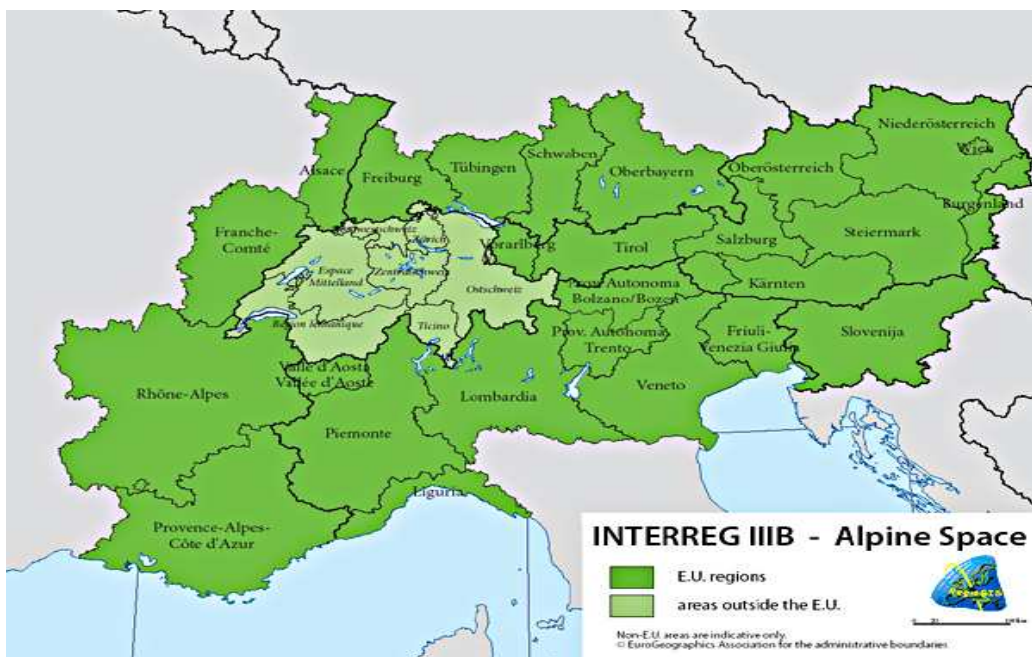


Final Report

According to Article 37 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999

For the Community Initiative Programme

"INTERREG III B Alpine Space"



Basic Information

CCI no:	2000 RG 16 0 PC 020
Community initiative:	INTERREG III B "Alpine Space"
Member State/Region:	Participating states: Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Slovenia, Liechtenstein, Switzerland
Title of the assistance:	Alpine Space Programme, INTERREG III B Community Initiative
Programming Years:	2000 - 2008
Managing Authority:	Land Salzburg, "Regionalentwicklung und EU- Regionalpolitik" Postfach 527, A-5010 Salzburg Tel: + 43 662 8042-3799 Fax: + 43 662 8042-3808 E-mail: alpine.space@salzburg.gv.at
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Monitoring Committee approval date:	June 9 th 2009
Financial setting:	According to the last decision of the European Commission on the programme of November 23 rd 2006, C (2006) 5746, the financial support of the European Union amounts to 57.204.518 Euro
Annual Implementation Report 2008	has been integrated into the present final report (see part 1)

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Preamble

According to article 37 (1) of Regulation (EC) No. 1260/1999 the Managing Authority shall, within six months of the end of each full calendar year of implementation, submit an annual implementation report as laid down in article 34 (1) lit c of the same regulation to the European Commission. According to the same article and as set out in the guidelines on closure of assistance (2000-2006) from the Structural Funds of the European Commission (COM (2006) 3424, chapter 3.3.1) a final report shall be submitted to the Commission at the latest fifteen months after the final date of eligibility of the expenditure as laid down in the Commission decision granting a contribution from the Funds.

As set out in the above-mentioned guidelines of the EC no annual implementation report is required to be provided for the final full calendar year in which the programme is implemented if the final report contains a separate section on implementation of the programme during that year (chapter 3.3.5). The programme partners made use of this option and the present document contains a separate section that is dedicated to the *eighth* annual report for the Community Initiative Programme "*INTERREG III B Alpine Space*" covering the period from January 1st to December 31st 2008.

Part I: Annual Implementation Report 2008

Preamble

The *seventh* annual implementation report about the Community Initiative Programme (CIP) "*INTERREG III B Alpine Space*" was submitted to the European Commission on June 26th 2008 after it had been approved by the Monitoring Committee on June 10th 2008. With letter of July 7th 2008 the Commission declared the report 2007 as admissible and with letter of September 8th 2008 the Commission communicated that it regarded the report as satisfactory.

In the following the *eighth* annual report covering the period from January 1st to December 31st 2008 is presented.

1. *Changes in General Conditions which are of Relevance to the Implementation of the CIP*

No relevant changes in the general conditions as laid down in the CIP and in the Programme Complement with consequences for the implementation of the CIP occurred in 2008.

2. *Progress in the Implementation of Priorities and Measures*

2.1. General Information

Programme implementation went smoothly and according to plan in 2008. All available funds had been committed to projects in previous calls for proposals. The activities in 2008 were mainly dedicated to project closure as only few projects were still implementing activities.

2.2. Priority 1: Spatial Planning and Competitiveness

A total of 25 projects were approved in this priority. 16 projects ended their activities by the end of 2007.

In the first half of 2008 only nine projects were still running:

- four projects in measure 1.1: Alplakes, Diamont, Lexalp and Viadventure,
- five projects in measure 1.2: Alpinet Gheep, Alpshealthcomp, Aspect, Nena and Regiomarket.

The overall exhaustion of funds for this priority is indicated in the table below:

	TOTAL BUDGET			ERDF BUDGET		
	according to PC	allocated to projects	% of exhaustion	according to PC	allocated to projects	% of exhaustion
Priority 1	42.772.496	47.756.294	111,65%	21.040.299	21.673.640	103,01%
Measure 1.1	20.737.603	23.233.161	112,03%	10.145.548	10.334.830	101,87%
Measure 1.2	22.034.893	24.523.133	111,29%	10.894.751	11.338.810	104,08%

Figure 1 - Exhaustion of funds for priority 1

2.3. Priority 2: Transport

A total of nine projects were approved in this priority. Five projects ended their activities by the end of 2007.

In the first half of 2008 only four projects were still running:

- two project in measure 2.1: Alpnaf and Monitraf,
- two projects in measure 2.2: Alpcheck and Via Nova.

The overall exhaustion of funds for this priority is indicated in the table below:

	TOTAL BUDGET			ERDF BUDGET		
	according to PC	allocated to projects	% of exhaustion	according to PC	allocated to projects	% of exhaustion
Priority 2	25.547.868	25.272.209	98,92%	12.223.575	12.304.297	100,66%
Measure 2.1	5.550.181	5.478.196	98,70%	2.597.083	2.596.591	99,98%
Measure 2.2	19.997.687	19.794.013	98,98%	9.626.492	9.707.706	100,84%

Figure 2 - Exhaustion of funds for priority 2

2.4. Priority 3: Environment and cultural heritage

24 projects were approved under this priority. 20 projects ended their activities by the end of 2007.

In the first half of 2008 only four projects were still running:

- two projects in measure 3.1: Alpencom and ForAlps,
- one project in measure 3.2: Alpter,
- one project in measure 3.3: ClimChAlp.

The overall exhaustion of funds for this priority is indicated in the table below:

	TOTAL BUDGET			ERDF BUDGET		
	according to PC	allocated to projects	% of exhaustion	according to PC	allocated to projects	% of exhaustion
Priority 3	42.186.178	45.664.680	108,25%	20.229.094	20.514.124	101,41%
Measure 3.1	12.310.919	13.390.323	108,77%	6.010.773	6.078.315	101,12%
Measure 3.2	12.788.327	14.478.720	113,22%	6.177.150	6.326.484	102,42%
Measure 3.3	17.086.932	17.795.637	104,15%	8.041.171	8.109.325	100,85%

Figure 3 - Exhaustion of funds for priority 3

2.5. Priority 4: Technical Assistance

As regards the Technical Assistance budget 99,49% of the ERDF amount indicated in the Programme Complement have been allocated to the different budget lines. The funds allocated to measure 4.1 were used to cover the costs of direct support of MA/PA, JTS, NCP, the second level control and the monitoring system. Funds allocated to measure 4.2 were used to cover the costs of information and publicity activities on national and programme level, strategic workgroups and the midterm evaluation (including its update). Additionally, the preparation of the European Territorial Cooperation Programme "Alpine Space" was funded within measure 4.2 (by the interests occurred from the ERDF payment in advance and the national payment in advance for TA).

	TOTAL BUDGET			ERDF BUDGET		
	according to PC	allocated budget	% of exhaustion	according to PC	allocated budget	% of exhaustion
Priority 4	7.632.334	7.792.331	102,10%	3.711.550	3.692.666	99,49%
Measure 4.1	5.921.297	5.526.201	93,33%	2.853.238	2.639.601	92,51%
Measure 4.2	1.711.037	2.266.130	132,44%	858.312	1.053.065	122,69%

Figure 4 - Exhaustion of funds for priority 4

The following table gives an overview on the effected ERDF payments per budget line.

	2002-2007	2008	TOTAL
Measure 1	1.988.920,97	317.019,56	2.305.940,52
DSMA	362.844,07	29.516,72	392.360,79
JTS	1.074.534,10	72.015,81	1.146.549,90
2nd level control	51.000,00	7.200,00	58.200,00
national TA	500.542,80	208.287,03	708.829,83
Measure 2	557.234,89	202.585,19	759.820,08
I&P	328.425,53	67.140,06	395.565,59
evaluation	71.924,40	0,00	71.924,40
workgroups	72.868,17	0,00	72.868,17
national TA - I&P	84.016,79	135.445,13	219.461,92
TOTAL	2.546.155,86	519.604,74	3.065.760,60

Figure 5 - Overview on the effected ERDF payments per budget line

3. *Quantification of Targets and Indicators in Relation to those established at the Start of the Programme and/or in the Programme Complement*

According to Council Regulation (EC) No. 1260/1999 and the programme document indicators relevant for the Alpine Space Programme are distinguished on several levels: programme level, priority level and measure level. Indicators quantify the results of implementation of the programme on the basis of all the current outcomes of projects. The tables and figures below are consequently of major importance to assess the effectiveness and the progress made in fulfilling the programme. As they contain no target-values these indicators cannot give an overview on the advancement and the effectiveness of projects, still they give a good impression about if and how the programme objectives on three different levels are met. However, it must be underlined that for the Transnational European Territorial Cooperation Programme Alpine Space this deficiency was resolved.

3.1. *Quantified Indicators on Programme Level*

Programme level	Results 2008
Number of projects establishing a common perspective for programme specific development issues	33
Number of projects enhancing genuine transnationality of actions by having at least three financing partners	58
Number of projects initiating actions with established national, regional and local systems laying ground for new activities	31
Amount of projects co-financing from public-like or private institutions	2.335.639,32 € ¹
Amount of projects co-financing from regional and local administration	(--) ²
Number of projects having a mixed partnership involving both authorities from the spatial planning domain and partners from other sectors	39
Number of projects involving non-EU partners	46

Figure 6 - Indicators on programme level

By the end of 2007 all programme funds were committed and no new call was opened.

¹ Compared to the previous years the indicator on co-financing from public-like or private institutions cannot be interpreted in a time row, since the legal status classification of some partners had to be corrected in the course of programme implementation, based on analyses performed by the relevant NCP. Furthermore, the amount shows the contribution from private participants only.

² The data provided per year is not reliable and could therefore not be assessed properly; final information is provided in the second part of the present document (final report).

The overall objectives of the INTERREG IIIB programme were achieved. More than the half of the projects established a common perspective for programme specific development issues, such as a common strategy for sustainable development in the Alpine Space.

In terms of cooperation, the previous annual implementation reports (AIR) already highlighted the main achievements that can be observed through the quantified indicators on programme level.

The composition of the partnership can be underlined as being one of the successful aspects of the programme. 39 projects (out of 58) were based on a mixed partnership, involving both vertical (local, regional and national authorities from the spatial planning domain) and horizontal (experts and operators from different sectors) dimensions. The programme's function as a platform for actors stemming from different fields, with different - but complementary - views and experiences, proved to be very effective and lead to a more comprehensive and coherent approach for addressing the alpine challenges.

As already pointed out in the previous AIR, the two non-Member States participating in the programme (Switzerland and Liechtenstein) were also very well represented in the partnerships as they actively took part in 46 projects. This internal cohesion proves not only that a strong interest was taken by these countries in this EU initiative, but also that the necessity of a transnational approach was definitely understood by the partners.

3.2. *Quantified Indicators on Priority Level*

PRIORITY 1: 25 approved projects

Indicator on priority level	Results 2008
Number of spatial planning authorities involved in projects	324
Number of networks established to promote sustainable development	189
Number of projects dealing with the use of ICT to contribute to a stronger Alpine Space economy	19
Number of projects dealing with best practice in the field of creation of permanent jobs and income opportunities	16

Figure 7 - Indicators Priority 1

Progress in priority 1 has been very good. The nine last running projects (out of 25) completed their activities in 2008.

The general purpose of this priority is to “promote the Alpine Space as a competitive and attractive living and economic space in the scope of a polycentric spatial development in the EU”.³ To that end, a strong emphasis is put on the promotion of transnational cooperation and share of knowledge as well as on the strengthening of competitiveness, in order to achieve a sustainable development of the Alpine regions.

The indicators on priority level show an increased cooperation between the different actors. The rise that can be observed as regards the number of spatial planning authorities involved in projects (+19,6% in relation to 2007) contributed to develop a common understanding of spatial development strategies, and confirmed that an added value can be drawn from a close cooperation between actors representing different spatial levels (national, regional and local) and bodies from others sectors (SME, innovation and technology centres, etc.).

The results achieved in improving transfer of knowledge, spread of information and best practices have improved. The number of networks established to promote sustainable development has been continuously increasing, and registered a remarkable push upwards during the last year of the period (+81,7%). The increase in this indicator is due to the projects led under measure 1.2, since the amount of established networks remained stable over the passed year in measure 1.1. As already pointed out in the previous report, the increase is to be searched in particular in projects dealing with the field of eco-industries, promotion of regional products, wood chain and renewable energies. Lately the increase of competitiveness also reached the health and wellness market, which put up a significant performance by the end of 2008.

The number of projects dealing with best practice in the field of creation of permanent jobs and income opportunities remained stable in 2008 (16 projects). As regards the effective amount, the number of jobs created under this priority (mostly measure 1.2) remained relatively weak (around 186, mainly in the eco-industries sector), even if an increase is to be noticed. Creation of permanent jobs and income opportunities is vital for ensuring the competitiveness and attractiveness of the regions. This is why it should be stimulated, and the focus of attention on the economic strengths of the Alpine Space (support to SME, industries, agriculture, tourism, etc.) must be carried on.

Concerning the use of tools, 19 projects out of 25 have dealt with ICT. This can be regarded as a good score, considering the recent spreading and use of ICT applications in the past years. The benefits that can be drawn from the information and communication technologies in order to contribute to a stronger economy within the Alpine Space and to spread knowledge will make their use unavoidable in the future.

³ CIP, chapter 4.2, p. 56.

As a whole, the main aim of the priority seems to have been generally understood and efficiently put into practice by the project partners. The exchanges between the different actors allowed bringing new knowledge and drawing shared visions of the territory, notably by providing the Alpine Space with common indicators and databases in the field of sustainable regional development.

PRIORITY 2: 9 approved projects

Indicator on priority level	Results 2008
Number of projects offering innovative solutions for the accessibility to transport and communication infrastructure	7
Number of projects developing decision making tools for transport issues	8
Number of projects improving access to transnational/high-speed transport networks	6
Number of environmental friendly transport links between metropolitan areas and tourist areas	21

Figure 8 - Indicators Priority 2

As already pointed out in the previous AIR, the relatively low number of projects dealing with transport issues led to a limited achievement of the priority objectives.

However, the approved projects completed their activities successfully and enabled to reach the general objectives expected at priority level, increasing thus slightly the results reported in 2007.

In 2008 eight projects (out of nine) played a part in developing tools for transport issues, compared to six in 2007. The two recently finalised projects, which are to be found in measure 1, provided decision-makers and planners with filled databases and new indicators to assess the effects of road traffic. Analysis, studies, scenarios and maps presenting the current challenges severely affecting the quality of life within the Alpine Space (such as noise and air pollution) were also developed. These projects contributed efficiently to the reinforcement of scientific foundations and could lead to concrete formulated policy statements to better manage the international goods transport and to foster the transfer from road to rail.

Several projects also contributed to generate effective results by offering innovative solutions for the accessibility of transport and communication infrastructure (seven projects). This required the consideration of transport networks and mobility from a more coherent point of view and the development of alternatives to private motorized transportation. Concrete implementation on the territory has been achieved with the creation of 21 environmental friendly transport links between metropolitan areas and tourist areas (stable since 2006).

These were aimed at tourists as well as at local population to make the use of soft mobility more spontaneous and to stimulate a more sustainable way of moving. Finally, six projects also enabled to improve access to transnational/high-speed transport networks, by optimising capacities of existing networks and by developing new technologies for improving safety and efficiency in both rail and road sectors.

As a whole, this priority not only provided the cooperation area with new operational data and knowledge, but also implemented concrete actions with visible and lasting effects. This way, the projects pursued the general objective of priority 2 and its intention to develop more sustainable transport systems.

PRIORITY 3: 24 approved projects

Indicator on priority level	Results 2008
Number of projects dealing with management of water resources	8
Number of common perspectives for the sustainable exploitation of natural resources	22
Number of transnational projects developing perspectives of the common cultural heritage and/or initializing pilot projects	18
Number of projects developing and installing transnational risk prevention measures	8
Number of transnational plans for the prevention of flooding	5

Figure 9 - Indicators Priority 3

24 projects in total were approved under the topic of “wise management of nature, landscape and cultural heritage, promotion of the environment and prevention of natural disasters”. The four last running projects, which had already reached an advanced level of implementation in 2007, ended their activities in the beginning of 2008. Positive results can be highlighted.

As regards environmental matters, an encouraging number of common perspectives for sustainable exploitation of natural resources (22) were developed on various topics such as water, wind, wood, as well as soil wise management. Concrete transnational risk prevention measures were taken by eight projects on different present challenges, especially on disasters caused by water, weather and earthquakes or more generally by climate change.

Concerning the cultural dimension covered by the priority, 18 transnational projects contributed to develop perspectives of the cultural heritage and/or initialise pilot projects. The latter tackled different kinds of actions, such as promotion of agriculture and traditions, revitalisation of historical settlements and cultural routes. The promotion of the landscapes led to the strengthening of the

population's identity (especially in case of participative activities involving the inhabitants) and to a better attractiveness of the areas for the tourists.

3.3. *Quantified Indicators on Measure Level*

Measure 1.1: Mutual knowledge and common perspectives

In 2008 the four last projects (out of 11) operating under measure 1.1 were finalised.

This measure focuses on strengthening partnership between territories at all levels by promoting contacts and networks, spreading information and knowledge and drawing up common perspectives of spatial development⁴. It puts also a strong emphasis on transferability. In this respect, the two positive trends highlighted in the previous AIR are definitely confirmed.

The analysis shows a first encouraging trend in the field of "*spreading of information and knowledge*"⁵ within the Alpine Space. The number of transnational information activities and training and education courses increased by more than 39% since 2007 and resulted in a total amount of participants of 27.339. A significant interest seems to have been mobilised by activities related to gender equality matters. As a whole, all projects could announce an increase of their transnational activities, especially during the two last years of the period. This result is quite encouraging at the end of the first transnational European cooperation programme set up for the Alps.

Secondly, the number of involved spatial planning authorities increased as well. This way, 153 national, regional and local authorities have contributed to the dissemination of shared knowledge and to the promotion of sustainable development in the cooperation area. 10 projects also established a mixed partnership involving both authorities from the spatial/regional planning domain and partners from other sectors.

Furthermore, the high number of activities which involved co-operations among peri-alpine and core alpine partners (10 projects) and among partners from different language areas (11 projects) enables to confirm a true transnational and cooperative nature of the implemented projects.

Data seem to denote a strong interest and a good understanding of the need of developing common approaches and tools. The figures are encouraging and lead to believe in a commitment of the partners in going on acting on a transnational level. Moreover, the basis built up during the 2000-2006 period will be of great importance for the 2007-2013 period and is expected to be strengthened and

⁴ Programme Complement, chapter 2.2, p.25.

⁵ Programme Complement, chapter 2.2, p.25.

completed. This would thus favour not only the capitalization and valorisation of results, but also and above all their transfer into concrete actions.

Type	Indicator	Results 2008
Priority level	Number of spatial planning authorities involved in project	153
Priority level	Number of networks established to promote sustainable development	30
Priority level	Number of projects dealing with the use of ICT to contribute to a stronger Alpine Space economy	8
Priority level	Number of projects dealing with best practice in the field of creation of permanent jobs and income opportunities	4
MI output	Number of transnational information activities and training and education courses	359
MI output	Number of transnational networks	27
MI output	Number of policy evaluation reports according to the main policy fields mentioned in the ESDP	4
MI result	Number of people participating in information activities, training and education courses	27.339
MI result	Number of pilot projects generated through projects	9
MI impact	Increase of number of information activities and training and education courses	11
MI impact	Mixed partnership involving both authorities from the spatial and the regional planning domain and partners from other sectors	10
MI impact	Co-operations among peri-alpine and core alpine partners	10
MI impact	Co-operations among partners of different language areas	11

Figure 10 - Indicators Measure 1.1

Measure 1.2: Competitiveness and sustainable development

By the end of 2008 the five remaining projects finalised their activities, as previously 9 other projects did.

In 2008 significant advances have been made in the fields of competitiveness and sustainable development, contributing to improve the economical situation at a micro level. This was achieved notably by focusing on a strategic support to SME and industries, by providing population with goods and services and by favouring sustainable tourism and employment.

From a general point of view, all projects have significantly played a part in pursuing the main focus of measure 1.2, which intends to “strengthen the

competitiveness of the Alpine Space by supporting the development of common approaches in different economic sectors".⁶ The number of networks established to promote sustainable development (especially in the sectors of eco-industries and regional products) rose considerably since 2007 (+114,9%). The ICT often acted as a mean to achieve this aim, by providing among others e-learning systems, e-services and online databases and by spreading information.

As already stated in measure 1.1, the increase of the number of spatial planning authorities involved in projects (+30,5%) shows encouraging signs in the field of spatial cooperation at various levels within the Alpine Space area, as well as a strong commitment of the partners to fulfil the programme's major target of a common development strategy. These institutional networks, established within the framework of the projects' implementation, can serve as a strong and stable basis to carry on with further collaborations.

A positive evolution can be highlighted as well concerning networking and know-how exchange; a high number of SME (5044, i.e. +42,1% in relation to 2007) and innovation and technology centres (179) involved in these networks contributed to spread knowledge and to promote co-operations and transferability of activities on a transnational level. Moreover, many people took part in professional training and education (8418), especially in the topics of eco-industries and of actions aiming at providing a better support to population (with goods and services in rural areas) and SME. Exchanges of experience and best practice examples will be pursued and fostered by the ETC programme, so to ensure the sustainability, transferability and durability of the project results. But it is also expected to go a step further by producing more concrete results.

However, the 45 created enterprises (without considering the enlargements and extending of existing ones), mainly in the regional market branch, can be presented as a visible result of the project actions. They contribute to the attractiveness, competitiveness and economic dynamism of the regions. Moreover, the amount of firms and institutions that achieved certifications under measure 1.2 reached 151, i.e. +164,9% in relation to the previous year. These certifications regard especially projects dealing with the tourism sector (mainly health and wellness). Nevertheless, a progressive and more and more visible expansion to projects supporting eco-industries can be noticed as well.

Finally, it should be highlighted that the share of women involved in project activities (50%) shows a good performance in the promotion of gender equality although it remained stable during the whole period. Further efforts are intended to be done in this direction during the new programming period, since the equal opportunities principle is a requirement to *"be followed by all projects carried out by the programme"*⁷.

⁶ Programme Complement, chapter 2.2, p.29.

⁷ ETC - Operational Programme Alpine Space, chapter 2.3.2, p.34.

The good results achieved in measure 1.2 show some first encouraging perspectives and contributed to the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy's objectives in terms of economic growth and employment. But efforts must be carried on in this direction in order to ensure sustainable and long-lasting transnational cooperation and competitiveness.

Type	Indicator	Results 2008
Priority level	Number of spatial planning authorities involved in project	171
Priority level	Number of networks established to promote sustainable development	159
Priority level	Number of projects dealing with the use of ICT to contribute to a stronger Alpine Space economy	11
Priority level	Number of projects dealing with best practice in the field of creation of permanent jobs and income opportunities	12
MI output	Number of SME involved in networking and know-how exchange	5.044
MI output	Number of innovation and technology centres involved in networking and know-how exchange	179
MI output	Number of firms and institutions that achieve certifications (i.e. quality and environmental management, occupational safety)	151
MI result	Number of people taking part in professional training and education	8.418
MI result	Share of women participating in project activities	50%
MI result	Number of joint promotion instruments for Alpine products	121
MI result	Number of services resulting from transnational cooperation	119
MI impact	Amount of off-programme investment or other activities induced by programme-funded partnerships	3.559.003
MI impact	Additional positive economic effects	14
MI impact	Creation of new enterprises	45

Figure 11 - Indicators Measure 1.2

Measure 2.1: Perspectives and analyses

In 2007 one project out of three ended its activities. The two remaining projects were closed in 2008.

The data related to measure 2.1 did not experience significant changes in relation to the previous year. This can be explained by the relative low number of projects operating under this measure. However, two slight increases have been registered as regards "*perspectives and analyses*" in the field of transports.

Firstly, the two projects concluded in 2008 played a significant role in developing decision making tools for transport issues, contributing to the main objective of measure 2.1, i.e. “provide the actors with a decision-making support and information in the field of transports”.⁸ Developing tools for a common understanding and approach at macro level of the transport-related issues that affect the Alpine Space is essential in order to implement concrete actions and to find solutions at the appropriate level. This is necessary to reduce the negative impacts of road traffic (e.g. air and noise pollution, risks for health and security) and to improve the quality of life.

