

A l p i n e S p a c e P r o g r a m m e

**INTERREG III B
Community Initiative**

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List of abbreviations

ARGE ALP	Arbeitsgemeinschaft Alpenländer
ARGE Alpen Adria	Arbeitsgemeinschaft Alpen-Adria
CADSES	Central, Adriatic, Danubian and South- Eastern European Space
CAP	Common Agricultural Policies
CI	Community Initiative
CIP	Community Initiative Programme
CEMAGREF	Centre National du Machinisme Agricole, du Génie Rural, des Eaux et des Forêts (France)
CEMAT	Conférence Européene des Ministres d'Aménagement du Territoire
CERN	Centre Européen pour la Recherche Nucléaire
COTRAO	COmmunauté de TRavail des Alpes Occidentales
DG	Directorate-General
EMAS	Eco-Management and Audit scheme
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
EQUAL	Community initiative in the field of transnational cooperation to promote new means of combating all forms of discrimination and inequalities in connection with the labour market in order to
ESDP	European Spatial Development Perspectives
EVED	Eidgenössisches Verkehrs- und Energiewirtschaftsdepartement (Switzerland)
EWG	Europäische Wirtschaftsgemeinschaft
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IPPC	Integrated pollution prevention and control
ISPA	Instrument for Structural Policies for Pre-accession
LEADER+	Links between Actions for the Development of the Rural Economy
MERCOSUR	Main trading bloc in Latin America comprising the countries of Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay as full members and Chile and Bolivia as associated countries
NARD	National Agency for Regional Development
NEAT	Neue Eisenbahn-Alpentransversale (Switzerland)
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NUTS	Nomenclature of territorial units for statistics
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OP	Operational Programme

SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
TEN	Trans-European Transport Network
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
URBAN	Community initiative concerning economic and social regeneration of cities and of neighbourhoods in crisis in order to promote sustainable urban development
WHO	World Health Organisation
WSL	Eidgenössische Forschungsanstalt für Wald, Schnee und Landschaft (Switzerland)

Introduction

“The characteristic territorial feature of the European Union (EU) is its cultural variety, concentrated in a small area. This distinguishes it from other large economic zones of the world such as the USA, Japan and MERCOSUR. This variety - potentially one of the most significant development factors for the EU – must be retained in the face of European integration. Spatial development policies therefore must not standardise local and regional identities in the EU, which help enrich the quality of life of the citizens.”¹

This statement is particularly true in the context of the Alpine Space². In fact, this area is a major contact zone between different European cultures and languages where the German, the Latin and the Slavic areas meet. The Alpine Space represents one of the most manifold regions in the heart of the European Community. Its unique diversity of natural and cultural landscapes serves as scenery for an attractive and powerful space for living and economy. Development perspectives for the Alpine Space must therefore take this diversity into account.

The Alps are by far the largest mountains in Europe. With regard to natural areas and as a large European landscape they represent a spatial unit. However, in the political and socio-cultural respect they are characterised by a small-scale heterogeneous diversity. Furthermore considerable social and economic disparities, often within small distances, are still evident. The Alps are the only, basically homogeneous, natural area which is divided up into such a large number of states (EU member and non member states).

70 million people are living on a surface of 450.000 km², many languages (German, Swiss-German, French, Italian, Ladinic, Raeto-Romanic, Slovenian, Croatian, Hungarian) as well as a great variety of culture meet in the Alpine Space. At least 13 million inhabitants live in the mountainous alpine area, which comprises about 191.000 km² that is nearly 50 % of the total co-operation area of the Alpine Space Programme.

The mountainous area with its fascinating nature and its rich cultural heritage is a source of a common identity for its people. But the pictures of the Alps are very different. From the inside, its function as a habitat and as an economic area for the inhabitants, an independent use of alpine resources as well as ensuring the quality of life are in the foreground. From the outside, it is characterised by other aspects: transport barrier, roof garden of Europe, tourism and leisure destination or ecologically valuable area in need of protection. These different interests result in a considerable potential for conflicts as well as in opportunities for further development.

The image of Europe is not complete without the Alps: the mountainous area above all known as one of the most important tourism destinations of the world. 100 million of people per year are visiting the Alps. Taking into consideration visitors of the flatlands, the Mediterranean coastal zones, the big lakes and the metropolitan areas around the Alps, the Alpine Space is clearly the worldwide number one in tourism.

¹ European Spatial Development Perspective, 1999² The „Alpine Space“ represents the co-operation area as defined in the OJ C143/6, 23.05.2000

The picture of the Alps does often not reflect diverse interconnections with surrounding foothills and large centres. Several agglomerations around the Alps have achieved European or global leadership, especially in economic terms. Thereby the power of innovation as well as the geographical location in the centre of European territory have been a major success factor. Finally, the spatial relationships of the mountainous area and the surrounding foothills serve as a promoter of development and progress.

The change of Europe, not only on its own but also on a global level, requires new efforts for the Alpine Space. The enlargement of the European Union to the East has changed the rather peripheral location of the Alpine Space to a largely central area within Europe. But compared with the foothills and surrounding lowlands, the Alps are of less economic and demographic importance, which may also lead to the risk of making peripheral some alpine areas, which are not located along or near European development areas.

However, this also leads to various opportunities through the promotion of strengthened collaboration and co-operation ranging from North to South and West to East and through the promotion of linkages to the European development areas, especially at the eastern border of the Alpine Space. A harmonised and balanced development therefore requires both, to take into consideration the whole co-operation area – including the non-member states Switzerland and Liechtenstein - as well as various interrelations between regions concerned. Sustainable development of the co-operation area, taking into account the natural and cultural heritage of the Alps, will be the basis that the Alps remain the “roofgarden” of Europe and that people continue to appreciate the Alps and the surrounding areas as one of the fascinating regions.

Within INTERREG IIIB the Alpine States take actively the opportunity to develop a common strategy in spatial development and to establish concrete measures for co-operation. A successful implementation of transnational model projects will serve as a good example for other states of the European Union and it will be a valuable contribution to the idea of European unification. The Alpine Space Programme is a result of a phase of intensive co-operation among the participating countries from September 1999 to November 2000 and comprises common positions for the Alpine Space.

The present document represents a common strategy of all Partner States aimed at achieving a higher degree of territorial and socio-economic integration within the Alpine Space following the guidelines expressed by the ESDP and other relevant community policies.³

³ RECE 1260/99

The EU Commission Communication (2000/C 143/08) to the Member States

Studies of regional development: Analysis of the perspective of the alpine and peri-alpine arc regions, European Commission 1995 (n. 17)

Alpine Convention

SDEC

Guiding principles for sustainable spatial development of the European Continent - European Conference of Ministers responsible for regional planning (Hanover, September 7-8, 2000)

1. Structure of the programme area

1.1 General characteristics

The co-operation area as laid down in the Commission's guidelines for the CI INTERREG III is defined as "Alpine Space" referring to its main characteristic feature, the Alps, Europe's largest mountain range. The Alpine Space comprises the mountainous area in the geographical sense as well as the surrounding foothills and lowlands, a small part of the Mediterranean coastal zone including the Adriatic, parts of the great river valleys of Danube, Po, Adige, Rhone and Rhine. The mountainous "core area" is spatially inseparably linked with the surrounding "peri-alpine belt", containing some of the most attractive European metropolitan areas.

Due to the often strong structural differences between the mountainous area and the surrounding belt it is sometimes useful to give a separate analysis of these two parts of the Alpine Space. But due to strong interrelations of all regions of the Alpine Space a division of the co-operation area concerning processes, problems, development perspectives and strategies is by nature not reasonable. Therefore the Alpine Space is always treated as one unit.

1.1.1 The Alpine Space in its European dimension

The Alpine Space as defined in the Commission's guidelines for the CI INTERREG III represents:

- a unique environmental potential both as a forest and water reserve that as a group of ecosystems guarantee a high degree of biodiversity;
- an absolutely exceptional, structured and variegated cultural wealth;
- a vital socio-economic scope;
- one single area with different levels of development;
- a transit and meeting area between Mediterranean Europe and Central Europe and between Eastern and Western Europe;
- an area with a high landscape value both for residents and tourists and an important and valuable recreation area;
- an ecologically fragile natural and mountain area which is highly diversified at micro-spatial level, with limited accessibility and high danger potential.

But, considered in its entirety and reflecting to actual European and global development challenges, the Alpine Space is more than the "heart", the Alps more than the "roof" of Europe. In fact, the territory emerges as a strategic area situated in the geographic centre of Europe, able to take on, for many aspects, the hinging role between the territories of urban and industrial development of Northern and Southern Europe, between Latin Europe in the west and Balkan Europe in the east, capable of assuming a series of specific and irreplaceable functions towards them⁴. The Alpine Space therefore is:

Europa 2000+, European Commission 1994

- a living space for 70 million of people settling a surface of 450.000 km²;
- an attractive space for working and for living due to the fact that centres of commerce, cultural life and recreation alternating with zones of pure nature meet on a small scale;
- the largest coherent mountainous landscape in Europe that serves as the most important tourism destination of the world visited by at least 100 million of tourists every year;
- a focal point of prosperity, modernity and innovation of at least European, sometimes of global importance with a strong development potential: the peri-alpine part of the co-operation area comprises four major metropolitan areas of global significance: the upper-Rhine and upper-Danube areas, the Rhone valleys and the Po Basin down to the Adriatic sea;
- the second major zone of economic integration in Europe which hosts first range and sometimes globally important gateway cities, such as for example Milan, Turin, Venice, Vienna, Munich, Geneva, Zurich, Lyon, Marseilles or Strasbourg, as well as a large number of dynamic small and medium-sized towns and cities, as for example Augsburg, Innsbruck, Linz, Graz, Salzburg, Cuneo, Trieste, Udine, Bolzano, Trento, Belluno, Chambery, Lausanne, Basel, Ljubljana and many others;
- an area which is crossed or touched by axes for transit and trade that are of strategic importance for the further development of Europe: the axes from Strasbourg via Stuttgart, Munich to Vienna passing the northern border of the Alps, the Rhine valley passing the Black Forest and Vosges, the Rhône valley passing the western border of the Alps and finally the Po river basin from Turin via Milan to Venice may give some representative examples;
- an area crossed by several axes from north to south and east to west, for example Ventimiglia, Cenis, Mt. Blanc, Gr. St. Bernhard, Simplon, Gotthard, San Bernadino, Reschen, Brenner, Felbertauern, Tauern, Schober, Semmering, Wechsel. The concentration of local and regional as well as transalpine transit causes a high traffic volume and environmental loads in the main valleys and passes;
- an area where different political backgrounds meet and nevertheless long tradition in political co-operation exists: 5 member states of the European Union, Switzerland and Liechtenstein.
- an area which hosts a great cultural variety as a result of the manifold topography, historical backgrounds, traditions, languages and linkages to the neighbouring areas.

However, as stated above it is not sufficient to have in mind only the scenery of the Alps (landscapes, summits, valleys, lakes, two sea mouths etc.) whilst dealing with alpine topics. The foothills and the lowlands around the Alps are an inseparable part of the Alpine Space, especially in a European context. For lots of people the metropolises of Munich, Vienna, Milan, Lyon and Zurich are to some extent part of the Alps although they are not directly located within the mountainous area. The interdependencies between alpine regions and their peri-alpine neighbourhood are of crucial importance for further sustainable development for both of them, not only in terms of economics, but also in terms of natural resources, culture, education, institutional frames, recreation and others.

Similarly, clear differences between the Alps and the lowlands can be observed, not only in terms of topography but also in terms of economy, ecology and social life. Mov-

ing from the centre to the exterior of the Alpine Space, two zones can be distinguished: on the one hand the Alps with a great number of small and medium-sized cities and towns, in the following described as the core area, and on the other the foothills and lowlands, hosting big cities and metropolitan areas, in the following described as the peri-alpine belt. The following table gives a short overview of the main characteristics of both zones:

The alpine core area and its small and medium-sized towns and cities	The peri-alpine belt and its metropolitan areas
<p>This zone of the Alps represents the large mountainous part. Due to the topographic and climatic conditions it is an area with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unspoiled nature and valuable landscape with high importance for tourism; • mixed economic structure with declining primary sector; • economic and social disparities on a small scale level; • large number of dynamic small and medium-sized towns and cities; • urbanisation processes in the valleys with ribbon-like settlement structures of more than 100 kilometres; • difficulties of the inner transport and connections; • often links between settlements in geographical proximity are missing; • richness of natural resources but threatened by natural disasters; • depopulation processes in peripheral areas with significant deficits of infrastructure and accessibility. 	<p>It comprises the foothills and lowlands around the Alps including the valleys of the big rivers. It is characterised by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • being a centre of economic growth in Europe with a concentration of metropolitan areas and gateway cities; • urbanisation processes are widespread; • a position mostly close to axes of transport and trade with European importance; • a high attractiveness, about 80 % of the population of the entire Alpine Space lives in about 50 % of the total area; • a great variety of industries, public and private services, in particular in the field of training and education; • a high risk for natural disasters in the foothills and river valleys due to flooding; • parts of rural areas with significant deficits in infrastructure and therefore accessibility.

The differences between the alpine core area and the surrounding foothills and lowlands as well as the numerous and often strong influences, interdependencies and different interests of use require an integrated view of the Alpine Space, including a wide scale approach when launching a common development strategy in the scope of the European Spatial Development Perspective. However, in defining common strategies and measures for co-operation it should be taken into account, that the mountains in the centre of the Alpine Space have a major role concerning the structure of spatial development of the co-operation area: sometimes as a barrier, sometimes as a hinge.

Therefore the Alpine Space Programme under INTERREG III covers the entire Western, Eastern, Northern and Southern Alps including the foothills, the lowlands and the coasts around the Alps. The participating Member States and regions on the basis of NUTS II are:

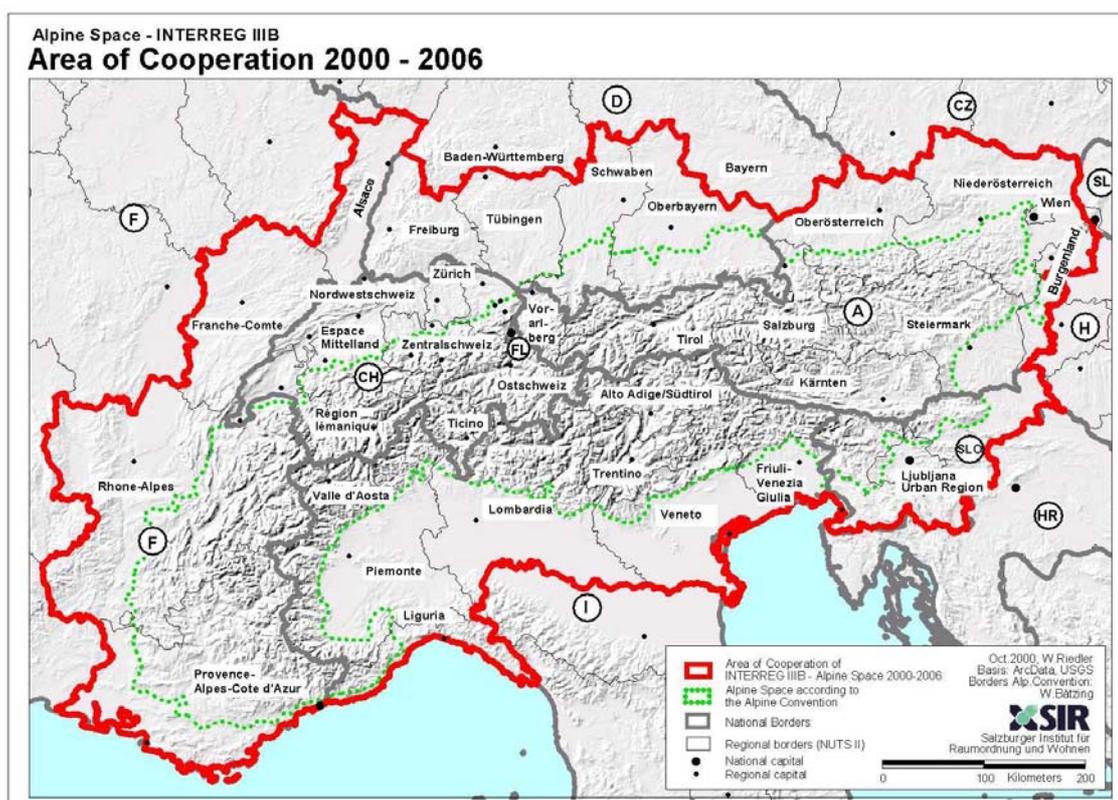


Figure 1: Area of the Alpine Space Programme under CI INTERREG III (source: SIR)

- Austria (whole country): Vorarlberg, Tyrol, Salzburg, Carinthia, Styria, Upper Austria, Lower Austria, Vienna, Burgenland;
- France: Rhône-Alpes, Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur, Franche-Comté, Alsace;
- Germany: districts of Upper Bavaria and Swabia (in Bavaria), Tübingen and Freiburg (in Baden-Württemberg);
- Italy: Lombardia, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Veneto, Trentino-Alto Adige, Valle d’Aosta, Piemonte, Liguria.
- Slovenia (whole country).

In order to add further value to the programme, the Member States intend to cooperate with the following non-EU Member States, who are invited to be full partners:

- Liechtenstein (whole country);
- Switzerland (whole country).

1.1.2 Experience of transnational co-operation in the Alpine Space

General experiences

The Alpine Space offers a tradition in transnational co-operation over several decades starting from political and administrative co-operations on national or regional level to co-operations on smaller scale between local authorities and private institutions, partly within the frame of European Community initiatives and programmes.

Between 1972 and 1981, three associations were established serving as international platforms for co-operation in different fields of spatial development of alpine regions (below the national level). The ARGE ALP (founded 1972) consists of 11 regions from 4 states of the Eastern Alpine Space. 19 regions of 7 states of the Eastern Alpine Space, Hungary and Croatia count among the members of the ARGE Alpen-Adria (founded 1978). And last, but not least the COTRAO (founded 1981), being a complementary institution for the Western Alps, uniting 8 regions and cantons of 3 states. The common objectives of these associations is to promote an active exchange of information and to realise joint actions across borders as well as to contribute to the European integration process.

In 1995, the Alpine Convention was set into force. The alpine states together with the European Union committed to co-operate in different fields of action. They regard the Alps as one common space, regardless of all national borders and administrative barriers, in order to develop common strategies for protecting and developing the Alps, following the principle of sustainable development.

Furthermore, some networks of institutions on local and regional level have been established, partly promoted by various European Programmes such as the "ARGE Alpenstädte" (a network of small and medium-sized alpine towns), "Alliance in the Alps" (a network of communities all over the Alps aiming to put into practice the goals of the Alpine Convention), the network of protected areas (for harmonising data, networking administration of national-parks) and REGIONALP, a discussion platform of the Pilot Action Programme "Eastern Alps". Last but not least, numerous co-operations in specific fields by private and public bodies, by research institutions or among international and national NGO's play an important role in the scope of the transalpine co-operation.

Experiences in the scope of European regional policy and integration of sectoral policies

With growing economic and social integration within Europe, internal borders are increasingly losing their separating character and more intensive relationships and interdependencies are emerging between cities and regions. A stronger awareness regarding the challenge and the need for transnational co-operation in the field of spatial development policies emerged in the 1990s. This process reached a first climax with the adoption of the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) in 1999. The ESDP as the main political document serves as a reference on European level to formulate spatial development and spatial planning policies.

Being aware that the various problems of spatial planning may only be solved within a larger framework, the European Commission set into force an innovative approach to integrated spatial development policy on transnational level taking into account the ESDP: the Community Initiative INTERREG IIC and the Pilot Action Programme under Art. 10 ERDF.

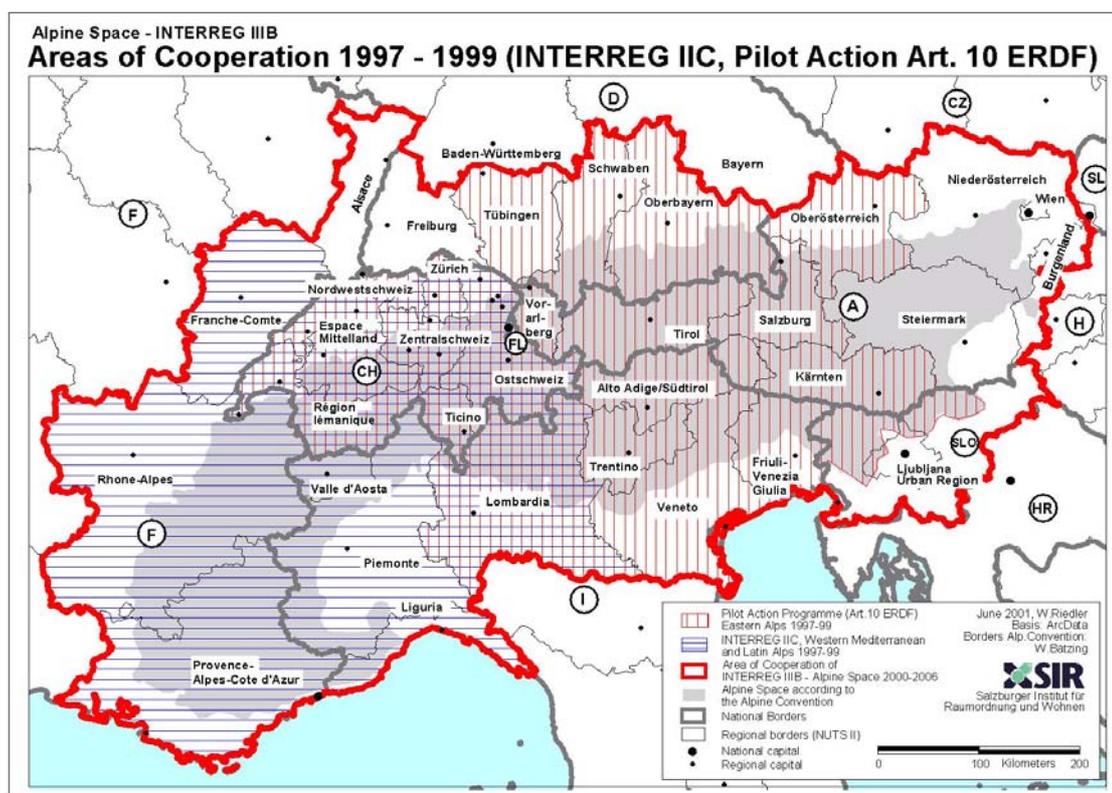


Figure 2: Areas of co-operation 1997-1999 (source: SIR)

Austria with the federal provinces of Upper Austria, Carinthia, Salzburg, Tyrol and Vorarlberg, Germany represented by Bavaria (Government district of Upper Bavaria and Swabia) and Baden-Württemberg (Government district Tübingen), and Italy with the regions of Lombardy, South Tyrol, Trentino, Venetia and Friuli-Venezia Giulia have submitted the Joint Pilot Action Programme under Art. 10 ERDF - "Eastern Alps" in early 1997 in order to realise various transnational projects relevant to problems of a sustainable spatial planning. The programme comprises measures in the fields of spatial development and planning, regional planning, environmentally sound travel logistics, public and private services, computer information systems, settlement typologies in small alpine centres and water resources in the Alps. The area of co-operation refers to the alpine parts of these regions as defined by the Alpine Convention (cf. map). Liechtenstein, Slovenia and Switzerland have been invited to participate. EU funds, however, are not available for Liechtenstein and Slovenia.

Simultaneously, the Community Initiative INTERREG II C (1997-99) for the Western Mediterranean and Latin Alps was launched. It covered the regions of Andalusia, Aragon, Catalonia, the Balearic islands, Murcia, Valencia, Ceuta and Melilla in Spain; Corsica, Franche-Comté, Languedoc-Roussillon, Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur and Rhône-Alpes in France; Basilicata, Calabria, Campagna, Latium, Liguria, Lombardy, Umbria, Piedmont, Sardinia, Sicily, Tuscany and Valle d'Aosta in Italy and all of Greece. It aimed to encourage interregional co-operation between Spain, France, Greece and Italy and to strengthen Mediterranean co-operation, most notably in the fields of culture, improvement of local transport networks and promotion of sustainable development. It followed the approach outlined in the ESDP.

A further activity in the scope of community initiative INTERREG II C covered the Central, Adriatic, Danubian and South- Eastern European Space ("CADSES"). Austria, Germany, Greece, Italy and Slovenia have launched territorial planning strategies comprising measures for creation of networks of towns, development of transport networks that respect the environment, co-operation in the area of improved access to knowledge and information and co-operation in the area of management of the cultural heritage and protection of natural resources.

The Alpine Space is involved in other EU Programmes financed by the Structural Funds, such as: Objective 1, Objective 2, Objective 5a and 5b, LEADER II (1994-1999) and, in the present programming period (2000-2006), Objective 2 and LEADER+. Therefore, INTERREG IIIB Alpine Space Programme represents an integrated strategic approach of the area and aims to encourage a stronger cohesion between sectoral and horizontal policies of the area. Finally a lot of initiatives for transborder co-operation on a small-scale level have been established.

1.1.3 Coherence of the Operational Programme with other EU programmes and policies

Linkages with other INTERREG III programmes

The programme area of the Alpine Space Programme overlaps to some extent with other co-operation areas in the scope of the Community Initiative INTERREG IIIB (see also figure 3). In the western parts of the Alpine Space, the NUTS II regions Piemonte, Lombardia, Liguria, Valle d'Aosta, the French regions of Provence-Alpes-Côte d'azur and Rhône-Alpes, and three Swiss cantons are also eligible areas of the Western Mediterranean co-operation area. Alsace and Franche-Comté in France, Freiburg, Tübingen and Schwaben in Germany and 15 Swiss cantons can furthermore co-operate with other regions in the North-West Europe co-operation area. In the eastern part of the Alpine Space, all NUTS II areas belonging to Germany, Austria and Slovenia as well as the Italian NUTS II regions Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Veneto, Lombardia and Trentino-Alto Adige may co-operate with areas covered by the CADSES co-operation area.

The purpose of the Strand A of the CI INTERREG III is to strengthen cross-border co-operation between neighbouring authorities as well as to develop cross-border economic and social centres through joint strategies for sustainable territorial development in various policy fields. Furthermore, it aims at the transfer of know how, the establishment of common administrative and networking structures, the creation of common products. Regional development therefore requires a high portion of investment activities in infrastructure in order to cut down regional imbalances.

Concerning the Alps, the Strand A of the CI INTERREG is restricted to areas along the internal and external borders of the Community. In mountainous areas it will mainly contribute to promote regional development along border areas that are often characterised by high mountain ranges hampering intensive co-operation. Due to the fact that border regions in the past converted into peripheral regions within their respective countries much effort will be needed to strengthen their attractiveness as a working and living space as well as to avoid out-migration.

INTERREG III A-Programmes at the external border of the Community have a clear focus on an active strategy for preparing the border regions for the upcoming EU enlargement.

