

Interreg

CENTRAL EUROPE



European Union
European Regional
Development Fund

ANNEXES to the Draft Final Report for the Impact
Evaluation of the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE
Programme – Phase 1

CIVITTA



ABBREVIATIONS

CA	Contracting Authority
CE	Central Europe
EU	European Union
JS	Joint Secretariat
KAI	Key Area of Intervention
MA	Managing Authority
MC	Monitoring Committee
eMS	Electronic Monitoring System
ETF	Evaluation Task Force
NCP	National Contact Point
NUTS	Nomenclature of Territorial Units of Statistics
PO	Policy Objective
SO	Specific Objective
TBE	Theory Based Evaluation
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference

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1. ANNEX 1 – DETAILED METHODOLOGY

1.1. EVALUATION MATRIX

TABLE 1 EVALUATION MATRIX

Evaluation Question	Evaluation methods	Data collection methods	Data sources	Type of data and information
Q1 Gross effect	ToC Data analysis (e.g. trend analysis, GIS analysis)	Desk research	Programme documents, Project documents, the eMS, Keep.eu, Annual Implementation Reports, secondary data sources (Eurostat, the EC & other statistical sources, relevant publications (thematic studies, impact evaluations etc.), legislative, strategic and procedural framework	Statistical data Programme monitoring data, Qualitative information from literature review
Q2. Net Effect	ToC Data analysis (e.g. correlation analysis) Project and comparative Case studies Focus Group	Desk research Beneficiary survey Interviews with programme bodies, with beneficiaries, with thematic experts	Programme documents Project documents Beneficiaries Programme bodies Thematic experts	Programme monitoring data Qualitative and quantitative information
Q3. Understanding of impact and showing what worked best	ToC Individual case studies Comparative case studies Targeted analysis: cluster analysis and cost-effectiveness analysis	Desk research Beneficiary survey Stakeholder survey at programme level, project target groups survey (at project level) Interviews with programme stakeholders, with beneficiaries, with project end users	the eMS Programme Bodies Project documents (project output factsheets etc.) Beneficiaries Stakeholders at programme level Project target groups	Context data in the area of the programme\ Programme monitoring data Qualitative and quantitative information

Evaluation Question	Evaluation methods	Data collection methods	Data sources	Type of data and information
	Focus Group			
AQ1. Synergetic and multiplication effects	ToC Data analysis Focus Group Case Studies	Desk research Beneficiary survey Interviews with programme bodies, with beneficiaries, with thematic experts, with project end users	Project documents Programme bodies Beneficiaries Project target groups Thematic experts	Programme monitoring data Qualitative and quantitative information
AQ2. Unintended effects	ToC Data analysis Focus Group Case Studies	Desk research Beneficiary survey Thematic Survey (end-users at project level) Interviews with programme bodies, with beneficiaries, with thematic experts, with project end users	Project documents Beneficiaries survey, Programme Bodies Project target groups Thematic experts	Programme monitoring data Qualitative and quantitative information
AQ3. Contribution to a better governance	ToC Data analysis Focus Group Case Studies	Desk research Beneficiary survey Survey with stakeholders at programme level Interviews with programme bodies, with beneficiaries, with stakeholders at programme level	Project documents Beneficiaries Programme Bodies Stakeholders at programme level Project target groups	Programme monitoring data Qualitative and quantitative information
AQ4. Contribution to wider strategies	ToC Data analysis Focus Group Case Studies	Desk research Beneficiary survey Interviews with programme bodies, with beneficiaries, with stakeholders at programme level	Project documents Beneficiaries Programme Bodies Stakeholders at programme level Project target groups	Programme monitoring data Qualitative and quantitative information

Evaluation Question	Evaluation methods	Data collection methods	Data sources	Type of data and information
AQ5. Transferability of results	ToC Data analysis Focus Group Case Studies	Desk research Beneficiary survey Survey with stakeholders at programme level Interviews with programme bodies, with beneficiaries, with project end users	Project documents Beneficiaries Programme Bodies Stakeholders at programme level Project end users	Programme monitoring data Qualitative and quantitative information
AQ6. Contribution to change of practices at organisational and individual level	ToC Data analysis Focus Group Case Studies	Desk research Beneficiary survey Survey with stakeholders at programme level Interviews with programme bodies, with beneficiaries, with project end users	Project documents Beneficiaries Programme Bodies Stakeholders at programme level Project target groups	Programme monitoring data Qualitative and quantitative information
AQ7.Added value of transnational cooperation	ToC Data analysis (beneficiary mapping, GIS analysis) Focus Group Case Studies	Desk research Beneficiary survey Interviews with programme bodies, with beneficiaries	Project documents Programme Bodies Beneficiaries Project target groups	Programme monitoring data Qualitative and quantitative information
AQ8.Added value for specific target groups	ToC Data analysis (target group analysis) Focus Group Case Studies	Desk research Beneficiary survey Thematic Survey (project target groups) Interviews with programme bodies, with beneficiaries, with project end users, with thematic experts	Project documents Programme Bodies Beneficiaries Project end users Thematic experts	Programme monitoring data Qualitative information and quantitative
AQ9. Added value for specific types of territories	ToC Data analysis (GIS analysis) Focus Group Case Studies	Desk research Beneficiary survey Interviews with programme bodies, with beneficiaries, with project end users	Project documents Programme Bodies Beneficiaries Project end users	Programme monitoring data Qualitative information and quantitative
AQ10. Sustainability and viability of results	ToC Data analysis Focus Group Case Studies	Desk research Beneficiary survey Interviews with programme bodies, with beneficiaries, with project end users	Project documents Programme Bodies Beneficiaries Project end users	Programme monitoring data Qualitative and quantitative information

1.2. INSTRUMENTS AND METHODS

1.2.1. OVERVIEW OF THE METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The core methodological approach of this impact evaluation follows the conceptual framework of a Theory-Based Evaluation (TBE), using the **Theory of Change (ToC)**. Reconstructing the ToC behind the Interreg CE design is the starting point of the evaluation exercise. More specifically, the ToC builds on a detailed analysis of the intervention logic of the programme (as described in the programme documentation) and seeks to specify the causality assumptions on which the programme relies, i.e. how Interreg CE is expected to deliver the targeted impacts in order to respond to the identified needs. These assumptions, linking Interreg CE inputs with the expected outputs, results and outcomes, are to be routinely examined and tested through evaluative activities to determine:

- Whether – and the extent to which – the causality assumptions are verified, i.e. estimating the net effects of Interreg CE as a result of the funded projects and activities (EQ2), departing from the observed changes at programme level (EQ1).
- Whether – and the extent to which - internal or external factors have influenced the production of outputs and achievement of expected results.
- Whether – and the extent to which – unintended effects (both positive and negative) have been produced, and for whom (e.g. types of target groups/territories).

The reconstruction of the ToC leads to the formulation of **evaluation hypotheses** addressing causality assumptions as well as influencing factors and unintended effects, to be investigated using both qualitative and quantitative methods and confirmed through evidence triangulation. They will be tested as part of the analysis and conclusions will be formulated in the Evaluation Reports. The combination of different data collection tools and different analysis methods will allow for a better understanding of the impacts of the programme, in particular regarding implementation mechanisms (EQ3) and the nature and outreach of impacts (AEQs). The evaluation matrix presented in Annex 1 of this report indicates the contribution of each tool to the answering of the evaluation questions, considering the maturation of the tools during the Inception Phase and Phase 1 of the evaluation.

1.2.2. DATA USED AND LIMITATIONS

Based on the methodological approach presented above, and in line with the evaluation matrix presented in Annex 1, a wide range of qualitative and quantitative data were collected and analysed during Phase 1, each contributing to providing a comprehensive and substantiated answer to the evaluation questions.

The following data collection instruments were designed and implemented as part of this evaluation process:

1. DESK RESEARCH AND LITERATURE REVIEW

The analysis of available documents was the starting point for the reconstruction of the Theory of Change. It focused on establishing the context for the Programme actions, the main effects to be expected from the investments, as well as the factors that influence their results.

Document review was carried out for each SO and covered the following topics:

- The regulatory and socio-economic context for the implementation of the programme.
- The main needs that the programme was supposed to address.
- Other relevant programmes providing funding on the topics covered by the programme.
- Factors influencing the success of interventions.
- Main takeaways that can be used to conduct the impact evaluation of the programme.

Types of documents analysed

Type of document	Details
EU-level strategies	<p>Starting with the <i>EU 2020 Strategy for smart, sustainable, and inclusive growth</i>, EU-level strategic documents, including Macro-Regional Strategies were screened and analysed to better frame the priorities and actions supported through the programme, their alignment, and their potential contribution to the EU objectives.</p> <p>Sector-specific strategies and other relevant documents, such as EC Communications were covered by the analysis.</p>
EU-level regulatory framework	The analysis of the regulatory framework covered the CPR Reg.1303/2013, ERDF Reg. 1301/2013 and ETC Reg. 1299/2013. The analysis contributed to understanding the design conditions which were imposed at EU level, as well as the objectives and priorities of the EU Cohesion Policy.
National, regional, local strategies	A series of national, regional and local strategic documents was analysed, to better understand the specific contexts and priorities of the supported territories in the programme area. These were used to prepare the interviews with national representatives and also informed case studies.
EU-funded programmes	Other EU-funded programmes were analysed, in terms of thematic and territorial coverage, to understand potential “competition” for the Interreg CE programme, as well as potential synergies. These include territorially relevant programmes, such as other transnational cooperation programmes and thematically focus programmes, such as Horizon 2020 or Life.
Studies, analyses, surveys	<p>Various studies and analytical documents concerning EU Interreg transnational and cross-border programmes, as well as the main themes covered by the programme were analysed to understand the context, main trends, evolution, challenges etc. Most of them have a territorial focus at EU level.</p> <p>Surveys include Eurobarometer surveys.</p>
Statistics	Main indicators were extracted and analysed concerning the overall socio-economic development and the performance of the programme area in relation to the sectors covered by the programme. While numerous indicators are only available at national level, wherever possible, data was extracted at NUTS2 level. The main data source is Eurostat, but various other sources were used, such as the European Environmental Agency and ESPON.

The analysis of the literature shows that there are numerous sources for understanding the strategic priorities and the relevant socio-economic and political contexts, as a whole and at the sectoral level, both at the time of programming and during the implementation.

2. QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

Data analysis based on project documentation covers an assessment of programme and project related data provided by the JS. It includes preliminary results contributing to answering the evaluation questions along the ToC established above. Therefore, this section analyses:

- The programme’s inputs, i.e. projects and their distribution across partner countries, regions and beneficiaries,
- The programme’s outputs, i.e. the innovation networks, strategies, pilot actions, tools and trainings that have been produced,

- The programme's results and outcomes, i.e. the funds leveraged, the institutions adopting new/improved strategies, action plans, tools and services, the number of jobs created, as well as the programme's outreach including the target groups reached by the projects' activities.

The analysis of the programme's inputs covers all 138 Interreg CE 2014-2020 projects, while the analysis of the outputs and results covers those 85 projects (61.5% of the total) that have been completed until 14th December 2021, and that received funding in Calls no. 1 and 2.

The analysis of partners involved in Interreg CE 2014-2020 compared to other cooperation programmes was mainly conducted based on Keep.eu database. The goal of the analysis was to reflect entities' participation in other types of programmes – however, this was only possible through a manual inspection of data, which aimed to remove potential duplicates due to different spelling, similar institutions included with either the English name or the national language official name, or to other types of errors that prevented an automated identification of unique partners in different programmes.

The analysis only refers to those institutions that were involved in Interreg CE 2014-2020 – therefore it is not possible to compare the number of partners to that of another cooperation programme, thus limiting the types of comparative analyses with other programmes.

3. SURVEYS

Survey targeting beneficiaries | The survey was developed as a primary data collection instrument and its findings are used to substantiate answers to the evaluation questions. In order for the survey to be effective, it builds upon the elements of the ToC. As such, the project document analysis was performed before designing the survey questionnaire, so that the latter would capture the first-hand insights and would not be too general.

A pilot was also conducted prior to the roll-out, to further ensure that the process would run smoothly. The invitation was sent to a limited sample of 30 randomly selected beneficiaries. Three responses were received during the pilot, all with complete answers, indicating that no changes were necessary at this stage. Responses received during the pilot stage were included in the overall survey results.