Secondly, it is worth highlighting that all three projects contributed to the use of alternative solutions to road transport means or inter-modality, by spreading the fact that a more sustainable mobility (eco-mobility and rail transport alternative) can be achieved and by encouraging this.

The promotion of soft mobility has been concretised by awareness-raising actions and communication campaigns and by the development of databases and studies to support decision-makers in their choices aiming at reducing the effects of the Alpine congestion and at promoting inter-modality. As an example, almost 60 information campaigns and conferences have been organised to promote alternative solutions and spread good practices. This represents a good performance considering that they took place within the framework of three projects only. These actions were dedicated to a wide public and the use of ICT contributed actively to spread information on transport issues in the Alps. Young people have been a privileged target group for awareness-raising actions and activities since soft mobility reflexes are expected to be stimulated from the early age. Trainings for employees in public passenger transport were also of significant importance and many good practices examples were transferred.

The intention of this measure was to develop “common approaches on mobility problems, giving special attention to environmental concerns”.⁹ It can be stated that the projects operating under measure 2.1, although not many, contributed efficiently to this strategic feature. The competent authorities were provided with tools and strategies (such as reports, analysis, databases, indicators, software, simulations) which ease to draw common visions of the Alpine Space transport issues at different scales. This new knowledge, provided at macro level, enables the implementation of concrete actions which shall respect the specificities and general shape of the regions.

The frame conditions for transport development in the Alpine Space which were defined by measure 2.1 represented a good basis for the implementation of practical solutions within the framework of measure 2.2. This is why tight interactions were expected – and actually occurred – between both measures.

⁸ Programme Complement, chapter 2.2, p.33.

⁹ Programme Complement, chapter 2.2, p.35.

Type	Indicator	Results 2008
Priority level	Number of projects offering innovative solutions for the accessibility to transport and communication infrastructure	1
Priority level	Number of projects developing decision making tools for transport issues	2
Priority level	Number of projects improving access to transnational/high-speed transport networks	0
Priority level	Number of environmental friendly transport links between metropolitan areas and tourist areas	9
MI output	Number of transnational feasibility studies dedicated to investments in sustainable transports	0
MI output	Number of new tools and data-bases for assessing transport developments	4
MI output	Number of information campaigns on territorial impact of transport addressed to public	59
MI result	Number of feasibility studies inducing investments	0
MI result	Number of administrative/technical services implied in transnational networks coordinating funded actions	3
MI impact	Use of alternative solutions to road transport means or intermodality	3
MI impact	Number of non-participating actors benefiting from the access to new transport networks	5

Figure 12 - Indicators Measure 2.1

Measure 2.2: Improvement of existing and promotion of future transport systems by large scale and small scale intelligent solutions such as intermodality

In 2008 the two last projects (out of six) operating under measure 2.2 were finalised.

As in measure 2.1, the results in measure 2.2 did not experience significant changes during the past year. However, it can be underlined that in most cases the expectations of the priority were fulfilled by all six projects.

In 2007, an important rise (from 57 to 164) in the number of technical equipment installed or in the implementation of existing ones was reported. This total remained quite stable in 2008 and increased only slightly (to 168). The most modern technologies were used and provided planners and decision-makers with new or harmonised databases (on road traffic), pricing and emission models, studies on transalpine traffic, etc. To that end, high-tech tools for monitoring mobility, such as antennas, permanent stations, GPRS systems and on board devices, were applied by the projects. The environmental concerns were the

starting point for the analyses, and the various kinds of knowledge were developed with a view to an operational use in the transport policy.

An important work has been made as well by five projects to promote inter-modality and to make people aware of the existing alternatives to road transport. The equipments also include infrastructures that can be directly used by the population, such as mobility centres, information signs or portals for mobility. Recently, many actions were led for supporting a more “healthy mobility”, i.e. by linking transport policy and health prevention. Buses, trains, bicycles and one’s own feet are some of the alternative solutions that have been actively promoted and highlighted as a way to improve people’s and environment’s health.

Type	Indicator	Results 2008
Priority level	Number of projects offering innovative solutions for the accessibility to transport and communication infrastructure	6
Priority level	Number of projects developing decision making tools for transport issues	6
Priority level	Number of projects improving access to transnational/high-speed transport networks	6
Priority level	Number of environmental friendly transport links between metropolitan areas and tourist areas	12
MI output	Number of new technical equipment installed or implementation of existing ones	168
MI output	Number of projects supporting alternative solutions to road transport following the recommendations of feasibility studies	5
MI output	Number of pilot projects testing new tools for inter-modality	6
MI result	Number of proposals concerning the harmonisation of national systems	35
MI result	Security standards carried out on a transnational basis	0
MI result	Number of users of pricing models	11
MI impact	Use of alternative solutions to road transport means or inter-modality	5
MI impact	Number of non-participating actors benefiting from the access to new networks	67.411
MI impact	Number of new transnational transport services or infrastructure set up	8

Figure 13 - Indicators Measure 2.2

As regards freight transport, a great step forward has been done for the shift from road to rail by optimizing the Alpine rail network efficiency. From a more general point of view, the set up of eight transport services or infrastructures (especially for rail transport) and the creation of 12 environmental friendly transport links

between metropolitan areas and tourist areas also contributed to foster and promote sustainable mobility solutions, to reduce the vehicles flows and to improve the quality of life in the Alpine Space. Still, further efforts have to be made ensuring more concrete and long-lasting effects.

One of the strengths of the projects is that mobility has been considered from different points of view. Thus, the habits of commuters, tourists and inhabitants have been taken into account to analyse people's mobility, and a strong focus has been put on the flows of goods as well. Moreover, both long distance and local traffic were considered in the project results. This consideration of different categories of movements enables to draw a more comprehensive and coherent understanding of the Alpine mobility.

Measure 3.1: Nature and resources, in particular water

The two last projects (out of eight) running under measure 3.1 ended their activities in March 2008.

This measure intends to “*promote conservation and valorisation of natural resources, such as soil and water*”¹⁰, objective which requires common perspectives and management strategies. And even if only a minor increase could be noticed in 2008 (indeed, the two newly completed projects were already at their late stage of implementation in 2007), it must be underlined that, as a whole, the projects efficiently contributed to this aim.

The rise in the number of studies and guidelines focused on natural resources, which had already doubled from 2006 to 2007, went on increasing in 2008; it amounts now to 53 (+17,8%). Their topics are dealing mostly with water issues, such as meteo-hydrological forecast, flooding, river basin management, sedimentation and relation to climate change. This continuous evolution upwards highlights the importance which is attached to water in the Alpine Space and the acknowledgement of this resource as a crucial present and future challenge to be taken advantage of.

But other natural resources were also given importance in the outputs. Thus, the sectors of wood (e.g. wood log production study market, use of wood energy) and of wind (e.g. wind energy, windharvest) were provided with new knowledge, scientific studies, technical reports and user manuals as well.

In addition to this, the projects also contributed to the creation of 38 accesses to databases and electronic archives (i.e. one more than in 2007), especially as regards meteorological and climatological issues. They provided precious knowledge on natural resources, and enabled to support spatial planning decisions.

¹⁰ Programme Complement, chapter 2.2, p.42.

The high number of public authorities (397) which made use of the pilot projects' results, although stable, shows a good performance to further apply the results into concrete actions and/or policies in various fields. This has already been initiated with hydrological risk and sediment management plans, tourism use management, spatial planning, environmental strategies, resources protection, etc. and must be carried on.

Type	Indicators	Results 2008
Priority level	Number of projects dealing with management of water resources	3
Priority level	Number of common perspectives for the sustainable exploitation of natural resources	14
Priority level	Number of transnational projects developing perspectives of the common cultural heritage and/or initializing pilot projects	8
Priority level	Number of projects developing and installing transnational risk prevention measures	1
Priority level	Number of transnational plans for the prevention of flooding	2
MI output	Number of pilot projects	8
MI output	Databases, electronic archives and GIS created or enlarged in the field of natural heritage protection and development	17
MI output	Number of studies and guidelines focused on natural resources, in particular concerning water issues	53
MI result	Number of public authorities which made use of the results of pilot projects	397
MI result	Number of accesses to databases and electronic archives	38
MI impact	Improvement of the environmental assets of the areas covered by pilot projects	5
MI impact	Increase of information and use of software dedicated to environmental protection and development	6
MI impact	Adoption of methodologies contained in studies and researches by all the authorities concerned	6

Figure 14 - Indicators Measure 3.1

Measure 3.2: Good management and promotion of landscapes and cultural heritage

The last project (out of eight) operating under measure 3.2 was finalised in March 2008.

Type	Indicators	Results 2008
Priority level	Number of projects dealing with management of water resources	0
Priority level	Number of common perspectives for the sustainable exploitation of natural resources	4
Priority level	Number of transnational projects developing perspectives of the common cultural heritage and/or initializing pilot projects	8
Priority level	Number of projects developing and installing transnational risk prevention measures	0
Priority level	Number of transnational plans for the prevention of flooding	0
MI output	Number of guidelines and management plans on cultural resources and landscapes issues	37
MI output	Number of initiatives aimed at transferring experiences and good practices in the field of cultural heritage and landscape management	103
MI output	Number of pilot projects	32
MI result	Number of interventions related to the output	293
MI result	Number of territorial institutions adopting good practices suggested by the projects	91
MI result	Number of public authorities which made use of the results of pilot projects	188
MI impact	Adoption of suggestions, methodologies, guidelines and management plans	82
MI impact	Increase of awareness and of experiences, exchange on good management of cultural and natural heritage	7
MI impact	Creation of derived positive effects on cultural heritage and landscape from the environmental and economic point of view	152

Figure 15 - Indicators Measure 3.2

By the end of 2007 a successful implementation of the projects was registered, as already pointed out in the previous AIR. The last project, which ended its activities last year, mainly contributed to the further increase of the number of guidelines and management plans on cultural resources and landscape issues (from 34 to 37 in total). These were intended for decision-making in the Alpine context and provide the cooperation area with precious information on terraced landscapes management and revitalisation.

From a general point of view, 103 initiatives in total were aimed at transferring experiences and good practices. They present a successful achievement notably as

regards methods for cultural and natural preservation, as well as techniques of intervention on historical buildings.

Significant is also the number of pilot projects which were realised by all eight projects, as it amounts to 32. Concrete interventions were achieved at local level, which contributed to strengthen the Alpine identity (notably through interventions on patrimony) and promote the attractiveness of the landscapes for soft tourism.

Promotion of landscapes and cultural heritage is an objective that cannot be fully achieved without taking into account the main parties involved. Thus, a participative approach of the population could be led within the framework of various actions, which enabled to strengthen the identity and cohesion of the inhabitants (e.g. search for a name for the village shop, campaigns on the topic of energy efficiency).

The projects implemented under measure 3.2 were thus of great efficiency to promote the landscapes and to reinforce the cultural identity and heritage of the regions. Here numerous positive effects (152) from the environmental and economic point of view can be reported. They were achieved notably thanks to actions in the fields of historical settlements (e.g. development of leisure activities, architecture); promotion of cultural heritage and traditional activities (e.g. support to crafts, cultivation of olives and minority population); micro-economy (e.g. creation of jobs, local support); and sustainable tourism (e.g. revitalisation of hiking trails, creation of a museum and a guest house). The outputs and results of pilot projects (e.g. guidance, databases, illustrated books, etc.) proved their full relevance and usefulness; since 188 public authorities made use of them.

Measure 3.3: Cooperation in the field of natural risks

The last project (out of eight) aiming at promoting cooperation in the field of natural risks and at increasing knowledge of natural phenomena was completed in 2008. Even if this project ended its activities already in March, some progress is to be noticed.

The raising trend of the number of networks established related to natural risk prevention and information has been confirmed in 2008, with an increase from 15 to 18. This contributes significantly to reach the objective of the measure, which focuses on co-operations and knowledge exchange of natural phenomena in order to implement concrete strategies for improving the safety of population and infrastructures by a better risk prevention and mitigation. 199 different institutions (+6,4%) were using networks for early detection, which shows that the instruments and disposals developed for risk prevention were put to efficient use. This high number of institutions mainly took advantage of networks established in the field of meteorological events forecast.

Moreover, several new and/or completed tools (i.e. databases, models, maps, etc.) are now as well at disposal of decision-makers in different fields of natural risks: water and soil issues (e.g. flooding, erosion, landslides), seismic activity, as well as climate change consequences. Modern technologies (such as GPS and radar networks) were of essential use for this achievement. Concrete spatial planning measures can be taken in order to mitigate the risks and vulnerability of the Alpine areas, by acting directly on the territory, e.g. by settling housing policies, river and woodland management plans, etc. In total, 60 decision-making plans were proposed.

With the last running project, climate issues have been given a special care. Thus, harmonized monitoring networks through adaptation strategies have been of great importance to formulate concrete recommendations for business and regional development in response to climate change. The results of this last project are also currently exploited by three projects approved under the first call of the ETC programme.

As a whole, it can be noticed that the projects were able to bring together actors stemming from different fields. On this way, geologists, hydrologists, spatial planners, tourism experts, scientists, technicians, etc. but also the local population were involved in the implementation. A great emphasis has been put as well by all projects on information (e.g. through medias, Internet portal, comics strips, etc.) in order to provide people with a better knowledge of the different Alpine hazards, to raise one's awareness, and thus to contribute also by this mean to prevention. In total, 74 initiatives and pilot projects aimed at transferring experiences and good practices in the field of natural risk prevention and information have been implemented.

Type	Indicators	Results 2008
Priority level	Number of projects dealing with management of water resources	5
Priority level	Number of common perspectives for the sustainable exploitation of natural resources	4
Priority level	Number of transnational projects developing perspectives of the common cultural heritage and/or initializing pilot projects	2
Priority level	Number of projects developing and installing transnational risk prevention measures	7
Priority level	Number of transnational plans for the prevention of flooding	3
MI output	Number of initiatives and pilot projects aimed at transferring experiences and good practices in the field of natural risk prevention	74

MI output	Databases, electronic archives and GIS created or enlarged in the field of natural hazards	52
MI output	Number of networks established related to natural risk prevention and information	18
MI result	Number of joint actions among institutions in a transnational frame	71
MI result	Number of accesses to databases and electronic archives and thematic maps connected to the individuation of risk areas	13.200.030
MI result	Number of different institutions using networks for early detection	199
MI impact	Adoption of suggestions, methodologies, guidelines and management plans	60
MI impact	Increase of information and use of software dedicated to natural hazard prevention	8
MI impact	Faster circulation of information and a more efficient early detection system	8
MI impact	Improvement of the environmental asset of the areas covered by pilot projects	6
MI impact	Reduction of probability and effects of natural disasters	8
MI impact	Increasing security of people living in areas where pilot projects have been implemented through an adequate awareness raising and information	8

Figure 16 - Indicators Measure 3.2

3.4. *Categories of Intervention*

Following the Programme Complement, “*Categories of intervention listed in each measure are based on Article 36 of the Regulation (EC) No. 1260/1999 and have been compiled to help the Commission services report on Structural Funds activities (...) such information divided by categories is necessary to enable the Commission to respond to requests of information from EC institutions, from MS and from the public.*”¹¹ In the following table the projects have been listed by measure, according to the category of intervention they cover best. The expenditure reported by the end of 2008 for each category of intervention has been indicated.

The clusters of projects in the various categories of intervention are the following:

¹¹ CIP, chapter 2.1, p. 24

- For priority 1 a strong concentration (11 out of 25 projects) on “innovation and technology transfer, establishment of networks and partnerships between business and/ or research institutes” can be asserted;
- As priority 2 is not represented by a significant number of projects the categories of intervention affected reflect a quite scattered picture of the situation. However, a cluster on multi-modal transport can be identified;
- Also in priority 3 a high dispersion of reported expenditure can be noticed. However, two concentrations with four projects each (out of 24) can be identified. As expected the “Protection of the environment in connection with land, forestry and landscape conservation” is a major field of intervention. The other concentration concerns “Innovation and technology transfer, establishment of networks and partnerships between business and/or research institutes”.

Measure concerned	categories of intervention	certified expenditure (€)¹²	name of project
Measure 1.1	Research projects based in University and research institutes (181);	4.523.132,52	Mars, Lexalp, Diamont
	Innovation and technology transfers, establishment of networks and partnerships between business and/or research institutes (182);	8.745.987,90	E-Motion, Alpcity, Alplakes, Know for Alp, Viadventure
	Information and communication technology (including security and safe transmission measures (322);	1.369.534,07	Media Alp
	Services and applications for the citizen (health, administration, education (323);	2.222.845,81	Generalalp
	Innovative actions (414).	1.819.636,64	TusecIP
Measure 1.2	Innovation and technology transfers, establishment of networks and partnerships between business and/or research institutes (182);	5.792.531,27	Cara, Qualima, Women Alpnet, Alpinet Gheep, Alpshealthcomp
	Information and communication technology (including security and safe transmission measures) (322);	1.120.277,98	Alpinetwork

¹² According to the expenses certified by the Paying Authority in the payment request of December 2008

	Services and applications for the citizen (health, administration, education) (323);	2.111.158,47	Pusemor
Measure 1.2	Services and applications for SME (electronic commerce and transactions, education and training, networking) (324);	2.686.071,06	Alpps, Aspect, Nena
	Basic services for the rural economy and population (1305);	4.095.560,12	Neprovalter, Regiomarket
	Encouragement for tourist activities (1310)	2.602.104,52	Sentedalps, Via Claudia Augusta
Measure 2.1¹³	Environment-friendly technologies, clean and economical energy technologies (162);		
	Business advisory services (information, business planning, consultancy services, marketing, management, design, internationalisation, exporting, environmental management, purchase of technology (163);	2.659.798,92	Alpine-Awareness, Monitraf
	Research project based in universities and research institutes (181);	1.664.329,14	Alpnap
	Rail (311);		
	Roads (312);		
	Airports (314);		
	Urban transport (317);		
	Intelligent transport systems (319);		
	Information and communication technology (including security and safe transmission measures) (322);		
	Regional/local roads (3122);		
	Cycle tracks (3123).		

¹³ The measure 2.1 is not well represented as only three projects focus on this measure. Consequently, many categories of intervention are not covered at all.

Measure 2.2	Environment-friendly technologies, clean and economical energy technologies (162);	2.806.189,22	AlpsMobility II
	Business advisory services (information, business planning, consultancy services, marketing, management, design, internationalisation, exporting, environmental management, purchase of technology (163);		
	RTDI infrastructure (183);		
	Rail (311);		
	Roads (312);		
	Regional/local roads (3122);		
	Cycle tracks (3123);		
	Airports (314);		
	Waterways (316);		
	Urban transport (317);		
	Multi-modal transport (318);	6.733.132,31	Alpencors, MobilAlp, ViaNova
	Intelligent transport systems (319);	3.929.840,66	AlpFRail,
	Information and communication technology (including security and safe transmission measures) (322).	1.882.876,63	Alpcheck
Measure 3.1	Agriculture-specific vocational training (113);		
	Improving and maintaining ecological stability of protected woodlands (127);		
	Forestry-specific vocational training (128);		
	Research project based in universities and research institutes (181);		
	Renewable sources of energy (solar power, wind power, hydroelectricity, bio-mass (332);	2.488.464,61	Alpine Windharvest, Alpenergywood
	Energy efficiency, co-generation, energy control (333);		

Measure 3.1	Air (341);		
	Noise (342);		
	Drinking water (collection, storage, treatment and distribution (344)		
	Protection, improvement and regeneration of the natural environment (353);	3.947.441,00	Monarpop, Foralps
	Agricultural water resources management (1308);		
	Protection of the environment in connection with land, forestry and landscape conservation as well as with the improvement of animal welfare (1312)	4.361.594,51	LivingSpaceNetwork, Alpreserv, Alpencom, Alpnatour
Measure 3.2	Agriculture-specific vocational training (113),		
	forestry-specific vocational training (128);		
	Business advisory services (information, business planning, consultancy services, marketing, management, design, internationalisation, exporting, environmental management, purchase of technology (163);		
	Physical investment (information centres, tourist accommodation, catering facilities (171);		
	Research project based in universities and research institutes (181);	750.679,80	WalserAlp
	Drinking water (collection, storage, treatment and distribution (344);		
	Protection, improvement and regeneration of the natural environment (353);	1.603.064,10	Dynalp
	Renovation and development of villages and protection and conservation of the natural heritage (1306);	3.558.986,81	Crafts, IronRoutes,
	Encouragement of tourist activities (1310);	3.168.914,62	CulturAlp, Via Alpina
	Protection of the environment in connection with land, forestry and landscape conservation as well as with the improvement of animal welfare (1312).	2.527.152,17	Habitalp, Alpter

Measure 3.3	Restoring forestry production potentially damaged by natural disasters and introducing prevention instruments (125) ¹⁴ ;	906.955,04	Disalp
	Improving and maintaining ecological stability of protected woodlands (127);		
	Research project based in universities and research institutes (181);	3.163.001,10	Sismoalp, Catchrisk
	Innovation and technology transfer, establishment of networks and partnerships between business and/or research institutes(182);	8.343.938,85	Meteorisk, River Basin Agenda, Climchalp
	Information and communication technology (including security and safe transmission measures) (322).	3.431.039,57	Nab, AlpsGPSQuakenet

Figure 17 – Categories of Intervention

4. *Financial Implementation of the Assistance*

On December 19th 2008 the PA submitted the seventh request for payment to the European Commission.

Payment requests to the EC	Date of submission to the EC	Amount of requested ERDF	Date of receipt	Amount of payment
Payment request No 7	19.12.2008	€ 6.897.479,46	05.02.2009	€ 6.834.328,41

Figure 18 - Payment request to the EC in 2008

Details on this request for payment as well as on the actual ERDF payments initialised by the Paying Authority on measure level are laid down in the annex of this AIR.

¹⁴ Only the aspect of prevention instruments of this category has to be considered with regard to the mentioned project.

5. Steps taken by the Managing Authority and the Monitoring Committee to ensure the Quality and Effectiveness of the Implementation

5.1. Preparation Works for the Closure of the Programme

MA, JTS and NCP exchanged regularly on the progress as regards the closure of projects and the programme. Furthermore, MA and JTS staff members participated in Interact seminars dedicated to the programme closure and exchanged with other programmes resp. representatives of the European Commission.

In addition, the MA prepared a written procedure among the Monitoring Committee that was launched in November 2008 and was dedicated to the following issues related to the programme closure:

- Use of interest,
- Final communication activities,
- Time schedule for programme closure,
- Current status of programme closure,
- Time schedule for implementing and reporting national TA expenses.

The Monitoring Committee agreed on the proposals of the Managing Authority and therefore provided a proper basis for the programme closure.

5.2. Monitoring

No meeting of the Monitoring Committee took place in 2008. However, the Monitoring Committee was consulted via written procedure on several issues:

April 2008:

- JTS/MA work plan 2008,
- report on the JTS/MA work plan 2007,
- status report on project implementation 2007,
- annual statement 2007 and report on the use of the TA funds.

May/ June 2008:

- Annual Implementation Report 2007,
- Status report on closure of projects.

November/December 2008:

- Programme Closure.

The final meeting of the Monitoring Committee took place on June 9th 2009. At this occasion also the final report of the INTERREG IIIB Alpine Space Programme was discussed and approved.

5.3. *Financial Control*

Concerning first level control issues nothing specific is to be reported regarding the year 2008. Regarding second control measures it can be reported that in 2008 a follow up of the system and sample check of 2007 took place. Furthermore German, Slovene and Italian project participants and FLC bodies were audited. Details on the results are outlined in the annual audit report 2008 to be submitted by the Austrian Federal Chancellery.

5.4. *Coordination between NCP and JTS*

Also during the final year of programme implementation the close cooperation between the MA, JTS and NCP went on very constructively. Thanks to the intense support of the programme bodies approximately half of the approved projects could be closed already in 2008. For the majority of the remaining projects only few explanations on the final report documents were still outstanding. On October 14th and 15th 2008 a MA/JTS/NCP meeting took place dedicated to the final closure of still open projects. Besides this meeting regular and intense exchanges via phone or e-mail took place.

5.5. *Summary of any significant Problems encountered in Managing of the Assistance and any Measures taken*

No significant problems occurred in the year 2008.

5.6. *Measures taken to ensure Publicity for the Assistance in accordance with Article 46 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999*

The focus of I&P activities was directed towards a capitalisation of results. In the framework of the starting up of the European Territorial Cooperation programme "Alpine Space", achieved outputs and results were disseminated to relevant stakeholders and potential applicants.

- *Information Events and national I&P Activities*

Austria:

The website of the Austrian NCP was regularly updated with news on the programme and the online project database was updated as well. Furthermore, the NCP contributed regularly (six times in 2008) to the newsletter of the Austrian Conference on Spatial Planning.

Italy:

In 2008 the Italian NCP organised seminars for project partners aiming at supporting them during the project closure phase. These events were:

- a seminar on technical assistance for closing projects in Genoa on January 15th 2008 and
- a seminar on technical assistance for closing projects in Brescia on February 27th 2008.

In parallel, the NCP promoted the programme results in various ways:

- participation in the institutional stand of the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport in the "Forum of the Public Administration" in Rome on May 12th - 16th 2008. Within this event - a national wide fair where all the main public administrations (Ministry, Regions, etc.) present their activities and that is attended by more than thousand people - the NCP set up a "desk" describing the main results of the programme (with poster, publications and an internet point presenting the websites).
- In February 2008 the Alpine Space National Coordination office was appointed by the General Director for the implementation of a public tender for the drafting and editing of a publication on the INTERREG IIIB projects results, with an enclosed a database including all the projects funded within INTERREG IIIB Programmes with Italian participation. The NCP was appointed as technical responsible of this subcontracting, the publication was scheduled to be available in June 2009.

Slovenia:

The Slovene NCP prepared and disseminated electronic news. This electronic newsletter was sent to around 400 subscribers twice monthly. Electronic news brings information on events, rules, procedures or other information related to transnational programmes. All information is also available on the website www.cilj3.mop.gov.si.

The other countries dedicated their promotion activities to the ETC programme.

