme can build on the strengths of the status quo in order to exploit the possibilities offered by multilevel and transnational governance in the Alpine Space and address the threats imposed by the driving forces and their impacts beyond the national borders.</p>

1.2. Justification for the financial allocation

Justification for the financial allocation (i.e. Union support) to each TO and, where appropriate, investment priority, in accordance with the thematic concentration requirements, taking into account the ex-ante evaluation.

The overall programme budget comprises of EUR 139,75 Million (with an ERDF contribution of EUR 116,64 Million) as described in Section 3.

- The financial allocation to the chosen TOs reflects:
- The estimated financial size of the projects foreseen in each priority axis based on the experience of the 2007-2013 period;

- the coherence with the needs of the participating countries;
- the opinions expressed during the consultation rounds; and
- last, but not least, the expression of the strategic choices of the ASP stakeholders.

Further, for the estimation of the number of possible projects under each priority axis it was assumed that projects will have on average a budget of slightly over ERDF EUR 2 Million. However, this being an average, the ASP foresees the need for smaller and larger projects in the course of programme implementation as it seems fit.

The financial allocation per priority axis is as follows:

- **Priority Axis 1 (TO 1):** the planned budget allocation to Priority Axis 1 is ERDF EUR 37,32 Million, corresponding to 32% of the total, with an estimated number of 19 projects to be implemented. The financial allocation to this priority is in line with the emphasis given to innovation, technology transfer and entrepreneurship within all Partner States and also with the demand from the base as expressed during the period 2007-2013 and within the consultations during programming.
- **Priority Axis 2 (TO 4):** the planned budget allocation to Priority Axis 2 is ERDF EUR 31,49 Million, corresponding to 27% of the total, with an estimated number of 15 projects to be implemented. The financial allocation within this priority axis is justified by the broad partnerships envisaged in the pursuit of Specific Objective 4e.1 and also by the potentially cost-intensive outputs under Specific Objective 4e.2.
- **Priority Axis 3 (TO 6):** the planned budget allocation to Priority Axis 3 is ERDF EUR 31,49 Million, corresponding to 27% of the total, with an estimated number of 15 projects to be implemented. This financial allocation reflects the expected size of actions facing the needs to support of valorisation of cultural and natural heritage and increase awareness on the one side and the efforts to harmonise management approaches, facilitate knowledge transfer and foster shared potentials and responsibilities in the field of environmental protection and risk management.
- **Priority Axis 4 (TO 11):** the planned budget allocation to Priority Axis 4 is ERDF EUR 9,33 Million, corresponding to 8% of the total, with an estimated number of 10 projects to be implemented. This is a budget-wise “small but beautiful” priority axis, which is a novelty within the ASP. Its justification derives by the need to address governance challenges and development in the Alpine Space area by investing in multilevel and transnational governance in the tasks, approaches, services and processes of public administrations. Hence the projects expected are mainly focusing

in the creation of pivotal interfaces, which are not expected to be costly. However, their leverage effect can be substantial.

Table 2: Overview of the investment strategy of the cooperation programme

Priority axis	ERDF support (in EUR)	Proportion (%) of the total Union support for the cooperation programme (by Fund)			Thematic objective	Investment priorities	Specific objectives corresponding to the investment priorities	Result indicators corresponding to the specific objective (input from result indicator)
		ERDF	ENI	IPA				
1	37.323.349				1	1b	1b.1 Improve the framework conditions for innovation in the Alpine Space	Level of maturity of framework conditions for innovation for generating innovation processes among business, academia and administration
							1b.2 Increase capacities for the delivery of services of general interest in a changing society	Level of capacity of social organisations and public authorities to deliver innovation in the field of social services and services of general interest through transnational networking
2	31.491.576				4	4e	4e.1 Establish trans-nationally integrated low carbon policy instruments	Level of Implementation of low carbon policy instruments.
							4e.2 Increase options for low carbon mobility and transport	Level of potential to access and use low carbon mobility and transport options.
3	31.491.576				6	6c	6c.1 Sustainably valorise Alpine Space cultural and natural heritage	Level of sustainable valorisation of cultural and natural heritage of the Alpine Space.
							6	6d
4	9.330.837				11	-		
5	6.998.128				12	-		

SECTION 2.

PRIORITY AXES

2.1. Description of the priority axes other than technical assistance

2.1.1. Priority axis (repeated for each priority axis)

ID of the priority axis	1
Title of the priority axis	Innovative Alpine Space
The entire priority axis will be implemented solely through financial instruments	
The entire priority axis will be implemented solely through financial instruments set up at Union level	
The entire priority axis will be implemented through community-led local development	

2.1.1.1. Fund and calculation basis for Union support (repeated for each fund under the priority axis)

Fund	ERDF
Calculation basis (total eligible expenditure or eligible public expenditure)	total

2.1.1.2. Investment priority (repeated for each investment priority under the priority axis)

Investment priority	1b
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2.1.1.3. Specific objectives corresponding to the investment priority and expected results (repeated for each specific objective under the investment priority)

ID	
Specific objective	1b.1 Improve the framework conditions for innovation in the Alpine Space
The results that the Member States seek to achieve with Union	The area is rich in excellent universities, research institutions, good business, culture and support structures and high innovation potential in both research and business. However, there is relatively

support

little transversal cooperation between universities, research institutions, administration and business.

At the same time, the area's socio-geographic, economic and environmental features show growing demand for solutions as well as high opportunities for specialisation in products and services with regional and global market potential. The SWOT has outlined a number of topics (e.g. specific Alpine topography and resulting spatial structures, climate change vulnerability, risk management, socio-demographic change and ageing society, transport, energy and air pollution, water, forests, tourism, and consumers taste, barrier free accessibility and health services, valorisation of environmental goods, traditional activities, natural and cultural heritage, creative industries, eco-innovation and smart technologies, resource efficiency and green growth etc.). These can be summarised as "topics of Alpine Space importance".

The IP builds on the ASP 2007-2013 successful experience made under "Competitiveness and Attractiveness". Most projects however did not reach the "implementation phase" in the policy cycle and did not succeed to unlock private investments. Against this background, the IP focuses on projects reaching the implementation phase and unlocking private/public investments.

The ASP aims to improve framework conditions (awareness and foresight, legal, economic, administrative, governance, organisational issues, policy solutions, technology impact assessments) for stakeholders in the fields of research and innovation in order to increase knowledge transfer between business, users, academia and administration actors (Quadruple Helix approach) of the area. Thereby, it should enhance the potential for business innovation using research results on topics of Alpine Space importance.

The results to be delivered by the projects supported by the programme are residing initially in the common analysis and identification of innovation resources and obstacles as a base for further actions (output: strategic elements).

A further result expected is the formation of an "innovation vision for the ASP area". In this respect, a programmatic approach will be created based on an innovation policy foresight and on the coordination of actions in the delivery of innovation (output: strategic elements). This will be strengthened through preparatory steps (e.g. related to innovation related capacity building, (output: implementation elements) as well as "post-processing" i.e. in the transnational delivery of innovation (output: transnational cooperation structures).

The projects should result in instruments for supporting innovation and improving the framework conditions for innovation through design, testing, up-scaling, comparison and evaluation of

	<p>innovations (output: implementation elements). Transnational cooperation structures will facilitate the formation of partnerships among the different actors, thus, enhancing the enabling environment for innovation governance (output: transnational cooperation structures).</p> <p>Last but not least, the programme shall deliver conclusions on the relevance, effectiveness and sustainability of the above through monitoring and evaluation initiatives (output: transnational cooperation structures and strategic elements).</p>
ID	
Specific objective	1b.2 Increase capacities for the delivery of services of general interest in a changing society
The results that the Member States seek to achieve with Union support	<p>The area will have to cater also for the provision of a balanced level of social services and services of general interest, as well as to raise the capabilities for utilising social capital and strengthening governance efficiency as a contribution to sustainable and cohesive territorial development. At the same time, providers of social services and services of general interest could face reduced public budgets, hence meeting a double challenge of reducing unit costs and expanding services.</p> <p>IP 1b.2 builds on previous experiences, which on the one hand emphasize the small-scale dynamics in demographic change and the derived challenges for the delivery of services of general interest, and on the other hand develop strategic policies and demonstrate successful pilot actions and broad implementation. Services of general interest tackle a great variety of sectors (health, education, transport/social/cultural infrastructure, public transport, local supply) and therefore still require innovative solutions.</p> <p>The ASP will help to achieve more efficient services of general interest through developing, testing and adopting new social innovation solutions. Innovation is crucial in the face of a rapidly changing framework (i.e. on demographic and social transition, environmental and community trends, societal challenges, public finances etc.). Services of general interest should not only be safeguarded, but continuously developed; action plans should be provided for the promotion of social inclusion and utilisation of its potentials.</p> <p>The ASP aims to assist social organisations and public authorities to deliver more efficient, adaptable and “fit for purpose” services of comparable quality.</p> <p>The results to be delivered by the projects supported by the ASP are initially expected in raising the awareness and understanding of the potentials of social innovation related to the services of general interest (output: strategic and implementation elements).</p>

Transnational analysis and common identification of innovation resources and obstacles will be the base for further actions (output: strategic elements). This will be accompanied by the capacity development and training for identification, design, uptake and diffusion of social innovation (output: implementation elements).

The field for social innovation will be identified and delineated, hence earmarking the potential for transnational cooperation (output: transnational cooperation structures). This will happen through the design of strategic elements, e.g. policy foresight, open innovation approaches and local and regional action plans (output: strategic and implementation elements).

Projects should result in concrete instruments for supporting social innovation and enhancing capacities through design, testing, up-scaling, comparison and evaluation of social innovations. This includes testing applications for inclusion of all social groups, actors and users in the design and delivery of social services and services of general interest. As a final result, actual support materials should be available for the launch, operation and monitoring of social enterprises (output: implementation elements).

This experimental approach will be fostered by the transnational cooperation structures, facilitating the formation of local and regional partnerships among relevant actors (social enterprises, non-profit sector, public bodies etc.) (output: transnational cooperation structures).

Table 3.1: Programme specific result indicators (by specific objective)

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline value	Baseline year	Target value (2023)	Source of data	Frequency of reporting
1b.1	Level of maturity of framework conditions for innovation for generating innovation processes among business, academia and administration	% of maximum possible	62,7%	2014	Increase < 1,0%	Survey	2018, 2020, 2023

Table 3.2: Programme specific result indicators (by specific objective)

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline value	Baseline year	Target value (2023)	Source of data	Frequency of reporting
1b.2	Level of capacity of social organisations and public authorities to deliver innovation in the field of social services and services of	% of maximum possible	64,6%	2014	Increase <1,0%	Survey	2018, 2020, 2023

general interest through transnational networking							
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2.1.1.4. Actions to be supported under the investment priority (by investment priority)

2.1.1.4.1. A description of the type and examples of actions to be supported and their expected contribution to the specific objectives, including, where appropriate, identification of the main target groups, specific territories targeted and types of beneficiaries

Investment priority	1b
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Indicative Actions to be supported are:

- Set up transnational frameworks, platforms and networks for the identification of existing innovation resources, potentials and obstacles, as well as the valorisation of proven concepts in the fields of technology, business, social services and governance (mapping of resources, studies, pilots and strategies on research and innovation needs, market and product development potentials, human resources etc.) (rel. 1b.1, 1b.2);
- Set up transnational frameworks, platforms and networks for the coordination of innovation policy (coordination of regional and national RIS3 strategies, utilisation of Key Enabling Technologies (KET), innovation alliances, resources pooling structures, integrated supply chains, innovation governance initiatives and competence networks) (rel. 1b.1);
- Develop transnationally designed products, services, investment models and funding support instruments of business support centres, chambers of commerce, public administration and financing institutions, with emphasis on start-ups and dynamically growing SMEs (rel.1b.1);
- Develop contents and adapt education and training concepts for the uptake and diffusion of innovation and the provision of capacity development mechanisms (rel. 1b.1, 1b.2);
- Develop transnational models for the design, testing, up-scaling, comparison and evaluation of innovations (policies, tools, processes, actors, organisations and interfaces) in the fields of business innovation, services of general interest, social services and public administration (rel. 1b.1, 1b.2);
- Develop transnational models for the design and testing of open innovation modes of cooperation (rel. 1b.1, 1b.2);
- Design local, regional and transnational action plans for social inclusion via set-up of social enterprises as a demonstration of the feasibility of the innovative transnational concepts (rel.1b.2);
- Set up models and test pilot actions for a better participation of all social groups, actors and users in the design and delivery of social services and services of general interest (rel. 1b.2);
- Set up a policy foresight for governance challenges and cooperation modes in relation to the Alpine Space driving forces, innovative tools, approaches and

participation procedures (rel. 1b.1, 1b.2).

Note: These indicative actions have provided the base for the ex-ante quantification of the indicator targets based on the experiences of the former programme. More information can be found in the ex-ante report.

Target groups

General public;
Those groups listed below under the caption “Indicative types of beneficiaries”;
Enterprises, including SME.

Indicative types of beneficiaries

Local public authorities;
Regional public authorities;
National public authorities;
Agencies;
(Public) service providers;
Higher education institutions;
Education/training centres;
Business support organisations;
Enterprises, including SME, if relevant;
Interest groups including NGOs.

