



## **IMPLEMENTATION MANUAL FOR BENEFICIARIES**

### **PART 1: ABOUT THE PROGRAMME**

Cooperation Programme  
Interreg V-A Slovenia-Croatia  
for the programme period 2014–2020  
Version 2, 5 September 2016

## **PART 1: ABOUT THE PROGRAMME**

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**The Implementation Manual for Beneficiaries of the Cooperation programme Interreg V-A Slovenia-Croatia for the period 2014-2020, co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund.**

**Prepared and published by the Programme's Managing Authority and Joint Secretariat in cooperation with the representatives of Slovenia and Croatia (National Authority). The Managing Authority and the Joint Secretariat is hosted within the official structure of the Government office of the Republic of Slovenia for Development and European Cohesion Policy.**

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## PART 1: ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

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### ABBREVIATIONS

AA	Audit Authority
AB	Audit Body
BTM	Bilateral Technical meeting
CA	Certifying Authority
CB	Cross-border
CF	Cohesion Fund
CP	Cooperation Programme
CBC Programme	Cross-border Cooperation Programme
CSF	Common Strategic Framework
CPR	Common Provision Regulation
EC	European Commission
ECP	European Cohesion Policy
EGTC	European Grouping for Territorial Cooperation
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESF	European Social Fund
ESI	European Structural and Investment Funds
ETC	European Territorial Cooperation
FLC	First Level Control
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
GODC	Government Office for Development and European Cohesion Policy
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IP	Investment Priority
JS	Joint Secretariat
LP	Lead Partner
MA	Managing Authority
MC	Monitoring Committee
NA	National Authority
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NUTS	Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics
PA	Partnership Agreement
PP	Project Partner
RTD	Research, Technology and Development
RTDI	Research, Technology, Development and Innovation
R&D	Research and Development
R&I	Research and Innovation
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
SO	Specific Objective
SWOT	Strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats analysis
TA	Technical Assistance
TO	Thematic Objective

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# Implementation Manual for Beneficiaries

## **PART 1: ABOUT THE PROGRAMME**

## PART 1: ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

### CONTENT OF PART 1:

<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>1. ABOUT THE PROGRAMME .....</b>	<b>3</b>
1.1 Programme area.....	3
1.2 Investment priorities and specific objectives .....	4
1.3 Types of activities, main target groups, type of beneficiaries supported by the programme and guiding principles.....	6
1.4 Result and output indicators .....	13
1.5 Financial framework of the cooperation programme .....	14
1.6 Programme language.....	15
1.7 Management structure.....	15
1.8 Electronic monitoring system (eMS).....	18
<b>2. LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND PROGRAMME RELATED DOCUMENTS.....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>3. INTERREG V-A SI-HR KEY PRINCIPLES .....</b>	<b>19</b>
3.1 Result orientation .....	19
3.2 Territorial relevance .....	20
3.3 Partnership relevance.....	20
3.4 Sustainability .....	21
3.5 Horizontal principles .....	21

## PART 1: ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

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### INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Manual is to assist potential applicants in project development and preparation of the application to participate in the Cooperation Programme (CP) Interreg V-A Slovenia-Croatia (Interreg SI-HR). It also provides the information on selection, implementation and closure of the projects.

The Implementation Manual for Beneficiaries<sup>1</sup> is a part of the Application Pack and consists of different thematically parts. Overall, the Manual provides relevant and useful information on project implementation. The information on project development and partnership requirements is provided in Part 2, while the submission and assessment of the Application is covered in Part 3 of this Manual. Part 4 provides information on eligibility of expenditure, the procedures and requirements for reporting are described in Part 5, Part 6 covers information and communication and Part 7 covers archiving and closure. **Applicants should therefore read the entire Manual carefully before submitting the Application to the programme authorities.** The information in this Manual is notable for the preparation of a good project Application, as well as for the implementation of already approved projects.

This manual covers only preparation and implementation of projects in the frame of Priority axes 2 and 3 since Priority axis 1 will be implemented through strategic projects, governed by different regulations and guidelines, which will be covered in a separate manual.

The information provided in this Manual will be, if necessary, further developed and updated during the programme implementation. The programme will also provide beneficiaries with training and exchange opportunities in the form of workshops.

Additional information and documents related to the Open Call are available for download on the programme website [www.si-hr.eu](http://www.si-hr.eu).

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<sup>1</sup> The CP Interreg SI-HR uses the term *Lead Partner* for determining *Lead Applicant* in the phase of the preparation of the project and *Lead Beneficiary* after the *Subsidy Contract* is signed.

## PART 1: ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

### 1. ABOUT THE PROGRAMME



The cross-border CP Interreg SI-HR is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) under the European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) objective, which supports cross-border cooperation between Slovenia and Croatia during the period 2014-2020.

The overall objective of European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) is to promote a harmonious economic, social and territorial development of the Union as a whole. Cross-border cooperation programmes (CBC programmes) aim to tackle common challenges identified. For the participating regions of the present programme deep analysis showed specific needs in the fields of regional disparities and rural-urban divide, unemployment and improving conditions for smart growth, environment and adapting to climate change, and equal access to social, health and rescue services.

The conceptual orientation of the CP Interreg SI-HR therefore follows also the ambition of the Europe 2020 strategy, with its aims at "smart, sustainable and inclusive growth". Common challenges and intervention needs shared by regions involved in the programme area are taken into account in order to better contribute to social, economic and territorial cohesion.

#### 1.1 Programme area

The programme area comprises 17 NUTS 3 regions - statistical regions in Slovenia and counties in Croatia:

	Pomurska region, Podravska region, Savinjska region, Zasavska region, Posavska region, Jugovzhodna Slovenija region, Osrednjeslovenska region, Primorsko-notranjska region, Obalno-kraška region
	Primorsko-goranska County, Istarska County, City of Zagreb, Zagrebačka County, Krapinsko-zagorska County, Varaždinska County, Međimurska County and Karlovačka County.