- Publications

In 2008 a (final) brochure presenting the INTERREG IIIB project results against the background of upcoming challenges of the ETC programme 2007-2013 was elaborated. The project results most relevant for a quality project generation of the new programming period 2007-2013 were selected, clustered among four thematic areas and finally described on around 50 pages. The brochure published in all four Alpine languages and in English shall contribute to a better transferability of results and knowledge gathered in the programme and set a standard of quality that is expected from future projects. The brochure was printed in a total run of 8.000 copies and is also available for download in electronic format.

- Website

The programme website (www.alpinespace.org) was constantly updated. In order to focus and promote the final project results, the general programme description and technical information were shortened and/or linked with relevant sections on the website of the ETC Alpine Space Programme www.alpine-space.eu, while the result section was enlarged.

- Participation in Programme-external Events

Alpine external events (organised by other Alpine organisations) offered the possibility to promote project results of the past programming period and highlight the opportunities of the new programme. The JTS participated and actively promoted the programme and its projects at the occasion of external events:

- The “AlpWeek” organised by Alpine organisations (Alliance in the Alps, ALPARC, CAA, CIPRA and ISCAR) in June 2008. The Alpine Space Programme contributed with a plenary presentation and a poster exhibition and disseminated various result booklets produced by the programme and the projects. In addition, several project partners were present to exchange on project results in the transport and mobility field, e.g. in a dedicated workshop.
- The “Lernfest Benediktbeuern”, a regional information platform on sustainable development, with a total number of 37.000 participants offered the possibility to present the European Territorial Cooperation and the IIIB programme to the general public. The event took place in May 2008.
- The VI European mountain Convention “How to generate added value from Europe’s mountains?” taking place in October 2008 and organised by EUROMONTANA, offered a focus on economic challenges in the Alpine Space as well as on solutions for remote areas. The programme presented its project results in a poster and stand exhibition.

In addition to this active promotion on spot, the JTS sent manifold information material to be disseminated at the occasion of external events not attended by the JTS (e.g. several CIPRA or ALPARC events).

- Liaison with other INTERREG programmes

In order to cross link and exchange with other INTERREG IIIB areas and relevant stakeholders, JTS and MA attended Interact-meetings and networks. However it has to be stressed that the liaising activities were mainly dedicated to the ETC programme implementation (see AIR 2008 for the ETC programme).

- Networking with Alpine Organisations

JTS and MA were in regular contact with the Alpine Convention Permanent Secretariat. A meeting took place to discuss the availability of project results for the SOIA database as well as promotion possibilities e.g. on the website of the Alpine Convention. Moreover, the JTS actively contributed to events organised by other Alpine organisations.

6. Steps taken to ensure Compatibility with Community Policies as stipulated in Article 12 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999 and to ensure Co-ordination of all the Community Structural Assistance referred to in Article 17 par. 1 and the second Subparagraph of Article 19 par. 2 of the same Regulation

The programme partners declared in the operational programme that a project should not be funded if the EU policies, including the rules on competition, on the award of public contracts, on environmental protection and improvement and on the elimination of inequalities in general and the promotion of equality between men and women were not respected (see chapter 4.3. of the programme document and chapter 1.7. of the programme complement).

During the evaluation processes carried out in the course of the single calls for proposals the above mentioned aspects were carefully checked by the JTS and the NCP to ensure that projects not coherent or in open contrast with the relevant existing regulations at EU and national level were not selected.

In the partnership agreement the project participants obliged themselves to comply with the European Union's and national legislation, especially structural funds regulations, competition and public procurement law (§ 6 (2) lit g and § 7 (4) lit f of the partnership agreement). In the subsidy contract (§ 7 lit f) the LP was committed to comply with the European Union's and national legislation including public procurement. In § 9 lit j) of the same contract it is laid down that the Managing Authority has a right of withdrawal from the contract if regulations of the EU-law (especially provisions concerning competition and environmental law and regulations concerning equal treatment of men and women) have been violated.

At the occasion of national and transnational seminars and bilateral contacts NCP, JTS and MA informed the project participants about the legal provisions and programme rules that shall be observed by them.

During the project implementation phase the compliance of the project with relevant national and EU-regulations was checked by the first level control bodies.

In the course of the second level control this aspect as well as the work performed by the first level control bodies were checked as well.

The Managing Authority has been constantly monitoring the developments in EU competition and procurement law and also used the Interact-platform for an exchange of experiences and best practices with regard to these issues with other programmes and the EC. On this way, it has been ensured that appropriate information and support have been provided to the responsible programme bodies and actors in the member states as well as the project participants.

Annex

Expenses certified via the EC

Priority/Measure	Total actually paid and certified eligible expenditure*							
	2008 (until December 18 th 2008)				2001-2008			
	Public		Private	Expenditure	Public		Private	Expenditure
Community	other public	Community			other public			
Priority 1	3.505.037,80	3.304.844,97	23.727,01	6.833.609,78	18.818.319,88	17.037.145,39	1.233.375,09	37.088.840,36
Measure 1.1	1.716.560,37	1.618.234,64	68.986,16	3.403.781,17	9.398.464,06	8.634.172,81	648.500,07	18.681.136,94
Measure 1.2	1.788.477,43	1.686.610,33	-45.259,15	3.429.828,61	9.419.855,82	8.402.972,58	584.875,02	18.407.703,42
Priority 2	978.971,06	1.064.212,39	-108.694,62	1.934.488,83	9.852.013,92	9.135.887,17	688.265,79	19.676.166,88
Measure 2.1	198.468,35	275.725,31	-64.283,79	409.909,87	2.155.571,04	2.142.885,94	25.671,08	4.324.128,06
Measure 2.2	780.502,71	788.487,08	-44.410,83	1.524.578,96	7.696.442,88	6.993.001,23	662.594,71	15.352.038,82
Priority 3	2.073.478,99	2.230.814,37	6.083,00	4.310.376,36	18.700.454,21	19.136.779,53	413.998,44	38.251.232,18
Measure 3.1	664.564,68	624.241,44	-8.614,66	1.280.191,46	5.416.336,94	5.070.277,17	310.886,01	10.797.500,12
Measure 3.2	967.305,62	1.045.784,86	14.697,66	2.027.788,14	5.774.887,32	5.730.797,75	103.112,43	11.608.797,50
Measure 3.3	441.608,69	560.788,06	0,00	1.002.396,76	7.509.229,95	8.335.704,61	0,00	15.844.934,56
Priority 4 - TA	319.056,00	456.069,91	0,00	775.125,91	2.856.059,14	2.993.073,07	0,00	5.849.132,20
Measure 4.1	222.212,04	357.013,09	0,00	579.225,13	2.201.980,30	2.336.781,35	0,00	4.538.761,65
Measure 4.2	96.843,96	99.056,82	0,00	195.900,78	654.078,84	656.291,72	0,00	1.310.370,55
TOTAL	6.876.543,85	7.055.941,64	-78.884,61	13.853.600,88	50.226.847,15	48.302.885,15	2.335.639,32	100.865.371,62

*figures are based on certified expenses, part of ERDF not yet paid

Figure 19 - Overview on expenses certified and ERDF-funds requested by the Paying Authority in 2008

Actual ERDF payments on measure level

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	TOTAL
Priority 1	0,00	122.574,43	716.761,38	2.043.649,54	4.387.359,81	4.597.926,51	3.561.539,19	15.429.810,86
Measure 1.1	0,00	79.642,66	273.165,03	985.644,83	2.448.211,49	2.660.450,21	1.712.057,07	8.159.171,29
Measure 1.2	0,00	42.931,77	443.596,35	1.058.004,71	1.939.148,32	1.937.476,30	1.849.482,12	7.270.639,57
Priority 2	0,00	139.903,00	604.989,71	912.953,77	1.705.791,64	2.214.135,48	2.861.109,82	8.438.883,42
Measure 2.1	0,00	0,00	0,00	49.362,38	602.093,57	978.100,40	326.646,34	1.956.202,69
Measure 2.2	0,00	139.903,00	604.989,71	863.591,39	1.103.698,07	1.236.035,08	2.534.463,48	6.482.680,73
Priority 3	0,00	455.090,17	1.892.006,69	3.682.306,37	2.765.404,19	3.852.533,01	3.804.137,11	16.451.477,54
Measure 3.1	0,00	0,00	226.170,23	1.087.662,02	983.423,36	1.205.029,89	1.067.634,24	4.569.919,74
Measure 3.2	0,00	296.768,98	932.837,60	736.546,69	908.897,80	1.161.305,20	1.277.381,10	5.313.737,37
Measure 3.3	0,00	158.321,19	732.998,86	1.858.097,66	873.083,03	1.486.197,92	1.459.121,77	6.567.820,43
Priority 4 -	192.209,02	348.286,99	511.867,40	466.801,56	631.171,08	395.819,82	519.604,74	3.065.760,60
Measure 4.1	152.558,29	281.332,61	423.224,88	326.047,79	478.992,14	326.765,26	317.019,56	2.305.940,52
Measure 4.2	39.650,73	66.954,38	88.642,52	140.753,77	152.178,95	69.054,56	202.585,19	759.820,08
TOTAL	192.209,02	1.065.854,59	3.725.625,18	7.105.711,24	9.489.726,72	11.060.414,82	10.746.390,86	43.385.932,42

Figure 20 - Overview on ERDF payments

Part II: Final Report

Preamble

In the following the final report about the Community Initiative Programme (CIP) "INTERREG III B Alpine Space" covering the period from January 1st 2000 to December 31st 2008 is made. When setting up the report, the programme partners respected the provisions of article 37 (2) of Regulation (EC) No. 1260/1999 and other applicable rules, especially the guidelines on closure of assistance (2000-2006) from the Structural Funds of the European Commission (COM (2006) 3424).

With decision C (2001) 4017 of December 19th 2001 the European Commission approved the Community Initiative Programme "INTERREG III B Alpine Space". With the decisions C (2004) 5556 of December 22nd 2004, C (2005) 320 of February 3rd 2005, C (2005) 3092 of August 3rd 2005 and C (2006) 5746 of November 23rd 2006 the European Commission approved revisions of the programme document. In the course of the above-mentioned amendments of the programme document the programme complement was changed three times, after approval given by the Monitoring Committee, and sent to the European Commission for information (April 21st 2005, November 4th 2005 and February 23rd 2007). The final version of the programme complement was acknowledged by the EC on April 18th 2007 (CC D (2007) 230395).

At the date of closure the total budget of the programme according to the last approved financial plan amounts to 113.768.878 Euro. The budgeted financial support from the European Fund for Regional Development amounts to 57.204.518 Euro. Additional 50.875.916 Euro national public co-funding was foreseen, 5.688.444 Euro co-funding from the private sector are budgeted and 4.369.998 Euro is the planned financial contribution of the participating Non-member-state Switzerland.

1. Operational Framework: Important Changes in General Conditions in the Period 2000-2008 which are of Relevance to the Implementation of the Assistance

1.1. The main socio-economic Trends

Socio-economic trends of relevance for the programme implementation (significant changes in the socio-economic structure or dynamics) in the cooperation area can hardly be identified. On the one hand it can be stated that in such a short observation time the socio-economic features of the Alpine Space (as of any other transnational region of similar size) only exceptionally change significantly. This is shown by the comparison of the relevant statements in the IIIB and the ETC programme (see tables 1 - 3). On the other hand, neither the IIIB programme nor the ETC programme go beyond a basically qualitative assessment of the socio-economic framework conditions in the cooperation area. This has

various reasons, ranging from the problems of data availability and data compatibility¹⁵ over time restrictions to financial implications. The following statements summarise the comparison of the socio-economic conditions of the Alpine Space as laid down in the IIIB programme and the ETC programme. Details are provided in the following tables.

- The Alpine Space remains one of the most competitive areas in Europe combining different factors like high GDP and productivity, high level of R&TD investment as well as low unemployment. Growth is not among the highest in Europe but it is steady and is based on high living standards.
- Nevertheless growth of GDP, productivity and the level of unemployment may be negatively influenced by the financial and economic crisis that at present affects the global economy. The high living standard in the Alpine Space will most likely result in less severe impacts of the global crisis. The factor of steady growth which is typical for the region may not lead to very high negative amplitudes for growth and unemployment, as it may happen in other regions.
- Regarding disparities within the Alpine Space, the Eastern part of Alpine Space is lagging behind but catches up due to high growth rates; this catch-up process due to high growth rates must be seen in parenthesis with respect to the crisis however.
- With regard to the regional level it can be stated that according to a classification of 280 European regions taking into account the criteria economy, labour market, demography, environment, hazard, accessibility and spatial structure all Swiss regions, the Austrian regions Wien, Vorarlberg, Salzburg and Steiermark, the French regions Alsace and France-Comté, and the German regions Freiburg, Oberbayern and Tübingen are placed in the upper quarter; this could be regarded as a change as all Swiss regions were not mentioned in the IIIB programme document as being above EU average concerning GDP and unemployment. Vice versa, Italian regions are not represented in the upper quarter of this classification but were in the IIIB programme document mentioned (with exception of Liguria and Piemonte) as being above EU average regarding GDP and unemployment. This could be interpreted as a change in the performance of that regions but a comparison must take into consideration that the IIIB programme document only took the parameter of GDP and unemployment into account, while in the document of the Alpine Space 2007-2013 Operational Programme a variety of non-economic criteria apart from GDP are used. These trends on regional level are also due to be affected by the economic crisis, which will affect more severely the labour market in the time to come.
- At the beginning of the programme implementation a crisis affected traditional mining and industrial areas of the entire Alpine Space and

¹⁵ It should, however, be highlighted that in the implementation of the programme one project explicitly dealt with the issue of harmonising data of the cooperation area.

resulted in closing down of enterprises and also significant reductions in the secondary sector. Currently sectoral weaknesses exist noticeably in some Alpine core areas, which depend much on specific sectors of industry, tourism and agriculture. This trend is likely to be stronger in the future as demand for goods and services are currently declining. As for tourism this trend could undergo a change, as people could tend to spend their holidays in the Alpine Space avoiding higher expenses for long-distance flights. No changes regarding agriculture can be stated, unaltered agriculture is prosperous in the Alpine Space belt but shrinking in the Alpine core.

- The IIIB programme did not pay special attention to the topic of gender mainstreaming in the SWOT. This has changed: the ETC programme considers equality between men and women in the labour market as an important issue. The main focus is on equal representation of women in the framework of the knowledge economy including relevant fields like innovation, research and development.
- Stability with regard to knowledge economy can be observed, i.e. a high level of expenditure and employment in R&TD, which is above European average.
- ICT infrastructures and their availability remain bottlenecks in areas lagging behind or in the core Alpine area.
- As for urban system and urban-rural relations cities in the Alpine core still grow causing further polarisation between agglomerations and peripheral areas, there are no signs of a change.
- As for accessibility and connectivity the situation remained largely unchanged. The Alpine Space has a good connection within European Union, especially at crossroads of different transeuropean routes. The situation is different in Alpine Space lowlands and in Alpine core areas. Low accessibility remains a constraint for inner-alpine valleys and remote regions in general, which are also badly connected to higher level infrastructure and agglomeration areas. A new trend is the development of more sustainable transport modes like the transfer of a part of the transit traffic from road to rail; such a promotion of a multimodal transport system was enacted in Switzerland through investments in infrastructure and logistic alternatives. This development responds to more global trends like the general increase in European traffic and the increasing consciousness of climate change and impacts of climate change especially in the Alpine Space.
- There is an ongoing change regarding natural resources and natural heritage which is endangered by overexploitation and natural hazards but even more by a variety of developments such as abandonment of traditional farming practices, intensification of agriculture, settlement development that results in spatial fragmentation and sprawl, and also infrastructure construction and operation. These trends may aggravate in the future in Alpine Space.
- Developments such as abandonment of traditional farming practices directly affect the cultural heritage; abandonment and depopulation exert negative

influence on cultural heritage, too, as the stakeholders of cultural activities leave their cultural backgrounds and the places where they are culturally embedded. The question is what new forms of cultural life emerge instead of the more traditional forms and how new forms of life-style have to be taken into account as well in the framework of the Alpine Space Programme 2007-2013.

- As for resource efficiency, water due to climate change becomes even more a scarce resource. Regions on the southern side of the Alps may be affected by severe droughts in the future. The trend seems to be aggravating as scarcity of water is already affecting some areas, such as the Po plain. Energy efficiency achieved a higher level of consciousness during the last years, and it will become even more a priority on the political agenda. Regions of the Alpine Space are affected by the trend, since their energy use is slightly above the level of the respective national economies. This could lead to more use of renewable energy sources in the Alpine Space as well as to a reduction in the household consumption of energy.
- At the beginning of the decade floods have taken place and were the cause of action also in the IIIB programme; before the background of the experiences made in the past and the lessons learnt and also with respect to the aggravating problem of climate change as a factor elevating the risk of floods and its consequences need remains and is even stronger to develop further transnational cooperation.

Alpine Space Programme – Community Initiative INTERREG III B	Alpine Space 2007-2013 Operational Programme
A competitive area within Europe	
<p>“The Alpine Space as a whole (...) became more and more one of the centres of economic growth within Europe. (...) In several regions of the cooperation area GDP is much higher than in most parts of Europe.</p> <p>(...) 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. (...)</p> <p>(...) 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.</p> <p>(...) 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.”</p>	<p>“The Alpine Space is one of the most competitive areas in Europe (...).</p> <p>(...) Growth is not among the highest levels in Europe but is steady and is based on an important existing wealth.”</p> <p>(...) Some areas in the eastern part of the Alpine Space are lagging behind but have important growth rates and are catching up.</p> <p>(...) all Swiss regions, the Austrian regions Wien, Vorarlberg, Salzburg and Steiermark, the French regions Alsace and France-Comté, and the German regions Freiburg, Oberbayern and Tübingen (...) are placed in the upper quarter of the classification of 280 European regions [see figure 2 in the CIP].</p> <p>(...) The regions classified in the lower half either show average performance in most of the fields (e.g. Oberösterreich, Kärnten or Slovenia), or are characterised by distinct weaknesses related to labour market, population, hazards and/or accessibility.”</p>
Diverse and successful economy	
<p>“The Alpine Space is characterised by a high density of SME (small and medium-sized enterprises).</p> <p>(...) 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.</p> <p>(...) In some parts of the Alpine Space, the high rate of service activities is caused by tourism. There tourism is the central economic determinant. Many regions of the cooperation area</p>	<p>“The productive sector is based on a dense pattern of SME and specific productive cultures; organisations exist in the area in terms of funding and market networks or excellence in specific sectors (northern Italy clusters, valley productive systems etc.).</p> <p>(...) Sectoral weaknesses also exist, noticeably in some Alpine core areas, which rely too much on sectors of industry, tourism and agriculture.</p> <p>(...) Tourism is an important aspect of the Alpine Space service economy as the cooperation area is one of the major leisure destinations in Europe. (...) Tourism can be, on the other hand,</p>

Alpine Space Programme – Community Initiative INTERREG III B	Alpine Space 2007-2013 Operational Programme
<p>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.</p> <p>(...) 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."</p>	<p>too focused both in time and space. The activity also relies on external factors such as global economic prosperity and climate change, which could provoke downturns in the sector. (...).Tourism flows bring jobs and income, by making use of cultural assets, but may sometimes have deteriorating effects on the assets themselves or the identity of places."</p> <p>(...) Agriculture is prosperous in the Alpine Space belt, but is still shrinking in the Alpine core, even if specific Alpine products have a strong identity and "quality image"."</p>
Equality between men and women	
	<p>"(...) women are still underrepresented in several sectors and occupations, which are important from the point of view of knowledge economy. Relevant fields include innovation, research and development, where gender-sensitive measures are required in order to improve the representation of women."</p>
Knowledge Economy	
<p>"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.</p> <p>(...) 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.</p> <p>(...)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."</p>	<p>"The Alpine Space has a competitive edge to develop knowledge economy as it encompasses regions with a high level of education and has a dense network of universities and research centres. The combined level of expenditure and employment in R&TD is above European average in several regions of the Alpine Space and is strong in many areas, such as Rhône-Alpes, Switzerland and Bayern. Metropolitan areas and Alpine cities concentrate research centres – e.g. München, Zürich, Milano, Wien, Lyon, Sophia-Antipolis etc. – even if some can be found in medium sized cities as well. The industrial bases of the Alpine Space are associated to dynamic private research centres, which allow public-private synergies.</p> <p>(...) ICT infrastructures are well developed in the main metropolises and their influence areas, but are not so readily available in other places, especially areas lagging behind or in the core Alpine area. The south-eastern part of the Alpine Space has a rather low level of ICT infrastructures and is in a peripheral situation to that extent."</p>
Urban system and urban-rural relations	
<p>"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."</p>	<p>"(...) the cities in the Alpine core experienced constant growth in population, mostly at the expense of surrounding rural areas and in several cases due to their proximity to large agglomerations of the Alpine Space belt. This trend will lead to a further polarisation between agglomerations and the peripheral areas in terms of intensive urbanisation processes versus strong depopulation in case the present demographic trends are maintained.</p> <p>(...)Cities and agglomerations experience problems which may diminish their attractiveness as residential areas or location for economic activities.</p> <p>(...) Of special concern is the so called sprawled development – uncontrolled growth of agglomeration areas at the expense of surrounding, mostly rural areas – which results in loss of identity of urban and rural areas, increased commuting and inefficient use of resources."</p>

Figure 21 - Comparison of the programmes with respect to key topics and areas within socio-economic and territorial structure

Alpine Space Programme – Community Initiative INTERREG III B	Alpine Space 2007-2013 Operational Programme
Accessibility and connectivity	
<p>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 cooperation area are rather weak.</p> <p>(...) 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 cooperation area which are better placed with respect to the central area of the Community, such as north-western parts. 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.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>Located in the heart of an enlarged Europe and at the crossroad of different transeuropean routes, the Alpine Space is well connected to other European territories and is endowed with high capacity infrastructures.</p> <p>(...) Alpine Space lowlands globally have good infrastructure networks and transport systems, including public transportation, ensuring a good level of accessibility. (...) Connections between Alpine Space main cities are not easy through public transport and rely mainly on road or air connections. (...) Alpine core areas face contrasted situations in terms of mobility. Some are well connected to Alpine lowlands and/or polarised by medium size cities, for instance Innsbruck, Bolzano/Bozen or Grenoble, whereas others are confronted with remoteness and accessibility constraints because of geographic conditions. This is true for example of the south-western Alps, parts of Südtirol/Alto Adige or Dolomites.</p> <p>(...) Confronted with a general European traffic rise as well as global issues such as increasing oil prices or climate change impacts, Alpine Space and especially Alpine core territories are keen to mitigate traffic effects, to develop more sustainable transport modes and to draw economic benefit out of this position. (...) Development of better logistic chains as well as transfer of a part of the transit traffic from road to rail (multimodal transport system), are innovative ways promoted by the territories. Such solutions have been enacted in Switzerland through infrastructure investments and logistic alternatives, e.g. transit of trucks in the Lötschberg rail tunnel.</p> <p>(...) Beside the fact that transportation links between metropolitan areas are partly unsatisfactory, remote regions are often poorly served with infrastructure and connections to higher level infrastructure.</p>

Figure 22 - Comparison of the programmes with respect to accessibility and connectivity

Alpine Space Programme – Community Initiative INTERREG III B	Alpine Space 2007-2013 Operational Programme
Natural resources	
<p>“The Sixth Environment Action Programme of the European Community 2001-2010 underlines the importance of mountainous areas for preserving biodiversity (...).</p> <p>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.”</p>	<p>“The high share of (semi-)natural areas is connected with rich natural heritage, valuable cultural landscapes and rich biodiversity. (...) Various developments threaten the natural heritage of the Alpine Space and its characteristics: abandonment of traditional farming practices, intensification of agriculture, activities connected with tourism, settlement development, infrastructure construction and operation. The latter two result in take up of land and contribute to spatial fragmentation and sprawl. Regions where urban pressure is high are scattered throughout the Alpine Space, but are typically connected with agglomeration areas experiencing economic and population growth. These pressures are expected to aggravate in the future.”</p>
Cultural heritage	
<p>“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</p>	<p>“(...) problems regarding issues of maintenance and exploitation of cultural heritage and culture in general, also in relation to economic activities, in the Alpine Space. This, in turn, suggests a high potential for exchange of experience and synergies through transnational cooperation.”</p>

threatened.”	
Resource efficiency	
“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.”	“Especially the regions on the southern side of the Alps may be affected by severe droughts in the future – in the summer period, scarcity of water is already affecting some areas, such as the Po plain. (...)Of special concern with reference to water management and, more specifically, harmonisation of uses is in some parts of the Alpine Space the use of water for agricultural production. (...) Energy efficiency has been receiving quite a lot of attention in the recent years: national programmes are being implemented and specific instruments made available. The issue of energy efficiency is rather pertinent in the Alpine Space as well, since its regions use slightly more energy than the respective national economies.”
Natural risk prevention and management of climate change	
“Flooding has become a major problem and a growing threat for the Alpine Space. 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.”	“In the Alpine belt, extensive and recurring floods have taken place in the past decade. It is therefore not surprising, that the topic of natural hazards in the Alpine area was subject of several projects in the INTERREG IIIB Alpine Space Programme. The achieved results as well as the process character of transnational cooperation substantiate the need for further activities in this field. (...) Due to the high level of sensitivity of the natural landscape the Alpine Space is reacting faster and more violently to the warming of the climate and because of its particular topography natural risks manifest themselves more strongly than elsewhere.”

Figure 23 - Comparison of statement in the programmes with respect to natural and cultural heritage

The comparison as set out above allows the conclusion that all key topics of the IIIB programme continue to be highly relevant for the ETC programme. Only “equality between men and women” has been introduced as a new topic in the ETC programme. It can be noticed that special attention is paid to the key topic “accessibility and connectivity” in the III B as well as the ETC programme.

1.2. Changes in national, regional, sectoral Policies

For a transnational programme the question of relevant changes in national, regional or sectoral policies is possibly not adequate. On the one hand side there are too many of such changes within the programme area even to be registered, on the other side most of this will probably not become relevant on a transnational level.