2.1.1.4.2. Guiding principles for the selection of operations

Investment priority

1b

The selection of projects will be carried out following a standardised assessment procedure (Article 12 of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013). The objectives to be achieved are:

- Assess the relevance of a project proposal;
- Assess the feasibility of a project proposal;
- Define a transparent and objective basis for decision making on a proposal rejection or approval;
- Provide a base for communication and improvement among programme bodies and applicants.

The assessment will be conducted using the following sets of criteria:

Strategic Assessment Criterion

This criterion examines:

- the relevance, coherence and contribution of each project proposal to the ASP programme Objectives and especially the relevant Specific Objective addressed;
- the contribution to the envisaged results per investment priority;
- the demonstration of the need for the topic and approach of the proposal in its thematic and territorial context;
- the added value of transnational cooperation and
- the proposed partnership relevance to the above.

Operational Assessment Criterion

This criterion examines:

- the adequacy of the management provisions in terms of structures, procedures and competences;
- the quality and effectiveness of communication provisions;
- the quality of the Work Plan in terms of design in relation to clarity and coherence of the operational objectives, activities and means, feasibility, efficiency of the project and its results, potential for uptake and embedment into operative procedures of the partners involved;
- the adequacy of the budget provisions to guarantee the project implementation and generate value for money.

Coherence to Horizontal Principles Criterion

This criterion examines the way projects have integrated ASP horizontal principles within the project proposal intervention logic. It should not be considered as a “check list” but should animate projects to proactively develop their project ideas within the logic of the Programme.

These three criteria have a primacy order among them. The Strategic Assessment Criterion examines the relevance of the project proposal; hence it retains absolute primacy over the other two criteria. The Operational Assessment Criterion ensures the delivery of relevant results; hence it is enjoying a larger weight than the Coherence to Horizontal Principles Criterion, which is basically oriented towards integration of a “relevant and feasible” proposal into the ASP logic.

The detailed assessment criteria will be laid down and made available to project applicants in the project implementation handbook (PIH).

2.1.1.4.3. Output indicators (by investment priority)

Table 4: Common and programme specific output indicators

ID	Indicator (name of indicator)	Measurement unit	Target value (2023)	Source of data	Frequency of reporting
CO_26	Number of enterprises cooperating with research institutions	Enterprises (Number)	1000	Monitoring	Annually
CO_42	<i>Number of research institutions participating in cross-border, transnational or interregional research projects</i>	Organisations (number)	20	Monitoring	Annually
OI_1b.1_1	Number of supported transnational cooperation structures improving the framework conditions for innovation	Number	8	Monitoring/ Project progress reports	Annually
OI_1b.1_2	Number of developed strategic elements improving the framework conditions for innovation	Number	6	Monitoring/ Project progress reports	Annually
OI_1b.1_3	Number of developed implementation elements improving the framework conditions for innovation	Number	19	Monitoring/ Project progress reports	Annually
OI_1b.2_1	Number of supported transnational cooperation structures increasing capacities for the delivery of services of general interest in a changing society	Number	4	Monitoring/ Project progress reports	Annually
OI_1b.2_2	Number of developed strategic elements increasing capacities for the delivery of services of general interest in a changing society	Number	3	Monitoring/ Project progress reports	Annually
OI_1b.2_3	Number of developed implementation elements increasing capacities for the delivery of services of general interest in a changing society	Number	17	Monitoring/ Project progress reports	Annually

2.1.1.5. Performance framework

Table 5: Performance framework of the priority axis

Priority axis	Indicator Type (key implementation step, financial, output or, where appropriate, result indicator)	ID	Indicator or key implementation step	Measurement unit, where appropriate	Milestone for 2018	Final target (2023)	Source of data	Explanation of the relevance of the indicator, where appropriate
1	Financial	F1	Eligible expenditure verified by the certifying authority	EUR	3.359.101	37.323.349	Monitoring	
1	Output	OI_1b.1_3	Number of developed implementation elements improving the framework conditions for innovation	Number	4	19	Monitoring/ Project progress reports	With the chosen indicator, milestone and target more than 50% of the financial indicator can be reached.
1	Output	OI_1b.2_3	Number of developed implementation elements increasing capacities for the delivery of services of general interest in a changing society	Number	4	17	Monitoring/ Project progress reports	With the chosen indicator, milestone and target more than 50% of the financial indicator can be reached.

2.1.2. Priority axis (repeated for each priority axis)

ID of the priority axis	2
Title of the priority axis	Low Carbon Alpine Space
The entire priority axis will be implemented solely through financial instruments	
The entire priority axis will be implemented solely through financial instruments set up at Union level	
The entire priority axis will be implemented through community-led local development	

2.1.2.1. Fund and calculation basis for Union support (repeated for each fund under the priority axis)

Fund	ERDF
Calculation basis (total eligible expenditure or eligible public expenditure)	total

2.1.2.2. Investment priority (repeated for each investment priority under the priority axis)

Investment priority	4e
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2.1.2.3. Specific objectives corresponding to the investment priority and expected results (repeated for each specific objective under the investment priority)

ID	
Specific objective	4e.1 Establish trans-nationally integrated low carbon policy instruments
The results that the Member States seek to achieve with Union support	<p>The area is characterised by a high potential for energy savings, and sufficiency and related interventions, as well as rich resources and renewable energies. Investments in “ASP-appropriate” low carbon private and public solutions can have a local impact and a global contribution in fighting climate change. The ASP can strengthen the competitiveness of the area in the fields of technology development and innovation and reduce the dependency on imported fossil energy. The area has the potential to advance to a global low-carbon and energy sufficient model region. Reductions in energy consumption have also positive side-effects e.g. regarding emissions (NO_x, PM) which should also be exploited.</p> <p>Projects in the past addressed low carbon policy instruments under “Accessibility and Connectivity” and “Environment and Risk Prevention” developing best practise platforms and decision support</p>

tools, databases and guidelines for renewable energies and sustainable power systems. The IP can build on them and offer the opportunity to deepen and widen the scope of the projects, to involve new sectors, beneficiaries and actors and to build on existing knowledge and experience.

The adoption of low carbon technologies often fails due to a weak “enabling environment”. The process of establishing transnational integrated low carbon policies also concerns spatial development and growth debates, with a broad range of sectors related to energy inputs and emission outputs (from housing and buildings to agriculture and forestry). The ASP can act here as a bonding element among them

The ASP aims to establish low carbon policy instruments in the area with practical responses to the specific needs and challenges, spatial development policies, strategies and processes through the combination of available or potential technological and operational innovations and tools in low carbon systems.

The results to be delivered by the projects reside initially in the promotion of awareness and understanding of the potentials and the implications of low carbon policy instruments among decision makers and key administrations in sectoral (e.g. energy, transport, housing) but also cross-sectoral departments (e.g. spatial planning) (output: strategic and implementation elements).

Projects should also result in capacity building (output type: implementation elements) enhancing the institutional potential for the capitalisation and up-scaling of existing solutions, the operational setup and generation of tailor-fitted applications through transnational networks and cooperation structures (output: transnational cooperation structures).

Further these structures can open the “gates” for a broad participation and exchange on the regional planning and decision making process among stakeholders and the public (output: transnational cooperation structures); this could be achieved through debates on the assessment of impacts of low carbon policies, technologies and applications (output: implementation elements).

Last but not least, the ASP shall deliver conclusions on the relevance, effectiveness and sustainability of the above in order to deliver an enhanced enabling environment for the low carbon policy design, adaptation and implementation in the long term.

This will happen through monitoring and evaluation initiatives but also through the promotion of negotiation, mediation, participation and conflict resolution models (output: transnational cooperation structures and strategic elements).

ID	
Specific objective	4e.2 Increase options for low carbon mobility and transport
The results that the Member States seek to achieve with Union support	<p>Existing spatial and mobility patterns, business models and lifestyles are energy intensive and emission-rich (CO₂, NO_x, PM) deepening disparities between centres and metropolitan areas and the rural areas. Due to the topography people in peripheral areas are especially dependent on private vehicles for commuting and freight transport leading to high carbon activities; on the other hand space for individual traffic is limited.</p> <p>The IP builds on good experiences made in the former ASP under “Accessibility and Connectivity”. Projects showed the feasibility of a modal shift from road transport/traffic to rail transport/public transport addressing “strategic policy development” and “exploration/piloting”, but also reaching the implementation phase. There is a strong need to support development, testing and implementation of new low carbon technologies due to the complexity of the introduction of technological innovations on a system level (for example e-mobility).The implementation phase and the unlocking of public/private investments should be a focus in the current period.</p> <p>The area need to manage these “high carbon” activities fostering the availability and use of low-carbon mobility (passenger trips) and transport (freight and logistics) solutions. These are not a matter of technical applications alone.</p> <p>The ASP aims at an integrated organisation of spatial interaction, economic activity and mobility and transport patterns in order to provide the prerequisites for a low carbon economy and society. It is necessary to increase the options available for low-carbon mobility and transport by adopting technological, financial and organisational solutions taking also in account climate change aspects, resource efficiency and resilience.</p> <p>The results to be delivered by the projects reside initially in the promotion of awareness and understanding about the potentials and the implications of low-carbon mobility and transport options including the discussion on strategies, tools and operational modi among decision makers and key administrations in sectoral (e.g. energy, transport, housing) but also cross-sectoral departments (e.g. spatial planning) (output: strategic and implementation elements).</p> <p>In a next step the programme actions should result in the identification of existing mature and applicable low-carbon mobility and transport options and to foster their operational setup in the specific regional and local contexts through exchange in transnational networks and cooperation structures (output: transnational cooperation structures and implementation elements). Further the programme actions should result in the improvement of</p>

the “ground” for integration and implementation of low-carbon mobility and transport solutions via strategies. It should also foster the change for low carbon mobility and transport behaviour through operational, technological and funding applications at Alpine scale (output: strategic and implementation elements).

Last, but not least, the programme shall deliver conclusions on the relevance, effectiveness and sustainability of the above in order to deliver an enhanced enabling environment for the low carbon mobility and transport design, adaptation and implementation in the midterm. This will happen through monitoring and evaluation initiatives but also through the promotion of negotiation, mediation, participation and conflict resolution models (output: strategic and implementation elements).

Table 6.1: Programme specific result indicators (by specific objective)

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Base-line value	Base-line year	Target value (2023)	Source of data	Frequency of reporting
4e.1	Level of Implementation of low carbon policy instruments	% of maximum possible	66,5%	2014	Increase between 1,0 – 3,0%	Survey	2018, 2020, 2023

Table 6.2: Programme specific result indicators (by specific objective)

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Base-line value	Base-line year	Target value (2023)	Source of data	Frequency of reporting
4e.2	Level of potential to access and use low carbon mobility and transport options.	% of maximum possible	59,9%	2014	Increase <1,0%	Survey	2018, 2020, 2023

2.1.2.4. Actions to be supported under the investment priority (by investment priority)

2.1.2.4.1. A description of the type and examples of actions to be supported and their expected contribution to the specific objectives, including, where appropriate, identification of the main target groups, specific territories targeted and types of beneficiaries

Investment priority

4e

Indicative Actions to be supported are:

- Set up transnational frameworks, platforms and networks for the identification of existing research initiatives (e.g. from JRC), innovation resources, developments in the field of relevant KET, potentials and obstacles in the fields of low-carbon economy and low-carbon mobility and transport (mapping of resources, studies, pilots and strategies on research and application needs, market and product development potentials, prerequisites and “soft” factors for implementation etc.) (rel. 4e.1, 4e.2);
- Develop research to business networks and cooperation structures on relevant issues for capitalisation and/or generation of Alpine Space low-carbon applications and technologies (conversion to a post-carbon energy system through energy saving, energy efficiency, decentralised energy grids based on renewable resources, energy saving settlement patterns and public transports etc.) (rel.4e.1);
- Develop policy networks, strategies, models and toolboxes (e.g. in relation to the implementation of relevant legal obligations such as Directive 2008/50/EC and the Clean Air Policy Package, creation of an Alpine Space climate footprint system, “carbon proofing” tools for integrated spatial development policies, sustainable urban mobility plans, strategies and processes etc.) for setting up local/regional low carbon model areas and regions including special needs areas such as nature protection regions (rel.4e.1 and 4e.2);
- Set up networks for the ex-ante assessment of the maturity and the anticipated impacts and the monitoring of the outcomes of low carbon policies, technologies and applications. Foster the promotion of debate among stakeholders, governance and citizens, the generation of creative ideas and the provision of capacity development mechanisms (rel.4e.1 and 4e.2);
- Set up, test and implement negotiation, mediation, participation and conflict resolution models and standards for the adoption and implementation of low-carbon policies, technologies and applications (rel.4e.1 and 4e.2);
- Support the transfer and uptake of existing local/regional solution and instruments and shape a framework for capitalisation of on-going technological innovation for a more sustainable organisation of mobility and transport including inter-modality and ICT applications (rel.4e.2);
- Design and test operational, technological and funding models for low-carbon mobility and transport (rel. 4e.2);
- Develop tools to better integrate/coordinate mobility and transport strategies and plans of regions (rel. 4e.2).