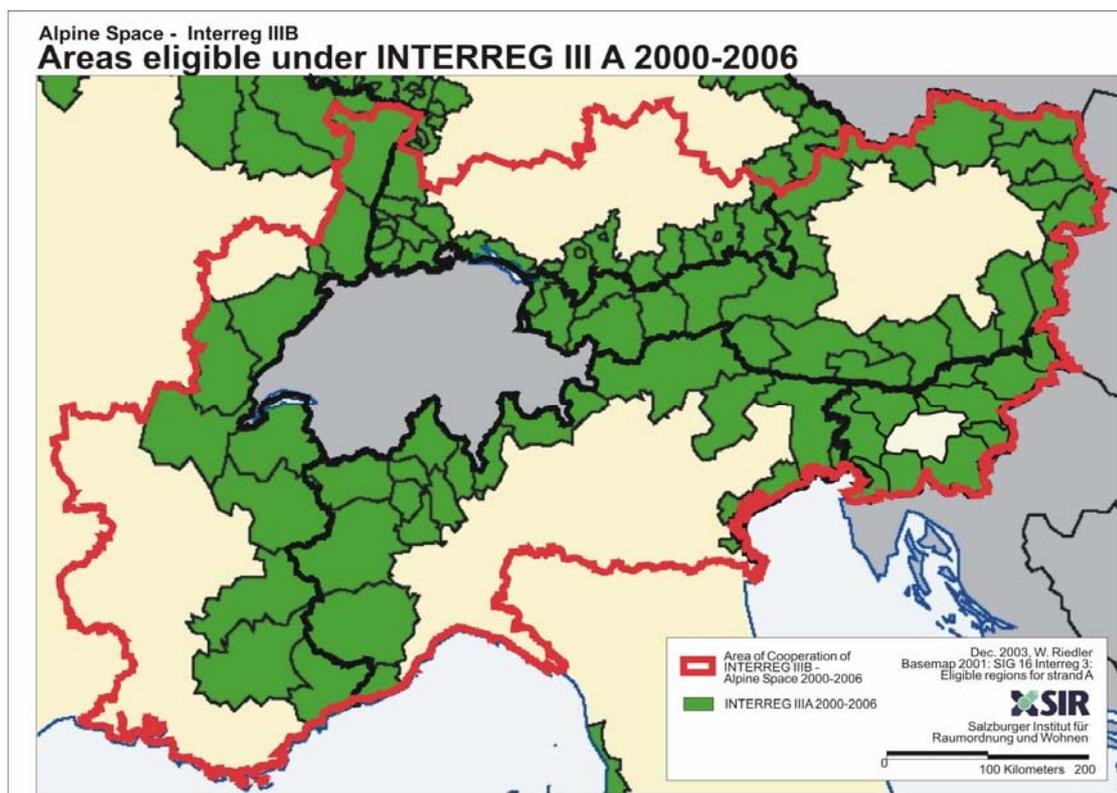


Figure 3: Eligible regions under INTERREG III A 2000-2006 (source: SIR)

The objective of Strand C is to promote interregional co-operation in order to improve the effectiveness of policies and instruments for regional development, especially in less developed regions.

Coherence with other EU policies

The understanding of the potential complementarity and coherence among different programmes and policies, both at the European and national level, have greatly influenced the setting up of the OP. Especially the bigger (in financial terms) Structural Fund Programmes and Initiatives, such as Objective 1, Objective 2 and Objective 3, LEADER+, URBAN II and EQUAL, have had great influence. Special care was taken in each Member State to clearly define programme goals so that they complement each other without overlapping. A summarised description of general goals for objective programmes and common initiative programmes of the participating Member States is given in the following table:

Objective 1	focuses on the stabilisation of economic structures and the improvement of competitive capacity of enterprises (within the Alpine Space co-operation area only relevant for one Austrian NUTS II area and Slovenia (whole country))
Objective 2	aims at improving the situation on local level mainly in economic and social terms. By means of investments in infrastructure on the level of enterprises as well as on regional level for improving basic economic conditions, consultancy services for creating new business opportuni-

	ties, the economic structure and competitiveness in industry, handi-craft and services should be promoted. Accompanying activities for preserving the environment (i.e. waste management) and improving the social situation (facilitating social and professional integration etc.) should contribute to sustainable development on regional level.
Objective 3	covers a wide range of general structural labour market problems and will among others strengthen activities in labour market policy, training and equal opportunities.
LEADER+	aims at improving the situation in rural areas and activating the endogenous potential of the population of small regions in all areas of life and work through local partnerships. A focus is given to agricultural activities and neighboured areas like (rural) tourism and handi-craft. The initiatives serve as a laboratory in order to create innovative ideas and approaches, which should be further developed in other programmes.
URBAN II	focuses on structural adjustments due to economic and social weaknesses in urban areas.
EQUAL	provides assistance for methods to fight discrimination and inequality of any type at the labour market, structured around the four pillars of the European Employment Strategy

Thus, the INTERREG IIIB Alpine Space Programme will have a clear positive complementary character in that it:

- promotes the exchange of experience and information through transnational co-operation building on local or regional activities carried out i.e. under Objective 2 and URBAN II;
- promotes the networking of cities and of competence centres for innovation and technology;
- strengthens the links between cities and rural areas;
- safeguards the integration of local and national policies into a common strategy on transnational level facing the requirements of the European Spatial Development Perspective and will therefore contribute to an integrated territorial development in Europe;
- generally promotes employment and gender equality and will therefore support specific measures to be carried out i.e under Objective 3 and EQUAL.

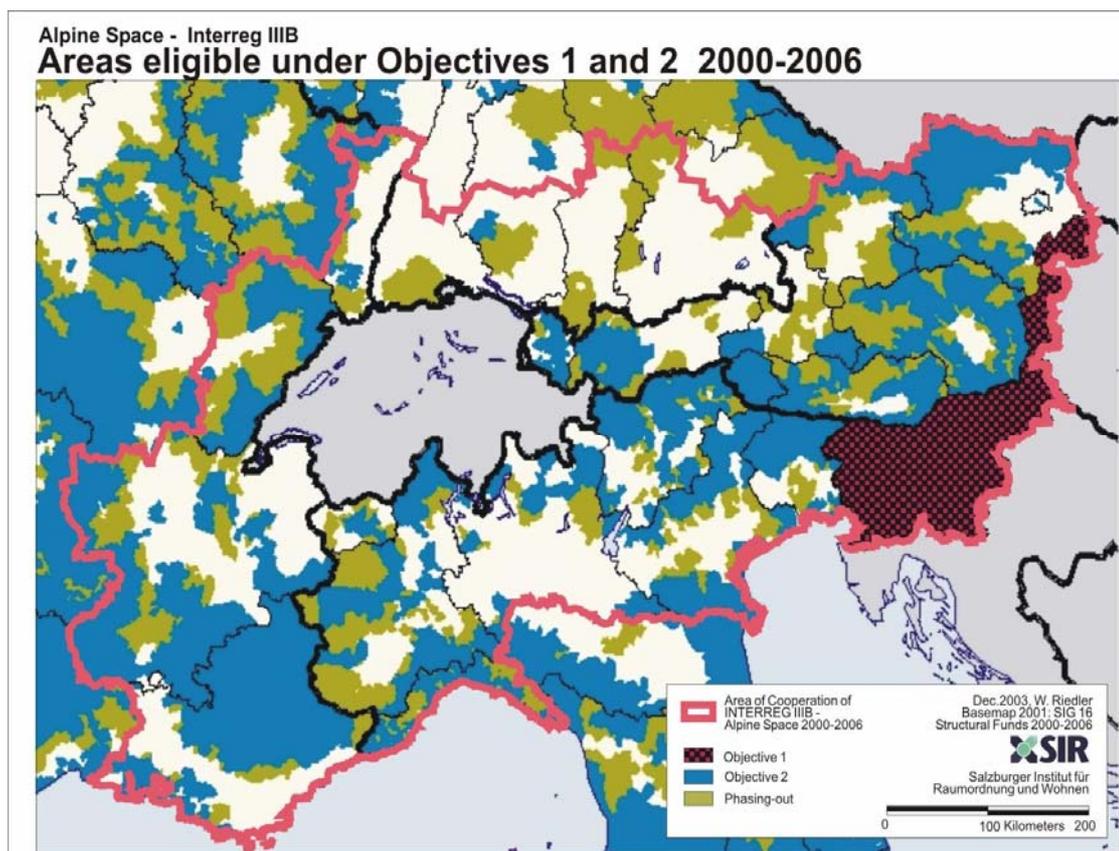


Figure 4: Areas eligible under Objectives 1 and 2 2000-2006 (source: SIR)

Finally, the Alpine Space Programme will also complement various RTD-activities to be carried out in the European Union's Fifth RTD Framework Programme (particularly the four thematic programmes) respectively in the sixth programme period. Projects in the Alpine Space Programme may use the results of the research activities and put them into practise.

As regards the development of the Information Society, the Alpine Space programme will refer to the eEurope Action Plan, launched by the EU Summit in Feira and subsequently updated in Nice in June 2000. First, actions are emphasised which will contribute to a cheaper and faster Internet-access as outlined in objective 1 of the Action Plan by means of investments in information society infrastructure in less favoured regions. Second, the Alpine Space programme will help to overcome deficiencies of using the internet as described in objective 3 of the Action Plan. Special reference under this objective will be given to the issue of "Government on-line: electronic access to public services". In any case project applicants have to take into account the results and the experiences gained in the IDA-programme (Interchange of Data between Administrations) as well as in the IST-programme.

How to manage the complementarities

Functionally, particularly the mentioned Structural Fund programmes are in the participating countries frequently managed by authorities who are responsible for the imple-

mentation of INTERREG programmes. This will contribute to a high coherence of actions initiated under all programmes.

Nevertheless, the participating countries will establish specific procedures to ensure both, the mutual exchange of experience and information gathered on local and regional level upon the transnational level and testing common strategies that could affect spatial development in the co-operation area as well as to avoid double funding of activities.

First, a scheme will be prepared showing the responsible authorities who manage the various programmes. The authorities for the implementation of the Alpine Space Programme on national and regional level will keep in close contact with them throughout the whole programming period. In this context the following activities are foreseen:

- to exchange information concerning open calls and selected projects
- to inform about changes of the programme document if necessary
- to inform regularly on publication and dissemination activities as well as to provide related documents
- to add linkages to other web-sites on the Alpine Space web-site
- to invite authorities to technical seminars, information days, conference of regions in the scope of the Alpine Space Programme
- to organise common meetings of the responsible authorities

Special attention should be given to the coherence among the different INTERREG III-Initiatives. Each activity has to be in line with the specific needs and priorities covered by the different programmes, although the regions concerned may run activities in different co-operation areas. The states and regions participating in the Alpine Space Programme aim to use synergies between the different programmes concerned to the greatest possible extent. Therefore the following additional co-ordination and information activities are envisaged:

- The national representatives will inform themselves about the evolution of relevant programmes before meetings of the Steering Committee and the Monitoring Committee;
- The implementation bodies will have frequent contacts to other co-operation areas in order to safeguard an active exchange of information and experience;
- When submitting proposals, lead partners have to declare that the proposed projects are not financed by other INTERREG III-programmes; national authorities responsible for implementing the programme have to certify to the Managing Authority that there is no double financing of projects.

Table 1: Main economic and social indicators of the programme area on NUTS II level

Territory	popula- tion (x 1.000 in 1996)	Labour Market		Employment by sector (% of total) 1997 ⁵			Educational attain- ment of persons aged 25-59 (% of to- tal) 1997			GDP Index 1997 ⁶ (EU15=100)	
		Employ- ment rate (%) 1997 ⁷	Unemploy- ment rate (%) 1997 ⁸	Agriculture	Industry	Services	low	medium	high	per capita of the resident population	per em- ployee
Burgenland	275	67.8	3.8	8.2	34.6	57.3	35	59	6	72	66
Lower Austria	1524	69.6	3.4	11.5	30.3	58.2	25	68	7	97	85
Vienna	1595	67.7	5.9	0.4	22.2	77.4	22	63	15	164	147
Carinthia	563	63.4	5.8	8.0	28.8	63.2	20	75	6	89	87
Styria	1207	65.7	4.8	10.0	32.3	57.6	27	66	7	91	84
Upper Austria	1381	69.8	3.0	8.2	35.4	56.4	28	65	7	103	89
Salzburg	509	69.5	3.9	5.6	25.4	69.0	23	67	10	123	104
Tyrol	660	66.6	5.4	5.5	26.0	68.5	25	67	7	107	97
Vorarlberg	344	68.9	4.1	3.0	40.0	57.0	32	61	7	110	98
Alsace	1708	59.7	7.8	2.6	35.9	61.4	34	48	18	100	100
Franche-Comté	1117	61.1	9.1	5.9	37.4	56.6	40	44	16	89	95
Rhône-Alpes	5625	62.5	10.5	3.5	30.5	65.9	34	45	22	95	99
Pr-Alpes-Côte d'Azur	4465	54.5	16.5	2.7	19.8	77.5	38	45	17	87	108
Freiburg	2093	69.2	6.2	3.7	38.3	58.0	21	56	23	106	95
Tübingen	1731	69.2	5.7	3.7	42.9	53.4	22	54	24	110	100
Upper Bavaria	3985	71.4	4.8	3.0	31.5	65.4	20	52	27	165	128

⁵ LI 1991, CH: 1995⁶ Sixth Periodic Report on the social and economic situation and development of the regions of the European Union⁷ CH: 1995⁸ CH: 1996

Table 1: Main economic and social indicators of the programme area on NUTS II level

Territory	population (x 1.000 in 1996)	Labour Market		Employment by sector (% of total) 1997 ⁵			Educational attainment of persons aged 25-59 (% of total) 1997			GDP Index 1997 ⁶ (EU15=100)	
		Employment rate (%) 1997 ⁷	Unemployment rate (%) 1997 ⁸	Agriculture	Industry	Services	low	medium	high	per capita of the resident population	per employee
Swabia	1726	69.1	5.8	4.3	38.4	57.3	22	59	19	105	98
Piemonte	4294	51.3	8.7	4.6	39.6	55.8	60	32	8	117	122
Valle d'Aosta	119	61.9	4.1	6.6	22.7	70.9	60	33	7	130	124
Liguria	1651	52.2	10.2	4.4	21.6	74.0	54	36	10	119	140
Lombardia	8959	58.3	6.2	2.7	40.7	56.6	57	34	9	131	131
Trentino-Alto-Adige	919	62.3	3.8	9.7	27.2	63.0	53	39	7	126	123
Veneto	4453	59.7	4.8	5.2	41.1	53.7	55	36	9	123	122
Friuli Venezia Giulia	1188	57.4	5.6	4.9	34.6	60.3	54	38	8	125	124
Leman Region	1278	51.5	7.0	6.2	21.7	72.1					
Mittelland Space	1644	51.7	4.4	8.9	30.3	60.8					
North - Western Switzerland	982	53.9	3.9	3.9	35.8	60.5					
Zurich Region	1194	56.3	4.3	2.7	24.3	73.0					
Eastern Switzerland	1037	51.1	3.3	9.1	35.8	55.1					
Central Switzerland	659	51.6	3.5	9.6	31.9	58.1					
Ticino	301	54.8	7.6	3.0	31.2	65.9					
Liechtenstein			3.0	1.8	37.7	60.5					
Slovenia ⁹	1991	53.7	14.4	3.9	41.3	54.8				68	

⁹ Data on NUTS I level, source: SORS, calculations NARD

1.2 The Alpine Space – an area of economic growth and regional disparities

In the recent past, European centres of prosperity have been shifting more and more southward. The Alpine Space as a whole - the lowlands around the Alps as well as the urbanised areas in the valleys and rural regions - became more and more one of the centres of economic growth within Europe. However, specific influences in terms of economy and spatial development can be observed.

Over the last decades, the centres of German prosperity have shifted southward reinforcing areas around Munich and Freiburg. High-tech centres combined with an attractive environment evoke the image of an “Alpine Silicon Valley”. Today, the influence of Munich extends up to the Alps. The axes of economic welfare and trade between Baden-Württemberg and Milan passing the Swiss territory are also of high importance. Additionally, the German territory is a transit area for East-West-trade.

Vienna is one of the most prosperous parts of the Alpine Space. Especially 10 years after the collapse of the iron curtain, it constitutes again a crossroad in Europe between east and west but also north and south. Finally the capitals of the “Länder” and their surroundings became very prosperous areas.

Development of the Italian regions has been for a long time based on the industrial districts from Piemonte Region to Adriatic sea coast, a border area in the east with an intensive polycentric development, based on SMEs and a strong financial capacity concentrated in Milan. All the Italian Alpine Space is a transit area between East and West as well as between Central Europe and the Mediterranean.

In France, like in Germany, centres of prosperity have shifted southward. Lyon and Marseille are the major cities after Paris. Alsace and Strasbourg focus foreign investment and Nice, Cannes and the Côte d’Azur are developing a successful service sector. Sophia Antipolis and Grenoble are major technological centres. A tendency of spreading economic power from the peri-alpine agglomerations into the main valleys is very obvious. Similarly, the region along the Rhine between Strasbourg and Basle shows an increasing economic performance. Only Franche-Comté is characterised by some lacks in economic development.

In Switzerland, a remarkable economic growth in agglomerations near to the Alps and in alpine tourist centres has been achieved. Its northern and western cities are crossed by important trade axes ranging from north to south as well as from west to east.

Slovenia is one of the most up-coming countries in Central Europe. It is undergoing processes of extensive social and economic restructuring and its strong orientation towards the European Union is confirmed by its official accession in May 2004.

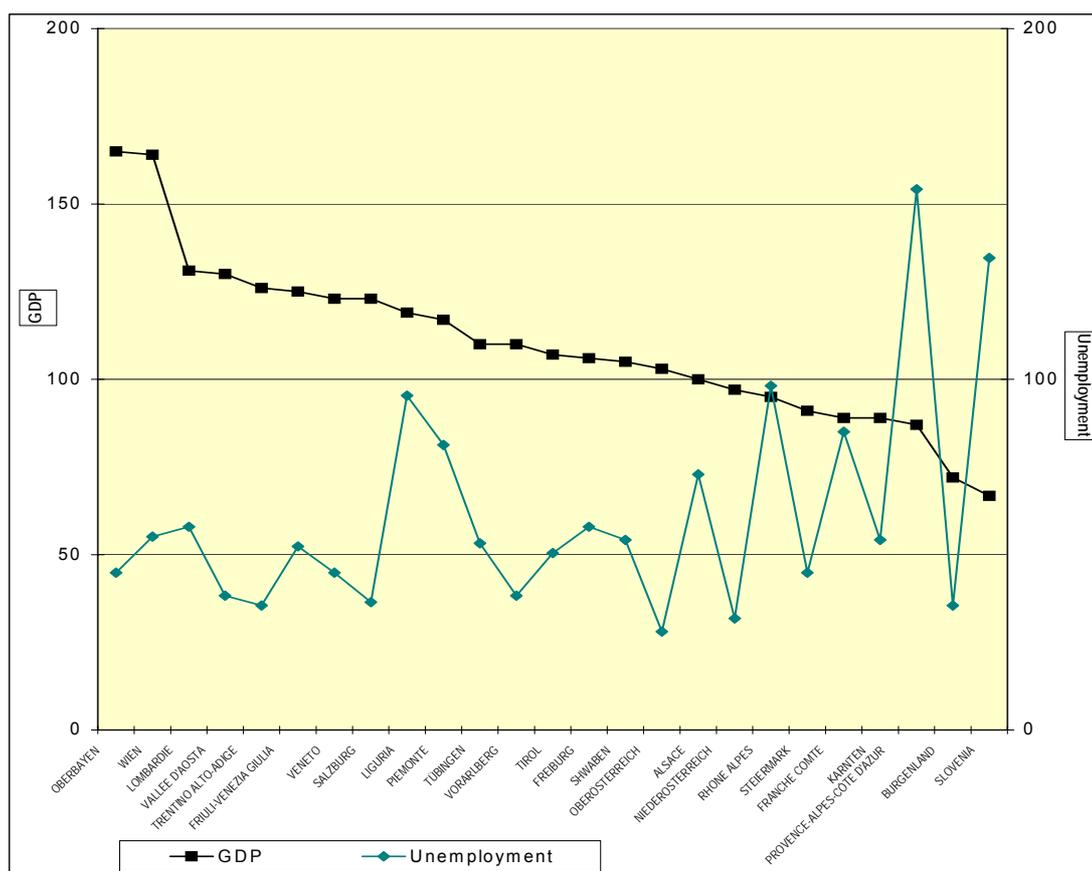
The Sixth Periodic Report on the social and economic situation and development of the regions of the European Union gives a number of figures to assess regional development. Referring to this document the following profile of the Alpine Space can be drawn up (table 1 and figure 5, 7 also give a short survey):

- The Alpine Space has strong industrial areas in the peri-alpine belt as well as high added value services especially in the alpine core area.
- The high spatial density of universities and research centres and the quality of their links with the regional industries and services enable the Alpine Space to have a strong capacity of innovation.

- The Alpine Space has a good level of accessibility regarding links between regions and their respective countries and therefore can serve as a hinge to other European regions. However, links between the countries of the co-operation area are rather weak.
- The territory has a high level of work force qualification which is well suited to the economic activity.
- Nevertheless there exist strong disparities on a small scale level, which are not visible from the data on the NUTS II level. Due to topographically determined disadvantages such differences occur especially in the mountain areas, even within a distance of a few kilometres.

GDP and unemployment

Generally spoken, unemployment is comparatively lower in the Alpine Space than in the rest of the European Union. In several regions of the co-operation area GDP is much higher than in most parts of Europe. Figure 5 shows GDP and unemployment rate for NUTS II regions¹⁰ in the co-operation area:



¹⁰ Data on NUTS I level for Slovenia.

Figure 5: GDP and unemployment [EU=100] (source: European Commission, DG XVI, Sixth Periodic Report on the social and economic situation and development of the regions of the European Union, database 1997)

Some specific regional characteristics can be identified:

- All participating Italian (with exception of Liguria and Piemonte) and German regions as well as the most prosperous areas of Austria (western part and Vienna) have a GDP higher than the EU average in combination with low unemployment rates.
- For a minority of regions, especially those located in France and in the eastern part of Austria, GDP is not much below average, and unemployment is not significantly higher than in the rest of the Alpine Space. This minor lagging behind may be caused by their position close to national borders in particular to the former iron curtain or by large scale break down of industries.
- Generally, regions with a high rate of seasonal workers in tourism generally face the problem of a higher unemployment rate than regions with a balanced situation of workers in tourism.

These figures refer to the entire co-operation area of the Alpine Space based on NUTS II level, including development centres like Munich, Milan, Turin, Lyon as well as of important medium-sized cities (see figure 8). As already mentioned, these highly aggregated data do not give a precise picture of the real situation. This is due to the large size of territorial units and the "homogenisation" of data between rural and highly developed areas. However, a comparison of the gross regional product at NUTS III level shows a considerable scale of variation. In the following figure some examples are presented to give an idea of the heterogeneity of the Alpine Space.

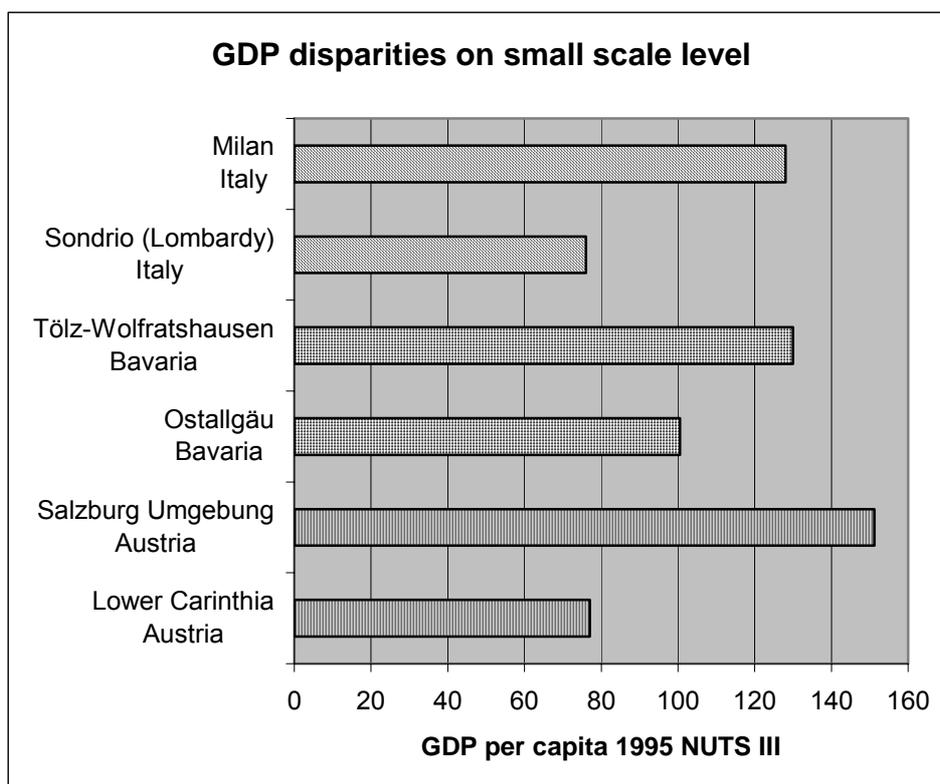


Figure 6: Examples of GDP disparities on NUTS III level

Analysing of data on NUTS III level clearly shows, that there exist sometimes strong disparities within distances of a few kilometres. In some southern and eastern alpine districts the 1995 productivity index per capita is more than 30 % - in some districts even 40 % - lower than the national average. Identical phenomena can be observed also in the low mountain ranges of Alsace and of the north-eastern part of the Black Forest. Generally spoken, the largest regional differences appear in the north-south direction. The Southern Alps have to face harder competition with lowlands and are more concerned by special climate and weather conditions. The socio-economic level of marginality relates to altitude of settlements. Places oriented strongly into tourism may be considered an exception.

Production, productivity and activity rate

Productivity (GDP according to the employment) in the Alpine Space is comparable to productivity in the rest of the EU. Generally, the regions endowed with the highest GDP are also the regions with the best productivity. However, this indicator sets higher standards than the first and as a consequence there are only 10 regions above EU average. Oberbayern and Vienna come first with a very high level of productivity and they are closely followed by the regions of Northern Italy. The lowest levels of productivity are found in the south-eastern part of Austria. Provence Alpes Côte d'Azur is an exception and ranks high for productivity, but quite low for GDP per capita. This discrepancy can be explained by the relatively high level of unemployment in this region.

The Alpine Space ranks high in Europe for mobilising the active population. 18 of the 24 regions of the co-operation area are above the EU average. However, a detailed

analysis shows this indicator not being significant when correlated with wealth and productivity. In fact, the regions of Northern Italy are below the EU average and rank generally low. The best results are found in the regions of Germany and western Austria.

The figure for active population as percentage of the total is quite similar to the rest of the EU, whereas variations around the average are generally low. Globally spoken, the regions with the highest levels of GDP per capita and the highest productivity have also the highest rates of active population.

Development of industry and crafts indicates a contrasting situation. A crisis has been affecting traditional mining and industrial areas of the entire Alpine Space for some time already. Enterprises are closing down and there are significant reductions in the secondary sector. In the inner-alpine valleys there are location disadvantages due to low accessibility. Owing to the topographic characteristics of the valleys, urban centres are more difficult to reach in an acceptable time than in the lowlands. In particular, areas near the main watersheds are to be considered peripheral, and they have serious geographical disadvantages (market barriers), which cannot be overcome despite heavy infrastructure investments. Unlike the lowlands, regional and local markets in the alpine core area are determined by topography (and therefore by a higher or lower degree of accessibility), and for this reason even short connections between valleys are sometimes very difficult.