During the years 2000-2008 one cannot recognise any changes in the regional or national policies concerning cross-border or transnational cooperation. The most relevant sectoral policies, such as employment, R&D and innovation, transport, environment, by and large remained at a high priority position throughout the observation period and have been further developed but not fundamentally changed.

1.3. Changes in the Objective 3 Policy Frame of Reference

Though the changes in the objective 3 of the structural funds policy frame of reference were dramatic, they affected the IIIB programme only indirectly respectively rather positively:

- On May 1st 2004 Slovenia joined the European Union. In the light of the upcoming access of Slovenia to the EU, the partner states redrafted the programme document and amended the agreement between the MA and the EU-member states accordingly, taking into account the respective guidelines provided by the EC. The programme document was transmitted to the EC on December 22nd 2003 (see annual report for the year 2003) and approved by the EC on December 22nd 2004. According to the Commission's decision on the approval of this revised programme costs arising on Slovene territory were eligible for ERDF-co-funding beginning with January 1st 2004. The Monitoring Committee decided in its meeting in Vaduz on March 7/8th 2005 that projects that were approved before the accession of Slovenia should be invited to ask for ERDF-co-funding for Slovene project participants whereby 75 % of the national co-funding of these participants should be replaced by ERDF funds and an increase of the overall budget should be excluded. The respective call was launched on April 19th 2005 and 12 projects applied for these additional ERDF-funds. On June 20th 2005 the Steering Committee approved these requests and as a result of this call an additional ERDF-amount of 211.955 Euro was allocated to projects. A greater non-financial impact of enlargement was the relative shift in the benchmarking for the regions. From 2004 onward the statistics take EU 27 generally as benchmark instead of EU-15 as before, sometimes leading to remarkable statistical effects which often blur a multi-annual comparison (e.g. see figure 21).
- The new programming period with its shift from Community Initiative INTERREG to European Territorial Cooperation (objective 3) has not directly affected the IIIB programme. The orientation towards the new objective 3 has dominated much of the implementation work since 2005. The eventual establishment of a stable and highly professional JTS at least to some extent is due to the foreseeable continuity of the basic programme structures under new framework conditions. Also the quality of the management and the programming process of the new programme gained from this continuity.
- Finally there has been a certain shift in the most relevant EU policies, with the renewed Lisbon and Gothenburg Strategy (2005) and the adoption of the Territorial Agenda (2007) which to a certain extent replaced the ESDP on which the IIIB programme was based as the main policy documents of reference.

All of these shifts came too late to be explicitly taken into account in implementing the programme but played a considerable role in the discussion on strategic issues,

which were fed into the programming process for ETC programme. The most recent policy input, the Green Paper on “Territorial Cohesion”¹⁶, a concept that is crucial for the design and strategy development of transnational cooperation programmes, has already been taken up by the new programme that contributed to the discussion of the paper during the consultation process.

¹⁶ CEC, Turning territorial diversity into strength, 2008

	Population (1000 inhabitants)		GDP/head (PPS) – EU25=100 (2001) / EU27=100 (2004)		Employment rate (ages 15-64 as % of pop. Aged 15-64) - Total		Employment rate (ages 15-64 as % of pop. Aged 15-64) - Female		Long term unemployed (% of total unemployed) -Total		Unemployment rate (%) - Female		Unemployment rate (%) - Young		Educational attainment of persons aged 25-64 (% of total) - Low		Educational attainment of persons aged 25-64 (% of total) - Medium		Educational attainment of persons aged 25-64 (% of total) - High	
	2001	2004	2001	2004	2002	2005	2002	2005	2002	2005	2002	2005	2002	2005	2002	2005	2002	2005	2002	2005
Austria	8032	8175	122,8	128,7	69,0	68,7	61,5	62,0	28,1	25,3	3,9	5,5	6,2	10,3	21,7	19,4	62,6	62,8	15,7	17,8
Voralberg	347	359	127,5	134,4	69,6	70,8	58,9	62,0	12,6	21,3	2,8	6,6	4,4	10,4	28,7	24,9	56,3	59,2	15,0	15,9
Tyrol	667	689	124,4	131,4	69,5	71,0	61,0	64,0	11,7	13,5	1,8	3,8	3,4	8,2	21,7	19,8	62,9	65,3	15,4	14,9
Salzburg	513	525	135,7	141,8	71,8	72,7	65,1	66,8	12,4	18,1	2,8	3,4	5,4	6,5	19,9	17,9	65,0	63,2	15,1	18,8
Carinthia	556	560	105,6	108,6	66,9	66,5	56,9	58,7	24,6	18,5	3,2	6,5	5,5	10,2	14,2	14,9	70,9	69,0	14,9	16,1
Styria	1188	1195	105,5	110,8	67,8	68,9	59,5	61,9	27,6	22,6	3,7	4,4	5,8	8,3	22,0	18,0	63,6	65,3	14,3	16,7
Upper Austria	1367	1393	118,7	120,2	70,9	70,5	62,9	62,7	21,1	24,4	3,4	4,8	5,1	6,9	24,8	22,4	60,3	62,3	14,9	15,4
Lower Austria	1531	1564	101,3	104,4	70,0	69,9	62,2	63,1	27,3	27,6	3,7	4,8	5,7	8,9	20,1	18,3	66,2	64,4	13,7	17,3
Vienna	1588	1613	167,0	179,7	67,0	63,8	62,5	59,4	37,1	29,7	6,0	7,9	11,1	19,7	21,1	19,0	58,4	57,7	20,6	23,4
Burgenland	276	277	83,6	89,8	67,9	68,1	59,3	59,9	21,2	29,9	4,8	7,4	7,1	12,8	27,5	23,6	61,0	63,7	11,6	12,7
France	60912	62324	115,0	112,3	62,9	62,6	56,4	57,0	32,7	42,5	9,8	10,5	18,9	22,3	35,9	33,6	40,6	41,5	23,5	24,9
Rhône-Alpes	5743	5922	116,9	112,8	64,8	64,7	58,7	59,9	24,9	34,9	7,9	9,0	17,0	18,6	31,8	31,8	41,2	43,9	27,0	24,3
Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur	4602	4723	104,9	104,9	57,9	57,5	51,5	51,7	39,9	47,7	12,4	11,8	21,4	26,9	39,4	36,6	40,1	39,7	20,6	23,7
Franche-Comté	1124	1138	102,2	97,7	65,0	63,3	57,8	55,7	21,3	36,0	10,0	9,6	21,8	20,1	36,9	38,0	43,7	43,6	19,3	18,4
Alsace	1762	1797	116,2	107,8	67,1	67,6	60,6	62,8	21,4	36,3	7,0	7,2	13,4	18,7	32,0	26,9	45,6	48,0	22,4	25,2
Germany	82339	82501	110,2	115,8	65,4	65,4	58,8	59,5	47,9	53,0	9,1	10,9	10,7	15,5	17,0	16,9	60,7	58,6	22,3	24,6
Upper Bavaria	4112	4203	162,3	169,3	72,3	71,2	65,0	64,3	31,0	40,7	3,8	6,3	3,9	10,4	17,2	15,8	56,6	53,7	26,2	30,5
Swabia	1760	1784	109,9	122,0	71,5	70,0	64,1	61,5	31,8	43,4	4,5	7,3	5,0	9,4	19,9	17,0	61,1	61,7	19,0	21,2
Tübingen	1772	1799	113,4	120,2	71,2	70,2	64,1	62,9	31,7	42,3	4,9	7,8	4,6	11,2	22,1	19,4	52,7	54,2	25,2	26,4
Freiburg	2146	2182	109,1	114,6	69,6	71,0	62,7	65,0	40,7	40,1	4,4	7,8	5,9	10,7	20,2	18,7	57,5	57,0	22,4	24,4

	Population (1000 inhabitants)		GDP/head (PPS) – EU25=100 (2001) / EU27=100 (2004)		Employment rate (ages 15-64 as % of pop. Aged 15-64) - Total		Employment rate (ages 15-64 as % of pop. Aged 15-64) - Female		Long term unemployed (% of total unemployed) -Total		Unemployment rate (%) - Female		Unemployment rate (%) - Young		Educational attainment of persons aged 25-64 (% of total) - Low		Educational attainment of persons aged 25-64 (% of total) - Medium		Educational attainment of persons aged 25-64 (% of total) - High	
	2001	2004	2001	2004	2002	2005	2002	2005	2002	2005	2002	2005	2002	2005	2002	2005	2002	2005	2002	2005
Italy	57927	58175	109,9	107,4	55,5	57,6	42,0	45,3	59,6	49,9	12,2	10,1	27,2	24,0	55,9	49,3	33,9	38,5	10,2	12,2
Lombardia	9150	9320	144,0	141,5	63,2	65,5	51,8	55,1	36,5	33,8	5,6	5,4	11,4	13,0	53,7	46,3	35,2	41,2	11,0	12,5
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	1190	1201	123,5	117,4	62,0	63,2	51,7	54,0	25,8	31,3	5,6	8,3	9,4	10,5	51,3	46,1	39,0	41,9	9,7	12,0
Veneto	4556	4671	127,1	127,4	63,2	64,6	50,7	53,0	28,6	34,6	5,2	6,2	7,6	12,6	57,4	50,0	33,9	38,8	8,7	11,2
Trentino-Alto Adige / Provincia Autonoma Trento	947	494	146,0	126,9	66,4	65,1	54,7	54,7	11,7	22,2	3,8	5,2	5,0	10,3	52,4	41,8	38,5	46,0	9,1	12,1
Valle d'Aosta	121	122	136,0	128,2	66,3	66,4	56,1	58,0	19,3	24,7	5,5	4,1	10,6	10,5	58,6	53,5	33,8	36,0	7,7	10,6
Piemonte	4291	4300	126,3	119,5	62,0	64,0	51,6	54,4	47,5	43,8	7,3	6,4	15,5	16,9	57,6	48,6	33,0	40,2	9,4	11,2
Liguria	1619	1585	118,7	109,7	58,2	61,1	46,8	50,5	57,4	37,9	8,6	9,1	23,0	20,0	53,4	41,1	35,5	44,4	11,1	14,5
Slovenia	1992	1997	74,4	83,3	63,4	66,0	58,6	61,3	55,6	47,4	6,8	7,0	16,5	15,9	23,0	19,7	61,8	60,1	15,3	20,2
Liechtenstein	32,83	34,29	165 000 (in CHF)	162 000 (in CHF)	16886 (persons)	15936 (persons)	n.a.	6686 (2006)	n.a.	26,5 (2006)	n.a.	3,9 (2006)	n.a.	5,3 (2006)	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Switzerland	7204	7364	141,0	136,0	78,9	77,2	71,5	70,4	n.a.	n.a.	3,4	5,1	37200 (persons)	52000 (persons)	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.

Source: European Commission (2004): A new partnership for cohesion. Convergence – competitiveness – cooperation, Third report on economic and social cohesion, Brussels; European Commission (2007): Growing regions, growing Europe. Fourth report on economic and social cohesion, Brussels; statistics for Liechtenstein: <http://www.as.llv.li/>; statistics for Switzerland: Eurostat, <http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/de/index.html>.

Figure 24- Regional Indicators for the Lisbon Strategy

2. *Implementation of Priorities and Measures for each of the Funds*

On the following pages the *achievements* in relation to the programmes objectives and targets are described and a *quantification* of the related indicators is set out on programme priority and measure level.

The following analysis compiles to a large extent the results presented in the Annual Implementation Report 2008. This is due to the fact that in previous annual implementation reports presented by the programme and accepted by the EC accumulated data was provided.

Attention shall be drawn here to two brochures that were published by the programme and in which detailed information on the single approved projects and their results can be found (see also chapter 4.1.4. of this report).

In 2006 a brochure was published that provides for short and precise information about all approved projects.¹⁷

End of 2008 a brochure was published by the programme that compiles the main outcomes achieved by the projects.¹⁸ This publication presents the INTERREG IIIB project results against the background of upcoming challenges of the ETC programme. The brochure shall contribute to a better transferability of achieved results and knowledge gathered in the programme and set a standard of quality that is expected from future projects.

According to Council Regulation (EC) No. 1260/1999 and the programme document indicators relevant for the Alpine Space-Programme are distinguished on several levels: programme level, priority level and measure level. Indicators quantify the results of implementation of the programme on the basis of all the current outcomes of projects. The tables and figures below are consequently of major importance to assess the effectiveness and the progress made in fulfilling the programme.

As they contain no target-values these indicators cannot give an overview on the advancement and the effectiveness of projects, still they give a good impression about if and how the programme objectives on three different levels are met.

¹⁷ The brochure "*Alpine Space Programme Interreg III B, Project Booklet 2000-2006*" was printed in the four official languages of the countries participating in the programme (French, German, Italian, Slovene) as well as in English. It is also available for download under <http://www.alpinespace.org/downloads.html?&L=0>.

¹⁸ The brochure "*Bridging potentials. Projects of the INTERREG IIIB Alpine Space Programme. Diverse. Visionary. Connecting*" was published in the four official languages of the Alpine Space countries as well as in English. It is also available for download under: <http://www.alpine-space.eu/information-center/programme-publications/programme-publications/>

However, it must be underlined that for the Transnational European Territorial Cooperation Alpine Space Programme this deficiency was resolved.

2.1. Quantified Indicators on Programme Level

Programme level	Results
Number of projects establishing a common perspective for programme specific development issues	33
Number of projects enhancing genuine transnationality of actions by having at least three financing partners	58
Number of projects initiating actions with established national, regional and local systems laying ground for new activities	31
Amount of projects co-financing from public-like or private institutions	2.409.824,33 € ¹⁹
Amount of projects co-financing from regional and local administration	15.700.128,26 €
Number of projects having a mixed partnership involving both authorities from the spatial planning domain and partners from other sectors	39
Number of projects involving non-EU partners	46

Figure 25 - Indicators on Programme Level

On programme indicator level it can be stated that the overall objectives of the INTERREG IIIB programme were well achieved. More than half of the projects established a common perspective for programme specific development issues, such as a common strategy for sustainable development in the Alpine Space.

The composition of the partnership can be underlined as being one of the successful aspects of the programme. 39 projects (out of 58) were based on a mixed partnership, involving both vertical (local, regional and national authorities from the spatial planning domain) and horizontal (experts and operators from different sectors) dimensions. The programme's function as a platform for actors stemming from different fields, with different – but complementary – views and experiences, proved to be very effective and could lead to a more comprehensive and coherent approach for addressing the Alpine challenges.

As already pointed out in the previous Annual Implementation Report (AIR), the two non-Member States participating in the programme (Switzerland and Liechtenstein) were also very well represented in the partnership, as they actively took part in 46 projects. This internal cohesion proves not only that a strong interest was taken by these countries in this EU initiative, but also that the stakes

¹⁹ Only the contributions from private participants are indicated here.

and necessity of a transnational approach was definitely understood by the partners.

In geographical terms a higher involvement of actors from the western part of the Alps is nevertheless expected in the ETC programme, as they were a bit lagging behind in terms of participation.

These experiences were transcribed in the Operational Programme (OP) 2007-2013 which highlights that *“several projects built up strategic partnerships including relevant stakeholders for addressing the main challenges of territorial development in the Alps”*.²⁰ The OP goes on insisting on an integrated approach (vertically, horizontally and geographically), in order to *“ensure a better quality of cooperation activities and lead to results better rooted in the territory”*.²¹ Finally, *“one of the main challenges in programme governance will consist in addressing and attracting the competent and relevant partners that can provide for right answers to the problems the cooperation area is confronted with”*.²²

2.2 Quantified Indicators on Priority Level

PRIORITY 1: 25 approved projects

Indicator on priority level	Results
Number of spatial planning authorities involved in projects	324
Number of networks established to promote sustainable development	189
Number of projects dealing with the use of ICT to contribute to a stronger Alpine Space economy	19
Number of projects dealing with best practice in the field of creation of permanent jobs and income opportunities	16

Figure 26 - Indicators Priority 1

Good results were achieved by all 25 projects in priority 1.

The general purpose of this priority was to *“promote the Alpine Space as a competitive and attractive living and economic space in the scope of a polycentric spatial development in the EU”*.²³ To that end, a strong emphasis was put on the promotion of transnational cooperation and share of knowledge as well as on the

²⁰ ETC - Operational Programme Alpine Space, chapter 1.3, p.11.

²¹ ETC - Operational Programme Alpine Space, chapter 2.3.2, p.34.

²² ETC - Operational Programme Alpine Space, chapter 2.3.2, p.33.

²³ CIP, chapter 4.2, p. 56.

strengthening of competitiveness, in order to achieve a sustainable development of the Alpine regions.

The indicators on priority level show an increased cooperation between the different actors. The high number of spatial planning authorities involved in projects (324) contributed to develop a common understanding of spatial development strategies, and confirmed that an added value can be drawn from a close cooperation between actors representing different spatial levels (national, regional and local) and bodies from others sectors (SME, innovation and technology centres, etc.).

More significant in the field of transnational cooperation are the results achieved in improving transfer of knowledge and spread of information and best practice. The number of networks established to promote sustainable development has been continuously increasing, and registered a remarkable push upwards during the last year of the period, mainly in measure 1.2. The increase is to be searched in particular in projects dealing with the fields of eco-industries, promotion of regional products, wood chain and renewable energies. Lately, the increase of competitiveness also reached the health and wellness market, which put up a significant performance during the last year of implementation.

The number of projects dealing with best practice in the field of creation of permanent jobs and income opportunities amounts to 16 which shows encouraging perspectives. However, the effective number of jobs created under this priority (mostly measure 1.2) remained relatively weak (around 186, mainly in the eco-industries sector). Creation of permanent jobs and income opportunities is vital for ensuring the competitiveness and attractiveness of the regions. This is why it should be stimulated and the focus of attention on the economic strengths of the Alpine Space (support to SME, industries, agriculture, tourism, etc.) must be carried on.

Concerning the use of tools 19 projects out of 25 have dealt with ICT. This can be regarded as a good score, considering the recent spreading and use of ICT applications in the past years. The benefits that can be drawn from the information and communication technologies in order to contribute to a stronger economy within the Alpine Space and to spread knowledge will make their use unavoidable in the future.

As a whole, the main aim of the priority seems to have been generally understood and efficiently put into practice by the project partners. The exchanges between the different actors allowed to bring new knowledge and to draw shared visions of the territory, notably by providing the Alpine Space with common indicators and databases in the field of sustainable regional development.

Outlook for the ETC programme

The Operational Programme of the new programming period highlights the strategic partnerships including relevant stakeholders that several projects built up during the INTERREG IIB. These networks represent a first solid basis for future cooperations. However, the ETC programme insists on the necessity to reinforce and widen them as well as to create new ones. But the real challenge of the 2007-2013 period will be to go beyond that by producing more tangible results which shall be concretely implemented. With this aim in view, a strong focus will have to be put on capitalisation and transferability of the project results.

It will also be expected from the new projects to make a more intensive and systematic use of ICT. Together with approaches, partnerships, methodologies and tools²⁴, the use of new technologies is definitely part of the pillars which are necessary to enable the fostering of innovation – one of the guiding principles of the ETC programme – and consequently the strengthening of the competitiveness and attractiveness of the Alpine Space.

PRIORITY 2: 9 approved projects

Indicator on priority level	Results
Number of projects offering innovative solutions for the accessibility to transport and communication infrastructure	7
Number of projects developing decision making tools for transport issues	8
Number of projects improving access to transnational/high-speed transport networks	6
Number of environmental friendly transport links between metropolitan areas and tourist areas	21

Figure 27 - Indicators Priority 2

The relatively low number of projects approved in priority 2 and dealing with transport issues led to a limited achievement of the priority objectives.

However, the approved projects completed their activities successfully and enabled to reach the general objectives expected at priority level.

In total, eight projects (out of nine) played a part in developing tools for transport issues. These projects provided decision-makers and planners with filled databases and new indicators to assess the effects of road traffic. Analysis, studies, scenarios and maps presenting the current challenges severely affecting the

²⁴ ETC - Operational Programme Alpine Space, chapter 2.3.2, p.34.

quality of life within the Alpine Space (such as noise and air pollution) were also developed. These projects contributed efficiently to the reinforcement of scientific foundations and could lead to concrete formulated policy statements to better manage the international goods transport and to foster the transfer from road to rail.

Several projects also contributed to generate effective results by offering innovative solutions for the accessibility of transport and communication infrastructure (seven projects). This required the consideration of transport networks and mobility from a more coherent point of view and the development of alternatives to private motorized transportation. Concrete implementation on the territory has been achieved with the creation of 21 environmental friendly transport links between metropolitan areas and tourist areas. These were aimed at tourists as well as at local population to make the use of soft mobility more spontaneous and to stimulate a more sustainable way of moving. Finally, 6 projects also enabled to improve access to transnational/high-speed transport networks, by optimising capacities of existing networks and by developing new technologies for improving safety and efficiency in both rail and road sectors.

As a whole, this priority not only provided the cooperation area with new operational data and knowledge, but also implemented concrete actions with visible and lasting effects. This way, the projects pursued the general objective of priority 2 and its intention to develop more sustainable transport systems.

Outlook for the ETC programme

The IIIB Alpine Space Programme has firmly recognised the crucial importance of transport and communication issues for sustainable development in the Alps. And importance is attached to activities aiming at making the whole transportation system more efficient, sustainable and coherent to the inhabitants, commuters, tourists, as well as goods hauliers. Improvement of accessibility, intermodality, traffic effects mitigation, promotion of soft mobility and development of sustainable innovative solutions are some of the objectives of the new programme, aiming at minimising both spatial and environmental impacts.

The quality of the currently running and future projects as well as their ability to produce concrete results is a clear expectation of the new programming period. The tools gained through the INTERREG IIIB projects constitute now a solid basis, and they are expected to be applied and used in a transnational perspective in the future.

PRIORITY 3: 24 approved projects

Indicator on priority level	Results
Number of projects dealing with management of water resources	8
Number of common perspectives for the sustainable exploitation of natural resources	22
Number of transnational projects developing perspectives of the common cultural heritage and/or initializing pilot projects	18
Number of projects developing and installing transnational risk prevention measures	8
Number of transnational plans for the prevention of flooding	5

Figure 28 – Indicators Priority 3

24 projects in total were approved under priority 3 covering the overall topic of “wise management of nature, landscape and cultural heritage, promotion of the environment and prevention of natural disasters”. This high approval rate confirms the demand in the Alpine Space on cooperation projects dealing with the environment. The compiled outcomes contributed very well to the achievement of the priorities objectives.

As regards environmental matters, an encouraging number of common perspectives for sustainable exploitation of natural resources (22) were developed on various topics such as water, wind, wood, as well as soil wise management. Concrete transnational risk prevention measures were taken by eight projects on different present challenges, especially on disasters caused by water, weather, earthquakes, etc., or more generally by climate change.

Concerning the cultural dimension covered by the priority, 18 transnational projects contributed to develop perspectives of the cultural heritage and/or initialise pilot projects. The latter compile different kinds of actions, such as promotion of agriculture and traditions, revitalisation of historical settlements and cultural routes, etc. The promotion of the landscapes led to the strengthening of the population’s identity (especially in case of participative activities involving the inhabitants) and to a better attractiveness of the areas for the tourists.

Outlook for the ETC programme

As a whole, the projects led under priority 3 contributed efficiently to develop stable networks committed to develop common development strategies. They could provide the Alpine Space with good initial results on the common management of nature, landscape and cultural heritage.²⁵ The ETC programme

²⁵ ETC - Operational Programme Alpine Space, chapter 1.3, p.11.

insists nevertheless on the necessity to strengthen and widen the existing networks and to go further towards a concrete implementation on the territory.

A special attention will be put on the management of natural resources, especially on water, which is considered as one of the main natural resources of the Alpine Space. The promotion of conservation and valorisation of all natural resources will be reinforced as well, and the use of renewable energies will be fostered.

2.3. Quantified Indicators on Measure Level

Measure 1.1: Mutual knowledge and common perspectives

11 projects were approved under measure 1.1.

This measure focused on strengthening partnership between territories at all levels by promoting contacts and networks, spreading information and knowledge and drawing up common perspectives of spatial development.²⁶ It put also a strong emphasis on transferability. In this respect, the two positive trends observed in the past years are definitely confirmed.

The analysis shows an encouraging trend in the field of “*spreading of information and knowledge*”²⁷ within the Alpine Space. The number of transnational information activities and training and education courses increased greatly over the years, bringing the total amount of participants to 27.339. A significant interest seems to have been mobilised by activities related to gender equality matters. As a whole, all projects could announce an increase of their transnational activities, especially during the two last years of the period (total number 359). This result is quite encouraging at the end of the first transnational European cooperation programme set up for the Alps.

Secondly, the number of involved spatial planning authorities increased continuously as well. This way, 153 national, regional and local authorities have contributed to the dissemination of shared knowledge and to the promotion of sustainable development in the cooperation area. 10 projects also established a mixed partnership involving both authorities from the spatial/regional planning domain and partners from other sectors.

Furthermore, the high number of activities which involved cooperations among peri-alpine and core alpine partners (10 projects) and among partners from different language areas (11 projects) enables to confirm a true transnational and cooperative nature of the implemented projects and confirms the fulfilment of the measure’s main objective “drawing up of common perspectives of spatial planning”.

²⁶ Programme Complement, chapter 2.2, p.25.

²⁷ Programme Complement, chapter 2.2, p.25.

Data seem to denote a strong interest and a good understanding of the needs of developing common approaches and tools. The figures are encouraging and lead to believe in a commitment of the partners in going on acting on a transnational level. Moreover, the basis built up during the 2000-2006 period will be of great importance for the 2007-2013 period and is expected to be strengthened and completed. This would thus favour not only the capitalisation and valorisation of results, but also and above all their transfer into concrete actions.