Note: These indicative actions have provided the base for the ex-ante quantification of the

indicator targets based on the experiences of the former programme. More information can be found in the ex-ante report.

Target groups

General public;

Those groups listed under the caption “Indicative types of beneficiaries”.

Indicative types of beneficiaries

Local Public Authorities;

Regional Public Authorities;

National Public Authorities;

Agencies;

Infrastructure and (public) service providers;

Higher education institutions;

Business support organisations;

Enterprises, including SME;

Interest groups including NGOs.

2.1.2.4.2. Guiding principles for the selection of operations

Investment priority

4e

The selection of projects will be carried out following a standardised assessment procedure (Article 12 of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013). The objectives to be achieved are:

- Assess the relevance of a project proposal;
- Assess the feasibility of a project proposal;
- Define a transparent and objective basis for decision making on a proposal rejection or approval;
- Provide a base for communication and improvement among programme bodies and applicants.

The assessment will be conducted using the following sets of criteria:

Strategic Assessment Criterion

This criterion examines:

- the relevance, coherence and contribution of each project proposal to the ASP programme objectives and especially the relevant specific objective addressed;

- the contribution to the envisaged results per investment priority;
- the demonstration of the need for the topic and approach of the proposal in its thematic and territorial context;
- the added value of transnational cooperation; and
- the proposed partnership relevance to the above.

Operational Assessment Criterion

This criterion examines:

- the adequacy of the management provisions in terms of structures, procedures and competences;
- the quality and effectiveness of communication provisions;
- the quality of the work plan in terms of design in relation to clarity and coherence of the operational objectives, activities and means, feasibility, efficiency of the project and its results, potential for uptake and embedment into operative procedures of the partners involved;
- the adequacy of the budget provisions to guarantee the project implementation and generate value for money.

Coherence to Horizontal Principles Criterion

This criterion examines the way projects have integrated ASP horizontal principles within the project proposal intervention logic. It should not be considered as a “check list” but should animate projects to proactively develop their project ideas within the logic of the programme.

These three criteria have a primacy order among them. The Strategic Assessment Criterion examines the relevance of the project proposal; hence it retains absolute primacy over the other two criteria. The Operational Assessment Criterion ensures the delivery of relevant results; hence it enjoys a larger weight than the Coherence to Horizontal Principles Criterion, which is basically oriented towards integration of a “relevant and feasible” proposal into the ASP logic.

The detailed assessment criteria will be laid down and made available to project applicants in the PIH.

2.1.2.4.3. Output indicators (by investment priority)

Table 7: Common and programme specific output indicators

ID	Indicator (name of indicator)	Measurement unit	Target value (2023)	Source of data	Frequency of reporting
OI_4e.1_1	Number of supported transnational cooperation structures aiming at establishing trans-nationally integrated low carbon policy instruments	Number	9	Monitoring/ Project Progress Reports	Annually
OI_4e.1_2	Number of developed strategic elements aiming at establishing trans-nationally integrated low carbon policy instruments	Number	6	Monitoring/ Project Progress Reports	Annually
OI_4e.1_3	Number of developed implementation elements establishing trans-nationally integrated low carbon policy instruments	Number	12	Monitoring/ Project Progress Reports	Annually
OI_4e.2_1	Number of supported transnational cooperation structures Increasing options for low carbon mobility and transport	Number	3	Monitoring/ Project Progress Reports	Annually
OI_4e.2_2	Number of developed strategic elements Increasing options for low carbon mobility and transport	Number	3	Monitoring/ Project Progress Reports	Annually
OI_4e.2_3	Number of developed implementation elements for low carbon mobility and transport	Number	18	Monitoring/ Project Progress Reports	Annually

2.1.2.5. Performance framework

Table 8: Performance framework of the priority axis

Priority axis	Indicator Type (key implementation step, financial, output or, where appropriate, result indicator)	ID	Indicator or key implementation step	Measurement unit, where appropriate	Milestone for 2018	Final target (2023)	Source of data	Explanation of the relevance of the indicator, where appropriate
2	Financial	F2	Eligible expenditure verified by the certifying authority	EUR	2.361.868	31.491.576	Monitoring	
2	Output	OI_4e.1_3	Number of developed implementation elements establishing trans-nationally integrated low carbon policy instruments	Number	4	12	Monitoring/ Project progress reports	With the chosen indicator, milestone and target more than 50% of the financial indicator can be reached.
2	Output	OI_4e.2_3	Number of developed implementation elements for low carbon mobility and transport	Number	4	18	Monitoring/ Project progress reports	With the chosen indicator, milestone and target more than 50% of the financial indicator can be reached.

2.1.3. Priority axis (repeated for each priority axis)

ID of the priority axis	3
Title of the priority axis	Liveable Alpine Space
The entire priority axis will be implemented solely through financial instruments	
The entire priority axis will be implemented solely through financial instruments set up at Union level	
The entire priority axis will be implemented through community-led local development	

2.1.3.1. Fund and calculation basis for Union support (repeated for each fund under the priority axis)

Fund	ERDF
Calculation basis (total eligible expenditure or eligible public expenditure)	total

2.1.3.2.1. Investment priority (repeated for each investment priority under the priority axis)

Investment priority	6c
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2.1.3.2.1.1. Specific objectives corresponding to the investment priority and expected results (repeated for each specific objective under the investment priority)

ID	
Specific objective	6c.1 Sustainably valorise Alpine Space cultural and natural heritage
The results that the Member States seek to achieve with Union support	<p>The combination of the rich cultural and natural diversity and heritage makes the area a globally attractive place with quality of life for inhabitants, newcomers and visitors.</p> <p>Cultural and natural heritage are at risk, but they can be the starting point for innovation and new development options. The right balance between conservation/protection and advancement is one of the main challenges. Both elements are integral part of the cultural resources of the area and an asset in the context of green growth for decoupling material input and economic growth. The ASP needs to strengthen an Alpine cultural identity and assume a pioneer role in utilising its material and non-material assets and green growth as constituent elements of an alternative and distinct Alpine lifestyle. The proper concept to this end is the sustainable valorisation meaning the integration of apparent or hidden resources (natural stocks, cultural habits, implicit knowledge, existing qualifications) in the added value chain without jeopardizing</p>

or destroying the given natural, social and cultural capital.

This IP can build on experiences from the previous; the valorisation of cultural heritage was however limited to the building sector. However experience also justifies the expectation that a more comprehensive approach on the valorisation of transnational Alpine culture will create new and innovative incentives. As regards the valorisation of natural heritage, further steps towards policy implementation should be aimed at.

The ASP can provide a framework for the exchange and interaction of organisations involved in the protection of natural and cultural heritage. It embraces the overall goal of strengthening a transnational identity and supports cooperation structures by developing adapted strategies, tools and models to this end.

The ASP aims to increase the consistent, balanced and sustainable use of the area's cultural and natural heritage by increasing awareness on the present potential and future challenges and developing new solutions (e.g. adoption of governance tools, development of new production chains, conflict management tools etc).

The results to be delivered by the projects reside initially in the fostering of a transnational Alpine identity using the transnational "label" as a catalyst (output: transnational cooperation structures and strategic elements).

Projects should result in the formulation of what "sustainable valorisation" means in the local and regional context (output: strategic elements). This result will be delivered by exchange within transnational networks and cooperation structures and through negotiation, mediation, participation and conflict resolution exercises at the local and regional level but also through capacity development actions (output: transnational cooperation structures and implementation elements).

After achieving that, the next result lies in the development of innovative approaches for the sustainable valorisation of cultural and natural heritage to foster green growth and resource efficiency. This can be achieved on the one hand by focusing on the improvement of the "ground" for formulation, implementation and evaluation of strategies, and on the other hand by focusing on practical demonstration, evaluation and broad adoption of sustainable valorisation tools and models through knowledge transfer, exchange of good practice examples, networking and development of cultural initiatives (output: implementation elements).

Table 9: Programme specific result indicators (by specific objective)

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Base-line value	Base-line year	Target value (2023)	Source of data	Frequency of reporting
6c.1	Level of sustainable valorisation of cultural and natural heritage of the Alpine Space	% of maximum possible	62,3%	2014	Increase between 1,0 – 3,0%	Survey	2018, 2020, 2023

2.1.3.2.1.2. Actions to be supported under the investment priority (by investment priority)

2.1.3.2.1.2.1. A description of the type and examples of actions to be supported and their expected contribution to the specific objectives, including, where appropriate, identification of the main target groups, specific territories targeted and types of beneficiaries

Investment priority	6c
<p>Indicative Actions to be supported are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise knowledge transfer, exchange of good practice examples, networking and development of innovations concerning models for non-profit organisations and voluntary work in the cultural, arts, and social sector; • Develop Alpine Space-wide cultural initiatives to promote a transnational Alpine identity, enhance awareness and envisage what the future Alpine cultural heritage could be; • Develop education, training, qualification and capacity development models and networks; and set up of pilot actions to re-invent traditional jobs in an innovative context; • Design implementation strategies, set up and test of models to better capitalize and innovate Alpine cultural and natural heritage by enterprises, research institutions, NGOs and local population using exchange of experiences, mutual learning and pilot activities; • Design implementation strategies, set up models and test pilot actions to combine tourism with the promotion and protection of Alpine natural and cultural heritage; • Set up, test and implement negotiation, mediation, participation and conflict resolution models in the context of tourism, culture, local needs and aspirations and economic growth in the context of cultural and natural heritage; • Develop and test control systems for the labelling and funding of green and fair products respecting and promoting Alpine Space cultural and natural heritage. <p><i>Note: These indicative actions have provided the base for the ex-ante quantification of the indicator targets based on the experiences of the former programme. More information can be found in the ex-ante report.</i></p>	

Target groups

General public;

Those groups listed under the caption “Indicative types of beneficiaries”;

Enterprises, including SME.

Indicative types of beneficiaries

Local public authorities;

Regional public authorities;

National public authorities;

Agencies;

Higher education institutions;

Education/training centres;

Business support organisations;

Enterprises incl. SMEs

Interest groups including NGOs.

2.1.3.2.1.2.2. Guiding principles for the selection of operations**Investment priority****6c**

The selection of projects will be carried out following a standardised assessment procedure (Article 12 of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013). The objectives to be achieved are:

- Assess the relevance of a project proposal;
- Assess the feasibility of a project proposal;
- Define a transparent and objective basis for decision making on a proposal rejection or approval;
- Provide a base for communication and improvement among programme bodies and applicants.

The assessment will be conducted using the following sets of criteria:

Strategic Assessment Criterion

This criterion examines:

- the relevance, coherence and contribution of each project proposal to the ASP programme objectives and especially the relevant specific objective addressed;
- the contribution to the envisaged results per investment priority;

- the demonstration of the need for the topic and approach of the proposal in its thematic and territorial context;
- the added value of transnational cooperation and
- the proposed partnership relevance to the above.

Operational Assessment Criterion

This criterion examines:

- the adequacy of the management provisions in terms of structures, procedures and competences;
- the quality and effectiveness of communication provisions;
- the quality of the work plan in terms of design in relation to clarity and coherence of the operational objectives, activities and means, feasibility, efficiency of the project and its results, potential for uptake and embedment into operative procedures of the partners involved;
- the adequacy of the budget provisions to guarantee the project implementation and generate value for money.

Coherence to Horizontal Principles Criterion

This criterion examines the way projects have integrated ASP horizontal principles within the project proposal intervention logic. It should not be considered as a “check list” but should animate projects to proactively develop their project ideas within the logic of the programme.

These three criteria have a primacy order among them. The Strategic Assessment Criterion examines the relevance of the project proposal; hence it retains absolute primacy over the other two criteria. The Operational Assessment Criterion ensures the delivery of relevant results; hence it is enjoying a larger weight than the Coherence to Horizontal Principles Criterion, which is basically oriented towards integration of a “relevant and feasible” proposal into the ASP logic.

The detailed assessment criteria will be laid down and made available to project applicants in the PIH.

2.1.3.2.1.2.3. Output indicators (by investment priority)*Table 10: Common and programme specific output indicators*

ID	Indicator (name of indicator)	Measurement unit	Target value (2023)	Source of data	Frequency of reporting
OI_6c.1_1	Number of supported transnational cooperation structures aiming at the implementation of sustainable valorisation of cultural and natural heritage of the Alpine Space.	Number	12	Monitoring/ Project progress reports	Annually
OI_6c.1_2	Number of developed strategic elements aiming at the implementation of sustainable valorisation of cultural and natural heritage of the Alpine Space.	Number	7	Monitoring/ Project progress reports	Annually
OI_6c.1_3	Number of developed implementation elements sustainably valorising cultural and natural heritage of the Alpine Space.	Number	14	Monitoring/ Project progress reports	Annually

2.1.3. Priority axis (repeated for each priority axis)

ID of the priority axis	
Title of the priority axis	3 Liveable Alpine Space
The entire priority axis will be implemented solely through financial instruments	
The entire priority axis will be implemented solely through financial instruments set up at Union level	
The entire priority axis will be implemented through community- led local development	

2.1.3.1. Fund and calculation basis for Union support (repeated for each fund under the priority axis)

Fund	ERDF
Calculation basis (total eligible expenditure or eligible public expenditure)	total

2.1.3.2.2. Investment priority (repeated for each investment priority under the priority axis)

Investment priority	6d
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2.1.3.2.2.1. Specific objectives corresponding to the investment priority and expected results (repeated for each specific objective under the investment priority)

ID	
Specific objective	6d.1 Enhance the protection, the conservation and the ecological connectivity of Alpine Space ecosystems
The results that the Member States seek to achieve with Union support	<p>The area is featuring exceptional and unique landscapes and biodiversity. Due to its topography, it is also characterised by high environmental vulnerability strongly influenced by human activities, emissions and impacts of climate change. It also provides ecosystem services not only for the residents, but as well for visitors, tourists and for other parts of Europe. These ecosystem services, and the factors influencing them, are in constant interaction.</p> <p>Interventions under IP 6d should respect and integrate two aspects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one oriented towards dynamic protection and risk management (protection, conservation and connectivity of “ecosystems”); and • one oriented towards sustainable use and risk prevention (integration of ecosystem services and reduction of emissions).

