

**Interreg Slovakia - Czechia
Cross-Border Cooperation Programme
2021–2027**

The programme has been drawn up according to the model form for Interreg programmes annexed to Regulation (EU) 2021/1059 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 laying down specific provisions concerning the European territorial cooperation (Interreg) objective supported by European Regional Development Fund and external financial instruments (hereinafter referred to as the „Interreg Regulation“).

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Strand	

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Complete name
CBC	Cross-Border Cooperation
CF	Cohesion Fund
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CR	Czech Republic
DNSH	Do No Significant Harm
EC Commission	European Commission
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ERDF/CF Regulation	Regulation (EU) 2021/1058 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 on the European Regional Development Fund and the Cohesion Fund
ESF	European Social Fund
ESIF	European Structural and Investment Funds
ESPN	European Observation Network for Territorial Development and Cohesion
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HEI	Higher Education Institution
INTERACT	An EU programme that provides services (trainings, seminars, manuals, IT tools) to other Interreg programmes
Interreg Regulation	Regulation (EU) 2021/1059 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 on specific provisions concerning the European territorial cooperation (Interreg) objective supported by the European Regional Development Fund and the external financial instruments
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
IT	Information Technology
MC	Monitoring Committee
NATURA 2000	A network of protected areas of the EU member states
NFC	Non-refundable Financial Contribution
OCT	Overseas Countries and Territories
OP	Operation Programme
PA	Priority Axis
Programme	Interreg Slovakia - Czechia Cross-Border Cooperation Programme 2021–2027
SCO	Simplified Cost Options
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SK-CZ	Slovakia - Czechia
SPF	Small Project Fund
SR	Slovak Republic
TA	Technical Assistance
Task Force	Task Force
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

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1. Joint programme strategy: main development challenges and policy responses

1.1 Programme area (not required for Interreg C programmes)

Reference: point (a) of Article 17(3), point (a) of Article 17(9)

The programme area in which the implementation of the projects is to have an impact are NUTS III regions - in the Slovak Republic the Trnava self-governing region, the Trenčín self-governing region and the Žilina self-governing region, in the Czech Republic the South Moravian region, the Zlín region and the Moravian-Silesian region.

1.2 Joint programme strategy: Summary of main joint challenges, taking into account economic, social and territorial disparities as well as inequalities, joint investment needs and complimentary and synergies with other funding programmes and instruments, lessons-learnt from past experience and macro-regional strategies and sea-basin strategies where the programme area as a whole or partially is covered by one or more strategies.

Reference: point (b) of Article 17(3), point (b) of Article 17(9)

Characteristics of the programme area with emphasis on economic, social and territorial disparities and inequalities

Characteristics of the area

Between the border regions of the Slovak Republic and the Czech Republic, there is a relatively distinct natural border formed by the mountains and the Morava River, which contributes to the formation of the outer periphery in both countries. This phenomenon negatively affects the economic and social development of the territory and thus the quality of life of a significant part of the 1,841 million inhabitants on the Slovak side and the 2,975 million inhabitants on the Czech side of the supported territory.

In the field of demography, two negative tendencies, which can already be observed today, will become more pronounced in the medium and especially in the long term. The first problem is the outflow of inhabitants from parts of the territory that are more distant from the development axes, thus creating peripheries. The second and equally serious problem in the supported territory is the significant ageing of the population. According to forecasts, the number of seniors in the supported territory will be many times greater than the number of children within a decade. Where these two risks are potentially interlinked, it is necessary to respond with appropriate measures. The aim in this case is to support the maintenance of local economic activities so as not to put pressure on the migration of the younger generation in particular.

Economic structure

The strengths of the border regions are the tradition of industrial production, a high degree of diversification of industrial and agricultural production and well-developed services. In terms of regional GDP per capita, the South Moravian region was the best performing in 2018, slightly lagging behind the Czech average. On the Slovak side, it was the Trnava region, whose produced GDP slightly exceeded the national average. In 2014-2018, however, there was a large difference in the growth dynamics of regional GDP between the Czech and Slovak

sides of the region. While GDP per capita in the Moravian-Silesian, South Moravian and Zlín regions increased by 12-17%, in the Trenčín, Žilina and Trnava regions it was only 3-5%.

Across the whole territory, average gross monthly wages increased significantly between 2010 and 2019, by 52% in Slovakia and by 40% in the Czech Republic. Given the generally favourable economic conditions, the favourable disposition of the productive sectors, the increasing inflow of investments, and the strong development potential of the region, there are prerequisites for further stable growth of economic activity in the whole region.

Labour market

In terms of the share of the economically active population, the employment shares of the individual sectors of the economy and the unemployment rate, there are no major differences in the territory. The labour market in the border regions is interlinked to a limited extent; however, its strength is the low unemployment rate. In terms of unemployment, all regions on the Slovak side of the supported territory have a lower registered unemployment rate than the national average, although the situation varies between districts (e.g. 5.25% in Bytča district compared to 1.93% in Trenčín district). As regards the indicator of the share of unemployed persons on the Czech side, of the regions under observation, only the Zlín region reaches the national level, while in the other two regions the share of unemployed persons is slightly above the average for the Czech Republic. Similarly to the Slovak Republic, the situation in the border districts is different (for example, in the Hodonín district it reached 4.70% compared to the Czech average of 2.87%).

An area where there are clear differences between countries is cross-border labour mobility. While 29,100 Slovak citizens were employed in the Czech Republic in 2019, only 5,979 Czech citizens were employed in the Slovak Republic in the same year. The likely reason for this is the long-term better labour market situation in the Czech Republic compared to the Slovak Republic. However, these figures have been on a downward trend in both countries in recent years, which is mainly due to the improving situation on the labour market.

Cross-border employment does not represent a significant opportunity to further reduce unemployment in the Slovak Republic or the Czech Republic. Therefore, from this perspective, the potential impact of the Programme on the structure of the economy is negligible, while more realistic opportunities may be presented by activities aimed at employment development through the promotion of sub-economic or entrepreneurial opportunities. However, the pandemic situation must also be taken into account, as measures against the spread of COVID-19 and the related fears of the population may pose a barrier to cross-border employment in the coming period as well. On the other hand, however, modifications to labour legislation have been made in the context of the anti-pandemic measures, which are likely to remain in force in the future and have the potential to change the forms of employment in both countries. This could prospectively contribute to a further reduction of unemployment also in the border regions.

Education

There is a relatively favourable educational level and a sufficient network of primary and secondary schools in the programme area. The problems encountered in the regional education system in the programme area are broadly similar and broadly replicate the national situation in both republics. In particular, there is a persistent mismatch between the requirements of the labour market and the education system, resulting in a lack of labour market employability of graduates according to their qualifications. On both sides of the border there is a demand for secondary and higher technical professions for the growing automotive industry and IT sector, which the education system is not able to sufficiently satisfy. One of the reasons for the

current situation is the long-term decline in the number of students in vocational secondary schools. However, significant differences between the Slovak and Czech parts of the programme area can be found in the field of higher education - not only in terms of capacity (almost three times more students study at the Czech side of the programme area than on the Slovak side of the programme area), but also in terms of quality (the ranking of Brno HEIs in world rankings). This also implies a higher attractiveness of HEIs on the Czech side of the territory for Slovak students than vice versa. The COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021 has brought new challenges for the education systems in both countries, especially in relation to the forced transition to online and distance learning. It has also highlighted the irreplaceable importance of the educational and socialising function of schools and the associated demands on the personal and technical competences of educators.

Science, research and innovation

In the supported territory there are universities with a variety of fields of study, which are linked to both theoretical and applied research. Due to the diverse and well-developed industrial production (e.g. automotive, electrical, chemical, food industry), there is a particular demand for applied research. Human resources are an important factor in the research and development system. Although the share of R&D (research and development) employment is on a steady upward trend, the overall volume of professional capacity, especially in Slovakia, appears insufficient at present.

On the Slovak side of the area, there is a significant underfunding of research activities. In contrast, the Czech Republic is gradually approaching the EU average in terms of R&D funding as a proportion of GDP, with the private sector accounting for around two thirds of total resources.

Tourism

The tourism sector is a significant part of the economic activities of the supported area. It not only contributes to economic prosperity, but also creates a significant number of job opportunities. Almost half of the foreign visitors to the Czech part of the programme area are citizens of neighbouring countries (Slovakia, Poland and Austria), and most of them are from Slovakia. The situation is similar on the Slovak side, where about half of the foreign visitors are citizens of the Czech Republic, Poland, Austria and Hungary, and here too the Czech citizens dominate. In terms of domestic tourism, the most visited regions are the South Moravian region on the Czech side and the Žilina region on the Slovak side. Even in terms of foreign visitors, these regions dominate, if we do not take into account the capital cities. The potential for the development of regional tourism, both in the narrower context of the border area (Euroregions Pomoraví, White Carpathians and Beskydy), but also in the wider context of the whole programme area, can be considered high.

In all border areas (regions), the accommodation capacities rate in 2019 increased slightly compared to 2014. It is clear from the current availability of accommodation capacities that it is advisable to focus on making tourist destinations more attractive all year round. The potential of overnight activities and related services is not sufficiently exploited throughout the programme area. Weaknesses include in particular access to and promotion of existing attractions (tourist routes, cycle paths). There is also insufficient development of joint local branding based on cultural and natural heritage and close cooperation between destination managements on both sides of the border.

The development of tourism can have a negative impact on the quality of the environment (increase in visitors and the associated emissions, waste, etc.). In the context of investment in the development of tourism infrastructure, it is therefore necessary to consider parallel investment in environmental protection in the border areas. It will also be particularly

important for the programme area how quickly the tourism sector, which was significantly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021, can return to pre-crisis mode.

Natural and cultural heritage

The strengths of the whole area are the diversity and uniqueness of historical and natural monuments, the richness and diversity of local culture, customs and traditions, the lively regional folklore and traditional crafts. There are many opportunities for cultural and sporting activities and visits to natural and historical monuments in the area.

On the Slovak side, the Žilina region stands out in terms of natural and cultural attractions, with four national parks and three sites on the UNESCO List of Cultural and Natural Heritage. The Žilina region also has the largest range of theatres, museums and galleries. On the Czech side of the territory, the natural and cultural heritage is most concentrated in the South Moravian region, although the differences with the Zlín and Moravian-Silesian regions are not as pronounced as on the Slovak side of the territory. However, the Podyjí National Park and the Moravian Karst, which is popular with tourists, are located here, as well as the largest range of cultural monuments. At the same time, Brno, as the largest city in the area, is a natural centre of culture.