In line with Article 3 of the Commission Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013 (ETC Regulation) to ensure coherence of the cross-border area, City of Zagreb, Osrednjeslovenska and Zasavska regions were included to the 14 NUTS 3 regions along Slovenia-Croatia border.

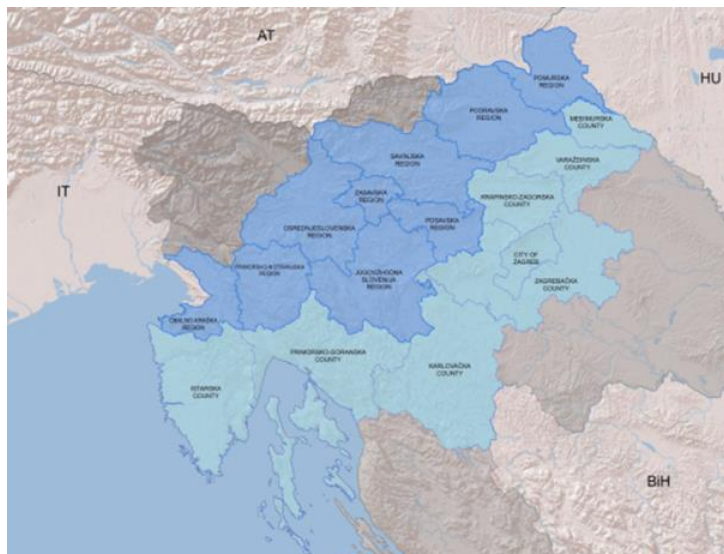
Osrednjeslovenska and City of Zagreb were included as adjacent regions also in the period 2007 - 2013 for their close vicinity and concentration of the economic, research, development and educational capacities that could significantly contribute to the development of the entire cross-border area. Zasavska region in Slovenia was included in order to increase the territorial coherence of the cross-border area and to better seize CBC potentials.

The programme area covers 31,728 km<sup>2</sup>, with a population of about 3,285,000 people.

## PART 1: ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

New: Compared to the 2007-2013 period, the programme area covers also Zasavska NUTS 3.region in Slovenia.

New: Compared to the 2007-2013 period all NUTS 3 regions are part of the core programme area.



### 1.2 Investment priorities and specific objectives

The **overall objective of the Cooperation Programme** is to promote sustainable, safe and vibrant border area by fostering smart approaches to preservation, mobilization and management of natural and cultural resources for the benefit of the people living and working in or visiting the area.

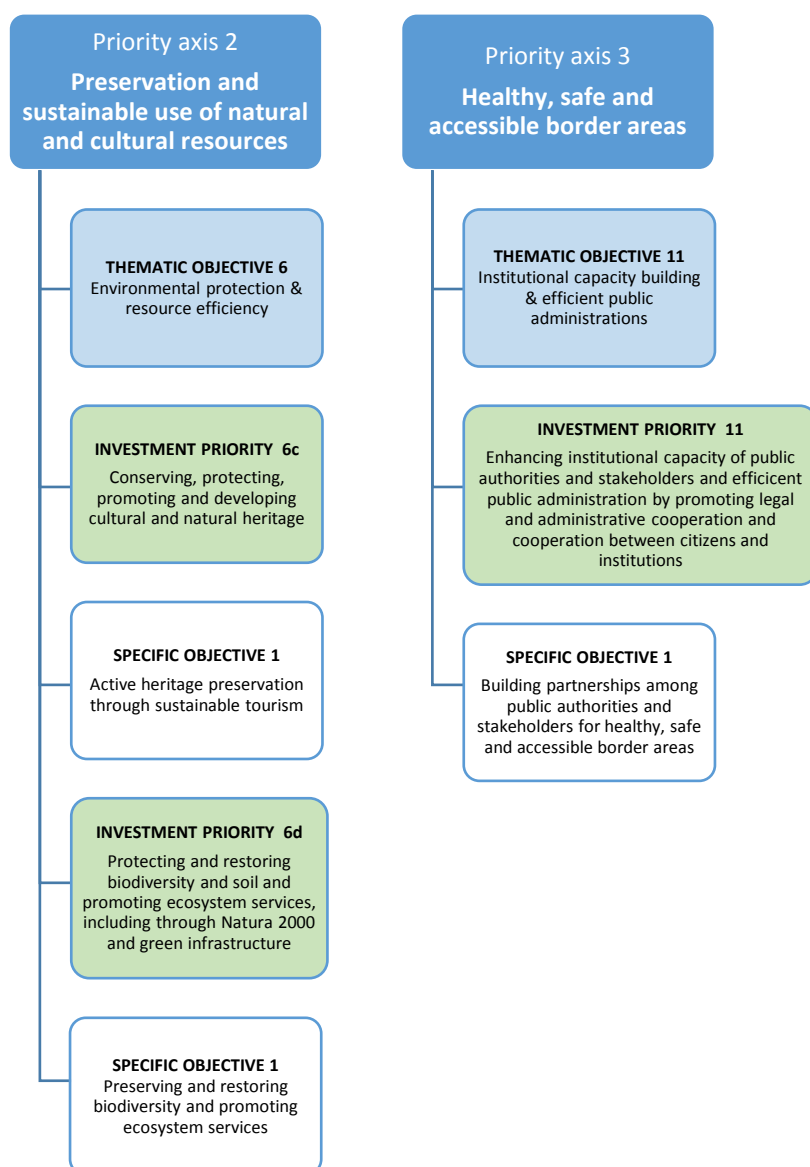
Based on the regulatory framework, which foresees thematic concentration of expenditure on a limited number of objectives and investment priorities, the CP Interreg SI-HR selected three thematic objectives (TO 5 – Promoting climate change adoption, risk prevention and management, TO 6 – Preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency, TO 11 – Enhancing institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders and efficient public administration) with three investment priorities and the priority for Technical Assistance (TA).