Protection, preservation and the connectivity of ecosystems have been addressed in the previous programme. Several projects with a high number of involved environmental authorities and NGOs paved the way to implementation by strategic policy development and diverse pilot actions. Now one should focus on policy implementation and unlocking public/private investments, which stayed behind the expectations.

The ASP will focus on providing the room for common trans-Alpine tools and methodologies, combination of knowledge bases, but also for common responses in form of strategies, (green) infrastructures, management structures and hazard/risk response mechanisms.

The ASP aims to harmonise management approaches, facilitate knowledge transfer and share responsibilities with the goal of integrating ecosystems functions and needs into policies.

The results to be delivered by the projects supported by the ASP reside initially in drawing a conceptual landscape, which will comprise on the one hand the existence and quality of transnational, national and regional governance instruments and tools addressing ecosystem services; and on the other hand the relevance, awareness and acceptance of ecosystem services in transnational, national and regional decision-making and decision-planning processes (output: transnational cooperation structures and strategic elements).

Building up on that, the ASP should deliver, through exchange within transnational networks, partnerships and cooperation structures (output: transnational cooperation structures) as well as capacity building, the “binding element” for the development of valorisation approaches for ecosystem services, and their implementation in policies and decision making and planning processes (output: implementation elements).

At the practical level, the programme actions should result in a harmonised transnational operating environment in the field of protection, preservation and ecological connectivity of ecosystems through:

- an interoperable information base (databases, platforms, e-monitoring systems surveillance mechanisms etc.) (output: implementation elements).; and
- a harmonised and coordinated management system (risk assessments, management strategies and plans, sustainability and adaptation assessments etc.) (output: strategic and implementation elements).

Last but not least, the programme actions should result in the establishment of the concept of ecosystem services in the public debate through fostering of dialogue among administration,

economic actors and citizens by means of negotiation, mediation, participation and conflict resolution approaches (output: transnational cooperation structures, strategic and implementation elements).

Table 11: Programme specific result indicators (by specific objective)

ID	Indicator	Measurement Unit	Base-line Value	Base-line Year	Target Value (2023)	Source of Data	Frequency of reporting
6d.1	Level of integration of the ecosystem services approach in the policy systems of the Alpine Space	% of maximum possible	47,0%	2014	Increase >3,0%	Survey	2018, 2020, 2023

2.1.3.2.2.2. Actions to be supported under the investment priority (by investment priority)

2.1.3.2.2.2.1. A description of the type and examples of actions to be supported and their expected contribution to the specific objectives, including, where appropriate, identification of the main target groups, specific territories targeted and types of beneficiaries

Investment priority	6d
<p>Indicative Actions to be supported are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up transnational frameworks and platforms for the interoperability of existing databases, promotion of data availability and the integration of management approaches (hazard and risk assessment, planning methodologies, management plans, sustainability and adaptation assessments etc.); • Develop concepts, strategies, models and pilots for sustainable and innovative management of efficient use of resources and reduction of emission, green infrastructure and biodiversity, landscape management and green corridors; • Set up, test and implement negotiation, mediation, participation and conflict resolution models in the context of land use, management of Alpine resources and assets with a view to diverging interests of stakeholders and territories; • Design implementation strategies, set up models and test pilot activities and transnational, regional and intercommunity cooperation of risk management (risk assessment, risk communication, risk managing measures and hazard prevention) as a tool of ecosystem conservation and protection; • Design implementation strategies, set up models and test pilot activities and transnational, regional and intercommunity cooperation regarding water bodies in the context of the Water Framework Directive and the Directive on the assessment and management of flood risks (e.g. regarding water pollution, water retention, basin management etc.) through integration of the ecosystem services approach; 	

- Set up networks and partnerships for the provision of capacity development mechanisms in order to develop alternative valorisation approaches for Alpine ecosystem services, increase awareness and integrate them in the implementation of policies.

Note: These indicative actions have provided the base for the ex-ante quantification of the indicator targets based on the experiences of the former programme. More information can be found in the ex-ante report.

Target groups

General public;

Those groups listed under the caption “Indicative types of beneficiaries”;

Enterprises, including SME.

Indicative types of beneficiaries

Local public authorities;

Regional public authorities;

National public authorities;

Agencies;

Higher education institutions;

Education/training centres;

Business support organisations;

Interest groups including NGOs.

2.1.3.2.2.2. Guiding principles for the selection of operations

Investment priority	6d
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The selection of projects will be carried out following a standardised assessment procedure (Article 12 of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013). The objectives to be achieved are:

- Assess the relevance of a project proposal;
- Assess the feasibility of a project proposal;
- Define a transparent and objective basis for decision making on a proposal rejection or approval;
- Provide a base for communication and improvement among programme bodies and applicants.

The assessment will be conducted using the following sets of criteria:

Strategic Assessment Criterion

This criterion examines:

- the relevance, coherence and contribution of each project proposal to the ASP programme objectives and especially the relevant specific objective addressed;
- the contribution to the envisaged results per investment priority;
- the demonstration of the need for the topic and approach of the proposal in its thematic and territorial context;
- the added value of transnational cooperation and
- the proposed partnership relevance to the above.

Operational Assessment Criterion

This criterion examines:

- the adequacy of the management provisions in terms of structures, procedures and competences;
- the quality and effectiveness of communication provisions;
- the quality of the work plan in terms of design in relation to clarity and coherence of the operational objectives, activities and means, feasibility, efficiency of the project and its results, potential for uptake and embedment into operative procedures of the partners involved;
- the adequacy of the budget provisions to guarantee the project implementation and generate value for money.

Coherence to Horizontal Principles Criterion

This criterion examines the way projects have integrated ASP horizontal principles within the project proposal intervention logic. It should not be considered as a “check list” but should animate projects to proactively develop their project ideas within the logic of the programme.

These three criteria have a primacy order among them. The Strategic Assessment Criterion examines the relevance of the project proposal; hence it retains absolute primacy over the other two criteria. The Operational Assessment Criterion ensures the delivery of relevant results; hence it is enjoying a larger weight than the Coherence to Horizontal Principles Criterion, which is basically oriented towards integration of a “relevant and feasible” proposal into the ASP logic.

The detailed assessment criteria will be laid down and made available to project applicants in the PIH.

2.1.3.2.2.3. Output indicators (by investment priority)

Table 12: Common and programme specific output indicators

ID	Indicator (<i>name of indicator</i>)	Measurement unit	Target value (2023)	Source of data	Frequency of reporting
OI_6d.1_1	Number of supported transnational cooperation structures aiming to enhance the protection, the conservation and the ecological connectivity of Alpine Space ecosystems	Number	9	Monitoring/ Project progress reports	Annually
OI_6d.1_2	Number of developed strategic elements aiming to enhance the protection, the conservation and the ecological connectivity of Alpine Space ecosystems	Number	8	Monitoring/ Project progress reports	Annually
OI_6d.1_3	Number of developed implementation elements enhancing the protection, the conservation and the ecological connectivity of Alpine Space ecosystems	Number	16	Monitoring/ Project progress reports	Annually

2.1.3.3. Performance framework

Table 13: Performance framework of the priority axis

Priority axis	Indicator Type (key implementation step, financial, output or, where appropriate, result indicator)	ID	Indicator or key implementation step	Measurement unit, where appropriate	Milestone for 2018	Final target (2023)	Source of data	Explanation of the relevance of the indicator, where appropriate
3	Financial	F3	Eligible expenditure verified by the certifying authority	EUR	2.361.868	31.491.576	Monitoring	
3	Output	OI_6c.1_3	Number of developed implementation elements sustainably valorising cultural and natural heritage of the Alpine Space.	Number	4	14	Monitoring/ Project progress reports	With the chosen indicator, milestone and target more than 50% of the financial indicator can be reached.
3	Output	OI_6d.1_3	Number of developed implementation elements enhancing the protection, the conservation and the ecological connectivity of Alpine Space ecosystems	Number	4	16	Monitoring/ Project progress reports	With the chosen indicator, milestone and target more than 50% of the financial indicator can be reached.

2.1.4. Priority axis (repeated for each priority axis)

ID of the priority axis	4
Title of the priority axis	Well-Governed Alpine Space
The entire priority axis will be implemented solely through financial instruments	
The entire priority axis will be implemented solely through financial instruments set up at Union level	
The entire priority axis will be implemented through community- led local development	

2.1.4.1. Fund and calculation basis for Union support (repeated for each fund under the priority axis)

Fund	ERDF
Calculation basis (total eligible expenditure or eligible public expenditure)	total

2.1.4.2. Investment priority (repeated for each investment priority under the priority axis)

Investment priority	11a
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2.1.4.3. Specific objectives corresponding to the investment priority and expected results (repeated for each specific objective under the investment priority)

ID	
Specific objective	11.1 Increase the application of multilevel and transnational governance in the Alpine Space
The results that the Member States seek to achieve with Union support	<p>The area is characterised by a long tradition of international and inter-regional cooperation on governmental and non-governmental level. The diversity of functions and objectives of them reflects the different background and institutional settings. With the upcoming challenges due to the global driving forces like climate change, economic globalisation, migration and societal transformation, the need for alignment of strategies and objectives has increased. The EUSALP stresses the need for increased multilevel and transnational governance. Here the ASP gives support and develops new transnational governance models and tools including the support to the development and implementation of the EUSALP.</p> <p>Administration systems of the area are characterised as advanced and effective but developments pose new challenges. The public administration has to address inherent elements such as indigenous demographic dynamics, regional decline and oversized</p>

infrastructures, shrinking public budgets etc.

Public administration has to “re-invent” themselves, its services and processes to provide for the “enabling framework” for competitiveness, sustainable and inclusive growth and territorial cohesion. One of the main lessons learnt from the previous programme period is, that coherent implementation of innovative solutions in the above fields need governance innovations on all levels. Although the Alpine Space has an elaborated governance system at hand the results of the previous ASP underline a lack of fitness to cope with the upcoming challenges.

Framework conditions need to be consolidated in order to succeed in exchange and cooperation. An “enabling framework” implies that relevant issues are jointly identified and conflicts of interest between different territorial types are addressed on the basis of dialogue and consensual solutions within transnational frameworks.

The ASP aims to increase multilevel and transnational governance by triggering and guiding the debate for governance innovation and by supporting public administrations in re-defining their tasks, approaches, services and processes, developing, testing and adopting innovative solutions through transnational cooperation.

The results to be delivered by the projects cover the following elements:

(1) *Gathering, consolidating, analysing* and monitoring data on the potentials, obstacles and limits of multilevel and transnational governance, especially in the context of the EUSALP. (output: strategic elements) (2) Increasing the capacity of stakeholders responsible for regional and national strategies and action plans to better integrate the transnational dimension in their work through developing transnational frameworks, platforms and networks especially in the context of the EUSALP. (output: transnational cooperation structures).

(3) The programme actions should result in concrete instruments for enabling and improving multilevel and transnational governance application. This could be through design, testing, up-scaling, comparison and evaluation of tools, processes, actors, organisations and interfaces in the field of public administration (output: implementation elements).

(4) Last but not least the programme shall deliver conclusions on the relevance, effectiveness and sustainability of the above through monitoring and evaluation initiatives and should organise exchange and information especially in the context of the EUSALP. (output: transnational cooperation structures and strategic elements).