Environment

Thanks to several protected areas and the existence of several national parks in the supported territories, the quality of the environment in the border foothills and mountains is relatively high. There is also a relatively high proportion of species-rich forest cover in the supported territory, which is more resilient to negative impacts. Strengths also include the existing strict environmental protection legislation and the growing support for alternative energy sources. A functioning flood monitoring and warning system also contributes to environmental protection. The large proportion of forest cover in the northern part of the area to the west, east and south-east of the Ostrava agglomeration and throughout the Slovak part of the supported area helps to mitigate the impacts of poor air quality and the risk of drying up of small watercourses.

A weakness of the programme area is the severely degraded environmental quality in the urbanisation zone of Považie and Horná Nitra and the associated pollution of a significant part of the hydrological network. Air quality is poor in northern and central Moravia, which is only slowly improving. Poor air quality also affects a large part of protected areas. Frequent and abrupt changes in short-term rainfall due to climate change usually have serious economic consequences. The high risk of drying up of small watercourses, especially in southern Moravia, is linked to a drop in groundwater levels.

In the future, the impact of climate changes can be expected to increase, both nationally and locally. In the long term, heavy rainfall will require more preventive flood control measures to limit its economic impacts. Air protection will remain an important priority and programmatic limitation of exhalations will continue. Combating drought will also be a priority at all levels. In particular, water retention in the landscape will be a priority, which will have a positive impact on the development of water-dependent ecosystems, but also on the increased protection and productivity of agricultural land.

Transport

The current state of the transport infrastructure of the supported area on both sides is only partially satisfactory, because the road infrastructure is not fully completed, which has a negative impact on the traffic intensity, especially on the passable sections of towns and villages. The existing infrastructure also presents significant safety risks at current traffic volumes. Similarly, the railway infrastructure on both sides of the border has systemic deficiencies which can only be compensated for by large investments. Integrated transport

systems are more developed in the Czech Republic than in the Slovak Republic, but their cross-border reach is still rather exceptional. However, the focus of funding for transport infrastructure development and quality assurance lies with national resources and other operational programmes of the ESIF.

Cross-border links, institutional cooperation, local community cooperation

For the regions on the Slovak-Czech border, close cooperation, family and work ties dating back to the times of the common republic and the preservation of the above-standard border regime after the division of the common state are a matter of course. The pillar of the existing cross-border cooperation is, above all, the good relations at the level of the regional authorities. Bilateral and multilateral cooperation also exists at the level of many municipalities, state institutions, schools and associations. Euroregions represent a higher form of cross-border cooperation, based on citizens' initiatives and competences of local authorities. This form of cooperation is an effective way of sustainable development of border regions, as Euroregions are permanent structures with their own identity and administrative, technical and financial resources. The European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation is a format that is still relatively underused. At the local level, people-to-people initiatives are also popular, providing flexible support for individual and group activities, with an emphasis on cross-border exchanges, meetings and cooperation. Despite the above-standard relations and the cultural and legislative proximity of the two countries, there are a number of thematic areas where there is scope for identifying and removing administrative barriers and finding common solutions to improve the quality of life of people in border regions.

Joint needs of the programme area

The socio-economic analysis of the programme area has highlighted a wide range of needs in the area that can be addressed through cross-border cooperation. The areas listed below have been identified as key areas to be targeted by the Programme.

Environment

- disaster management
- adaptation of ecosystems to climate changes
- biodiversity conservation and restoration
- reducing pollution

Education

- exchange of knowledge, experience, expertise and good practice between educational institutions at all levels of education from pre-primary to higher education

Culture and tourism

- preservation and restoration of cultural and natural heritage
- tourism products and their promotion

Institutional cooperation

- cooperation between public administrations and cooperating entities on both sides of the border area

Local initiatives - Small Project Fund

- creation of new and strengthening of existing partnerships, networks and cross-border structures, including leisure and interest activities

Complementarity and synergies with other programmes and funding instruments

In line with the ERDF/CF Regulation, the Programme priorities focus on Policy Objective 2 (a greener, low-carbon and resilient Europe transitioning to a zero net carbon economy through the promotion of a clean and fair energy transition, green and blue investments, circular economy, climate change mitigation and adaptation, risk prevention and management, and sustainable urban mobility) and 4 (a more social and inclusive Europe through the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights), as well as for the Interreg Specific Objective 1 - Better Cooperation Governance.

The main development needs of the territory are primarily addressed on both sides of the border through interventions at national and regional level. Cross-border cooperation between the Slovak Republic and the Czech Republic is a complementary mechanism, given the limited volume of resources, to address part of the identified needs that can be effectively addressed through jointly targeted support. Complementarity and synergy effects will arise in the programme area in particular with the following programmes and funding instruments:

- National Operational Programmes of the Investing in Jobs and Growth Objective co-financed by the ERDF, CF and ESF+.

In the Slovak Republic, there will be one Slovakia operational programme, under which interventions are planned in the areas of (i) support for climate change adaptation, risk prevention and disaster resilience, (ii) improving the protection of nature, landscape, biodiversity and ecosystem services, (iii) quality inclusive education, (iv) building administrative and analytical-strategic capacities of local and regional authorities, (v) improving management, services and infrastructure supporting cultural heritage, community development and sustainable tourism. The Slovakia OP also includes a Just Transition Fund which will support the social, employment, economic and environmental aspects of the transition towards the Union's 2050 climate target and a climate-neutral economy based on the Paris Treaty.

In the Czech Republic, complementarities and synergies will be created with several operational programmes. Environmental themes are covered by Životní prostředí OP and the field of education, especially non-investment activities co-financed by ESF+, are covered by Jan Amos Komenský OP. The Integrated Regional Operational Programme also focuses on national interventions on improving public administration, nature and biodiversity protection, climate change adaptation, risk prevention and disaster resilience, educational infrastructure and support for culture and tourism, among others. The Moravian-Silesian region, as one of the so-called coal regions, will be an eligible territory under the Spravedlivá transformace OP (Fair Transformation).

- National Recovery Plans co-financed by the European Union Recovery Facility aim to support recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. In Slovakia, the Recovery Plan priorities include regional adaptation to climate change with an emphasis on nature conservation and biodiversity development, the development of education at all levels and the digitisation of public administration. Národní plán obnovy (The National Recovery Plan) of the Czech Republic is built on similar pillars: digital transformation, nature conservation and adaptation to climate change, biodiversity promotion and the fight against drought, innovation in education and adaptation of school curricula.

- Cross-border cooperation programmes under which the Trnava and South Moravian regions are eligible territories for cooperation with Austria, the Žilina and Moravian-Silesian regions for cooperation with Poland and the Trnava region with Hungary.
- Transnational and interregional cooperation programmes (Interreg Central Europe, Interreg Europe, Interreg Danube, Interact and ESPON).

The programme will incentivise beneficiaries to implement activities and investments, taking into account the sustainability, aesthetics and inclusiveness principles of the New European Bauhaus initiative, in order to find affordable, inclusive, sustainable and attractive solutions to climate challenges. As this initiative highlights the benefits of environmental transformation through tangible experiences and changes at local level, the CBC programme has great potential to contribute to its vision. For example, through a place-based approach in supporting climate change adaptation and biodiversity enhancement through the exchange of experiences/information and the implementation of joint strategies, outreach activities relevant and targeted specifically to the region. The programme directly supports local initiatives such as joint actions, meetings, cultural events that bring communities together, thus contributing to increasing social inclusion, cohesion and a sense of belonging. A significant part of the funding will be dedicated to the preservation and transformation of cultural heritage, with the aim of improving access to cultural heritage for all and with a low carbon footprint (by supporting green tourism infrastructure).

In line with the EU's ambition to contribute to mainstreaming biodiversity interventions, the CBC programme SK-CZ has allocated 12% of the total allocation to biodiversity. Similarly, 13% of the allocation is earmarked to support climate action.

Strategic use of public procurement in support of strategic objectives (including professionalisation efforts to address institutional capacity gaps) will be promoted throughout the implementation of the programme. Beneficiaries should be encouraged to pay more attention to quality and life cycle cost criteria. Where possible, environmental (e.g. green procurement criteria) and social aspects and incentives for innovation will be included in public procurement procedures.

Lessons-learnt from past experience

The CBC programme SK-CZ has been continuously implemented in the programme area for more than 20 years; the period 2021-2027 is already its fourth post-programme period. The set-up of the programme interventions has evolved gradually since 2004, while maintaining a high degree of consistency, signalling their high relevance to the needs of the territory and their complementarity with other available funding sources.

The relevance of the intervention logic in the 2014-2020 programming period has also been confirmed by the independent mid-term evaluation of the programme carried out in 2019 and 2020. According to its findings, the development and protection of cultural and natural heritage is clearly the most important theme. A growing number of entities are interested in cooperation in this field, resulting in a high absorption capacity. Environmental protection as well as the promotion of institutional cooperation and people-to-people activities are stable themes of the programme with a reasonable interest from applicants. In the 2014-2020 programming period, the slowest uptake of allocated resources was in priority axis 1, both in the field of education and in the field of exploitation of the results of applied research. The likely reasons for this are the different readiness of the regions on the topic of innovation and the lack of awareness of eligible applicants in the field of education of the potential benefits of cross-border projects. In addition, the innovation and education themes were also massively supported by the national ESIF programmes, which may have reduced the interest of potential applicants.

Based on the lessons learned from the 2014-2020 programming period, the philosophy of the new programme is even more strongly based on interventions that are essentially a superstructure of large national operational programmes, while creating added value in the form of cross-border cooperation between Czech and Slovak entities. In terms of thematic focus, the programme has undergone a number of significant changes compared to the previous programming period. While new activities have been added in the field of environment, such as flood protection, the programme no longer includes interventions to support the exploitation of applied research results. In the field of education, the emphasis is on innovative approaches and new themes that can be more focused on social and educational elements in addition to content and didactics. In the field of culture and tourism, the programme aims to provide more support for interventions that make lesser-known sites more attractive to tourists and thus contribute to the sustainable development of the whole territory. All thematic areas also have to deal with the technological and societal risks and impacts brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

In terms of programme implementation of the 2014-2020 programming period, the most significant impact was the fact that the Interreg V-A SK-CZ programme was included in the ESIF Management System. The programme has been adapting to the implementation procedures established for national programmes, which has had a largely negative impact on its implementation, as the intended „appropriate“ application of the ESIF Management System has gradually changed into a requirement for full compliance with most of its provisions. The specificities of cross-border cooperation were taken into account in the form of exceptions, which slowed down its implementation considerably. In terms of the administrative burden on applicants and beneficiaries, the most problematic were the processes of contracting, implementation and control of public procurement and the change procedure. In 2020 and 2021, many projects had to be suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which limited the possibility to travel and made it impossible to hold activities with the physical participation of partners and target groups.