Priority axes 2 and 3 are described in Figure 1.



## PART 1: ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

Figure 1: Priority axes, thematic objectives, investment priorities and specific objectives other than for Priority axis 1 and Technical Assistance.



For detailed information on the description of the priority axes/investment priority, their objectives and their main activities refer to Section 2 of the Cooperation Programme. In order to make your project compliant with the programme it is compulsory to read and take into account the description under each priority axis/investment priority provided in the Cooperation Programme Interreg V-A Slovenia-Croatia<sup>2</sup>.

By every type of operation also the horizontal principles of the programme such as sustainable development, equal opportunities and non-discrimination and promotion of equality between men and women have to be considered. They will be specifically observed in the selection of operations, regardless of the priority axis they are proposed for. For more information on horizontal principles see Section 8 of the respective Cooperation Programme and Part 1, Chapter 3.5 of this Manual.

<sup>2</sup> The Cooperation Programme Interreg V-A Slovenia-Croatia is available on the programme website [www.si-hr.eu](http://www.si-hr.eu).

## PART 1: ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

### 1.3 Types of activities, main target groups, type of beneficiaries supported by the programme and guiding principles

#### 1.3.1 Priority Axis 2: Preservation and sustainable use of natural and cultural resources



#### Specific objective 2.1 - Active heritage preservation through sustainable tourism.

Investment Priority	Specific objective
<b>6c Conserving, protecting, promoting and developing natural and cultural heritage</b>	Active heritage preservation through sustainable tourism.

#### Type and examples of actions to be supported under specific objective 2.1

##### 1. Development of cross-border tourism products and destinations, on the basis of cultural and natural heritage following the concepts of active preservation, sustainable tourism, bottom-up and integrated approach

- ✓ Small-scale conservation, restoration and preservation of registered cultural and/or natural heritage including obligatory content development for smart utilization and sustainable management (e.g. restoration of ethnographic traditional buildings for the purpose of local museums, nature interpretation trails, archaeological parks, etc.);
- ✓ Small-scale investments in visitor infrastructure and equipment improving accessibility, visitor channelling and visitor experience of registered cultural and/or natural heritage (e.g. visitor centres, crafts production centres and show rooms, bike trails and rentals, parking areas, adaptations to persons with special needs, connection paths to heritage sites, etc.);
- ✓ Development of new contents and interpretation concepts (e.g. storytelling) of natural and/or cultural heritage considering new audience development and trends (e.g. innovative exhibitions, cross-border events, etc.);
- ✓ Development of new or improved joint sustainable tourism or related products and services in the form of unique thematic tours, packages, itineraries, routes or tourism offer by connecting natural and cultural resources with crafts and arts, local suppliers, SMEs, tourism operators, ... and exploiting Research, Technology and Innovation (RTI) potential, ICT tools, e-services and/or market trends.

##### 2. Cross-border destination or product co-operation structures, management and promotion

- ✓ Setting up, positioning and promoting CB territorial or product based co-operation structures by linking operators of cultural and natural heritage sites, businesses,

## PART 1: ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

destination managements organisations and/or other partners with common interest in CB sustainable tourism and active preservation (e.g. clusters, value-chain or similar structure that partners find most suitable for following commonly set objectives);

- ✓ Support to internationalisation and market access of cross-border sustainable tourism destinations and products (e.g. market entry support, joint development and piloting of marketing concepts and plans, participation at international events and fairs in the third markets, etc);
- ✓ Design and implementation of innovative promotion of the cross-border sustainable tourism destinations and products, including use of ICT, smart technologies, social media, etc.

### 3. Improvement of knowledge base and capacities for active preservation and sustainable tourism

- ✓ Training, mentoring, awareness raising, exchange of good practices, practical guidelines and expertise and similar activities supporting
  - All stages necessary for preservation, conservation and maintenance of heritage and traditional skills and strengthening the area's cultural and landscape identity (e.g. info points and guidelines for practical restoration of heritage, transfer of traditional knowledge, etc.);
  - All stages of mobilising the heritage for sustainable development and job creation in sustainable tourism and related businesses (e.g. start-up handy-craft centres, training programmes for new skills and competences development for actors involved in sustainable tourism and culture, heritage interpretation skills, thematic tour guides, etc.)
- ✓ Developing and testing new business models for management of cultural and/or natural heritage (e.g. management and marketing of small historic towns, etc.);
- ✓ Development and introduction of environmental or other quality standards;
- ✓ Elaboration and implementation of visitor management plans (e.g. visitor counting, visitor survey, audience development concepts, etc.)

#### Main Target Groups to be supported under specific objective 2.1

- ✓ Tourists/ visitors
- ✓ Local population
- ✓ Owners of heritage sites
- ✓ Businesses, their employees and potential start-ups connected with the utilization of cultural or natural heritage or sustainable tourism
- ✓ Also those groups listed under the caption "Indicative types of beneficiaries"

#### Types of beneficiaries to be supported under specific objective 2.1

- ✓ Local, regional or national authorities (e.g. municipalities, counties...)
- ✓ Non-profit organisations established by public or private law - legal persons acting in the field of cultural or natural heritage, sustainable tourism development or

## PART 1: ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

related services (e.g. museums, Natura 2000 and protected areas management authorities, regional development agencies, tourism destination management organisations, NGOs, associations...)

- ✓ Small and medium sized enterprises

### Guiding principles

During the selection procedure, besides the criteria applied for project assessment, the following will be required under this specific objective:

- ✓ Any heritage site or small-scale investment action receiving programme support should be publicly accessible after project is completed.
- ✓ The private profit lead partner shall be asked to provide, before the signature of the subsidy contract, proof that the financial guarantee is in force.
- ✓ Each project shall follow the principles of sustainable tourism.