At supraregional level the southern and south-eastern Austrian Alps, many eastern alpine regions in Italy and southern alpine regions in France are strongly disadvantaged as regards international accessibility, in particular in comparison with those parts of the co-operation area which are better placed with respect to the central area of the Community, such as north-western parts.

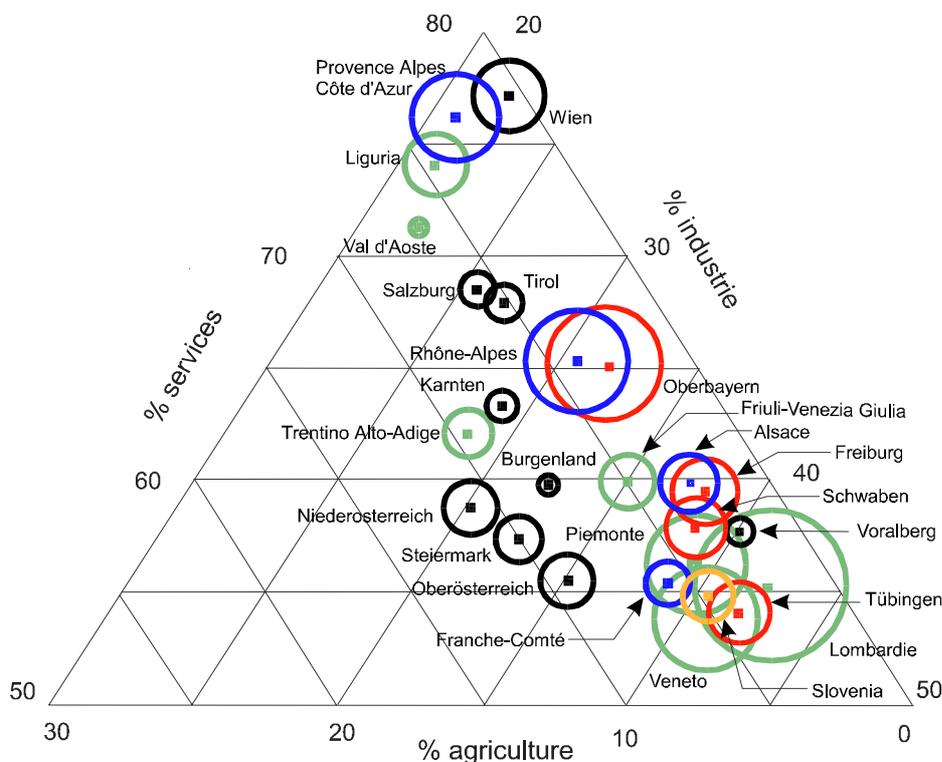


Figure 7: Production structure (source: European Commission, DG XVI, 6th Periodic report on the social and economic evolution of the regions in the European Union – 2000)

There are also alpine areas where industry is not only an important but also a very stable economic factor. This holds true for a number of alpine and foothill areas which have a long-standing tradition and accentuated industrial specialisation (e.g. textile industry, metallurgy and engineering, furniture, iron industry, shoe and glasses factories).

Structure by sectors of activity

Parts of Baden-Württemberg and with particular significance the regions of Northern Italy (Piemonte, Veneto, Lombardia) are still powerful industrial areas (around 45 % of the work force), whereas the regions Vienna, Provence- Alpes-Côte d'Azur and Liguria are characterised by a dominance of the service sector. However, regions with a significant agricultural activity (around 10 % of the work force) are small in number and mostly located in Austria.

In some parts of the Alpine Space, the high rate of service activities is caused by tourism. There tourism is the central economic determinant. However, large disparities in tourism development throughout the Alpine Space become evident. In many areas an extraordinarily high development level can be observed, whereas other places suffer from structural weaknesses and/or offer a considerable development potential. Many regions of the co-operation area depend on tourism in terms of income and employment, however, concerning the entire Alpine Space tourism is very predominately but less dominant than frequently assumed.

Spatial structure

The entire Alpine Space faces more or less intensive urbanisation processes with corresponding economic, ecological and social effects like an increase of land use for settlement and infrastructure, an increase of population and, not least important, increasing conflicts of land use interests and environmental problems. On the other side, there exist depopulation regions without dominating centres, characterised by a strong decrease of population. An ongoing depopulation assumed, the total economy and culture is endangered to collapse in these regions. However, apart from these typical aspects clear differences between the alpine core area and the peri-alpine belt can be identified:

The alpine core area and its small and medium-sized towns and cities	The peri-alpine belt and its metropolitan areas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • stronger restrictions for physical growth. Topographical disadvantages lead to more linear structures in spatial development and concentration in favourable areas. Nowadays, about 60 % of the alpine population is concentrated in urbanised areas that comprise only 25 % of the entire alpine core area; • no metropolitan areas. Grenoble with a population of approximately 500.000 people is the largest city in the Alps. More than 97 % of the alpine cities have less than 10.000 in- 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • topographical conditions allow an intensive land use for settlement, transport infrastructure, economic activity etc.; not by accident the peri-alpine belt hosts several metropolitan areas of international importance; • space for the physical growth not only of metropolitan areas but also of small and medium-sized towns is sufficiently available;

<p>habitants;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• inner-alpine cities without direct relationships to peri-alpine agglomerations but often centres of high local and regional dynamics;• significant and even growing spatial disparities regarding economic power and labour market become evident at the regional and local level. Generally, the socio-economic development declines with the altitude of settlements, except for regions with a high level of tourism;• crossed by several European axes for transit and trade with some restrictions for further development. Due to the transport development, the negative environmental impacts are expected to aggravate already in a few years;• totally high rate of immigration, but concerning high qualified employees out-migration from rural areas, especially in high altitudes and inner alpine side valleys to both, alpine and peri-alpine agglomerations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• some metropolitan areas already border to the Alps and don't have the possibility to spread out to this direction;• farmland in the peri-alpine areas is often of high quality. A loss of these areas leads to a release of work force from this sector and reduces production capacities for global competitiveness;• touched or crossed by several European development axes for transit and trade causing serious environmental problems on the connecting axes between them inside Alpine Space;• high rate of immigration from both, the alpine core area and the rest of Europe due to its high economic appeal.
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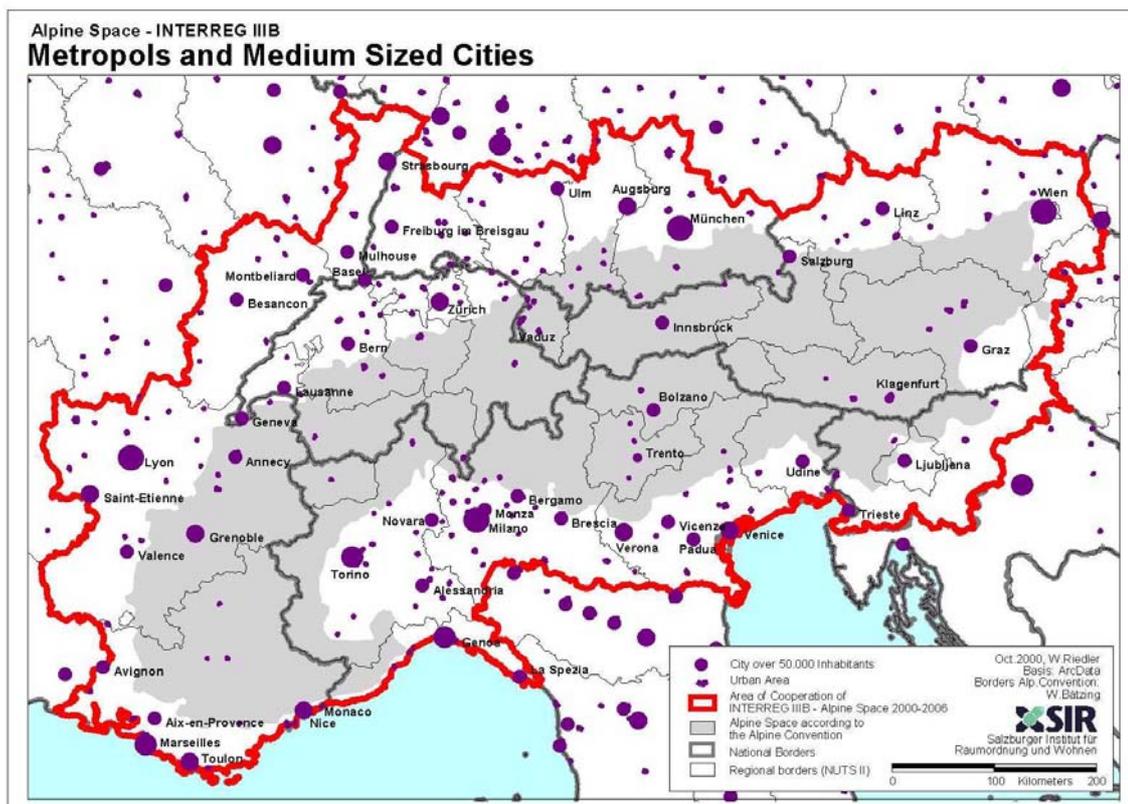


Figure 8: Spatial distribution of metropolitan areas, medium-sized cities and smaller towns

Importance of small and medium-sized towns and cities and their SMEs

For the future economic development of the alpine area it is necessary to find, develop and secure a position within a globally integrated economy. The strategic role of small and medium-sized towns cannot be valued high enough in this context - especially in the alpine core area as well as in the more rurally structured peripheral parts. Within the Alpine Space they function as network nodes of communication and information, service centres for the economy and competence centres for innovation and technology.

The strategic role of small and medium-sized towns has to be improved, also with a view to defining a new urban-rural partnership. Whereas the small and medium-sized cities are the movers and shakers of development within the Alps, big agglomerations feature as gateways to global networks. Figure 8 gives an impression of the number and spatial distribution of metropolitan areas, medium-sized cities and smaller towns of regional importance:

The Alpine Space is characterised by a high density of SMEs (small and medium-sized enterprises). They built the backbone of a dynamic innovation based economic development of the entire area. Especially in all regions with tendencies of depopulation because of missing alternative working places the establishment of SMEs is a central development goal. To avoid further augmenting of urbanisation pressure on medium-sized cities, in particular in the valleys of the mountain area, a high density of SMEs in smaller towns and on the periphery of metropolitan areas are a prerequisite for a bal-

anced spatial development and a reduction of disparities in living conditions of the alpine population.

1.3 The situation of transport and technical infrastructure

The Alpine Space is well integrated into the European Transport Network. Lots of efforts have been made to optimise the transport infrastructure on national and international level. Local and regional access to national and transnational transport networks and hubs is to a large extent guaranteed through connections of the primary and secondary networks.

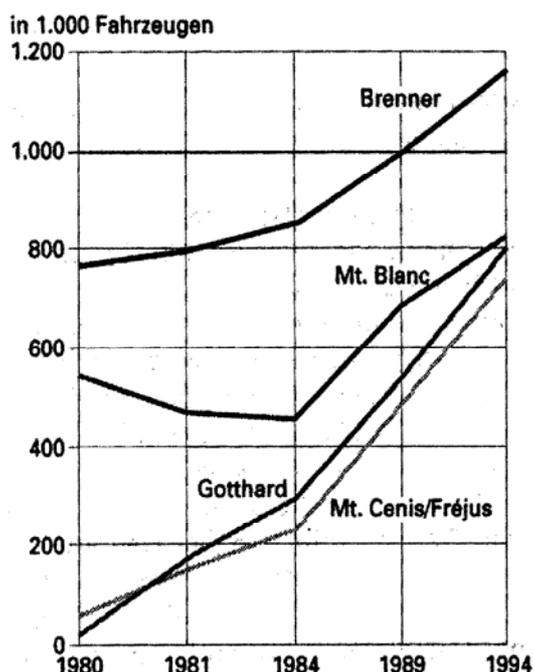
Motorways and railways of European importance as well as waterways, particularly in the northern parts (Rhine and Danube), have been promoting the economic growth. The Alpine Space furthermore hosts important gateway cities. Harbours like Marseille and international (intercontinental) airports like Munich, Vienna, Milan, Lyon, Zurich and Geneva serve as hubs for international trade and fulfil the requirements of increasing transport of people and goods. Additionally, well-functioning regional infrastructure such as regional airports is well distributed in the programme area.

However, considerable deficits and differences between the peri-alpine belt and the alpine core area still remain. Generally spoken, the links from the peri-alpine belt to the exterior (and vice versa) work very well, but some gaps are obvious concerning the connections between metropolitan areas framing the alpine arc. This results in inefficiencies and delays in the transport of people and goods.

Rail transport still suffers from capacity constraints (clearance) and technical incompatibilities between transport systems for example between Germany, Italy and France. They hamper considerably the development of high level inter-modality and further integration of the Trans-European networks.

In particular in the alpine core area transport has become a high environmental impact factor. Traffic has become one of the main sources of pressure on the environment. High consumption of energy, emissions of pollutants and noise, massive land consumption and effects of intersecting as well as impairment of landscapes, all these factors have a grave impact on the ecologically most sensitive alpine area. Narrow valleys, a low degree of ventilation and frequent cases of inversion weather conditions increase the damaging effects. On the bottom of the valleys, along the transit corridors, demand has grown rapidly for scarce centrally located and still available sites. Good accessibility favours the location of trade, industry and services. Due to the mountainous topography, intensive economic development leads to considerable atmospheric pollution and noise nuisance that lower the living conditions and residential quality in the valleys concerned. These problems are most severely felt in the Inn valley between Kufstein and Innsbruck, the Brenner-axis between Innsbruck - Bozen – Verona and the north-south Gotthard axis.

Since the sixties of the last century, road transport has been growing much faster than rail transport. Whilst in 1965, 87 % of the transit freight between Northern Europe and Italy (via alpine core area) were transported by rail and only 13 % on the road, these figures changed considerably till 1988, showing a proportion of 45 to 55 % in favour of road transport. In 1994 the rate of road transport reached about 60 %.



source: EVED (1996)

Figure 9: Number of heavy duty vehicles in cross-alpine freight transport on the road (1980–1994) across the four most important alpine passes (in 1,000 vehicles)

Taking into account the volume of freight, most of it is transported via the Austrian passes, about 62 % of the freight being hauled by lorries. In France, wagon-load transport as well as combined transport are only modestly developed (with a rate of about 17 %), which implies that about 83 % of the freight has to be transported by lorries. Even though in Switzerland transit transport on the road has also been increasing, they have succeeded in shifting about 75 % of the trans-Swiss freight transport by improving the rail infrastructure. In addition, limiting the tonnage of heavy lorries down to 28 tons has also contributed to this development.

For a long time, transit traffic was considered a motor for the prospering development of the local and regional economies in the Alps. Up to recent times, the location along the major traffic routes between north and south has been regarded as an advantage and has remained one of the main factors for the situation of settlements in the Alps. However, nowadays the big transit routes allow express transport over the Alps, a stop between Munich and Verona has become unnecessary.

Due to the improvement of the infrastructure in the 19th and 20th century, the alpine valleys were primarily linked with centres in the most direct way, and only secondarily with inner alpine ones. That is how a network has developed between the motorways of Northern and Southern Europe, which, together with high-speed rail, has considerably improved the access to and from the cities outside the Alps.

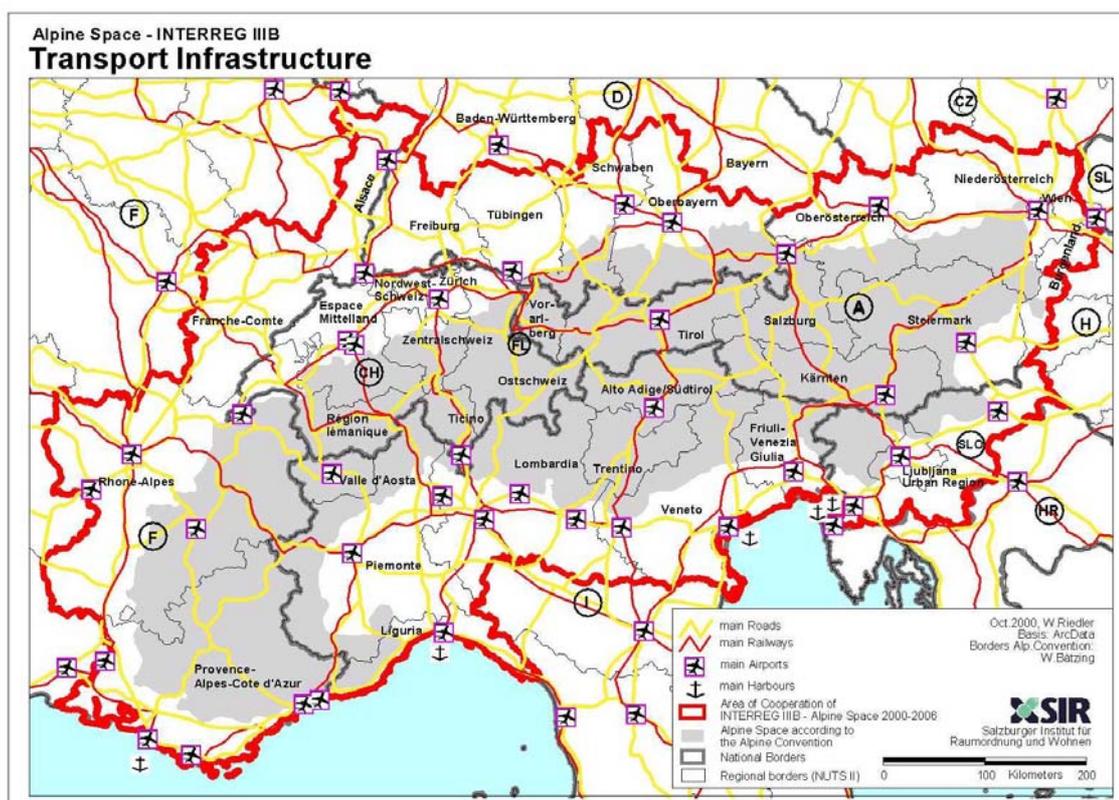


Figure 10: Network road, railway, airports and harbours (source: SIR)

In contrast to the linear phenomenon of transit, tourist traffic spreads over large parts of the alpine regions causing atmospheric pollution and noise nuisance even in areas far from the large transit routes. Recreational traffic has been growing rapidly in recent years. Most of the annual 50 million holidaymakers and 100 million weekend and one-day tourists take their own cars. However, the transport of freight and passengers across the Alps is set to increase dramatically by 2010. These are the findings of a study¹¹, done for the European Commission. The principal finding of this report is that freight transport across the Alps, given the expected economic growth in Europe, is set to grow by 75 % between 1992 and 2010, which amounts to average annual growth of more than 3 %. The study estimates passenger growth at 36 % over the same period, an average annual growth rate of 1.7 %.

The study shows that policy greatly influences how transport is split across the different modes and, assuming that European transport policies are fully implemented, rail, which is a reasonably environmentally-friendly mode, could take up a significant proportion of the overall traffic growth and therefore contribute much to the objective of sustainable mobility. Under the most optimistic model, which assumes that all infrastructures planned for 2010 are actually built - notably the new Alpine NEAT tunnel, Brenner and Mont Cenis - the forecast is for rail to increase its share of freight transport across the Alps from 35 % today to more than 40 %. This policy would also enable passenger transport to stabilise its market share.

¹¹ Study of the Development of Transalpine Traffic (Goods and Passengers) – Horizon 2010

Other models clearly demonstrate that the more modern the railway, the greater rail's share of Alpine transport and underline the importance of accompanying policies. The inevitable consequence in the medium and long term of the failure to build all the proposed new rail routes, and in particular the tunnels, will be traffic backed up across the alpine passes. Also inner alpine railways have to be completed. Even an initial reorganisation of alpine infrastructure would lead to a rapid reduction in the amount of freight transport travelling by road.

However, the Contracting Parties of the Alpine Convention (AC)¹² are aware of the potentially high environmental impact of Alpine transport, therefore they obligate themselves in the Transport Protocol of AC to implement a sustainable transport policy¹³

Technical infrastructure such as IT-technologies, data highways and energy supply has reached a high standard due to national and regional development efforts. In the peri-alpine belt a sufficient supply of these technologies has doubtless stimulated the economic boom and the spirit of innovation. However, in rural regions of the alpine core area the use of new information and communication technologies can be encouraged.

Frequently, there is a lack of fantasy and innovation for taking chances and opportunities the new information and communication technologies offer. Compared with the USA this is a phenomenon all over Europe and not only a special weakness of the Alpine Space. But in the co-operation area the opportunities given by an enforced use of new information technology can help to overcome barriers due to the mountainous topography. The philosophy of a global village can help to connect two neighbouring valleys or to improve direct selling of traditional manufactured products by e-commerce all over Europe.

A loss of qualified personnel to both the alpine and peri-alpine agglomerations leads to a lack of multipliers for the implementation of an information society within the Alpine Space.

1.4 Tourism in the Alpine Space – economic prerequisite for survival of several areas

In the Alpine Space a remarkable number of highly developed tourist destinations exist, such as the mountain and ski resorts in Espace Mont Blanc, the lakes of Carinthia or of northern Italy, alpine resorts in Vorarlberg, Tyrol, Salzburg, Salzkammergut, Bavaria, Alto Adige, Provence, Grisons, Valais and Ticino, the cities of Geneva, Milan and Vienna, historical towns such as Venice, the Mediterranean coastal parts of the co-operation area and many others. These areas have mostly to fulfil the traditional vacation function for tourists as well as leisure and recreation functions for the local population in the closer neighbourhood.

Tourism of the Alpine Space is commonly associated with winter sports, climbing, trekking and mountain-biking, and all other kinds of activities in the mountains. But in fact there exists a much greater variety: city-tourism, cultural-tourism, health and bath resorts, wellness and beauty offers, biking-tours, agro-tourism, all kinds of events, con-

¹² Germany, France, Italy, Liechtenstein, Monaco, Austria, Switzerland, Slovenia and the EU

¹³ cf. Transport Protocol, Chapter 1, Art. 1, Aims (quoted from: Protokoll zur Durchführung der Alpenkonvention von 1991 im Bereich Verkehr, Protokoll Verkehr, Luzern, 31. Oktober 2000).

gress- and seminar tourism, tours with historic trains, vacation in national and regional parks, traditional summer vacation at lakes and beaches.

There is no homogeneous "model" of tourism development. Different from the Western Alps, tourism in the Eastern Alps has mainly developed from the "inside" at a decentralised level. In the south-western parts of the alpine core area, especially in France, tourism is much more centralised, especially winter tourism.

The high importance of tourism for the labour market and as a source of income is a precondition for many municipalities and valleys of the Alpine Space to survive. Without tourism there would have been a marked exodus in several municipalities leading to an out-migration from many inner-alpine settlements. Additional income opportunities from tourism are in several areas a prerequisite to stop farm abandonment.

However, the total influence of tourism in the entire Alps is much lower than frequently assumed. Large areas, such as the eastern part of the Austrian Alps and parts of the Italian and Swiss Alps, parts of the river valleys and the lower mountain ranges, show much lower intensities of tourism. Forms of "soft" tourism exist beside intensive resorts and sometimes conflicts arise between tourism and other forms of land use (e.g. agriculture and forestry, environmental protection). However, in many areas a high development potential still exists. In Slovenia, for instance, tourism has recently increased in particular within the framework of local development areas. However, tourism development has to become harmonised with other economic as well as conservation activities in order to benefit from synergies to the largest possible degree.

1.5 The Alpine Space as a centre for education, research and development

The co-operation area is characterised by a high density of institutions for education, research and development. Referring to the Sixth Periodic Report on the social and economic situation and development of the regions of the European Union, a high share of activities is also concentrated in the private sector. However, taking a closer look at the territory, some differences appear:

- Concerning research and development expenditure, German regions of the programme area are in a leading position, followed by the western part of the Alps, whereas in some parts of Austria and northern Italy the expenditure is comparatively low and frequently below EU-average. Different levels of expenditure in research and development therefore exist within the Alpine space and are due to the different regional and national policies.
- Larger centres of research and development are concentrated in the metropolitan areas of the peri-alpine belt. These centres often fulfil the function of national focal points of competence and emphasise a more technical orientation (e.g. universities of Munich, Vienna, Milan, Torino, Zurich, Lyon). Due to their international reputation, they have a high appeal not only for people of alpine origin but also for international work force.
- For research and development outside the metropolitan areas, universities and public and private research institutions in small and medium-sized towns and cities are of great importance. Examples for such locations inside the core area are Bolzano, Padova, Pavia, Trento, Besancon, Grenoble, Graz, Innsbruck, Klagenfurt, Lausanne, Leoben, Linz or Salzburg. But also in the peri-alpine belt important loca-

tions exist with a long tradition as for example Freiburg im Breisgau, Fribourg, Geneva, Lausanne, Bern, Neuchâtel, Basel, Strasbourg, Tübingen, Venice, Ljubljana and many more.

- The Alpine Space hosts small and medium-sized research institutions with sometimes very specific fields of action (e.g. Istituto Trentino di Cultura, CERN in Geneva and CEMAGREF in Grenoble, the centre for ethnic minorities and regional autonomies at the European Academy of Bolzano, the Swiss Federal Research Institute WSL dealing with topics of alpine forestry and avalanches among others, the Fraunhofer Institute for atmospheric environmental research in Garmisch-Partenkirchen).
- SMEs dealing with research and development have been founded in the neighbourhood of universities and research institutions. The job creating effect of these SMEs is of double importance for the Alpine Space: on the one hand they support the economic development of small and medium-sized towns and on the other they provide high specialised education for the local population.

Whereas centres for research and development and consequently centres for innovation are located mostly in metropolitan areas and bigger urban centres, the situation of education and training including adult education and continuing education is more balanced over the entire co-operation area. However, clear disparities occur between well provided small and medium-sized towns and rural areas.

1.6 Agriculture and forestry: tradition and globalisation

Outside the Alpine Space, the image of alpine agriculture might be reduced on dairy farming and the production of meat. In fact, the Alpine Space is a territory with an enormous variety of agricultural products. Production of milk (especially in areas closer to the Alps), crops (more distant from the Alps and with emphasis on the main river basins), permanent crops and herbs (in climatically favoured areas) may give a first impression. Often, products of the Alpine Space like wines of upper Italy, the Rhône valley, Alsace, Kaiserstuhl and the East of Austria, rice from the Po Valley, cheese from France, Italy and Switzerland, herbs from the Provence and milk from Austria or beer from Bavaria have at least European and sometimes world-wide reputation and complete the image of the area.

The liberalisation of global markets has dramatic impacts also on the alpine agriculture, even though clear distinctions between the peri-alpine belt and the alpine core area have to be taken into consideration:

- In unfavourable areas of the Alpine Space the situation of agriculture is quite different. Farmers are directly affected by the disadvantages of mountain farming. Agricultural value added is not sufficient to maintain farms under present market conditions. Furthermore, attractive job alternatives in industry and services such as tourism will speed up farm abandonment. The ongoing trend of the agrarian market towards more globalisation will doubtless aggravate the existing regional disparities in agriculture. On the one hand, farmland will be abandoned on a large scale in many regions of the Alpine Space, on the other hand intensified use or even overuse will predominate in fewer, but more favourable areas like main river basins. Furthermore, the abandonment of farmland endangers both the rich ecosystem of mountain meadows and pastures and the varied cultural landscape, which is one of the major resources for tourism. To meet the requirements for both, maintaining the multi-functionality of mountain agriculture and preservation of social structures, especially in small villages, pub-

lic support for landscape protection as well as for the establishment and improvement of regional market systems based on high quality products is indispensable.