Type	Indicator	Results
Priority level	Number of spatial planning authorities involved in project	153
Priority level	Number of networks established to promote sustainable development	30
Priority level	Number of projects dealing with the use of ICT to contribute to a stronger Alpine Space economy	8
Priority level	Number of projects dealing with best practice in the field of creation of permanent jobs and income opportunities	4
MI output	Number of transnational information activities and training and education courses	359
MI output	Number of transnational networks	27
MI output	Number of policy evaluation reports according to the main policy fields mentioned in the ESDP	4
MI result	Number of people participating in information activities, training and education courses	27.339
MI result	Number of pilot projects generated through projects	9
MI impact	Increase of number of information activities and training and education courses	11
MI impact	Mixed partnership involving both authorities from the spatial and the regional planning domain and partners from other sectors	10
MI impact	Cooperations among peri-alpine and core alpine partners	10
MI impact	Cooperations among partners of different language areas	11

Figure 29 – Indicators Measure 1.1

Measure 1.2: Competitiveness and sustainable development

14 projects contributed to achieve the objectives of measure 1.2.

Significant achievements have been made in the fields of competitiveness and sustainable development, contributing to improve the economical situation at a micro level. This was accomplished notably by focusing on a strategic support to SME and industries, by providing population with goods and services and by favouring sustainable tourism and employment.

From a general point of view, all projects have significantly played a part in pursuing the main focus of measure 1.2, which intends to “*strengthen the competitiveness of the Alpine Space by supporting the development of common approaches in different economic sectors*”.²⁸ The number of networks established to promote sustainable development (especially in the sectors of eco-industries and regional products) rose considerably during the last years of implementation. The ICT often acted as a mean to achieve this aim, by providing among others e-learning systems, e-services, online databases, and by spreading information.

Just like in measure 1.1, a high number of spatial planning authorities involved in projects (171) can be reported, which shows encouraging signs in the field of spatial cooperation at various levels within the Alpine Space area, as well as a strong commitment of the partners to fulfil the programme’s major target of a common development strategy. These institutional networks, established within the framework of the projects’ implementation, can serve as a strong and stable basis to carry on with further collaborations.

A positive evolution can be highlighted as well concerning networking and know-how exchange; a high number of SME (5044) and innovation and technology centres (179) involved in these networks contributed to spread knowledge and to promote cooperations and transferability of activities on a transnational level. Moreover, many people took part in professional training and education (8418), especially in the topics of eco-industries and of actions aiming at providing a better support to population (with goods and services in rural areas) and SME. Exchanges of experience and best practice examples will be pursued and fostered by the ETC programme, so as to ensure the sustainability, transferability and durability of the project results. But it will also be expected to go a step further by producing more concrete results.

However, the 45 created enterprises (without considering the enlargements and extending of existing ones), mainly in the regional market branch, can be presented as a visible result of the project actions. They contribute to the attractiveness, competitiveness and economic dynamism of the regions. Moreover, the amount of firms and institutions that achieved certifications under measure 1.2

²⁸ Programme Complement, chapter 2.2, p.29.

reached 151. These certifications regard especially projects dealing with the tourism sector (mainly health and wellness). Nevertheless, a progressive and more and more visible expansion to projects supporting eco-industries has to be noticed as well recently.

Type	Indicator	Results
Priority level	Number of spatial planning authorities involved in project	171
Priority level	Number of networks established to promote sustainable development	159
Priority level	Number of projects dealing with the use of ICT to contribute to a stronger Alpine Space economy	11
Priority level	Number of projects dealing with best practice in the field of creation of permanent jobs and income opportunities	12
MI output	Number of SME involved in networking and know-how exchange	5.044
MI output	Number of innovation and technology centres involved in networking and know-how exchange	179
MI output	Number of firms and institutions that achieve certifications (i.e. quality and environmental management, occupational safety)	151
MI result	Number of people taking part in professional training and education	8.418
MI result	Share of women participating in project activities	50%
MI result	Number of joint promotion instruments for Alpine products	121
MI result	Number of services resulting from transnational cooperation	119
MI impact	Amount of off-programme investment or other activities induced by programme-funded partnerships	3.559.003
MI impact	Additional positive economic effects	14
MI impact	Creation of new enterprises	45

Figure 30 – Indicators Measure 1.2

Still, concerning the issue directly addressed by the Lisbon strategy, namely the economic growth, one should underline the important economic spill-over showed by the indicator “off - programme investment directly or indirectly

induced by the programme's funded partnership" (3.559.003 €)²⁹ in terms of new investments (performed mainly by SME) indirectly induced by the projects implementation. In this context the number of achieved joint promotion instruments for alpine (regional) products (121) and services (119) with focus on innovative solutions to maintain access to public services, issued from transnational cooperation, must be underlined. They can be seen as a significant push for competitiveness of the local production chains and improvement of living conditions for the populations.

Finally, it must be highlighted that the share of women involved in project activities (50%), although it remained stable during the whole period, shows a good performance in the promotion of gender equality. Further efforts are intended to be done in this direction during the new programming period, since the equal opportunities principle is a requirement to "*be followed by all projects carried out by the programme*"³⁰.

The good results achieved in measure 1.2 on the whole show some first encouraging perspectives and contributed to the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy's objectives in terms of economic growth and employment. But efforts must be carried on in this direction in order to ensure sustainable and long-lasting transnational cooperation and competitiveness.

Measure 2.1: Perspectives and analyses

Three projects were approved under measure 2.1. Even if the number of projects operating under this measure is relatively low, good results can be highlighted as regards "*perspectives and analyses*" in the field of transports.

Firstly, the projects played a significant role in developing decision making tools for transport issues, contributing to the main objective of measure 2.1, i.e. "*provide the actors with a decision-making support and information in the field of transports*".³¹ In fact, the Alpine Space is increasingly affected by the intensification of exchanges within the "internal market" and its direct consequent growth of the transport (particularly the freight transport) throughout its corridors. A good monitoring of the transport flow as well as performing tools allowing to follow the transport situation and to provide the sector with new services³² is indeed of crucial importance and should be possibly strengthened through the European Territorial Cooperation Programme "Alpine Space".

²⁹ This amount should be interpreted as the amount of indirect investment induced by the projects' implementation.

³⁰ ETC – Operational Programme Alpine Space, chapter 2.3.2, p.34.

³¹ Programme Complement, Chapter 2.2, p. 33.

³² Through, e.g. the "on spot and live" monitoring of the accidents and the development of an early warning system.

Secondly, it is worth highlighting that all three projects contributed to the use of alternative solutions to road transport means or inter-modality, by spreading the fact that a more sustainable mobility (eco-mobility and rail transport alternative) can be achieved and by encouraging this.

Type	Indicator	Results
Priority level	Number of projects offering innovative solutions for the accessibility to transport and communication infrastructure	1
Priority level	Number of projects developing decision making tools for transport issues	2
Priority level	Number of projects improving access to transnational/high-speed transport networks	0
Priority level	Number of environmental friendly transport links between metropolitan areas and tourist areas	9
MI output	Number of transnational feasibility studies dedicated to investments in sustainable transports	0
MI output	Number of new tools and data-bases for assessing transport developments	4
MI output	Number of information campaigns on territorial impact of transport addressed to public	59
MI result	Number of feasibility studies inducing investments	0
MI result	Number of administrative/technical services implied in transnational networks coordinating funded actions	3
MI impact	Use of alternative solutions to road transport means or inter-modality	3
MI impact	Number of non-participating actors benefiting from the access to new transport networks	5

Figure 31 – Indicators Measure 2.1

The promotion of soft mobility has been concretised, on the one hand through awareness-raising actions and communication campaigns, and on the other hand through the development of databases and studies to support decision-makers in their choices aiming at reducing the effects of the Alpine congestion and at promoting inter-modality. As an example, almost 60 information campaigns and conferences have been organised to promote alternative solutions and spread good practices. This represents a good performance considering that they took place within the framework of three projects only. These actions were dedicated to a wide public, and the use of ICT contributed actively to spread information on transport issues in the Alps. Young people have been a privileged target group for awareness-raising actions and activities, since soft mobility reflexes are expected

to be stimulated from the early age. Trainings for employees in public passenger transport were also of significant importance, and many good practice examples were transferred.

The intention of this measure was to develop “*common approaches on mobility problems, giving special attention to environmental concerns*”.³³ As a whole, it can be stated that the projects operating under measure 2.1, although not many, contributed efficiently to this strategic feature. The competent authorities were provided with tools and strategies (such as reports, analysis, databases, indicators, software, simulations) which ease to draw common visions of the Alpine Space transport issues at different scales. This new knowledge, provided at macro level, was led so as to enable the implementation of concrete actions, which shall respect the specificities and general shape of the regions.

The frame conditions for transport development in the Alpine Space, which were defined by measure 2.1, represented a good basis for the implementation of practical solutions within the framework of measure 2.2. This is why tight interactions were expected – and actually occurred – between both measures.

Measure 2.2: Improvement of existing and promotion of future transport systems by large scale and small scale intelligent solutions such as intermodality

The six projects approved under measure 2.2 showed encouraging results, since the expectations of the priority were fulfilled in most cases by all of them.

A total of 168 technical equipments were installed or existing ones were implemented. The most modern technologies could be used providing planners and decision-makers with new or harmonised databases (on road traffic), pricing and emission models, studies on transalpine traffic, etc. To that end, high-tech tools for monitoring mobility, such as antennas, permanent stations, GPRS systems and on board devices, were applied by the projects. The environmental concerns were the starting point for the analyses, and the various kinds of knowledge were developed with a view to an operational use in the transport policy.

An important work has been made as well by five projects to promote intermodality and to make people aware of the existing alternatives to road transport. The equipments also include infrastructures that can be directly used by the population, such as mobility centres, information signs or portals for mobility. Recently, many actions were led for supporting a more “healthy mobility”, i.e. by linking transport policy and health prevention. Buses, trains, bicycles and one’s own feet are some of the alternative solutions that have been actively promoted and highlighted as a way to improve people’s and environment’s health.

³³ Programme Complement, chapter 2.2, p .35.

As regards freight transport, a great step forward has been done for the shift from road to rail by optimising the Alpine rail network efficiency. Measures were also taken to harmonise technical standards for the railway, for instance to ease the modal shift. From a more general point of view, the set up of eight transport services or infrastructures (especially for rail transport) and the creation of 12 environmental friendly transport links between metropolitan areas and tourist areas also contributed to foster and promote sustainable mobility solutions, to reduce the vehicles flows and to improve the quality of life in the Alpine Space. Further efforts have to be made, ensuring more concrete and long-lasting effects.

One of the strengths of the projects is that mobility has been considered from different points of view. Thus, the habits of commuters, tourists and inhabitants have been taken into account to analyse people's mobility, and a strong focus has been put on the flows of goods as well. Moreover, both long distance and local traffic were considered in the project results. This consideration of different categories of movements enables to draw a more comprehensive and coherent understanding of the Alpine mobility.

Type	Indicator	Results
Priority level	Number of projects offering innovative solutions for the accessibility to transport and communication infrastructure	6
Priority level	Number of projects developing decision making tools for transport issues	6
Priority level	Number of projects improving access to transnational/high-speed transport networks	6
Priority level	Number of environmental friendly transport links between metropolitan areas and tourist areas	12
MI output	Number of new technical equipment installed or implementation of existing ones	168
MI output	Number of projects supporting alternative solutions to road transport following the recommendations of feasibility studies	5
MI output	Number of pilot projects testing new tools for inter-modality	6
MI result	Number of proposals concerning the harmonisation of national systems	35
MI result	Security standards carried out on a transnational basis	0
MI result	Number of users of pricing models	11
MI impact	Use of alternative solutions to road transport means or inter-modality	5
MI impact	Number of non-participating actors benefiting from the access to new networks	67.411
MI impact	Number of new transnational transport services or infrastructure set up	8

Figure 32 – Indicators Measure 2.2

Measure 3.1: Nature and resources, in particular water

A total of eight projects were approved in the field of nature and resources.

This measure intends to “*promote conservation and valorisation of natural resources, such as soil and water*”³⁴, objective which requires common perspectives and management strategies. As a whole, the projects efficiently contributed to this aim.

Type	Indicators	Results
Priority level	Number of projects dealing with management of water resources	3
Priority level	Number of common perspectives for the sustainable exploitation of natural resources	14
Priority level	Number of transnational projects developing perspectives of the common cultural heritage and/or initializing pilot projects	8
Priority level	Number of projects developing and installing transnational risk prevention measures	1
Priority level	Number of transnational plans for the prevention of flooding	2
MI output	Number of pilot projects	8
MI output	Databases, electronic archives and GIS created or enlarged in the field of natural heritage protection and development	17
MI output	Number of studies and guidelines focused on natural resources, in particular concerning water issues	53
MI result	Number of public authorities which made use of the results of pilot projects	397
MI result	Number of accesses to databases and electronic archives	38
MI impact	Improvement of the environmental assets of the areas covered by pilot projects	5
MI impact	Increase of information and use of software dedicated to environmental protection and development	6
MI impact	Adoption of methodologies contained in studies and researches by all the authorities concerned	6

Figure 33 – Indicators Measure 3.1

The rise in the number of studies and guidelines focused on natural resources went on increasing over the years, and reached a total of 53. Their topics are dealing mostly with water issues, such as meteo-hydrological forecast, flooding,

³⁴ Programme Complement, chapter 2.2, p.42.

river basin management, sedimentation and relation to climate change. This continuous evolution upwards highlights the importance which is attached to water in the Alpine Space and the acknowledgement of this resource as a crucial present and future challenge to be taken advantage of.

But other natural resources were also given importance in the outputs. Thus, the sectors of wood (e.g. wood log production study market, use of wood energy) and of wind (e.g. wind energy, windharvest) were provided with new knowledge, scientific studies, technical reports and user manuals as well.

In addition to this, the projects also contributed to the creation of 38 accesses to databases and electronic archives, especially as regards meteorological and climatological issues. They provided precious knowledge on natural resources, and enabled to support spatial planning decisions.

The high number of public authorities (397) which made use of the pilot projects' results, although stable, shows a good performance to further apply the results into concrete actions and/or policies in various fields. This has already been initiated with hydrological risk and sediment management plans, tourism use management, spatial planning, environmental strategies, resources protection, etc. and must be carried on.

Measure 3.2: Good management and promotion of landscapes and cultural heritage

Landscapes and cultural heritage were managed and promoted within the framework of eight projects.

A successful implementation of the projects was registered, and 37 guidelines and management plans on cultural resources and landscape issues result from it. They provide information in different fields, such as for example on historical settlements, cultural and natural landscapes or terraced landscapes management and revitalisation, etc. They are of great importance for decision-making in the Alpine context and provide the cooperation area with precious recommendations.

From a general point of view, 103 initiatives in total were aimed at transferring experiences and good practices. They present a successful achievement notably as regards methods for cultural and natural preservation, as well as techniques of intervention on historical buildings.

Significant is also the number of pilot projects which were realised by all eight projects, as it amounts to 32. Concrete interventions were achieved at local level, which contributed to strengthen the Alpine identity (notably through interventions on patrimony) and promote the attractiveness of the landscapes for soft tourism.

Promotion of landscapes and cultural heritage is an objective that cannot be fully achieved without taking into account the main parties involved. Thus, a

participative approach of the population could be led within the framework of various actions, which enabled to strengthen the identity and cohesion of the inhabitants (e.g. search for a name for the village shop, campaigns on the topic of energy efficiency).

The projects implemented under measure 3.2 were thus of great efficiency to promote the landscapes and to reinforce the cultural identity and heritage of the regions. Here numerous positive effects (152) from the environmental and economic point of view can be reported. They were achieved notably thanks to actions in the fields of historical settlements (e.g. development of leisure activities, architecture); promotion of cultural heritage and traditional activities (e.g. support to crafts, cultivation of olives and minority population); micro-economy (e.g. creation of jobs, local support); and sustainable tourism (e.g. revitalisation of hiking trails, creation of a museum and a guest house). The outputs and results of pilot projects (e.g. guidance, databases, illustrated books, etc.) proved their full relevance and usefulness, since 188 public authorities made use of them.

Type	Indicators	Results
Priority level	Number of projects dealing with management of water resources	0
Priority level	Number of common perspectives for the sustainable exploitation of natural resources	4
Priority level	Number of transnational projects developing perspectives of the common cultural heritage and/or initializing pilot projects	8
Priority level	Number of projects developing and installing transnational risk prevention measures	0
Priority level	Number of transnational plans for the prevention of flooding	0
MI output	Number of guidelines and management plans on cultural resources and landscapes issues	37
MI output	Number of initiatives aimed at transferring experiences and good practices in the field of cultural heritage and landscape management	103
MI output	Number of pilot projects	32
MI result	Number of interventions related to the output	293
MI result	Number of territorial institutions adopting good practices suggested by the projects	91
MI result	Number of public authorities which made use of the results of pilot projects	188

MI impact	Adoption of suggestions, methodologies, guidelines and management plans	82
MI impact	Increase of awareness and of experiences, exchange on good management of cultural and natural heritage	7
MI impact	Creation of derived positive effects on cultural heritage and landscape from the environmental and economic point of view	152

Figure 34 – Indicators Measure 3.2

Measure 3.3: Cooperation in the field of natural risks

Eight projects aiming at promoting cooperation in the field of natural risks and at increasing knowledge of natural phenomena were implemented.

A raising trend of the number of networks established related to natural risk prevention and information has been confirmed over the years. This contributes significantly to reach the objective of the measure, which focuses on cooperations and knowledge exchange of natural phenomena in order to implement concrete strategies for improving the safety of population and infrastructures by a better risk prevention and mitigation. 199 different institutions were using networks for early detection, which shows that the instruments and disposals developed for risk prevention were put to efficient use. This high number of institutions mainly took advantage of networks established in the field of meteorological events forecast.

Moreover, several new and/or completed tools (i.e. databases, models, maps, etc.) are now as well at disposal of decision-makers in different fields of natural risks: water and soil issues (e.g. flooding, erosion, landslides), seismic activity, as well as climate change consequences. Modern technologies (such as GPS and radar networks) were of essential use for this achievement. Concrete spatial planning measures can be taken in order to mitigate the risks and vulnerability of the Alpine areas, by acting directly on the territory, e.g. by settling housing policies, river and woodland management plans, etc. In total, 60 decision-making plans were proposed.

Climate issues were given a special care within the framework of one project. Thus, harmonised monitoring networks through adaptation strategies have been of great importance to formulate concrete recommendations for business and regional development in response to climate change. The results of this project are also currently exploited by three projects approved under the first call of the ETC programme.

Type	Indicators	Results
Priority level	Number of projects dealing with management of water resources	5
Priority level	Number of common perspectives for the sustainable exploitation of natural resources	4
Priority level	Number of transnational projects developing perspectives of the common cultural heritage and/or initializing pilot projects	2
Priority level	Number of projects developing and installing transnational risk prevention measures	7
Priority level	Number of transnational plans for the prevention of flooding	3
MI output	Number of initiatives and pilot projects aimed at transferring experiences and good practices in the field of natural risk prevention	74
MI output	Databases, electronic archives and GIS created or enlarged in the field of natural hazards	52
MI output	Number of networks established related to natural risk prevention and information	18
MI result	Number of joint actions among institutions in a transnational frame	71
MI result	Number of accesses to databases and electronic archives and thematic maps connected to the individuation of risk areas	13.200.030
MI result	Number of different institutions using networks for early detection	199
MI impact	Adoption of suggestions, methodologies, guidelines and management plans	60
MI impact	Increase of information and use of software dedicated to natural hazard prevention	8
MI impact	Faster circulation of information and a more efficient early detection system	8
MI impact	Improvement of the environmental asset of the areas covered by pilot projects	6
MI impact	Reduction of probability and effects of natural disasters	8
MI impact	Increasing security of people living in areas where pilot projects have been implemented through an adequate awareness raising and information	8

Figure 35 – Indicators Measure 3.3

As a whole, it can be noticed that the projects were able to bring together actors stemming from different fields. This way, geologists, hydrologists, spatial planners, tourism experts, scientists, technicians, etc. but also the local population were involved in the implementation. A great emphasis has been put as well by all

projects on information (e.g. through medias, Internet portal, comics strips, etc.), in order to provide people with a better knowledge of the different Alpine hazards, to raise one's awareness, and thus to contribute also by this mean to prevention. In total, 74 initiatives and pilot projects aimed at transferring experiences and good practices in the field of natural risk prevention and information have been implemented.

3. Financial implementation

3.1. General Information on the Financial Implementation

The graph below provides with an overview on the exhaustion of ERDF funds per priority.

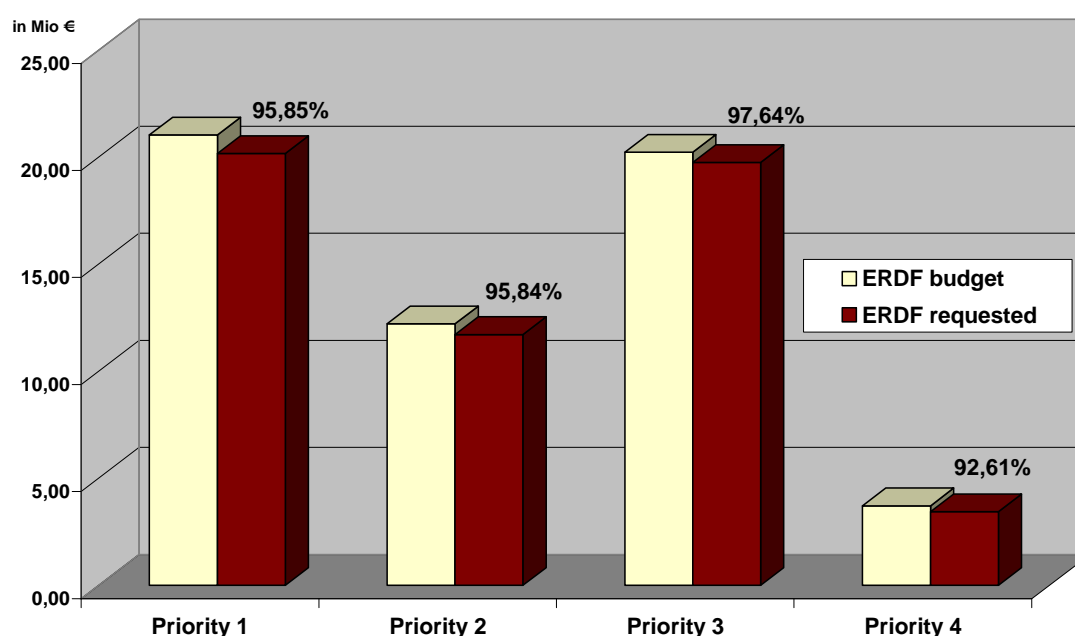


Figure 36 - Exhaustion of ERDF funds per priority

ERDF funds in the amount of € 55.070.709,70 were requested. Considering the ERDF budget of € 57.204.518, this leads to a final programme exhaustion of 96,27%. The reason for this underspending can be seen in the overestimation of the envisaged expenses made by the project participants. As this was already observed in 2006 the programme launched the so-called "extension call" (see chapter 4.1.1. of this report for more information). Despite these efforts on programme level a minor final decommitment has to be stated. Furthermore, the need of decentralised technical assistance funds was overestimated by the member states.

Whereas priority 4 "Technical Assistance" shows the lowest rate of exhaustion, the content related priorities show an exhaustion rate between 95,8% to 97,6%. The final decommitment is correspondingly shared among all priorities as follows:

	decommitment
Priority 1	873.694,67
Priority 2	508.376,75
Priority 3	477.574,96
Priority 4	274.161,63
Total	2.133.808,00

Figure 37 - Final decommitment per priority

The following table provides detailed information on the total expenditure (consisting of the certified expenditure and the Non-Member States contributions), the actual certified expenditure and the corresponding ERDF contribution in comparison with the original commitments to projects and the approved plan according to the programme complement.

	budget according to PC			commitments to projects			actual expenses		
	<i>total costs</i>	<i>total eligible costs</i>	<i>ERDF funds</i>	<i>total costs</i>	<i>total EU PP</i>	<i>ERDF funds</i>	<i>total costs</i>	<i>total certified</i>	<i>ERDF funds</i>
<i>Priority 1</i>	42.772.496	41.166.698	21.040.299	47.756.294	42.540.995	21.673.640	44.319.659,67	39.753.688,56	20.166.604,33
Measure 1.1	20.737.603	19.900.417	10.145.548	23.233.161	20.367.878	10.334.830	21.823.118,45	19.226.310,16	9.678.862,11
Measure 1.2	22.034.893	21.266.281	10.894.751	24.523.133	22.173.117	11.338.810	22.496.541,22	20.527.378,40	10.487.742,22
<i>Priority 2</i>	25.547.868	24.267.570	12.223.575	25.272.209	24.493.609	12.304.297	24.087.947,72	23.361.998,51	11.715.198,25
Measure 2.1	5.550.181	5.156.011	2.597.083	5.478.196	5.193.196	2.596.591	5.299.462,45	5.017.665,45	2.500.341,59
Measure 2.2	19.997.687	19.111.559	9.626.492	19.794.013	19.300.413	9.707.706	18.788.485,27	18.344.333,06	9.214.856,66
<i>Priority 3</i>	42.186.178	40.949.278	20.229.094	45.664.680	41.608.309	20.514.124	44.208.600,75	40.372.537,93	19.751.518,75
Measure 3.1	12.310.919	11.907.467	6.010.773	13.390.323	12.047.723	6.078.315	12.995.904,39	11.867.013,92	5.944.102,36
Measure 3.2	12.788.327	12.364.259	6.177.150	14.478.720	12.677.929	6.326.484	14.003.531,40	12.015.702,32	5.978.339,83
Measure 3.3	17.086.932	16.677.552	8.041.171	17.795.637	16.882.657	8.109.325	17.209.164,96	16.489.821,69	7.829.076,56
<i>Priority 4</i>	7.632.334	7.385.332	3.711.550	7.792.331	7.545.331	3.692.666	7.241.890,25	7.206.633,17	3.437.388,37
Measure 4.1	5.921.297	5.674.295	2.853.238	5.526.201	5.279.201	2.639.601	5.515.710,10	5.483.255,13	2.649.456,24
Measure 4.2	1.711.037	1.711.037	858.312	2.266.130	2.266.130	1.053.065	1.726.180,15	1.723.378,04	787.932,14
Total	118.138.876	113.768.878	57.204.518	126.485.514	116.188.244	58.184.727	119.858.098,39	110.694.858,17	55.070.709,70

Figure 38 – Overview on Measure level

As demonstrated in this table, the total costs were actually higher than originally planned, as the contribution from Non Member State level exceeded the financial plan. Additionally this table shows that the exhaustion on measure level varies between 92% (measure 4.2) and 99% (measure 3.1) only – and is therefore quite balanced.