***These requirements are a pre-condition for the project to be approved and will be checked during the assessment of the project Application. In case the submitted Application will not fulfil these requirements, the Application will be rejected.***

Higher relevance in regard to the achievement of specific objectives will be given to projects which demonstrate for example:

- ✓ Contribution to the smart balance between preservation and sustainable use of natural and cultural resources;
- ✓ Support concepts of active preservation, bottom-up and integrated approach.
- ✓ Consider appropriate visitor management and carrying capacity of particular heritage site.
- ✓ Integration of cultural and natural heritage with relevant tourism stakeholders (businesses, tourism management organisations, etc.) into unique cross-border tourism products or destinations.
- ✓ Enhancement, networking and upgrading of the existing initiatives to achieve higher attractiveness, visibility and long term sustainability
- ✓ Integration of CP cross-cutting issues (R&D, Capacity Building or ICT) as an added value to the project.

***These guiding principles are not a pre-condition for the project to be approved. They represent the criteria for the quality assessment of the received Application. This means that the contribution of the project to these guiding principles will be assessed and better contribution will be assessed with higher score.***

[Specific objective 2.2 - Protecting and restoring biodiversity and promoting ecosystem services.](#)

Investment Priority	Specific objective
<b>6d Protecting and restoring biodiversity and soil and promoting ecosystem services, including through Natura 2000, and green infrastructure</b>	Protecting and restoring biodiversity and promoting ecosystem services

## PART 1: ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

### Type and examples of actions to be supported under specific objective 2.2

1. **Capacity building** actions for increasing the participation, awareness, knowledge and acceptance among target groups on **nature protection** and **ecosystem services**;
2. **Development of joint co-ordinated approaches, methods, tools and new solutions** in planning, monitoring and management of Natura 2000 and other species and habitat types relevant for CB area (e.g. data exchange, integration of planning and monitoring methods, introduction of new monitoring tools and technologies, co-ordination of management approaches, etc.);
3. **Implementation of monitoring surveys** of Natura 2000 habitat types or species as well as other habitats and species relevant for CB area.

*Each project should among its activities implement at least one of the following actions under the following point:*

4. **Practical demonstration actions in nature** aiming at improving conditions and protection of different habitat types and species:
  - ✓ Establish the needed small-scale infrastructure to improve living environment of habitat types and species, reduce external pressures and guide accessibility, so as to bring direct positive impact on Nature 2000 and other species and habitat types relevant for CB area (e.g. observation bridges and platforms, protection measures, channelling information system,... ....);
  - ✓ Guided tourism and recreation flows (traffic/visitors) in order to ensure nature protection (e.g. elaboration and implementation of visitor management plans, visitor monitoring and channeling) and establishment of quiet zones;
  - ✓ Restore habitats, re-naturalization of river beds/improve hydrologic conditions
  - ✓ Ensure non-fragmentation of habitats;
  - ✓ Establish green infrastructure supporting the protection and conservation of habitat types and species and reducing the risks of biodiversity loss;
  - ✓ Remove and prevent the spread of invasive alien species;
  - ✓ Implement measures to prevent plant succession (in abandoned areas not addressed by Rural Development Plan).
5. Identification, mapping, evaluation and enhancement of **ecosystem services** with joint pilot studies of ecosystem values and development of methodologies for regional green accounting or other Payment for Ecosystem Service (PES) systems.

### Main Target Groups to be supported under specific objective 2.2

- ✓ Local population
- ✓ Visitors/ tourists
- ✓ Local communities
- ✓ Farmers
- ✓ Owners of land in NATURA 2000, protected areas and other areas of nature values
- ✓ Businesses
- ✓ Teachers, students, pupils, children
- ✓ Also those groups listed under the caption "Indicative types of beneficiaries"

## PART 1: ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

### Types of beneficiaries to be supported under specific objective 2.2

- ✓ Local, regional or national authorities (e.g. municipalities, counties,...)
- ✓ Non-profit organisations established by public or private law - legal persons in the field of nature protection (e.g. Natura 2000 and protected area management authorities, conservation authorities, NGOs, R&D institutions, regional development agencies, forest institutes, rural development centres, etc.)

### Guiding principles

During the selection procedure, higher relevance in regard to the achievement of specific objectives will be given to:

- ✓ Projects focusing on preservation of biodiversity that have a positive effect on:
  - Degree of conservation status of Natura 2000 species and habitat types which can be found on both sides of the programme area or
  - Natura 2000 sites which border to each other such as border rivers Mura, Drava, Sotla/Sutla, Kolpa/Kupa, Dragonja, etc.; CB forest areas of Gorjanci/Žumberak, Kočevsko/Snežnik/Snježnik/Gorski Kotar, etc.; or cross-border karst areas (e.g. Kras/Čičarija).
- ✓ Projects that apply CP cross-cutting issues (R&D, Capacity Building or ICT) as an added value to the project.