- The structural change of mountain agriculture in fact hides a functional change. In the past mountain agriculture and forestry fulfilled the function of production, the cultural aspect was a secondary product. Due to natural conditions and limited productivity, mountain agriculture cannot compete with lowland agriculture in Europe (and elsewhere in the world). From a social point of view, the future function of mountain agriculture lies also in the preservation of its cultural aspect including the attractive alpine cultural landscape. In addition, agriculture plays an important role for the stability of ecosystems and the richness of biodiversity.
- Also in the foothills and lowlands there exist a lot of farms that are from the economic point of view not profitable anymore. But to protect the characteristic cultural landscape and the rich bio-diversity a major breakdown of agriculture and forestry has to be prevented.
- The shift from production to conservation of the cultural landscape in the Alpine Space and to protection from natural disasters increases with altitude. A differentiated consideration of mountain agriculture and its basic problems is therefore necessary. But also in the basins of the foothills and lowlands new strategies to prevent flooding require solutions based on consensus, bringing together the interests of agriculture and civil protection.
- The multiple functions of agriculture in the maintenance and protection of the cultural landscape are increasingly recognised and appreciated at local, regional and national level. This holds especially true for strategies and programmes to protect the nature and landscapes and to develop programmes and political strategies. Concrete implementation measures have yet to be formulated.
- The peri alpine belt hosts farms which have one of the highest productivity rates compared to the European average. They are well prepared for global market systems, but due to the highly intensified farming systems cause some serious problems and damages onto the environment, like a loss of bio-diversity, emission of greenhouse gases, overuse and pollution of soil and ground water by fertilisers and biocides. On the other hand, farming is endangered by consumption of agricultural land for infrastructure and settlements.

Forests play traditionally an important role as a natural resource, especially for building and generation of energy with emphasis in the northern and eastern regions of the Alpine Space. Following the principle of sustainability, this renewable resource shows an excellent ecological balance sheet. Furthermore, the use of timber as an innovative material offers new perspectives for industries and craft in particular in the SME sector. Apart from the resource function, forests serve also as an important protection against natural hazards such as flooding, rockfall and avalanches throughout the Alpine Space. Not least importantly, they are rich habitats for flora and fauna and serve as a recreation area for the local population and tourists.

In the alpine areas primary sector takes a fundamental role in the maintenance of cultural landscape and protection of the environment. A special role of primary sector in mountainous area is the farmers as providers of common services for the local general public (e.g. mowing, landscape care).

Due to obvious natural disadvantages for production, especially in mountain areas, agricultural issues play an important role in various EU policies. Numerous programmes

and Community initiatives like Objective 5a, 5b and LEADER II have been launched in the structural funds period 1994-1999 especially in the alpine part of the co-operation area in order to find new opportunities for an integrated rural development facing the new challenges of the globalisation of agriculture. High emphasis was given to establishing close co-operation with tourism and handicraft as well as to improving local networking among decision-makers and other actors. Supported by other agrarian instruments in the scope of the CAP, the programmes and initiatives aimed at preserving these areas as a place for living and working.

Even if the number and territorial extension of these activities will be reduced under the present structural fund period, numerous programmes aimed at improving the situation of agriculture such as the rural development programmes according to Art. 33 will remain, continue (partly as phasing-out) or be started. Thus, a close co-ordination with the CIP INTERREG IIIB is required.

1.7 The natural and cultural heritage: expression of alpine identity

The Alpine Space and particularly the alpine core area is hosting an enormous variety of sensitive ecosystems. They form a reservoir for natural resources of European importance, offer a unique nature, landscape and cultural heritage and are also basis for the specific image of the Alps as a "clean" area. Apart from the very natural conditions, farming has contributed to the wealth of the Alpine Space in terms of bio-diversity and habitats. The unspoiled nature and the attractive landscape form the main basis for international tourism and recreation of the population inside and outside the Alps. Concerning the relevance and situation of the natural heritage it can be stated:

- Due to the intensive use of land in the peri-alpine belt, sensitive ecosystems are rather rare compared to the alpine core area. The aspect of use was emphasised in the past, not least caused by suitable topographical preconditions.
- Also in the alpine valleys housing, economic and tourism activities as well as transport infrastructure hardly leave enough space for natural landscapes, such as river forests, wetlands or natural lakesides. In the higher, especially south western alpine regions, an ongoing decay of traditional farming on the one hand, and a further exploitation by tourist infrastructure resulting in already apparent symptoms of overuse in several tourist resorts on the other, determine the negative development of the alpine environment. At the same time, especially in the Southern Alps, the abandonment of farmland leads to a return to mountain wilderness and a re-immigration of predators.
- The present situation concerning national nature conservation varies a lot in the alpine states. There are differences in terms of legal practices, categories of protected areas, spatial extension and using restrictions.
- Water and soil are still influenced by air pollution due to an increase of traffic, as well as to long-distance transport of toxic agents from areas outside the Alps. Pollution therefore represents a problem of European dimension. It does not only spoil the quality of the resources themselves (drinking-water, water as substratum in special habitats), but also endangers the basis of other economic activities (e.g. clean air in recreation areas). Furthermore, in some areas heavy consumption of water, also for producing snow and generating energy above all for alpine and peri-alpine agglomerations, has a negative impact on natural habitats and landscape attractiveness.

The Sixth Environment Action Programme of the European Community 2001-2010 underlines the importance of mountainous areas for preserving biodiversity and the necessity for a specific integrated management, especially regarding the linkages with tourism. From the view of the ESDP, concerted actions are required to achieve both, a better networking of areas with high natural value (not only within the alpine core-area but also between the core area and the peri-alpine belt) and a balanced spatial development. Therefore, the implementation of the European ecological network "Natura 2000" and its co-ordination with regional development policies is of major importance.

Potential negative effects should be investigated by means of environmental impact assessment. Innovative approaches on local or regional level could be launched in the scope of the LIFE-programme. Finally, the Alpine Convention should be mentioned as a central policy document, even though it has been drawn up only for the mountainous part of the area covered by the Alpine Space Programme. The CIP Alpine Space will therefore aim at co-ordinating the activities mentioned and at providing tools for integrated territorial development on this issue.

The cultural heritage in all aspects and its whole diversity forms an unique common value of European importance. Many languages (German, Swiss-German, Italian, French, Slovenian, Raeto-Romanic and Ladinic, Croatian, Hungarian), are spoken with an enormous richness of dialects. Traditional customs vary from east to west, from north to south, from valley to valley and even from village to village.

But similarly to the natural heritage, disparities can be observed also with respect to the cultural heritage. Areas of urban influence often show an increasing loss of traditional skills, e.g. handicraft, building, art, literature, language and customs, whereas in rural areas, conservation strategies with often low acceptance for innovation can be found. This effect can be observed throughout the entire Alpine Space. In the last years, activities for a revival of these skills have been started, notably through various cultural exchanges including the creation and development of networks based on cultural activities.

Due to farm abandonment and depopulation in several valleys of the southern Alps, settlement structures as an important feature of landscape and cultural heritage slowly disappear. Traditional types of architecture, especially those with a close link to traditional farming techniques, as well as rural and historic buildings as centres of social life in small villages are threatened. Several pilot projects in Italy and France have proved the existence of effective instruments for reconstructing such historic buildings and using them as a part of a unique tourist highlight. Economic benefits as well as new jobs have led to a reversal of depopulation tendencies in some cases. In Bavaria and Austria a wide range of good examples in renovation and development of villages ("Dorferneuerung") as well as preservation of cultural heritage can be found. In Switzerland various examples for a successful revival of traditional products exist. These products are appreciated as typical regional souvenirs or are offered as regional specialities in hotels and restaurants. Such measures ensure economic benefits as well as conservation of knowledge of traditional production techniques. Visiting farms or workshops for traditional techniques form additional services in tourism with a view to repositioning within the market of alpine destinations and so enhancing competitiveness.

Several European policies and programmes such as ESDP, European Landscape Convention, CULTURE 2000 etc. express the importance of the cultural heritage. At present, a working group established in the scope of the Alpine Convention elaborates basic requirements for a protocol "population and culture". Initiatives aim not only at the conservation of cultural sites and traditions but also at the development and innovation

facing the future challenges. The CIP Alpine Space will put high efforts to provide opportunities for mutual exchange of information and knowledge and to assist in valorisation of the cultural richness.

1.8 Natural resources and risks - not only an inner alpine topic

Within the European territory the Alps are an important reservoir of natural resources. Apart from soil (including minerals) and air, water for drinking (“water tower of Europe”), and for generation of energy as well as timber are of European importance. On the one hand, these natural assets are the subject of protection, but on the other they play an important role as an economic resource and a site criterion.

The living and working space as well as the unspoiled nature are endangered not only by natural hazards, but also by overexploitation of resources. For instance, the European trend to increasing demand for water for households, agriculture and tourism as underlined in the ESDP leads to serious negative impacts. Furthermore, conflicts of interest between alpine and peri-alpine areas (e.g. supply of drinking water or energy from alpine hydropower plants to peri-alpine regions, impact of long-distance transport of air pollutants) as well as different attitudes in regard to conservation and development strategies are evident and require the development of integrated management strategies.

The disasters of flooding on Rhine, Danube, Po and Rhône in the recent past made it evident that natural risks are not only a problem of the alpine core space, but also of the peri-alpine belt. As experiences show, effects of snowmelt in the Alps in spring or heavy rain fall also have huge effects on territories far away from the mountains. This is not least to some extent caused by recent sealing activities in terms of settlement and infrastructure in this part of the Alpine Space.

Flooding has become a major problem and a growing threat for the Alpine Space. The Alpine Space Programme should encourage the development of common perspectives and strategies to deal with flood mitigation, building on what has been achieved in other programmes. This is true in particular of the actions initiated under the previous INTERREG IIC Programme between France and Italy, in the fields of forecasting, data gathering, and raising of public awareness about flood risks, all of which can be relevant for other parts of the Alpine Space programme area.

Taking into consideration the experts' forecasts on climate change with corresponding increase of precipitation rates, especially during winter times, increase of heavy storms and generally a global warming followed by a retreat of permafrost soil, dramatic scenarios may be built for the future. All the above factors will presumably lead to a growing danger of natural risks, such as flooding, erosion, rockfalls, land slides, forest fires and avalanches, and furthermore represent a threat to the Alpine Space as a living and economic area.

1.9 The environment: an Alpine Space topic of European relevance

The Alpine Space is a large area, comprising different administrative systems and environmental conditions. A vast number of studies, regulations and contracts on various environmental issues can be found, but no comprehensive studies exist as yet on the state of the environment, pressures and responses.

Generally it can be stated that the Alpine Space shares most of environmental concerns with the rest of the European Union. Especially the Alpine core area is, considered to be of European importance ecologically, but is also extremely fragile.

The specific topography of the Alpine Area, the difference in local, regional and national legislation and administration make it necessary to consider the environmental situation on a small scale level. The following survey focuses on the most important environmental issues.

Air quality

The quality of air has improved considerably over the past decade in the co-operation area, but there are still problems, for example in urban areas or along transport corridors going through Alpine valleys. Also, a shift has occurred in the character of pollution: the problems with "classical" pollutants such as sulphur dioxide or dust have diminished, but at the same time other pollutants, ozone for example, have gained importance.

Despite various improvements brought about by restructuring and a stricter environmental legislation, the pressure from industry, power generation and motorised road transport still persists. Characteristic for the Alpine Space is a growing pollution from motorised transport, e. g. on the main routes crossing Alps in the north-south direction: Inn valley, Brenner, Eisack valley, Gotthard freeway.

Activities to curb air pollution were started at all levels, from the international to the local, and include for example preparation of the Transport Protocol in the framework of the Alpine Convention, national transport policies to regulate transit transport, local initiatives such as the Climate Alliance.

Water

The issue has partly already been dealt with in the previous chapters, especially from the point of view of use of water for drinking and hydropower generation. Mentioned is also the danger of flooding.

The Alpine core area is generally regarded as a reservoir of high quality drinking water, supplying also the lowlands. The quantity and quality of water is, though, not secure. The changing climate/weather patterns, especially the variation of precipitation and extreme weather events are contributing to an altered regime of the alpine watercourses and of availability of water. Shifts in land use, such as abandonment or compaction of soil by buildings (roads, parking, housing etc.) contribute further to these phenomena through changes in water storage capacity and water transport in soils. The quality of water is mostly estimated as good, but a growing pressure from various activities such as intensive agriculture or tourism may worsen the situation. Acidification is a prominent topic for mountain waterbodies and there are cases of eutrophication of mountain lakes.

In the peri-alpine belt some large European river systems are found, for example Danube, Po, Rhine, Rhone, as well as numerous smaller ones. The quality of water in these rivers has largely improved over the past decade, in numerous cases for one or more grades. A persistent problem remains the quality of groundwater, which is often used for human consumption: despite various measures, the nitrate content, remains of

pesticides, heavy metals and other pollutants may exceed the values, set for use in households.

As for pressures on the water quantity, the growth of demand from households and industry has levelled off to some extent. In the supply, a severe problem remain the losses during the transfer of water to consumers. Introduction of new technologies, closed cycles etc. has contributed to a moderate growth of demand from industry.

The main "pressure groups" from the point of view of pollution are the agriculture, industry and households. Intensive agriculture presents a problem in the mountainous regions as well as in the lowlands, contributing to pollution of waterbodies with organic matter, nitrates, pesticide remains, which leads among other to eutrophication. In the Alpine Space the food, pulp and paper, metal and other processing industries, which have a high polluting potential are quite common. Their impact has, though, lessened due to restructuring and technological advances. In some mountainous parts of the co-operation area, tourism is a significant pressure factor (waste water, artificial snow, traffic) due to the high sensitivity of the environment. In winter tourism, the exploration pressure on glaciers for skiing is rather strong, and will possibly increase with further global warming, which means also a considerable threat to this enormous "water reservoir". Generally, the treatment of waste water has improved, leading to lower burdens from industry and households.

The improvements in water quality in the past decade have been due to stricter legislation, targeted policies and better implementation. Very significant in this respect has been the clean-up in industry, eventhough it is partly also a consequence of closing down of plants. Regions and urban areas have been engaged in efforts to improve the supply of water and treatment of waste water. Also for the future there are plans in some countries to introduce better waste water treatment facilities. Comprehensive approaches to water management have been proposed and implemented in parts of the Alpine Space, which should encompass whole catchment areas. Often, this requires transnational co-operation. Despite targeted measures, for example in the framework of the EU Nitrate Directive or agri-environmental schemes, pollution from agriculture remains a severe problem requiring further concerted efforts. Another issue that needs to be pursued more vigorously are policies and measures targeting the demand side of water supply.

Soil

Eventhough the problems connected with soil are numerous and rather well known, quantitative data are not widely available. Therefore it is difficult to comprehensively assess the state. An effort will be made in the following to point at problems and their causes.

A prominent topic in the Alpine Space is the pressure on land use, caused by urban development, construction of transport facilities and tourism. As already mentioned, this issue is pertinent in the mountainous areas where the pressure is especially felt in the narrow Alpine valleys and in the main valleys where most of economic activities takes place, but also in the lowlands where the economic development, growth of population in urban areas and changes in lifestyles (smaller households etc.) are requiring new areas. These developments are first of all impacting on a finite and non-renewable resource, as well as bringing secondary effects, such as surface sealing, soil erosion or diffuse contamination. Further mentioned should be contaminated sites,

which may be abandoned industrial zones or mining sites, waste disposal sites etc. that also require inventories and remedial action.

The problem of soil erosion is very serious for the mountainous part of the Alpine Space. Along with the Mediterranean, the Alps are currently considered as one of the most endangered areas in Europe (EEA, 1999). Beside the action of water and wind, extreme events, such as landslides contribute to the severity of the problem. The instability due to the permafrost changes is also a major concern. There is a complex chain of causes, ranging from changes in land use, unsustainable agricultural and forestry practices, unsuitable technical solutions applied, to changes in weather patterns.

The situation regarding soil contamination differs in the mountainous and lowland parts of the co-operation area. While some sources, such as transport or agriculture, are common, the intensity and effects are different. Here the high sensitivity of the mountainous ecosystems should be exposed as the factor requiring due consideration, which at equal loads means stronger effects of, for example, pollution from transport, acidification due to long-range transmission of pollutants or surplus nutrients from agriculture. In the lowlands, urban areas are experiencing pressures from industry, power generation and transport, whereas in rural areas agriculture and tourism are the main pressure factor.

The responses to the problems of soil have, up till now, been rather scattered and unsatisfactory. This may partly be due to the complexity of the problems and lack of "hard" data. Urban and land use policies have started to address the problems of rational use of land, redevelopment of derelict and contaminated sites, transport in urban areas. Furthermore, measures have been planned and implemented at the EU level and in single states to lessen the pollution from industry, power generation and agriculture.

Waste generation and management

In the past decade, the trend in waste generation in the EU has been growth of its quantity (10 % between 1990 and 1995), and there are predictions that it will continue also in the period until 2010 (EEA, 1999). Developments in single countries regarding quantities and relations between categories of waste follow different patterns and there is no data available for the Alpine Space area specifically. Problems related to waste are numerous: beside the growing quantities, there is the issue of adequate management, secondary pollution from landfills and incineration plants, land use problems related to location of landfills, treatment of hazardous waste, the large amounts of waste that are being transported within and between the countries of the EU.

By estimates, about half of the waste in the EU originates from industrial production processes, construction and demolition activities, whereas municipal waste, mining waste and waste from other sources contribute about equal part to the other half. Also here, differences between countries are significant (EEA, 1999). One special problem in the mountainous part of the Alpine Space is the waste produced as a result of tourism and recreational activities. Combined with high ecological sensitivity of the area and lack of space it represents an additional burden on the environment.

The issue of waste has received a lot of attention at the EU level and also in single states. A Community Strategy for Waste Management was adopted by the European Commission in 1989, followed by the Waste Framework Directive, which represent the basis for the EU policy on waste. The priorities are on reduction, reuse and recycling. In spite of this, the currently predominant management practices are still landfilling and

incineration of waste. In the Alpine Space, some regions and local areas have been quite successful in setting up well functioning waste management systems, but many issues, such as recycling, require higher level, integrated solutions.

Noise

The so called environmental noise is attributable mainly to road, rail and air traffic, airports, industry and recreational activities. These disturbances are mostly concentrated in urban areas. For the EU an estimate has been made, that more than 30 % of the population live in dwellings with significant exposure to road noise (EEA, 1999). Characteristic of the Alpine Space are further high noise levels along the major transport corridors, especially in the narrow parts of the Alpine valleys. In the Alps, another problem at the regional and local level are the potential conflicts between noise generating activities and those requiring peaceful environment. One may think of transport and tourism, different types of recreational activities and spa tourism, transport and recreation vs. nature conservation.

Noise abatement may be pursued through different measures, such as technical and engineering solutions, legal instruments, education and information. At the regional and local level there is a need for integrated solutions, as well as for exchange of experience between areas with similar problems.

Human health

The quality of the environment impacts in the final consequence on human health and quality of life in general. Since environmental problems in the Alpine Space are similar to those in the rest of EU, it can be assumed that the same applies to the issue of human health. There is a growing evidence of correlation between air, water, soil and food quality and risk for, or occurrence of certain diseases.

Human health is a new priority topic in the framework of the Sixth Environment Action Programme of the European Community. In the Programme, the need for more research, for new indicators, a re-examination of existing standards and limit values is called for. An important requirement, also for the national, regional and local levels, is the integrated view on, and dealing with, the environmental issues.

2. Future development trends for the Alpine Space

2.1 Change of Europe brings new challenges for the Alpine Space

Even though being centred in the heart of the European Union, the strategic location of Alpine Space changed in the last decade. Not only the opening of the “iron curtain” but also the change of markets modified the relative position in space and its competitiveness. In economics, classical industrial production has developed to technology orientated manufacturing, the change of consumer behaviour in leisure and travel has altered the mountain area to a second and third vacancy region, the effects of globalisation to the common agriculture market accelerated the structural change-over dramatically. The main principle of spatial development has changed from a sectoral to an integrated approach of sustainable development.

The relative position of the Alpine Space in Europe will in the future move to the southern and western part of the European continent. New strong west-east axes will develop respectively reinforce in the north, only touching the Alpine Space slightly tangentially in its eastern part (line Stuttgart – Munich – Salzburg – Vienna). Also the southern axes (line Marseille - Genoa – Milan – Venice - Ljubljana) will be of great importance for the connection with the whole eastern Europe, with much higher potentialities in consequence of the Slovene accession to the EU. To participate in the new development, the eastern part of the Alpine Space has already set into life again the traditional co-operation with the Danube area. These changes are accompanied by the risk of a strong divergence between western and eastern Alps.

The north-south axes (line coming in the west from north to Strasbourg – Bale going to the south of Italy and France and in the east from the north to Bavaria – Salzburg – Vienna – Slovenia and/or Italy) will be redefined, especially concerning the Baltic and the Adriatic area. The future role of the Alpine Space and its gateway cities to connect the Mediterranean with the Baltic and Scandinavian area is obvious. To enforce its competitiveness as one of the most innovative European regions the Alpine Space must play an active role in designing the structure of these traditional and new axes. Not only the question of accessibility to the TEN but also its sustainable organisation must be solved. Within the scope of transport systems, development restrictions for new capacities caused by the alpine topography are obvious. Further disadvantages arise from the partly incompatible and inflexible railroad systems. The technological deficits in rail transport systems are well known and brought up an enormous growth of road traffic in the last decade. The restricted “carrying capacity” of mountain ecosystems as well as the stress to the population living along the transit routes require new solutions. The issue of transportation reduction time between source and destination by sustainable transport systems must be solved first.

The tradition in co-operation among the alpine partner countries means a strong advantage. However, this tradition concerning the entire Alpine Space was either more sectoral or did not cover the entire territory, as for example in the case of the Alpine Convention. Economic and ecological concepts covering the entire Alpine Space as a strategic spatial unit have been missing.

The leading position in research and development not only in a European but also in a global dimension has led to a high attractiveness as an area of settlement for new technology orientated companies. The need of highly specialised and well educated labour force has grown tremendously in the Alpine Space. The competition on the labour force market has just begun and it will intensify dramatically in the next decade be-

cause of the demographic structure of the European population. High-tech regions which lack permanent innovation as well as regions with a strong economic orientation toward the service sector are more dependent on younger work force. Keeping and enforcing its leading position in economic key sectors such as information technology, bio- and medical technology as well as in the field of tourism will only be possible if the competition for labour force can be won by innovative settlement strategies and by keeping high quality of settlement and landscape structures respectively. Furthermore fast adaptation to modern economic trends in the field of education and, a wide range of education services training, including adult education and continuing training, and an ongoing improvement of working conditions at universities and research institutes have to contribute considerably to an enhanced competitiveness of the Alpine Space.

2.2 Strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats for further development

Inside the Alpine Space there exist very powerful regions, e.g. the valleys of Danube, Po, Rhine and Rhone as well as the metropolitan areas, e.g. Bale, Lyon, Marseille, Milan, Munich, Turin, Vienna and Zurich. In the surroundings of the big cities, peri-urban areas with strong development dynamic all lying in the alpine belt grew up, but only parts of them are well or at least satisfyingly connected. The connection of the northern alpine area Rhine valley – Bale – Zurich and the southern area Marseille – Rhone valley – Lyon is still weak. Also the connection between the western alpine part Marseille – Rhone valley – Lyon to the north eastern part Munich – Vienna as well as to the south eastern part Milan – Triest/Udine – Ljubljana is not well developed. In order to play an active role in a new European spatial structure not only the connections from the outside but especially the connections inside the co-operation space are a prerequisite for further positive development.

Furthermore within the Alpine Space there exist many regionally important medium-sized towns and cities with strong economies. Well known examples are Augsburg, Tübingen, Konstanz or Freiburg im Breisgau in the German part, Aosta, Belluno, Bozen, Genoa, Trento, Merano, Triest or Venice in Italy, Chur, Fribourg, St. Gallen, Neuchâtel, Lausanne or Sion in Switzerland, Chambéry, Grenoble or Nice in France, Graz, Innsbruck, Klagenfurt, Linz or Salzburg in Austria, Ljubljana in Slovenia or Vaduz in Liechtenstein. Metropolitan areas as well as cities are highly attractive due to their distinguished infrastructure and working places. As an example for excellent structures the sector of research and education can be given. Not only in the big, but also in the smaller cities research institutions and universities of international reputation can be found.

Nevertheless, strong economic and social disparities are evident. 15 regions range over the community average of GDP and two of them even have a GDP 50 % higher than the average. At the other end of the scale, only two regions have a GDP lower than 75 % of the EU average, meaning that disparities between strong and weak regions of more than 200 % in GDP exist (on NUTS II level). Detailed analyses on NUTS III level show, that these disparities are even stronger, sometimes within small distances.

Youth unemployment rates of the German, Swiss and Austrian parts are significantly lower than 10 %, while in the south-western part rates are partly above 15 %, some-

times higher than 25 %. Concerning the annual population growth rate, correlating effects of a negative rate occur in regions with high youth unemployment.

The effect of urbanisation is still going on and leads to serious problems in rural areas. Especially younger people with high qualifications often have to commute due to a lack of adequate jobs in rural areas. The purchasing power flows up to cities, infrastructure and supply with basic goods and services become reduced or suspended.

This is a well known phenomenon in rural areas. However, consequences of urbanisation processes are much harder felt in mountainous areas than in the lowlands, especially in the fields of landscape conservation and preservation of the cultural heritage. Mountain landscapes play a main role in providing renewable resources and offering recreation facilities. Today a declining economic importance of agriculture and demographic changes induce rapid shifts in land use (including land abandonment all over the alpine core area, especially in the western and southern Alps). An increase in fallow land and the return of forest contribute considerably to a loss of habitats, biodiversity and cultural heritage at all scales.

In contrast to other European territories the Alpine Space has excellent prerequisites to develop strategies for preventing urbanisation and depopulation processes of rural areas. In the field of research and development, high leisure attractiveness of rural areas especially in mountain regions and foothills should build the basis for a settlement policy towards new innovation centres. A close co-operation between public and private research and development institutes, universities, training and education institutes (including adult education and continuing training) and local authorities provides for new possibilities for a sustainable spatial development. In areas with a high tourist frequentation, market opportunities for regional products can be used to increase incomes and stabilise agricultural structures.

Even if the alpine wealth in cultural heritage in terms of landscape, handicraft, building, art, language and customs is obvious, its diversity and persistency is endangered by several factors. Furthermore, the aspect of conservation has often been emphasised in the past, whereas the readiness for further development of cultural traditions is sometimes on a rather low level. Finally, the different languages in the Alps make cultural exchange to a certain extent more difficult. The high educational level of the younger generation in terms of languages builds a solid basis for a more intensive cultural and economic exchange. Very positive experiences gained by networking projects show, that identification with the Alpine Space leads to better conditions for transnational co-operation.