The survey has been carried out between the 13th and 30th of April 2021. The participation link was distributed among the beneficiaries by email, using a dedicated email address set up by the evaluation team for this purpose (evaluations@civitta.com). Two reminders were sent to beneficiaries in days 7 and 14. Participation to the survey was entirely voluntary and all answers were anonymous. In order to ensure a higher response rate, a supporting letter signed by the JS/MA Head of Office accompanied the invitation sent out to beneficiaries. The JS also supported the survey roll-out stage with social media messages, encouraging beneficiaries to contribute to the evaluation.

The survey resulted in a response rate of 37%. The survey addressed all 920 project partners¹ that were involved in the implementation of the 85 projects in Calls 1 and 2 of the Interreg CE Programme. Out of the 920 contacts initially provided by the JS, 838 unique contacts were identified, and six email addresses were missing. Based on the analysis of erroneous emails², 792 contacts were considered correct and were counted as potential respondents. 295 responses were received, out of which 248 answered all questions. A second round of the survey will be conducted in Phase 2 of the impact evaluation and will include beneficiaries from the third and fourth calls.

The questionnaire can be found in Annex 5 and the detailed survey results are presented in Annex 8.

¹ According to data provided by the Interreg CE Joint Secretariat.

² Contact was considered invalid when emails appeared as bounced, undelivered, or a message was received indicating that neither the person responsible for the project is available to provide a response (e.g. because he/she left the organisation and cannot be contacted) nor someone else has knowledge on the project. Where possible, the Evaluation team followed up to ensure a close contact with the organisation and to redirect the message to another person who had knowledge about the project.

Survey targeting Programme stakeholders | The survey was developed as a primary data collection instrument, with the purpose to collect key information on the policy uptake of Programme results and the Programme's contribution to multi-level governance and governance process analysis. Given the important role of National Contact Points in facilitating policy uptake and enabling synergies at the local and regional level, as outlined in the Progress Report, NCPs acted as intermediaries in distributing the survey among National Committee Members.

The survey has been carried out in June-July 2021. The participation link was distributed among the National Committee Members by email. Two reminders were sent to beneficiaries in days 7 and 14. Participation to the survey was entirely voluntary and all answers were anonymous. National Contact Points took charge of the communication with the target group. A paper-based survey was also available to be filled in by those people who found it difficult to access the survey online.

The survey resulted in a response rate of approx. 30%. The survey addressed National Committee members, those organisations involved in or influencing policy-making at different governance levels (local, regional, national and EU). 46 answers were received, out of approx. 150 members to whom it was distributed. Given that no direct contact was established between the Evaluation team and the target groups, the exact number of persons that the survey reached is unknown and can only be estimated. This creates some limitations in terms of representativeness of the responses.

66% of responses were recorded from regional public authorities/institutions. By Member State, the most represented was Poland (14 responses), and the least Hungary (no response).

The questionnaire can be found in Annex 5 and the detailed survey results are presented in Annex 8.

Survey targeting project target groups | The survey was developed as a primary data collection instrument and its findings are used to substantiate answers to the evaluation questions. The target group of this survey consists of all SMEs that were targeted by the projects selected for the case study analysis for the Innovation theme (approx. 1100 SMEs).

The survey was carried out in October 2021. **A major difficulty encountered was the lack of available databases of end-users, or the GDPR challenges that beneficiaries are facing, thus creating difficulties in sharing contacts with the Evaluation team due to confidentiality issues, as outlined by project beneficiaries interviewed as part of the evaluation process.** Therefore, in order to ensure a higher response rate and to reach out to end-users more directly, the Joint Secretariat assisted the Evaluation team in this process, by distributing the online survey to Lead Partners and Project Partners.

Only 22 answers were received (out of which 21 providing complete answers), which significantly reduced its relevance and usefulness for feeding into the evaluation questions. This instrument is thus subject to strong data limitations in terms of applicability and utility and should be reconsidered in the second stage of the evaluation.

The questionnaire can be found in Annex 5 and the detailed survey results are presented in Annex 8.

4. INTERVIEWS

Interviews with Programme stakeholders | The interviews were developed as a primary data collection instrument and the resulting findings are used to substantiate the answers to the evaluation questions, as outlined in the Evaluation Matrix (Annex 1). As such, they also cover all stages of the ToC. In particular, the interviews are used, together with other instruments, to triangulate the Evaluation team's conclusions on the needs, inputs, actions, outputs and results of the Interreg CE programme.

Interviews with programme managers remain one of the most commonly used methods in the intermediate evaluation of structural programmes³. It allows the Evaluation team to gather information on the programme, and more specifically its context, implementation and results.

³ [evaluation_sourcebook.pdf \(europa.eu\)](#)

For this evaluation, semi-structured, guide-based interviews were performed. They targeted representatives of programme bodies and were used as an exploratory instrument, to support the development of the ToC and gain insights related to the preliminary findings resulting from the documents analysis.

The first round of interviews includes a total of 22 interviews, broken down as follows:

- 1 interview with the Interreg CE Managing Authority,
- 5 interviews with the Joint Secretariat (4 collective interviews with the Project Managers of the respective Thematic Priorities and 1 collective interview with the management team),
- 11 interviews with Monitoring Committee members and National Contact Points (2 for Hungary, 2 for Poland, 1 for Austria, 1 for Slovenia, 1 for Croatia, 1 for Germany, 1 for Czechia, 1 for Slovakia and 1 for Italy),
- 1 interview with the former European Commission's desk officer for Interreg CE⁴,
- 4 interviews with representatives of Macro-Regional Strategies and other Interreg transnational programmes.

Interview guidelines can be found in Annex 6.

Interviews with thematic experts | The interviews were developed as a primary data collection instrument and the resulting findings are used to build an in-depth understanding of the contextual developments in Central Europe in relation to the four thematic priorities, as well as for triangulation purposes.

Thematic experts were selected based on their expertise in the themes covered by the Programme (i.e. innovation, low-carbon, environment, culture and transport). From a longer list of thematic experts, the Evaluation team, together with the JS, shortlisted those **experts that were most knowledgeable about the Programme**, in order to provide informed feedback on the contribution of the programme to the discussed topics.

This round of interviews targeted a list of 15 experts (3 by theme), in order to maximize the response rate to the invitation for the interview. Five semi-structured, guide-based interviews were conducted as part of this evaluation. Three of the experts were involved in the validation Focus Groups as well.

Interview guidelines can be found in Annex 6.

Interviews with project beneficiaries | These interviews were developed as a primary data collection instrument to feed into the case studies developed as part of the targeted analysis. The interviews looked into the implementation mechanisms at project level, aiming to identify what works best and why. At the same time, interviews sought to assess the types of effects produced and the added value of the projects financed by the Programme.

The role of Lead Partners was crucial in facilitating access to project partners and end-users. Therefore, the interviews targeting lead partners were prioritised. Where lead partners were unavailable for the interview, project partners were contacted as well.

In total, 19 interviews were conducted with project lead partners and projects partners, broken down as follows:

- 3 LPs, 2 PPs (innovation)
- 3 LPs (low-carbon)
- 3 LPs, 1 PP (environment)

⁴ After consultations with the MA/JS, the former EC desk officer was interviewed, taking into consideration that he may have more extensive knowledge in relation to Call 1 and 2 projects, which are the focus of the current report.

- 1 LP, 4 PPs (culture)
- 1 LP, 1 PP (transport)

Interview guidelines can be found in Annex 6.

Interviews with end-users | Interviews with end-users will provide inputs to answering almost all evaluation questions, but most importantly identifying the added value for specific target groups, transferability of results, contribution to change of practices at organisational and individual level, sustainability of results, as well as identifying other effects than the ones predicted.

Reaching out to end-users was highly dependent on project and lead partners' availability to facilitate contact. Therefore, it encompassed a high degree of uncertainty, ultimately becoming a major challenge.

So far, two interviews with project end-users were conducted, 1 for the Environment theme and 1 for Low carbon theme.

Interview guidelines can be found in Annex 6.

5. COST EFFECTIVENESS ANALYSIS

The CEA consists of three methodological steps including a) the definition of effectiveness, b) the estimation of costs and c) the thematic clustering of projects.

Starting with effectiveness, it is defined at the projects' output level and includes six output types:

- Innovation networks,
- Pilot actions & Investments, i.e. pilot actions that include investment activities,
- Pilot actions, i.e. pilot actions without investments,
- Tools,
- Trainings,
- Strategies.

The effectiveness of the outputs is defined along five categories that jointly reflect the main overall aims of the Interreg CE programme. These categories are:

- The **contribution** of the output to improving the economic, social, and territorial development in CE (Co)
- The **importance** of the output for reaching the respective project's goals (Im)
- The extent to which the output contributed to generating **synergies** with other projects and/or EU/national/regional/local strategies, policies and programmes (Sy)
- The outputs **transferability**, i.e. the extent to which the output was transferred to public policies, other regions, sectors (Tr)
- The output's **sustainability**, i.e. to what extent is it used after the respective project' end (Su)

To measure each element, the analysis employed a rating scheme from 0 to 5 (including half steps) with 0 being the worst degree (e.g. absolutely no contribution to economic, social and territorial development) and 5 being the best degree. The outputs were rated by JS project managers as they have an unrivalled insight into the projects as well as by experts from the Evaluation team, who based their assessment on the available project documents. The aggregate rating for each output and category is the average of the JS programme managers and the experts' ratings.

The overall output effectiveness is calculated using the following formula:

$$Effectiveness_i = 0.2 Co_i + 0.2 Im_i + 0.2 Sy_i + 0.2 Tr_i + 0.2 Su_i$$

Hence, the effectiveness of an output i is the weighted average of the five effectiveness categories, whereby all categories are equally weighed.

The costs are calculated from ERDF expenditure data provided by the JS. For each project, these data include ERDF expenditures by partner at the work-package level. All expenditures are in Euro. In most cases the work-packages covered only one type of outputs (e.g. strategies) so that the expenditures could be directly related to the respective output. In cases where the work-package included two or more different output types (e.g. strategies and tools), the expenditures were evenly split across all different types of outputs in the respective work-package. In case a work-package produced more than one output of the same type, we calculated the unit costs, i.e. dividing the total ERDF expenditures of the work-package by the number of outputs (of the same type).

In the third step the projects and their outputs were clustered in thematic groups depending on the projects' focuses, to ensure a good comparability of the outputs' effectiveness. The clustering was done in a two-step process. The first clustering step defined 8 main clusters of projects, while the second clustering step defined for each main cluster secondary clusters, thus providing an even higher level of disaggregation. The clustering was done manually based on the available information on the projects by the experts and project managers of the JS.

The respective main and secondary clusters are defined as:

- **Innovation**
 - General innovation, i.e. projects dealing with innovation general
 - Social innovation
 - Specific innovation, i.e. projects dealing with innovation in specific sectors and areas
- **Skills**
 - Cultural heritage and CCI
 - Social innovation / entrepreneurship
 - Other
- **Energy efficiency**
 - Energy efficiency
 - GHG
 - Mobility
- **Climate change adaption**
 - Cultural heritage, i.e. projects protecting cultural heritage from climate change effects
 - General CCA
- **Circular economy**
 - NA, i.e. no secondary cluster was defined due to the low number of projects
- **Nature**
 - Nature, i.e. projects protecting landscapes, bio-diversity etc.
 - Urban, i.e. projects related to urban environment
- **Urban mobility**
 - NA, i.e. no secondary cluster was defined due to the low number of projects
- **Connectivity**
 - Freight transport
 - Rural transport
 - General transport

Combining the information on the clusters, effectiveness and costs a cost-effectiveness index was calculated as the ratio of the cluster relative effectiveness to the cluster relative costs, i.e. both the effectiveness measure and the output costs are normalised by the average output effectiveness and costs by the eight main clusters.

6. CASE STUDIES

Introduction | The case studies are used for several purposes: a) understanding the mechanisms behind the project outcomes and results, b) identifying the most effective measures/interventions (in connection with the cost-effectiveness analysis), c) identifying good practices or lessons learned, as well as d) measuring the factors of influence related to the net effects of the programme. The case studies are part of the evaluation triangulation process and complement the interviews, surveys and desk research.

The case studies apply a mix of methods, including quantitative and qualitative analysis, desk analysis of project documents, interviews with beneficiaries and end-users and if applicable surveys of target groups of the selected case study projects.