***These guiding principles are not a pre-condition for the project to be approved. They represent the criteria for the quality assessment of the received Application. This means that the contribution of the project to these guiding principles will be assessed and better contribution will be assessed with higher score.***

### 1.3.2 Priority Axis 3: Healthy, safe and accessible border areas



#### Specific objective 3.1. - Building partnerships among public authorities and stakeholders for healthy, safe and accessible border areas

Investment Priority	Specific objective
<b>11 Enhancing institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders and efficient public administration by promoting legal and administrative cooperation and cooperation between citizens and institutions</b>	Building partnerships among public authorities and stakeholders for healthy, safe and accessible border areas

## PART 1: ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

### Type and examples of actions to be supported under specific objective 3.1

**Indicative actions to be supported** in the field of i) public health and health-care, ii) social care services, iii) safety (civil protection, emergency and rescue services), iv) cross-border public transport and sustainable mobility services:

- 1. Setting up new or strengthening existing cross-border cooperation structures<sup>3</sup>** of public institutions, civil society and other stakeholders in order to provide integrated territory-based solutions for provision of services in the selected field (e.g. joint thematic events and workshops; know how, information and data base development and exchange, familiarization with partner legal framework and administrative systems, bilateral agreements in order to identify common development issues and structures for long term operation);
- 2. Co-ordination, elaboration and improvement of joint plans, procedures and exchange of governance models** for provision of cross-border services and/or services in border areas with service gap (e.g. elaboration of joint cross-border plans, strategies and programmes, optimising processes of service delivery, reduction of administrative barriers, harmonisation of protocols and intervention procedures, transfer of best practices);
- 3. Developing skills and competences** for provision of selected public services (e.g. joint training programmes, technical trainings and capacities for cross-border interventions, language and cross-cultural skills, mentoring, cross-border exchanges and placements of staff, etc.);
- 4. Joint development and delivery (demonstration) of new or improved services within the cooperation structures** (e.g. innovative organisation models for service provision, organisational structures for provision of mobile services, diversification of the channels for service delivery, strengthening organisational and technical capacities for specific service delivery, adjustment of time tables and integration of public transports across the border, etc.);
- 5. Promotion of active involvement of different groups of citizens** in cross-border cooperation and use of new services (e.g. specialised events, awareness and promotion campaigns, etc.);
- 6. Promotion of co-operations structures, their joint services and programmes**

### Main Target Groups to be supported under specific objective 3.1

- ✓ Service providers
- ✓ Staff members in organisations providing the public services
- ✓ Volunteers
- ✓ Local population in peripheral border areas
- ✓ Tourists/visitors of peripheral border areas

<sup>3</sup> **Cross-border cooperation structure** is a cross-border group of institutions and stakeholders established or enhanced during the project with the aim to develop and provide certain public service or programme. The group may go beyond project partnership, however it shall exist after the project completion.



## PART 1: ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

- ✓ Also those groups listed under the caption “Indicative types of beneficiaries”

### Types of beneficiaries to be supported under specific objective 3.1

- ✓ National, regional and local authorities
- ✓ Non-profit organisations established by public or private law - legal persons (e.g. health centres, social care organisations, NGOs, elderly centres, regional development agencies, social enterprises, rescue services and civil protection organisations, etc.)

### Guiding principles

During the selection procedure, beside the criteria applied for project assessment, the following will be required under this specific objective:

- ✓ Projects shall clearly aim at developing a sustainable cross-border cooperation structure.
- ✓ Each cross-border cooperation structure shall address at least one of the priority fields:
  - i) public health and health-care,
  - ii) social care services,
  - iii) safety (civil protection, emergency and rescue services),
  - iv) cross-border public transport and sustainable mobility services.
- ✓ Each cross-border cooperation structures shall enhance either:
  - i) provision of cross-border service or
  - ii) provision of service targeted to peripheral/rural areas.

Peripheral/ rural areas under this co-operation programme are considered all areas outside the urban centers of city municipalities.<sup>4</sup>
- ✓ Any service, structure or model developed shall be accompanied by a demonstration action, which allows-transfer of best practices and/or testing of new solutions in real life context.

***These requirements are a pre-condition for the project to be approved and will be checked during the assessment of the project Application. In case the submitted Application will not fulfil these requirements, the Application will be rejected.***

Higher relevance in regard to the achievement of specific objectives will be given to:

- ✓ Projects that will be able to demonstrate vertical integration of institutions and larger territorial coverage of cooperation structure. Participation of relevant line ministries as associate partners in the project will reflect the strategic relevance of the project.
- ✓ Projects that apply CP cross-cutting issues (R&D, Capacity Building or ICT) as an added value to the project.
- ✓ Projects focusing the provision of services towards vulnerable target groups such as isolated elderly, women and youth at risk, the migrants, disabled people and other groups that are at risk of poverty or social exclusion in the programme area.

<sup>4</sup> Urban centre is considered a settlement in which the seat of city municipality (in case of SI) or city (in case of HR) is located.



## PART 1: ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

*These guiding principles are not a pre-condition for the project to be approved. They represent the criteria for the quality assessment of the received Application. This means that the contribution of the project to these guiding principles will be assessed and better contribution will be assessed with higher score.*

### 1.4 Result and output indicators

The project main outputs and results have to contribute to the CP Interreg SI-HR indicators which will be monitored on the programme and project level.

**Programme specific result indicators** represent a measurable intended change by the programme in the entire programme duration through all approved projects. These indicators will be monitored only on the programme level and their quantitative value has been determined in advance.

Table 1: Programme specific result indicators

Priority axis	Specific objective	Specific result indicator
2	2.1 Active heritage preservation through sustainable tourism	Visitors to cultural and natural heritage sites in the programme area
	2.2 Protecting and restoring biodiversity and promoting ecosystem services	Average degree of conservation status of habitat types and species of Natura 2000 sites in programme area - species
		Average degree of conservation status of habitat types and species of Natura 2000 sites in programme area - habitats
3	3.1 Building partnerships among public authorities and stakeholders for healthy, safe and accessible border areas	Level of cooperation quality in the field of health, social care, safety and mobility services within the programme area

**Programme specific output indicators** represent tangible deliverables of the programme, which the programme will achieve in the entire programme duration through all approved projects. The quantitative value of these indicators has been determined in advance and they will be monitored on the programme as well as project level.