Culture and education form the environment, create regional identity and provide for orientation and guidance for the young generation. They promote self-responsibility, creativity, and tolerance. Common activities in the various fields of art, culture and sport are very well suited to deepen mutual understanding and form a basis for solidarity.

Mostly unrecognised is the structural change taking place in the tourism sector. Travelling behaviour as well as market structures have changed dramatically. In the summer season, coastal areas have successfully relieved the mountain areas as the main vacancy destinations. As for the winter season, climate change has worsened the competitiveness of the foothill areas. By reduced flight prices cities became international and global competitors. Large parts of the Alpine Space have changed to a second and third short trip destination. Organisation structures of enterprises as well as regional tourism organisations have to some extent failed to adapt to the new situation. Also the

opportunities given by modern information technology are frequently not yet recognised, the implementation not yet realised.

However, tourism has been essential to the economic development of the Alps, but it has also been a major source of conflicts between economic and ecological perspectives. Today's competition in the tourism market encourages concentration tendencies (concentration of infrastructure, transport facilities, jobs etc.) so that tourism infrastructure in municipalities with very high tourism intensity is increasingly displacing more and more agriculture and traditional housing structures. In addition, the most attractive regions run the risk of being overburdened by an excessive increase of holiday homes. Fortunately, a change in paradigm in the sense of a sustainable tourism development can be recognised more and more. It has become a well accepted fact that an unscathed nature and attractive landscapes are the basic capital for successful tourism.

Protection of population and settlements from natural risks is one of the main task in the Alpine Space. Thereby mountain forests are of vital importance, in particular in the field of water regimes, soil conservation and protection from avalanches. Damages on forests due to continuous emission of air pollutants and ambient ozone production, but also natural hazards like heavy storms and calamities will increasingly endanger the protective function of mountain forests. Furthermore, climate change, former mistakes in developing settlement structures and infrastructure as well as changes in land- use by farm- abandonment will contribute to an increase of natural risks and hazards. Particularly recent extreme natural hazards (e.g. dramatic avalanches in winter 1999 and 2000) may have an alarming effect and show the sensibility of the Alps as a living and economic area. They have demonstrated that technical solutions always have their limits and that only a mix admitting natural dynamics and technical prevention can reduce the overall risk. Subsequently, risks of flooding, rockfalls, land slides and avalanches will have to be managed by suitable actions in terms of prevention, forecasting and/or technical control.

Water from the alpine core area is one of the most important renewable resources of the Alpine Space. Not only as drinking water for the metropolitan areas but also as a source for energy production. The utilisation of mountain water reservoirs as a resource for big cities in the lowlands reaches a new dimension in the context of privatisation of the public supply sector. Future private supply companies will open and enlarge their networks and pressure on the mountain resources will grow significantly due to the possibilities to sell alpine water on the European market. This requires intensive discussions about the economic relationship between source areas and supply companies and calls for strict regulations to avoid overuse and damages of the fragile mountain ecosystems. However, alpine energy sources (including water) ought to be used in an atmosphere of partnership between the alpine core and the metropolitan areas.

Table 2 gives a short summary on weaknesses and strengths, threats and opportunities for further development.

Table 2: Summary of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in the programme area.

	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Spatial location in Europe	<p>heart of old EU</p> <p>hinge between northern Europe and the Mediterranean area</p> <p>strong axes pass or touch the area</p>	<p>permeability of axes parts</p> <p>cross-boarder and transnational connection within the peri-alpine belt</p> <p>spatial fragmentation due to national borderlines and geographical barriers</p> <p>few connections among axes</p>	<p>+ independent hinge between northern and southern Europe</p> <p>+ connection western Mediterranean - Danube area</p> <p>+ new axes Mediterranean/Adriatic - Baltic area</p>	<p>- more peripheral location in enlarged Europe</p> <p>- geographical distance from the EU-institutions</p>
Spatial structure on regional level	<p>cities with very good infrastructure and high quality jobs</p> <p>leisure and culture in- and outside cities</p> <p>high leisure quality in (well developed) tourism-areas</p> <p>closeness of small cities to natural environment</p>	<p>still strong urbanisation effects</p> <p>lack of supply of basic goods and services in rural areas</p> <p>unbalances due to urbanisation effects</p> <p>weak connectivity between rural areas and cities</p>	<p>+ new co-operations of rural areas and cities in the field of innovation centres / winning of high qualified working force</p>	<p>- depopulation of rural areas, especially in the south-western parts of the alpine core area</p> <p>- increasing of disconnection between rural areas and cities</p>
Population structure	<p>high education levels</p> <p>mostly open to innovations</p> <p>high rate of active population</p>	<p>unbalanced age structure and resulting structure of working force</p> <p>migration of younger people to cities</p> <p>depopulation of rural areas</p>	<p>+ working opportunities in innovation and technology branches</p>	<p>- increasing depopulation of rural areas, especially in the south-western parts of the alpine core area</p> <p>- successor problems in mountain agriculture</p> <p>- missing working force in growing innovation and technology branches</p> <p>- abandonment of mountain agriculture</p>

Economy	<p>high to very high GDP leading position in the new economy sectors</p> <p>low unemployment rates high presence of SMEs strong tourist destination</p>	<p>strong disparities of GDP, especially on NUTS III (and valley) level</p> <p>youth unemployment in south-west</p> <p>lack of compliance with new market structures</p> <p>low economic development in the rural mountain areas</p>	<p>+ winning new market shares in an enlarged EU</p> <p>+ new opportunities for sustainable eco-tourism</p>	<p>- losing leading position in productive sectors because of missing working force</p> <p>- economic lagging behind of the mountain areas compared to industrialised cities in the valleys</p>
Traffic and transport	<p>large number of connections with other spaces</p> <p>relatively good quality public transport network in mountain areas</p> <p>modern and powerful gateway structures of metropolitan areas</p>	<p>connection between metropolitan areas sometimes missing or weak</p> <p>too much emphasis on road transport at the expenses of rail transport</p> <p>strong environmental impact along transit axes</p> <p>incompatible and inflexible rail transport technology</p> <p>weak inner connection network</p>	<p>+ new innovative and integrated rail transport</p> <p>+ reinforcement of inner connections</p>	<p>- strong growth of transport only on roads, especially of freight transport along transit axes</p> <p>- development of EU axes (weak alpine connections)</p> <p>- diminishing of public transport for rural areas</p> <p>- increasing environmental impacts of transit traffic</p>
Information society	<p>relatively good technical infrastructure, especially in and between metropolitan areas and small and medium-sized cities</p>	<p>some deficits of technical infrastructure in rural areas</p> <p>weak use of IT-technologies, especially in some rural areas</p>	<p>+ promoting wider and more diverse use of information infrastructure/technologies and innovation in rural areas</p>	<p>- migration of high qualified work force from rural to urban areas</p>
Research, development and education	<p>tight network of leading R&D institutions</p> <p>partly highest EU rate of investment in the field of R&D</p> <p>high rate of private R&D</p> <p>dense network of universities / higher education institutions</p> <p>variety of different school types</p>	<p>strong disparities between metropolitan and rural areas, especially rural alpine core areas</p> <p>lack of technology and innovation centres in rural and mountain areas</p> <p>weak transnational co-operation among R&D centres</p>	<p>+ stop of urbanisation by close co-operation cities / rural areas</p> <p>+ innovation through transnational R&D projects</p> <p>+ high qualified labour force</p>	<p>- loss of leading position due to missing working force</p>

Agriculture and forestry	high quality and diversity of products good image of alpine products (use of cross marketing effects) market leadership in specialised sectors	decrease of younger population in agriculture depopulation of rural areas decrease of per capita income high rate of land abandonment especially in the south western parts of the alpine core area and low mountains ranges	+ higher incomes by regional product labelling and distribution	- loss of cultural heritage - loss of landscape attractiveness as a basis of tourism - loss of the local typical production - successor problems in mountain agriculture
Tourism	strong destinations in tourism leading position on world market great variety in tourism products additional income in agriculture additional demand for regional products by tourist	tourism organisations and enterprises often not adapted to new market structures missing brand "Alpine Space" with concerted marketing activities	+ attracting tourists + new source markets in eastern Europe + better market presence by modern information technologies	- without common marketing organisation losing competition with other zones well promoted by tour operators - climate change leads to stronger disparities of higher alpine areas and foothills - effects of mass tourism
Natural and cultural heritage, landscapes	richness and diversity of Alpine Space tradition of transnational co-operation in field of environmental protection	high pressure by settlement and tourism/leisure in well developed regions growth of traffic and transport depopulation of rural areas (e.g. south western parts of the Alps)	+ new sources of income by protection and maintenance + better integration between environmental concerns and productive activities	- overburdening of attractive regions and protected areas - loss of cultural heritage and landscape in rural areas
Natural risks and resources	efficient, high quality local measures for prevention and prediction richness of water resources (drinking water / energy)	lack of suitable technical solutions to handle new types of extreme events high influence of human activity on nature and ecosystems by draining weak transnational co-operation on common standards of prevention and prediction	+ additional income for local authorities by selling water and energy + define guidelines for best practice on the prediction of risks	- growing danger for settlement area by climate change - pressure on (water-resources by private supply companies

3. Programme objectives and strategy

The general programme objectives give an idea of possible answers to the question “where to go”, the programme strategy tells “the best vehicle” to use for the way. Under general objectives those are summarised, which are of a certain strategic relevance. Operative objectives with a close link to possible priorities and measures will not be described, as they are implicitly given in the next chapter of the programme. Consequently in the section “programme strategy” only general considerations about possible principles and instruments are discussed. They build the basis for the programme implementation procedures described in chapter 12.

3.1 General programme objectives

A synopsis of the given strength – weakness analysis under reflection of the future risks and opportunities leads to the general programme objectives. There are four main objectives:

- I. To establish the Alpine Space as a powerful area in the European network of development areas: This would make it necessary to develop a common understanding of the role of the Alpine Space in terms of sustainable spatial development and to actively promote this by various activities and measures.
- II. Initialisation and support of sustainable development initiatives within the Alpine Space under consideration of the relationship between the alpine core region and the fringes of the Alps. This would cover transnational activities in various sectors from Community to communal level with a stress on the most important issues of the Alpine development.
- III. The solution of issues of accessibility and transport by the promotion of sustainable modes of transport and communication.
- IV. Protection of the richness of the natural and cultural heritage, preservation of population and infrastructure from natural hazards by the development of common tools, exchange of methods and information.

3.2 Programme strategy

The common aim is the development of the Alpine Space and its overall reinforcement in the general context of territorial competition regulated by the processes of globalisation and accelerated in Europe, in these years, by the completion of the single market and by the introduction of the Euro.

The programme strategy should be guided by the following principles::

- The basic principle of sustainable development in its economic, social and environmental dimension should be represented in all operations in order to avoid contradictory efforts between conservation and development.
- All operations should provide equal opportunities for men and women.

- Innovation orientation should be the basis of all activities and should include new developments, new technologies and should be oriented on new trends and existing potentials.

The objectives listed above should be achieved by the following strategies

- Transnationality

All partnerships must have a strong transnational component. Especially in the field of defining a common understanding of spatial development strategies a participation of all partner countries is strongly recommended.

- Building on existing networks, previous programmes and experiences

New operations should be built on existing experience and networks in the various fields relevant to the programme as far as possible. Thereby emphasis should be on bringing together all isolated initiatives for either the Western or Eastern Alps that were launched during the last period of the structural funds in order to reach a “corporate identity” for the entire Alpine Space. In this context a strengthened co-operation also with the participating Non-Member States Liechtenstein and Switzerland has to be envisaged.

- Achieving a wide spread commitment of the population of Alpine Space

The beneficiaries of the programme must represent relevant groupings of the alpine population. Consequently, innovative solutions must take into account the needs of the local population and should be consensus-based to a widest possible degree. Bottom-up approaches should be sufficiently supported.

A wide partnership must be developed including not only partners from national, regional and local authorities but also economic and social partners and other relevant and competent bodies such as NGOs, representatives of the academic and educational world, private institutions and companies.

Public relation and information activities for the programme itself as well as for project results have to accompany the implementation process from the very beginning to the end. Furthermore, exchange of experience and knowledge at programme and priority level should contribute to the internal coherence.

- Focussing on integrated approaches

The sector-orientated procedure of problem solving should be overcome and transferred into an integrated approach bringing together different views from all technical aspects concerned.

In all operations the use of new technologies such as **information and communication technologies** should be encouraged¹⁴ and the innovative aspect of solutions has to be stressed. The inclusion of actions which pursue those objectives of the *eEurope*

¹⁴ The following types of transnational actions are recommended: Projects to strengthen communication networks; actions to enhance network security; projects to provide telematic services, including e-health, e-commerce, tourism and distance education; projects addressing cross-lingual aspects of Information Systems; projects to enhance transnational Geographical Information Systems; actions to support the interoperability of governmental and regional information systems; actions to enhance and exchange digital content such as cultural and scientific objects.

2002 Action Plan which are most pertinent in the context of transnational co-operation in the area covered by the programme could also be considered¹⁵.

- Tangible Results
 - After a more conceptual phase in the scope of previous programmes (CIP Western Mediterranean and Latin Alps and the ERDF Art. 10 Pilot Action Programme Eastern Alps) a strong focus should be on implementation of gained experiences and knowledge and on tangible and visible results.
-

4. Priorities and measures

4.1 The way to define priorities and measures

The definition of priorities and measures is based on the European Commission's guidelines for the Community Initiative INTERREG III, strand B¹⁶. They are derived from the programme objectives and strategies indicated in the last chapter and follow two superior lines:

- reinforcement of "short networks" within the Alpine Space and strengthening the territorial cohesion with a view to overcoming as much as possible the barrier effect caused by geographic and geopolitical factors;
- improvement of access to "long networks" to slow down the current isolation process of the Alpine Space in the European context and to strengthen its position in the inter-territorial competition.

Moreover, in order to ensure a wide partnership throughout the Alpine Space and to encourage synergies between the European policies and those in the alpine states, the priorities and measures will consider the following:

- All operations in the scope of priorities and measures have to respect the Community policies and rules on the elimination of inequalities and the promotion of equality between men and women, on the labour market and on environmental protection.
- The common targets that the Alpine States have agreed upon in international conventions and documents – partly in co-operation with the European Commission - that affect aspects of spatial planning. In this respect, particular emphasis will be put on the European Spatial Development Perspectives and its proceedings as well as the Alpine Convention and its protocols, the ARGE ALP¹⁷, the ARGE Alpen-Adria¹⁸,

¹⁵ see http://europa.eu.int/comm/information_society/eeurope/documentation/index_en.htm
In this context, the document "List of benchmarking indicators for the eEurope Action Plan" from the Single Market Council of November 2000 (ref. 13493/1/00 REV 1), could provide useful information to assess the results and impact of all related actions (see <http://register.consilium.eu.int/pdf/en/00/st13/13493-r1en0.pdf>).

¹⁶ OJ C143/6, 23.05.2000, Annex IV

¹⁷ <http://www.argealp.at/>

¹⁸ <http://www.stmk.gv.at/verwaltung/lad-ra/arge.stm>

the COTRAO¹⁹ and the guiding principles for sustainable spatial development of the European continent (European Conference of Ministers, Hanover, September 2000).

- The experience and results of preceding European programmes, in particular that of projects elaborated within the Pilot Action Programme, Art. 10 ERDF (Eastern Alps) and INTERREG IIC for the Western Mediterranean and Latin Alps (Western Alps).
- The objectives defined by the Alpine States in a wide-spread information campaign together with partners of economic and social importance during the programme.
- Links to existing co-operation networks and further development of their activities (i.e. ARGE Alpenstädte, network of local authorities "Alliance in the Alps", RegionAlp, network of protected areas).
- The potential for solving problems, as described in chapter 2.

Thus, an integrated approach of initiatives by political-administrative as well as private partners from the European down to the local level is given consideration.

By combining top-down and bottom-up approach, synergies can be exploited: harmonising objectives at an early stage will ensure a wide involvement in the programme and facilitate solid partnerships as well as efficient and accurate measures. In return, this will encourage the implementation of the programme in spatial planning systems.

4.2 Priorities and measures – overview and detailed description

The Alpine Space Programme under INTERREG IIIB is built on the experience of INTERREG IIC and Article 10 ERDF Pilot Action Programme and takes account of Community policies and principles and of the recommendations for territorial development of the ESDP. Furthermore synergies arise by bringing together the experiences of co-operation made in the scope of the Alpine convention and of the Alpine "ARGE's". However, the Alpine Space Programme means a considerable enlargement of co-operation and a new approach towards a common identity. But given the limited financial resources and the vastness of the territories involved, it is important to avoid dispersal of efforts and seek a strong focus.

Access to information and opportunities linked to interventions within the Structural Funds framework are essential for the efficiency of co-financed actions. Advertisement measures are ruled by art. 46 Reg. (CE) 1260/1999 on Structural Fund and Reg. (CE) 1159/2000 on information and advertisement activity by Member-States on Structural Funds. A plan will be defined in the Programming Complement on the organisation of information and advertisement activities within the framework of the OP Alpine Space.

In accordance with the EU principle of free competition, the measures of the Programme do not foresee direct State aid to the enterprises. Priority 1 may be an exception, however, the projects within this priority are linked to regional law regarding contributions to SMEs which are notified to the EU Commission.

The following three priorities, listed without hierarchical order, structure the mainstream of transnational actions:

¹⁹ <http://www.unil.ch/cotrao/>

- Priority 1: Promotion of the Alpine Space as a competitive and attractive living and economic space in the scope of a polycentric spatial development in the EU
- Priority 2: Development of sustainable transport systems with particular consideration of efficiency, inter-modality and better accessibility
- Priority 3: Wise management of nature, landscapes and cultural heritage, promotion of the environment and the prevention of natural disasters

Priority 1: Promotion of the Alpine Space as a competitive and attractive living and economic space in the scope of a polycentric spatial development in the EU

Aims and perspectives

Territorial development within a polycentric spatial concept

In order to strengthen the co-operation area as a modern living and economic space in a polycentric arrangement of several centres of global economic integration the national spatial development as well as sectoral policies of the EU require one strong focus. Therefore the ESDP serves as the major development guideline. For the alpine core area also the Spatial Planning Protocol of the Alpine Convention is an important reference. Since also two Non-Member States participate in the Alpine Space Programme there is a strong demand for their national perspectives to match with those of the EU.

Successful implementation of the ESDP needs an alpine specification taking into account specific structures, problems and needs of the co-operation area. In the project REGIONALP under the ERDF Art. 10 Pilot Action Programme Alpine Space, the consequences of the ESDP for the eastern part of the alpine core area have already been studied. In the new period, this process has to be continued for a wider area with more complex conditions. These are determined by intensive interactions and dependencies between the peri-alpine belt and the alpine core area, considerable social and economic disparities, scarce spatial resources for further housing, commercial and infrastructure developments and the limited carrying capacities of ecosystems, in particular in the mountainous parts of the Alpine Space.

A global economic integration of the Alpine Space depends upon a strengthened co-operation of several big agglomerations with a strong focus on stimulating the economic development of the alpine core area in the scope of an ongoing globalisation and liberalisation. In this context also the strategic role of small and medium-sized towns can not be valued high enough. They function as network nodes of communication and information, service centres for economy, competence centres for innovation and technology and centres for education and training (including adult education and continuing training). Consequently the linkage between small and medium-sized towns and peri-alpine metropolitan areas that serve as gateways to the global networks should be strengthened.

The role of small and medium-sized towns has to be improved also with a view to defining a new urban-rural partnership. Also important is networking of rural regions and local communities across the Alpine Space which provides for mutual learning and exchange of best practise and bottom-up solutions in various fields such as sustainable tourism, local and regional spatial planning, agriculture and Agenda 21 processes. Actions in this field can be built on experiences gained in the project "Local Authorities Network - Alliance in the Alps" under the ERDF Art. 10 Pilot Action Programme Alpine Space. The results of the projects "Good practice guide for the implementation of programmes and projects concerning sustainable spatial and regional planning" and "Regional and spatial planning instruments for alpine areas, with special reference to the balanced and sustainable development of settlements in densely and sparsely populated regions" can also serve as a good orientation.

The complexity of structures and interactions in the programme area lead to an increasing demand for evaluating sectoral policies (such as competition, transport, agriculture, environment) with regard to their territorial impact. Subsequently, a common understanding for a new transsectoral approach in spatial planning should be realised.

Binding human capital to the regions

Several urban agglomerations framing the alpine core area are dynamic development centres even in a global sense. They are pioneers in finding new ways of organising manufacturing industry, centres of service sector economy and leaders on the way towards a knowledge based economy. For overcoming social and economic disparities within the Alpine Space, links between these centres and small and medium-sized towns are of high importance. The often critical dependencies from economic mono-structures and a high percentage of SMEs with limited capacities for research and development and a more difficult access to innovation and knowledge can be overcome by a strengthened co-operation of research and development centres, education and training institutes, public administration and private companies. These actions can help to bind high qualified human capital to rural regions, reduce the commuting rate and prevent out-migration.

The special natural and cultural assets of the Alpine Space open up new development opportunities in the field of health and recreation, environmentally friendly tourism and high quality food production. Common marketing strategies are necessary to create a global image of the Alps as a synonym for speciality and quality in the field of agriculture and forestry (in particular organic food production, furniture etc.). Mountain farming, however, needs a forward looking blueprint allowing both for the special situation of the Alps and for requirements of the relevant EU policy. The natural and cultural heritage as well as an intact environment determine the quality of life for the local population and should be highlighted as convincing arguments for location decisions for new companies.

However, taking into account that numerous Community programmes and initiatives like Objective 2 (including phasing out raising from former Objective 5b-programme) and LEADER+ already aim at improving the situation of agriculture the CIP Alpine Space will seek a strong focus to complement these activities. In order to guarantee the highest possible synergies and to raise value added, only actions will be eligible which aim at practical transnational co-operation. This could be achieved by both, exchange of experience and information gathered on local and regional level upon the transnational level and testing common strategies that could affect spatial development in the co-operation area.

In the field of tourism it is important to set up common guidelines that respect the diversity of space and resources. However, actions covering this issue should be referred to under the aspect of sustainable spatial development, whereas direct support to competitors within the co-operation area won't be eligible. Future tourist destination development in the planning area finds a good basis for common guidelines and experi-

ences in two studies of the European Commission on integrated quality management of tourist destinations²⁰.

Access to the information society to overcome distances

Rural regions are often concerned by a more difficult access to public and private services and information. The encouraged use of new information and communication technologies can contribute to overcome these disadvantages and to promote the participation of the of rural population in the information society. Thereby the establishment of virtual regional platforms should provide for a communication and market place, help to improve public services and allow for the exchange of knowledge and innovation and transnational networking also for large groups of the civil society. These actions have to be accompanied by education and training activities (including adult education and continuing training) and awareness raising for new opportunities and benefits of IC technologies.

Measure 1: Mutual knowledge and common perspectives

This measure promotes contacts and networks among the territories of the Alpine Space in order to draw common visions and to address specific development topics in a context of social and economical integration. The general objectives of this measure are the following:

- to develop a common understanding of spatial development strategies in an enlarged Europe covering the entire Alpine Space as a connected spatial unit according to the aims of ESDP;
- to ensure the connection of the Alpine Space and its metropolitan areas as a central node in the system from the south-west to the east as well as from the Mediterranean to the Baltic and Scandinavian regions;
- to improve knowledge, to promote widespread information and to develop and use common indicators and comparative analyses of spatial phenomena;
- to develop networks and exchange of best practice between different alpine actors;
- to strengthen the internal cohesion and identity of the population within the Alpine Space;
- to reinforce the transnational co-operation between all countries of the Alpine Space and to promote alpine networks covering the entire territory;

²⁰ **“Towards quality rural tourism: Integrated quality management (IQM) of rural destinations”**, Luxembourg: Eur-Op, 2000 - 154 p. Eur-Op catalogue n° CT-24-99-041-**-CEN, FR. Summary, Luxembourg: Eur-Op, 2000 - 14 p. Eur-Op catalogue n° CT-25-99-261-**-C. All languages. The document is the result of a study carried out by THE TOURISM COMPANY (UK) in association with FUTOUR (Germany) and the ECOTRANS network for the European Commission.

“Towards quality urban tourism: Integrated quality management (IQM) of urban tourist destinations”, Luxembourg: Eur-Op, 2000 - 168 p. Eur-Op catalogue n° CT-24-99-049-**-CEN, FR. Summary, Luxembourg: Eur-Op, 2000 - 14 p. Eur-Op catalogue n° CT-25-99-261-**-C. All languages. The document is the result of a study carried out by ORGANISATION MARKETING (OGM:Belgium), for the European Commission.

(see also <http://europa.eu.int/comm/enterprise/library/lib-tourism/index.htm>)

Possible actions (indicative and not definite list showing only examples of possible actions)

- Drawing up of alpine development perspectives and subsequently of common implementation strategies in the scope of the ESDP.
- Promotion of networking between planning and research institutions for drawing up a joint approach to development issues and developing joint observation and monitoring tools
- Co-operation on impact assessment of EU sectoral policies
- Development of co-operation and networking between metropolitan areas and gateway cities framing the Alps, as well as between small and medium-sized towns of peri-alpine and core alpine area in order to develop a strong area of global economic integration
- Encouraging the development of networks of cities and towns to exchange knowledge and innovation for solving common problems and to stimulate the development of rural regions
- Defining a common statistical basis for data collecting and making data processing systems compatible with a view to providing a broad data base for planning, business and information purposes
- Drawing up of perspectives in agriculture and forestry and impact assessment of policies and projects affecting rural territories
- Co-operation in the field of education and training with a view to awareness raising for problems and development chances for the Alpine Space
- Further development of tools for planning, implementation and participation with a view to sustainable spatial development (such as Strategic Environmental Assessment, Agenda 21)

Measure 2: Competitiveness and sustainable development

This measure is focused on strengthening the competitiveness of the Alpine space by setting common approaches in different sectors such as agriculture, craft activities, services, tourism, etc. This measure intends also to promote the development of the different territories of the Alpine Space according to their specificity. The general objectives of this measure are the following:

- to preserve and strengthen the functionality and attractiveness of the rural areas even if they are of strong peripheral and/or mountainous location;
- to stop intra- and interregional migration to urban agglomerations and depopulation of rural areas as well as the trend of urbanisation;
- to promote implementation of Agenda 21 at the local and regional level and to promote co-operation between cities and other local authorities in the field of sustainable urban and spatial policies;
- to achieve an intensive co-operation in the fields of research and development, innovation and technology transfer between cities and their rural neighbourhood as well as between SMEs and innovation centres;

- to reinforce the role of the Alpine Space as a hinge between different cultural traditions and economy;
- to speed up the reorganisation and to strengthen the competitiveness of the tourism sector, especially in the mountain areas by implementing sustainable tourism development strategies;

Possible actions (indicative and not definite list showing only examples of possible actions):

- Promotion of joint business strategies through sectoral networks, clusters of innovation and a more integrated research and development with a view to providing SMEs with better access to innovation, particularly technological innovation
- Promotion of co-operation of rural areas facing the same development challenges through networks of producers, labelling, marketing and know how exchange, particularly in agriculture, tourism and craft activities
- Development of a more sustainable and more transnational offer in the field of tourism (including farm tourism) taking advantage of the environment and cultural heritage and with a view to creating permanent jobs. Two studies of the European Commission on integrated quality management of tourist destinations (see footnote 20) give clear guidance on how tourism can be developed in a sustainable way
- Favouring the use of information and communication technologies for improving private and public services, including the transfer of know-how and technologies amongst local administrations and the development of applications of public interest (education and training, health care, etc.)
- Development of telematic services and applications based on the possibilities offered by the information society for overcoming distances and promoting access to knowledge and innovation, in particular in sectors such as electronic commerce, training, research and teleworking
- Mutual recognition of qualifications, networking and co-operation of labour exchange and professional associations with a view to promoting mobility of labour force
- Securing supply of goods and services for small scale and sparsely populated alpine areas in order to guarantee acceptable standards of living
- Reducing the dependency from economic mono-structures and promotion of the structural change in rural areas through diversifying the rural economic base and utilising endogenous resources

Priority 2: Development of sustainable transport systems with particular consideration of efficiency, inter-modality and better accessibility

Aims and perspectives

One of the basic requirements for keeping and further developing the programme area as a modern living and economic space is to ensure mobility for the local population, visitors and tourists in a sustainable way. The development of efficient transport systems has to be seen in the context of the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN), as well as of guidelines and action plans for sustainable transport adopted by the single partner states, the EU, OECD, UNECE and WHO. Among these, the Transport Protocol of the Alpine Convention that was signed by all participating states and the European Commission is considered as a major reference document.