Selection Criteria – Individual Case Studies

- **5 individual case studies in phase 1** (the focus on this report) and 5 in phase 2 of the evaluation
- Each of the 10 Specific Objectives covered by one individual case study (partly covered in this phase of the evaluation);
- All 5 thematic areas are covered by at least one case study (innovation, low-carbon, environment, culture and transport)
- A mix of territories covered, in terms of countries, urban/rural regions
- Project focus – related to the Interreg CE 2021+ programme
- Output mix
- Outreach focus – mix of target groups
- Recommended by interviewed stakeholders

The selected case studies for evaluation phase 1 are: **Innovation – DigitalLife4CE, Low-carbon – LOW-CARB, Environment – RAINMAN, Culture – INDUCULT2.0., Transport - RUMOBIL**

Selection Criteria – Comparative Case Studies

- 5 comparative case studies - 3 in phase 1, and 2 more will follow in phase 2 of the evaluation.
- Comparison of 2 projects
- All 5 thematic areas covered (innovation, low-carbon, environment, culture and transport)
- First 3 case studies on: innovation, low-carbon and environment
- If possible: projects should have the same focus, but different approaches (to provide insights into what works best)
- If possible: projects should show differences in the uptake by policy-makers, the roll-out to other regions etc. (to provide insights into the factors influencing the uptake and/or roll-out)
- Recommended by interviewed stakeholders

The selected case studies for evaluation phase 1 are: **Innovation – KETGATE & SYNERGY, Low-carbon – ENERGY@SCHOOL & eCentral, Environment – GreenerSites & LUMAT**

Both individual and comparative case studies are available in full in Annex 3.

7. FOCUS GROUPS

The **thematic focus groups** were set up as a tool to complement other methodological approaches, taking place after the finalisation of the field research with the specific aim of **enabling triangulation and validity-checking** of working hypotheses and resulting conclusions/recommendations.

The purpose of the Focus Groups was twofold:

- Reaching a consensus on the evaluation conclusions, presented for each EQ;

- Approval / validation of the proposed recommendations / adjustment according to the feedback received from participants.

As part of the evaluation phase 1, the following focus groups were organised:

- **One general session**, focusing on the main findings at the Programme level, as well as on the CEA
- **5 thematic sessions**, focusing on specific findings of the evaluation by theme

On average for the six sessions, around 12-15 participants attended each focus groups, including the MA/JS, members of the Evaluation Task Force, Monitoring Committee members, National Contact Points, thematic experts and the Evaluation team.

The findings of the FGs are presented in Annex 7.

2. ANNEX 2 – THEORY OF CHANGE

2.1. AT THE PROGRAMME LEVEL

2.1.1. CONTEXT

Brief qualitative description of the political and institutional developments in the CE area (countries and regions) over 2014-2020: governance etc.

- Central Europe has diverse administration and governance systems and approaches and significantly different capacity needs, in terms of know-how, human resources and financial capacity.
- The gap between regulation and implementation is still a challenge in the programme area. The Better Regulation package (2016) has put more emphasis on the effective transposition and implementation, while the Toolbox provides guidance and instruments for increased evidence-based decision-making and results-orientation. The number of infringements (more numerous for environment and transport sectors) shows however, that challenges remain, even for transposition from EU to national level.
- Evidence in respect to the challenges for the actual implementation of the regulations is limited to few sectors, particularly environment. Nonetheless, it points out to political factors (gold-plating, to fit national/regional contexts), fragmentation on administrative structures and capacity (producing explanatory documents, establishing norms, enforcing “on the ground”, monitoring, etc.)⁵.

TABLE 2 KEY EU, NATIONAL AND REGIONAL STRATEGIES BY SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	KEY STRATEGIES
1.1 Sustainable linkages among actors of the innovation systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Territorial Agenda of the European Union 2020 • Europe 2020 Flagship Initiative - Innovation Union • Digital agenda for Europe An industrial policy for the globalisation era
1.2 Skills and entrepreneurial competences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Agenda for new skills and jobs • Europe 2020 Flagship Initiative - Innovation Union Digital agenda for Europe

⁵ [Challenges in the implementation of EU Law at national level \(europa.eu\)](http://europa.eu)

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	KEY STRATEGIES
2.1 Energy efficiency and renewable energy usage in public infrastructures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource efficient Europe • An agenda for new skills and jobs • Digital agenda for Europe Territorial Agenda of the European Union 2020
2.2 Low-carbon energy planning strategies and policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource efficient Europe • An agenda for new skills and jobs Territorial Agenda of the European Union 2020
2.3 Mobility planning in functional urban areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White Paper “Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area” (EC, 2011) • EU Clean Air Policy Package (EC, 2013) • Communication “Together towards competitive and resource-efficient urban mobility” (EC, 2013) • Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans • European Strategy for Low-Emission Mobility (EC, 2016)
3.1 To improve integrated environmental management capacities for the protection and sustainable use of natural heritage and resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU 2020 Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth • The EU Biodiversity Strategy • EC Communication on Water Scarcity and Droughts • EC Blueprint to Safeguard Europe’s Waters • EU 2030 Agenda: SGD6 Integrated Water Resources Management • Declaration of Stymfalia, 2014 Cultural landscapes in Natura 2000 sites: towards a new policy for the integrated management of cultural and natural heritage. • Charter of Rome on Natural and Cultural Capital, Council of the EU, 5 December 2014. • European Landscape Convention - The European Landscape Convention introduced a Europe-wide concept focusing on the quality of landscape protection, management and planning and covering the entire territory, not just outstanding landscapes. Through its ground-breaking approach and its broader scope, it complements the Council of Europe’s and UNESCO’s heritage conventions. • Commission Communication on an integrated approach to cultural heritage • “Cultural landscapes in Natura 2000 sites” • “Charter of Rome on Natural and Cultural Capital” • Action Plans: EUSDR (2010), EUSALP (2015), EUSAIR (2014), EUSBSR (2014)
3.2 To improve capacities for the sustainable use of cultural heritage and resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU 2020 Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. • The European Agenda for Culture (2007) • European framework for action on cultural heritage • The Pillar of Social Rights (2017) • Workplan for Culture (2015-2018) of the Council for EU
3.3 To improve environmental management of functional urban areas to make them more liveable places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities • Circular Economy Package (2015) and Circular Economy Framework (2018) • Urban Agenda for the EU (Pact of Amsterdam) (2016) • The EU Strategy on adaptation to climate change (2013) • Policy handbook - Using EU culture programmes to foster local, regional and national development (2011-2014) • EU Strategy on Green Infrastructure (2013) • Roadmap to a Resource Efficient Europe (2011)
4.1 To improve planning and coordination of regional passenger transport systems for better connections to national and European transport networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Europe 2020 - A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth • Framework Strategy for a Resilient Energy Union with a Forward-Looking Climate Change Policy (2015) • Low-emission Mobility Strategy (2016) • European Strategy on Cooperative Intelligent Transport Systems, (2016); • Europe on the move packages-An agenda for a socially fair transition towards clean, competitive, and connected mobility for all Europe (2017)
4.2 To improve coordination among freight transport stakeholders for increasing multimodal environmentally-friendly freight solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Europe 2020 - A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth • Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area (2011) • Low-emission Mobility Strategy • EU’s maritime transport policy (2009) • Aviation: Open and Connected Europe (2017) • An aviation strategy for Europe (2015) • Framework Strategy for a Resilient Energy Union with a Forward-Looking Climate Change Policy (2015) • European Strategy for Low Emission Mobility (2016)

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	KEY STRATEGIES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Europe on the move packages-An agenda for a socially fair transition towards clean, competitive, and connected mobility for all Europe (2017)

Brief qualitative description (with times series charts for illustration where relevant) of socio-economic developments in the CE area (area overall, countries and regions) over 2014-2020: demographic trends (e.g., rural decline), GDP per capita evolution (in relation to EU average), changes in employment structure, etc.

- The Programme area boasts of a generally high level of socio-economic development, competitiveness, and quality of life. The evolution of GDP per capita shows a decrease of disparities between the countries in the programme area, as the newer MS converging towards the EU average. Nonetheless, the gap remains significant, with values (of GDP per capita) four time higher in Germany than in Croatia, in nominal terms (best/worst performing).
- Out of the 9 low-income regions present in the area in 2013 (in Hungary and Poland)⁶, only 5 remained in 2019, with others reaching or surpassing the threshold level and most converging towards it. Eastern Slovakia has, however, fallen to a GDP per head in PPS below 50% of the EU average.
- Most of the population lives in urban areas (cities, towns and suburbs)⁷. Croatia and Hungary have registered the highest increase in urban population (9.2 and 6.3 pp, respectively), between 2014-2019, mostly towards cities, whereas Italy and Slovakia are experiencing a slight increase in the rural population (below 2%). Suburbanization is visible throughout the area, notably in Italy and Czechia.
- Throughout the area, urban growth poles attract investments, talent, and innovation, benefiting from “capital magnetism”. In the more developed countries (older MS – Germany, Austria, Italy), they are also home to larger shares of people living in material and social deprivation, compared to the rural areas⁸.
- In contrast, in the less developed countries, rural areas concentrate most people living in material and social deprivation, and remain disconnected from the main economic flows, against poor digital and physical connectivity.
- The programme area is with intense economic and social ties which make it a functional area. Its economic structure makes it one of the EU’s industrial core areas. The economic activity is concentrated in SMEs, in technology-oriented industries, and in business-related and cross-sectoral services.
- The quality of the workforce is generally high, with a noticeable increasing trend in the level of education/lifelong learning/female participation in education (qualified workforce). Prior to the COVID crisis, unemployment levels were generally below EU average, except for Italy and Croatia.
- Sectoral and spatial inequalities of ICT infrastructure are visible across the area.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	KEY FEATURES
1.1 Sustainable linkages among actors of the innovation systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uneven distribution of economic strengths rooted in the historical and structural differences between regions - urban and industrialised areas vs. rural and peripheral areas. Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) form the majority of business entities and are the biggest employers in central Europe. SMEs may act as regional innovation motors;

⁶ Regions with a GDP per head in PPS below 50% of the EU average in 2013 [lagging_regions_report_en.pdf \(europa.eu\)](#)

⁷ Eurostat, online data code: ILC_LVHO01

⁸ Eurostat, online data code: ILC_MDSD09

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	KEY FEATURES
	<p>however there is a “severe underinvestment in research and innovation in the private sector</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research and development as well as investments are concentrated in few, mostly urban growth poles including capital city agglomerations • Low level of R&D activities in rural and/or peripheral regions <p>Transnational and regional links and networks between actors within the innovation systems are weak.</p>
1.2 Skills and entrepreneurial competences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brain-drain occurrences and deterioration of competitiveness and risk of unemployment. • On-going labour market transformation. • Disparities in education and employment. • Lack of competences and skills within. • SMEs in terms of innovative products and services. • Differences in entrepreneurial culture.
2.1 Energy efficiency and renewable energy usage in public infrastructures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High level of energy import dependency and imports from countries vulnerable to economic or political instability. • Low energy efficiency in regions of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe (e.g. housing) and in public institutions. • Existing lifestyles in “mature” economies and catching up processes in new MS lead to increased energy demand / consumption. • Experience in energy saving technologies (infrastructure/housing) in some regions.
2.2 Low-carbon energy planning strategies and policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of renewable energy resources still low in new MS (e.g. Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia), despite high potentials. • High level of experience and know-how in renewable energy. • Experience in clean energy production (wind, solar, biomass, hydropower, geothermal energy) in some regions. • High percentage of biomass production in some regions. • High energy intensive transport. • High dependency on fossil fuels.
2.3 Mobility planning in functional urban areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The prevalence of urban mobility varies widely within the CE area, with 62% of Czech citizens traveling within cities on a daily basis, against only 24% of Slovak citizens (Eurobarometer 406, 2013). • According to a survey conducted in 2014⁹, the main transport mode used for the most frequent trip remains the car in most CE countries: Slovenia (more than 70% of respondents), Italy, Germany, Croatia, Austria, Poland and Slovakia (ca. 45%), as well as in Czechia, where car is at par with public transport (both modes around 38%), while public transport is the main mode in Hungary only (ca. 37%, with ca. 33% for the car). • Between 5% (Hungary) and 14% (Italy) of CE citizens often encounter problems when traveling within cities, while the EU average lies at 9% (Eurobarometer 406, 2013). • A majority of CE citizens view air pollution, noise pollution, road congestion, traveling costs and accidents as fairly or very important problems in cities (Eurobarometer 406, 2013). • At the same time, at least 72% of citizens living in the largest CE cities (e.g. Prague, Munich, Leipzig, Zagreb, Vienna, Graz, Warsaw, Cracow, Ljubljana) were satisfied with public transportation, except for cities in Hungary, Slovakia and Italy where this proportion was lower (e.g. down to 45% in Kosice) (Eurostat, Perception survey results, 2015).
3.1 To improve integrated environmental management capacities for the protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme area is highly heterogeneous in geographical terms, including coastal areas, mountain ranges, rural areas, large urban agglomerations