## PART 1: ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

Table 2: Common and programme specific output indicators by investment priority

Priority axis	Specific objective	Common and programme specific output indicators
2	2.1 Active heritage preservation through sustainable tourism	Increase in expected number of visits to supported sites of cultural or natural heritage and attractions
		Small scale investments in visitor infrastructure and preservation of natural and cultural heritage
		New or improved cross-border sustainable tourism products and destinations integrating natural or cultural heritage
		Persons participating in capacity building activities
		Number of enterprises receiving support
		Number of enterprises receiving grants
	2.2 Protecting and restoring biodiversity and promoting ecosystem services	Surface area of habitats supported to attain a better conservation status
		Implemented practical demonstrations of measures in nature in support of biodiversity
		Joint studies and tools for assessing and promoting ecosystem services developed
		Persons with improved practical skills and competences for implementation of biodiversity protection measures and valorisation of ecosystem services
3	3.1 Building partnerships among public authorities and stakeholders for healthy, safe and accessible border areas	Institutions participating in cross-border structures
		Persons representing institutions and stakeholders from the programme area with improved skills and competences in CB service delivery

### 1.5 Financial framework of the cooperation programme

The total value of the programme amounts to 50,722,582 EUR, of which the ERDF contribution amounts to 43,114,193 EUR. 10,026,557 EUR of ERDF will be allocated to the Priority axis 1 for strategic projects.

The total value of the programme available for funding of projects under Priority axes 2 and 3 is 38,9 million Euro, of which 85% is financed by the ERDF, while 15% shall be contributed by other funding.

In Table 3 the division of funds available for projects by priority axes other than Priority axis 1 and Technical Assistance is presented.

## PART 1: ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

Table 3: Division of funds available for projects under Priority axes 2 and 3

Priority axis	Union support (in EUR)	National counterpart (in EUR)	Total funding (in EUR)	Co-financing rate
Priority axis 2	28,074,358	4,954,299	33,028,657	85 %
Priority axis 3	5,013,278	884,697	5,897,975	85 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>33,087,636</b>	<b>5,838,996</b>	<b>38,926,632</b>	<b>85%</b>

### 1.6 Programme language

The official languages of the Interreg SI-HR programme are Slovene, Croatian and English. The official written communication with the JS or MA is in principle to be carried out bilingually in Slovene and Croatian. All JS members have the understanding of Slovene and Croatian, therefore the communication with Project Partners in both languages is ensured.

### 1.7 Management structure

The CP Interreg SI-HR is a joint programme of the two Member States, Slovenia and Croatia.

The joint implementation structure of the programme includes the following programme authorities: Managing Authority assisted by the Joint Secretariat, Certifying Authority and Audit Authority. In the efficient and smooth implementation of the Cooperation Programme National Authorities and National Controllers are also involved.

#### Managing Authority (MA)

The Managing Authority is responsible for the management and the implementation of the programme in accordance with the principle of sound financial management and in line with EU regulations ruling the ERDF funds.

#### Joint Secretariat (JS)

The Joint Secretariat assists the Managing Authority and the Monitoring Committee in carrying out their respective functions and undertakes the day-to-day implementation of the programme. It also provides information and guidance to project applicants and partners.

#### Certifying Authority (CA)

The Certifying Authority certifies the Claims for Reimbursement and Applications for Payment before they are sent to the Commission. The Certifying Authority shall make payments to the Lead Partners or in exceptional cases to Project Partners.

#### Audit Authority (Second Level Control)

## **PART 1: ABOUT THE PROGRAMME**

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The Audit Authority is assisted by the Group of auditors comprising of a representative of both Member States participating in the Cooperation Programme. The Audit Authority is responsible for verifying the sound operation of the management and control system of the Cooperation Programme. Audits on projects will be spread during the entire programme lifetime.

### **National Authority (NA)**

National Authorities - representatives of the Member States are providing information to applicants in order to obtain quality projects that will meet the Cooperation Programme objectives and indicators, as well as assisting the MA and JS in organising the support for potential applicants in finding CB Project Partners.