Table 14: Programme specific result indicators (by specific objective)

ID	Indicator	Measurement Unit	Base-line Value	Base-line Year	Target Value (2023)	Source of Data	Frequency of reporting
11.1	Level of application of multilevel and transnational governance in the Alpine Space.	% of maximum possible	63,2 %	2014	Increase between 1,0 – 3,0%	Survey	2018, 2020, 2023

2.1.4.4. Actions to be supported under the investment priority (by investment priority)

2.1.4.4.1. A description of the type and examples of actions to be supported and their expected contribution to the specific objectives, including, where appropriate, identification of the main target groups, specific territories targeted and types of beneficiaries

Investment priority	11a
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Indicative Actions to be supported are:

- Set up transnational frameworks, platforms and networks for the identification of existing resources and obstacles, as well as the valorisation of proofed concepts in the field of governance (mapping of resources, studies, pilots and strategies governance needs, development potentials, human resources etc.);
- Develop, test and implement instruments to stimulate cooperation and organisation processes in the context of EUSALP;
- Develop transnational models for the design, testing, up-scaling, comparison and evaluation of innovations (tools, processes, actors, organisations and interfaces) in the field of public administration;
- Set up a policy foresight for governance challenges in relation to the Alpine Space driving forces;
- Develop innovative models for institutional co-operation and spatial organisation for and between different territorial types;
- Knowledge transfer, exchange and capitalisation activities addressing the major governance aspects of the AS.
- Improving governance through a more active involvement especially of non-institutional actors, like civil society organisations;
- Develop instruments for monitoring, reporting and evaluating multilevel and transnational policy instruments;
- Design implementation strategies, set up models and test pilot actions for successful and reciprocal communication of public administrations among them and with the civil society;
- Design implementation strategies, set up models and test pilot actions for a better participation of all social groups in the regional and local governance systems;

- Develop contents and adapt education and training systems and capacity development mechanisms for the uptake and implementation of multilevel and transnational governance.

Note: These indicative actions have provided the base for the ex-ante quantification of the indicator targets based on the experiences of the former programme. More information can be found in the ex-ante report.

Target groups

General public;

Those groups listed under the caption “Indicative types of beneficiaries”;

Policy makers.

Indicative Types of beneficiaries

Local public authorities;

Regional public authorities;

National public authorities;

Agencies;

Higher education institutions;

Education/training centres;

Business support organisations;

Interest groups including NGOs.

2.1.4.4.2. Guiding principles for the selection of operations

Investment priority

11a

The selection of projects will be carried out following a standardised assessment procedure (Article 12 of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013). The objectives followed are:

- Assess the relevance of a project proposal;
- Assess the feasibility of a project proposal;
- Define a transparent and objective basis for decision making on a proposal rejection or approval;
- Provide a base for communication and improvement among programme bodies and applicants.

The assessment will be conducted using the following sets of criteria:

Strategic Assessment Criterion

This criterion examines the:

- the relevance, coherence and contribution of each project proposal to the ASP programme objectives and especially the relevant specific objective addressed;
- the contribution to the envisaged results per investment priority;
- the demonstration of the need for the topic and approach of the proposal in its thematic and territorial context;
- the added value of transnational cooperation and
- the proposed partnership relevance to the above.

Operational Assessment Criterion

This criterion examines

- the adequacy of the management provisions in terms of structures, processes and competences;
- the quality and effectiveness of communication provisions;
- the quality of the work plan in terms of design in relation to clarity and coherence of the operational objectives, activities and means, feasibility, efficiency of the project and its results, potential for uptake and embedment into operative procedures of the partners involved;
- the adequacy of the budget provisions to guarantee the project implementation and generate value for money.

Coherence to Horizontal Principles Criterion

This criterion examines the way projects have integrated ASP horizontal principles within the project proposal intervention logic. It should not be considered as a “check list” but should animate projects to proactively develop their project ideas within the logic of the programme.

These three criteria have a primacy order among them. The Strategic Assessment Criterion examines the relevance of the project proposal, hence it retains absolute primacy over the other two criteria. The Operational Assessment Criterion ensures the delivery of relevant results, hence it is enjoying a larger weight than the Coherence to Horizontal Principles Criterion, which is basically oriented towards integration of a “relevant and feasible” proposal into the ASP logic.

The detailed assessment criteria will be laid down and made available to project applicants in the PIH.

In addition, projects developed in the framework of the EUSALP will be assessed based on the following criteria:

- Relevance and composition of the proposed partnership (as under the Strategic Assessment Criterion) with emphasis on the multi-level representation and its capacity to achieve visibility and dissemination among target groups and peers;
- Suitability and added value of the activities of the proposal to be implemented as a “project” (as in the assessment of the work plan under the Operational Assessment Criterion) in comparison to “routine tasks” of the involved institutions.

2.1.4.4.3. Output indicators (by investment priority)*Table 15: Common and programme specific output indicators*

ID	Indicator (name of indicator)	Measurement unit	Target value (2023)	Source of data	Frequency of reporting
OI_11.01	Number of supported transnational cooperation structures encompassing multilevel and transnational governance in the Alpine Space.	Number	10	Monitoring/ Project progress reports	Annually
OI_11.02	Number of developed strategic elements aiming at the increase of the application of multilevel and transnational governance in the Alpine Space	Number	3	Monitoring/ Project progress reports	Annually
OI_11.03	Number of developed implementation elements applying multilevel and transnational governance in the Alpine Space	Number	20	Monitoring/ Project progress reports	Annually

2.1.4.5. Performance framework

Table 16: Performance framework of the priority axis

Priority axis	Indicator Type (key implementation step, financial, output or, where appropriate, result indicator)	ID	Indicator or key implementation step	Measurement unit, where appropriate	Milestone for 2018	Final target (2023)	Source of data	Explanation of the relevance of the indicator, where appropriate
4	Financial	F4	Eligible expenditure verified by the certifying authority	EUR	186.617	9.330.837	Monitoring	
4	Output	OI_11.1_3	Number of developed implementation elements applying multilevel and transnational governance in the Alpine Space	Number	4	20	Monitoring/ Project progress reports	With the chosen indicator, milestone and target more than 50% of the financial indicator can be reached.

2.1.4.6. Categories of intervention

Categories of intervention corresponding to the content of the priority axis, based on a nomenclature adopted by the Commission, and indicative breakdown of Union support.

Tables 17-20: Categories of intervention

Table 17: Dimension 1 Intervention field		
Priority axis	Code	Amount (EUR)
1	60 Research and innovation activities in public research centres and centres of competence including networking	37.323.349
2	23 Environmental measures aimed at reducing and / or avoiding greenhouse gas emissions (including treatment and storage of methane gas and composting)	13.996.256
	44 Intelligent transport systems (including the introduction of demand management, tolling systems, IT monitoring, control and information systems)	17.495.320
3	85 Protection and enhancement of biodiversity, nature protection and green infrastructure	17.495.320
	94 Protection, development and promotion of public cultural and heritage assets	13.996.256
4	119 Investment in institutional capacity and in the efficiency of public administrations and public services at the national, regional and local levels with a view to reforms, better regulation and good governance	9.330.838
5	121 Preparation, implementation, monitoring and inspection	6.998.127
	122 Evaluation and studies	
	123 Information and communication	

Table 18: Dimension 2 Form of finance

Priority axis	Code	Amount (EUR)
1	01 non-repayable grant	37.323.349
2	01 non-repayable grant	31.491.576
3	01 non-repayable grant	31.491.576
4	01 non-repayable grant	9.330.838

Table 19: Dimension 3 Territory type

Priority axis	Code	Amount (EUR)
1	00 Not applicable	37.323.349
2	00 Not applicable	31.491.576
3	00 Not applicable	31.491.576
4	00 Not applicable	9.330.838

Table 20: Dimension 6 Territorial delivery mechanisms

Priority axis	Code	Amount (EUR)
1	00 Not applicable	37.323.349
2	00 Not applicable	31.491.576
3	00 Not applicable	31.491.576
4	00 Not applicable	9.330.838

2.2. Description of the priority axis for technical assistance

2.2.1. Priority axis

ID of the priority axis	5
Title of the priority axis	Technical Assistance

2.2.2. Fund and calculation basis for Union support (repeated for each fund under the priority axis)

Fund ERDF

Calculation Basis (total eligible expenditure or eligible public expenditure) total

2.2.3. Specific objectives and expected results

ID	
Specific objective	Increase in efficiency and effectiveness of the management and implementation of the programme
The results that the Member States seek to achieve with Union support	This specific objective is aimed at delivering the programme tasks in the most efficient and effective way. Effective and efficient management and implementation of the programme shall also address the target of reducing the administrative burden for beneficiaries. In other words, the ASP is committed to continuously improving and smoothening its administrative procedures.
ID	
Specific objective	Reinforcement of capacities of project applicants and beneficiaries
The results that the Member States seek to achieve with Union support	<p>The capacity of project applicants to submit project proposals that have high potential to contribute to the programme objectives, as well as the ability of beneficiaries to successfully implement transnational projects in virtual and international project teams, constitute key factors for an effective programme implementation.</p> <p>Thus, in addition to reduction of administrative burden for project applicants and holders as is set out in Section 5 of this document, the programme will continue to offer a number of measures aiming at capacity building, such as trainings on project application, tools for project management, seminars for lead partners of approved projects, consultations and support offered by the managing authority (MA), the joint secretariat (JS) and the Alpine Space contact points (ACPs).</p>
ID	
Specific objective	Actions for a better visibility of the programme and its results
The results that the Member States seek to achieve with Union support	Principally with regard to the upcoming macro-regional strategy, as well as to the aim of better co-ordination with other funds and programmes, the ASP strives for a clear profile and a good visibility of its funding possibilities and results.

2.2.4. Actions to be supported and their expected contribution to the specific objectives (by priority axis)

2.2.4.1. Description of actions to be supported and their expected contribution to the specific objectives

Priority axis	5
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Actions with this objective comprise preparation, management, monitoring, evaluation, information and communication, networking, complaint resolution, as well as audit and control tasks.

Specific Objective 1 is aimed at implementing these tasks in the most efficient and effective way. Effective and efficient management and implementation of the programme shall also address the target of reducing the administrative burden for beneficiaries.

The following actions will be supported:

- Management of the programme by the MA with support of the JS;
- Implementation of the tasks of the certifying authority (CA);
- Establishment of co-operation and co-ordination networks and contacts among programme bodies and Partner States, as well as with bodies and representatives of other relevant EU-co-funded programmes by MA, JS and ACP;
- Support of the work of the programme committee (PC) and providing it with information it requires;
- Setting up appropriate procedures for the selection and implementation of projects, including the provision of documents that will set out for beneficiaries the conditions for support and the requirements for project implementation;
- Establishment of a system to record and store (in computerised form) data on each operation necessary for monitoring, evaluation, financial management, verification and audit, including data on individual participants in projects;
- Drawing up and implementation of an evaluation plan;
- Setting-up a network of national first-level control coordinating bodies with the purpose of exchanging information and best practices on transnational level;
- Organisation and implementation of audit activities with regard to the programme management and control system and the projects;
- Setting up and management of a network of national contact points.

Actions for the reinforcement of the capacities of applicants and beneficiaries

Building on the experience in the programme period 2007-2013, the technical assistance aims at strengthening project support measures and reinforcing the capacities of project applicants and beneficiaries to apply for and to use ERDF funds in line with the programme objectives and expected results.

The following indicative actions will be supported:

- Organisation of workshops and seminars for project applicants to strengthen their capacity to elaborate project proposals in line with the programme specific objectives and results;
- Organisation of trainings and seminars on specific project implementation issues like project management, reporting, control and audits as well as communication;
- Provision of project management tools for the beneficiaries in order to facilitate the project-internal planning and controlling;
- Intensifying the support for beneficiaries in the project generation phase;
- Setting up of information (fact sheets, forms and guidance) for applicants and beneficiaries in order to provide instruction with regard to all phases of the project cycle: project preparation, application, implementation and closure.

Actions for a better visibility of the programme and its results

Building on the experiences made in the programme period 2007-2013 and the results of the Strategy Development Project, the ASP understands its role as the one of a “driver of development and change” and will thus concentrate on three functions, which will be set out in detail in the PIH and communication strategy:

- trigger and fund projects that serve its role and its objectives;
- nourish debates on the future of the Alpine Space area and the cohesion policy evolution;
- act as a catalyst of cooperation and of common solutions in the Alpine Space.

The following indicative actions will be supported under this objective:

- Drawing up and implementation of a communication strategy;
- Setting up of studies, reports and surveys on strategic issues concerning the programme;
- Establishment of cooperation and coordination networks and contacts with representatives of other EU-funded programmes and partner states.