The table below shows the composition of funding on measure level.

	Community contribution (ERDF)	Member State contribution				Non MS contribution
		<i>national public</i>	<i>regional public</i>	<i>local public</i>	<i>private</i>	
<i>Priority 1</i>	20.166.604,33	11.219.455,98	5.379.766,67	1.895.661,94	1.092.199,64	4.565.971,11
Measure 1.1	9.678.862,11	5.525.455,09	2.453.128,88	994.914,26	573.949,82	2.596.808,29
Measure 1.2	10.487.742,22	5.694.000,89	2.926.637,79	900.747,68	518.249,82	1.969.162,82
<i>Priority 2</i>	11.715.198,25	7.880.780,21	2.143.805,23	720.615,15	901.599,67	725.949,21
Measure 2.1	2.500.341,59	1.954.387,45	472.436,24	68.719,09	21.781,08	281.797,00
Measure 2.2	9.214.856,66	5.926.392,76	1.671.368,99	651.896,06	879.818,59	444.152,21
<i>Priority 3</i>	19.751.518,75	14.644.714,89	4.544.727,40	1.015.551,87	416.025,02	3.836.062,82
Measure 3.1	5.944.102,36	4.373.475,13	1.194.125,26	42.398,58	312.912,59	1.128.890,47
Measure 3.2	5.978.339,83	4.251.112,43	755.980,88	927.156,75	103.112,43	1.987.829,08
Measure 3.3	7.829.076,56	6.020.127,33	2.594.621,26	45.996,54	0,00	719.343,27
<i>Priority 4</i>	3.437.388,37	3.383.224,57	386.020,22	0,00	0,00	35.257,08
Measure 4.1	2.649.456,24	2.509.896,27	323.902,63	0,00	0,00	32.454,97
Measure 4.2	787.932,14	873.328,30	62.117,60	0,00	0,00	2.802,11
Total	55.070.709,70	37.128.175,65	12.454.319,52	3.631.828,96	2.409.824,33	9.163.240,22

Figure 39 - Composition of funding on measure level

As clearly demonstrated in the graph below, main parts of the costs were covered by ERDF funds and national public funds, whereas the private contribution and the contribution from local public level were quite low.

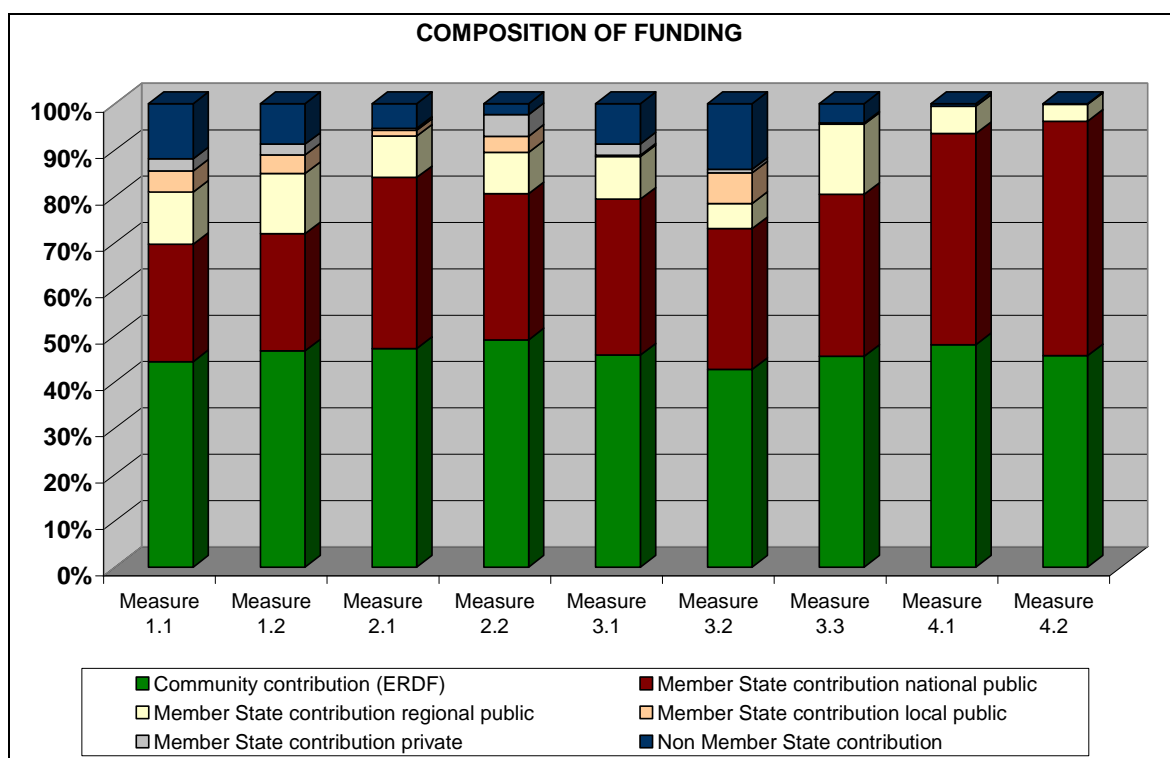


Figure 40 - Composition of funding measure level

3.2 Overview on Payment Requests

During the programme implementation period the Paying Authority submitted seven interim payment requests to the European Commission. The following table provides for an overview on the respective dates and amounts.

Payment requests to the EC	Date of submission to the EC	Amount of requested ERDF	Date of receipt	Amount of payment
Payment request No 1	05.06.2003	€ 352.405,48	20.02.2004	€ 352.405,48
Payment request No 2	22.12.2003	€ 3.014.856,90	28.07.2004	€ 3.014.856,90
Payment request No 3	22.12.2004	€ 8.031.713,48	28.02.2005	€ 7.667.102,66
Payment request No 4	22.12.2005	€ 11.855.210,70	19.01.2006	€ 11.042.656,30
Payment request No 5	21.12.2006	€ 10.522.144,50	25.01.2007	€ 9.690.190,38
Payment request No 6	21.12.2007	€ 11.583.091,58	12.02.2008	€ 11.562.155,97
Payment request No 7	19.12.2008	€ 6.897.479,46	05.02.2009	€ 6.834.328,41

Figure 41 - Payment requests to the EC

Additional a payment in advance amounting to € 4.180.596 was received in April 2002.

The final payment request in the amount of € 726.417,60 was submitted to the European Commission together with this final report.

3.3 Information on the Use of Interests

During the implementation of the programme, the Paying Authority earned interests in the amount of € 1.234.253,68. After deduction of the respective taxes and the transaction fees an amount of € 896.995,68 was available for the programme.

	2002-2008
interests	1.234.253,68
transaction fees	-28.694,52
taxes	-308.563,48
TOTAL	896.995,68

Figure 42 - Budget, transaction fees and taxes

The Monitoring Committee decided to use the interests to cover the expenses related to the preparation of the ETC programme "Alpine Space" and to co-fund the centralised TA (managed by MA) expenses in 2008. The remaining amount of € 455.388,08 was used to cover parts of the national co-funding of the decentralised (managed by MS) Technical Assistance expenses.

The following graph details the use of interests:

	use of interests
centralised TA	441.607,60
programme preparation	143.845,87
staff MA	29.516,72
hosting JTS	189.543,92
2nd level control	7.200,00
information & publicity	71.501,10
decentralised TA	455.388,08

Figure 43 - Use of interests

3.4 Expenditures per Categories of Intervention

Following the Programme Complement, “Categories of intervention listed in each measure are based on Article 36 of the Regulation (EC) No. 1260/1999 and have been compiled to help the Commission services report on Structural Funds activities (...) such information divided by categories is necessary to enable the Commission to respond to requests of information from EC institutions, from MS and from the public.”³⁵ In the following table the projects have been listed by measure, according to the category of intervention they cover best.

The clusters of projects in the various categories of intervention are:

- For priority 1 a strong concentration (11 out of 25 projects) on “innovation and technology transfer, establishment of networks and partnerships between business and/ or research institutes” can be asserted;
- As priority 2 is not represented by a significant number of projects the categories of intervention affected reflect a quite scattered picture of the situation. However a cluster on multi-modal transport can be identified;
- Also in priority 3 a high dispersion of reported expenditure can be noticed. However, two concentrations with four projects each (out of 24) can be identified. As expected the “Protection of the environment in connection with land, forestry and landscape conservation” is a major field of intervention. The other concentration concerns “Innovation and technology transfer, establishment of networks and partnerships between business and/or research institutes”.

³⁵ CIP, chapter 2.1, p. 24

Measure concerned	categories of intervention	certified expenditure (€)	name of project
Measure 1.1	Research projects based in University and research institutes (181);	4.523.132,52	Mars, Lexalp, Diamont
	Innovation and technology transfers, establishment of networks and partnerships between business and/or research institutes (182);	9.291.161,12	E-Motion, Alpcity, Alplakes, Know for Alp, Viadventure
	Information and communication technology (including security and safe transmission measures) (322);	1.369.534,07	Media Alp
	Services and applications for the citizen (health, administration, education) (323);	2.222.845,81	Genderalp
	Innovative actions (414).	1.819.636,64	TusecIP
Measure 1.2	Innovation and technology transfers, establishment of networks and partnerships between business and/or research institutes (182);	6.500.207,69	Cara, Qualima, Women Alpnet, Alpinet Gheep, Alpshealthcomp
	Information and communication technology (including security and safe transmission measures) (322);	1.120.277,98	Alpinetwork
	Services and applications for the citizen (health, administration, education) (323);	2.111.158,47	Pusemor
	Services and applications for SME (electronic commerce and transactions, education and training, networking) (324);	4.051.823,34	Alpps, Aspect, Nena
	Basic services for the rural economy and population (1305);	4.095.560,12	Neprovalter , Regiomarket
	Encouragement for tourist activities (1310)	2.648.350,80	Sentedalps, Via Claudia Augusta
Measure 2.1³⁶	Environment-friendly technologies, clean and economical energy technologies (162);		

³⁶ Measure 2.1 is not well represented as only three projects focus on this measure. Consequently, many categories of intervention are not covered at all.

Measure 2.1	Business advisory services (information, business planning, consultancy services, marketing, management, design, internationalisation, exporting, environmental management, purchase of technology (163);	3.023.813,58	Alpine-Awareness, Monitraf
	Research project based in universities and research institutes (181);	1.993.851,87	Alpnap
	Rail (311);		
	Roads (312);		
	Airports (314);		
	Urban transport (317);		
	Intelligent transport systems (319);		
	Information and communication technology (including security and safe transmission measures) (322);		
	Regional/local roads (3122);		
Cycle tracks (3123).			
Measure 2.2	Environment-friendly technologies, clean and economical energy technologies (162);	2.806.189,22	AlpsMobility II
	Business advisory services (information, business planning, consultancy services, marketing, management, design, internationalisation, exporting, environmental management, purchase of technology (163);		
	RTDI infrastructure (183);		
	Rail (311);		
	Roads (312);		
	Regional/local roads (3122);		
	Cycle tracks (3123);		
	Airports (314);		
	Waterways (316);		
	Urban transport (317);		
	Multi-modal transport (318);	7.371.726,87	Alpencors, MobilAlp, ViaNova
	Intelligent transport systems (319);	3.929.840,66	AlpFRail
Information and communication technology (including security and safe transmission measures) (322).	4.236.576,31	Alpcheck	

Measure 3.1	Agriculture-specific vocational training (113);		
	Improving and maintaining ecological stability of protected woodlands (127);		
	Forestry-specific vocational training (128);		
	Research project based in universities and research institutes (181);		
	Renewable sources of energy (solar power, wind power, hydroelectricity, bio-mass (332);	2.488.464,61	Alpine Windharvest, Alpengerywood
	Energy efficiency, co-generation, energy control (333);		
	Air (341);		
	Noise (342);		
	Drinking water (collection, storage, treatment and distribution (344)		
	Protection, improvement and regeneration of the natural environment (353);	4.224.919,19	Monarpop, Foralps
	Agricultural water resources management (1308);		
Protection of the environment in connection with land, forestry and landscape conservation as well as with the improvement of animal welfare (1312)	5.153.630,12	LivingSpaceNetwork, Alpreserv, Alpencom, Alpnatour	
Measure 3.2	Agriculture-specific vocational training (113),		
	forestry-specific vocational training (128);		
	Business advisory services (information, business planning, consultancy services, marketing, management, design, internationalisation, exporting, environmental management, purchase of technology (163);		
	Physical investment (information centres, tourist accommodation, catering facilities (171);		
	Research project based in universities and research institutes (181);	750.679,80	WalserAlp
	Drinking water (collection, storage, treatment and distribution (344);		
	Protection, improvement and regeneration of the natural environment (353);	1.603.064,10	Dynalp

Measure 3.2	Renovation and development of villages and protection and conservation of the natural heritage (1306);	3.558.986,81	Crafts, IronRoutes,
	Encouragement of tourist activities (1310);	3.168.914,62	CulturAlp, Via Alpina
	Protection of the environment in connection with land, forestry and landscape conservation as well as with the improvement of animal welfare (1312).	2.934.056,99	Habitalp, Alpter
Measure 3.3	Restoring forestry production potentially damaged by natural disasters and introducing prevention instruments (125) ³⁷ ;	906.955,04	Disalp
	Improving and maintaining ecological stability of protected woodlands (127);		
	Research project based in universities and research institutes (181);	3.481.591,64	Sismovalp, Catchrisk
	Innovation and technology transfer, establishment of networks and partnerships between business and/or research institutes(182);	8.343.938,85	Meteorisk, River Basin Agenda, Climchalp
	Information and communication technology (including security and safe transmission measures) (322).	3.757.336,16	Nab, AlpsGPSQuakenet

Figure 44 – Categories of Intervention

4. Administration and Management

4.1. Steps taken by the Managing Authority and the Monitoring Committee to ensure the Quality and Effectiveness of Implementation

4.1.1. Monitoring, Financial Control (day-to-day management checks) and Evaluation Measures, including Data Collection Arrangements

Report about the Activities of the Monitoring Committee

In accordance with article 35 (1) of Regulation (EC) No. 1260/1999 a Monitoring Committee (MC) was set up after the programme had been approved by the European Commission. When nominating the members of the MC the partner states took note of article 8 of the above-mentioned regulation and the respective

³⁷ Only the part that regards the prevention instruments has to be considered.

provisions of the rules of procedure that were set up for the MC. Thus, the national and regional level was represented, including whenever possible representatives of governmental environmental bodies and representatives of non-governmental bodies, in particular relevant transnationally organised partners (such as Arge Alp, Arge Alpen Adria, Cotrao) were invited to take part in an advisory capacity. The MC fulfilled the tasks as set out in article 35 (3) of the same regulation.

Date	Location	Main points of discussion and decision
March 14 th 2002	Salzburg	Constitution of the Monitoring Committee Approval of the Rules of Procedure Approval of the Programme Complement
November 6 th 2002	Lyon	Decision concerning the JTS contract with the consortium AFI/Soges Launch of the tendering procedure for the recruitment of a JTS Director Approval of changes in the Programme Complement regarding the project selection criteria (follow-up of decisions taken at the Vienna SC meeting) Information and Publicity Plan Involvement of the regions in the Programme Midterm evaluation, annual report, monitoring and financial system
February 4 th 2003	Salzburg	Restructuring of JTS (contractual arrangements, location of JTS) Information and Publicity activities Timetable for the next call
September 29 th 2003	Vienna	Restructuring of JTS (staff issues) N+2 situation Draft paper on future of INTERREG Strategic projects Monitoring Accession of Slovenia and change of programme documents Management of expenditures for transnational project management
March 3 rd 2004	Lyon	Exhaustion of ERDF-funds on programme-, priority-, measure-level and n+2 situation Monitoring system Status of project implementation Timetable for next call Information and publicity budget Approval of PC revised due to accession of Slovenia Results of the midterm evaluation Programme administration (JTS work plan, clearer definition of tasks and duties of JTS and NCP) Strategic issues (strategic projects, project fair, conference of the regions Presentation of three running projects by the LP to the MC to give an insight into implementation of projects and their state of the art
October 20 th 2004	Annecy	Situation of approved projects (status, reasons for delay, problems and possible solutions) Programme budget (status, decommitment-risk,

		rebalancing) Programme changes in the light of the midterm evaluation Transnational project costs JTS (work plans 2004 and 2005, work share with MA) Information and Publicity Plan (report about recent and planned activities, updated plan) Cooperation with alpine organisations Presentation of Monitoring System Amendments of rules of procedure Strategic issues (thematic workshops, prospective study) Approval of modified technical assistance budget
March 7 th /8 th 2005	Vaduz	Status of programme and project implementation Approval of revised Programme Complement Next call for project proposals Presentation of Monitoring System Approval of revised technical assistance budget Approval of revised information and publicity plan Prospective study (status report by experts) Update of midterm evaluation (contractors and timetable)
January 18 th 2006	Rome	Status of programme and project implementation Pre-financing of final ERDF-tranche of 5 % JTS work plan 2006 Peak Event of the Alpine Space Programme Stresa 2006 Elaboration of Alpine Space Programme 2007-2013 (work plan, tendering procedures, budget, actors and procedures)
June 27 th 2007	Salzburg	Annual Implementation report 2006 Procedure to be followed in case of de-commitment

Figure 45 - Activities of the Monitoring Committee

Besides the meetings decisions were taken by the MC via written procedure as and when required.

Monitoring System

Originally, it was planned to apply a Monitoring System that had been developed for the Italian Ministry of Economy and Finance and that was used by several INTERREG IIIA programmes with Italian participation and the INTERREG IIIB programmes MEDOCC and CADSES. Since this Monitoring System turned out as not enough flexible in technical standards to be adapted to the specific requirements of the Alpine Space Programme a different system had to be established. Finally, the system developed and used in the INTERREG IIIB programme "Baltic Sea" and the INTERREG IIIC programmes was selected and adapted to the needs of the programme. The system was operational and a smooth and concise monitoring of all projects was ensured by end of 2004, however some delay in the instalment of the system has to be reported.

In 2004 the MA-staff furthermore took part in a training session offered by the EC in Brussels for an electronic data exchange system set up by the EC.

Strategic Projects

In late 2002 the partner states began a discussion on strategic projects for the Alpine Space Programme. The Monitoring Committee decided to set up a work group to deal with this issue. The work group was composed of members of the Steering Committee and experts from national public administrations in order to merge a top-down (expectations of programme partners) and bottom-up approach (identified needs of the programme area and project ideas from experts working in the respective fields).

This discussion process continued in 2003 with two meetings held in Paris on April 24th and in Lyon on July 8th which aimed at reaching a common understanding about strategic projects respectively the development of a strategic approach. The main achievement of the work group in 2003 was the development of a catalogue of strategic issues that should be tackled by respective projects. After a further constructive two days-meeting and intensive e-mail-exchanges two major strands were followed:

- On the one hand, a team of experts coming from several states of the cooperation area was commissioned to elaborate the so-called "Prospective Study". In close and constant coordination with the national co-ordinators the experts carried out an analysis of the economic, social and territorial trends as well as the spatial policies in the cooperation area and the INTERREG IIIB programme itself and came up with respective recommendations. Furthermore, different scenarios were developed for the cooperation area, proposals for improving the cooperation in the period 2007-2013 were set out and ideas for potential strategic projects were elaborated. The findings of the expert team were presented to the interested public via a summarising brochure as well as in full length on the programme's website.
- On the other hand, the programme organised three thematic workshops that should cover the three priorities of the programme and focus on the most important challenges within these three priorities. The workshops aimed at presenting project results and findings in the different fields of interest, bringing together the key actors in these fields and at exchanging ideas for future projects on the respective key topics. The first workshop was dedicated to the topic "Impact of climate change on risk management and sustainable spatial development" and held in Germany (Rosenheim) in November 2004, the second workshop was organised in Austria (Innsbruck) in April 2005 and dealt with the topic "Maintaining the quality of life and competitiveness in the Alpine rural areas and their centres", the third workshop was held in Italy (Venice) in June 2005 and dealt with transport issues. All three workshops proved to be fruitful events and the outcomes were broadly communicated via diverse brochures and press releases.

The projects submitted in the coming calls were the successful outputs of the workshops and the Prospective Study.

Both, the workshops and the "Prospective Study" can be regarded as an essential input for the preparation of the Alpine Space Programme for the period 2007-2013 as they formed the background for the development of the programme strategies and guiding principles.

Based on the experiences gathered during programme implementation and on the ideas emerged in the above-mentioned workshops and discussions and in view of developing the debate on the future of INTERREG IIIB the MC asked the MA to prepare a letter of proposals coming from the MC, dealing both with management issues and strategic topics/next priorities. The respective document of the MA was handed over to Commissioner Michel Barnier at the occasion of his visit to Salzburg in 2003.

Extension call

In June 2006 the Steering Committee asked MA/JTS to prepare the launch of the so called "extension call". The idea to launch such a call was to make use of the ERDF-funds that were/would not requested by closing projects and to allocate these funds to specific additional activities of already approved projects under special conditions: no more than 50.000,-- Euro were foreseen for each applying project and no more than three months prolongation of the total project duration was granted. Furthermore, the current performance of the project (e.g. quality of project management, respect of set time schedule for the implementation of activities, level of budget exhaustion) was considered when evaluating the requests. It was decided to grant additional ERDF-funds to project activities in the following fields:

- a) Sustainability of results, e.g. development of tools/activities to ensure maintenance of project results after closure, transfer of results to public beneficiaries;
- b) Promotion and dissemination of project results among other Alpine Space Programme stakeholders as well as policy makers and decision making bodies;
- c) Networks with other Alpine Space Projects to create synergies for future activities under the ETC Alpine Space Programme.

It was made clear to all applicants that the disbursement of this additional subsidy was subject to the condition that it could be covered by the available ERDF funds the Paying Authority had received from the EC and that it would be paid out after the payment of the final balance by the EC.

The Steering Committee approved 18 requests for project extension, representing a total ERDF amount of € 596.631 (11 projects from priority 1: € 345.381; 3 projects

from priority 2: € 108.500; 4 projects of priority 3: € 142.750). Five projects covered the field a), 11 the field b) and two the field c).

The programme intended to give particular support to projects taking actions for a better visibility throughout the Alpine Space. Therefore, the majority of extension activities were approved in field b). The fact that only two proposals were granted additional funds for the creation of networks and synergies for future activities under the transnational European Territorial Cooperation Programme can be explained with the programme being already quite active in this respect: at the occasion of the Alpine Space Summit in June 2006, thematic working groups were set up, gathering project representatives in a side programme and enabling them to share their experiences, expectations and ideas, seeking for synergy effects for future cooperation in the Alpine Space. These working groups convened again within the framework of a Lead Partner seminar organised by the programme during the second half of 2006.

Financial Control

The partner states agreed that the first level control should be carried out by the identified responsible authorities in each of the member states. Whereas in Italy and Slovenia a centralised first level control system was set up, a decentralised first level control system was established in Austria, France and Germany. The first level control was implemented as outlined in the description of the management and control system.

The second level control was performed in the whole eligible area by a private audit company which was contracted by the MA on the basis of an EU-wide tendering procedure. More details are provided in the final audit report and the winding up declaration.

4.1.2. Summary of any significant Problem encountered in Managing the Assistance and any Measure taken

The EC considered that there were no outstanding issues that would require an annual meeting to take place. As the EC did also not raise any other comments, observations and recommendations/requests for adjustments nothing is to be reported in this respect.

Implementation of projects behind the plan

In 2003 and 2004 the programme partners had to notice that the implementation of the projects was generally lagging behind. Although many projects and a considerable amount of ERDF co-funding had been approved by the Steering Committee, the number of progress reports submitted and the ERDF-amounts requested for were behind expectations.

The respective analysis carried out by JTS and MA revealed that the deviation from the financial plans was caused by several reasons:

- In 2002 and 2003 a number of projects were approved only under some profound conditions. The fulfilment of these conditions led sometimes to a significant delay of the actual start of project implementation.
- It took considerably time for the project participants to negotiate the partnership agreement and finally sign this contract and the subsidy contract (even though the programme provided for guidelines which set out recommendations on clauses for the partnership agreements that the project participants were asked to conclude). This led to a belated start of project implementation and delayed submissions of progress reports.
- Many of the reports submitted by projects approved in the first calls were not prepared properly and had to be revised by the Lead Partners,
- A number of projects were not able to submit the progress reports by the deadlines fixed in the subsidy contracts. This was mainly due to problems as regards the first level control. It took considerable time until the first level control-systems in the single Member States were installed (as it was difficult to foresee systems that meet both, the national requirements of the single Member States and the respective EU-regulations without clear provisions or guidance provided by the EC) so that projects received the necessary certifications of expenditure later than expected.
- Furthermore problems as regards the handling of so called "common transnational activities" occurred and led to a certain delay in the implementation of approved projects (see respective information below).

Based on the analysis and the respective mandate given by the MC several actions were taken in order to avoid any further deviation, especially:

- beginning with 2004 the JTS regularly carried out an in-depth-analysis of the state of the art and problems faced by the approved projects, and reported that to the MC, suggesting concrete action plans.
- The Steering Committee was asked by the MC to carefully chose the conditions of project approval to ensure them to be fulfilled in short time and to avoid any delay in the project implementation.
- The programme bodies MA, JTS and NCP intensified assistance and guidance for approved projects (monitoring of project implementation, Lead Partner-seminars on technical aspects of project implementation, template for the partnership agreement with concrete model clauses instead of the former guidelines).
- The possibility of extraordinary reporting of expenditure was offered to the projects, i.e. to report costs additionally to the agreed reporting deadlines.
- Awareness-raising was done in the sense of making the project participants aware of the importance to report costs according to the

approved project budget plans and projects were closely monitored on that aspect by MA and JTS.

- Intensified efforts were made to establish a well-functioning first level control system and develop guidelines for the implementation the first level control, in order to speed up and harmonise these checks.