### **National Controllers (First Level Control)**

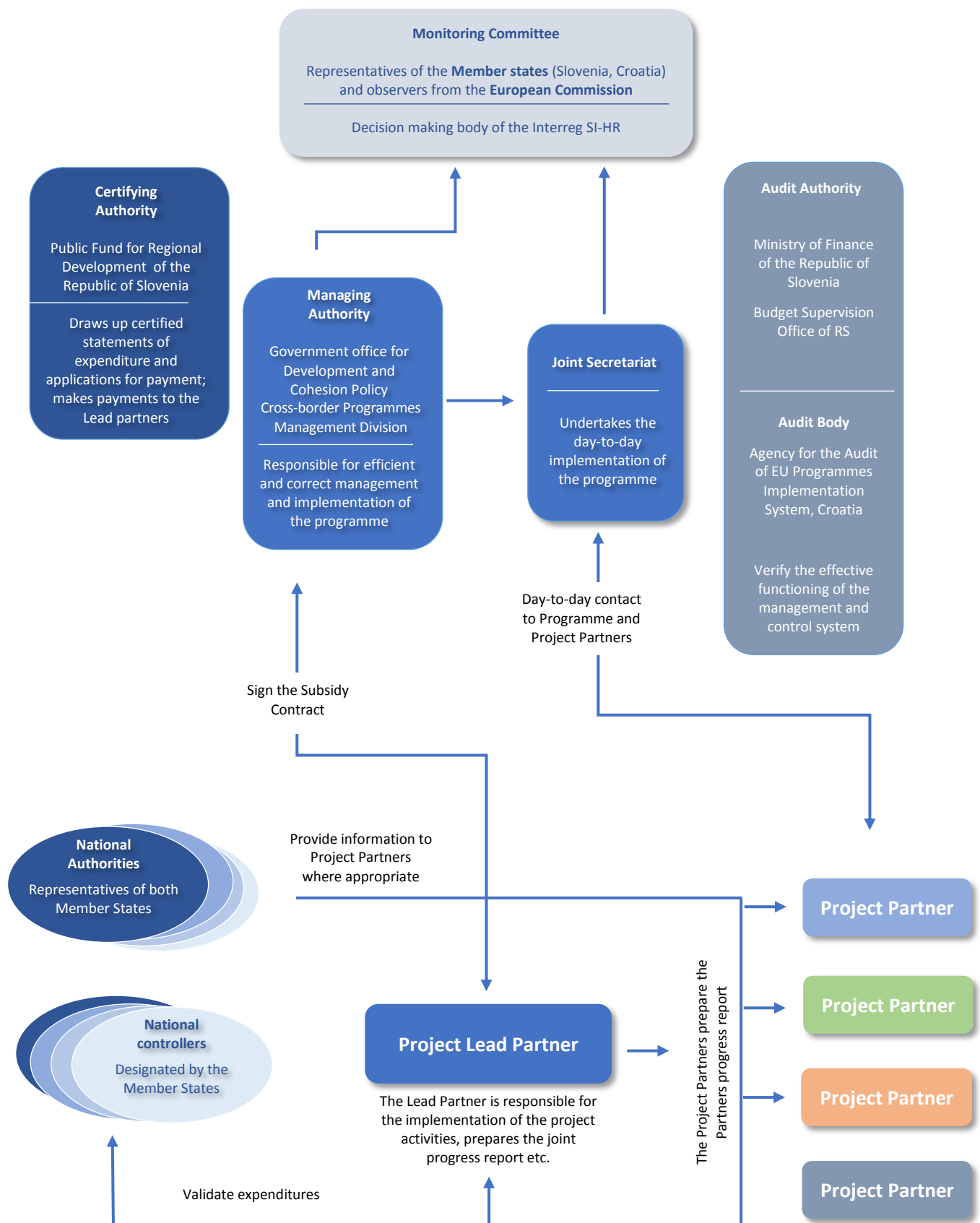
The National Controllers verify the delivery of the co-financed products and services, the soundness of the declared expenditure and the compliance of such expenditure with EU, programme and national rules. For this purpose, each Member State has designated controllers that are responsible for verifying the legality and regularity of the expenditure declared by each Lead and Project Partner participating in a project located on its territory.

### **Monitoring Committee (MC)**

The Monitoring Committee steers the programme, supervises the quality and effectiveness of its implementation and decides on the approval or rejection of the projects for funding. It is composed of representatives of both Member States, Slovenia and Croatia. The list of the Monitoring Committee members is available on the programme website.

## PART 1: ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

Figure 2: Programme management structure



## PART 1: ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

### 1.8 Electronic monitoring system (eMS)

For the monitoring of the implementation, including the application process and reporting, the Interreg SI-HR programme uses the eMS information system. The eMS is a monitoring system with communication portal to support submission, approval, management and administration, reporting and monitoring of projects. The system supports collection of all information on submitted and approved projects, their assessment, implementation and achievements as well as modifications and closure.

**New:** In comparison to 2007 - 2013 period, instead of the ISARR Monitoring System, the eMS will be used for submission of the applications and reporting of expenditure.

## 2. LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND PROGRAMME RELATED DOCUMENTS

Projects implemented under the programme must comply with EU rules governing the Structural Funds, the national legislation, and must show coherence and complementarities with regional, national and sectoral development strategies/programmes. The documents or web links to the relevant documents listed below (not exhaustive list) are provided on the programme website [www.si-hr.eu](http://www.si-hr.eu).

### Relevant programme documents

- Cooperation Programme Interreg V-A Slovenia-Croatia (adopted by the European Commission Decision C(2015)6775 final as of 30 September 2015)

### Key regulations for the European Structural and Investment funds (basic EU Regulations for the period 2014-2020)

#### ✓ Common Provisions Regulation (CPR)

Regulation (EU) **No 1303/2013** of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and laying down general provisions on the European Regional development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006

#### ✓ ETC Regulation

Commission Regulation (EU) **No 1299/2013** of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on specific provisions for the support from the European Regional Development Fund to the European Territorial Cooperation Goal

#### ✓ ERDF Regulation

Commission Regulation (EU) **No 1301/2013** of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on the Regional Development fund and on specific provisions concerning the Investment for growth and jobs goal and repealing regulation No 1080/2006

#### ✓ EGTC Regulation

Regulation (EU) **No 1302/2013** of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 amending Regulation (EU) No 1082/2006 on a European grouping of

## PART 1: ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

territorial cooperation (EGTC) as regards the clarification, simplification and improvement of the establishment of such groupings

### Strategic framework

- ✓ Europe 2020: A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, Communication from the Commission, COM(2010)2020 final
- ✓ Danube Strategy: European Union strategy for the Danube region, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and social Committee and the Regions, COM(2010) 715 final
- ✓ The European Union Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR, 2014)
- ✓ The European Union Strategy for the Alpine Region (EUSALP, 2015)

### National basic rules

Besides EU rules and rules of the Cooperation Programme, national rules have to be respected as well. We would like to highlight some examples:

- ✓ **Procurement of goods and services:** whether the beneficiary is public or private, they all have to act in accordance with the public procurement rules applicable for the public beneficiaries.
- ✓ **State aid:** if the project or its activities are subject to State aid rules, the ceilings of public funding or aid intensity will have to be respected.
- ✓ Valid national legislation ruling **specific fields addressed by the project**, e.g. environmental interventions, natural and cultural heritage, construction, etc., has to be respected in preparing and implementing the projects.

## 3. INTERREG V-A SI-HR KEY PRINCIPLES

### 3.1 Result orientation

The strong focus in this programme period is given to the result orientation of a project with the demand for visible outputs and concrete results. The result-oriented approach is reflected in the new programme, as well as project intervention logic.