2.2.4.2. Output indicators expected to contribute to results (by priority axis)*Table 21: Output indicators (by priority axis)*

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Target value (2023) (optional)	Source of data
OI 5.1_1	Number of calls for proposals successfully launched and closed	number	4	Monitoring
OI 5.1_2	Number of projects approved	number	40	Monitoring
OI 5.1_3	Number of transnational events and workshops	number	2	Monitoring
OI 5.2_1	Number of transnational seminars and trainings for applicants and beneficiaries	Number	4	Monitoring
OI 5.3_1	Studies, reports and surveys on strategic relevance for the programme	Number	1	Monitoring

2.2.5. Categories of intervention

Corresponding categories of intervention based on a nomenclature adopted by the Commission, and an indicative breakdown of Union support

Tables 22-24: Categories of intervention

Table 22: Dimension 1 Intervention field		
Priority axis	Code	Amount (EUR)
5	121	6.018.390
5	122	349.905
5	123	629.832

Table 23: Dimension 2 Form of finance		
Priority axis	Code	Amount (EUR)
5	02 non repayable grant	6.998.127

Table 24: Territory type		
Priority axis	Code	Amount (EUR)
5	00 Not applicable	6.998.127

Explanation of codes

121	Preparation, implementation, monitoring and inspection
122	Evaluation and studies
123	Information and communication

SECTION 3

FINANCING PLAN

3.1 Financial appropriation from the ERDF (in EUR)

Table 25 (Financial table – annual support from the ERDF)

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total
ERDF	5.785.209	8.447.189	12.063.118	21.918.617	22.356.990	22.804.130	23.260.213	116.635.466
IPA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ENI	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	5.785.209	8.447.189	12.063.118	21.918.617	22.356.990	22.804.130	23.260.213	116.635.466

3.2. Total financial appropriation from the ERDF and contributions (in EUR)

Table 26: Financing plan

Priority axis	Fund	Basis for the calculation of Union support (Total eligible costs or public cost)	Union support (a)	Contributions (b) = (c) + (d)	Indicative breakdown of the contributions		Total programme budget (e) = (a)+(b)	Co-financing rate (f) = (a)/(e) (2)	For Information	
					Public contribution (c)	Private contribution (d) (1)			Contributions from third countries	Contributions from EIB
Priority Axis 1: Innovative Alpine Space	ERDF	43.909.823	37.323.349	6.586.474	5.598.502	987.972	43.909.823	0,850	2.200.000	
Priority Axis 2: Low Carbon Alpine Space	ERDF	37.048.913	31.491.576	5.557.337	4.723.736	833.601	37.048.913	0,850	1.400.000	
Priority Axis 3: Liveable Alpine Space	ERDF	37.048.913	31.491.576	5.557.337	4.723.736	833.601	37.048.913	0,850	1.400.000	
Priority Axis 4: Well-governed Alpine Space	ERDF	10.977.456	9.330.838	1.646.619	1.646.619	0	10.977.455	0,850	200.000	
Priority Axis 5 Technical Assistance	ERDF	10.766.351	6.998.127	3.768.223	3.768.223	0	10.766.350	0,650	295.000	
Total	ERDF	139.751.456	116.635.466	23.115.990	20.460.816	2.655.174	139.751.456	0,835	5.495.000	

(1) To be completed only when priority axes are expressed in total costs.

(2) This rate may be rounded to the nearest whole number in the table. The precise rate used to reimburse payments is the ratio (f).

3.3 Breakdown by priority axis and thematic objective

Table 27: Breakdown of the financial plan

Priority axis	Thematic objective	Union support	Contributions	Total programme budget
Priority Axis 1: Innovative Alpine Space	(1) strengthening research, technological development and innovation	37.323.349	6.586.474	43.909.823
Priority Axis 2: Low Carbon Alpine Space	(4) supporting the shift towards a low-carbon economy in all sectors	31.491.576	5.557.337	37.048.913
Priority Axis 3: Liveable Alpine Space	(6) preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency	31.491.576	5.557.337	37.048.913
Priority Axis 4: Well-governed Alpine Space	(11) enhancing institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders and efficient public administration	9.330.837	1.646.619	10.977.456
Priority Axis 5: Technical Assistance		6.998.128	3.768.223	10.766.351
Total		116.635.466	23.115.990	139.751.456

Table 28: Indicative amount of support to be used for climate change objectives

Priority axis	The indicative amount of support to be used for climate change objectives (EUR)	Proportion of the total allocation to the programme (%)
1.		
Total		

This table is generated automatically by SFC based on categorisation tables included under each of the Priority Axes.

SECTION 4

INTEGRATED APPROACH TO TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT

Description of the integrated approach to territorial development, taking into account the content and objectives of the , including in relation to regions and areas referred to in Article 174(3) TFEU, having regard to the Partnership Agreements of the participating Member States, and showing how it contributes to the accomplishment of the programme objectives and expected results

The Strategy Development Project (Gloersen et al., “Strategy development for the Alpine Space”, 2013) has identified a number of Alpine Space territorial types (i.e. Alpine metropolises, larger cities, stable of growing rural areas, declining and shrinking rural areas and tourism areas) and outlined their spatial interactions and disparities (e.g. strong growth poles and weak periphery or relations of agglomerations, commuting patterns and locations of energy sources); it also delineated areas and their territorial function (areas of valuable natural and cultural heritage under pressure e.g. due to outmigration, decline, fragmentation of habitats, biodiversity loss, and natural and manmade hazards).

The extensive analysis of the territorial features of the participating regions and the global challenges described in Section 1 reflected on the potential and needs of the programme area, and – at the same time – identified the means to achieve improved coordination across different territorial levels and instruments in order to deliver an integrated approach with regional and local actors.

Those elements, which were suitable for transnational cooperation, provided the backbone for the formulation of the ASP strategy. The strategy builds on the Europe 2020 priorities of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth through an integrated approach combining thematic and territorial dimensions in the design of the four programme priority axes and fully reflects the principles of the Territorial Agenda 2020. At the national and regional level the strategy has been assessed in the course of the ex-ante evaluation and was found to be highly consistent and complementary.

Hence, priority axes 1, 2 and 3 address TOs in their territorial context (e.g. disparities between metropolises and peripheral areas in priority axis 1, spatial interactions and spatial confinements in low energy economy, mobility and transport in priority axis 2, and areas of natural and cultural value under pressure in priority axis 3) in an integrated way (i.e. in terms

of cross-sector spatial planning, shared ownership and solidarity). Priority axis 4 delivers the bonding element of the topics addressed within the other priority axes, by bringing them into the context of the multi-level and transnational governance, of the Alpine Space area as a whole.

The ASP cannot be more specific to concrete territorial needs and areas due to its inherent limitations addressed in Section 1. Instead, the ASP requires that projects demonstrate a persuading approach conducive to integrated territorial development, taking in account the ASP horizontal principles (see Section 8). These are meant to address concrete territorial challenges, to consider relevant territorial development policies as well as territorial/regional conditions for the implementation of envisaged actions, and finally to regard their implications and impacts on other sectors in the given territories. As far as possible, relevant actors from other sectors and various administrative levels should be involved directly or in a consultative way.

4.1. Contribution of planned interventions towards macro-regional and sea basin strategies, subject to the needs of the programme area as identified by the relevant Member States and taking into account, where applicable, strategically important projects identified in those strategies (where appropriate)

(Where Member States and regions participate in macro-regional and sea basin strategies)

During the programming phase of the ASP, the states and regions of the Alpine region recommended the European Council to request the European Commission to launch a strategy and action plan preparation process. On 20 December 2013, the European Council invited the European Commission to develop an “EU Strategy for the Alpine Region” (EUSALP). Its adoption and an action plan are expected for mid-2015.

The “Political resolution towards a European Union Strategy for the Alpine region” from October 2013, signed by the representatives of states and regions, underlined the importance of the strategy as in instrument of harmonious, solidary and sustainable development for the Alpine region.

In the context of the ASP, the EUSALP demonstrates its special value in its focus to “...develop synergies between the various existing programmes and focus on a limited and

clearly defined set of priorities". The EUSALP will be based on three key thematic pillars, which have been broadly endorsed by the stakeholders:

- Ensuring sustainable growth and promoting full employment, competitiveness and innovation by consolidating and diversifying specific economic activities with a view to reinforcing mutual solidarity between mountain and urban areas;
- Promoting environmentally friendly mobility, reinforced academic cooperation, development of services, transports and communication infrastructures policy;
- Promoting sustainable management of energy and natural and cultural resources and protecting the environment and preserving biodiversity and natural areas.

Already in the course of the Strategy Development Project, the representatives of the ASP discussed the options and implications of a EUSALP for and on the future ASP with the expert team and the stakeholders, and a common understanding of the role of the ASP and its relation to the EUSALP has been established. The high consistency of the ASP TOs, the national and regional policies and the key thematic pillars of the future EUSALP guarantee a smooth coordination.

The macro-regional strategy will become more concrete by the time the ASP will be fully operational. For that reason, the ASP has foreseen under priority axis 4 for the accommodation of activities relevant to the macro-regional strategy in the framework of multi-level and transnational cooperation addressed by the programme. The ASP is interested primarily in the enhancing and application of multilevel and transnational governance building on past experiences and new opportunities. The macro-regional strategy is one of these opportunities. However, the focus of the ASP has to be seen in the combination of topics that were expressed through the selection of the four TOs, and within the indicative actions depicted in the four priority axes.

The ASP also contributes to topics related to the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (PA02, PA03, PA04, PA05, PA06, PA07, PA08, PA10) and to the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region ("transnational terrestrial habitats and biodiversity", "diversified tourism offer" and "sustainable tourism management").

It is noteworthy that the ASP demonstrates significant thematic congruence with the Central Europe programme. This allows for coordination of projects working within the same thematic field, supporting the cooperation between Alpine Space and Central Europe stakeholders. Coordination with the Alpine Convention will be fostered in thematic fields addressed by both working programmes resp. protocols.

SECTION 5

IMPLEMENTING PROVISIONS FOR THE COOPERATION PROGRAMME

5.1. Relevant authorities and bodies

Table 29: Programme authorities

Authority/body	Name of the authority/body and department or unit	Head of authority/body (position or post)
Managing authority (MA)	Land of Salzburg (Austria), represented by the Government Office of the Land Salzburg, department 1 for Economy, Research and Tourism, unit 1.1	Member of unit 1.1.
Certifying authority (CA)	Land of Salzburg (Austria), represented by the Government Office of the Land Salzburg, department 1 for Economy, Research and Tourism, unit 1.2	Head of unit 1.2.
Audit authority (AA)	Federal Chancellery of Austria, department IV/3 Financial Control of the ERDF	Head of department IV/3

The body to which payments will be made by the Commission is:

CA

MA

Table 30: Body or bodies carrying out control and audit tasks

Authority/body	Name of the authority/body and department or unit	Head of authority/body (position or post)
Body or bodies designated to carry out control tasks	First Level Control Bodies (FLCB)	--
Body or bodies designated to be responsible for carrying out audit tasks	Group of auditors	AA chairs Group of auditors

5.2. Procedure for setting up the Joint Secretariat (JS)

After consultation of the Member States and third countries participating in the programme, the MA will set up a JS (Article 23(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013). The JS will assist the MA and the PC in carrying out their respective functions and undertake the day-to-day implementation of the programme.

5.3. Summary description of the management and control arrangements

This section presents the structures and procedures concerning the project life cycle as well as the main tasks and responsibilities of the programme bodies connected to it. Details will be provided in the PIH.

Programme bodies and their main functions

Managing and certifying authorities

The Partner States have appointed the Land of Salzburg (Austria), represented by the Government Office of the Land Salzburg, department 1, for Economy, Research and Tourism, unit 1.1 as MA and unit 1.2. as CA of the programme.

MA and CA will fulfil the functions respectively the tasks laid down in Article 125 and Article 126 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 and in Article 23 and Article 24 of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013.

Responsibilities of the Partner States

According to Articles 122 and 123 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, Member/Partner States are responsible for the management and control of the programme. All Partner States agree to apply the partnership principle as laid down in Article 5 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013.

Audit authority

The functions of the AA as laid out in article 127 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 will be performed by the Federal Chancellery of Austria, department IV/3 Financial Control of the ERDF.

The AA will be assisted by a group of auditors comprising a representative of each Member State participating in the programme.

First Level Control Coordinating Body (FLCCB)

The Member States will establish financial management and control systems at national level, as set out in Article 74 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 and Article 23(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013. To ensure a reliable control system and to support the work of first level control body (FLCB), a FLCCB will be set-up.

Joint Secretariat (JS)

A JS will be set up by the MA (see 5.2) after consultation of the Partner States.

Programme committee (PC)

In accordance with Article 47 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, the Partner States, in agreement with the MA, will set up a monitoring committee (MC) within three months from the date of the notification of the Commission's decision approving the CP. This committee will be called PC.

The PC will draw up and adopt its own Rules of procedure within the institutional, legal and financial framework of the Partner States concerned.

The members of the PC will represent the participating Partner States on policy and administrative level.

National coordinators (NCs)

Each Partner State shall be represented by one national coordinator who is member of the national delegation of the PC. The function of the NCs is to safeguard a continuous coordination among Partner States and to prepare decisions of the PC.

Alpine Space contact points (ACPs)

Each Partner State will set up a Contact Point securing a link between the transnational and national/regional level in the programme implementation and serving as a contact point for project applicants and partners in the respective country. In an advisory capacity contact point representatives can participate in the PC.

Description of procedures***Project generation***

The programme bodies will provide information and support to organisations interested in becoming a project partner. For this purpose thematic workshops and/or seminars will be organised at the transnational level. At the national level respective information measures will be carried out, if needed.

Project application

Projects will normally be selected in a two-step application procedure following calls for project proposals. Calls shall be launched regularly. Terms of reference (ToR) will be published for each call in which programme rules and expectations are set out.

The application process will be carried out completely in an online system. Only applications being pre-selected by the PC in step 1 of the application procedure (“expression of interest – EoI”) will be invited to submit a complete application form (AF) (step 2).

In certain cases, e.g. for targeted calls for proposals with specific ToR, the programme may launch a one-step application procedure.

Assessment and selection

The Partner States ensure a clear, transparent and traceable evaluation by the JS and selection of projects by the PC. The criteria and details on the evaluation process (set out in the PIH) will be made available in the application documents.

Geographical eligibility

In accordance with Article 20(1) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013 operations shall be located in the part of the programme area comprising Union territory. However, the MA may accept that all or part of an operation is implemented outside the Union part of the programme area, provided the conditions as set out in Article 20(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 are satisfied.