Although considerable efforts were made by the programme bodies to avoid the de-commitment of funds and the programme made use of the possibility to base the requests for payment to the EC on self-declarations of the projects (on actually occurred project expenditure) the "n+2"- rule lead to a loss of ERDF-funds amounting to 1.387.997,62 Euro in 2003 and 2.090.520 Euro in 2004.

Joint Technical Secretariat

During programme implementation significant problems were encountered within the management structure of the programme which shall be set out here (see also annual implementation reports 2002 and 2003). After having carried out an EU-wide tendering procedure the Managing Authority – after consultation of the partner states – contracted a German/Italian consortium to assume the tasks of the Joint Technical Secretariat in 2002. Unfortunately the cooperation revealed not to be very satisfactory and fruitful for both sides, MA and consortium, which was partly due to the fact that the respective arrangements and the location of the JTS (Garmisch-Partenkirchen which is quite distant from Salzburg) were not ideal. The MA consulted the Monitoring Committee which dedicated several meetings to an in-depth discussion of the problems and possible solutions concerning the JTS. Finally, the consortium and the MA agreed on a termination of the contract by end of 2003 and on respective measures to ensure a smooth implementation of the JTS tasks in the transition period. The partner states decided on a new location and legal construction of the JTS. The city of Rosenheim was selected among several candidates nominated by the partner states to host the JTS and employ the JTS-staff which was recruited by the MA after having made broad announcements of the vacancies (especially by using the programme's website). This solution proved to be good and sustainable and Rosenheim hosted the JTS until end of 2008.

In three workshops held between October and December 2004 all tasks of MA and JTS were analysed, the work share between both institutions was partly revised and ways were defined to speed up the work flow and make it more efficient. These measures, the new organisation of the JTS and the location closer to the MA proved to be essential for a closer and easier co-ordination between these two bodies.

Common Transnational Activities

In 2003 problems as regards the handling of so called "common transnational activities" occurred. There was a basic difference of interpretation among the partner states concerning the nature of these activities and the procedures to be followed by the projects regarding financial unwinding, that had negative consequences in terms of delays in the implementation of several approved

projects (especially as regards the conclusion of the partnership agreement and the certification of “transnational” expenditure). In a common meeting of MA, national co-ordinators and representatives of the European Commission which was held in Brussels on April 30th 2004 the issue of transnational costs could finally be solved.

As a result the application form was adopted so that project holders had to indicate which activities were planned to be handled as common transnational activity and such activities had to be described in detail. To support the project holders and financial control bodies the MA issued guidelines for the projects with information on what to respect during project application and implementation and adopted the model partnership agreement accordingly. The solution found proved to be effective and no further problems arose on that issue in the following years.

Conference of Regions

When setting up the programme document the partner decided to create a body called “Conference of Regions” (see chapter 7.1.4 of the programme document) which should be a platform for the regions to exchange views and experiences and to foster the partnership between the regions.

On July 7th 2003 the first Conference of the Regions was organised in Lyon and was dedicated to transport issues (see annual implementation report 2003).

It was planned to organise the second Conference of the Regions in 2004 in Italy. Apart from some organisational problems it revealed to be very difficult to motivate politicians to participate in such a conference. For this reason it was decided to organise the initiative in the form of a seminar. This seminar took place on March 23rd 2004 in Pedavena and was dedicated to the topic “Development Prospects for Mountain Areas in the Enlarged European Union”. The results of this event were published in form of a brochure by the Region of Veneto. In the light of the experience made other efforts to organise regular meetings of the “Conference of the Regions” have not been made in the following years.

It can be conceded that the original idea to create a platform for regional exchange has turned out not very successful.

4.1.3. Use made of Technical Assistance

The programme's TA funds were used to ensure a proper programme administration and information & evaluation. The total budget dedicated to this priority amounted to € 7.385.332. Finally, expenses in the amount of € 7.234.128,54 were covered by the TA budget during the programme implementation, what leads to an overall exhaustion of 97,95% in this priority.

The following table provides detailed information on the expenses and the funding of these per cost centres – these were partly managed by the MA ("centralised" – MA, JTS, SLC, I&P, evaluation, workgroups and programme preparation) and partly managed by the member states ("decentralised" – NCP and national I&P).

	<i>total costs</i>	<i>ERDF</i>	<i>national EU</i>	<i>interests</i>	<i>national Non EU</i>
Measure 4.1	5.515.710,10	2.649.456,24	2.152.150,18	681.648,72	32.454,97
<i>Centralised</i>					
DSMA	805.457,07	392.360,79	362.844,08	29.516,72	20.735,48
JTS	2.490.456,27	1.146.549,90	1.142.642,97	189.543,92	11.719,49
2nd level control	116.400,00	58.200,00	51.000,00	7.200,00	0,00
<i>Decentralised</i>					
Austria	297.513,10	148.756,53	93.469,65	55.286,92	0,00
France	426.813,98	213.406,99	92.019,81	121.387,18	0,00
Germany	266.377,46	133.188,72	82.120,88	51.067,86	0,00
Italy	1.097.156,89	548.578,44	324.747,28	223.831,17	0,00
Slovenia	15.535,33	8.414,87	3.305,53	3.814,94	0,00
Measure 4.2	1.726.180,15	787.932,14	720.098,94	215.346,97	2.802,11
<i>Centralised</i>					
I&P	810.074,31	401.340,25	334.430,86	71.501,10	2.802,11
Evaluation	143.848,80	71.924,40	71.924,40	0,00	0,00
Workgroups	145.736,34	72.868,17	72.868,17	0,00	0,00
Preparation 2007+	143.845,87	0,00	0,00	143.845,87	0,00
<i>Decentralised</i>					
Austria	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00
France	79.137,48	39.568,73	39.568,75	0,00	0,00
Germany	99.315,90	49.657,94	49.657,96	0,00	0,00
Italy	293.133,22	146.566,60	146.566,62	0,00	0,00
Slovenia	11.088,23	6.006,05	5.082,18	0,00	0,00
Total	7.241.890,25	3.437.388,37	2.872.249,12	896.995,68	35.257,08

Figure 46 - Technical Assistance: expenses 2002-2008

As already highlighted in chapter 3.3 the interests earned by the programme were allocated to this priority and used as outlined above.

4.1.4. *Measures taken to ensure Publicity of the Assistance towards potential Beneficiaries and the general Public (article 46), particularly with regard to the Communication Action Plan set out in the Programme Complement (point 3.1.1. in annex to Regulation 1159/2000).*

The Information and Publicity plan of the INTERREG IIIB Alpine Space Programme was set up and approved by the Steering Committee in 2002. Between

2000 and 2004, the I&P activities were mainly carried out on national level and organised by the relevant partner state (e.g. infodays or press releases targeted towards regional / national audience).

Events

Transnational LP and national PP seminars

Since 2003 seven transnational Lead Partner seminars were held in the premises of the MA in Salzburg (A) and the JTS in Rosenheim (D) to provide technical information to project partnerships, e.g. on reporting procedures. In these seminars, the programme was represented by the MA, the NCP network and the JTS.

The meetings facilitated networking among actors of MA, JTS, NCP and LP, but also among LP of various projects. In the final phase of the programme, these events became more and more helpful to exchange on project results and on the preparation of the ETC Alpine Space Programme 2007-2013.

In addition to the transnational Lead Partner seminars, the National Contact Points organised more than 15 project partner seminars in the different partner states, with a main focus on the first level control.

General information events and technical applicants seminars

In addition to the technical seminars for approved LP and PP, approximately 30 information events took place, both on transnational and national level. According to requirements and situation, these seminars provided either general programme information, technical details on the application procedure or support in partner search.

Thematic Workshops

In 2004 and 2005 the programme scheduled a series of thematic workshops that should cover the three priorities of the programme. The workshops laid down a ground of analysis and confrontation of achieved as well as envisaged project results, fostered thematic networks, stimulated the matching of national and international development strategies, promoted the dissemination of good practices and project results among policy-makers and identified future areas for action. The first workshop that was dedicated to the topic "Impact of climate change on risk management and sustainable spatial development" was held on November 25th 2004 in Rosenheim and gathered approximately 80 participants. The proceedings of the conference were gathered in a brochure in English and German language published by the German programme bodies.

"Maintaining quality of life and economic competitiveness in the rural Alpine Areas and their centres" was the title of the second workshop held in Innsbruck, Austria on April 7th and 8th 2005. This event was attended by approximately 130

participants. The proceedings of the conference were published in an English brochure published by the Austrian programme bodies.

The last workshop of this thematic series “Transports in the Alpine Space Area” was held in Venice, Italy, on April 16th and 17th 2005 and was attended by 140 participants.

Mid term event - “Alpine Space Summit”

The transnational mid term event, the “Alpine Space Summit” in Stresa (I) on June 19th and 20th 2006 provided insight into the benefits of transnational cooperation in the Alps, through presentations, discussions and a platform of projects. The event also opened the public discussion on the next generation of this programme. Project developers were offered the opportunity to get acquainted with the results of other projects, to seek for synergies and even to prepare the ground for new projects in the next programming period.

Approximately 400 project partners of the Alpine Space Programme as well as representatives of other INTERREG programmes and the European Commission, politicians, stakeholders and interested people from various working fields met to exchange experience, knowledge and ideas. The programme offered was threefold: the plenary sessions were dedicated to the programme achievements and results assessment, as well as to the perspectives for the future and the forthcoming transnational cooperation. These sessions were combined with a “side programme” organised by the project partners themselves. During the whole Alpine Space Summit, a “stand exhibition” showed the projects’ activities and results. Since each of the 57 projects (approved at this stage) had its own stand to display its material and to present specific features, the participants were given the chance to experience the projects in different ways.

The major findings of the conference were published in the “Alpine Space Summit proceedings”. This brochure was published in autumn 2006 and dispersed to the conference participants. Moreover, several print and promotion materials were produced to be presented and/or disseminated during the event, such as conference portfolios or 57 project posters.

“National Summits”

To guarantee the continuity of exchanges at different occasions like the Alpine Space Summit and the thematic workshops and in order to reach the political level on national and regional level as well as potentially interested institutions, “National Summits” or “Final Events” (according to point of time) - similar to the Alpine Space Summit - were organised in the Member States. The events demonstrated concrete project results as the added value of the past cooperation and were held in most of the participating countries (A, D, F, I, SI).

Final event - “Alpine Space Heading for Excellence”

On June 28th and 29th 2007, about 400 participants - politicians, current and potential new project partners, representatives of European and Alpine

organisations and institutions, representatives of local, regional, national and European level – met for a two-days conference in St. Johann im Pongau (A). The event combined the “finale” of the INTERREG IIIB Alpine Space Programme with the ceremonial launch of the ETC Alpine Space Programme 2007-2013.

Through a project fair – gathering results of 30 projects – and “project visits” to four Alpine Space projects (respectively relevant project activities in the area of St. Johann), the event offered an insight in concrete project results and the possibility to experience these results in practice.

The proceedings of the event were published and sent to the participants in a digital “Eventletter” (inaugurating the layout of the new programme newsletter).

Publications

In addition to the publications already mentioned above (proceedings of the programme events), the following print and/or electronic materials were produced:

Image brochure

In 2004 the first image brochure with a general programme presentation in English language (16 pages) was published. The brochure was print in a run of 1.800 copies.

Applicants’ leaflet

An applicants’ leaflet with guidelines on the application procedure was published in 2004, too. It was produced in all Alpine languages and in English, in a total print run of 7.200 copies (1.800 in each language).

Project booklet

In 2006 a compilation of all approved projects was published. The “project booklet of the Alpine Space Programme” was presented at the Alpine Space Summit in June 2006 and was composed of short and precise information of all approved projects. The brochure was printed in all Alpine languages and in English, in a print run of 2.500 copies. Due to the great demand a reprint of another 2.500 copies was arranged in late 2006.

Summary Prospective Study

As the Prospective Study was a useful instrument for the programme to discuss the preparation work for the next programme, a brochure was produced, that showed the main results of this study. It distributed at the occasion of the Alpine Space Summit. A first print run of 500 copies was printed in early 2006. Due to the great demand, e.g. at the occasion of external events, a reprint of another 600 pieces was arranged in late 2006.

"Facts and figures"

The flyer "Facts and figures" including short statistical information on the implementation of the INTERREG IIIB programme and its projects was produced and disseminated at the occasion of the St. Johann final event and several external and project events. In total 2.450 copies were printed in English language.

"Bridging potentials"

The last programme publication "Bridging Potentials..." serves as a bridge between the two programming periods. It presents the gripping results of the INTERREG IIIB Alpine Space projects with regard to the upcoming challenges of the ETC programme. The brochure is available in all Alpine and the English language and was printed in a total run of 8.000 copies. A thematic presentation of the results was considered as clearer and as more coherent than the usual classification per priority. Four categories were determined: Nature, Competitiveness, Quality of life and Mobility. An additional part on programme management was added to present and promote the work accomplished during the INTERREG IIIB period.

Transnational Alpine Space Newsletter

Since 2003 14 issues of the electronic transnational programme newsletter were sent out. The newsletter included announcements, news and reports on programme and project level and was sent to all programme bodies, project lead partners, Alpine institutions, other INTERREG programmes, as well as to "external" subscribed readers (about 400 subscriptions).

National publications

In addition to the transnational newsletter, national "infoletters", "newsletters" or other direct mailings were edited and disseminated by the Austrian, German, French, Italian, Slovene and Swiss NCP.

Moreover, national flyers and result publications were published to promote the programme and its project results.

The most important publications were:

- a publication on natural risks and management of resources in the Alpine Space, illustrated with project results and experiences in April 2006 by the Bavarian State Ministry for Environment, Health and Consumer Protection,
- the "magazine dreiB" (threeB) published by the Austrian Federal Chancellery with assistance of the NCP, presenting stories on transnational cooperation projects in INTERREG IIIB and being available in English and German language,
- a brochure issued by the region Rhône-Alpes presenting the 39 projects in which French partners were involved (the presentations were elaborated on the basis of interviews with project partners),
- various publications of the participating Italian regions (e.g. Lombardia, Piemonte) including project presentations of different INTERREG programmes (e.g. Alpine Space together with CADSES, MEDOCC and INTERREG IIIC).

Website

In April 2002 the programme's website www.alpinespace.org was launched. The site was structured in a way as to give a general overview on the programme contents, to provide for a continuous updating of specific information and to supply with important new tools for improving the application/implementation process and the visibility of funded projects.

Since the first launch in 2002, the website was constantly updated. In 2004 the website was revised: the layout was adapted, the navigation structure was changed, new sections were added. From 2006 on the project result section including the most important project publications (studies, factsheets, guidelines, brochures etc.) was set up.

The following contents were launched continuously between 2002 and 2006:

- general information on the Community Initiative INTERREG and the programme,
- download section containing programme documents, programme studies and analysis, EU regulations, publications, presentations of programme events etc.,
- applicants' pack (forms, guidelines and models),
- event calendar,
- news and newsletter,
- links and contact database (list of project and programme involved bodies),
- project section: detailed information on projects (e.g. partnership, budget, objectives, results and outputs),
- frequently asked questions and glossary,
- press releases,
- restricted area for the programme bodies,
- discussion forum,
- upload tool for the applications procedure,
- national sections (info on national events, national newsletters etc.).

As already described above, in 2009 the general programme descriptions and technical information were shortened and/or linked with relevant sections on the website of the ETC Alpine Space Programme www.alpine-space.eu, while the result section was enlarged.

Promotion material

In order to promote the programme at diverse occasions, various promotion materials and gadgets with the programme corporate identity (CI) were produced in 2005:

- banners to be used by JTS; NCP and MA: 10 pieces,
- posters with the programme CI and a slogan: 250 pieces,
- pens: 2000 pieces,

- tissue bags: 2000 pieces,
- blocknotes: 2000 pieces,
- stickers with the “combined” Alpine Space/EU logo: 2000 pieces,
- visit cards (produced in 2005 and on demand).

Participation and promotion in external events

Starting from 2004 on, the staff of the JTS, MA and/or NCP actively promoted the Alpine Space Programme at the occasion of external events. Stand exhibitions were arranged, presentations in the plenary sessions were given, workshops were facilitated (e.g. joint workshops with Alpine Space projects).

The main events were (sorted by date):

- “The Alps - the Next Generation”, September 22nd -25th 2004 in Kranjska Gora (SI)
- Pro Monte conference “Challenges, Necessities and Opportunities for Territorial Cooperation in the Alps”, February 17th 2006 in Belluno (I).
- MONTESPON seminar “Transnational Exchange and Networking on Mountain Topics”, workshops moderation, September 5th and 6th 2006 in Lucerne (CH).
- “ForumAlpinum” (organised by ISCAR), April 18th - 21st 2007 in Engelberg (CH)
- “3rd Global Change Research Networking Meeting for European Mountains”, October 18th and 19th 2007 in Innsbruck (A)
- “AlpWeek” (organised by the Alliance in the Alps, ALPARC, CAA, CIPRA and ISCAR) June 11th-14th 2008 in L’Argentière-La-Bessée (F)

For these events tailored thematic flyers and posters (e.g. promoting project results in specific thematic area) were produced.

In addition the JTS sent information material to be disseminated at the occasion of external events not attended by the JTS (e.g. several CIPRA, ALPARC, COST events or scientific workshops).

Media appearance

Several articles about the Alpine Space Programme promoted the programme in printed media from local to European level. Press releases were published mainly on regional level at the occasion of programme events such as the thematic workshops, the summit and the final event.

In addition, project participants and the JTS contributed to various articles in scientific or national magazines and to best-practise guidelines (e.g. project results).

Liaison with other INTERREG programmes

Since July 2004 the JTS and MA took part in various Interact-seminar. The occasions were used to set up contacts with MA and JTS of other programmes and

to exchange experiences and best practises in various fields of programme and project management.

Networking with Alpine organisations

In May 2004 a first meeting between MA, JTS and the Alpine Convention (represented by the Permanent Secretariat) took place aiming to investigate chances of joint cooperation. From then onward, several meetings were arranged, and JTS and MA were in regular contact with the Alpine Convention Permanent Secretariat. The Alpine Convention was granted an observer status in the Alpine Space Monitoring Committee. In exchange the programme was granted observer status in the Alpine Convention's Permanent Committee.

The Alpine Convention was invited to produce a contribution with its visions on sustainable territorial development of the Alps to the "Prospective Study". This thematic cooperation finally resulted in various contributions of the Alpine Convention during the drafting process of the Alpine Space Programme 2007-2013.

The Alpine Convention also actively took part in three thematic workshops, in the summit and the final event organised by the Alpine Space Programme.

Contacts were also intensified with the Alpine organisation CIPRA International (Commission International pour la Protection des Alpes). Various events gave the possibility to exchange and cooperate.

4.2. Summary of the Results of the main Evaluations carried out on the Programme

4.2.1. Evaluations and studies conducted for the programme

According to the regulations, the IIIB programme has been subdued to three evaluation exercises, all implemented by experts independent from the programme partners:

- Ex-ante Evaluation (EaE),
- mid-term evaluation (MTE),
- Up-date of the mid-term evaluation (Update).

In addition to these evaluations the so-called "Prospective Study" (in the following "ASPS") was conducted by a transnational expert group³⁸ between December 2004

³⁸ The Expert Group drafting the Prospective Study was composed of:

- Prof. Dr. Thomas Bausch, Alpenforschungsinstitut GmbH, Garmisch-Partenkirchen (DE)
- Mr. Thomas Dax, Bundesanstalt für Bergbauernfragen, Wien (AT)
- Prof. Dr. Umberto Janin Rivolin, Politecnico di Torino (IT)
- Mr. François Parvex, SEREC, Sierre (CH)

and November 2005. Although the study's objectives were quite different from the standardised evaluation it can be seen as a similar conceptual input into the IIIB programme and even more so for the successor programme and is therefore included in this chapter's considerations.

As additional sources for the following statements the programme document for the ETC programme and the Ex-ante-Evaluation of this ETC programme³⁹ were used since in many respects these two documents mark not only the beginning of the new Alpine Space Programme but at the same time reflect the progress made and the learning process initiated and pursued in the IIIB programme.

4.2.2. Functions exerted by the Evaluations and Study carried out

The three evaluations - ex-ante, mid-term and up-date of mid-term - were commissioned pursuant to Council Regulation No. 1260/1999. Due to the lack of experience with programming and implementation of transnational programmes - not only in the Alpine Space - the evaluations were conceptualised not merely as controlling and assessment tool but much rather as a general conceptual input into the process of programme management as a whole.

During the elaboration period of the evaluations the evaluation teams were accepted as observers at the meetings of the programme bodies. Since the monitoring of the programme and other day-to-day implementation tasks were satisfactorily fulfilled by the MA and the JTS the findings, the criticisms and all inputs from the evaluations in general were treated on a strategic rather than on an operational level. The discussions and comments during meetings were just as important and influential as the written reports and notes. This is particularly true for the ex-ante evaluator, which - as often - was fully integrated into the programming process. As a matter of fact it was finalised before the final draft of the programme was submitted to the Commission in December 2001.

- Univ.Dipl.Ing. Sergeja Praper, Urban Planning Institute of the Republic of Slovenia, Ljubljana (SI)

- Prof. Martin Vanier, Université Joseph Fourier, Grenoble (FR)

³⁹ elaborated by Manuela Giacobbi.

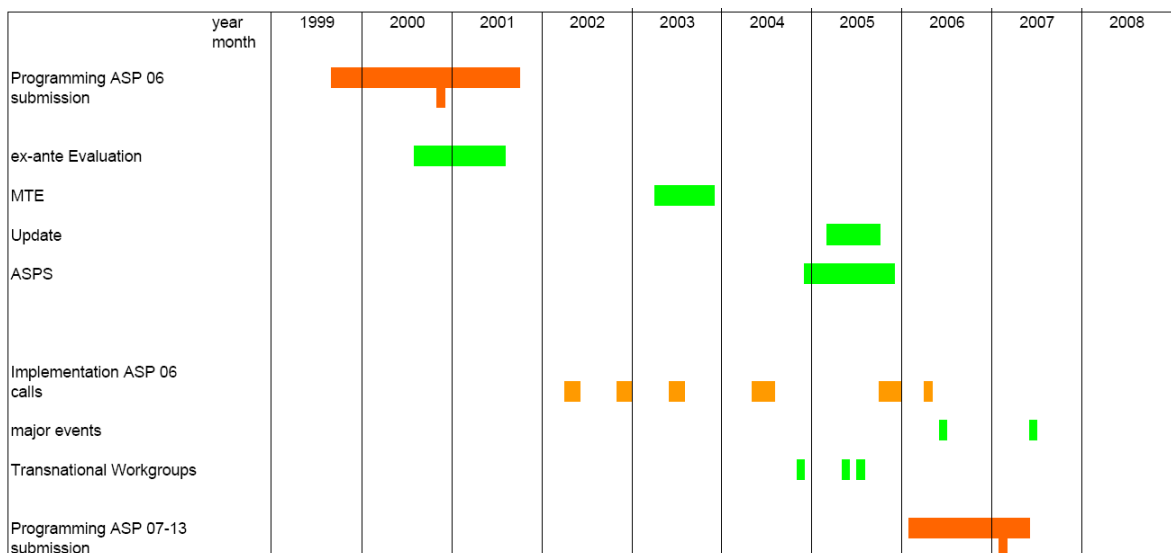


Figure 47 - Temporal embedding of evaluations and studies in the ASP

In the course of the intensive discussions which started during the programming phase and had not led to a satisfactory result in 2004 - more than half way through the IIIB programme - a need was felt by many programme partners:

- a) to underlay the discussion on programme strategy with some more conceptual rigour and a systematic baseline information and
- b) to turn the existing consensual intentions of the programme partners into practical proposals for further implementation.

The results of the prospective study were too comprehensive and some of it also too academic to be adequately received by the programme partners and to be integrated into the implementation of the IIIB programme. Much of it went into the programming process for the ETC programme and the prospective study still serves today as one reference when discussing strategic issues in the programming period 2007-2013.

Summarising one may say that the programme management made extensive and successful use of external expertise to strengthen and to fertilise the strategic management of the programme. The principles of transparency and open discussion on the one hand but also of consensus among the programme partners and pragmatic orientations towards implementation of all programme measures have guided the remit of the external expertise and the dealing with its result within the programme and its management structures.

The rigid time structure given by the regulations for evaluations did not support this approach but neither inhibit it completely. The same can be said about the function of Commission's working paper no. 8 which was the authoritative guide for the elaboration of the compulsory evaluations but little adapted/applicable to the issues of transnational programmes. The present structural funds regulations leave much more space for evaluation processes as the one adopted by the IIIB programme.

4.2.3. Main Findings of the Evaluations and Studies

The MTE and its update

The MTE started off with the tasks stipulated by working paper No 8a of the EC but was widened to reflect on a number of issues that were not satisfactorily solved by the programme document (and the Programme Complement). Among these issues were:

- a positioning of the IIIB programme within the then prevailing European spatial development policy,
- a preliminary stock-taking of (other) transnational cooperations in the Alpine Space.

Besides reporting on the compulsory points of a mid-term evaluation concerning the actualising of the SWOT-Analysis, the internal and external coherence of the programme, the suitability of the indicators and the quantification of objectives, the MTE reflected also on:

- the appropriateness of the implementing structures,
- the experiences of project applicants,
- the current stage of implementation in terms of funding and selected aspects of implementation.

The recommendations derived from the monitoring data available, the analysis of programme documents and from interviews with programme partners and project partners were divided into short-term recommendations which could be implemented in the remaining IIIB programme period and long-term recommendations, which were only seen to become fruitful during programming of the ETC programme. A more detailed account of the recommendations is given in the following where the further handling of each of these recommendations is described.

The Prospective Study

The list of questions which the partner states expected the study to answer shows the huge scope of the study and gives a first clue about its relative success:

- What are the key transnational trends and issues at stake in the Alpine Space?
- Who are the key players in this respect and what is their role in the institutional framework?
- What is the degree of knowledge of these issues by key players in the field (local, regional and national authorities, EU, relevant sector administrations, civil society, private sector)?
- What are their policy tools/instruments?
- What is the degree of coverage of these issues by existing planning documents and strategies developed by the above key players?
- To what extent have these issues been appropriately addressed to date by various forms of cooperation (cross-border and transnational projects and programmes)?