Based on this experience, the 2021-2027 CBC programmes are exempted from the Slovak ESIF Management System, which will allow the relevant management processes to be set up taking into account the needs of the CBC programmes. Expenditure can also be incurred outside the eligible territory, but the impacts of the implementation of the project activities must be in the eligible programme area, i.e. in the six border regions. This allows for the involvement of other entities from other regions.

Macro-regional strategies

The whole programme area is part of the EU Strategy for the Danube region (the Danube Strategy), which aims to intensify cooperation between the 14 countries involved in pursuing common priorities in the area. Although a separate transnational cooperation programme Interreg Danube is established to achieve the objectives of the Danube Strategy, the SK-CZ Cross-Border Cooperation Programme can contribute to some extent to the achievement of its objectives in the eligible border area of the Slovak and Czech Republic.

Horizontal principles

In accordance with point 6 of the preamble and Article 9 of Regulation (EU) No. 2021/1060 (hereinafter referred to as the „Common Provisions Regulation“) and also in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, due account shall be taken of the horizontal principles (respect for fundamental rights and compliance with the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, promotion and consideration of equality between men and women, equal opportunities, equal treatment and non-discrimination, taking into account accessibility for persons with disabilities, sustainable development) in the application,

selection, monitoring and evaluation process. Entities involved in the programme, including applicants and beneficiaries, will be bound by the horizontal principles.

1.3 Justification for the selection of policy objectives and the Interreg-specific objectives, corresponding priorities, specific objectives and the forms of support, addressing, where appropriate, missing links in cross-border infrastructure

Reference: point (c) of Article 17(3)

Table 1

Selected policy objective or selected Interreg-specific objective	Selected specific objective	Priority	Justification for selection
<p>PO 2: A greener, low-carbon transitioning towards a net zero carbon economy and resilient Europe by promoting clean and fair energy transition, green and blue investment, the circular economy, climate change mitigation and adaptation, risk prevention and management, and sustainable urban mobility</p>	<p>(iv) Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention and resilience, taking into account ecosystem based approaches</p>	<p>Environment</p>	<p>Although climate change is perceived as a global problem, it is desirable to support activities aimed at preventing its occurrence and eliminating its negative impacts also at the local level. In the supported territory, climate change is mainly manifested in a gradual increase in average annual temperatures and a decrease in average rainfall. Extreme meteorological phenomena such as flash floods or, conversely, droughts or heat waves can be observed more and more frequently. Climate change is having a negative impact on the environment and, consequently, on the economy in the region and in both countries.</p> <p>The natural disasters caused by climate change that have been identified as the primary risks in the supported territory include, in particular, the drying up of watercourses and the associated drop in groundwater levels, the threat of floods and water erosion, but also fires as a result of long periods of drought.</p> <p>This specific objective will therefore support climate change adaptation and disaster management at different levels. At expert level, this will mainly involve cross-border cooperation in data collection and analysis and exchange of experience. In response to current data and needs, different public administration institutions and emergency services will be supported in strengthening mutual cooperation and in developing and implementing joint strategies and measures. Interventions will also be targeted at the general public in order to raise awareness about climate change and possible adaptation measures in everyday life. It will also include awareness-raising activities aimed at changing public perceptions and attitudes towards the environment.</p> <p>The object of the support will be non-</p>

			commercial activities carried out in the public interest.
PO 2: A greener, low-carbon transitioning towards a net zero carbon economy and resilient Europe by promoting clean and fair energy transition, green and blue investment, the circular economy, climate change mitigation and adaptation, risk prevention and management, and sustainable urban mobility	(vii) Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution	Environment	<p>The strengths of the supported area include a high proportion of protected areas and also a relatively high presence of species-rich forest stands. On the other hand, the area is characterised by a disturbed quality of the environment, which is manifested in particular by poor air and water quality. The causes of the current situation can be found in the intensity of industrial activity, transport and agriculture, especially in the urbanisation zone of the supported territory. The long-term interest of the inhabitants of the region, but also of the general public of both countries, is to protect the biodiversity in these areas and to improve the current state of the environment.</p> <p>As this is an area that can also be improved through cross-border cooperation, this specific objective will support joint activities aimed at monitoring the current state of biodiversity and finding appropriate solutions to improve the status of species and habitats. Interventions will also support the exchange of experience and the implementation of joint measures to reduce pollution. Last but not least, this specific objective will also include joint public information and awareness-raising activities.</p> <p>The object of the support will be non-commercial activities carried out in the public interest.</p>
PO 4: A more social and inclusive Europe implementing the European Pillar of Social Rights	(ii) Improving equal access to inclusive and quality services in education, training and lifelong learning through developing accessible infrastructure, including by fostering resilience for distance and on-line education and training	Education	<p>Education systems on both sides of the border of the supported territory face broadly similar challenges in terms of both content and forms of education. In addition to the traditional lack of linkages between education and the labour market and the low interest in vocational training, the COVID-19 pandemic has added new problems related to distance learning and the accompanying socio-pathological phenomena.</p> <p>This specific objective will aim to jointly seek and test innovative solutions at all levels of education (from pre-primary to higher education) that will be used on both sides of the border. In particular, cross-border exchange of knowledge and experience between educational institutions, the creation of common</p>

			<p>content, the development of digital and didactic skills, cross-border mobility of pupils, students and teachers, as well as cooperation with employers and the prevention of socio-pathological phenomena among young people. Most of these activities are among the priorities of the Osnabrück 2020 Declaration.</p> <p>The object of the support will be non-commercial activities carried out in the public interest.</p>
PO 4: A more social and inclusive Europe implementing the European Pillar of Social Rights	(vi) Enhancing the role of culture and sustainable tourism in economic development, social inclusion and social innovation	Culture and tourism	<p>The extraordinary cultural-historical potential of the supported area is an opportunity for further development of tourism. It represents one of the key areas of cooperation between the border regions of the Slovak Republic and the Czech Republic and for this reason it has been supported for a long time also within the Interreg programme. By 2019, almost half of the foreign visitors to the Czech part of the programme area were citizens of neighbouring countries, with the largest number coming from Slovakia. The situation was similar on the Slovak side, where about half of the foreign visitors were citizens of the Czech Republic, Poland, Austria and Hungary, and here too guests from the Czech Republic dominated. The COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021 significantly affected the entire tourism sector. The CBC programme will therefore focus on supporting this sector to gradually return to its pre-pandemic development and to allow the region's visitor numbers to grow. Interventions in the 2021-2027 programming period will focus in particular on deepening cross-border cooperation between tourist destinations in the areas of management and promotion, with a view to increasing the comprehensiveness of the tourist offer in the region. To this end, it will also be possible to support the improvement of the technical condition of tangible cultural heritage, the retrofitting of exhibitions with cross-border significance and the construction or modernisation of tourist infrastructure.</p> <p>The object of the support will be non-commercial activities carried out in the public interest.</p>
ISO 1: A better cooperation governance	ii) enhance efficient public administration by promoting legal	Institutional cooperation	<p>Cross-border institutional cooperation between the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic is based primarily on the historical ties established during the</p>

	and administrative cooperation and cooperation between citizens, civil society actors and institutions, in particular with a view to resolving legal and other obstacles in border regions		<p>common state and the common membership in the EU. Due to the relatively high degree of compatibility of public administration systems and relevant legislation on both sides of the border, many entities are involved in various forms of cooperation and many of them have long-standing partners on the opposite side of the border.</p> <p>The CBC programme will continue to support them, focusing on identifying and reducing administrative and legislative barriers in different areas of life. In particular, interventions will be directed towards the establishment and further development of partnerships between public administrations and cooperating entities.</p> <p>The object of the support will be non-commercial activities carried out in the public interest.</p>
ISO 1: A better cooperation governance	iii) build up mutual trust, in particular by encouraging people-to-people actions	Local initiatives - Small Project Fund	<p>The continuing social ties and cultural affinity of Czechs and Slovaks are clearly beneficial for joint problem solving in the border region. However, in addition to institutional cooperation, further development is also needed at the community level, which contributes most to the social and civic cohesion of the border region.</p> <p>To this end, part of the support will also be channelled into people-to-people cooperation, in particular through leisure activities aimed at strengthening and promoting good neighbourly relations between the population. These activities help remove mutual prejudices and can also provide a space for innovative ideas that can later be scaled up in the form of larger projects.</p> <p>The object of the support will be non-commercial activities carried out in the public interest.</p>

2. Priorities

Reference: points (d) and (e) of Article 17(3)

- 2.1. Title of the priority (repeated for each priority)

1.1 Environment

- 2.1.1. Specific objective (repeated for each selected specific objective)

Reference: point (e) of Article 17(3)

(iv) Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention and resilience, taking into account eco-system based approaches

- 2.1.2. Related types of action, and their expected contribution to those specific objectives and to macro-regional strategies and sea-basin strategies, where appropriate

Reference: point (e)(i) of Article 17(3), point (c)(ii) of Article 17(9)

Climate change has a significant impact on the environment and consequently on the economy and quality of life. Although it is perceived as a global problem, it is desirable to support activities aimed at reducing its impact at the local level. The cross-border cooperation programme will support joint activities related to the prevention and recovery from natural disasters and to support ecosystems in their adaptation to climate change.

Both investment and non-investment activities will be financed under this priority.

Types of actions:

Collection and exchange of data, information and experience:

The focus of support is on the collection and exchange of data and information needed to prevent the negative impacts of climate change, to map the current situation in this area and to transfer know-how in the context of disaster management caused by climate change.

This type of action includes, for example: the collection and evaluation of climate data and the expected impacts of climate change, the production of analyses, models and forecasts of future climate change developments and the exchange of experience in this field (disaster management - floods, fires, water erosion, etc.).

Implementation of joint strategies and action plans:

The development of joint strategies and action plans for improving the environment, adapting to climate change and avoiding the negative impacts of climate change will be supported - but with a particular focus on the implementation of pilot actions.

This type of action includes, for example: the implementation of joint measures to prevent the drying up of water resources and aquatic ecosystems, the implementation of joint strategies and action plans to prevent and address the consequences of natural risks (floods, water erosion, fires, invasive plant and animal species), the development of joint integrated risk management systems.

Raising awareness on climate change mitigation and adaptation:

The support aims to raise awareness among different population groups and practical and concrete steps that can contribute to reducing the negative impacts of climate change.

This type of action includes, for example: raising awareness on the causes and impacts of climate change, with an emphasis on practical application in everyday life, dissemination of examples of good practice.

Expected results (contribution to the specific objective):

The implementation of joint activities will strengthen the links between relevant institutions and experts on both sides of the border, allowing appropriate measures to be taken and pilot projects with cross-border implications to be implemented. In the long term, the programme will contribute to reducing the negative impacts of climate change in the region and increase its resilience to risks and adverse natural phenomena. The public will be better informed about the current state of the climate and the impacts of climate change and about concrete and practical options for mitigation.