#### Programme intervention logic

In the 2014-2020 funding period the European Union requires from the programmes to set in place **result-oriented** intervention logic, demonstrating their clear contribution to the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy and to the achievements of economic, social and territorial cohesion. Programmes are to fund projects, which demonstrate the translation of outputs arising from “soft” actions (surveys, studies etc.) into concrete, visible and sustainable results. Those have to lead to a change (improvement) of the initial situation in the programme area.

The intervention logic of the CP Interreg SI-HR consist of four priority axes (including the axis for the Technical Assistance) and related specific objectives. For each specific objective expected results (see Part 1, Chapter 1.4) are defined which reflect changes that the

## PART 1: ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

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programme seeks to achieve for the entire programme area through the implementation of projects. Results and related changes are measured through result indicators linked to each programme specific objective.

### Project intervention logic

Projects have to strictly apply a result-oriented approach, clearly defining the results the project is striving for and linking them with the territorial challenges and needs.

**The coherence of the project intervention logic** (i.e. the project specific objectives, activities, outputs and expected results) **with the targeted specific objective of the programme is a pre-condition for a project to be funded** (see also Chapter 2.2 in Part 2 on developing the project intervention logic). Projects not showing a clear link to a programme specific objective and/or not contributing to the respective expected programme result will not be supported by the CP Interreg SI-HR.

## 3.2 Territorial relevance

Territorial relevance is one of the key quality requirements for a project to be funded. The cross-border relevance needs to be clearly demonstrated throughout the entire project, meaning that the problems identified cannot be solved efficiently by individual Member States:

- ✓ solutions are jointly developed by organizations in different counties/regions working together in a project, thereby showing a clear cross-border added value going beyond the mere results independently achievable in the involved countries/regions;
- ✓ project outputs should be embedded in a cross-border working approach;
- ✓ projects have to demonstrate an integrated approach to regional development by combining thematic (the perceived needs of the programme area) and territorial approach (actual effects detected in the programme area).

## 3.3 Partnership relevance

In order to achieve tangible project results it is essential to involve partners who are most relevant and competent for the development, implementation, communication as well as capitalization of the planned project main outputs and results. In this respect, for designing a relevant partnership the thematic competence and expertise, geographical and institutional relevance have to be considered.

The partnership should reflect the integrated territorial approach to regional development to be set in place by the project. All partners have to be involved in a way that demonstrates the joint implementation and the cross-border added value of the project.

More on how to set up a quality partnership is available in the Implementation Manual for Beneficiaries, Part 2, Chapter 2.3.



## PART 1: ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

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### 3.4 Sustainability

The sustainability of project outputs and results is crucial for ensuring territorial impact on the area and long-term benefits for its inhabitants which continue after the project end in order to reach the project's overall objectives.

Therefore, projects have to ensure that outputs obtained and results achieved are durable and suitable to be independently continued after project closure.

In order to achieve sustainability, projects need to follow from the beginning a longer-term, strategic perspective that leads to desired results for the target groups over an extended time frame. In order to achieve such long-term benefits, it is essential to consider needs of key stakeholders as well as the institutional context already when planning the project. In particular, key stakeholders and project beneficiaries should be actively involved from the early stages of the project development.

A distinction between the following dimensions of sustainability should be made: **financial sustainability** (financing of follow-up activities and investments, resources for covering future operating and maintenance costs, etc.) and **institutional sustainability** ("ownership" of project outputs - which structures will allow the results of the project to continue to be in place and be developed after the project end).

### 3.5 Horizontal principles

A horizontal principle is a principle that must be integrated throughout the programme and in all projects. Therefore, every project approved by the Interreg SI-HR programme is required to contribute to the following horizontal principles.

#### 3.5.1 Sustainable development

Sustainable development is integrated as horizontal principle in the Cooperation Programme. Therefore, all projects supported by the programme will have to respect the relevant policies and rules. Applicants have to describe the contribution to sustainable development, explaining how the economic, environmental and social sustainability principle is anchored within the project design and planned activities.

#### 3.5.2 Equal opportunities and non-discrimination

Projects have to ensure that the activities implemented are in line with the principle of equal opportunities and do not generate discrimination of any kind (sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation).

Applicants have to describe the contribution to equal opportunities and non-discrimination, explaining how the equal opportunity principle is anchored within the project design and planned activities.

Besides actions of projects which explicitly address the reduction of disparities, all projects submitted under any priority axis are encouraged to incorporate measures for promoting equal opportunities and preventing any discrimination, for example by actively tackling concerns of demographic change and inequality. All projects will be encouraged to integrate measures, which actively seek to diminish the specific challenges identified in the

## PART 1: ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

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programme area (e.g. better social inclusion of disadvantaged groups). Projects are also encouraged to integrate the principle of barrier-free accessibility at all levels.

### ***3.5.3 Equality between men and women***

Projects have to ensure that the activities implemented are in line with the principle of equality between men and women and do not generate discrimination of any kind.

Applicants have to describe the contribution to this principle, explaining how the equality principle is anchored in the project design and planned activities.

Projects submitted under any priority axis are encouraged to incorporate measures for integrating the gender perspective, for example by integrating equal participation of women and men and/or actively promoting gender mainstreaming.

In general, projects submitted under any priority axis are strongly encouraged to incorporate also activities for tackling environmental concerns and **reducing their environmental impact**, for example by:

- ✓ Contribution to reduced transport and mobility related air pollution (in particular for short travel distances).
- ✓ Contribution to the development of green infrastructures and technologies.
- ✓ Contribution to more employment opportunities, training and education possibilities as well as support services regarding environmental protection and sustainable development.
- ✓ Application of green public procurement in a methodological way.
- ✓ Considering online meetings instead of face-to-face meetings where possible.
- ✓ Organising conferences and events in a sustainable way (e.g. by combining different meetings in one place, reducing printing and using recyclable materials, using video conference facilities, etc.).