⁹ Fiorello, Davide & Martino, Angelo & Zani, Loredana & Christidis, Panayotis & Elena, Navajas. (2016). Mobility Data across the EU 28 Member States: Results from an Extensive CAWI Survey. Transportation Research Procedia. 14. 1104-1113. 10.1016/j.trpro.2016.05.181.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	KEY FEATURES
and sustainable use of natural heritage and resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The landscape is shaped both by natural and cultural elements which combined give the cultural identity of the area. • While government expenditure on environmental protection¹⁰ has not increased significantly in the Central European area, consumption of environmental protection services¹¹ has grown steadily. • The share of Natura 2000 protected areas¹² has not changed during the implementation of the programme, but it differs across the area, from 14% of the territory in Czechia, to 38% in Slovenia. • Awareness in respect to biodiversity has increased significantly, over 70% of Europeans saying they have heard of it¹³. Its importance, threats, and measures to protect it are also higher in the public interest and on the public agenda. Pollution, man-made disasters, and climate change are perceived as major factors affecting biodiversity. However, the extent of damage by human activities such as intensive farming, forestry and over-fishing is still not fully acknowledged. • The environmental performance¹⁴ in the Programme area differs. Austria and Germany are at top of the rankings in the programme area, despite higher values of garbage production or food waste. This is due to more comprehensive actions in respect to environmental policies, from air pollution and emissions to agriculture and biodiversity. • Countries which score better in circular economy (Germany, Czech Republic, Italy, or Poland)¹⁵ have invested more in innovation and/or circular economy sectors. • Tourism has cross-cutting impact on natural resources, heritage, environment, transport. There is increasing awareness in respect to „overtourism“ and adverse effects it produces for the environment and the communities located in or close to popular touristic destinations.¹⁶
3.2 To improve capacities for the sustainable use of cultural heritage and resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great diversity of cultural heritage and resources in terms of historical sites, documentary heritage, artefacts, traditions, cultural landscapes as well as traditional skills and knowledge. • Numerous UNESCO heritage sites, as well intangible cultural heritage of humanity items, are present in the Programme area (out of which 5 has a transboundary character), as well as 19 European Heritage sites¹⁷. • Satisfaction with the cultural facilities such as concert halls, theatres, museums, and libraries in their cities differs widely in the programme area, from 23.2% of the population in Bratislava, to 75.7% in Vienna being very satisfied. The perception has largely remained the same since 2015¹⁸. • Cultural and creative vibrancy differs significantly, with higher values in Italy and Austria¹⁹. • Consumption of cultural goods and services is relatively high across the area, with a visible East-West divide²⁰. Consumption is mostly influenced by financial and physical barriers, accessibility being particularly low in remote or rural areas and small towns and for people with disabilities or the elderly. Digitalization has significantly contributed to improved access²¹. • Perception on cultural heritage is high, people considering it important for their country, but also for them personally, as well as for their local community, their region, and for the EU.

¹⁰ Eurostat online data code: ENV_AC_EPNEIS

¹¹ Eurostat online data code: ENV_AC_CEPSGH

¹² Eurostat online data code: ENV_BIO1

¹³ Special EB 436 (2015) and Special EB 481 (2018)

¹⁴ [Environmental Performance Index | Environmental Performance Index \(yale.edu\)](#)

¹⁵ [Ranking how EU countries do with the circular economy – POLITICO](#)

¹⁶ [EUMobilityatlas2021_FINAL_WEB.pdf \(boell.org\)](#)

¹⁷ [European Heritage Label sites \(osnabrueck.de\)](#)

¹⁸ Eurostat, online data code: URB_PERCEP\$DV_170

¹⁹ [European Year of Culture Heritage 2018 \(arcgis.com\)](#)

²⁰ Eurostat, 2015 data, online data code CULT_PCS_HBS

²¹ [Briefing European Parliamentary Research Service \(europa.eu\)](#)

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	KEY FEATURES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than seven in ten agree living close to places related to Europe's cultural heritage can improve people's quality of life (71%), while 70% agree they feel pride in a historical monument or site, work of art or tradition from a European country other than their own, or that living close to places related to Europe's cultural heritage can give people a sense of belonging to Europe. • Government expenditure for cultural services has remained relatively constant between 2013-2019, 0.5-0.6% of GDP. • Cultural heritage is one of the most popular topics in Interreg programs (1st in 2007-2013 and 2nd in 2014-2020) (keep.eu). More than 10% of the overall Interreg budget is invested in cultural projects.
3.3 To improve environmental management of functional urban areas to make them more liveable places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A large share of the population in the programme area is living in the over 200 metropolitan areas²² located here. Peri-urban space is increasing much faster than are traditional core cities²³. • Metropolitan regions are diverse across the Programme area, in terms of demography, geography or economy. Significant disparities may exist within the same metropolitan area, in respect to degree of urbanization or income levels of its inhabitants. • The EU also has a number of crossborder metropolitan regions that require close cooperation among their constituent agglomerations belonging to different Member States. Linguistic, political and bureaucratic issues render this a difficult task. An ESPON study on these regions concludes that cross-border polycentric metropolitan regions are an important emerging phenomenon of European spatial organisation and have potential for further development. Societal challenges • Economic activity, innovation and creativity is mostly concentrated in metropolitan regions, which also tend to attract a more highly educated population, including many commuters²⁴. • Against rapid urbanization trends and urban sprawl, the relation between urban and rural spaces is one of apparent conflict, in relation to land use and negative environmental impact. However, urban spaces depend on their surroundings for resources and functions just as much as rural areas rely on the urban space, showing the mutual benefits of their coexistence.²⁵ • Many cities face sustainability challenges resulting from either demographic decline or overcrowding, increasing social inequity, pollution, or congestion. However, high concentration of people businesses can also result in opportunities for resource efficiency and more sustainable mobility²⁶. • The environmental dimension is as essential for the core cities as it is for the territories surrounding them.²⁷. • Wastewater treatment capacity is very high in Slovakia, Slovenia, Austria and Germany.
4.1 To improve planning and coordination of regional passenger transport systems for better connections to national and European transport networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban areas around growth poles and particularly around capital cities are significantly better connected to the main transport corridors compared to rural areas. The same areas offer better and more diverse transport services to their citizens, including multi-modal transport. • Rural regions are still missing effective transport connections. The so-called 'first and last miles' is often a problem for those who live far from city centres, emphasizing the social role of the public transport services, besides contributing to effective mobility.²⁸ • Cross-border accessibility is still considered a major barrier across most EU borders. For example, cross-border rail services are especially rare between Poland and Slovakia or Slovenia and Italy²⁹. Poor accessibility is caused by the absence of adequate cross-border network infrastructure but also by the different legal or governance obstacles, technical

²² [Metropolitan regions in EU cohesion policy \(europa.eu\)](https://europea.europa.eu/en/urban-environment/urban-environment-policy)

²³ [Urban environment — European Environment Agency \(europa.eu\)](https://europea.europa.eu/en/urban-environment/urban-environment-policy)

²⁴ [Metropolitan regions in EU cohesion policy \(europa.eu\)](https://europea.europa.eu/en/urban-environment/urban-environment-policy)

²⁵ [Microsoft Word - Svedin proofread 2011-07-29cs.doc \(europa.eu\)](https://europea.europa.eu/en/urban-environment/urban-environment-policy)

²⁶ [Urban environment — European Environment Agency \(europa.eu\)](https://europea.europa.eu/en/urban-environment/urban-environment-policy)

²⁷ [Urban systems — European Environment Agency \(europa.eu\)](https://europea.europa.eu/en/urban-environment/urban-environment-policy)

²⁸ [EUMobilityatlas2021_FINAL_WEB.pdf \(boell.org\)](https://europea.europa.eu/en/urban-environment/urban-environment-policy)

²⁹ [201704_rail_passenger_accessibility.pdf \(europa.eu\)](https://europea.europa.eu/en/urban-environment/urban-environment-policy)

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	KEY FEATURES
	<p>(such as power systems), signalling etc. More intensive economic ties and the existence of common urban areas are associated with better connectivity and commuting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member States tend to give priority to projects that will improve their national network, especially high-speed rail transport; however, these have limited cross-border interconnectivity. • Modal split of passenger transport on land is still heavily dependent on cars, at over 80% in all countries of the CE area. Access to domestic markets for road passenger transport continues to be heavily restricted in several EU countries. • Fragmented EU airspace leads to high operating costs for airlines, as it limits the optimisation of flight paths or duplicating costly functions. Major European airports are likely to face a capacity crunch in the future³⁰. • Multimodal passenger transport, including integrated ticketing and payment systems, are confined to local, regional, or national levels and are highly fragmented. Their integration faces numerous challenges, including legal and commercial barriers (resistance from operators to share data), taxes and charges, proprietary software³¹, insufficient coordination between stakeholders. • Cooperation and coordination among the stakeholders are challenging due to the large number of operators and service providers, lack of trust between the operators, high competition, lack of experience or expertise, missing legal framework.³² • Awareness in respect to road transport negative externalities (pollution, congestion, accidents), particularly in urban areas, has increased, prioritizing investments for sustainable services and alternatives. • Demand-responsive transport services, mobility as a service, digitalization, and non-motorized transport, especially by bicycle, have significantly improved connectivity in rural areas located in proximity of cities and town. Barriers remain, including the attitudes and user habits, particularly in the case of older user, with less digitally skilled. Dependence of private cars is still more apparent in ex-soviet states. • The growth of the tourism industry in recent years has largely been built on unsustainable travel patterns³³. • The adaptation of infrastructure to new mobility patterns and the deployment of infrastructure for clean, alternative fuels, poses additional challenges that require new investments and a different approach to the design of networks and business models.³⁴
4.2 To improve coordination among freight transport stakeholders for increasing multimodal environmentally-friendly freight solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The density of the infrastructure is still higher in older member states, particularly in Germany and Austria. The quality of the infrastructure is also better in these states³⁵, as is the overall satisfaction of its users.³⁶ • General government expenditure for transport has remained relatively constant between 2014-2019, but varies significantly, from 1.7% of GDP in Germany, to 4.8% in Hungary. • Freight transport continues to grow, and road transport is the main mode (between 54-70% of all freight in the CE area member states), growing at a faster rate compared to the other transport modes. At EU level, road freight transport is expected to grow by 40% 2030 and by as much as 80% until 2050.³⁷ • The rail share in the overall modal split of freight transport in the CE area is generally above 25% (except for Germany, Croatia and Italy which are lower), above the EU average of 18%.

³⁰ [european-semester thematic-factsheet transport en.pdf \(europa.eu\)](#)

³¹ [Remaining challenges for EU-wide integrated ticketing and payment systems - Publications Office of the EU \(europa.eu\)](#)

³² [Remaining challenges for EU-wide integrated ticketing and payment systems - Publications Office of the EU \(europa.eu\)](#)

³³ [EUMobilityatlas2021_FINAL_WEB.pdf \(boell.org\)](#)

³⁴ [2019-transport-in-the-eu-current-trends-and-issues.pdf \(europa.eu\)](#)

³⁵ [Aggregated LPI | Logistics Performance Index \(worldbank.org\)](#)

³⁶ [2019-transport-in-the-eu-current-trends-and-issues.pdf \(europa.eu\)](#), quoting World Economic Forum Scoreboard

³⁷ [Multimodal and combined transport | Mobility and Transport \(europa.eu\)](#)

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	KEY FEATURES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multimodal transport has increased between 0.5% in Hungary and 17.4% in Slovakia (annual growth rate, 2014-2019)³⁸ The central Europe area shows regional disparities in multimodal accessibility, with Germany displaying the best infrastructure (more than 5 terminals per 10,000 sq. km) and Poland the worst endowment (less than 2 terminals per 10,000 sq. km)³⁹. Intermodal and combined rail transport continues to develop more positively than rail freight transport in general⁴⁰, particularly triggered by cross-border transport.