Eligibility criteria

A set of eligibility criteria will be defined to ensure that the projects meet the programme requirements. They will be used for a formal check of the submitted project applications.

Assessment criteria

Assessment criteria will be used to assess the quality of those project applications that have passed the eligibility check. They are designed to rate the compliance of applications with regard to strategic and operational aspects as laid down in Section 8 under the heading “Guiding principles for the selection of projects”. The criteria used by the ASP have been harmonised with other ETC programmes as part of the Harmonized Implementation Tools (HIT) initiative.

Quality of projects

The strong result-oriented approach to be applied by all programmes supported by the European Structural and Investment Funds for the 2014-2020 period calls for projects able to deliver concrete and visible outputs and results, in response to well identified challenges affecting the programme area and addressing development needs in an integrated manner. Projects focussing on purely academic cooperation or basic research or aiming at mere networking and exchanging of experience and/or not demonstrating the translation of outputs arising from “soft” actions (surveys, studies, networks, etc.) into concrete and sustainable results will not be supported by the programme.

In addition to the thematic horizontal elements (see Section 8), all projects receiving funds have typically to meet the following quality requirements:

- Transnational relevance;
- Partnership relevance;
- Concrete and measurable results;
- Durable outputs and results;
- Coherent approach;
- Sound project communication strategy and tools;
- Effective management;
- Sound budget.

Contracting

Following the decision of the PC to approve project proposals recommended for funding, the MA concludes a subsidy contract with the each project lead beneficiary (called lead partner by the programme), using a standard template approved by the PC. The template will be developed in compliance with the applicable laws of the Republic of Austria and the principles of the institution hosting the MA.

In order to ensure a solid legal basis for a smooth project implementation and the compliance of the project with legal provisions on EU and national level, the programme will provide the projects with a partnership agreement (PA) template. The submitted and signed PA, which the lead partner has made with its project partners, is the prerequisite for the MA to prepare the subsidy contract.

Project implementation and reporting

In order to provide evidence for the progress in project implementation compared with the plans laid out in the AF, the lead partner will submit progress reports to the JS twice a year –

alternating short status reports including payment claims and more detailed progress reports. After the end of the project, a final report will be provided. The programme's e-monitoring system provides the data on projects to be communicated to the European Commission as required by Article 122 and Article 72 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013.

Public procurement

The programme will take adequate information measures to enable project partners to respect public procurement rules.

Payment of funds

In accordance with Article 13 of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013, for each project, project partners shall appoint a lead partner. The lead partner shall assume overall responsibility for the application and implementation of the entire project, including the handling of ERDF funds.

All projects have to be pre-financed by the project partners. Expenditures of all partners have to be validated by authorised national FLCs.

The lead partner collects the certificates of all project partners issued by their respective FLC, and includes them in the status respectively progress reports to the JS. In these documents, the lead partner reports on progress achieved by the project partnership and on related eligible and validated expenditures.

Based on checks of the reports undertaken by the JS, the MA shall make payments to the lead partner who is responsible for transferring the ERDF contribution to the partners participating in the project.

FLC system

Reliable financial control systems will be established by the Member States participating in the programme. Each Member State will designate the FLCB responsible for verifying the legality and regularity of the expenditure declared by each beneficiary participating in the operation located on its territory. The identification of the FLCB in each member state shall be made on the basis of the chosen control system (centralised or decentralised).

The Member States will set up FLCCB which are responsible for the authorisation and coordination of the FLCB. The FLCCB will perform quality checks on the work of the FLCB, which shall prove the functionality of the national FLC system.

Resolution of complaints

The procedures set in place for the resolution of complaints are differentiated in relation to the matter concerned: complaints related to decisions of TF respectively PC on project assessment and selection, complaints related to decisions of MA/JS, complaints related to financial controls. Project lead applicants respectively beneficiaries will have the possibility to submit complaints related to the above-mentioned matters to the MA/JS. Detailed information on the procedures for submission and examination of complaints will be laid down in the description of the monitoring and control system and the PIH.

Annual and Final Implementation Reports

In accordance with Article 50 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, the MA will submit an annual report to the Commission for the first time in 2016 and by 31 May each year. A final implementation report will be submitted to the Commission by 30 September 2023 following the same procedures as the annual reports.

Programme evaluation

The programme has been subject to an Ex-ante evaluation of independent evaluators. The recommendations of this evaluation have been taken into account during the drafting of this programme.

In accordance with Article 54 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, the MA will draw up an evaluation plan which will be approved by the PC in line with provisions as laid down in Article 114 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013.

In compliance with Article 57 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, the ex-post evaluation lies in the responsibility of the Commission together with the Member States.

Computerised exchange of data

As stipulated in Articles 72 and 122 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, data exchange with the Commission will be carried out electronically.

On the side of the programme, the e-monitoring system (e-MS) shall provide data and information needed to fulfil the management, monitoring and evaluation requirements.

In accordance with Article 122 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, the programme will ensure that no later than 31 December 2015, all exchanges of information between beneficiaries and the MA/CA and AA can be carried out by means of an electronic data exchange system.

The computer system used shall meet accepted security and reliability standards. Accepted procedures that ensure reliability of the accounting, monitoring and financial reporting information in computerised form will be implemented.

Contribution of the Member States to the financing of technical assistance

On programme level, the technical assistance (TA) is jointly financed by the participating Member States. In accordance with Article 17 of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013, TA is financed by a maximum of 6% of the total ERDF amount allocated to the programme and co-financed by the Member States participating in the programme. Details on the TA budget are laid out in Section 3.

Each Member State shall transfer its contribution share for Technical Assistance to the account of the MA.

Contribution of the TA budget is provided as advance payment on a yearly basis in proportion to the individual share of total ERDF co-financing of the Member State.

Information and communications

In line with Article 116 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, a communication strategy will be drafted in the first six months of the programme implementation to ensure transparency towards and information of relevant partners and stakeholders.

It will take into account detailed rules concerning information and communication measures as laid down in Article 116 and Annex XII of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013. The strategy will be valid for the whole programming period, complemented by annual work plans. All programme and project communication activities will be branded consistently to a harmonised branding introduced on a voluntary basis by ETC programmes for the 2014-2020 period.

5.4. Apportionment of liabilities among the participating Member States in case of financial corrections imposed by the managing authority or the Commission

Without prejudice to the Member States' responsibility for detecting and correcting irregularities and for recovering amounts unduly paid according to Article 122(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, the MA shall ensure that any amount paid as a result of an irregularity is recovered from the lead partner. In accordance with Article 27 of Regulation

(EU) No 1299/2013, the project partners shall repay the lead partner any amounts unduly paid.

If the lead partner does not succeed in securing repayment from a project partner or if the MA does not succeed in securing repayment from the lead partner, the Member State on whose territory the project partner concerned is located shall reimburse the MA the amount unduly paid to that project partner according to Article 27(3) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013. The MA is responsible for reimbursing the amounts recovered to the general budget of the Union, in accordance with the apportionment of liabilities among the participating member states as laid down below. The MA will reimburse the funds to the Union once the amounts are recovered from the lead partner/project partner/member state.

The apportionment of liabilities among the participating Member States shall be as follows:

Each Member State bears liability for possible financial consequences of irregularities caused by a beneficiary located on its territory, in case of any irregularity which cannot be attributed to a certain member state a joint liability between the Member States shall apply proportionate to the ERDF-funds allocated to beneficiaries on their territory.

5.5. Use of the Euro

In accordance with Article 28 of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013 expenditure incurred in a currency other than the Euro shall be converted into euro by the beneficiaries using the monthly accounting exchange rate of the Commission in the month during which that expenditure was incurred.

5.6. Involvement of partners

Role of the partners in the preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the cooperation programme

Process of the preparation of the cooperation programme

The Strategic Development Process

From mid-2011 to mid-2013 the ASP ran a process for medium to long-term strategic orientation and priorities for the Alpine Space. Two years of intense exchange among experts and extensive stakeholder consultation produced significant results. An expert report

provided a solid base for channelling discussions about the future of the Alpine Space, including:

- recommendations for policies to pursue selected strategic objectives in the Alpine Space;
- proposals for overcoming barriers to achieving those objectives;
- specific starting points for working on a Macro-Regional Strategy.

The Strategy Development Project has paved the way for identifying key priorities and strategic orientations for the next programme and substantiated the debate on Alpine governance and a possible macro-regional strategy for the Alpine Space. For each field of future Alpine-wide cooperation, important actors were identified and the role that a future ASP could assume – potentially interacting with a macro-regional strategy for the Alpine Space – were described.

In this inclusive process, key actors from all seven countries participating in the ASP were consulted and provided their feedback on the expert findings in a series of stakeholder workshops (representatives from local, regional and national administrative level, chambers, enterprises, research and development institutions, civil society/NGO, education/training sector, etc). Also the young had a voice: under academic guidance, students contributed their views to the process. More than 700 respondents took part in an accompanying online survey. The Strategy Development Project attracted widespread attention to an issue that has now found its way onto the EU agenda:

While the Partner States of the ASP had started preparing for the successor programme 2014-2020, regional authorities, NGO and European institutions, actors in and around the Alps have started to prepare a macro-regional strategy for the Alpine Space.

Drafting of the programme

The programming process to set up the next ASP was coordinated and steered by the TF 2014+. It had the mandate to develop the programme documents for submission to the European Commission (EC). Composed of representatives of national and regional authorities of the seven participating Partner States, the MA, the JTS and observers, the “TF 2014+” built on the profound analysis on the needs, recommendations and potentials of (territorial) cooperation in the Alpine Space performed in the SDP to feed the programming process with strategic input.

The drafting of the programme, its objectives and strategies was supported by external experts. Experts were also contracted to for the ex-ante evaluation as well as the Strategic

Environmental Assessment (SEA report). Together with representatives from the MA and JS, the external experts formed a drafting team, developing proposals for the programme documents as an input for the discussions of the TF 2014+.

The “TF 2014+” and the drafting team met about a dozen times representatives of the Alpine Convention, the initiative of the Alpine regions for a macro-regional strategy and of the European Commission participated in some of the meetings.

In November 2013, a transnational public consultation on the draft CP as well as on the draft of the SEA report was carried out via the programme website. 226 participants from all programme countries and from a wide range of organisations and sectors provided their feedback on the documents. The results of the consultation, including the concerns, comments and recommendations of the participating stakeholders were carefully analysed and considered in the present CP.

In addition, all Partner States performed consultations on national and regional level, respecting the partnership principle as set out in Article 5 of the CPR.

Role of the partners in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the cooperation programme

The programme partners commit themselves to the partnership principle as laid down in Article 5 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 and will therefore involve key actors not only in the preparation phase, but also in programme implementation, monitoring and evaluation (especially by involving relevant actors in national committees or by nominating them as members of the PC, TFs or other working groups that will be set up in the course of programme implementation).

In the PC, the administrative level of all Partner States will be represented. With regard to the political level the Partner States put great importance to an appropriate awareness raising and involvement of political representatives in the programme implementation. This will be achieved through various activities, such as organisation of events (details will be set out in the communication plan). The EC and relevant Alpine organisations (e.g. the Alpine Convention) will be invited to take part in the PC in an observer role.

SECTION 6

COORDINATION

The mechanisms that ensure effective coordination between the ERDF, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and other Union and national funding instruments, including the coordination and possible combination with the Connecting Europe Facility, the ENI, the European Development Fund (EDF) and the IPA and with the EIB, taking into account the provisions laid down in the Common Strategic Framework (Annex I to Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013). Where Member States and third countries participate in cooperation programmes that include the use of ERDF appropriations for outermost regions and resources from the EDF, coordination mechanisms at the appropriate level to facilitate effective coordination in the use of these resources

Coordination among ESI-Funds

The Partner States aim at using synergies and avoiding overlapping between the different ESI-funded programmes. Thus, coordination and complementarity with such programmes is essential for the envisaged most efficient and effective use of ERDF funds allocated to the ASP.

The following activities have and will be undertaken by the programme to ensure coordination with other ESI-funded programmes:

- In the phase of drafting the present document various consultations have been made on national and transnational level to ensure that the programme has a clear differentiation to other ESI-funded programmes.
- When submitting project proposals the applicants will have to take responsibility that the proposed project is not financed by other ESI-funded programmes and will have to describe if and how the project is linked with other community, national and regional programmes and policies
- During the process of project evaluation additionality, synergies and possible overlapping of the submitted project proposals with other projects and programmes will be checked.
- The programme bodies will communicate and spread the results and outputs of projects funded by the ASP as will be set out in the communication strategy.

- The programme bodies (MA, JS and ACP) will have frequent contacts with representatives of other ETC programmes in the cooperation area and with the INTERACT programme to ensure an active exchange of information and experience about diverse projects and initiatives.
- The macro-regional strategy which will be set up for the Alpine region will also help to better coordinate the programme with other ESI-funded programmes.

The Partner States will take respective measures to coordinate activities under the ASP with other ESI-funded programmes covering their territory.