The types of actions have been assessed as compatible with the Do No Significant Harm (DNSH) principle as they are not expected to have any significant negative environmental impact due to their nature.

For the INTERACT and ESPON programme:

Reference: point (c)(i) of Article 17(9)

Definition of a single beneficiary or a limited list of beneficiaries and the granting procedure

Irrelevant

2.1.3. Indicators

Reference: point (e)(ii) of Article 17(3), point (c)(iii) of Article 17(9)

Table 2
Output indicators

Priority	Specific objective	ID [5]	Indicator	Measurement unit [255]	Milestone (2024) [200]	Final target (2029) [200]
PO 2	iv	RCO 81	Participations in joint actions across borders	Number of participants	22	216
PO 2	iv	RCO 83	Strategies and action plans jointly developed	Number of strategies/ action plans	0	11
PO 2	iv	RCO 84	Pilot actions developed jointly and implemented in projects	Number of pilot actions	0	11
PO 2	iv	RCO 87	Organisations cooperating across borders	Number of organisations	4	37
PO 2	iv	RCO 116	Jointly developed solutions	Number of solutions	0	6

Table 3
Result indicators

Priority	Specific objective	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline	Reference year	Final target (2029)	Source of data	Comments
PO 2	iv	RCR 79	Joint strategies and action plans taken up by organisations	Number of strategies / action plans	0	2021	10	Monitoring system	
PO 2	iv	RCR 84	Organisations cooperating across borders after project completion	Number of organisations	0	2021	30	Monitoring system	
PO 2	iv	RCR 85	Participations in joint actions across borders after project completion	Number of participants	0	2021	43	Monitoring system	
PO 2	iv	RCR 104	Solutions taken up or up-scaled by organisations	Number of solutions	0	2021	3	Monitoring system	

2.1.4. Main target groups

Reference: point (e)(iii) of Article 17(3), point (c)(iv) of Article 17(9)

The main target groups are the entities that will be positively affected by the results of the implemented activities:

- inhabitants of the border region,
- visitors to the border region.

Target groups may also include public sector bodies, non-governmental non-profit organisations, as well as organisations focusing on environmental protection, water management, agriculture, forestry and disaster management.

2.1.5. Indication of the specific territories targeted, including the planned use of ITI, CLLD or other territorial tools

Reference: Article point (e)(iv) of 17(3)

Irrelevant

2.1.6. Planned use of financial instruments

Reference: point (e)(v) of Article 17(3)

Irrelevant

2.1.7. Indicative breakdown of the EU programme resources by type of intervention

Reference: point (e)(vi) of Article 17(3), point (c)(v) of Article 17(9)

Table 4

Dimension 1 – intervention field

Priority no	Fund	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
PO 2	ERDF	iv	<p>058 Adaptation to climate change measures and prevention and management of climate related risks: floods and landslides (including awareness raising, civil protection and disaster management systems, infrastructures and ecosystem based approaches)</p> <p>059 Adaptation to climate change measures and prevention and management of climate related risks: fires (including awareness raising, civil protection and disaster management systems, infrastructures and ecosystem based approaches)</p> <p>060 Adaptation to climate change measures and prevention and management of climate related risks: others, e.g. storms and drought (including awareness raising, civil protection and disaster management systems, infrastructures and ecosystem based approaches)</p> <p>064 Water management and water resource conservation (including river basin management, specific climate change adaptation measures, reuse, leakage reduction)</p>	10,366,418

Table 5

Dimension 2 – form of financing

Priority no	Fund	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
PO 2	ERDF	iv	01 Grant	10,366,418

Table 6

Dimension 3 – territorial delivery mechanism and territorial focus

Priority no	Fund	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
PO 2	ERDF	iv	33 No territorial targeting	10,366,418

2.2.1. Specific objective

Reference: point (e) of Article 17(3)

(vii) Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution

2.2.2. Related types of action, and their expected contribution to those specific objectives and to macro-regional strategies and sea-basin strategies, where appropriate

Reference: point (e)(i) of Article 17(3), point (c)(ii) of Article 17(9)

The high proportion of protected areas and the significant presence of species-rich forests require targeted biodiversity conservation interventions on both sides of the cross-border region. This priority will support joint activities aimed at maintaining the integrity of habitats, providing living space, but also space for animal migration by supporting the construction of green infrastructure and also through measures to reduce pollution.

Types of actions:

Collection and exchange of data, information and experience:

The focus of the support is on the collection and exchange of data and information needed to map the current situation in the field and the transfer of know-how in relation to the conservation and restoration of biodiversity in the supported area.

This type of action includes, for example: monitoring the status and evolution of species and habitats, producing studies, analyses related to biodiversity conservation (e.g. occurrence of invasive plant and animal species, status of different forms of pollution) and jointly seeking solutions, exchange of experience and good practice in the use of green infrastructure and pollution reduction.

Implementation of joint strategies and action plans:

The support focuses on the development of joint strategies and action plans for biodiversity conservation and restoration and pollution reduction - but with a particular emphasis on the implementation of pilot actions.

This type of action includes, for example: the implementation of joint actions to improve the status of species and habitats, the implementation of joint strategies and action plans supporting the construction, promotion and use of green infrastructure.

Awareness-raising activities on the need for biodiversity conservation:

Awareness-raising of different population groups on the benefits of building green infrastructure and on practical and concrete actions that can contribute to biodiversity conservation and pollution reduction in the supported area will be supported.

This type of action includes, for example: raising awareness of the importance of nature and biodiversity conservation, dissemination of examples of good practice.

Expected results (contribution to the specific objective):

The implementation of joint activities will contribute to strengthening existing and creating new partnerships and networks that will seek solutions for habitat conservation and protection of high biodiversity areas through exchange of experiences, joint action plans and strategies, exchange of experiences in the development of green infrastructure in urban environments (e.g. urban and municipal forest parks, urban and municipal protected areas and rest areas), including piloting of new approaches in practice. Joint projects will contribute to improved environmental quality in the region, benefiting both residents and visitors to the supported area. This priority will also result in better information on the state of the environment and increased awareness among residents of practical ways to protect nature.

The types of actions have been assessed as compatible with the DNSH principle as they are not expected to have any significant negative environmental impact due to their nature.

For the INTERACT and ESPON programme:

Reference: point (c)(i) of Article 17(9)

Definition of a single beneficiary or a limited list of beneficiaries and the granting procedure

Irrelevant

2.2.3. Indicators

Reference: point (e)(ii) of Article 17(3), point (c)(iii) of Article 17(9)

Table 2
Output indicators

Priority	Specific objective	ID [5]	Indicator	Measurement unit [255]	Milestone (2024) [200]	Final target (2029) [200]
PO 2	vii	RCO 81	Participations in joint actions across borders	Number of participants	20	199
PO 2	vii	RCO 83	Strategies and action plans jointly developed	Number of strategies / action plans	0	10
PO 2	vii	RCO 84	Pilot actions developed jointly and implemented in projects	Number of pilot actions	0	10
PO 2	vii	RCO 87	Organisations cooperating across borders	Number of organisations	3	34
PO 2	vii	RCO 116	Jointly developed solutions	Number of solutions	0	6

Table 3
Result indicators

Priority	Specific objective	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline	Reference year	Final target (2029)	Source of data	Comments
PO 2	vii	RCR 79	Joint strategies and action plans taken up by organisations	Number of strategies / action plans	0	2021	9	Monitoring system	
PO 2	vii	RCR 84	Organisations cooperating across borders after project completion	Number of organisations	0	2021	27	Monitoring system	
PO 2	vii	RCR 85	Participations in joint actions across borders after project completion	Number of participants	0	2021	40	Monitoring system	

PO 2	vii	RCR 104	Solutions taken up or up-scaled by organisations	Number of solutions	0	2021	3	Monitoring system	
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2.2.4. Main target groups

Reference: point (e)(iii) of Article 17(3), point (c)(iv) of Article 17(9)

The main target groups are the entities that will be positively affected by the results of the implemented activities:

- inhabitants of the border region,
- visitors to the border region.

Target groups may also include public sector bodies, non-governmental non-profit organisations, as well as environmental, biodiversity and green infrastructure organisations.

2.2.5. Indication of the specific territories targeted, including the planned use of ITI, CLLD or other territorial tools

Reference: Article point (e)(iv) of 17(3)

Irrelevant

2.2.6. Planned use of financial instruments

Reference: point (e)(v) of Article 17(3)

Irrelevant

2.2.7. Indicative breakdown of the EU programme resources by type of intervention

Reference: point (e)(vi) of Article 17(3), point (c)(v) of Article 17(9)

Table 4

Dimension 1 – intervention field

Priority no	Fund	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
PO 2	ERDF	vii	079 Nature and biodiversity protection, natural heritage and resources, green and blue infrastructure	9,569,002

Table 5

Dimension 2 – form of financing

Priority no	Fund	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
PO 2	ERDF	vii	01 Grant	9,569,002

Table 6

Dimension 3 – territorial delivery mechanism and territorial focus

Priority no	Fund	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
PO 2	ERDF	vii	33 No territorial targeting	9,569,002

2.3. Priority

Reference: point (d) of Article 17(3)

2.1 Education

2.3.1. Specific objective (repeated for each selected specific objective)

Reference: point (e) of Article 17(3)

(ii) Improving equal access to inclusive and quality services in education, training and lifelong learning through developing accessible infrastructure, including by fostering resilience for distance and on-line education and training

2.3.2. Related types of action, and their expected contribution to those specific objectives and to macro-regional strategies and sea-basin strategies, where appropriate

Reference: point (e)(i) of Article 17(3), point (c)(ii) of Article 17(9)

The border regions of the Czech-Slovak border area are characterised by a relatively well-developed infrastructure of schools at all ISCED levels. Despite the satisfactory quality of primary education and sufficient profiling of secondary and higher education, there is potential for improvement at all levels of education through cross-border cooperation.

Under this priority, non-investment activities will be financed. Where justified, equipment necessary for the implementation of activities may also be procured but must not represent a significant part of the project budget.

Type of action:

Exchange of knowledge, experience, expertise and good practice between educational institutions at all levels of education from pre-primary to higher education:

In order to improve the quality of educational content, cooperation will be promoted not only on the development of soft skills but also on vocational topics. The cooperation will be aimed at finding common themes and interests in the educational process in a cross-border context; a prerequisite of the outputs developed is their use on both sides of the border.

In order to improve the quality of forms of education, the introduction and strengthening of innovative ways of education and new didactic approaches will be promoted, including specific forms of education such as work with talents, pupils/students with special educational needs or practical training.