2.1.2. EXTERNAL FACTORS

FACTORS	DETAILS AND EXAMPLES
Horizontal and vertical cooperation/ coordination mechanisms between various levels of territorial governance	<p>Various cooperation forms (e.g. urban-rural partnerships, metropolitan regions, European Territorial Cooperation and other cooperation models such as macro-regional strategies and European Groups of Territorial Cooperation) create horizontal and vertical cooperation/ coordination mechanisms between various levels of territorial governance (transnational, national, regional, local). This favours cooperation, but also demands increased quality, sophistication of interventions.</p> <p>The intensity of transnational cooperation is remarkably high. Demand in transnational cooperation supported by the programme has been highest across Europe for many years⁴¹. However, this could pose risks of only consolidating existing partnerships, not expanding to others.</p> <p>Market fragmentation and the multitude of regulators and actors in the transport sector, both for passenger and freight, impose particularly difficult obstacles to cooperation.</p> <p>The numerous local administrations involved in each FUA/metropolitan area, their different power (financial and negotiation), as well as the political factor, often hinder the creation of functional structures and effective cooperation.</p>
Increasing gap between regulation and implementation	<p>The environment sector is among the top sectors identified by the EU Court of Auditors consistently problematic when it comes to resolving infringements, alongside transport. This shows persistent challenges in transposing and implementing EU legislation at national level, due both to political decisions and insufficient capacity.</p>
Emergence of new technologies and methods	<p>Internet and social media access and use has increased across the programme area, including for cultural purposes. This is highly likely to have influenced the way projects were designed and implemented. Beneficiaries may have used internet-enabled participatory/ collaborative approaches to reach end-users and understand their needs/ expectations, to collect data on topics of interest and to communicate with them or with other stakeholders. It is also likely that the outputs and results reach more end-users, faster.</p> <p>Internet use is likely to pose risks related to personal privacy, fake news, radical/hate speech, which might be particularly important to sensitive topics/ sites.</p> <p>Digitisation of cultural heritage can be essential for the conservation, renovation, study and promotion of European cultural resources.</p> <p>For the transport sector, new socio-economic and technological developments have also emerged or become more prominent, such as the collaborative economy, digitalisation, big data, increasingly complex business structures and supply chains, and a shift to a circular economy.</p>
Changes in legislation at EU/ national/ regional level	<p>Heritage-related interventions are likely to be influenced by legislation in the following topics⁴²:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land-use, including ownership, territorial integration (or the lack thereof) Heritage definition in policy, formally and informally: e.g. listed, not-listed or not-yet-listed, as well as different conceptualisations of heritage (that may have different legal implications, (e.g. archaeology, buildings, landscapes, tangible / intangible).

³⁸ Eurostat, online data code RAIL_GO_CONTWGT

³⁹ [PowerPoint-Präsentation \(uic.org\)](#)

⁴⁰ [PowerPoint-Präsentation \(uic.org\)](#)

⁴¹ [Study of cooperation challenges and impacts in central Europe - Interreg \(interreg-central.eu\)](#), wiiw

⁴² Based on: [d 1.2 mapping of current heritage re-use policies and regulations in europe.pdf \(europa.eu\)](#)

FACTORS	DETAILS AND EXAMPLES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building codes and regulations, architectural as well as technical, e.g. seismic design; fire safety; physical accessibility; health and safety; modern (sustainability) technologies (e.g. insulation, acoustics, heating, PV panels). • Financing mechanisms, e.g. possibility of PPP, grass-root initiatives • Incentives / Barriers: e.g. taxes, incentives. <p>Most aspects are regulated at national, regional, or local level. It is likely that stricter rules were introduced for intervening on heritage sites and for building requirements, across the Programme area.</p> <p>Cross-sector conditions might have been imposed, such as those related to energy efficiency, environment protection etc.</p> <p>Since 2019, there is Manual available, on European Quality Principles for EU-funded Interventions with potential impact upon Cultural Heritage, developed under the mandate of the EC.</p> <p>For the transport sector, the gradual shift to alternative fuels vehicles has influenced and will continue to influence the development of the specific infrastructure, fleet development, business models and operation costs. Other changes in legislation that may influence interventions in the transport sector, beyond environment protection and energy efficiency include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • completing market opening. • introducing the principle of competition for public service contracts. • ensuring non-discriminatory access to infrastructure, particularly for rail. • reducing technical and regulatory barriers for market entry. • setting common standards. • addressing road charging systems and technologies. • increasing road safety. • the single signalling system. • common passenger rights with fewer national exemptions. • harmonised technical standards across Europe. • fair working conditions and passenger rights⁴³
Changes in national or regional government/ policy priorities	<p>Across the EU the perception on the societal and economic value of heritage and its role has been reinforced and is currently widely recognized as an enabling factor for sustainable development and revitalisation. There is also a gradual shift from state investments to financially independent models of private (and civic) investments⁴⁴. These developments may have contributed to increased demand for projects and may have also determined a more participatory approach in the design and implementation, including through community-led initiatives.</p> <p>Integrated territorial development through tailored place-based initiatives and instruments are gaining interest across the EU and are likely to encourage cooperation beyond administrative borders at local level.</p> <p>Increased awareness and knowledge on the complexity of urban development processes are likely to determine better alignment of investments in the different areas – energy efficiency, mobility, land use etc.</p>
Existence of other EU funds	<p>There are numerous other funding sources. EU programmes which contribute to enhancing and preserving natural heritage include the European Green Capital Award, the LIFE programme, Horizon 2020 (Challenge 5 "Climate action, environment, resource efficiency and raw materials") and the other programmes financed through the European Structural and Investment Funds.</p> <p>The Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2014-2020 ensures that at least 20% of the European budget is climate-related expenditure. Within the 20% target, the largest share of financing is ensured through the ESIF, Horizon 2020 and the LIFE programme. Cohesion policy supports environmental infrastructure including clean drinking water supply, waste management and waste-water treatment</p> <p>Should contribute to synergies, as they are easy to track and have strict rules for complementarity.</p>
COVID crisis	<p>Because of the COVID pandemic, the economy registered a sharp decline in Q2 of 2020, readjusting moderately in Q4 of the same year. Given the uncertainty regarding the duration of the crisis and</p>

⁴³ [european-semester thematic-factsheet transport en.pdf \(europa.eu\)](#)

⁴⁴ Idem

FACTORS			DETAILS AND EXAMPLES
			<p>its long-term effects, it is expected that the situation will remain strenuous, while the economic sentiment remains rather low in the entire programme area.</p> <p>While the medical crisis and the social distancing measures caused disruptions for the entire economy, it had a disproportionate negative effect on tourism and travel. In this context, coastal regions in Croatia, Italy and Germany, the mountainous regions in Austria and Italy, and tourist cities were significantly affected. Even more, in remote regions tourism-related services are often the main sources of income for the local population. On the other hand, services turnover has increased in the second part of 2020.</p> <p>Most industries resorted to reducing working time and relied on various forms of government support, preventing layoffs. Remote work has been essential to cope with immediate effects of the crisis for the industries that could adopt it. However, evidence suggests that more than 80% of the employees working in sectors hard-hit by the COVID-19 crisis, such as retail, accommodation, transport, and food services, are, in effect, unable to work remotely, mainly because of the nature of their work. As a result of the crisis, labour market inequalities are likely to have increased across the area, between low and high skilled and between men and women, particularly affecting working mothers.</p> <p>The prolonged medical crisis may trigger a longer-term economic downturn, particularly for certain sectors (tourism, leisure, travel, transport, logistics). It may also divert resources to other priorities. Together these factors may pose a risk to completing ongoing projects as planned and in maintaining the sustainability of outputs and results.</p>
Migration countries	from	third	<p>The cultural heritage of migrants can have a positive contribution to the development, diversity, and revitalization of the communities they arrive in. Recent migration waves may have determined new themes/ target groups / activities in projects.</p> <p>However, the cultural clash may have posed threats to “sensitive” heritage sites or cultural elements, making interventions more difficult.</p>
Climate change			<p>Climate change accelerates the deterioration and loss of diverse cultural heritage. Increased awareness in this respect may have influenced the way projects were designed and implemented. It may also have a significant influence on the sustainability of the interventions, if different/ more preventive or corrective actions are needed.</p> <p>Growing awareness about climate change effects and adaptation measures can increase interest in the interventions.</p>
Unequal ICT coverage and access and e-administration			Difficulty in implementation, unequal access to information

2.1.3. THEORY OF CHANGE

2.1.3.1. NEEDS

General needs of the programme area

Needs by SOs

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	NEEDS
1.1 Sustainable linkages among actors of the innovation systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve framework for innovation • Support economic specialisation based on regional potentials • Enhanced technology transfer between research, education and business • Stronger links between regions and innovation actors • Improve skills and knowledge in the field of innovation • Improve industrial networks – including SMEs - due to increasing embeddedness of regions into global capital flows
1.2 Skills and entrepreneurial competences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting new demands for locations & new challenges for the regional labour market • Increase of flexibility, adaptability and dynamic development of employment • Measures against (youth) unemployment and low activity rates • Increase participation in education • Improve lifelong learning & guidance

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	NEEDS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support of labour market improvements (including training systems) • Increase numbers of green employment forms, creative industries and co-operative SMEs • Support of alternative employment forms
2.1 Energy efficiency and renewable energy usage in public infrastructures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributing to a low-carbon economy and to combating climate change through an efficient use of energy. • Reducing central Europe's energy import dependence and increasing air quality through an efficient use of energy. • Exploiting the large potential for fossil fuel energy savings and by increasing energy efficiency • Increasing the overall capacity of the public sector for implementing measures to reduce CO2 emissions of public infrastructure. • Strengthening the necessary expertise (i.e. methods and technologies) for reducing energy consumption and/or replacing the consumption of fossil fuels with renewable energy sources. • Reduce know-how disparities and increase capacities of the public sector and related entities for improving the energy efficiency of public infrastructures.
2.2 Low-carbon energy planning strategies and policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the development and implementation of innovative local and regional energy planning strategies leading to an enhanced use of endogenous renewable energy potentials. • Contribute to a reduction of the differences in the use of renewable energy in CE. • Help building new knowledge as well as exchanging existing knowledge and experiences between and within regions concerning the planning, financing and implementing of concrete actions to deliver sustainable energy measures. • Improve the capacity of the public sector and related entities, as a key starting point for mobilising investment for low-carbon measures at territorial level. • Contribute to triggering activities in regions with a lower usage of their renewable energy potentials. • Support linking the demand and supply side, considering the quality and capacity of energy distribution grids, by strengthening the knowledge and planning capacity of the public sector and related entities that facilitate the transition towards 'Sustainable Energy Regions'.
2.3 Mobility planning in functional urban areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport is a high energy-consuming sector, transport demand is constantly increasing, and negative externalities are pressing. • Need to improve the energy efficiency of urban transport at the level of functional urban areas. • Need to improve the capacities of the public sector and related entities for low-carbon mobility planning at the level of FUAs through better governance and integrated approaches to planning (in particular through a closer vertical and horizontal coordination and integration of mobility planning and solutions between urban cores and their hinterlands).
3.1 To improve integrated environmental management capacities for the protection and sustainable use of natural heritage and resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural heritage and resources (including water, soil, fauna and flora) are subject to numerous pressures and usage conflicts, e.g. between environmental protection and industry, agriculture, transport, urbanisation or tourism. As a result, ecosystems with different needs and challenges often overlap (urban/ wetlands). <i>(increased)</i> • Further pressure arises from the increasing risk of natural hazards linked to the effects of climate change. The fragmentation and loss of biodiversity, the vulnerability of natural heritage and landscapes as well as the effects of climate change have a strong impact at territorial level (cf. Territorial Agenda 2020). <i>(increased)</i> • Diverging priorities are often found in respect to the protection, conservation and use of natural and cultural assets and resources, particularly where the two appear together (for example in Natura 2000 sites) <i>(increased)</i> • Lack of a cross sectorial (integrated) approaches <i>(constant)</i> • Legal gaps in protection of ecosystems, ecosystem networks are missing <i>(constant)</i>
3.2 To improve capacities for the sustainable use of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protecting and more sustainably using natural and cultural heritage and resources, which are subject to a variety of pressures and usage conflicts (e.g. from industry, intensive