The highly sensitive alpine ecosystems and the burden for the local population induced by the enormous concentration of transport in the valleys and around agglomerations require the most efficient use of existing infrastructure. Potentials for reducing total traffic have to be identified and utilised.

The future organisation of mobility has to give priority to public transport and inter-modality. In this respect regional and local access to national and transnational transport networks has to be improved. Thereby innovative and efficient solutions are required to stop the ongoing trend of secondary railway closure. But also the transalpine railway connections and the linkage of metropolitan areas framing the alpine arc, in particular between the Rhine, the Rhone and the Danube axis have to become more efficient.

The concentration of transport, crossing the Alps on the few major north-south and east-west transit routes and its continuous growth demand for a shift to environmentally friendly modes and the promotion of inter-modality. A reduction of negative effects should be supported by common systems of road tolls and models for internalising of external costs. Furthermore, transnational networks of logistic centres have to be established for organisation of the most effective multimodal transport. Common solutions must be future orientated and take into consideration transport impacts in the scope of the envisaged enlargement of the EU.

On the local and regional scale the shift to environmentally friendly transport systems must be supported by "soft" steering instruments such as motivation systems, improved access to information about transport offer and awareness raising. A network of mobility centres in tourist regions should to be established to provide information on possibilities for travelling to and mobility within destinations by public transport services.

Planning of new transport infrastructure needs a co-ordinated and integrated approach including spatial and environmental impact assessment in order to avoid inefficient investments and securing widely accepted solutions. Also new commercial developments affecting the transnational territory should be evaluated in advance with regard to their traffic inducing impact.

Measure 1: Perspectives and analyses

This measure promotes the development of common perspectives and analysis in order to raise common issues and to propose common solutions for transport problems. The measure intends to support the different actors of mobility by drawing their attention on long-range issues concerning sustainable transport. Traffic evolution, environmental and spatial concerns, technical regulations or improved connections are some of the issues that can be addressed through this measure. The general objectives of this measure are the following:

- to develop strategies and instruments for sustainable transport systems taking into account the Alpine Convention and to establish an action plan for implementation under special consideration of alpine transport and environmental problems (freight transport, tourism and leisure traffic, land use and infrastructure, urban sprawl, pollution and noise);
- to increase the knowledge about the possibilities of, the acceptance for and the use of modern information technology for all social, labour and cultural groups of the Alpine Space;
- to improve the accessibility of public services and institutions to modern information technology;

Possible actions (indicative and not definite list showing only examples of possible actions)

- Drawing up of common perspectives and policies in the field of transport (including heavy vehicle traffic) by following an intersectoral approach and with a view to developing the Trans-European Transport Network on the basis of the Transport Protocol of the Alpine Convention
- Spatial and environmental impact assessment of new infrastructure affecting the transnational territory and drawing up a common sustainable transport strategy and action plan for inner alpine and transalpine transport with particular attention to trans-european transport freightways on rail
- Identifying missing links and drawing up future transport scenarios and feasibility studies for the alpine transport taking into account the envisaged enlargement of the EU
- Development of joint observation and monitoring of spatial and environmental impact of transport including transport infrastructure
- Drawing up of strategies and action plans for minimising landscape deterioration, soil consumption, environmental impacts in particular noise and pollutant emission caused by transport
- Development of joint safety standards with reference to both, travellers (prevention and comparison of crime) and environment (risk areas on main transit routes)
- Development of joint strategies and implementation activities for education and awareness raising on sustainable mobility and environmentally friendly travel behaviour

Measure 2: Improvement of existing and promotion of future transport systems by large scale and small scale intelligent solutions such as intermodality

This measure promotes the development of intelligent solutions to upgrade existing transport systems or to develop future ones. The scope of measures embraces all the aspects of mobility on different scales and fields of action. Passenger or good transport, infrastructure or mobility management, local or European concerns can thus be considered. Sustainability as well as positive spatial and environmental impacts are prerequisites of actions. The general objectives of this measure are the following:

- to improve functionality and inter-modality of existing transport systems as well as infrastructure and services of environmentally friendly transport modes, in particular of rail;
- to preserve the existing public transport systems and to improve their interconnectivity, also concerning systems within the metropolitan areas and those of the rural territory;
- to improve the accessibility of public services and institutions to modern information technology;

Possible actions (indicative and not definite list showing only examples of possible actions)

- Promoting the development of trans-European transport freightways with a view to shifting transport from road to rail
- Establishing and transnational networking of logistic centres serving information on actual transport capacities and organising efficient, multimodal transportation of goods
- Establishing and transnational networking of mobility centres providing mobility management and information services with a focus on shopping and companies, leisure and tourism traffic
- Linking of metropolitan areas in the Alpine Space with a view to improving coordination of national infrastructure investment, improvement of existing infrastructure, etc.
- Improving links for long distance travel by convenient infrastructure as well as for an environmentally friendly access to holiday resorts
- Preserving existing public transport systems and improving their interconnectivity, functionality and intermodality

Priority 3: Wise management of nature, landscape and cultural heritage, promotion of the environment and the prevention of natural disasters

Aims and perspectives

The sensitive ecosystems with an enormous diversity in flora and fauna, biodiversity, attractive landscapes as well as cultural heritage of the Alpine Space represent common values of world wide importance and are an expression of regional and local identity. In addition, an intact environment and the security of humans and resources of natural disasters determine the quality of life and are important economic factors. All these assets are by nature the subject of transnationality and demand more than ever upon common perspectives and management strategies. Thereby several European directives such as the Habitat Directive and the directive establishing a framework of community actions in the field of water policies as well as the Alpine Convention and its several protocols form important guidelines. However, due to its special conditions the Alpine Space may take up an "ecological laboratory" function with a view to becoming the European motor of a fruitful and long lasting symbiosis between conservation and development.

Nature conservation

Further development of the European ecological network "Natura 2000" incorporated in the Habitat Directive²¹, as well as the observed return of wilderness in areas suffering from a large-scale breakdown of mountain farming form the starting point for a strengthened co-ordination of national protection and management instruments. In order to enhance the acceptance for conservation, it is necessary to raise awareness and find balanced solutions taking into account nature conservation and an improvement of living conditions for the local population. Thereby the common challenge lies in harmonising conservation with sectoral and regional development policies.

Cultural and landscape heritage

Following the Community Programme Culture 2000, the definition of Culture in its broad sense covers advanced culture as well as popular culture, mass-produced culture and everyday culture. Community initiatives have shown the importance of cultural activities in the society and the potential for job creation.

Cultural heritage of the Alpine Space can be considered as the combined group of archaeological sites, monuments, works of art, minor building, villages and towns immaterial heritage (cultural tradition of different kinds, art and literature, education and sports) and not least of cultural landscapes that are specific to an area and that, following the European Landscape Convention, determine the identity and lifestyle of the population. This heritage can undergo two different degrading conditions – either abandonment or improper use in the centres of intensive economic development. Protection and enhancement of the cultural heritage calls first of all for an inventory and cataloguing with a view to creating a common data base. Apart from conservation ac-

²¹ OJ L206, 22.07.92

tivities there is a need for a revival of lost, unused or underused structures (e.g. typical settlement structures or construction techniques using local raw material). Special emphasis is to be put also on further development of traditional elements (e.g. in construction, architecture) in combination with new technologies (e.g. renewable energies). The enormous diversity of cultural heritage on the regional and local level must be protected with a view to avoiding pauperisation and standardisation. In order to disseminate the cultural wealth over the Alpine Space and over the entire Europe common efforts have to be put into the exchange of experience and information about activities in all fields of the cultural heritage. Actions in this field can be built on experiences gained in the projects "Restauro – Rigenerazione e Salvaguardia dei Centri Storici" and "Carta del rischio del patrimonio culturale" under the Interreg IIC programme MEDOC. Cultural landscape has never been a static feature but is subject to dynamic natural processes and human impact. Criteria have to be defined for balancing image conservation and contemporary human intervention. Subsequently a need emerges for creative rehabilitation and upgrading from the viewpoint of integrated management of the transnational territory accompanied by awareness raising for landscape values.

Environment and natural resources

The Alpine Space is concerned by environmental pollution in various aspects. The highly developed peri-alpine belt and the main valleys suffer from "self made" immissions, waste production and water contamination. The higher mountain regions, however, are strongly affected by long-distance transport of air pollutants and ambient ozone production. At the same time they represent a reservoir of natural resources of unique quantity and quality. The exploitation of natural resources has to be managed rationally due to the limited ecological bearing capacity of mountain ecosystems. Thereby the management of water resources deserves special attention. Transnational co-operation is required for the monitoring of quality, eutrophication and purity of surface and groundwater. Actions in this field can be built on experiences gained in the project "Multinational Network of Environmental Laboratories – Retelab" under the Interreg IIC programme MEDOC and in two studies of the European Commission on integrated quality management of tourist destinations (see footnote 20). Common management concepts must be transsectoral and require a catchment orientated approach. For economic activities such as energy production (hydrological power plants) and tourism (mountaineering huts) in high alpine regions common standards have to be defined with a view to environmental compatibility and avoiding overuse of resources. In particular in the field of sustainable tourism future projects find a good basis of experiences gained in the project "Mediterranean system of routes in natural and cultural parks – PAN" under the Interreg IIC programme MEDOC. The richness of renewable resources on the one hand and the sensitivity for air pollution (valleys: inversion weather conditions; higher altitudes: increased UV-B radiation) on the other call for a common action in the field of renewable energies. Due to the scarce spatial resources special emphasis must be given also to soil management, waste avoidance, disposal and recycling

Natural disasters

The Alpine Space is threatened by a variety of natural hazards such as avalanches, erosion and landslides in the alpine core area, floods especially in its foothills and lowlands, forest fires mostly in the southern regions and earthquakes over the entire cooperation area. Thereby interdependencies between resource management, environ-

mental protection and potential risk on the one hand and between inner and peri-alpine areas on the other become very obvious. Transnational co-operation is required in the field of spatial planning, early detection, monitoring and risk management in disaster prone areas. Thereby networks and actions of the previous programmes, in particular in the field of flood mitigation under Interreg II C programme between Italy and France and under measure D "Natural and cultural heritage" of the ERDF Art. 10 Pilot Action Programme Alpine Space form a good basis. Joint activities include exchange of experience and knowledge as well as testing of new techniques. Special emphasis must be given to the management of mountain forests and torrent catchments. Actual information of weather situation and development as well as of arising risk potential must be available for everybody and any time across the entire territory. Results of scenario modelling have to be exchanged and put together for an effective and early prevention of disasters (e.g. danger zone planning). Furthermore, common alarm plans are necessary to provide fast and co-ordinated mutual support in emergency situations.

Measure 1: Nature and resources, in particular water

Since alpine ecosystems are very sensitive and at the same time unique they require common perspectives and management strategies. This measure promotes the conservation and the valorisation of the natural resources in particular water. The general objectives of this measure are the following:

- to reduce emission of pollutants to sensitive ecosystems such as mountain forests and all drinking water resources;
- to avoid uncontrolled exploitation of water resources and to promote its wise management in various fields (energy production, irrigation, drinking water, etc.);

Possible actions (indicative and not definite list showing only examples of possible actions)

- Development of integrated transnational strategies for establishing an alpine network of wildlife and of integrated management practises, in particular in the scope of the European ecological network (Natura 2000) and in areas that are increasingly concerned by the return of wilderness
- Networking between public administration, public institutions, planning and research institutes with a view to developing co-operation, alpine approaches and analysing spatial phenomena, finding and using common indicators, creating a common database and monitoring the natural and cultural heritage
- Promotion of integrated management practises for preserving biodiversity
- Formulation of joint strategies and actions for protecting the environment and developing common standards for using natural resources (especially water resources) rationally and avoiding their unconsidered exhaustion
- Promotion of use of renewable energies
- Favouring the use of environmental management tools and labelling systems such as EMAS, ISO 14001, Ecolabel and IPPC with a view to improving the environmental quality

Measure 2: Good management and promotion of landscapes and cultural heritage

This measure aims at promoting the good management of natural and cultural landscapes and the cultural heritage through transnational cooperation in conservation and creative further development. In fact these assets are never static but underlie the social and economic development. In particular in the Alpine Space they form a rich potential for sustainable tourism but also contribute considerably to the local and regional identity. The wise management of natural and cultural landscapes as well as of the cultural heritage as potential sources for a sustainable tourism is subject of two studies of the European Commission on integrated quality management of tourist destinations (see footnote 20).

The general objectives of this measure are the following:

- to improve connectivity, conservation and management of ecosystems and traditionally used cultural landscapes;
- to support landscape conservation and the use of traditional regional products and their manufacturing to stop land abandonment;
- to protect and improve the cultural heritage through collection and exchange of information, data and documentation;
- to maintain and develop the regional diversity of cultural assets and to promote an active exchange in the various fields of the cultural heritage;
- to maintain and manage typical landscape features referring to both, the natural and cultural heritage e.g. traditional settlements and buildings, historical routes, fortresses, etc. and implementing the European Landscape Convention;

Possible actions (indicative and not definite list showing only examples of possible actions)

- Promotion of co-operation for cataloguing, protection and upgrading of the manifold cultural heritage and its creative further development
- Protecting and recovering settlement types in small and medium-sized alpine centres
- Drawing up of joint integrated spatial development concepts for cultural landscapes taking into account aesthetic aspects and sustainable use of natural resources, creative rehabilitation of cultural landscapes in particular in areas where its diversity is endangered by a large-scale breakdown of agriculture
- Preservation and promotion of landscapes as well as of the natural and cultural heritage as potential for development of sustainable tourism and other economic activities
- Establishing of joint platforms and centres for common exhibitions, cultural events, workshops and activities with a view to preserving and further developing the cultural identity of the Alpine Space
- Promotion of common educational and training activities in the field of environmental protection and cultural and natural values

Measure 3: Co-operation in the field of natural risks

This measure aims to promote transnational cooperation to reach a common and clear understanding of the natural risk phenomena. Therefore land use, vegetation, water regime and climate changes have to be taken into account. Issues dealing with flooding will take into account the results and recommendations of respective projects in the previous Interreg IIC programme. The general objectives of this measure are the following:

- to avoid damages of lives and settlements through extreme natural hazards by new combined strategies and technical solutions, forecasting as well as by creating buffer areas of natural dynamics;
- to strengthen and conserve mountain forests and their protection function;
- to analyse risks from natural hazard and/or from man made hazard, propose technical instruments and preventive strategies for risks and to improve the information for the Alpine Space population about natural risks;

Possible actions (indicative and not definite list showing only examples of possible actions)

- Improving forecasting, observation and monitoring, risk management, testing new technologies and models and setting up of information systems for the prevention of natural disasters and the protection of human and resources
- Study of standards to survey and file data in order to create conditions to exchange and compare the figures
- Strengthening co-operation regarding civil defence
- Drawing up of common strategies and developing new and efficient planning tools (danger zone plans, models) for the prevention of natural risks (e.g. landslides, floods and avalanches) and for facing the consequences of climate change
- Drawing up of common procedures to evaluate the danger of avalanches, landslides and floods and development of information systems for an optimum spreading of information in an institutional ambit and to the media to protect population from natural risks

Priority 4: Technical assistance

It is the original task of the Monitoring Committee, the Steering Committee, the Conference of Regions and the National Committees to contribute to the selection and the implementation of projects (for further details see section 7). In order to manage this process in the most efficient way, these bodies require professional services covered by the technical assistance of the programme. The technical assistance comprises activities concerning the management of the programme and its implementation as well as for monitoring, control, information and dissemination. It contributes to implementing the operational programme within the defined area and will be necessary during the entire programme period. The Managing Authority, the Paying Authority and the national authorities involved will be responsible for programme implementation. They will be supported, in this task, by the Joint Technical Secretariat and the National Contact Points. Their tasks are set out in more detail in section 7. Taking into account that seven countries representing many languages and cultural backgrounds are participat-

ing in the programme a well working structure will be of high importance for the successful implementation of the programme. The experiences gathered previously with the different Interreg programmes contributed to the development of the structure.

Among the bodies that have to be established to safeguard the implementation of the programme the Joint Technical Secretariat will be of main importance. It is the focal point for all transnational activities and service oriented tasks. It has to cover the languages and backgrounds of the programme partners and has to ensure knowledge of the EU institutions, the structural funds regulations and corresponding procedures as well as expertise in European spatial development. It has to contribute to raising awareness for programme concerns through appropriate promotion and information activities. Not least, services to manage further important activities like monitoring and control activities during the whole programme period have to be provided. These various tasks and qualifications call for a highly motivated team ready to work in a multicultural environment.

A part of the work of the Joint Technical Secretariat is also dedicated to direct support of the Managing Authority. This direct support will enable the Managing Authority to meet the various requirements for the efficiency and correctness of management and implementation of the programme. Further support by experienced staff is necessary for the Paying Authority for a reliable management of the programme budget and accountancies.

The National Contact Points will provide additional support especially as regards project application, implementation and control as well as information activities on national level in close co-operation with the JTS. The NCP related activities are directed by the transnational character of the programme, however they have a strong focus on encouraging and facilitating projects. Thus it is necessary to additionally provide a specific national background (knowledge of national system of financing, knowledge of administrative and legal system etc.) to the transnational activities.

According to the rules for expenditures incurred in managing and implementing the Structural Funds as laid down in Regulation 1685/2000²² the technical assistance is divided in two measures.

The total budget for Technical Assistance (see financial table) is 7.385.331Euro of which 3.711.550Euro are financed by the ERDF (56,3% of the total ERDF). A total of 2.964.752Euro (5% of the ERDF allocation) are allocated to Measure 1 (programme management, monitoring and control) and the rest 1,3% are allocated to Measure 2 (information and evaluation). In principle, a maximum of 2,0% of the ERDF allocation (1.186.000), within Measure 1 of the TA, could be allocated to the contact points for TA activities as described bellow.

Measure 1: Programme administration

This measure covers activities and procedures necessary for an efficient management of the programme and its implementation as well as activities for monitoring and control and programme evaluation. The general objectives of this measure are the following:

²² OJ L193, 29.7.2000)

- Further development of cooperation among all national and transnational bodies involved in the programme management building on the experience of the previous programming period
- Implementation of a large number of high quality projects contributing clearly measurable to a harmonious, balanced and sustainable development in the Alpine Space
- Allocation of funds according to all relevant regulations and eligibility rules

Possible actions (indicative and not definite list showing only examples of possible actions)

- establishment of adequate co-operation structures among the bodies involved in the programme
- preparation, selection, appraisal and monitoring of the assistance and of operations (but excluding expenditure on the acquisition and installation of computerised systems for management, monitoring and evaluation)
- support for project applicants in developing and running projects
- conscientious management of the programme budget and the accountancies
- organisation of monitoring processes; monitoring of the programme
- safeguarding the progress of projects and the programme by auditing and on-the-spot checks of operations
- management of data and information raising from the evaluation, monitoring and information activities as well as from project-outputs
- computerised data exchange with the Commissions' services
- organisation of evaluation; evaluation of the programme covered by external services.
- acquisition and installation of computerised systems for management, monitoring and evaluation

Measure 2: Information and evaluation

This measure covers information on the programmes objectives and procedural questions as well as public relation activities for awareness raising and a broad dissemination of results. Furthermore this measure includes additional external services like studies or expert seminars. The general objectives of this measure are the following:

- Providing wide spread information about the programme including project results and well developed awareness for the benefits of transnational co-operation among large groups of the civil society
- Providing high quality advice for possible project applicants and project partners during the implementation phase
- Setting up of appropriate means and scientific support for steering the programme implementation adequately according to objectives defined from the outset and future requirements

Possible actions (indicative and not definite list showing only examples of possible actions)

- information activities like oral presentations, seminars, expert workshops, publications like leaflets and brochures, CD-ROMs etc. (including translation to a certain extent), mutual expert visits among the programme implementation bodies
- establishment of a programme web-site
- any other service contributing to the implementation of the programme

4.3 Project selection strategy and organisation

Database for the joint project selection process

Clear and transparent instructions for the contents and the standardisation of project applications are important prerequisites for checking the indicators set out below and/or specified, completed and further developed by the MC during the implementation process and set out in the Programme Complement and, subsequently, for a high-quality project monitoring and project selection.

Hence, additional to what is set out in chapter 7.2 the minimum contents of project applications will have to be specified in the Programme Complement and/or in the call for proposal and have to be in line with the programme's project selection criteria.

The joint project selection for the INTERREG IIIB Programme Alpine Space will be performed by the bodies indicated in section 7. It is based on two types of selection criteria: obligatory criteria (criteria that have to be fulfilled) and priority criteria. All projects have to fulfil all the obligatory criteria (e.g. existence of transnational co-operation) otherwise they are rejected. The priority criteria and some obligatory criteria are used for the assessment of quality of the projects. Each project has to be assessed by these criteria. The overall sum of each project will show the quality of the project according to the priority criteria. Based on this assessment four types of project levels are defined as follows: A-level project (very good standard), B-level project (good standard), C-level project (intermediate standard) and D-level project (minimum standard).

In order to be supported by the INTERREG III B Alpine Space-Programme, projects will have to meet at least minimum standard in the above outlined dimension - of course A- and B-level projects will have priority.

This procedure for project selection forms also an aggregate quality indicator, which is also used as an important monitoring indicator (cf. section 5.2).

Organisation of project-selection

- Projects will be selected according to open calls for proposals. The calls for proposals are organised transnationally by the Joint Technical Secretariat assisted by the National Contact Points.
- At least every year after approval of CIP Alpine Space one call for projects should take place. Calls for project in 2005 and 2006 will depend on the available budget.
- In order to avoid an excessive amount of financial and human resources for the management of small sized projects the aimed average budget size of a project should be 500.000 EURO - 1 MEURO.

- The average duration for interventions for projects should be 2 - 3 years.

In general the following types of projects will be funded under the various measures of the Alpine Space programme:

- Investment,
- Action (e.g. networking and exchange of experience-projects) and
- Studies.

Of course projects may consist of combinations of the various types. It is envisaged, however, that all projects have to produce tangible and visible results.

Obligatory criteria and Priority criteria

The following outline contains the obligatory criteria, which have to be fulfilled as a minimum requirement by all projects submitted for application. These criteria – according to Article 35 (3) lit b Council Regulation (EC) 1260/1999 - will have to be approved or adapted by the MC. The criteria might be specified, completed and further developed by the MC during the implementation process and set out in the Programme Complement. Furthermore, the programme complement will contain a detailed list of priority indicators, which will be used for the selection of projects.

According to what is set out in chapter 7.2, it is within the responsibility of the National Contact Points of the project partners in co-operation with the Joint Technical Secretariat to check if projects fulfil the obligatory criteria or not before they reach the joint selection process.

The programme cannot retain projects that fail to meet the following criteria:

- provide a transnational project partnership
 - projects must have a transnational character²³, that is at least two co-operating partners from different states participating in a project and securing national co-financing;
 - each EU-partner has to contribute financially to the project. The contribution of Non-Member States can be either in money or in kind.
- have a Lead Partner who safeguards a reliable project organisation and a competent project management. The form of co-operation, the content of the project and the distribution of work must be the subject of a written agreement between the partners. If the Lead Partner is from Switzerland or Liechtenstein the project must have an ERDF-Lead Partner for dealing with ERDF-funds.
- respect relevant national and EU policies regarding structural funds policies, environmental legislation etc.;
- be in accordance with European and national spatial development policy issues – spatial development aims and issues of the ESDP and national spatial development

²³ This excludes projects which are eligible under INTERREG III A (cross-border co-operation projects)

strategies. Projects must therefore demonstrate a positive impact towards a balanced and harmonious development of the territory.

- concentrate on transnational problems calling for transnational solutions;
- include a description of quantified outputs and/or clear attainable targets to allow for appraisal and ex-post evaluation;
- be completed within the programme period (before June 2008);
- not be funded by other EU programmes but synergies with other EU programmes are welcome; the (Lead) partners must confirm that the project is not funded by other EU programmes.
- do not duplicate existing work;
- be consistent with the programme. The objectives and methodologies of the projects must fall within the strategy, priority and measures defined in the programme;
- provide equal opportunities for men and women;
- demonstrate their environmental sustainability.

Some of the obligatory project selection criteria are also used for the assessment of the quality of the projects if the application fulfils the criteria better than the minimum level is demanding.

4.4 Programme monitoring / Monitoring indicators

Referring to Art. 36 (1) of the Council Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999²⁴ a detailed description of monitoring indicators will be a part of the programme complement. For drawing up the indicators, the participating countries confirm to take into account the methodology and list of examples of indicators published by the Commission as well as the categorisation of fields of intervention proposed by the Commission. In the following an outlook on the methodology for definition and classification of the monitoring indicators to be used will be given.

Indicators relevant for the INTERREG IIIB Alpine Space Programme are to be distinguished on four different levels:

- Programme- and
- Priority-level
- Measure- and
- Project-level.

These indicators will be used for both, the joint programme monitoring procedure as well as for the joint project selection process. Monitoring indicators are needed as a tool to assess the effectiveness, efficiency and utility of a programme and they will give

²⁴ OJ L161/1 26.06.1999

indications on the degree to which they meet the programme objectives on the different levels. The structural funds terminology distinguishes mainly four types of monitoring indicators for the performance of a programme:

- Input: budget allocated;
- Output: physical measure of activities, measured in physical or monetary units;
- Result: direct and immediate effects of the programme;
- Impacts: consequences of the programme beyond the direct and immediate effects.

Impact /Result indicators - in order to adequately reflect the expected variety - had to be developed „bottom up“, starting from the level of projects. Therefore, all indicators on programme and priority level are based on aggregated information derived from the project and measure levels.

Such a set of consistent indicators will provide the basis for the qualitative evaluation of projects and of the programme impact as a whole. Thus the monitoring procedure and information about project impacts collected there, will form a solid basis for mid-term and ex-post evaluations of the programme.