- How do the positioning and thematic overlaps of different INTERREG areas affect the process? If cooperation schemes failed to tackle these issues satisfactorily, by what factors can this be explained?
- What related strategic objectives should be included in a future ETC programme, taking into account the necessity to accommodate the EU Lisbon and Gothenburg agendas?
- Which cross-border and transnational projects, on which part of the Alpine Space (cities, sub-areas) or possibly outside the area are the most likely to contribute to these strategic objectives?
- Which partners (institutional key-actors, NGOs) should primarily be addressed by future cooperating programmes?
- Which projects could be launched, at least as preliminary study projects in the framework of the IIIB programme?
- Which possible big projects as mentioned in the draft for the future structural funds regulations are expected which could fit into a future programme?
- Which future cooperation networks according to the future structural funds regulations are expected to suit to a future programme?
- What could be the social, economic and environmental impacts of such projects?
- What related baseline information, indicators and targets can be used to monitor the achievements of a future alpine space territorial cooperation programme?

The findings of the prospective study have been very widespread but may be summarized in the following three groups:

a) Proposals of possible shared scenarios for the Alpine territory: as the answer to an apparently simple question: "Given the current activities of the INTERREG IIIB Alpine Space Programme on the one hand and the substantive key issues arising from main territorial trends and policies in the Alpine area on the other, what strategic vision of the area should be agreed in order to guide the priorities of a future programme?" The six scenarios⁴⁰ presented were not conceived to sum up and to rank all possible futures of the Alpine territory, but rather to show that the analyses carried out by the study can offer equally good argumentations to support different spatial orientations, to each responding respective development strategies. It was pointed out that "the only serious way to build a strategic scenario for the Alpine Space transnational spatial development (i.e. capable to guide the actors' intentions) is to frame an appropriate public discussion on the

⁴⁰ namely:

- a) Alpine Core and the MEGAs
- b) Regional Diversity: Puzzle and Coopetition
- c) North-South Mediation
- d) Networks, Corridors, Connecting elements
- e) Openness and Enlargement
- f) Positioning: We and the Others

proposed visions among the real institutional and socioeconomic decision-makers at stake. Indeed, any attempt of imposing a desirable scenario by authoritative or scientific legitimation would easily weaken the guiding capacity of such vision, for the simple reason that nobody is motivated to share a scenario which he did not contribute to set up."⁴¹

b) Proposals for improving cooperation after 2006: These covered the contents of cooperation, the area of cooperation, the design of strategies and the decision-making process. In terms of content the study "offers a vast array of themes and of methodological suggestions which, according to an hopefully agreed development scenario, decision-makers may decide to combine and diversify in view of the preparation of next Alpine Space territorial cooperation programme."⁴² Concerning the decision-making process the Prospective Study strongly advocates a stronger integration of the local level and more influence on the programme design and implementation for the regions. It suggests to have the future programme managed by an EGTC to be founded by the programme partners.

c) Ideas for potential strategic projects: Two main frames of reference were used in the elaboration of ideas for strategic projects, namely project ideas at programme level were proposed in view of the preparation of the ETC-programme and project ideas connected with strategic key issues were structured around key words pertaining to topics proposed by the European Commission, as well as to substantive findings of the Prospective Study.

4.2.4 Impacts and influences observed

Leaving aside the short-term issues the observations and recommendations that were made by the evaluations and studies can be grouped into six (more or less distinct) areas:

- a) Quality of the logical framework of the programme,
- b) Programme strategy,
- c) Selection(process) of projects,
- d) Programme management structures,
- e) Financial management,
- f) Linkages between programme and projects.

⁴¹ Prospective Study, p. 101 f.

⁴² Prospective Study, p. 105 and 107 ff.

a) Quality of the logical framework of the programme

Issue: Internal coherence of CIP

MTE recommendation/observation:

According to the study a more visionary and positively formulated objectives would be appropriate. Priorities and their objectives should be deduced primarily from SWOT-analyses and not from INTERREG guidelines or ESDP in order to have more relevance for the cooperation area. A more logical and structured hierarchy and in some parts a clearer concretisation of objectives, priorities and measures would be necessary to facilitate conceptualising strategic fields.

Programme reaction:

The partner states doubted whether reformulations in the programme could lead to better/strategic projects and insisted that the quality level of the programme was sufficient and amendments are not needed.

MTE-Update comments:

The evaluation conceded the quality level but the usefulness and appropriateness of improvement was held up. It called for more emphasis to be given to the internal coherence and the strategic logic of the next programme.

Prospective study opinion/recommendation:

The study developed a completely different logic of a programme based on substantive key issues, procedural key issues and key actors.

Conclusion:

The internal coherence has been considerably improved (as far as possible) during the implementation phase without requiring formal changes of the programme. The ETC programme has successfully taken into account the higher standard for a logical framework.

Issue: External coherence of CIP

MTE recommendation/observation:

The study stated that there was a good coherence with the INTERREG IIIB guidelines and the ESDP. More emphasis on and more influence from the female perspectives on Alpine problems was suggested.

Programme reaction:

The programme partners underlined that equal opportunities and environment were well considered (guiding principles) and foreseen as obligatory criteria at the programme level, this was not considered a relevant question particularly not for a programme document amendment.

MTE-Update comments:

The study acknowledged that it was too late for improvements concerning horizontal themes. In future, the relation between gender mainstreaming and spatial development should be discussed in more depth to enhance awareness of gender issues.

Prospective study opinion/recommendation:

The study does not reflect on this issue.

Conclusion:

The provisions for horizontal themes including gender issues have been considered sufficiently throughout the whole implementation process.

Issue: Indicators

MTE recommendation/observation:

The indicator system of the programme was regarded as being unsatisfactory, most indicators were not quantified and the logic of the indicators between the different levels was unclear. According to the study these deficits reflected the shortcomings of the internal coherence of the programme.

Programme reaction:

At that stage of programme implementation a change of the indicator system was not regarded useful despite the difficulties that had occurred in establishing it. The programme partners underlined that the EC did not consider a compulsory revision. However, the next programme should put more emphasis on the indicators. Especially it should tackle the question of aggregation of effects from the project to the programme level.

MTE-Update comments:

Some efforts could be made to receive better information on the achievements even in the running programme in order to enable a more concrete assessment of the programme impacts.

Prospective study opinion/recommendation:

The study does not reflect on this issue.

Conclusion:

The indicator system was not changed due to the late stage of advancement of the programme. However, suggestions for improvement of the indicator system have been taken on board for the ETC-programme.

b) Programme Strategy

Issue: SWOT Analysis

MTE recommendation/observation:

The general conditions remained unchanged. A tendency that certain problems are intensifying was recognisable.

Programme reaction:

Due to the unchanged general conditions the partner states saw no need for amendments in the programme document.

MTE-Update comments:

The study did not take up this issue.

Prospective study opinion/recommendation:

The study delivered a first analysis of socio-economic and territorial trends but did not relate it to the programme's (or any) SWOT-analysis.

Conclusion:

The analyses of the prospective study have to a large extent been integrated in the drafting of the respective chapter of the ETC programme document which was set up with support of experts.

Issue: Networking with Alpine initiatives

MTE recommendation/observation:

Cooperation between Alpine Space and Alpine Convention as well as other Alpine initiatives should be intensified according to the study. Better integration of the experiences of other INTERREG IIIB programmes in the CIP would be appreciated.

Programme reaction:

The partner states underlined that the JTS had built up relations with Alpine organisations and other programmes and that MA/PA/JTS/NCP would stay in contact with bodies of other programmes to gain synergies.

MTE-Update comments

The study stated that the Alpine Convention participated in the Monitoring Committee meetings as observer; contacts to other IIIB programmes, however, should be intensified.

Prospective study opinion/recommendation:

Alpine Convention and CIPRA are set out as key actors in the cooperation area.

Conclusion:

The programme integrated the Alpine Convention as observer in the Monitoring Committee, as well as in relevant projects. Networking with other INTERREG/ETC programmes has been intensified and basic initiatives and support from Interact were provided and used by the programme.

Issue: Spatial visions

MTE recommendation/observation:

The study suggested to develop spatial visions in order to jointly define problems, challenges and opportunities, and to define a common mission of the Alpine space. Defining strategic projects was regarded promising and it was set out that experts might help to structure the discussion process.

Programme reaction:

At a workshop held in 2004 dedicated to the topic of strategic projects the partner states developed respective approaches and the terms of reference for the prospective study took account of the aspect of spatial visions.

MTE-Update comments:

On the basis of the results of the prospective study and the MTE this task should be deepened in the programming of the next programme.

Prospective study opinion/recommendation:

One main result of the prospective study was the proposal of “possible shared scenarios of the Alpine territory” (as briefly described above).

Conclusion:

The considerations of the prospective study concerning the scenarios/visions were little appreciated by the programme partners. They rather convinced them that a vision is not what the Alpine Space or the new programme needed urgently.

c) Selection (process) of projects

Issue: Project selection criteria

MTE recommendation/observation:

The study stated that the meaning of a distinction between the more technical aspects of transnationality and a qualitative approach was questionable. "Spatial development" and "innovative design" should be better defined. Risks of a too big number of criteria and their necessity at the same time were mentioned. According to the study the criterion “equal opportunities” should be enhanced strategically by stating it also as priority criterion.

Programme reaction:

The partner states pointed out that the JTS had improved the evaluation system for the projects in a step-by step process; the considerations on “equal opportunities” within the evaluation of projects were regarded adequate.

MTE-Update comments:

The study recommended to modify the project selection in the future programme.

Prospective study opinion/recommendation:

The study proposes an analysis grid for projects, building on the response of the projects to key issues.

Conclusion:

Project selection was based on a two-step-approach for the last two calls. This new selection process is prominently signposted in the new programme.

Issue: Quality of project evaluation

MTE recommendation/observation:

The study stated that sufficient expert knowledge is lacking to assess the relevant impacts of the projects.

Programme reaction:

The partner states set out that the JTS had improved the evaluation system for the projects in a step-by step process and set up and maintained a list of external experts to assist in technical project evaluation when necessary.

MTE-Update comments:

More experience by the JTS and the case by case consultation of experts resolved the issue.

Prospective study opinion/recommendation:

No reference to this issue is made in the study.

Conclusion:

The aspect was accordingly resolved during programme implementation.

Issue: Strategic projects

MTE recommendation/observation:

The study set out that the ongoing discussion about strategic projects was necessary, but there might be not enough time left to prepare them within the remaining implementation period. External experts and Alpine institutions could provide support to reach the long-term goal of a transnational spatial vision.

Programme reaction:

The partner states took the observations in the study on board. The organisation of three transnational workshops to tackle this issue was decided and later on the remit for the prospective study was redirected/widened to the proposal of “immediate strategic projects”.

MTE-Update comments:

The three transnational workshops were too large as a platform to discuss the task of strategic projects. The expert group of the prospective study was showing one productive way to deal with the issue of strategic projects in the future.

Prospective study opinion/recommendation:

In June 2005 the authors of the study presented a “first methodological framework to define strategic projects” and proposed six interim strategic projects of which only those “launching surveys and preparing framework projects within a specific field of high Alpine relevance” seemed possible before the termination of the IIIB programme.

Conclusion:

The discussion about strategic projects was brought to a productive (preliminary) end with the launching of the new programme which also contains a paragraph on strategic projects, which is based on the experience with the last call of the IIIB programme. In this last call some of the ideas of the prospective study were taken up although the selected projects did not directly refer to the prospective study proposals.

d) Programme Management Structures

Issue: Conference of the Regions

MTE recommendation/observation:

The Conference of the Regions should get a defined role and function in the programme as it could importantly raise awareness and the political commitment of the region.

Programme reaction:

A more precise formulation of the role of the conference should give an opportunity to involve other existing organisations, initiatives and political actors.

MTE-Update comments:

The role of the Conference had been enhanced but was still unclear. "Formal advice for MC" seemed to be not a redeemable formulation and should be cancelled in favour of networking and synergy building tasks.

Prospective study opinion/recommendation:

No reference to this issue is made in the study.

Conclusion:

The Conference of Regions could not live up to the expectations during implementation. Except for France, where the political level showed interest it could not attract relevant attention. A relevant role in programming or programme implementation could not be attained. For this reason it is no longer mentioned in the ETC programme.

Issue: Programme Bodies

MTE recommendation/observation:

Clarification of functions and tasks of the MA in relation to JTS and SC in relation to MC was regarded necessary by the study and it was stated that the role of the NCP should be enhanced in the project selection process.

Programme reaction:

The partner states highlighted that the description of the tasks was based on EU regulations, thus no overlapping was recognisable but a clarification of the roles should optimise processes. The task of approval of TA budget should be shifted from SC to MC (following an EC-suggestion). The partners decided to rework chapter 7 1.2 and 7.1.3 of the programme accordingly.

MTE-Update comments:

The study underlined that roles and functions of programme bodies were adapted in a meaningful way and were somewhat clarified in the programme. Functions of the National Coordinators (NC) were added in the document, but the description of role, position and tasks was not regarded clear enough to the evaluators. For future programmes, a clearer programme body structure was suggested.

Prospective study opinion/recommendation:

No reference to this issue is made in the study.

Conclusion:

The division of functions and tasks between the different management bodies has beyond the changed description in the CIP improved a lot during the implementation. In the new programme the MC and the SC functions were merged into a Programme Committee, following the MTE's proposal (see below).

Issue: MS and SC

MTE recommendation/observation:

The study said that a clear division of tasks between SC and MC existed, but functions were often fulfilled by the same persons.

Programme reaction:

The respective partner states were responsible for nominating members of SC and MC. However, partner states did not change their nominations for the committees in the light of the evaluation.

MTE-Update comments:

The study kept up the comment on that issue.

Prospective study opinion/recommendation:

No reference to this issue is made.

Conclusion:

The new programme management structure foresees only one institution to fulfil the tasks formerly assigned to SC and MC thus solving the issue of double (multiple) functions of individuals.

e) Financial Management

Issue: Financial unwinding

MTE recommendation/observation:

The study said that priority 2, especially 2.1 needed more effort and ideas to fully exploit the funds and to avoid shifting of funds.

Programme reaction:

The problem beside this, which was agreed to be tackled with greater efforts, was seen in the uneven commitment in the use of programme funds (between priorities and measures and participants of partner states). The partners decided to change chapter 5 of the CIP and the MA elaborated a new financial table.

MTE-Update comments:

The study stated that funds had been allocated in an adapted way as the financial status of actual programme implementation showed.

Prospective study opinion/recommendation:

This was not a theme for the prospective study.

Conclusion:

The budget shift from measure 2.1 mainly to priority 1 was applied early enough to guarantee a full absorption of available funds.

Issue: Absorption of funds

MTE recommendation/observation:

According to the study there was a lack of projects under priority 2 (transport) and a restricted call was recommended.

Programme reaction:

The partners set out that after the Conference of Regions in Lyon a number of projects had been submitted under priority 2. A workshop about the transport issue might lead to further new project ideas in this field. Emphasis on the funding possibilities in priority 2 was still needed, but the absorption of funds was regarded much better than in 2003. A restricted call was envisaged by the programme partners.

MTE-Update comments:

Funds were adapted and modified in the right way so that their exhaustion was actually satisfying. The intention to organise a special restricted last call allowed the evaluators to expect the full absorption of funds till the end of programme period. The workshop on transport in Venice was not regarded fully satisfying and there were real doubts about getting project ideas accepted.

Prospective study opinion/recommendation:

This was not a theme for the prospective study.

Conclusion:

The efforts of the programme lead to good project proposals and in the end the programme had no problem with the absorption of funds in any of the three priorities.

Issue: Pre-financing of project development

MTE recommendation/observation:

Possibilities for pre-financing project development works for NGO or small companies, which do not have the resources and capacities to elaborate a high quality proposal for a project, should be improved according to the study.

Programme reaction:

A two-step application process was envisaged for the next programming period. This procedure should be followed in the last (restricted) call.

MTE-Update comments:

The study did not comment on that.

Prospective study opinion/recommendation:

Financial issues were not touched by the prospective study.

Conclusion:

The 2-step-approach is now standard in the new programme after successful testing in the last call of the IIIB programme.

Issue: programme budget

MTE recommendation/observation:

All national co-funding means should be joined in one common pot in order to reduce the influence of national interests and continuous peering on national absorption, and to support transnationality as a key factor of INTERREG IIIB according to the evaluators.

Programme reaction:

The MA strongly supported this idea and the states envisaged to have a common funding pot to be foreseen in the next programme.

MTE-Update comments:

This idea should be fostered proactively at the EU level. Support for it should be carried out with the help of other programmes. The idea should also be discussed with non-member states because there exist other financing-systems in these states.

Prospective study opinion/recommendation:

Financial issues were not touched by the prospective study.

Conclusion:

The issue is still unresolved since the national co-financing remains in the responsibility of each programme partner, there have been improvements though in the selection process which is now less driven by the national co-financing arrangements than at the beginning of IIIB programme.

f) Linkages between programme and projects

Issue: Linkage between programme and projects

MTE recommendation/observation:

The study stated that thus far, no project was linked with projects of other programmes, but would be with the support of the MA, NCP and JTS.

Programme reaction:

The partner states underlined that project applicants were asked to indicate if similar projects in other programmes were tackled and that JTS and NCP also did this kind of check. Intensified contacts between JTS/NCP of different programmes should lead to a better knowledge about other projects.

MTE-Update comments:

Contacts and the exchange of experiences between the projects of different programmes are visible, particularly in the case of special themes. Linkages should be fostered to build up synergies. Some of the activities of Interact were developing in this direction.

Prospective study opinion/recommendation:

The study supports strongly formal linkages between the projects and the programme level.

Conclusion:

The transnational workshops as well as other events for the project partners have established a constant flow of information between projects and programme.

Issue: Monitoring system

MTE recommendation/observation:

A database solution was requested due to the increasing number of projects.

Programme reaction:

A monitoring system was set up.

MTE-Update comments:

Introducing data-based monitoring was not easy and still had some technical problems when the MTE-update was carried out. Adaptation to the special needs of the programme bodies was still underway. Analysing data was still rather crucial.

Prospective study opinion/recommendation:

The study did not address this issue.

Conclusion:

After some starting difficulties the acquired software was working well and delivered great quality monitoring results.

Issue: Transnational Workgroups

MTE recommendation/observation:

Transnational workgroups should be set up in the remaining programme period according to the evaluators.

Programme reaction:

The partner states shared the opinion that transnational workgroups involving experts and LP of approved projects should be set up and that opportunity to share experiences by LP of approved and newly approved projects should be given.

MTE-Update comments:

Three transnational workshops dedicated to the three priorities of the CIP were set up. Within the scope of these events, there were also opportunities for transnational workgroups of projects. A networking seminar held by the JTS also made an attempt to bring projects together in transnational workgroups.

Prospective study opinion/recommendation:

The idea of transnational workgroups was also endorsed by the prospective study.

Conclusion:

The three workshops together with their comprehensive documentation (also available on the website) are certainly part of the success of the IIIB programme.

Open issues according to evaluation/studies

From the compilation set out above one can derive that most issues raised by the evaluations and studies were positively received by the programme and in due course tackled. In many cases the positive application of recommendations had to be left – in accordance with the proposals from the evaluations – to the programming of the ETC programme.

A few issues though have not been solved in the way indicated by the evaluations and studies or not been solved at all by now, which deserves a short comment:

Impact measurement

Whereas the indicator system has been adapted and improved considerably and is now completely new designed in the ETC programme, provisions for measuring the impact of the interventions (individually and cumulated) on the programme area or their actual contribution to the attainment of the programme's (and priorities') objectives are still missing, as the ex-ante evaluation of the ETC-programme also noticed.

This is mainly due to the lack of appropriately prepared context data, reflected also by the fact that the SWOT analyses by and large is based on qualitative statements only.

While it may be only fair and sensible to base the strategy of a programme on the consensus between the programme partners inspired by whichever views of the individual partners (EU guidelines, national perception of problems, sectoral priorities, assumptions on success factors, etc.) and not (only) on analytical considerations, the question of the actual state of play in a certain field, e.g. innovation, arises when someone wants to know something about the relationship between the interventions and the strategy field.

Common vision for the Alpine Space

The efforts to elaborate a common vision for the Alpine Space, which has been strongly demanded by the evaluations and for which the prospective study provided comprehensive material for discussion were not continued after the delivery of the prospective study. Most programme partners considered the value added of such a discussion too low if not negative in order to invest the necessary energy.

The successful solution of strategic orientation of programme implementation by the introduction of strategic project selection (as laid down in the new programme) seems sufficient in the view of most programme partners.

Relationship with Alpine Initiatives

Intensification of the relationship with other Alpine initiatives has been urged by both the evaluations and the prospective study. Indeed the most important of these, the Alpine Convention, became (observing) member of the Alpine Space Monitoring Committee. The return of this move, though, - in the view of most programme partners - remained small and contacts with other initiatives remained sporadic throughout programme implementation without a noticeable disadvantage for the programme. It seems that the opportunities and advantages of intensified relationship have been over-estimated by the evaluators.

Strategic Projects

The discussion on the definition, the generation and the selection of strategic projects occupied the attention and the interest of the programme partners throughout the whole implementation period. With the two step procedure for the two last calls and its satisfactory results the solution seemed to be found and was - further refined - integrated in the new programme. However, this solution falls far short of the conceptual ideal laid down in the prospective study and also of the definitions given for strategic projects by other sources, e.g. the BBR study.⁴³

What the new programme has established is a strategic process of selecting high quality projects, which is but a first step to generate and implement strategic projects. Under the much more sophisticated framework of the new programme the discussion on strategic interventions could be successfully resumed and pushed further.

Definition of target groups

Particularly the prospective study goes into some detail in describing and analysing the different target groups (in the course of defining strategic projects) and distinguishes strongly between the different territorial levels (national, regional, local). Beside this the concentration of the projects on public administration and the lack of participation of private institutions was articulated by the evaluations also and discussed in the programme structures quite controversially. The definition of target groups for the priorities in the new programme does not represent a progress in this respect.

⁴³ Federal Office for Building and Regional Planning, Developing and Assessing Strategic Transnational Cooperation Projects (INTERREG IVB), Bonn 2009

4.3. *Statement by the Managing Authority, noting the Problems encountered and the Steps taken to ensure Compatibility with Community Policies including the Rules on Competition, on the Award of Public Contracts, on Environmental Protection and Improvement and on the Elimination of Inequalities and the Promotion of Equality between Men and Women*

According to the programme (chapter 4.3) and the programme complement (chapter 1.7) a project should not be funded if the EU policies, including the rules on competition, on the award of public contracts, on environmental protection and improvement and on the elimination of inequalities and the promotion of equality between men and women, were not respected.

In the project application, among other things, the contribution of the project to sustainable development, to the improvement of the employment situation, to equal opportunities had to be indicated. Also the link of project activities to Community Initiatives (LEADER, EQUAL, URBAN) and other European activities (e.g. TENS, Natura 2000, 6th Environmental Action Plan) had to be indicated.

Concerns of environmental protection, the promotion of equality between men and women, compatibility with the common rural policy, in particular with Article 37, par. 2 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999 and the contribution to the realisation of the European Employment Strategy were obeyed insofar as institutions/bodies/persons representing these concerns were represented in the national committees installed in each partner state. Project proposals were discussed by these committees before the scheduled project selection meetings of the SC.

During the project evaluation process the above-mentioned aspects were carefully checked by the programme bodies to ensure that projects not coherent or in open contrast with the relevant regulations on EU and national level were not selected.

In the partnership agreement the project participants obliged themselves to comply with the European Union's and national legislation, especially structural funds regulations, competition and public procurement law (§ 6 (2) lit g and § 7 (4) lit f of the partnership agreement). In the subsidy contract (§ 7 lit f) the LP was committed to comply with the European Union's and national legislation including public procurement. In § 9 lit j) of the same contract it is laid down that the Managing Authority has a right of withdrawal from the contract if regulations of the EU-law (especially provisions concerning competition and environmental law and regulations concerning equal treatment of men and women) have been violated.

At the occasion of national and transnational seminars and bilateral contacts NCP, JTS and MA informed the project participants about the legal provisions and programme rules to be observed by them.

During the project implementation phases the compliance of a project with relevant national and EU-regulations was checked by the first level control bodies. In the course of the second level control this aspect as well as the work performed by the first level control bodies were checked as well.

The Managing Authority has been constantly monitoring the developments in EU competition and procurement law and also used the Interact-platform for an exchange of experiences and best practices with regard to these issues with other programmes and the EC. In this way, it has been ensured that appropriate information and support were provided to the responsible programme bodies and actors in the member states as well as the project participants.

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List of Abbreviations

AIR	Annual Implementation Report
ALPARC	Alpine Network of Protected Areas
ASP	Alpine Space Programme
ASPS	Alpine Space Prospective Study
BBR	Bundesamt für Bauwesen und Raumordnung (Federal Office for Building and Regional Planning)
CAA	Club Arc Alpin
CI	Corporate Identity
CIP	Community Initiative Programme
CIPRA	Commission Internationale pour la Protection des Alpes
DSMA	Direct Support Managing Authority
EaE	Ex-ante Evaluation
EC	European Commission
FLC	First Level Control
EGTC	European Grouping on Territorial Cooperation
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESDP	European Spatial Development Perspectives
ETC	European Territorial Cooperation
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIS	Geographic Information System
GmbH	Gesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung (company with limited liability)
GPRS	General Packet Radio Service
GPS	Global Positioning System
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
I&P	Information & Publicity
ISCAR	International Scientific Committee on Research in the Alps
JTS	Joint Technical Secretariat
LP	Lead Partner
MA	Managing Authority
MC	Monitoring Committee
MEGA	Metropolitan European Growth Area
MS	Member State
MTE	Mid-term Evaluation
MTE-Update	Up-date of Mid-term Evaluation
NC	National Coordinator
NCP	National Contact Point
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
OP	Operational Programme
PA	Paying Authority
PC	Programme Complement
PP	Project Partner
R&D	Research and Development
R&TD	Research and Technological Development
RTDI	Research, Technological Development and Innovation
SC	Steering Committee
SF	Structural Funds
SLC	Second Level Control
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
SOIA	System for the Observation and Information on the Alps
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
TA	Technical Assistance