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	NEEDS
cultural heritage and resources	<p>agriculture, climate change, transport, urbanisation and sub-urbanisation as well as tourism). <i>(increased)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cultural richness is often not well valorised and related potentials are not sufficiently used and its vibrancy is not transmitted to the people <i>(increased)</i> • Integrated approaches for planning and managing natural and cultural resources are not widely applied and respective capacities are limited. <i>(constant)</i> • Natural and cultural heritage sites are not sufficiently linked. <i>(constant)</i> • Need for facilitating a good balance between the preservation of cultural heritage and sustainable long-term socio-economic development of regions to strengthen their attractiveness and competitiveness. <i>(constant)</i> • Lack of a cross sectorial (integrated) approaches <i>(constant)</i>
3.3 To improve environmental management of functional urban areas to make them more liveable places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decline of the urban environmental quality. Pollution is a serious problem in many metropolitan regions, mainly generated by transport, energy consumption and waste creation. Improving air quality, reducing high levels of noise, tackling contaminated sites, addressing water scarcity/quality, and fostering efficient waste-management cycles are the most prominent challenges for urban areas as per the European Metropolitan Authorities⁴⁵, together with ensuring preparedness and response capacity to climate change phenomena, such as flooding and extreme temperatures. <i>(constant)</i> • Increase of land use conflicts, especially in growing urban areas. <i>(increased)</i> • Ineffective transport networks, poor design of public transport, insufficient or absent transport connections between core cities and metropolitan areas result in congestion and prevent access to jobs and services. <i>(constant)</i> • Unequal and insufficient effort dedicated to environmental management and measures for mitigation of pollution sources (industry, traffic, etc.). <i>(constant)</i> • Dispersion of power and lack of coordination between different policy actors. Institutional structures and governance practices often remain geared towards the radial (core-centric) urban model, which may put outer areas in a dependent position in their relations with the core cities⁴⁶. <i>(constant)</i> • Insufficient or lack of spatial planning powers for metropolitan regions prevents effective response for challenges such as urban sprawl, ineffective mobility systems etc. <i>(constant)</i> • Metropolitan regions do not always have sufficient resources. They also face limitations when it comes to benefitting from various sources of EU funding. <i>(constant)</i> • Lack of a cross sectorial (integrated) approaches <i>(constant)</i>
4.1 To improve planning and coordination of regional passenger transport systems for better connections to national and European transport networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Programme area shows weak local, regional, and transnational accessibility especially outside of agglomerations and in its eastern parts. <i>(constant)</i> • Transport systems still lack integration between modes of transport and are not adapting fast enough to the new trends in respect to mobility. <i>(constant)</i> • Peripheral regions, rural and intermediate areas (towns, suburbs) have lower accessibility and connectivity to major nodes and lower quality of public transport, compared to larger cities. <i>(constant)</i> • Integrated passenger transport systems and multimodality is unevenly implemented. <i>(constant)</i> • While some regions have well developed mobility planning systems, in others relevant knowledge and capacity is missing. <i>(constant)</i> • Transnational coordination is lacking. <i>(constant)</i>
4.2 To improve coordination among freight transport stakeholders for increasing multimodal environmentally-friendly freight solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While some countries the main issue is to upgrade and maintain existing infrastructure, others need to develop or expand their transport network. <i>(constant)</i> • The availability and quality of transport infrastructure is lower in the Eastern part of the territory. <i>(constant)</i>

⁴⁵ [CIDOB - The Role of Metropolitan Areas in the Governance of Development Challenges: Towards the European Urban Agenda](#)

⁴⁶ [SPIMA – Spatial Dynamics and Strategic Planning in Metropolitan Areas | ESPON](#), 2017

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	NEEDS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renovation and upgrading of the railway network are a common challenge for Eastern countries, which is a challenging task as the network is relatively extensive (<i>constant</i>) • Building missing links at borders between EU countries and along key European routes, removing bottlenecks or interconnecting transport modes in terminals (<i>constant</i>) • Integration and interconnection of all modes of transport, including equipment for traffic management and innovative technologies⁴⁷. (<i>constant</i>) • Beside the need for optimisation of individual modes of transport (i.e. making them more environmentally-friendly, safe and energy efficient), their combination in multi-modal freight transport chains is required for a sustainable transport system. (<i>increased</i>) • Administrative and technical barriers persist across the territory, for all modes of transport. There is a lack of shared standards and procedures and, more generally, of a harmonised framework. Deficiencies in terms of coordination among freight transport stakeholders can be observed, which represents a barrier to more streamlined, flexible, and sustainable multimodal freight transport. (<i>constant</i>)

Causes for the problem

- Institutional challenges⁴⁸
 - Different institutional frameworks, policies, laws, and regulations
 - Unclear mandates,
 - Lack of guidelines and standards to assist decisionmakers and stakeholders,
 - Lack of prioritisation processes
 - Lack of coordination
 - Limited collaboration
 - Low levels of communication among multi-level actors and stakeholders
 - Lack of awareness and sense of urgency
- Technical challenges
 - Lack of knowledge
 - Insufficient technical skills, training, and information access
 - Lack of best practice examples
- Socio-cultural challenges
 - People's values, perceptions, and judgements, including place attachment and place dependence.
 - Lack of stakeholders' motivation and willingness to act
- Financial challenges - Lack of funding and investment
- Socio-economic challenges (e.g. brain drain, lack of qualified workforce, limited capacity of the private sector to invest, etc.)

2.1.3.2. INPUTS

Summary of application requirements and project WPs

- Projects between 1-5 million euros are supported, with a duration of 30-36 months.
- Co-financing rates are differentiated between old and new MS (80% and 85%, respectively) and also for partners outside the programme area (80%).

⁴⁷ [2019-transport-in-the-eu-current-trends-and-issues.pdf \(europa.eu\)](#)

⁴⁸ Based on [Adapting cultural heritage to climate change impacts in the Netherlands: barriers, interdependencies, and strategies for overcoming them | SpringerLink](#)

- Project activities are to be grouped by work packages: thematic, management work package, communication, investment specification (if applicable). Each work package is divided into activities (ideally not more than 4-6 activities per work package). Activities have to lead to the development of one or more project outputs.

The selection of operations includes two sets of pre-defined quality criteria.

- Strategic criteria allow for assessing the relevance of applications and the extent of their contribution to achieving a specific objective, which are linked to the results envisaged within a specific objective.
- Operational criteria allow for assessing the quality of implementation regarding the feasibility and viability of applications as well as their value for money (resources used in relation to results delivered).

The programme funded projects which demonstrated the translation of outputs arising from “soft” actions (surveys, studies, etc.) into concrete, visible and sustainable results. Those had to lead to an observable change (improvement) of the initial situation, embedding the results orientation at project level.

The strategic criteria support the safeguard of the intervention logic, ownership, and the quality of the implementation by assessing:

- Contribution to programme objectives and results of SO
- Coherence of planned activities and outputs with types and examples of actions and outputs as described under the IP
- Relevance and strategic character in relation to territorial challenges and needs
- Coherence with relevant policies at different levels
- Cooperation character and transnational added value of the applications
- Relevance of the partnership in terms of technical and institutional capacity
- Strategic value for innovative approach

The operational criteria safeguard the quality of implementation by assessing:

- Structure, coherence, and transparency of the project work plan
- Project communication and capitalisation strategy and activities
- Coherence of the budget with the project work plan and value for money
- Structures and procedures set in place for the daily management of the operation.

Implementation mechanisms

Integrated approach - The supported actions have to contribute to improving capacities for the protection and sustainable use of both natural and cultural heritage and resources. The application of an integrated approach is a key factor to ensure sustainable development and to avoid usage conflicts. The same approach is expected in respect to sustainable urban development, mobility, and energy efficiency.

Result-orientation - The programme funded projects which demonstrated the translation of outputs arising from “soft” actions (surveys, studies, etc.) into concrete, visible and sustainable results, including new or improved policies, strategies, and investments. Those must lead to a change (improvement) of the initial situation. Pilot actions were envisaged for the testing and practical implementation of the tools developed, as a means for demonstrating their applicability.

Strong partnerships – The quality of the partnerships implementing the projects is assessed by several elements:

- Partners are expected to be involved in the development, implementation, communication as well as capitalisation of the planned outputs and results.
- The thematic competence and expertise, geographical and institutional relevance of the partners must be considered.

- Depending on the goals of the project this can imply the involvement of different governance levels (national, regional, and local authorities) as well as other players such as research institutions, intermediate bodies, agencies, enterprises and many others.
- The partnership should reflect the integrated territorial approach to regional development to be set in place by the project, which requires multi-disciplinary and cross-sectoral partnerships.
- Each project must have at least 3 financing partners, from at least 3 countries and with at least 3 of the partners located in Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE regions. Assimilated partners and third-country partners are also accepted. Recommended size is 8-12 partners.
- Only limited partner changes are allowed between the step 1 and 2 of the calls. In the implementation phase partner changes are exceptional cases, posing a risk factor to the entire project.
- Decision makers (e.g., ministries) should either directly included in the partnership or can be effectively reached by the project.
- Intensity of partnership is assessed at project level by joint preparation, joint implementation, joint staffing, joint financing.

Territorial focus - Projects must demonstrate an integrated approach to regional development by combining thematic and territorial dimensions. Emphasis will be put on regions/ territories with most potential or with most significant pressures for which an exchange and learning from more advanced regions will be most beneficial. For example, projects financed under SO 4.1 particularly target the needs of peripheral regions with respect to linkages to the TEN-T network and transport nodes.

Simultaneously, territories which already show good performance will be further strengthened because of improving their implementation capacities (e.g., improved international connection of sites, novel technologies, investment preparation etc.) All actions need to consider the specific territorial characteristics of the respective targeted areas.

Comprehensive approach to target group groups – including public and private actors, such as policy makers, planners, relevant organisations, operators, owners and users, additionally all population groups which are benefitting from the supported actions.

Sustainability - Projects have to ensure that outputs obtained and results achieved are durable and suitable to be continued after project closure. Financial institutional and political sustainability is considered. Measures may include follow-up activities, uptake to the policy level, ownership, financing through other initiatives or funds, leverage of investments, etc.

To achieve sustainability, projects are expected to adopt from the beginning a longer-term, strategic perspective that leads to desired results for the target groups over an extended time frame. In order to achieve such long-term benefits, they have to consider needs of key stakeholders as well as the institutional context already when designing the project. Key stakeholders should be actively involved from the early stages of the project development.

Innovation and state-of-the-art solutions – Collaboration between research, public administration and the public sector is encouraged, RDI activities and testing thorough pilot actions is expected in the supported projects. Thus, innovation is mainstreamed in all SOs. Innovative approaches may result from e.g. the testing and demonstration of novel solutions within different (regional) contexts, experimental piloting of new methods or tools with a view to their future mainstreaming and/or their policy integration as well as from capitalising on previously acquired knowledge etc. An important aspect in this regard is the involvement of relevant actors in the partnership and during project implementation to ensure availability of the relevant knowledge and expertise.

Communication and dissemination of results – Communication activities are included in a separate WP and monitored through specific indicators. Communication objectives in the application form have been pre-defined as: raising awareness, increasing knowledge, changing attitude, or changing behaviour of a

specific audience. Projects must identify their audiences. It is expected that projects contribute not only to the outreach of the programme, but also to build trust beyond its target groups and end users.

Focus on monitoring and evaluation – Strong M&E culture safeguards the quality of the implementation and is also useful for learning.

- Project evaluation is voluntary, but encouraged, by the following means:
 - Evaluation of project implementation and/or achievements by external/independent experts (e.g. achievement of project specific objectives, related to specific elements of project implementation such as output or pilot actions, project communication, impact of project results on the identified target groups and stakeholders, etc.)
 - Internal/external evaluation of project management (e.g. internal feedback loops from project partners on project coordination, internal communication and information flows, etc.) and/or formalised quality review of outputs (e.g. peer reviews)
 - Scientific monitoring by expert or advisory boards (e.g. involving also associated partners for thematic assessment of outputs and results).
- Project mid-term review is compulsory on the following aspects:
 - Content-related and financial progress of the project
 - Joint reflection on management issues
 - Realistic forecast and recommendations for the remaining project period
 - If applicable, identification of project deviations and delays as well as necessary project modifications.
 - No activity and budget changes will be allowed before the mid-term review. Based on the outcome of the review, especially in case of low project performances, the programme reserves the right to apply reductions to the project budget.

2.1.4. ACTIONS AND OUTPUTS

Actions

The Programme sets out to implement the following actions:

- Developing and implementing strategies, policies and tools
- Developing and implementing integrated territorial development strategies and concepts
- Developing and testing innovative management tools and technologies
- Establishing and strengthening transnational cooperation among relevant actors
- Harmonising environmental management concepts and tools on the transnational level

2.1.4.1. OUTPUTS

Each activity should include one or more deliverables (e.g., analysis report, feasibility study etc.) that contribute to the achievement of project outputs.

The implemented actions led to the following outputs:

- Strategies and action plans developed and/or implemented
- Tools developed, tested and/or implemented tools
- Investments prepared
- Leverage of funds prepared
- Pilot actions, including pilot investments implemented
- Capacity building actions, also through training

Each output should be captured by a programme output indicator and should directly contribute to the achievement of the project result. Each thematic work package must foresee at least one output. Projects

should also foresee capitalisation and communication activities (i.e. making the results available and transfer them to a wider audience) in order to roll-out and mainstream the achieved results.