This type of action includes, for example: the creation of common educational materials and content, support for the development of digital skills, including online safety and the prevention of socio-pathological phenomena (cyber-bullying, discrimination, etc.), activities aimed at increasing the use of innovative and new forms and practices, including online and distance learning (e.g. activities promoting pupil and student mobility (between educational institutions) and teacher mobility, activities promoting cooperation with employers to increase the quality and relevance of dual and vocationally oriented education.

Expected results (contribution to the achievement of the specific objective):

Cross-border cooperation and exchange of experience, knowledge and good practice will contribute to the improvement of the quality of education (its content and forms) and to the increased connectivity of education to the specific needs of the border region.

The types of actions have been assessed as compatible with the DNSH principle as they are not expected to have any significant negative environmental impact due to their nature.

For the INTERACT and ESPON programme:

Reference: point (c)(i) of Article 17(9)

Definition of a single beneficiary or a limited list of beneficiaries and the granting procedure

Irrelevant

2.3.3. Indicators

Reference: point (e)(ii) of Article 17(3), point (c)(iii) of Article 17(9)

Table 2
Output indicators

Priority	Specific objective	ID [5]	Indicator	Measurement unit [255]	Milestone (2024) [200]	Final target (2029) [200]
PO 4	ii	RCO 85	Participations in joint training schemes	Number of participants	416	4,163
PO 4	ii	RCO 87	Organisations cooperating across borders	Number of organisations	7	68

Table 3
Result indicators

Priority	Specific objective	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline	Reference year	Final target (2029)	Source of data	Comments
PO 4	ii	RCR 81	Completions of joint training schemes	Number of participants	0	2021	3,330	Monitoring system	
PO 4	ii	RCR 84	Organisations cooperating across borders after project completion	Number of organisations	0	2021	54	Monitoring system	

2.3.4. Main target groups

Reference: point (e)(iii) of Article 17(3), point (c)(iv) of Article 17(9)

The main target groups are the entities that will be positively affected by the results of the implemented activities:

- inhabitants of the border region,
- visitors to the border region.

The target groups may also include the various components of the public sector, non-governmental non-profit organisations, as well as educational institutions/ schools and micro, small, medium and large enterprises.

- 2.3.5. Indication of the specific territories targeted, including the planned use of ITI, CLLD or other territorial tools

Reference: Article point (e)(iv) of 17(3)

Irrelevant

- 2.3.6. Planned use of financial instruments

Reference: point (e)(v) of Article 17(3)

Irrelevant

- 2.3.7. Indicative breakdown of the EU programme resources by type of intervention

Reference: point (e)(vi) of Article 17(3), point (c)(v) of Article 17(9)

Table 4

Dimension 1 – intervention field

Priority no	Fund	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
PO 4	ERDF	ii	145 Support for the development of digital skills 148 Support for early childhood education and care (excluding infrastructure) 149 Support for primary to secondary education (excluding infrastructure) 150 Support for tertiary education (excluding infrastructure)	7,176,751

Table 5

Dimension 2 – form of financing

Priority no	Fund	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
PO 4	ERDF	ii	01 Grant	7,176,751

Table 6

Dimension 3 – territorial delivery mechanism and territorial focus

Priority no	Fund	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
PO 4	ERDF	ii	33 No territorial targeting	7,176,751

2.4. Priority

Reference: point (d) of Article 17(3)

2.2 Culture and tourism

2.4.1. Specific objective (repeated for each selected specific objective)

Reference: point (e) of Article 17(3)

(vi) **Enhancing the role of culture and sustainable tourism in economic development, social inclusion and social innovation**

2.4.2. Related types of action, and their expected contribution to those specific objectives and to macro-regional strategies and sea-basin strategies, where appropriate

Reference: point (e)(i) of Article 17(3), point (c)(ii) of Article 17(9)

The economic and social impacts resulting from travel restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021 have also significantly affected the tourism sector, reducing cross-border tourist mobility to almost zero. The CBC Programme therefore builds on the support to this sector in previous programming periods and specifically focuses on harnessing the potential of culture and tourism to foster economic development, social inclusion and social innovation as one of the tools to mitigate the impact of the pandemic and increase the resilience of the region.

Both investment and non-investment activities will be funded under this priority. It will also include a **Small Project Fund** for smaller infrastructure investments.

Types of actions:

Conservation and restoration of cultural and natural heritage:

Under this type of action, emphasis will be placed on linking existing monuments and services on both sides of the supported territory and investment activities for the conservation or restoration of tangible and intangible cultural heritage of cross-border significance. It will therefore be possible to support activities to improve the technical condition of tangible cultural heritage and to retrofit the displays of cultural, technical and natural monuments with cross-border significance.

This type of action will also support activities aimed at preserving, modernising and building tourist infrastructure to connect attractions in the territory (cycling, walking, water, running infrastructure, rest areas, information and navigation systems, solutions for storing and parking bicycles or charging e-bikes, e-scooters, e-motorcycles).

This type of action includes, for example: activities aimed at preserving and improving the technical condition of tangible cultural heritage and natural monuments, activities aimed at building facilities for the preservation and development of intangible cultural heritage, including its digitisation, activities aimed at creating a comprehensive tourist offer in the border area (e.g. linking certain types of monuments in the form of nature trails, thematic routes), activities aimed at preserving, modernising and building tourist infrastructure.

Cooperation and exchange of experience in the creation and promotion of complex tourism products:

An important part of the support will be non-investment activities to raise public awareness and information about available tourism products and services. Support will also be directed towards making tourism products and destinations more attractive and strengthening destination management to support joint strategies and activities including joint marketing and promotion activities, exchange of information and know-how on quality systems, increasing the attractiveness of products and services for visitors, or creating joint products and destinations under a single label.

This type of action includes, for example: activities to raise awareness of the possibilities of exploiting the cultural and natural heritage in the border area, including innovative and digital approaches, the implementation of joint activities and strategies involving the integration of destinations, cooperation in the field of training of tourism professionals, exchange of know-how, etc.

Expected results (contribution to the achievement of the specific objective):

The activities supported will result in an increased supply of tourist attractions and an increased number and quality of tourism services in the cross-border region. The whole sector will gradually return to the continuous development before the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Tourist destinations will be better managed and promoted, including through strengthened cross-border links, joint products and innovative solutions. As a consequence of these factors, visitor numbers to the region will gradually increase again, which will also be reflected in economic and social benefits for the inhabitants of the area.

The types of actions have been assessed as compatible with the DNSH principle, as they have been assessed as compatible according to the technical guidance on the DNSH principle under the Recovery and Resilience Facility Regulation.

For the INTERACT and ESPON programme:

Reference: point (c)(i) of Article 17(9)

Definition of a single beneficiary or a limited list of beneficiaries and the granting procedure

Irrelevant

2.4.3. Indicators

Reference: point (e)(ii) of Article 17(3), point (c)(iii) of Article 17(9)

Table 2

Output indicators

Priority	Specific objective	ID [5]	Indicator	Measurement unit [255]	Milestone (2024) [200]	Final target (2029) [200]
PO 4	vi	RCO 77	Number of cultural and tourism sites supported	Number of sites	0	85
PO 4	vi		Total length of newly constructed or upgraded cycle paths and hiking trails	km	0	41
PO 4	vi	RCO 87	Organisations cooperating across borders	Number of organisations	12	122

Table 3
Result indicators

Priority	Specific objective	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline	Reference year	Final target (2029)	Source of data	Comments
PO 4	vi	RCR 77	Visitors of cultural and tourism sites supported	Number of visitors	1,054,044	2019	1,391,332	Monitoring system	
PO 4	vi	RCR 84	Organisations cooperating across borders after project completion	Number of organisations	0	2021	98	Monitoring system	

2.4.4. Main target groups

Reference: point (e)(iii) of Article 17(3), point (c)(iv) of Article 17(9)

The main target groups are the entities that will be positively affected by the results of the implemented activities:

- inhabitants of the border region,
- visitors to the border region.

The target groups may also include the various components of the public sector, non-governmental non-profit organisations, as well as cultural and tourism institutions.

2.4.5. Indication of the specific territories targeted, including the planned use of ITI, CLLD or other territorial tools

Reference: Article point (e)(iv) of 17(3)

Irrelevant

2.4.6. Planned use of financial instruments

Reference: point (e)(v) of Article 17(3)

Irrelevant

2.4.7. Indicative breakdown of the EU programme resources by type of intervention

Reference: point (e)(vi) of Article 17(3), point (c)(v) of Article 17(9)

Table 4
Dimension 1 – intervention field

Priority no	Fund	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
PO 4	ERDF	vi	165 Protection, development and promotion of public tourism assets and tourism services 166 Protection, development and promotion of cultural heritage and cultural services	43,060,507

			167 Protection, development and promotion of natural heritage and eco-tourism other than Natura 2000 sites	
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Table 5

Dimension 2 – form of financing

Priority no	Fund	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
PO 4	ERDF	vi	01 Grant	43,060,507

Table 6

Dimension 3 – territorial delivery mechanism and territorial focus

Priority no	Fund	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
PO 4	ERDF	vi	33 No territorial targeting	43,060,507

2.5. Priority

Reference: point (d) of Article 17(3)

3.1 Institutional cooperation

2.5.1. Specific objective (repeated for each selected specific objective)

Reference: point (e) of Article 17(3)

(ii) Enhance efficient public administration by promoting legal and administrative cooperation and cooperation between citizens, civil society actors and institutions, in particular with a view to resolving legal and other obstacles in border regions

2.5.2. Related types of action, and their expected contribution to those specific objectives and to macro-regional strategies and sea-basin strategies, where appropriate

Reference: point (e)(i) of Article 17(3), point (c)(ii) of Article 17(9)

Despite the relatively high degree of compatibility of public administration systems and relevant legislation between the Czech and Slovak Republics, there is considerable scope for strengthening and deepening their institutional cooperation and increasing the efficiency of public administration and other cooperating entities, especially in border regions that are most affected by the divisive function of national borders.

Under this priority, non-investment activities will be financed. In justified cases, necessary equipment for the implementation of the activities may also be procured but it must not represent a significant part of the project budget.

Type of action:

Cooperation between public administrations and cooperating entities on both sides of the border area:

This type of action includes, for example: activities supporting the creation and strengthening of partnerships, networks and cross-border support structures, activities supporting the exchange of experience and good practice between public administration institutions and cooperating entities in various fields, activities aimed at identifying and reducing administrative barriers to cross-border cooperation (e.g. in the field of employment of persons from the other country, recognition of education and qualifications, provision of social services and health care).