A basic set of output indicators, to be used in the monitoring procedure, contains the following information (descriptive):

- total number of direct beneficiaries, broken down by main target groups [e.g. enterprises, citizens, institutions];
- number of projects;
- financial monitoring (exploitation of means, financial steps of implementation);
- an aggregated qualitative project indicator²⁵, based on the assessment of projects by some obligatory²⁶ and priority criteria. (cf. chapter 5.1)

The set of indicators shown is geared to the quantification of objectives on programme and priority levels. In general, it is necessary to state that the limits to a sensible quantification of objectives are rather narrow in the context of cross-border programmes for methodological reasons²⁷. It is however anticipated that ‘impacts’ as understood in Commission’s Working Paper 3 (‘Indicators for monitoring and evaluation: an indicative methodology’) will be difficult to measure in the case of INTERREG III B, owing to the large size of the co-operation area and the limited size of the budget.

²⁵ A project selection based on the priority criteria and some obligatory criteria has to ensure and safeguard the quality of projects. The procedure of these assessment is as follows:

Each project has to be assessed by each of the priority. Based on these assessment four types project levels are defined as follows: A-level project, (very good standard) , B-level project, (good standard), C-level project (intermediate standard) and D-level project (minimum standard).

²⁶ Some of the obligatory project selection criteria are also used for the ranking of projects if the application fulfills the criteria better than the minimum level is demanding.

²⁷ See the Commissions Methodological Working Paper “Ex-ante Evaluation and Indicators for INTERREG (Strand A), section 1.4

The quantification of indicators on programme and priority levels requires the completion of the programming process on the measure level (documented in the programme complement) and/or the agreement of indicators on project- and measure levels in the responsible programme implementing institutions (according to Council Regulation 1260/99, Article 35 (3), lit. b).

Programme level

- Number of projects establishing a common perspective for programme specific development issues
- Number of projects enhancing genuine transnationality of actions by having at least three financing partners
- Number of projects initiating actions within established national, regional and local systems laying ground for new activities
- Amount of project co-financing from public-like or private institutions
- Amount of project co-financing from regional and local administrations
- Number of projects having a mixed partnership involving both authorities from the spatial planning domain and partners from other sectors
- Number of projects involving non-EU partners

Based on the quantitative and qualitative information collected on project and measure-levels, the following aggregate indicators should be used on programme-level:

- 70% share of A- and B-level projects according to the aggregate qualitative project indicator (cf. above);
- size-distribution of projects:
 - between 70% and 80% share of large projects above 1,0 MEURO
 - between 20% and 30% share of small projects between 0,5 MEURO and 1,0 MEURO
- progress of financing plan

Priority level

Priority I:

- Number of spatial planning authorities involved in projects
- Number of networks established to promote sustainable development
- Number of projects dealing with the use of ICT to contribute to a stronger Alpine Space economy
- Number of projects dealing with best practices in the field of creation of permanent jobs and income opportunities

Priority II:

- Number of projects offering innovative solutions for the accessibility to transport and communication infrastructure
- Number of projects developing decision making tools for transport issues
- Number of projects improving access to transnational/high-speed transport networks
- Number of environmental friendly transport links between metropolitan areas and tourist areas

Priority III:

- Number of projects dealing with management of water resources
- Number of common perspectives for the sustainable exploitation of natural resources
- Number of transnational projects developing perspectives of the common cultural heritage and/or initialising pilot projects
- Number of projects developing and installing transnational risk prevention measures
- Number of transnational plans for the prevention of flooding

Based on the quantitative and qualitative information collected on project and measure-levels, the following aggregate indicators should be used on priority-level:

- 30% share of A-level projects according to the aggregate qualitative project indicator in each priority
- 40% share of B- level projects according to the aggregate qualitative project indicator in each priority
- 50% share of projects involving local and regional Authorities
- 50% share of projects involving Partners of 3 Countries at least

5. Indicative Financing Plan

Structure	Total Budget cost	Total Public Reg. Cost	Community participation										Public expenditure					Private Reg. Cost	Other Financial Resources (Switzerland)		
			Community participation		Public expenditure																
			Total	ERDF	National public participation				Regional public participation												
					Total	Central	Regional	Local	Other												
1. Spatial development and co.	41,165,698	33,306,321	21,649,299	21,946,299	17,264,822												17,264,822	2,061,477	1,695,798		
2001	4,695,722	4,695,722	2,347,861	2,347,861	2,347,861													2,347,861	287,633		
2002	1,138,112	1,138,112	569,056	569,056	569,056														569,056	287,633	
2003	5,211,279	5,211,279	2,605,639	2,605,639	2,605,639														2,605,639	287,633	
2004	10,508,344	10,508,344	5,254,170	5,254,170	5,254,170														5,254,170	287,633	
2005	10,525,487	10,525,487	5,262,740	5,262,740	5,262,740														5,262,740	287,633	
2006	8,589,793	8,589,793	4,294,350	4,294,350	4,294,350														4,294,350	287,633	
2. Sustainable transport	14,297,376	12,938,329	12,223,329	12,223,329	10,349,999														1,282,699	1,282,699	
2001	2,932,699	2,932,699	1,466,334	1,466,334	1,466,334														1,466,334	213,263	
2002	6,496,599	6,496,599	3,233,299	3,233,299	3,233,299														3,233,299	213,263	
2003	6,496,599	6,496,599	3,233,299	3,233,299	3,233,299														3,233,299	213,263	
2004	2,969,791	2,969,791	1,484,895	1,484,895	1,484,895														1,484,895	213,263	
2005	2,911,228	2,911,228	1,455,614	1,455,614	1,455,614														1,455,614	213,263	
2006	2,593,317	2,593,317	1,296,882	1,296,882	1,296,882														1,296,882	213,263	
3. Natural environment and cu.	40,548,271	39,494,311	29,229,964	29,229,964	19,175,217														19,175,217	1,544,957	1,236,066
2001	6,408,539	6,408,539	3,204,269	3,204,269	3,204,269														3,204,269	296,156	
2002	7,257,196	7,257,196	3,628,593	3,628,593	3,628,593														3,628,593	296,156	
2003	7,248,352	7,248,352	3,624,176	3,624,176	3,624,176														3,624,176	296,156	
2004	6,065,879	6,065,879	3,032,939	3,032,939	3,032,939														3,032,939	296,156	
2005	6,078,849	6,078,849	3,039,424	3,039,424	3,039,424														3,039,424	296,156	
2006	7,899,557	7,899,557	3,949,843	3,949,843	3,949,843														3,949,843	296,156	
4. Technical Assistance	7,385,332	7,385,332	3,711,558	3,711,558	3,673,792														3,673,792	347,063	
2001	1,669,799	1,669,799	834,899	834,899	834,899														834,899	95,927	
2002	1,201,628	1,201,628	600,814	600,814	600,814														600,814	95,927	
2003	1,189,849	1,189,849	594,924	594,924	594,924														594,924	95,927	
2004	1,369,895	1,369,895	684,947	684,947	684,947														684,947	95,927	
2005	1,369,219	1,369,219	684,901	684,901	684,901														684,901	95,927	
2006	1,368,895	1,368,895	684,905	684,905	684,905														684,905	95,927	
TOTAL YEARS																					
2001	15,695,716	15,695,716	7,547,858	7,547,858	7,547,858														7,547,858	723,333	
2002	16,063,426	16,063,426	8,021,713	8,021,713	8,021,713														8,021,713	723,333	
2003	20,214,496	20,214,496	10,107,233	10,107,233	10,107,233														10,107,233	723,333	
2004	20,785,896	20,785,896	10,487,519	10,487,519	10,487,519														10,487,519	723,333	
2005	20,822,782	20,822,782	10,518,031	10,518,031	10,518,031														10,518,031	723,333	
2006	20,788,832	20,788,832	10,500,167	10,500,167	10,500,167														10,500,167	723,333	
TOTAL	113,768,876	109,060,434	87,234,519	87,234,519	80,875,918														80,875,918	6,688,444	4,389,966

Table 3: Indicative Financial Table by priorities and years in EURO

In application of Article 29, §2 of the Council Regulation No 1260/1999 of 21 June 1999, the contribution from the ERDF is calculated in relation to the total eligible cost of the programme.

The ERDF co-financing rate is fixed to 50 % of the total programme-part of the EU-member states, except for Slovenia, whose territory is included in Objective 1 and therefore can benefit of a maximum ERDF rate of 75%.

The co-financing of costs for management, implementation, monitoring and control will be fixed in accordance with Council Regulation No 1685/2000 of 29 July 2000. Further details will be elaborated in the Programme Complement.

6. STATE AID TABLE

		AUSTRIA	FRANCE	GERMANY	ITALY
PI	M1	Any state aid provided under these measures will be provided in conformity with the following exemption regulations, as decided by the Commission on the application of the Council regulation (EC) n° 994/98 of 7.5.1998, relative to the application of articles 87 and 88 of the Treaty to certain horizontal aid schemes (OJ L 142 of 14.5.1998): Commission regulation (EC) N° 68/2001 of 12 January 2001 on the application of Articles 87 and 88 of the EC Treaty to training aid or Commission Regulation (EC) N° 69/2001 of 12 January 2001 on the application of Articles 87 and 88 of the EC Treaty to <i>de minimis</i> aid or Commission Regulation (EC) N° 70/2001 of 12 January 2001 on the application of Articles 87 and 88 of the EC Treaty to State aid to small and medium-sized enterprises, all of them published in the Official Journal L 10, 13.1.2001.			
	M2				
PII	M1	No state aid will be provided under this measure in the sense of article 87(1) of the Treaty.	No state aid will be provided under this measure in the sense of article 87(1) of the Treaty.	No state aid will be provided under this measure in the sense of article 87(1) of the Treaty.	No state aid will be provided under this measure in the sense of article 87(1) of the Treaty.
	M2	No state aid will be provided under this measure in the sense of article 87(1) of the Treaty.	No state aid will be provided under this measure in the sense of article 87(1) of the Treaty.	No state aid will be provided under this measure in the sense of article 87(1) of the Treaty.	No state aid will be provided under this measure in the sense of article 87(1) of the Treaty.
PIII	M1	No state aid will be provided under this measure in the sense of article 87(1) of the Treaty.	No state aid will be provided under this measure in the sense of article 87(1) of the Treaty.	No state aid will be provided under this measure in the sense of article 87(1) of the Treaty.	No state aid will be provided under this measure in the sense of article 87(1) of the Treaty.
	M2	No state aid will be provided under this measure in the sense of article 87(1) of the Treaty.	No state aid will be provided under this measure in the sense of article 87(1) of the Treaty.	No state aid will be provided under this measure in the sense of article 87(1) of the Treaty.	No state aid will be provided under this measure in the sense of article 87(1) of the Treaty.
	M3	No state aid will be provided under this measure in the sense of article 87(1) of the Treaty.	No state aid will be provided under this measure in the sense of article 87(1) of the Treaty.	No state aid will be provided under this measure in the sense of article 87(1) of the Treaty.	No state aid will be provided under this measure in the sense of article 87(1) of the Treaty.

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PIV	M1	No state aid will be provided under this measure in the sense of article 87(1) of the Treaty.	No state aid will be provided under this measure in the sense of article 87(1) of the Treaty.	No state aid will be provided under this measure in the sense of article 87(1) of the Treaty.	No state aid will be provided under this measure in the sense of article 87(1) of the Treaty.
	M2	No state aid will be provided under this measure in the sense of article 87(1) of the Treaty.	No state aid will be provided under this measure in the sense of article 87(1) of the Treaty.	No state aid will be provided under this measure in the sense of article 87(1) of the Treaty.	No state aid will be provided under this measure in the sense of article 87(1) of the Treaty.

Concerning Slovenia, it cannot be stated with certainty that the implementation of INTERREG III B programmes does not include any elements of state aids in compliance with Art. 2 of State Aid Control Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia No. 1/00 and 30/01) since the nature of the future projects is not exactly known yet.

In accordance with the statement above the Ministry of Finance will be informed about the project proposals within the National Committee in order to have the possibility to estimate the need of declaration of the INTERREG III B programmes in compliance with Art. 9 of State Aid Control Act.

In line with Article 12 of the Council Regulation for the Structural Funds (EC) No 1260/1999 (OJ L 161 of 26.6.1999, p.1) and point 7 of the Guidelines for INTERREG III (OJ C 143, of 23.5.2000, p.6), all operations within the framework of this Programme will be in conformity with State aid provisions as expressed in Articles 87 and 88 of the EC Treaty. The responsible authorities of Austria, France, Germany, Italy and Slovenia confirm that:

(1) any aid granted under this Programme will be in conformity with the provisions laid down in one of the Commission regulations adopted under Council Regulation (EC) No 994/98 of 7 May 1998 on the application of Articles 92 and 93 of the Treaty, establishing the European Community to certain categories of horizontal State Aid (OJ L 142, 14. 5. 1998, p. 8). The Commission has adopted four such Regulations so far:

Commission Regulation (EC) No 68/2001 of 12. 1. 2001 on the application of Articles 87 and 88 of the EC Treaty to training aid (OJ L 10, 13. 01. 2001, p. 20 as amended[1]); Commission Regulation (EC) No 69/2001 of 12. 1. 2001 on the application of Articles 87 and 88 of the EC Treaty to de minimis aid (OJ L 10, 13. 01. 2001, p.30); Commission Regulation (EC) No 70/2001 of 12. 1. 2001 on the application of Articles 87 and 88 of the EC Treaty to State Aid to small and medium-sized enterprises (OJ L 10, 13. 01. 2001, p. 33 as amended[2]); and Commission Regulation (EC) No 2204/2002 of 12. 12. 2002 on the application of Articles 87 and 88 of the EC Treaty to State Aid for employment (OJ L 337, 13. 12. 2002, p. 3).

(2) in case of assistance going beyond the minimis or beyond the aid covered by one of the Block Exemption Regulations, the individual notification and approval by the European Commission is required. The provisions of the Council Regulation 659/99 laying down detailed rules for the application of Article 93 EC Treaty [now Article 88], (OJ L 83, 27.03. 1999, p.1-9) should be respected.

Special rules may apply for the following sectors: steel; coal; ship-building and repair, synthetic fibres; motor vehicle industry; transport; production, processing and marketing of agriculture and fisheries products.

Concerning Slovenia, it cannot be stated with certainty that the implementation of INTERREG III B programmes does not include any elements of State aid within the meaning of Articles 87 and 88 of the EC Treaty since the nature of the future projects is not exactly known yet. The introduction of a new aid scheme or ad hoc aid requires a modification of the assistance by a formal Commission decision. The Management Authority will keep the State Aid table up-to-date and will inform the Commission of any modification of the table.

[1] Regulations (EC) No 68/2001 has recently been amended by a Commission Regulation (EC) of 25 February 2004 No 363/2004 (OJ L 63, 28/02/2004, p. 20)

[2] Regulation (EC) No 70/2001 has recently been amended by a Commission Regulation (EC) No 364/2004 of 25 February 2004 (OJ L 63, 28/02/2004, p. 22).

7. Joint structures of co-operation and financial management for implementation of INTERREG III B Alpine Space

The implementation structures and procedures set out below are agreed among the partners for implementing INTERREG IIIB Alpine Space Programme 2000 to 2006 (2008) in order to safeguard efficient transnational programme management. However, the procedures set out in the following chapter will be examined in the mid-term evaluation with regard to their practicability and might then be modified by the programme partners in the light of the experience gathered up till that time.

The Implementation Concept proposed is based on the following overall principles:

- compliance with requirements of Regulation 1260/1999 as well as of the INTERREG guidelines;
- slim, efficient and effective programme management and clear division and definition of responsibilities in order to minimise administrative costs, also at project level (Lead partner principle);
- balance between structures at transnational and national level, defining the respective responsibilities at the most adequate level;
- involvement of all Partner States (EU Members and Non-Members) as full programme members;
- commitment on English as working language.

7.1 Organisational structures for programme implementation (functional organisation)

7.1.1 Administrative structures

The joint implementation structure consists of:

Programme Implementing Authorities:

- a Managing Authority;
- a Paying Authority;
- a Joint Technical Secretariat;
- National Contact Points.

Bodies to support the selection and implementation of projects:

- a Monitoring Committee;
- a Steering Committee;

- a Conference of Regions;
- National Committees;
- Transnational working groups.

7.1.2 Monitoring Committee (MC)

A transnational MC will be set up in accordance with Article 35 of Council Regulation (EC) no 1260/1999 within three months of approval of the programme at the latest.

The MC will supervise the programme. Its overall task is to ensure the quality and effectiveness of implementation and accountability of programme operations.

The main tasks of the MC are:

- to confirm and adjust the programme complement, including physical and financial indicators to be used to monitor the assistance; its approval must be obtained before any further adjustment is made; it shall make later amendments to the programme or the programme complement;
- to consider and approve the project selection criteria within six months of approval of the CIP;
- to be responsible for the implementation of the Technical Assistance budget;
- to periodically review the progress made towards achieving the specific objectives of the assistance;
- to examine the results of implementation, particularly achievement of the targets set for the different measures and the midterm evaluation;
- to consider and approve the annual and final reports before they are sent to the Commission;
- to adopt a promotion and public relations plan to be implemented by the Joint Technical Secretariat and the National Contact Points;
- to approve the yearly working plan of the Joint Technical Secretariat.
- to consider and approve any proposal to amend the content of the Commission decision on the contribution of the Funds;
- it may propose any adjustment or review of the assistance likely to aid the attainment of the objectives described in Article 1 Council Regulation (EC) NO 1260/1999 and chapter I of the INTERREG Guidelines or to improve the management of assistance in accordance with Article 34 (3) of Council Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999.

Membership, chairmanship and procedures

The MC shall be composed of 2-3 representatives of each partner state, from both national and regional level from all partner states, including whenever possible representatives of governmental environmental bodies, to ensure efficiency and broad representation. The President of the Conference of the Regions and the head of the Managing Authority are full members of this Committee.

A representative of the European Commission will be a member in an advisory capacity.

Representatives of the Joint Technical Secretariat shall take part in MC meetings.

Representatives of non-governmental bodies (NGOs), in particular relevant transnationally organised partners shall be members in an advisory capacity, such as those representing environmental authorities/ organisations.

The members of the Monitoring Committee shall be appointed by the respective governments within 30 days of approval of the CIP.

The MC shall have a chairman and a deputy-chairman, chosen from the representatives of the national authorities responsible for administration of INTERREG. The chairman and deputy-chairman shall be nominated for a period to be defined in the Rules of Procedure and alternate between the partner states.

The MC shall meet at least once a year.

Decision-making in the MC will be by consensus among the national delegations (one vote per delegation). Decisions may be taken via written procedure.

At its first meeting, the MC shall establish its own rules of procedure, taking into account the institutional, statutory and financial systems of the countries involved in the programme.

The MC will be assisted by the Joint Technical Secretariat. The secretariat will be responsible for the preparation of all documentation relating to the meetings.

Broader involvement of the regional level (NUTS II) will be secured by the Conference of the Regions. Broad involvement of the regional and local level, as well as economic and social partners and non-governmental organisations will be secured through the National Committees to be established in all partner states.

7.1.3 Steering Committee (SC)

In accordance with points 29 and 44 of the INTERREG guidelines a single SC shall be set up as a body responsible for the joint selection of projects for funding, after having applied the criteria for project selection and co-ordinated monitoring of projects' implementation.

The SC will be set up within three months of approval of the programme.

The main tasks of the SC are:

- to approve calls for proposals;
- to approve individual project applications on the basis of the assessment of projects;
- to co-ordinate with other Community programmes and policies;
- to establish transnational working groups;
- to give guidance to the Managing Authority and
- to approve the rules of procedure of the Joint Technical Secretariat.

Membership, chairmanship and procedures

The SC shall be composed of 2 representatives of each partner state, each from both national²⁸ and regional level of all partner states to ensure efficiency.

Representatives of the Joint Technical Secretariat and the Managing Authority shall take part in SC meetings.

A representative of the European Commission may attend as an observer to the SC Meetings.

The chairman on behalf of the SC can invite others to attend the meeting as observers or experts.

The members of the SC shall be appointed by the respective governments within 30 days of the approval of the CIP.

The SC shall have a chairman and a deputy-chairman. The chairman and deputy-chairman shall be nominated for a period to be defined in the Rules of Procedure and alternate between the partner states.

The SC shall meet at least once a year.

Decision-making in the SC will be by consensus among the national delegations (one vote per delegation). Decisions may be taken via written procedure.

7.1.4 Conference of the Regions

The Alpine Space Programme is based on regions at NUTS II level, which have to co-operate in a transnational way. The transnational level and the aim of considering this space as a whole can be further increased by creation of a body addressed to two main objectives:

- Exchange of views, also in order to facilitate partnership among regions;
- Formal advice to the monitoring committee on the following items:
 - selection criteria;
 - co-ordination with other programmes and policies;
 - physical and financial indicators;
 - modification of management procedures and modification of the financial tables;
 - financial plan for technical assistance;
 - dates and stages of interim evaluations;
 - approval of the annual report;
 - examination of results of implementation and of progress made in achieving the specific objectives of the assistance.

The Conference will meet once a year and deal with topics that are proposed by the Monitoring Committee (e.g. specific priorities of the programme). The partner states endeavour to safeguard that the Conferences are not organised as isolated events but

²⁸ Representatives of Ministries responsible for Spatial development.

that follow-ups of the preceding Conferences are done so that synergies can be gained.

Participation in this conference is optional to the regions at NUTS II level.

The Presidency is held by a Region of the Co-operation area, following a rotation by State.

The Regions at NUTS II level are represented in the Conference with one full member for each Region²⁹. Each Region will appoint a substitute member.

The President of the Conference on behalf of the Conference may invite other persons with an advisory capacity.

The European Commission and the National programme co-ordinators might participate as observers.

The President of the Conference is a full member of the MC.

7.1.5 Managing Authority (MA)

According to Article 9 lit n, Article 34 of Council Regulation (EC) no 1260/1999 and point 25 of the INTERREG guidelines the overall responsibility for the programme shall lie with the MA.

The Partner States nominate the

Amt der Salzburger Landesregierung,
Abteilung 15, (Wirtschaft, Tourismus, Energie)
Südtirolerplatz 11,
PF 527,
A-5010 Salzburg (Austria),
Tel. +43 662 8042 3799, Fax +43 662 8042 3808,

as MA.

The person responsible in the MA for the programme (and the Paying Authority) is
Mag. Dr. Christian Salletmaier (address, telephone and fax-number as indicated above).

Tasks of the MA:

The main tasks of the MA besides programme administration are to promote the programme and to initiate the steps which are necessary for an efficient implementation of the programme. The MA initiates and safeguards all necessary actions and elaborates proposals for the MC/SC which have to decide on these proposals. The MA acts as an interface between the European Commission and the participating states and regions represented in the Monitoring and Steering Committee and will be responsible for the efficiency and correctness of management and implementation in accordance with Article 34 of Council Regulation (EC) no 1260/1999, in particular:

²⁹ Officially there is exist no NUTS II regions in Switzerland; but the political group of co-ordination at the Cantons' level has defined six INTERREG IIIB-Regions, which shall be represented in the Conference of the Regions.

- representing the CIP towards the European Commission;
- setting up a system to gather reliable financial and statistical information on programme implementation for the monitoring indicators and evaluation and for forwarding the data to the programme bodies and the EC;
- ensuring that the relevant programme bodies and the EC are duly and regularly informed on any important information on the programme implementation;
- adjusting and implementing the programme complement;
- drawing up and (after approval of the MC) submitting to the European Commission the annual implementation report;
- organising, in co-operation with the European Commission and the National Contact Points of the Member States, the mid-term evaluation;
- ensuring that those bodies taking part in the management and implementation of the assistance maintain either a separate accounting system or an adequate accounting code for all transactions relating to the assistance;
- ensuring the correctness of operations financed under the assistance, particularly by implementing internal controls in keeping with the principles of sound financial management and acting in response to any observations or requests for corrective measures adopted;
- ensuring compliance with Community policies;
- ensuring compliance with the obligations concerning information and publicity;
- contracting the Joint Technical Secretariat;
- signing contracts with final beneficiaries (lead partner);
- keeping record of State aid schemes to be provided, and will inform the Commission, namely by a modified Programming Complement, of each modification regarding the provision of State aid schemes. Any new addition of any State aid scheme or ad hoc aid would require a new Commission decision.
- forward the financial audit reports according to Commission Regulation 438/2001 (or as superseded by any new EC implementation regulation issued on the basis of the new SF regulation) to the European Commission.

The MA will be supported by the Joint Technical Secretariat in its administrative work.

7.1.6 Paying Authority (PA)

The function of the PA according to Article 9 lit o, Article 32 of Council Regulation (EC) 1260/1999 and point 25 of the INTERREG guidelines will be carried out by the MA nominated in section 7.1.5 above.

Since the same body, namely the Amt der Salzburger Landesregierung, will act as Managing Authority and Paying Authority, it has, according to Article 3 lit a of Commission Regulation (EC) 438/2001, to be provided for a clear allocation and adequate separation of functions within this organisation. Therefore the Partner States have agreed that the tasks of Managing Authority and Paying Authority shall be performed by two separate sub-units of the Amt der Salzburger Landesregierung. Consequently

unit "Regionalentwicklung und EU-Regionalpolitik" shall act as MA and unit "Wirtschafts- und Technologieförderung" as PA.

The bank account number of the PA will be communicated to the Commission's services in due time after approval of the programme document.

Tasks of the PA:

- drawing up and submitting of payment applications;
- receiving payments from the Commission;
- monitoring of commitments and payments of ERDF funds at programme level;
- monitoring financial implementation of the projects;
- paying out ERDF-funds to the final beneficiaries.

The operative tasks of the PA can be carried out by a bank or another private institution contracted on the basis of a tendering procedure. The PA fulfils the decisions of the SC and MC. It shall be funded by the Technical Assistance budget. The national co-finance will be shared by the participating EU Member States proportionally to their ERDF contribution.

7.1.7 Joint Technical Secretariat (JTS)

The programme shall have one JTS, which will be chosen by means of a tendering procedure. The JTS is responsible to the Monitoring Committee and works under a contract with the MA, who also controls and monitors their work. The JTS gives technical support to the MC and the SC as well as to the MA and the PA. It fulfils all day-to-day-work on the transnational level. It will work in close contact with the National Contact Points. It will therefore act as a transnational focal point for the network of the National Contact Points.

The JTS shall have international staff being able to communicate in the major Alpine languages (French, German, Italian and Slovenian).

The work plan for the JTS has to be approved by the MC every year.

The JTS shall be funded from the Technical Assistance budget. The national co-finance will be shared by the participating EU Member States proportionally to their ERDF contribution.

Tasks of the JTS:

The main tasks of the JTS can be differentiated as follows:

A: Direct Support to the MA/PA

- support of MA/PA in fulfilling their tasks as described in chapter 7.1.5 and 7.1.6. (see also chapter 4.2., priority 4 second paragraph).