Coordination with other EU funding instruments

Furthermore, coordination with other union instruments relevant for policy areas concerned by the ERDF is important. The ASP tackles issues that are complementary to diverse EU funding instruments; of particular relevance for the programme area are the following:

- HORIZON 2020;
- Programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and SMEs (COSME) 2014-2020;
- LIFE;
- Connecting Europe Facility;
- High-growth and innovation SME facility (GIF);
- Risk Sharing Finance Facility (RSFF);
- PROGRESS.

Coordination with these other EU funding instruments will be ensured on project and on programme level. When submitting a project proposal, applicants will have to describe the coherence and complementarity of their project with other Union instruments of relevance for the topics addressed by their proposals.

At programme level coordination and complementarity shall be achieved by clearly communicating, especially in the terms of reference, and by taking into account in the phase of project evaluation that the Programme will not supplement the above mentioned programmes but support projects that provide for a transnational dimension of these issues. This means that the ASP could fund the preparation of projects that will be carried out in the framework of other programmes or vice versa that results achieved by projects funded by other programmes could be put in practise in a transnational dimension in the ASP.

Coordination with national and regional funding instruments

Transnational projects have the potential to improve national, regional and local policies and related funding instruments. With regard to the principle of proportionality and within the given limits the ASP will seek to coordinate with national and regional funding instruments. This shall be done in the following ways:

- During the project evaluation the coherence and complementarity with national and regional policies will be assessed by applying respective assessment criteria;
- The Partner States will take respective measures to coordinate activities under the ASP with national and regional funding instruments in place in their territory.

Coordination with EIB

Projects funded by the ASP can prepare the ground for large investments which could be funded by financial instruments administered by the EIB. Coordination with EIB will be sought by the ASP through information and support to beneficiaries on funding possibilities offered by the EIB which could be used for follow-up measures on projects funded by the programme.

SECTION 7

REDUCTION OF ADMINISTRATIVE BURDEN FOR BENEFICIARIES

A summary of the assessment of the administrative burden for beneficiaries and, where necessary, the actions planned accompanied by an indicative timeframe to reduce the administrative burden.

Building on project support measures in the programme period 2007-2013 the programme authorities have early started investigating into simplification measures.

A survey among lead partners of closed projects was heading for toeholds for further facilitation and simplification for the upcoming programme period 2014-2020. The basis for all considerations were the already well structured, clear and – as far as possible – simple implementation procedures of the period 2007-2013 with provisions of detailed project implementation collected in a handbook giving guidance, containing fact sheets and forms, and additionally offer trainings and seminars.

In parallel, a master thesis¹ dealing with specific challenges that project managers are facing when implementing ERDF-co-funded projects and using the example of the ASP searched for possible fields of improvement relating to programme and project implementation, too.

Based on both – survey and master thesis – a reduction of the administrative burden for beneficiaries is envisaged mainly in following fields:

Application procedure

The better projects are prepared the better they will be implemented. Therefore the programme will put more emphasis on assisting projects already in their application phase.

To safeguard high-quality assistance to applicants, the project generation process will be supported by the ACP and coordinated by the JS.

Terms of reference will lay down the general requirements for the application. Upon decision of the PC these terms of reference might be complemented by recommendations concerning

¹ Friedwagner-Maislinger, Magdalena (2013): Programm- versus Projektmanagement. Besondere Herausforderungen an das Projektmanagement bei der Umsetzung EU-geförderter Projekte am Beispiel des ETZ Programms „Alpenraum“. Unveröffentlichte Masterthesis.

the expected contents and results. For ordinary calls standardised schedules and terms of reference will give planning reliability to applicants with respect to their own resources (staff, budget) and will help to avoid delays and last-minute preparation of applications.

EoI and AF will be slimmed to the core information needed for sound evaluation and monitoring of the project. This will not only reduce the workload for applicants to fill in the AF and will give the partnership more flexibility in the course of the project implementation but also counteract the fact that the previous extensive AF was often used as internal project management tool for which it was explicitly not elaborated and even less practical.

Nonetheless internal project management and controlling are of highest importance for successful project implementation. This will be facilitated by the provision of a detailed project management tool supporting especially the work of lead partners, which can be used on a voluntary basis.

EoI and AF will be advanced to e-forms. Online forms cannot be submitted if they are not fully and correctly completed, which will preserve applications from non-consideration due to formal deficiencies.

Reporting procedure

Corresponding to the reduced information content of the AF the online-reporting form will be shortened too according to the needs of project monitoring. Additionally projects will have to provide a „full“ progress report containing a payment claim and detailed information on project implementation only once a year, namely in the first half year, whereby in the second half year a short status report containing a payment claim will be sufficient. This approach of alternating detailed progress and short status reports will considerably reduce the burdens for beneficiaries caused by the reporting requirements without losing essential information for project control on programme level.

A clear assignment of tasks and responsibilities between JS and MA will on the one hand help to avoid double checks on the same issue and on the other hand enhance clarity of requirements and instructions for project partners and keep the number of revision loops for progress reports to a minimum. This will also be supported by the use of online-reporting forms which cannot be submitted if they are not fully and correctly completed.

All these efforts shall contribute to shorten the period between submission of the progress report/payment claim to the JS and the release of ERDF funds by the MA. Thus beneficiaries will be relieved from all burdens in connection with too long pre-financing periods.

Eligibility of costs

According to Article 17(1) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013 and Delegated Regulation (EU) No 481/2014), the European Commission set up specific rules on eligibility of expenditure mainly based on a common set of the following five budget lines applicable for all ETC programmes:

1. Staff costs
2. Office and administration expenditure
3. Travel and accommodation costs
4. External expertise and service costs
5. Equipment expenditure

Especially with regard to staff costs the above-mentioned eligibility rules contain considerable simplification options relating to the calculation and documentation requirements (Article 67 and 68 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013). When defining the programme eligibility rules the ASP will make use – to the maximum possible extent - of the simplification options offered by the regulatory framework if accepted and applied by the FLCB. The application of calculating staff costs on a monthly basis will contribute to a significant reduction of the administrative workload for beneficiaries. Furthermore overheads of up to 15% of certified and reported staff costs will be eligible in the upcoming programme period without any evidence.

General remarks

In addition to the above-mentioned actions to reduce administrative burdens for beneficiaries the programme supported the INTERACT-HIT-process in order to come to harmonised implementation tools (HIT). Especially project partners participating in various ETC programmes will benefit from harmonised and simplified tools and rules.

Although the proposals stemming from the HIT-process cannot be copied one to one due to programme specific rules and requirements, the INTERACT models shall be used as far as possible in order to realize the maximum possible added value.

SECTION 8

HORIZONTAL PRINCIPLES

8.1. Sustainable development

Description of specific actions to take into account environmental protection requirements, resource efficiency, climate change mitigation and adaptation, disaster resilience and risk prevention and management, in the selection of operations.

Article 8 of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013 states: “Member States and the Commission shall ensure that environmental protection requirements, resource efficiency, climate change mitigation and adaptation, biodiversity and ecosystem protection, disaster resilience and risk prevention and management are promoted in the preparation and implementation of Partnership Agreements and programmes.”

The ASP consists of four priority axes out of which two, namely priority axis 2 “Low Carbon Alpine Space” and priority axis 3 “Liveable Alpine Space”, are explicitly dedicated to environmental protection, resource efficiency, climate change action and risk prevention and management. Priority axis 1 “Innovative Alpine Space” and priority axis 4 “Well-Governed Alpine Space” indirectly also address efficiency as an element of sustainable development in the broader sense.

As a transnational CP, the ASP conceives, however, a broader concept of sustainable development, introducing a number of principles for projects, namely:

Related to governance and integration:

- Application of partnership and multi-level governance;
- Support for capacity building and improvement of governance interactions;
- Delivery of concrete impacts on policy making processes and follow-up actions;
- Contribution to integrated territorial development;
- Coordination and maximisation of synergies with other national, regional and EU programmes and initiatives;

Related to environmental sustainability:

- Promotion of life-cycle assessment approaches and integration of protection of biodiversity and ecosystems;

- Integration of climate change adaptation and risk management provisions;
- Contribution to a low-emission (e.g. CO₂, NO_x, PM), low discharge, resource-efficient and parsimonious land-use economy and society;
- Integration of resource-efficient, low emission ICT tools.

Related to inclusion and solidarity:

- Contribution to solidarity between participating regions;
- Contribution to the safeguarding and promotion of employment and sustainable jobs;
- Integration of Life Long Learning, qualification and skills improvement elements.

The programme is delivered through a targeted selection of projects. When examining project proposals the guiding question is:

“Is the operation contributing to the promotion of sustainable development by addressing the Alpine Space programme Sustainable Development Principles?”

The assessment of the quality of the eligible project proposals will be based on a set of quality criteria which are common to all priority axes and investment priorities.

The contribution of each project to these principles will be addressed in a qualitative manner in the frame of project and programme monitoring and evaluation.

8.2. Equal opportunities and non-discrimination

Description of the specific actions to promote equal opportunities and prevent any discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation during the preparation, design and implementation of the cooperation programme and, in particular, in relation to access to funding, taking account of the needs of the various target groups at risk of such discrimination, and in particular, the requirements of ensuring accessibility for persons with disabilities.

Article 7 of Regulation (EU) No1303/2013 states: “Member States and the Commission shall take appropriate steps to prevent any discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation during the preparation and implementation of programmes”.

Non-discrimination transcends gender issues and adopts a wider focus. While anti-discrimination legislation is an acquired aspect of EU legal systems, the practical implementation of anti-discrimination practices is lagging behind. Equal access to information, and controls on whether equality and non-discrimination requirements are being met, is also an issue.

In the course of programme preparation, the ASP has observed non-discrimination and addressed relevant issues related to the socio-demographic developments in the programme area (mainly related to migration and ageing) in the SWOT analysis. The strategy of the programme puts emphasis in the availability of programme benefits to everyone through knowledge diffusion and dissemination, equality in the quality and access to social and public services, promotion of resources efficiency, as well as availability of public environmental goods and services.

This strategic orientation of the programme can be enhanced by a targeted selection of projects. When examining proposals the following “guiding question” should be assessed – where appropriate:

“Is the operation contributing to the promotion of equal opportunities and non-discrimination?”

The assessment of the quality of the eligible project proposals will be based on a set of quality criteria which are common to all priority axes and investment priorities.

During the implementation the ASP emphasizes on the principle of equal access to information of the possibilities offered by the programme. This includes targeting different social groups adequately; removing barriers in the communication of the programme (e.g. media, language etc.), promoting barrier free approaches etc.

In the course of programme implementation attention will be given to equal opportunities and non-discrimination in a qualitative manner in the frame of project reporting and programme monitoring and evaluation.

8.3. Equality between men and women

Description of the contribution of the cooperation programme to the promotion of equality between men and women and, where appropriate, the arrangements to ensure the integration of the gender perspective at cooperation programme and operation level.

The aim of equality between women and men, in particular, belongs to the fundamental values of the European Union and is set out in the Treaty on the European Union. Article 3 states that the Union shall “combat social exclusion and discrimination, and shall promote social justice and protection, equality between women and men, solidarity between generations and protection of the rights of the child”. The elimination of inequalities and the promotion of equality between women and men are also included in the consolidated version of the TFEU. These fundamental values must be respected in the regulations and

implementation of the ESI Funds of the European as stated in Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013: “Member States and the Commission shall ensure that equality between men and women and the integration of gender perspective is promoted in the preparation and implementation of programmes” and that the “Member States and the Commission shall take appropriate steps to prevent any discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation during the preparation and implementation of programmes”.

The **same approach proposed above for the issues of non-discrimination** can be used to ensure equality between men and women with a focus on the gender issue.

SECTION 9

SEPARATE ELEMENTS

9.1. Relevant partners involved in the preparation of the cooperation programme

Stakeholder workshops in the frame of the Strategy Development Project

As a core element of the Strategy Development Project, a series of stakeholder consultations was run in the different parts of the programme area between September and November 2012. The results were discussed at a transnational conference in Milan in February 2013. In total, 701 participants attended the events. Besides authorities at national, regional and local level, also development agencies, chambers, enterprises, education/training institutions and NGOs took part in the dialogue.

Online consultation in the frame of the Strategy Development Project

Complementing the workshops, in November and December 2012, all those interested in Alpine regional policy were invited to submit their proposals for the future development of the Alpine Space. The survey was conducted in English and all Alpine languages (German, French, Italian, Slovene). It was accessed by more than 1.400 visitors, with more than 700 actors actively taking part in it, from all seven Alpine countries. The composition of participants confirms the diversity of stakeholders and expectations with regards to Alpine cooperation.

Public consultation and national consultations on the CP and SEA

226 respondents completed the public consultation on the draft operational programme and the SEA report, which was online from 31 October to 29 November. All seven Alpine countries were represented, with the majority of respondents coming from Italy (44%), Austria (16%) and Slovenia (11%). Roughly half of them were representatives of a (former) project in the ASP. The main types of organisation represented were regional administration bodies, universities/research institutions and NGOs/civil society organisations. All comments

received were reviewed by the experts and considered in the finalisation of the CP and SEA report.

The Partner States involved in the programme discussed and agreed on the CP, SEA and ex ante documents within their national committees, mainly composed of representatives from national and regional ministries as well as administrative bodies.