Results

The objective of the Interreg CE is to strengthen capacities through improved:

- policy frameworks (policy, legal and economic)
- institutional development
- human resources development
- managerial systems

Result indicators

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	RESULT INDICATORS
1.1 Sustainable linkages among actors of the innovation systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Status of linkages among actors of the innovation systems achieved through transnational cooperation in central European regions
1.2 Skills and entrepreneurial competences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Status of capacities of the public and private sector for skills development of employees and entrepreneurial competences achieved through transnational cooperation driving economic and social innovation in central European regions
2.1 Energy efficiency and renewable energy usage in public infrastructures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Status of capacities of the public sector and related entities for increased energy efficiency and renewable energy use in public infrastructures achieved through transnational cooperation
2.2 Low-carbon energy planning strategies and policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Status of capacities of the public sector and related entities for territorially based low-carbon energy planning and policies achieved through transnational cooperation
2.3 Mobility planning in functional urban areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Status of capacities of the public sector and related entities for low-carbon mobility planning in functional urban areas achieved through transnational cooperation
3.1 To improve integrated environmental management capacities for the protection and sustainable use of natural heritage and resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Status of integrated environmental management capacities of the public sector and related entities for the protection and sustainable use of natural heritage and resources achieved through transnational cooperation
3.2 To improve capacities for the sustainable use of cultural heritage and resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Status of capacities of the public and private sector for the sustainable use of cultural heritage and resources achieved through transnational cooperation
3.3 To improve environmental management of functional urban areas to make them more liveable places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Status of integrated environmental management capacities of the public sector and related entities in functional urban areas achieved through transnational cooperation for making them more liveable places
4.1 To improve planning and coordination of regional passenger transport systems for better connections to national and European transport networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Status of coordinated planning capacities of the public sector and related entities for regional passenger transport systems linked to national and European transport networks achieved through transnational cooperation
4.2 To improve coordination among freight transport stakeholders for increasing multimodal environmentally-friendly freight solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Status of coordination among freight transport stakeholders for increasing multimodal environmentally-friendly freight solutions achieved through transnational cooperation

Actions by SOs

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS
1.1 Sustainable linkages among actors of the innovation systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing and strengthening transnational innovation networks and clusters, including supporting their internationalisation. • Enhancing the transfer of R&D-results from research institutions to the business sector - in particular SMEs - leading to new services and products. • Building transnational links for improving existing and developing new services which support innovation in businesses. • Strengthening links between the public sector, finance institutions as well as the business sector (in particular SMEs) to design and test new structures and services that facilitate the access to financing of innovation. • Increasing cooperation between research, the public and private sectors to stimulate innovation and entrepreneurship.
1.2 Skills and entrepreneurial competences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing the skills of employees in the business sector (particularly SMEs) regarding novel technologies, innovative products, services or processes and social innovation contributing to regional smart specialisation strategies. • Developing and implementing strategies and tools to improve creativity and entrepreneurial mind-sets building on different business cultures and on all levels of education. • Developing and implementing strategies and tools for improving technological and managerial competences for entrepreneurship for economic and social innovation. • Adapting, developing, and testing innovative learning systems for increasing skills and entrepreneurial competences considering demographic change challenges.
2.1 Energy efficiency and renewable energy usage in public infrastructures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing, testing and implementing policies, strategies and solutions to improve the energy efficiency in public infrastructures including buildings as well as to increase the use of renewable energies. • Developing and testing innovative management approaches to increase regional capacities for improving the energy performance in public infrastructure including buildings (e.g. energy managers). • Developing and implementing solutions for the application of novel energy saving technologies that will increase the energy efficiency in public infrastructures including buildings. • Harmonising concepts, standards and certification systems at transnational level to improve the energy performance in public infrastructure including buildings. • Strengthening the capacity of the public sector to develop and implement innovative energy services, incentives and financing schemes (e.g. energy performance contracting, PPP models, etc.).
2.2 Low-carbon energy planning strategies and policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing and implementing integrated territorial strategies and plans to increase the use of endogenous renewable energy potentials and to improve regional energy performance • Designing and testing concepts and tools for the exploitation of endogenous renewable energy resources • Developing and implementing territorial strategies to improve the energy management in both the public and the private sector (especially in SMEs) • Developing demand-focused strategies and policies to reduce energy consumption (e.g. smart metering, distribution of smart consumer applications, etc.) • Developing and testing solutions for improved interconnections and coordination of energy networks targeting the integration and use of renewable energy sources
2.3 Mobility planning in functional urban areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing and implementing integrated mobility concepts, action plans and services for reducing CO2 emissions • Setting up and/or adapting governance systems as a basis for integrated low-carbon mobility in functional urban areas • Developing and testing concepts and strategies (including innovative financing and investment models) to facilitate the introduction of novel low-carbon technologies in the public transport sector in functional urban areas • Developing and implementing services and products fostering smart low-carbon mobility in functional urban areas (e.g. multimodal services, etc.)

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS
3.1 To improve integrated environmental management capacities for the protection and sustainable use of natural heritage and resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing and implementing integrated strategies and tools for the sustainable management of protected or environmentally highly valuable areas (e.g. biodiversity, landscapes, eco-systems, etc.) • Developing and implementing integrated strategies and tools to sustainably use natural resources for regional development, thus avoiding potential use conflicts (e.g. with tourism, transport, industry, agriculture, energy, etc.) • Developing and testing the application of innovative technologies and tools that facilitate effective integrated environmental management (e.g. remediation technologies, monitoring tools etc.) • Developing and testing applications to improve the efficient management of natural resources in public institutions and enterprises (e.g. reduction of natural resource consumption, closed loop systems) • Harmonising environmental management concepts and tools on the transnational level for risk prevention and management (e.g. flood risk management plans) and to reduce negative climate change impacts on the environment and human life (e.g. adaptation measures)
3.2 To improve capacities for the sustainable use of cultural heritage and resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing and implementing strategies and policies for valorising cultural heritage and resources and/or the potentials of cultural and creative industries • Developing and implementing integrated territorial development strategies and concepts that build on cultural heritage to foster sustainable economic growth and employment (e.g. in the tourism sector) • Developing and testing innovative management tools for the preservation and sustainable use of cultural heritage and resources (e.g. ICT applications) • Establishing and strengthening transnational cooperation among relevant actors to foster the sustainable use and the promotion of cultural heritage sites in central Europe
3.3 To improve environmental management of functional urban areas to make them more liveable places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing and implementing strategies and tools (including innovative financing and investment models) to manage and improve environmental quality (air, water, waste, soil, climate) as well as to tackle natural and man-made risks in functional urban areas • Strengthening the capacity for environmental planning and management (e.g. participatory planning mechanisms and decision-making processes) at the level of functional urban areas • Developing and implementing integrated strategies, policies and tools to reduce land-use conflicts in functional urban areas (e.g. urban sprawl, shrinkage and fragmentation also in the view of social implications) • Developing and implementing integrated strategies and pilot applications for the rehabilitation and reactivation of brownfield sites • Developing concepts and implementing environmental pilot applications to support the development towards smart cities (e.g. ICT applications, environmental technologies)
4.1 To improve planning and coordination of regional passenger transport systems for better connections to national and European transport networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing and implementing strategies (including innovative financing and investment models) to link sustainable passenger transport in particular in peripheral areas to the TEN-T network as well as to the primary, secondary and tertiary transport nodes • Developing and implementing coordinated strategies, tools and pilot applications to improve regional public transport systems for passengers in particular across borders (e.g. commuter connections, interoperability, etc.) • Developing concepts and testing pilot applications for smart regional mobility (e.g. multimodal ticketing, ICT tools, routes on demand, etc.) • Developing coordinated concepts, standards and tools for improved mobility services in the public interest (e.g. for disadvantaged groups, for shrinking regions, etc.)
4.2 To improve coordination among freight transport stakeholders for increasing multimodal environmentally-friendly freight solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing and implementing coordinated strategies (including innovative financing and investment models) for strengthening the multimodality of environmentally-friendly freight transport systems (e.g. rail, river, or sea transport) • Developing and implementing coordination and collaboration mechanisms between multimodal freight transport actors • Developing and implementing coordinated concepts, management tools and services aimed at increasing the share of environmentally friendly logistics through optimised freight transport chains (e.g. multimodal transnational freight transport flows)

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing and testing coordinated strategies and concepts for “greening” the last mile of freight transport (e.g. logistics planning)

2.1.4.2. OUTPUT INDICATORS

The **output indicator system** is reflecting the main typology of outputs namely:

- Number of strategies and action plans developed and/or implemented
- Number of tools developed and/or implemented
- Number of pilot actions implemented
- Number of trainings implemented
- Number of enterprises receiving support (common indicator)
- Number of enterprises participating in cross-border, transnational or interregional research projects (common indicator)
- Number of research institutions participating in cross-border, transnational or interregional research projects (common indicator)

Additional indicators. The programme has defined the following thematic result indicators which aim at capturing the result and implementation-oriented project effects:

- Number of institutions adopting new and/or improved strategies and action plans
- Number of institutions applying new and/or improved tools and services
- Amount of funds leveraged based on project achievements
- Number of jobs created (FTE) based on project achievements
- Number of trained persons

Applicants have to choose from the thematic result indicators listed above those of relevance for the project considering its scope and the planned achievements.

Projects must report on the following communication result indicators which aim at capturing the project’s communication effects:

- Visits to the project website
- Participants at project events
- Event participants satisfied with information provided
- Joint communication activities implemented with external stakeholders

2.1.4.3. ASSUMPTIONS

Refer to the Programme document, ex-ante assessment, territorial analyses, and any other document mentioned in the Programme document for assumed causality links between inputs and outputs/ results/ outcomes.

- Innovation is one of the most important driving forces for regional development and economic wealth. Therefore, an innovative approach is expected in the financed interventions.
- Transnational cooperation can add value by building new knowledge and by fostering the exchange of knowledge and experience among regions, in particular addressing stakeholders dealing with the protection of natural and cultural heritage and resources as well as their management and valorisation.
- Transnational coordination can be essential for ensuring coherent and effective solutions and policies.
- Transnational coordination is a catalyst for implementing smart solutions answering to regional challenges.

- Transfer of knowledge, outputs and results should allow for efficiently addressing existing disparities between regions. The knowledge created in the projects should be easily applicable, transferable, and possible to use in other organisations/ regions /countries outside of the defined partnership.
- Interventions will build regional capacities following an integrated bottom-up approach involving and coordinating relevant actors from all governance levels.
- The application of an integrated approach is a key factor to ensure sustainable development and to avoid usage conflicts.
- Sustainability of project outputs and results is crucial for ensuring territorial impact and long-term benefits which continue after the project end in order to reach the project's overall objectives.
- Multi-level governance /Vertical integration (i.e. involvement of institutions representing various levels of administration like national, regional and local levels) is expected to help reaching the intended structural change as well as policy improvement and implementation.
- Multi-level governance (connecting top-down and bottom-up initiatives with also cross-sectoral approaches) is needed to increase participation of local communities while fostering the efficiency of administrations and the consistency of policy-making.
- Communication plays a strategic role in successful projects. Communication helps projects to achieve the change they aim for with their thematic activities.