Expected results (contribution to the specific objective):

The supported activities will result in the strengthening of existing and the creation of new partnerships that will jointly seek solutions to legal and other obstacles in border regions. The exchange of experiences and examples of good practice will create more efficient governance mechanisms and thus reduce administrative barriers and the divisive function of the national border in areas with functional cross-border links.

The types of actions have been assessed as compatible with the DNSH principle as they are not expected to have any significant negative environmental impact due to their nature.

For the INTERACT and ESPON programme:

Reference: point (c)(i) of Article 17(9)

Definition of a single beneficiary or a limited list of beneficiaries and the granting procedure

Irrelevant

2.5.3. Indicators

Reference: point (e)(ii) of Article 17(3), point (c)(iii) of Article 17(9)

Table 2
Output indicators

Priority	Specific objective	ID [5]	Indicator	Measurement unit [255]	Milestone (2024) [200]	Final target (2029) [200]
ISO 1	ii	RCO 87	Organisations cooperating across borders	Number of organisations	4	41
ISO 1	ii	RCO 117	Solutions for legal or administrative obstacles across border identified	Number of solutions	0	1

Table 3
Result indicators

Priority	Specific objective	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline	Reference year	Final target (2029)	Source of data	Comments
ISO 1	ii	RCR 84	Organisations cooperating across borders after project completion	Number of organisations	0	2021	33	Monitoring system	
ISO 1	ii	RCR 104	Solutions taken up or up-scaled by organisations	Number of solutions	0	2021	1	Monitoring system	

2.5.4. Main target groups

Reference: point (e)(iii) of Article 17(3), point (c)(iv) of Article 17(9)

The main target groups are the entities that will be positively affected by the results of the implemented activities:

- inhabitants of the border region,
- visitors to the border region.

The target groups may also include the various components of the public sector and non-governmental non-profit organisations.

2.5.5. Indication of the specific territories targeted, including the planned use of ITI, CLLD or other territorial tools

Reference: Article point (e)(iv) of 17(3)

Irrelevant

2.5.6. Planned use of financial instruments

Reference: point (e)(v) of Article 17(3)

Irrelevant

2.5.7. Indicative breakdown of the EU programme resources by type of intervention

Reference: point (e)(vi) of Article 17(3), point (c)(v) of Article 17(9)

Table 4

Dimension 1 – intervention field

Priority no	Fund	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
ISO 1	ERDF	ii	171 Enhancing cooperation with partners both within and outside the Member State 173 Enhancing institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders to implement territorial cooperation projects and initiatives in a cross-border, transnational, maritime and inter-regional context	4,784,501

Table 5

Dimension 2 – form of financing

Priority no	Fund	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
ISO 1	ERDF	ii	01 Grant	4,784,501

Table 6

Dimension 3 – territorial delivery mechanism and territorial focus

Priority no	Fund	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
ISO 1	ERDF	ii	33 No territorial targeting	4,784,501

2.6. Priority

Reference: point (d) of Article 17(3)

3.2 Local initiatives

2.6.1. Specific objective (repeated for each selected specific objective)

Reference: point (e) of Article 17(3)

(iii) Build up mutual trust, in particular by encouraging people-to-people actions

2.6.2. Related types of action, and their expected contribution to those specific objectives and to macro-regional strategies and sea-basin strategies, where appropriate

Reference: point (e)(i) of Article 17(3), point (c)(ii) of Article 17(9)

Local cross-border cooperation initiatives are primarily aimed at getting to know each other and building trust between the inhabitants of the border regions. The activities will be implemented through the people-to-people instrument under the Small Project Fund and aim to create conditions for people of all ages to meet and spend time together, especially through leisure and educational activities. They are generally accessible to a wide range of target groups in a smaller geographical area and can flexibly support both individual and group initiatives, with an emphasis on cross-border exchanges and cooperation. The benefits of these projects for specific people living in border regions are the acquisition of awareness of the culture and skills of neighbouring regions, the lowering of language barrier, the acquisition of useful information and contacts, as well as sporting activities and entertainment.

Under this priority, non-investment activities will be funded. Where justified, equipment necessary for the implementation of the activities may also be purchased but it must not represent a significant part of the project budget.

Type of action:

Creation of new and strengthening of existing partnerships, networks and cross-border structures, including leisure and interest activities:

This type of action includes, for example: activities promoting social, sporting and cultural contacts in the cross-border area, joint activities in different fields (e.g. history, culture, art, nature, technology, health, lifestyle), activities promoting the involvement of citizens in governance.

Expected results (contribution to the specific objective):

The supported activities will result in closer personal and working relations between the inhabitants of the border regions. The interventions will thus contribute to building mutual trust and tolerance on both sides of the border. Intense cultural and social contacts are also an important prerequisite for further economic development and a gradual increase in the quality of life in the programme area.

The types of actions have been assessed as compatible with the DNSH principle as they are not expected to have any significant negative environmental impact due to their nature.

For the INTERACT and ESPON programme:

Reference: point (c)(i) of Article 17(9)

Definition of a single beneficiary or a limited list of beneficiaries and the granting procedure

Irrelevant

2.6.3. Indicators

Reference: point (e)(ii) of Article 17(3), point (c)(iii) of Article 17(9)

Table 2
Output indicators

Priority	Specific objective	ID [5]	Indicator	Measurement unit [255]	Milestone (2024) [200]	Final target (2029) [200]
ISO 1	iii	RCO 81	Participations in joint actions across borders	Number of participants	0	3,419
ISO 1	iii	RCO 87	Organisations cooperating across borders	Number of organisations	0	128
ISO 1	iii	RCO 115	Public events across borders jointly organised	Number of events	0	42

Table 3
Result indicators

Priority	Specific objective	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline	Reference year	Final target (2029)	Source of data	Comments
ISO 1	iii	RCR 84	Organisations cooperating across borders after project completion	Number of organisations	0	2021	51	Monitoring system	
ISO 1	iii	RCR 85	Participations in joint actions across borders after project completion	Number of participants	0	2021	342	Monitoring system	

2.6.4. Main target groups

Reference: point (e)(iii) of Article 17(3), point (c)(iv) of Article 17(9)

The main target groups are the entities that will be positively affected by the results of the implemented activities:

- inhabitants of the border region,
- visitors to the border region.

The target groups may also include the various components of the public sector and non-governmental non-profit organisations.

2.6.5. Indication of the specific territories targeted, including the planned use of ITI, CLLD or other territorial tools

Reference: Article point (e)(iv) of 17(3)

Irrelevant

2.6.6. Planned use of financial instruments

Reference: point (e)(v) of Article 17(3)

Irrelevant

2.6.7. Indicative breakdown of the EU programme resources by type of intervention

Reference: point (e)(vi) of Article 17(3), point (c)(v) of Article 17(9)

Table 4

Dimension 1 – intervention field

Priority no	Fund	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
ISO 1	ERDF	iii	171 Enhancing cooperation with partners both within and outside the Member State	4,784,501

Table 5

Dimension 2 – form of financing

Priority no	Fund	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
ISO 1	ERDF	iii	01 Grant	4,784,501

Table 6

Dimension 3 – territorial delivery mechanism and territorial focus

Priority no	Fund	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
ISO 1	ERDF	iii	33 No territorial targeting	4,784,501

3. Financing plan

Reference: point (f) of Article 17(3)

3.1 Financial appropriations by year

Reference: point (g)(i) of Article 17(3), points (a) to (d) of Article 17(4)

Table 7

Fund	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
ERDF (territorial cooperation goal)	0	14, 575,845	14,809,977	15,048,792	15,292,382	12,671,584	12,925,017	85,323,597
IPA III CBC								
NDICI-CBC								
IPA III								
NDICI								
OCTP								
Interreg funds								
Total	0	14, 575,845	14,809,977	15,048,792	15,292,382	12,671,584	12,925,017	85,323,597

3.2 Total financial appropriations by fund and national co-financing

Reference: point (f)(ii) of Article 17(3), points (a) to (d) of Article 17(4)

Table 8

Policy objective No	Priority	Fund (as applicable)	Basis for calculation EU support (total eligible cost or public contribution)	EU contribution (a)=(a1)+(a2)	Indicative breakdown of the EU contribution		National contribution (b) = (c) + (d)	Indicative breakdown of the national counterpart		Total (e) = (a) + (b)	Co-financing rate (f) = (a)/(e)	Contributions from the third countries (for information)
					without TA pursuant to Article 27(1) (a1)	for TA pursuant to Article 27(1) (a2)		National public c)	National private d)			
2	1.1 Environment	EFRR	Total eligible costs	21,330,899	19,935,420	1,395,479	5,332,725	4,692,798	639,927	26,663,624	80%	0
4	2.1 Education	EFRR	Total eligible costs	7,679,124	7,176,751	502,373	1,919,781	1,689,407	230,374	9,598,905	80%	0
4	2.2 Culture and tourism	EFRR	Total eligible costs	46,074,742	43,060,507	3,014,235	11,518,685	10,136,443	1,382,242	57,593,427	80%	0
ISO1	3.1 Institutional cooperation	EFRR	Total eligible costs	5,119,416	4,784,501	334,915	1,279,854	1,126,272	153,582	6,399,270	80%	0
ISO1	3.2 Local initiatives	EFRR	Total eligible costs	5,119,416	4,784,501	334,915	1,279,854	1,126,272	153,582	6,399,270	80%	0
	Total	All funds	Total eligible costs	85,323,597	79,741,680	5,581,917	21,330,899	18,771,192	2,559,707	106,654,496	80%	0
		EFRR	Total eligible costs	85,323,597	79,741,680	5,581,917	21,330,899	18,771,192	2,559,707	106,654,496	80%	0
	Total	All funds	Total eligible costs	85,323,597	79,741,680	5,581,917	21,330,899	18,771,192	2,559,707	106,654,496	80%	0

4. Action taken to involve the relevant programme partners in the preparation of the Interreg programme and the role of those programme partners in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation

Reference: point (g) of Article 17(3)

The preparation of the Programme was initiated by the representatives of the Managing Authority and the National Authority at the MC of the InterregV-A SK-CZ Cross-Border Cooperation Programme. Subsequently, the Task Force working group was established in September 2019, which is an advisory, consultative and initiating body established under the partnership principle to ensure the preparation of the Programme with the aim of deciding on the preparation of relevant documents related to the programming process for the period 2021-2027 and to set its priorities and direction.

The Task Force coordinates the whole programming process. The members of the Task Force are representatives of the different regions and associations as well as representatives of the relevant ministries on both sides of the border.