B: Programme related services

- Secretariat to the MC and SC including organisation of meetings, preparation and implementation of decisions to be taken there, drafting of minutes etc;

- management of project application process (incl. preparation of calls for proposals, assessment of applications information and advice to applicants and partners of approved projects regarding implementation of activities and financial administration, preparation and making available of standardised forms for project application and documentation as well as requests for project changes)
- monitor progress made by projects through collecting and checking project progress reports;
- dealing with information and publicity on the programme and its projects, joint public relations work;
- occasional interpreting services and translations as may be required;
- organisation of technical seminars (e.g. Lead Partner Forums, etc.)

C: *Networking, project development*

- node in the network of National Contact Points and close co-operation with National Contact Points;
- co-operation with national committees and transnational working groups;
- liaison with the implementing authorities, the European Commission and other INTERREG III B co-operation areas;
- co-operation with organisations, institutions and networks relevant for the objectives of the programme in the Alpine Space.

7.1.8 National Committees, National Co-ordination, National Contact Points, National Co-ordinators

National Committees:

The involvement of regional and local authorities, which are responsible for regional and local development and spatial planning on the regional and local level, both in the planning phase (mainly as providers of project ideas) and in the implementation phase (as project developers and for co-financing) of the CIP, as well as the involvement of the economic and social partners and non governmental organisations, is of great importance.

For this reason each partner state shall establish one or more national committees in accordance with its institutional structure in order to ensure the co-ordination at the national level.

Each state shall inform the MA about the setting up of the committees and provide information about their composition and rules of procedure. They may decide themselves on their specific tasks.

National Contact Points:

National co-ordinating units of Partner States and national committees could be assisted by a National Contact Point (see also description of role of National Contact Points contained in chapter 4.2. Priority 4). Costs for this Contact Point will be co-financed by technical assistance, as is established in Priority 4/Technical Assistance. while the costs of operating the committees will be financed only by the respective

partner states. The main task of the National Contact Points is to assist the project application and implementation process for all projects, esp. serving as a contact point for project applicants and partners in the respective countries (especially the National Contact Point of the Partner State the LP is coming from will advise the LP in preparing a project application for ERDF co-financing and assist to find transnational partners).

Furthermore, the National Contact Point will support JTS and MA/PA in the fulfilment of their tasks. As they are important for project development and information about the programme within the Partner States, close links should be established between the JTS and the National Contact Points.

The National Contact Points shall be informed on a same-day basis about any and all assistance requests submitted by the PA/MA to the Commission. The PA/MA shall inform the National Contact Points on a same-day basis on any incoming SF funds. In the case of a shortage of SF funds available on the programme account, the priorities of further out-payments shall be fixed by agreement between the PA/MA and SC.

National Contact Points will be informed about results of project selection carried out by the SC and regularly informed about the status of project implementation by the JTS.

National Contact Points and PA/MA shall inform each other and immediately with regard to any delay, implementation problems or irregularities occurring in the financial management of the programme, co-ordinate measures to eliminate such problems among each other and monitor their successful implementation.

However, as the rules for administration of public financing and the responsibilities for spatial planning policy are not homogenous among participating States, each Partner State has to decide the respective arrangements to be set up for co-operation and division of responsibilities within the respective Partner States fulfilling the different obligations in programme implementation procedures set out in chapter 7.2 below. Information about organisational structures at the national level has to be provided to the MA. Without prejudice to that decision, each Partner State shall set up a National Contact Point securing a link between the transnational and national level in programme implementation. Therefore the national level will be referred to as Contact Point in the following chapters.

National Co-ordinators:

Each partner state of the programme is represented by a national co-ordinator which can be recruited by the partner states from national or regional level. The function of the national co-ordinators shall especially be to safeguard a continuous co-ordination among partner states and to prepare meetings of MC and SC whereby national co-ordinators do not have decision rights.

7.1.9 Transnational working groups

Transnational Working Groups may be established following a decision of the Steering Committee. They shall especially deal with programme-priorities and/or specific thematic and strategic fields. The composition of the transnational working groups will depend on the respective topic that is dealt with. They may be composed of experts or of lead partners of approved projects. When establishing a transnational working group the SC, with support of the MA, shall give indications about the issue to be treated, about expected working plan and composition of the working group. The tasks of the

transnational working groups are especially to co-ordinate between relevant projects in order to produce synergy effects and to support the implementation of the projects and the programme or to deepen certain topics relevant for the Alpine Space. JTS and NCP will assist in the organisation of these working groups. The working groups are financed by the technical assistance budget. Monitoring and the Steering Committee will be regularly informed about activities and progress made by these working groups.

Management Structure

Cf Annex

7.2 Procedural regulations governing programme implementation (procedural organisation)

7.2.1 Co-ordination at the programme level

Co-ordination between the authorities named in section 7.1.1 and involved in implementation of the INTERREG III B Alpine Space Programme shall be within the sphere of responsibility of the MA/PA and/or, as commissioned by the latter, the JTS. The MA/PA acts on the basis of decisions of the SC and MC. The MA/PA stays in close contact with National Contact Points and JTS.

The following agreements shall be made complementary to the provisions of Council Regulation 1260/1999 with regard to the tasks of the MA and PA:

- a) The MA/PA shall become active with regard to the following issues of strategic importance for the programme only in agreement with the SC:
 - preparation of proposals for MC decisions regarding programme amendments or programme planning supplements;
 - preparation of, and (if required) participation in the annual meetings with the European Commission pursuant to Article 34 (2) Council Regulation 1260/1999;
 - preparation of comments to the MC on regular monitoring, progress reports, annual reports and interim appraisals.
- b) MA/PA shall summarise all information transmitted by the Member States about estimates of payment applications under the programme expected for the current and the following calendar year and shall transmit the estimate for the whole programme to the European Commission as well as (for information) to the National Contact Points by the end of March of each year. This estimate shall relate to eligible expenditure as a whole as well as to ERDF funds.

7.2.2 Administration of the programme at project level

The administrative work involved in the procedures for granting assistance to the individual projects under the INTERREG III B Alpine Space Programme will be managed according to the following rules, which may be further specified by the MA.

7.2.3 The Lead Partner (LP) principle

The partners of each project shall nominate a LP, which takes the overall responsibility for the application and implementation of the entire project. If the LP is coming from a Member state the financial management and full financial responsibility of all ERDF funds is included. The LP then is the final beneficiary according to Council Regulation (EC) 1260/1999. If the LP would come from a Non-Member State the task of the LP must be performed by a project partner coming from an EU-Member State ("ERDF-Lead Partner"), because only a project partner coming from a Member State is entitled to deal with ERDF-funding. In these cases it is the ERDF-LP who is final beneficiary according to Council Regulation (EC) 1260/1999. The project partner coming from the

Non-Member State, however, can be regarded as substantial LP, who delivers the inputs to the project, whereas the ERDF-LP only formally acts as LP.

The LP establishes legal relations with the project partners in order to legally define their co-operation and to safeguard himself against his partners by contract.

Regarding the programme co-operation across the external EU borders with Liechtenstein and Switzerland two principles have to be taken into account when the LP principle is applied:

- in the course of project development, the Non-Member States are given the same opportunities as the Member States, as they can generate and initiate projects by themselves and choose their project partners by the same rules;
- the project parts to be financed from different EU financial sources require different contractual relations and different forms of financial responsibility;
- the project parts to be financed from national money only³⁰ do not need any contractual relation with the MA/PA and impose less administrative obligations for project implementation in the Alpine Space Programme.

The possibility to initiate projects and to act as a LP has to be open for all of the eligible organisations from the Alpine Space Programme, although the different nature of the general financial responsibility of the different financial instruments to be used makes it impossible to handle the different project parts fully in the same way. Therefore, there are two different ways of the application of the LP principle regarding his location inside or outside the EU.

Responsibilities of a LP coming from a Member State include:

- submission of the project application;
- co-ordination of submission of the project application for ERDF contribution;
- signing of subsidy contract for the whole project;
- transnational project management including public relation measures;
- collecting information about all project parts and monitoring and reporting about progress of the whole project in the framework of the agreed monitoring system;
- monitoring and reporting of financial flows for the whole project including ERDF funds;
- facilitating audit by all relevant auditing authorities.

Responsibilities of a LP coming from a Member State do not include:

- Financial responsibilities for national funds of other project participants.

Responsibilities of a LP coming from a Non-Member State are:

³⁰ Which will be the case for Liechtenstein and Switzerland

- submission of the project application;
- co-ordination of submission of the project application for ERDF contribution;
- signing of subsidy contract for the whole project together with the ERDF-LP;
- transnational project management including public relation measures;
- collecting information about all project parts and monitoring and reporting about the progress of the whole project;
- monitoring and reporting of financial flows for the whole project including ERDF funds together with ERDF-LP;
- facilitating audit by all relevant auditing authorities.

Responsibilities of a LP coming from a Non-Member State do not include:

- Financial responsibilities for ERDF funds or national funds of other project participants.

Responsibilities of the an ERDF-Lead Partner in a project with a LP from a Non-Member State are:

- signature of subsidy contract for the whole project together with the LP ;
- ERDF accounting and reporting.

Responsibilities of the an ERDF Lead Partner in a project with a LP from a Non-Member State do not include:

- Financial responsibilities for national funds of other project participants.

The relations between project parts co-financed with ERDF and project parts financed with national money only have to be guaranteed by a co-operation agreement between the relevant project partners submitted together with the application, and it is supervised and monitored by the Joint Technical Secretariat.

More detailed guidelines and rules of procedure of the above mentioned LP principles will be outlined in the Subsidy Contract.

7.2.4 Information and consulting

Persons or institutions potentially interested in, or responsible for, projects located in a Partner State shall be adequately informed by the JTS in co-operation with the National Contact Points of the respective Partner State of the objectives of the programme, the prerequisites for obtaining ERDF funds and the individual procedures to be followed.

Active public relations work for the programme will be implemented by the JTS in accordance with the MA and by the National Contact Points on the basis of a promotion and public relations plan, which has to be adopted by the MC and regularly updated by the JTS.

7.2.5 Submission of co-financing applications

Formal applications for co-financing from the ERDF funds within the scope of the programme shall be submitted by the LP (in case of LP coming from a Non-Member State: jointly with ERDF-LP) to the JTS primarily in electronic form.

After reporting to the monitoring system the JTS shall immediately inform all the National Contact Points involved in the project application (send copy for information) for further common proceeding (see below).

Applications shall include:

- information on the legal and economic situation of the LP as well as of other project partners – differentiating between project partners in EU Member States (entitled to receive ERDF funds) and project partners coming from a Non-Member-State;
- the objective of the assisted project;
- the location of, or (in the case of immaterial projects) the territory covered by, the project;
- the scheduled project costs including the most important components and the planned financing (separating project parts eligible for ERDF co-funding and national funding only (if this is the case) and giving detailed information on any other public assistance obtained and indicating the cash value of such assistance).
- The expected results and deliverables, including indicators for project monitoring.

A confirmation securing all project co-financing has to be included in the project application. Further requests will be defined in the Programming Complement.

7.2.6 Assessment of the co-financing application

Assessment of project applications lies within the responsibility of the JTS in co-operation with the National Contact Points of the project partners in order to secure a complete examination of the project application.

After a project is submitted, the JTS verifies the eligibility or admissibility of the project, i.e., whether the project complies with all the minimum selection criteria established (and namely with the established below and in point 7.2.5 above).

It will perform a technical quality assessment of the project for which it will be supported by the national Contact points and authorities and experts, if JTS considers it necessary to consult an expert. These experts will be contracted by the MA and funded with technical assistance budget. The partner states shall nominate experts whereby it shall be safeguarded that independent persons are recruited and that all relevant fields are covered by their expertise. The nomination will be co-ordinated by the JTS.

The JTS, supported if necessary by the National Contact Points shall also examine the following aspects:

- economic and organisational capacity of the project partners;

- amount and appropriateness of the costs of the project;
- appropriateness of the ratio between own funds and public assistance (taking into account the possible programme co-financing with ERDF funds as well as any other national public funds applied for, already granted or promised);
- secured financing (including statements of funding bodies (public and/or private) concerned);
- whether the aim of the project applied for is in line with sectoral policies and objectives (if required, also including statements of other administrative bodies concerned).
- checking the completeness of national assessments;
- whether the project meets the specific INTERREG III B assistance requirements pursuant to the Programme and Programme Supplement;
- does the project meet the ERDF assistance requirements pursuant to Council Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999 and the (planned) Council Regulation of the EC No 1685/2000 on the eligibility of assistance of measures;
- compliance with other relevant provisions of EU law (subsidy laws, rules for awarding of public contracts, environmental law etc.).

The aspects to be checked by JTS/NCP may be further elaborated by JTS/NCP in coordination with MA, and if necessary consultation of the MC. Based on this examination, the application is given positive or negative statements on the individual aspects examined by the JTS and the Contact Points. They may take account of the recommendations from the preliminary assessment of project proposals and project applications by respective national committees, if available

The results of this examination are presented by the JTS to the SC for a decision in the standardised form of a report with an assistance recommendation.

Enough time should be foreseen to enable Members of the SC to make recommendations on the projects applied for ERDF co-financing before decision in the SC;

In order to secure the maximum coherence between projects and programme objectives and whenever required, SC may ask the JTS to provide the support of experts for examining the main contributions of projects proposed for the achievement of strategic objectives of the programme (innovative approach, surplus of results, a.o.). The recommendations of the experts form part of the recommendations to the SC.

In the event of disputes, the SC may obtain external statements (e.g. expert opinions, assessments by the concerned municipalities, Euregios, etc.).

7.2.7 Single co-financing decision regarding ERDF-funds

The allocation of ERDF-funding will follow a single decision of the Land Salzburg basing on the "Allgemeine Richtlinien für die Gewährung von Förderungsmitteln des Landes Salzburg".

The SC selects ERDF projects and allocates ERDF funds on the basis of assistance recommendations issued by the JTS and National Contact Points.

The co-financing of a project with INTERREG III B funds shall be granted (according to availability) in specific amounts only if the results of the examination by the National Contact Points and the JTS are as follows:

- the assistance requirements are fulfilled as defined by the criteria of the INTERREG IIIB Alpine Space Programme, the relevant assistance guidelines and other relevant national and Community legislation;
- the amount of co-financing to be granted, taking into consideration the total amount of subsidies, is commensurate with the content of the project and the financial capacity and/or needs of the LP and – if applicable – complies with the provisions of EU competition legislation (assistance caps, cumulating rules, notification rules);
- the amount of ERDF co-financing funds can be covered within the scope of the available financial framework of the programme and does not exceed the respective upper co-funding limits (pursuant to Art. 29 of Regulation No. 1260/1999).

7.2.8 Co-financing approval/contract for EU- funding

MA/PA informs all applicants as well as – for information – the National Contact Points about the result of the SC's project selection.

The legally binding written approval for ERDF co-financing granted to a project shall be issued by the MA/PA in the form of a co-financing contract between the MA/PA and the LP (to be signed by the LP or, in cases of LP coming from a Non-Member State, by the LP jointly with the ERDF-LP).

The ERDF co-financing contract (subsidy contract) shall contain the information requested in the project application on the LP and the project itself in a clearly understandable manner and defining in accordance with the legal basis of the programme and other relevant legislation, the costs eligible for assistance in terms of territory concerned, timeframe and subject matter.

The LP shall moreover be obliged to co-ordinate all involved project partners named in the ERDF co-financing contract and to comply with the conditions and requirements with regard to reporting, auditing and repayment.

The legally binding commitment of ERDF funds to a project shall be reported by the MA/PA for reporting to the financial monitoring system as well as to the respective National Contact Points.

7.2.9 Assessment of (interim and final) financial statements

Only expenses actually paid and eligible for funding (or expenses recognised as equivalent under EU law) may be co-financed by ERDF funds. ERDF funds may therefore only be paid out on the basis of invoices, including all payment confirmations (or equivalent booking slips), that clearly relate to the recipients of the assistance, the assisted project and agree with the defined timeframe. To ensure this, the LP shall present financial statements with invoices for the pro-rated total costs and financing of the co-financed project including the list of all invoices and confirmations to the JTS, which have been audited by the respective national co-funding authorities of all project partners as to their correctness with regard to the amounts calculated and the content, by checking the invoices and – depending on the type of project – also by conducting

on-site audits or collections of the corresponding project reports and similar documentation.

7.2.10 Payment of ERDF funds

After examining a project's implementation and the financial statements by the JTS, the PA/MA shall immediately pay the ERDF funds to the project account of the LP and report this act in the financial monitoring system. The confirmation of the payment of the ERDF funds shall also be reported to the JTS.

In the event a repayment is required, the MA/PA shall request repayment of the ERDF funds and shall organise the re-transfer to the programme account and the PA/MA shall report this to the financial monitoring system.

7.2.11 Financial auditing

With reference to Article 34 lit f and 38 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999 the overall responsibility for co-ordination of financial auditing lies with the MA/PA in co-operation with the respective national auditing authorities nominated by the Member State (choosing of projects to be audited (on site), method/way of auditing procedure, drafting a financial auditing plan). However, since the MA/PA might not be allowed to audit public co-funding institutions in other Partner States, financial control could be delegated to the national auditing authority nominated by each Member States. They shall ensure for all projects co-financed by ERDF funds under INTERREG IIIB Alpine Space that compliance with the terms and conditions for assistance under the programme as well as the correctness of financial statements settled with regard to expenses eligible for assistance and assistance funds to be granted is continuously ensured both in factual and accounting terms and if necessary audited on site.

MA/PA and the Member States will endeavour to secure a complete financial audit of all parts co-financed by ERDF funds.

The respective national Auditing Authorities shall be obliged to make available at all times all relevant information at the project level for ERDF co-financed projects in agreement with the MA/PA to the European Commission.

In this context care shall be taken to ensure a proper separation (and if applicable, also an organisational and functional separation) of the personnel conducting the audit and auditing tasks from the project consulting activities and, in particular, from the project management in order to avoid conflicts of interests and to reduce the risk of irregularities.

7.2.12 Financial responsibilities

If the MA has knowledge of irregularities on behalf of a Lead Partner, especially regarding inappropriate implementation, it shall immediately inform the respective EU partner states, who shall, in the first instance, bear the responsibility for investigating irregularities and making the financial corrections required according to Article 39 (1) of Council Regulation (EEC) No 1260/1999 as well as the SC.

The EU-member state concerned shall make the financial corrections required in connection with the irregularity. The corrections shall consist in cancelling all or part of the Community contribution. The Community funds released in this way may be re-used in

compliance with the arrangements to be defined pursuant to Article 53(2) of Council Regulation (ECC) No 1260/1999. In cases of cancellation of ERDF-funds the MA is to take the required measures with respect to the LP.

If it is decided that a cancellation of the Community contribution is not be effected, the MA will be released from any demands whatsoever from the EU Commission, from the EU Partners concerned, from the other EU Partners and from other third parties for whatever legal reason.

8. Joint Programming Process

The joint preparation work for the Operational Programme INTERREG III-B Alpine Space started in September 1999 in Rome by an informal meeting of the national representatives of "Alpine Space/Eastern Alps" Joint Pilot Action Programme under Art. 10 ERDF and national representatives of France. In this meeting, national representatives of France agreed to participate in a common Alpine Space Programme. By this, an Alps-wide co-operation can thus be set into force joining both, experiences of the INTERREG II C programme (1997-99) for the Western Mediterranean and Latin Alps and of the Joint Pilot Action Programme under Art. 10 ERDF - "Eastern Alps".

The programming process was characterised by a broad participation of the relevant actors in the different countries and aimed at creating a common view on future trans-national co-operation and at gathering various inputs by:

- wide-spread information campaigns (by mailing as well as oral and internet presentations) addressed to political and administrative representatives as well as to partners of economic and social importance (including environmental partners);
- information days in the countries and regions involved, partly in co-operation of two countries;
- contacting persons and institutions responsible for the previous programmes.

Basing on this preparatory work, the joint programming process started in January 2000 with the first meeting of the National Programme Co-ordinators for the INTERREG III-B Alpine Space Programme in Vienna. This board consisted of 1-2 members per participating country. Liechtenstein was represented by Switzerland.

On occasion of the 2nd meeting in March 2000 a group of experts (1-2 representatives per country) was established to support the national co-ordinators and to prepare a draft for the programme document.

Beside internal discussions and mutual exchange of results within and between the preparing boards a lot of information and co-ordination activities have been carried out on the inter-ministerial and regional level in the participating countries.

The following table summarises the most important meetings during the programming process:

Date	Meetings, Conferences, Events	Groups involved
September 29 th , 1999	Joint meeting on "The EC-Proposals on INTERREG III B – Alpine Space: first step to create a unique co-operation area for two spaces – the Eastern and the Western Alps" – National representatives of "Alpine Space/Eastern Alps" Programme meet the National representatives of France in Rome;	(not relevant)

November 16 th , 1999	Meeting of the transnational Management committee of the "Alpine Space/Eastern Alps" Joint Pilot Action Programme under Art. 10 ERDF in Rome;	(not relevant)
January 21 st , 2000	Transnational start up meeting of the National Programme Co-ordinators for the INTERREG III-B Alpine Space Programme in Vienna	(not relevant)
January 26 th , 2000	Austrian Information-day on transnational spatial development cooperation experiences and forward looks on INTERREG III B (Alpine Space and CADSES). Presentation and discussion respectively exhibition	Representatives of administrations at local, regional and national level and social and economic partners. Representatives of NGO's, research and planning institutes and universities
March 13 th – 14 th , 2000	Seminar "Alpine Space/Eastern Alps" Joint Pilot Action Programme under Art. 10 ERDF: REGIONALP – „the Transnational Co-operation In the Alpine Space. Perspectives for the future INTERREG III in Como – Region of Lombardy;	Representatives of administrations at local, regional and national level and social and economic partners
March 22 nd , 2000	INTERREG III-B Alpine Space Information-day in Austria: presentation to and discussion with representatives of administration at regional and national level and social and economic partners;	Representatives of administration at regional and national level and social and economic partners
March 29 th , 2000	2 nd Transnational meeting of the National Programme Co-ordinators for the INTERREG III-B Alpine Space Programme in Salzburg; 1 st meeting of the Expert Group for the INTERREG III-B Alpine Space Programme in Salzburg;	(not relevant)
Mai 19 th , 2000	INTERREG III-B Alpine Space Programme information day in Switzerland: presentation to political-administrative of the regions;	Representatives of cantonal administrations responsible for Economic Affairs and for Spatial Planning, representatives of federal Agencies concerned by INTERREG III B, some Institutes and NGO's

May 22 nd , 2000	Transnational meeting of the National Programme Co-ordinators for the Alpine Space and CADSES Programme in Vienna;	(not relevant)
May 29 th , 2000	INTERREG III-B Alpine Space Programme draft presentation to and discussion with Italian representatives of administration at national and regional level in Rome;	Representatives of administrations at local, regional and national level and social and economic partners
June 26 th , 2000	Alpine Space/Eastern Alps" Joint Pilot Action Programme under Art. 10 ERDF „Spatial Planning and Development in the Eastern Alps“ Regionalp report on results in Udine – Region of Friuli Venezia Giulia: the Regionalp experience and perspectives for INTERREG III;	Representatives of administrations at local, regional and national level and social and economic partners
July 17 th – 18 th , 2000	Transnational technical seminar for the regions that belong to the Alpine Space in Milan;	Representatives of administrations at local, regional and national level and social and economic partners
July 18 th , 2000	2 nd meeting of the Expert Group for the INTERREG III-B Alpine Space Programme in Milan;	(not relevant)
July 18 th + 19 th , 2000	3 rd Transnational meeting of the National Programme Co-ordinators for the INTERREG III-B Alpine Space Programme in Milan;	(not relevant)
August 9 th until September 1 st	Written consultation procedure about the first chapters of the programme in Switzerland;	Addressed to heads of cantonal Agencies for Spatial Planning, as well as for European and Transborder Affairs, intercantonal Organisations (in total about 80 addressees)
August 28 th , 2000	4 th Transnational meeting of the National Programme Co-ordinators for the INTERREG III-B Alpine Space Programme in Vienna;	(not relevant)
September 5 th , 2000	INTERREG III-B Alpine Space information in Austria: presentation to and discussion;	Representatives of administration at regional and national level and social and economic partners

September 8 th , 2000	INTERREG III-B Alpine Space Programme draft presentation to and discussion with Italian representatives of administration at national and regional level in Rome;	Representatives of administrations at local, regional and national level and social and economic partners
September 18 th , 2000	INTERREG IIIB Alpine Space Programme presentation to the regions and agreement on a French contribution to the programme draft in Lyon;	Representatives of the regional authorities concerned (regional executives, economic and social councils and Préfectures of each region) + experts;
September 19 th , 2000	5 th Transnational Meeting of the National Programme Co-ordinators for the INTERREG III-B Alpine Space Programme in Milan; 3 rd meeting of the Expert Group for the INTERREG III-B Alpine Space Programme in Milan;	(not relevant)
September 28 th , 2000	Information day on INTERREG IIIB in general and on the Alpine Space Programme in Ljubljana, Slovenia;	Representatives of local authorities, regional institutions, national administration bodies, NGOs, research and planning institutes, universities;
October 11 th , 2000	6 th transnational meeting of the National Programme Co-ordinators for the INTERREG III-B Alpine Space Programme in Geneva;	(not relevant)
October 12 th – 13 th , 2000	Transnational technical seminar of the regions to the Alpine Space Programme in Geneva organised by Switzerland and France;	On the Swiss side representatives of cantonal administrations; On the French side, same participation as for 18 September meeting;
October 23 rd , 2000	INTERREG III-B Alpine Space information in Austria: presentation to and discussion;;	Representatives of administration at regional and national level and social and economic partners and NGO's
October 24 th - 25 th , 2000	7 th transnational meeting of the National Programme Co-ordinators for the INTERREG III-B Alpine Space Programme in Vienna;	(not relevant)

November 6 th , 2000	INTERREG III-B Alpine Space Programme information day in Bavaria: presentation to political-administrative representatives as well as private partners in Murnau.	Regional and local politicians; regional and local administration; associations (environmental protection, tourism, labour, culture); universities and other public research institutions; consulting and private research institutions; press and broadcasting companies;
Dec. 12, 2000	Transnational coordinators' meeting, Lyon	
February 15 th , 2001	Transnational technical seminar of the regions to the Alpine Space Programme in Kranjska Gora, Slovenia;	Participants from 9 states: Italy (34 participants), Austria (14), Bosnia and Herzegovina (4), Germany (3), Croatia (2), Switzerland (2), Latvia (2), France (1) and Slovenia (81). Represented were national, regional and local authorities/ administrations, research institutes, universities, NGOs and enterprises (mostly in the field of planning and regional development);
March 1, 2001	Transnational coordinators' meeting, Munich	
March 19, 20, 2000	Transnational coordinators' meeting, Brussels	Preparation and discussion of CIP with EC
April 4 th , 2001	INTERREG III-B Alpine Space Programme information day in Baden-Württemberg: presentation to political-administrative representatives as well as private partners in Stuttgart.	Regional politicians; regional administration; associations (trade corporation, chambers of commerce); universities and other public research institutions; information service provider
May 5 th , 2001	Meeting between the Italian representatives of Alpine Space and Italian representatives Alpine cross-border in Rome	(not relevant)
May 11, 2000	Transnational coordinators' meeting, Ljubljana	
June 11, 12 2000	Transnational coordinators' meeting, Seon (GE)	
September 3, 4, 2000	Transnational coordinators' meeting, Bern	

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Annexes:

Management Structure (Table)

Ex-ante-evaluation