Participants for the Slovak Republic:

Ministry of Investments, Regional Development and Informatization of the Slovak Republic as the Managing Authority, Trnava self-governing region, Trenčín self-governing region, Žilina self-governing region, Association of Towns and Municipalities of Slovakia. The Bratislava self-governing region also participated in the process of drafting the programme document in the position of an observer. The Joint Technical Secretariat of the Interreg V-A SK-CZ Cooperation Programme was also involved in the programming process.

Participants for the Czech Republic:

Ministerstvo pro místní rozvoj České republiky (Ministry for Regional Development of the Czech Republic) in the position of the National Authority, South Moravian region, Zlín region, Moravian-Silesian region and the White Carpathians region.

A consortium of three companies ERUDIO, s.r.o., RegioPartner s.r.o., RADELA, s.r.o. participated in the preparation of the programme document. The consortium provided valuable input to the process of preparing the programme document and played an important role in the development of chapters 1, 2 and 3 of the programme document.

An important aspect in the development of the programme document was the regular meetings of the Task Force, which were attended by the above-mentioned members and representatives from the Slovak Republic and the Czech Republic.

The main task of the Task Force, in the sense of the partnership principle, is to ensure the effective preparation of the Programme in order to prepare relevant documents related to the programming process and the setting of its priorities and direction. The task of the Task Force was also to discuss and approve the main outputs of the programming process (socio-economic analysis of the programme area, working documents related to the strategy and content of the draft Programme, financial plan, SEA, SCO, etc.).

A representative from the European Commission attended the meetings of the Task Force and in case of absence was regularly informed on the progress of the programming. Information on the meetings of the Task Force together with the content of the meeting is regularly published on the website of the InterregV-A SK-CZ Cross-Border Cooperation Programme, which is accessible to the general public.

The preparation of the Programme started in September 2019. The main objective of the preparation of the Programme for the next programming period 2021-2027 was to identify those areas that will be selected as priorities in the next programming period.

The first step was the development of a socio-economic analysis by the consortium. The first phase of

the socio-economic analysis was the starting point for the elaboration of a programme document describing the geographical and socio-economic development and the specificities of the programme area. The preparers of the analysis held meetings with representatives of the border regions. Representatives of local action groups in the border area were also contacted and given the opportunity to express their views on the needs and priorities of the regions concerned. On the basis of the results of the socio-economic analysis, the preparers drafted and elaborated the Programme Strategy (Chapter 1), the Priorities (Chapter 2) and the Financial Plan (Chapter 3).

Chapter 1 focuses on the overall strategy of the Programme, in particular the main development challenges and policy responses. Chapter 2 defines specific policy objectives in line with the (EU) Regulations, namely:

- PO2: A greener, low-carbon transitioning towards a net zero carbon economy and resilient Europe by promoting clean and fair energy transition, green and blue investment, the circular economy, climate change mitigation and adaptation, risk prevention and management, and sustainable urban mobility;
- PO4: A more social and inclusive Europe implementing the European Pillar of Social Rights;
- ISO1: A better cooperation governance.

The consortium developed a stakeholder questionnaire aimed at optimising the content of the proposed priorities so that the public also had the opportunity to comment on the needs of the border regions. The questionnaire included questions covering environment, education, culture and tourism, institutional cooperation and local initiatives. Potential applicants were given the opportunity to comment through open questions on the planned project plans or to suggest what improvements they would like to see in the new programming period. The questionnaire was published on the website of the Interreg V-A SK-CZ programme and was also distributed via a newsletter.

A total of 163 respondents participated in the survey, mainly from the territorial self-government and its organisational units (56.44%), and according to the majority of answers the selected policy objectives correspond to the needs of the Czech-Slovak border region.

Respondents in the questionnaire expressed the greatest interest in the implementation of activities under the specific objective „Strengthening the role of culture and sustainable tourism in the field of economic development, social inclusion and social innovation“. 77% of respondents indicated that the examples of activities identified under this specific objective cover the planned activities of potential applicants.

Finally, respondents indicated what they would like to see in the new programming period 2021-2027. The most frequent answers were related to the simplification of the administrative process for the submission of the NFC application and the implementation of projects, as well as simpler reporting of expenditure.

As part of the work related to the preparation of the Programme, an SEA impact assessment of the draft Programme was carried out during July 2021 - March 2022 in cooperation with the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic and the Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic, in which local and regional environmental actors from both participating countries played an important role. The conclusions of the SEA assessment are taken into account in the Programme or will be incorporated in the Programme documentation, as relevant.

Partners and their roles in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Programme

Following the relevant EU regulations, partners from both countries will be involved in the preparation and implementation of the Programme. The participation of the partners will be guaranteed through the MC, whose members will be representatives of the Czech and Slovak partners, and the members of the MC will have the right to vote on all matters related to the Programme.

The tasks of the MC stem directly from the requirements of the European legislation. Their broad scope and voting rights in the decision-making of the MC ensures that the partners represented in the MC have a significant stake in the process of implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Programme.

The partners vote, inter alia, on the procedures applicable in the Programme, participate in the selection of projects, monitor and evaluate the progress in the implementation of the Programme.

The MC shall adopt its rules of procedure, which shall include provisions on its functioning, its rights and obligations, the voting rights of its members and other rules on participation in its meetings, as well as means and tools to prevent and eliminate possible conflicts of interest. The rules of procedure, together with the list of members of the MC, will be published on the programme's website, as referred to in Article 36(2) of the Interreg Regulation.

In the framework of e-cohesion, electronic data exchange between beneficiaries and all entities involved in the programme will be ensured in accordance with Annex XIV of the CPR.

5. Approach to communication and visibility for the Interreg programme (objectives, target audiences, communication channels, including social media outreach, where appropriate, planned budget and relevant indicators for monitoring and evaluation)

Reference: point (h) of Article 17(3)

Support for the implementation of the objectives of the Programme will be ensured through the implementation of information and promotional activities related to positive changes in the Slovak-Czech border area.

Main objective:

The main communication objective is to raise public awareness of EU support through the effective use of an appropriate range of communication tools, to ensure the transparency of support to all target groups and to contribute to economic and social cohesion in the field of cross-border cooperation. One of the main objectives is also to reduce the administrative burden for beneficiaries.

Specific objectives:

- creating clear, simple and understandable manuals and documents;
- informing about the possibility of simplified cost options;
- informing potential beneficiaries about the possibilities of cross-border projects co-financing;
- supporting beneficiaries during the implementation of projects at each stage of implementation;
- promotion of the Programme, including the Small Project Fund, and strengthening public awareness of the positive impact of project implementation on the Programme area.

Target groups

The selected target groups focus mainly on the eligible programme area of the Slovak-Czech border area. The target groups are:

- residents and visitors to the programme area;
- beneficiaries;
- entities involved in the implementation of the Programme;
- potential applicants for NFC;
- organisations, associations and bodies involved in the Programme and ESIF supported areas;
- the general public.

Communication channels

The programme will use a number of communication channels through which it aims to reach as many people as possible in the relevant group. The main communication channels are:

- the website of the Programme and the institutions involved in the implementation of the Programme - it will include in particular lists of applications for NFC, lists of approved projects, current calls and information on the possibilities of project support, etc.;
- social networks and media - rapid communication with the general public via social networks;

- information and promotion events - leaflets, posters, conferences, workshops, promotional videos, etc;
- publications and other promotional materials - supporting documents, methodologies, manuals, etc.

Social media plays an important role in communicating the Programme, enabling to:

- raise more people's awareness of the Programme's activities;
- initiate and develop interactions with users;
- have an impact on extending the reach of information.

Communication with potential applicants and beneficiaries will also be supported through the organisation of training sessions. The Joint Programme Secretariat will be available for face-to-face and online consultations with all stakeholders and interested parties. Information and promotion activities will be implemented in line with the Programme's communication strategy.

Planned budget

The estimated budget for the implementation of the information and promotion activities planned in the Communication Strategy will be approximately 0.25% - 0.5% of the TA budget. The amounts earmarked for each communication activity will be specified in the annual plans for information and promotion activities. Based on the implementation experience in the previous programming period, a significant part of the resources will be dedicated to public communication. Once the Programme has been approved, a website will be prepared as the main communication channel for the Programme.

Indicators for monitoring and evaluation

The extent to which the envisaged specific objectives have been met and the effectiveness of the information and promotion activities will be assessed as part of the evaluation of the Programme. The result indicators will measure the fulfilment of the specific communication objectives of the Programme.

Below is a table of expected results and indicators, which will be detailed in the Programme's communication strategy.

Expected results	Output indicators
Interest of potential applicants in implementing cross-border projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of participants in training sessions for potential beneficiaries, • number of consultations provided to potential beneficiaries, • number of users who received information on the call from the Programme website, • number of users who have read posts related to the call.
Increasing the effectiveness of Programme promotion through beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of events aimed at promoting the Programme organised by the beneficiaries, • number of participants in events organised by the beneficiaries.
Increasing the public awareness of the benefits resulting from the implementation of the Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of users who have read posts related to the Programme and projects, • number of visits to the Programme website; • number of participants in information and promotion events, • number of press releases.

6. Indication of support to small-scale projects, including small projects within small project funds

Reference: point (i) of Article 17(3), Article 24

In the 2021-2027 programming period, part of the Programme allocation will be earmarked for the implementation of small-scale projects under the SPF (within the meaning of Article 25 of the Interreg Regulation). The aim of the SPF in the Slovak-Czech border area is to strengthen cross-border social cohesion by promoting local cooperation and deepening long-term cooperation between actors on both sides of the border.

The SPF will be implemented under two priorities: 3.2 Local initiatives, specific objective (iii) Build up mutual trust, in particular by encouraging people-to-people actions and 2.2 Culture and tourism, specific objective (vi) Enhancing the role of culture and sustainable tourism in economic development, social inclusion and social innovation.

Activities will be aimed at promoting social, sporting and cultural contacts in the cross-border area and will be implemented mainly through the people-to-people instrument. The small projects will allow to involve a wide range of local communities from the border area in cross-border cooperation and to support civil society initiatives, thus strengthening contacts, building and consolidating a common identity. They will contribute in particular through learning about and cultivating traditions, learning local crafts together, learning about the history of the border region and spending leisure time together. In the field of tourism, small infrastructure projects linked to soft activities will be possible.

The SPF administrator(s) will be entities with considerable knowledge of the programme area, experience in managing and administering cross-border projects and sufficient capacity to administer the SPF.

7. Implementing provisions

7.1 Programme authorities

Reference: point (a) of Article 17(6)

Table 9

Programme authorities	Name of the institution [255]	Contact name [200]	E-mail [200]
Managing Authority	<i>Ministry of Investments, Regional Development and Informatization of the Slovak Republic, Cross-Border Cooperation Programmes Section</i>	<i>Ing. Lea Malá</i>	<i>lea.mala@mirri.gov.sk</i>
National Authority (for programmes with participating third or partner countries, if appropriate)	-	-	-
Audit Authority	<i>Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic, Audit and Control Section</i>	<i>Ing. Vladimira Zacharidesová</i>	<i>vladimira.zacharidesova@mfsr.sk</i>
Group of auditors representatives	-	-	-
Body to which the payments are to be made by the Commission	<i>Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic, European Funds Section</i>	<i>Ing. Katarína Vallová</i>	<i>katarina.vallova@mfsr.sk</i>

7.2 Procedure for setting up the joint secretariat

Reference: point (b) of Article 17(6)

By mutual agreement between the Managing Authority and the National Authority, a Joint Secretariat will be established for the programming period 2021-2027, based in Bratislava. The Joint Secretariat will be established within the Ministry of Investments, Regional Development and Informatization of the Slovak Republic.

The main tasks of the Joint Secretariat will be:

- providing support to the Managing Authority and the MC in the performance of their functions;
- providing potential beneficiaries with information on funding opportunities under the Programme and assisting beneficiaries in the implementation of operations;
- receiving applications for non-refundable financial contributions (project applications);
- providing expert evaluation of applications for non-reimbursable financial contribution (project applications) in cooperation with the regional coordinators;
- informing applicants of the results of the evaluation and selection process of operations (project applications);

- preparation of contracts for the provision of the European Regional Development Fund non-refundable financial contribution with the lead partner;
- preparation of contracts for the provision of co-financing from the state budget of the Slovak Republic, i.e. contracts between the Managing Authority and the lead cross-border partner;
- cooperation with the Managing Authority in the tasks related to the establishment and operation of a system for recording and storing data in electronic form on each operation.

The number of staff and their necessary qualifications will be determined on the basis of the above-mentioned tasks. The salary costs of the staff of the Joint Secretariat and the costs related to the performance of the tasks of the Joint Secretariat will be covered by the technical assistance.

7.3 Apportionment of liabilities among participating Member States and where applicable, the third or partner countries and OCTs, in the event of financial corrections imposed by the managing authority or the Commission

Reference: point (c) of Article 17(6)

In accordance with Article 52 of the Interreg Regulation, the Managing Authority shall ensure that any amount paid as a result of an irregularity is recovered from the lead or sole partner. The partners shall reimburse to the lead partner any amounts unduly paid.

In the event that the lead partner fails to secure the recovery of amounts unduly paid from the other project partners or the Managing Authority fails to recover amounts unduly paid from the lead or sole partner, the responsibility for recovery shall pass to the Member State. The financial responsibility shall lie with the State in which the partner to whom the undue payment has been made is established or in which the sole beneficiary of the project is registered.

In the case of financial corrections applicable to all or part of the Programme, the Member States involved in the Programme shall be liable for the above corrections in proportion to the degree of culpability of the irregularity.

Where the degree of fault of the Member State cannot be determined (e.g. the financial correction is the result of incorrectly set common procedures or rules), the financial responsibility of each of the Member States involved in the Programme shall be established on a pro rata basis. The decisive factor is the share of the expenditure of the beneficiary from each Member State in the total expenditure to which the financial correction relates.

The details of the allocation of responsibilities between the participating Member States in the event of financial corrections imposed by the Managing Authority, the Audit Authority or the Commission will be elaborated in the Memorandum of Understanding on the Programme between the participating partners and subsequently in the relevant programme documentation as well as in the contract for the grant of a non-refundable financial contribution from the European Regional Development Fund concluded between the Managing Authority and the lead partner.

8. Use of unit costs, lump sums, flat rates and financing not linked to costs

Reference: Articles 94 and 95 of Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 (CPR)

Table 10: Use of unit costs, lump sums, flat rates and financing not linked to costs

Intended use of Articles 88 and 89	YES	NO
From the adoption the programme will make use of reimbursement of the Union contribution based on unit costs, lump sums and flat rates under priority according to Article 88 CPR (if yes, fill in Appendix 1)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
From the adoption the programme will make use of reimbursement of the Union contribution based on financing not linked to costs according to Article 89 CPR (if yes, fill in Appendix 2)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Map of the programme area



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<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=77137516>

Appendix 1

Union contribution based on unit costs, lump sums and flat rates
Template for submitting data for the consideration of the Commission
(Article 94 of Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 (CPR))

Date of submitting the proposal	

This Appendix is not required when EU-level simplified cost options established by the delegated act referred to in Article 94(4) of CPR are used.

A. Summary of the main elements

Priority	Fund	Specific objective	Estimated proportion of the total financial allocation within the priority to which the simplified cost option will be applied in %	Type(s) of operation covered		Indicator triggering reimbursement		Unit of measurement for the indicator triggering reimbursement	Type of simplified cost option (standard scale of unit costs, lump sums or flat rates)	Amount (in EUR) or percentage (in case of flat rates) of the simplified cost option
				Code (1)	Description	Code (2)	Description			
<p>(1) This refers to the code for the intervention field dimension in Table 1 of Annex I CPR. (2) This refers to the code of a common indicator, if applicable.</p>										

B. Details by type of operation (to be completed for every type of operation)

Did the managing authority receive support from an external company to set out the simplified costs below?

If so, please specify which external company:

Yes/No – Name of external company

1.1. Description of the operation type including the timeline for implementation ⁽¹⁾	
1.2. Specific objective	
1.3. Indicator triggering reimbursement ⁽²⁾	
1.4. Unit of measurement for the indicator triggering reimbursement	
1.5. Standard scale of unit cost, lump sum or flat rate	
1.6. Amount per unit of measurement or percentage (for flat rates) of the simplified cost option	
1.7. Categories of costs covered by the unit cost, lump sum or flat rate	
1.8. Do these categories of costs cover all eligible expenditure for the operation? (Y/N)	
1.9. Adjustment(s) method ⁽³⁾	
1.10. Verification of the achievement of the units delivered — describe what document(s)/system will be used to verify the achievement of the units delivered — describe what will be checked and by whom during management verifications — describe what arrangements will be made to collect and store the relevant data/documents	
1.11. Possible perverse incentives, mitigating measures ⁽⁴⁾ and the estimated level of risk (high/medium/low)	
1.12. Total amount (national and EU) expected to be reimbursed by the Commission on this basis	
<p>⁽¹⁾ Envisaged starting date of the selection of operations and envisaged final date of their completion (ref. Article 63(5) of CPR).</p> <p>⁽²⁾ For operations encompassing several simplified cost options covering different categories of costs, different projects or successive phases of an operation, the fields 1.3 to 1.11 need to be filled in for each indicator triggering reimbursement.</p> <p>⁽³⁾ If applicable, indicate the frequency and timing of the adjustment and a clear reference to a specific indicator (including a link to the website where this indicator is published, if applicable).</p> <p>⁽⁴⁾ Are there any potential negative implications on the quality of the supported operations and, if so, what measures (such as quality assurance) will be taken to offset this risk?</p>	

C: Calculation of the standard scale of unit costs, lump sums or flat rates

1. Source of data used to calculate the standard scale of unit costs, lump sums or flat rates (who produced, collected and recorded the data; where the data are stored; cut-off dates; validation, etc.):

2. Please specify why the proposed method and calculation based on Article 88(2) of CPR is relevant to the type of operation:

3. Please specify how the calculations were made, in particular including any assumptions made in terms of quality or quantities. Where relevant, statistical evidence and benchmarks should be used and, if requested, provided in a format that is usable by the Commission:

4. Please explain how you have ensured that only eligible expenditure was included in the calculation of the standard scale of unit cost, lump sum or flat rate:

5. Assessment of the audit authority or authorities of the calculation methodology and amounts and the arrangements to ensure the verification, quality, collection and storage of data:

Appendix 2

Union contribution based on financing not linked to costs
Template for submitting data for the consideration of the Commission
(Article 95 of Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 (CPR))

Date of submitting the proposal	

This Appendix is not required when amounts for EU-level financing not linked to costs established by the delegated act referred to in Article 95(4) of CPR are used.

A. Summary of the main elements

Priority	Fund	Specific objective	The amount covered by the financing not linked to costs	Type(s) of operation covered		Conditions to be fulfilled/results to be achieved triggering reimbursement by the Commission	Indicator		Unit of measurement for the conditions to be fulfilled/results to be achieved triggering reimbursement by the Commission	Envisaged type of reimbursement method used to reimburse the beneficiary or beneficiaries
				Code ⁽¹⁾	Description		Code ⁽²⁾	Description		

(¹) This refers to the code for the intervention field dimension in Table 1 of Annex I to the CPR and Annex IV to the EMFAF Regulation.

(²) This refers to the code of a common indicator, if applicable.

B. Details by type of operation (to be completed for every type of operation)

1.1. Description of the operation type			
1.2. Specific objective			
1.3. Conditions to be fulfilled or results to be achieved			
1.4. Deadline for fulfilment of conditions or results to be achieved			
1.5. Unit of measurement for conditions to be fulfilled/results to be achieved triggering reimbursement by the Commission			
1.6. Intermediate deliverables (if applicable) triggering reimbursement by the Commission with schedule for reimbursements	Intermediate deliverables	Envisaged date	Amounts (in EUR)
1.7. Total amount (including Union and national funding)			
1.8. Adjustment(s) method			
1.9. Verification of the achievement of the result or condition (and where relevant, the intermediate deliverables) — describe what document(s)/system will be used to verify the achievement of the result or condition (and where relevant, each of the intermediate deliverables) — describe how management verifications (including on-the-spot) will be carried out, and by whom — describe what arrangements will be made to collect and store relevant data/documents			
1.10. Use of grants in the form of financing not linked to costs/ Does the grant provided by Member State to beneficiaries take the form of financing not linked to costs? [Y/N]			
1.11. Arrangements to ensure the audit trail Please list the body(ies) responsible for these arrangements.			

Appendix 3

List of planned operations of strategic importance with a timetable - Article 17(3)

Small Project Fund

A Small Project Fund covering the whole programme area will be established for the 2021-2027 programming period. In practice, the main objective of the SPF implemented under this specific objective is to open up the Programme to small local initiatives and to strengthen cross-border social cohesion by promoting local cooperation, social, sporting and cultural contacts and confidence-building activities and deepening long-term partnerships and implementing people-to-people initiatives.

As stated in Article 25(3) of the Interreg Regulation, the administrator of the Small Project Fund will be primarily responsible for the preparation and implementation of the Small Project Fund project, establishing the criteria and procedures for the selection of small projects, contracting, monitoring, control of results and closure of small projects. At the same time, other tasks such as informing, motivating, supervising and guiding potential project promoters will be crucial for the successful implementation of small projects. The Small Project Fund will be of particular relevance to the Programme and is therefore classified as an operation of strategic importance.