SO specific assumptions

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	ASSUMPTIONS
1.1 Sustainable linkages among actors of the innovation systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant R&D activities in urban and intermediate regions serve as seed-bed and anchor of innovation in central Europe. • There is a high potential for mobilisation of synergies between business and research and investments in product and process innovations. • Better interlinking advanced regions will support the competitiveness of transnational and regional clusters in central Europe against changes in world market conditions and the inclusion of horizontal challenges. • The improvement of framework conditions for R&D and innovation supports the CE programme area to remain a destination for foreign investments and capital flows.
1.2 Skills and entrepreneurial competences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The fostering of links between business and research increases competitiveness and decreases the risk of brain drain in the CE programme area. • The improvement of skills and knowledge of human capital and of entrepreneurs is an important factor for increased innovation capacity in the CE programme area. • The promotion of innovation potentials in rural regions encourages impulses for a sustainable and balanced territorial development and will foster economic and social cohesion. • The promotion of skills and competences in peripheral and shrinking regions – being targeted from long-term (demographic) transformation processes – may reduce the increasing lagging behind of peripheral, badly accessible regions. • Fostering additional knowledge and skills in the field of economic and social innovation (with a specific focus on SMEs) will increase the entrepreneurial spirit within the regions and improve the endogenous economic potential thus reducing out-migration in peripheral regions.
2.1 Energy efficiency and renewable energy usage in public infrastructures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efficient use of energy can contribute to decreasing central Europe's energy import dependence and mitigating climate change. • The promotion of endogenous resources and energy technologies is a high potential, but capacities are often limited. • The sectors housing, public services and transport are among the biggest energy consumers – especially in urban areas. Their energy use is still wasteful in many regions in central Europe. • Efficient use of energy can contribute to decreasing central Europe's energy import dependence, to reduce air pollution and to mitigating climate change.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	ASSUMPTIONS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public infrastructure owners and operators often lack the expertise of methods and technologies for reducing energy consumption.
2.2 Low-carbon energy planning strategies and policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential new green jobs contribute to increase the competitiveness of regions and to reduce unemployment. The implementation of low-carbon strategies supports the reductions of greenhouse gas emissions and of central Europe's existing dependency on fossil energy. The use of available knowledge on renewable energy of some central European regions is a great potential for lagging regions. There is the need for increasing the capacity of the public sector for energy efficiency measures.
2.3 Mobility planning in functional urban areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The exchange of knowledge and the development of integrated mobility concepts and action plans considering interactions between "urban cores" and their "hinterlands" will help improve the capacities of the public sector and related entities for mobility planning fostering the reduction of CO2 emissions in functional urban areas. The creation of governance systems (including horizontal and vertical coordination of stakeholders and policies) facilitating the integration of sustainability concepts will also help reduce CO2 emissions. The new services and products created (e.g. multimodal services) will help foster smart low-carbon mobility in functional urban areas.
3.1 To improve integrated environmental management capacities for the protection and sustainable use of natural heritage and resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Natural heritage is an important location factor and the use of its assets can serve as a driver for economic development The loss of biodiversity, the vulnerability of natural heritage and landscapes as well as the effects of climate change have a strong impact at territorial level (cf. Territorial Agenda 2020). The complexity of the challenges requires integrated approaches based on sustainable long-term strategic visions linking different policies, sectors and administrative levels. Integrated environmental management means a comprehensive approach to natural resource planning and management that encompasses ecological, social, and economic objectives. It considers interrelations among different elements and incorporates concepts of carrying capacity, resilience and sustainability. Investments in the sustainable use, protection and restoration of biodiversity and Natura 2000 lead to direct or indirect socio-economic benefits, including maintaining or creating jobs. Transnational cooperation will allow for improving the capacities of those actors by supporting the development and implementation of integrated environmental strategies and tools as well as the joint testing of pilot solutions. This will facilitate a larger uptake of the integrated environmental concept into the public and private sector such as the application of innovative technologies and introducing resource efficient solutions.
3.2 To improve capacities for the sustainable use of cultural heritage and resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural heritage and resources represent important location factors for regional development. Cultural heritage can be an economic asset, a tourist attraction, and an identity factor, and it can also contribute to social cohesion. It also plays an important role in urban revitalisation, increasing property values, stimulating business, creating jobs and income, maintaining craftsmanship skills. In rural regions, tourism can be one of the most important economic sectors. Preservation of cultural heritage is often understood as a barrier to economic development. Improved environmental management and measures for mitigation of pollution sources (industry, traffic, etc.), in combination with the rich cultural diversity, could lead to valorising numerous development and income potentials, particularly in urban areas (e.g. cultural and environmental tourism and creative industries).
3.3 To improve environmental management of functional urban areas to make them more liveable places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving the quality of the urban environment would increase the attractive and liveable cities and regions. In combination with the rich cultural diversity numerous development and income potentials could be lifted (e.g. cultural and environmental tourism and creative industries).

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	ASSUMPTIONS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced governance will contribute to better planning, management and decision making thereby reducing usage conflicts and negative externalities on the environment.
4.1 To improve planning and coordination of regional passenger transport systems for better connections to national and European transport networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secondary infrastructure for feeder transport and the integration of hubs in the local and regional transport schemes ('last mile') are important. Transnational cooperation can strengthen connections to TEN-T corridors and to primary, secondary and tertiary transport nodes of the TEN-T network (as defined according to "The New Trans-European Transport Network Policy Planning and implementation issues", SEC (2011) 101 final), in particular for peripheral regions. A specific focus will be put on public transport at regional level as the sustainability of those connections is considered to be an underlying principle. Tackling the challenges would reduce disparities in regional accessibility and support environmentally friendly transportation modes, which would ultimately contribute to a significantly improved accessibility and competitiveness of central European regions.
4.2 To improve coordination among freight transport stakeholders for increasing multimodal environmentally-friendly freight solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Efficient multimodal and combined transport is a key driver of economic and environmental benefits. Multi-modal platforms will enhance the efficiency, reliability and quality of greener freight transport modes and services, thus contributing also to trade facilitation. Such a coordinated approach will pave the way for designing future infrastructure in a sustainable manner and a more effective transportation of goods to and across central European regions.

2.1.4.4. RISKS

RISKS	DETAILS
Rigidity of partnerships (from one project to the next)	Consolidating existing partnerships, missing opportunities by not involving new entities.
Instability of partnerships (in the same project)	Possible conflicts or tensions among the perspectives or interests and partners
Fluctuating political support	Elections, stakeholder sensitivities around particular issues, high levels of turnover in policy and mid-level positions in government
Personal privacy, fake news, radical/hate speech	Esp. for individual end-users / participants
Unstable / not durable partnerships	Low sustainability of outputs and results
Technical capacity of beneficiaries	Capacity to address the needs effectively, with innovative solutions,
Impossibility to implement activities as planned	In the context of the Covid crisis
Financial capacity of beneficiaries	Especially for private entities, in the context of the Covid crisis
Target group availability	Lack of data or access
Target group willingness/ capacity to participate	Especially in the context of the Covid crisis

2.1.5. OUTCOMES

The main goal of the programme is to achieve **cooperation beyond borders in central Europe**, "to make our cities and regions better places to live and work." Transnational cooperation in central Europe is the catalyst, leading to the creation of an enabling environment, fostering the implementation of smart solutions answering to regional challenges, and triggering economic opportunities and employment at regional level.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	OUTCOMES
1.1 Sustainable linkages among actors of the innovation systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stronger links within and between regions as well as a critical mass of innovative actors for improving innovation capacity. These will enhance knowledge and technology transfer between key players of the innovation systems and will consequently contribute to innovation-driven growth at regional level and reduce disparities. Contribution to regional smart specialisation strategies, through better and more sustainable linkages among actors of the innovation systems. Increased cooperation between actors of the innovation systems, especially between business and research. This will improve the access to research results for enterprises, notably SMEs, thus stimulating further investment in innovation.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	OUTCOMES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved links between research and public administration that will positively contribute to both economic and social innovation transfer.
1.2 Skills and entrepreneurial competences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stimulating the mutual exchange and learning, transnational cooperation will help to increase skills of employees and entrepreneurs for applying novel technologies and methods. This will enable SMEs to develop and implement innovative products, services and/or processes contributing to the respective regional smart specialisation strategies. Innovative learning systems will contribute to the targeted improvement of skills and thus increase regional competitiveness especially in regions facing social challenges. Transnational approaches will support entrepreneurship by building technological and managerial competences as well as promoting entrepreneurial mind sets and initiatives. The support of social innovations will allow for meeting social needs and further improve the capacities of regions to manage new challenges such as those deriving from demographic and climate change, migration and brain drain.
2.1 Energy efficiency and renewable energy usage in public infrastructures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced know-how disparities and increased capacities of the public sector for improving the energy efficiency of public infrastructures will reduce their energy consumption and CO2 emissions. The strengthening of competences as well as the developing and implementing strategies, management approaches and financing schemes will serve as seedbed for achieving higher energy efficiency. Increased competencies will leverage further investment such as the renovation of public buildings and the upgrading of the energy efficiency level of public infrastructure. Fostering the identification of renewable energy potentials, testing innovative solutions and preparing follow-up investments will increase their usage in public infrastructures.
2.2 Low-carbon energy planning strategies and policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transnational cooperation will improve the capacity of the public sector concerning the planning, financing and implementation of sustainable energy measures. This will be a key starting point for mobilising investment for low-carbon measures at territorial level. Improved capacities for planning local and regional energy strategies and using the endogenous renewable energy potentials the programme contribute to reduce CO2 emissions and improve air quality.
2.3 Mobility planning in functional urban areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved capacities of the public sector and related entities for mobility planning will allow for sustainable mobility planning to be implemented and therefore lead to the reduction of CO2 emissions in functional urban areas. Promoting more environment friendly and sustainable low-carbon urban transport systems contributes to tackle air quality problems (including high concentrations of particulate matters and ozone) and fosters the regional quality of life as well as economic conditions especially around urban nodes. Promoting innovative low-carbon mobility solutions will support authorities in their efforts towards the goal of sustainable mobility.
3.1 To improve integrated environmental management capacities for the protection and sustainable use of natural heritage and resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transnational cooperation will allow for improving the capacities of those actors by supporting the development and implementation of integrated environmental strategies and tools as well as the joint testing of pilot solutions. This will facilitate a larger uptake of the integrated environmental concept into the public and private sector such as the application of innovative technologies and introducing resource efficient solutions. The main result envisaged is: "Improved integrated environmental management capacities of the public sector and related entities for the protection and sustainable use of natural heritage and resources in central Europe achieved through transnational cooperation".
3.2 To improve capacities for the sustainable use of cultural heritage and resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved capacities will allow for better coordinating the preservation and management of cultural heritage and resources with sustainable growth. They will also lead to a more sustainable use and valorisation of those assets. Overall, improved capacity will allow for better protection of cultural heritage and related resources going hand in hand with an enhanced exploitation of existing potentials (e.g. in the growing sectors of cultural tourism, cultural and creative industries etc.), delivering on the objectives of wider EU contributions and MRS. The main result envisaged is: "Improved capacities of the public and private sector for the sustainable use of cultural heritage and resources in central Europe achieved through transnational cooperation".

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	OUTCOMES
3.3 To improve environmental management of functional urban areas to make them more liveable places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transnational cooperation will help to increase those capacities by supporting the development and implementation of integrated environmental management to improve the environmental performance (such as air quality, water management, flood risks etc.) of functional urban areas. • The development and implementation of strategies and tools as well as the joint testing of pilot applications (e.g. for site rehabilitation) will trigger investments for improving the quality of the urban environment. • The main result envisaged is: “Improved integrated environmental management capacities of the public sector and related entities in central Europe’s functional urban areas achieved through transnational cooperation for making them more liveable places”.
4.1 To improve planning and coordination of regional passenger transport systems for better connections to national and European transport networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transnational cooperation will contribute to reducing existing disparities of knowledge as well as to increase the planning and implementation capacity in the field of integrated passenger transport systems where better regional and transnational coordination between stakeholders is considered a key factor. • Strategies, tools and pilot applications will contribute to setting up improved connections to the TEN-T network and transport nodes. Furthermore, within the transnational context the development of coordinated concepts for smart regional mobility and services is foreseen, fostering improved service standards and interoperability. Particular attention will be put on mobility services in the public interest. • The main result envisaged is: “Improved and coordinated planning capacities of the public sector and related entities for regional passenger transport systems in central Europe linked to national and European transport networks achieved through transnational cooperation”.
4.2 To improve coordination among freight transport stakeholders for increasing multimodal environmentally-friendly freight solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transnational cooperation will contribute to improving coordination among existing services, provided by different modes of transport, creating intermodal systems of existing transport facilities, overcoming discontinuity across borders and the lack of infrastructure. • Coordinated strategies, concepts and management tools will contribute to improving the multimodality of environmentally-friendly freight transport (e.g. rail, river or sea transport). • Multi-modal platforms will be promoted and developed as a potential for consolidating and optimising freight flows. This will enhance the efficiency, reliability and quality of greener freight transport modes and services. Such a coordinated approach will pave the way for designing future infrastructure in a sustainable manner and a more effective transportation of goods to and across central European regions. • The main result envisaged is: “Improved coordination among freight transport stakeholders for increasing multimodal environmentally-friendly freight solutions in central Europe achieved through transnational cooperation”.

2.1.5.1. RISKS

RISKS	DETAILS
W-E social polarisation and segregation	Reluctance of possible project partners to participate in common projects. Limited durability and sustainability
Peripheral regions/ areas affected by limited connectivity and accessibility	Limited effectiveness of interventions
Not implementing/ using outputs/results in practice	Due both to political decisions and/or insufficient capacity, gold-plating
Personal privacy, fake news, radical/hate speech	Reluctance to participate in projects Negative publicity for projects
Unequal ICT coverage and access and e-administration	Difficulty in implementation, unequal access to information

2.1.6. EVALUATION HYPOTHESES

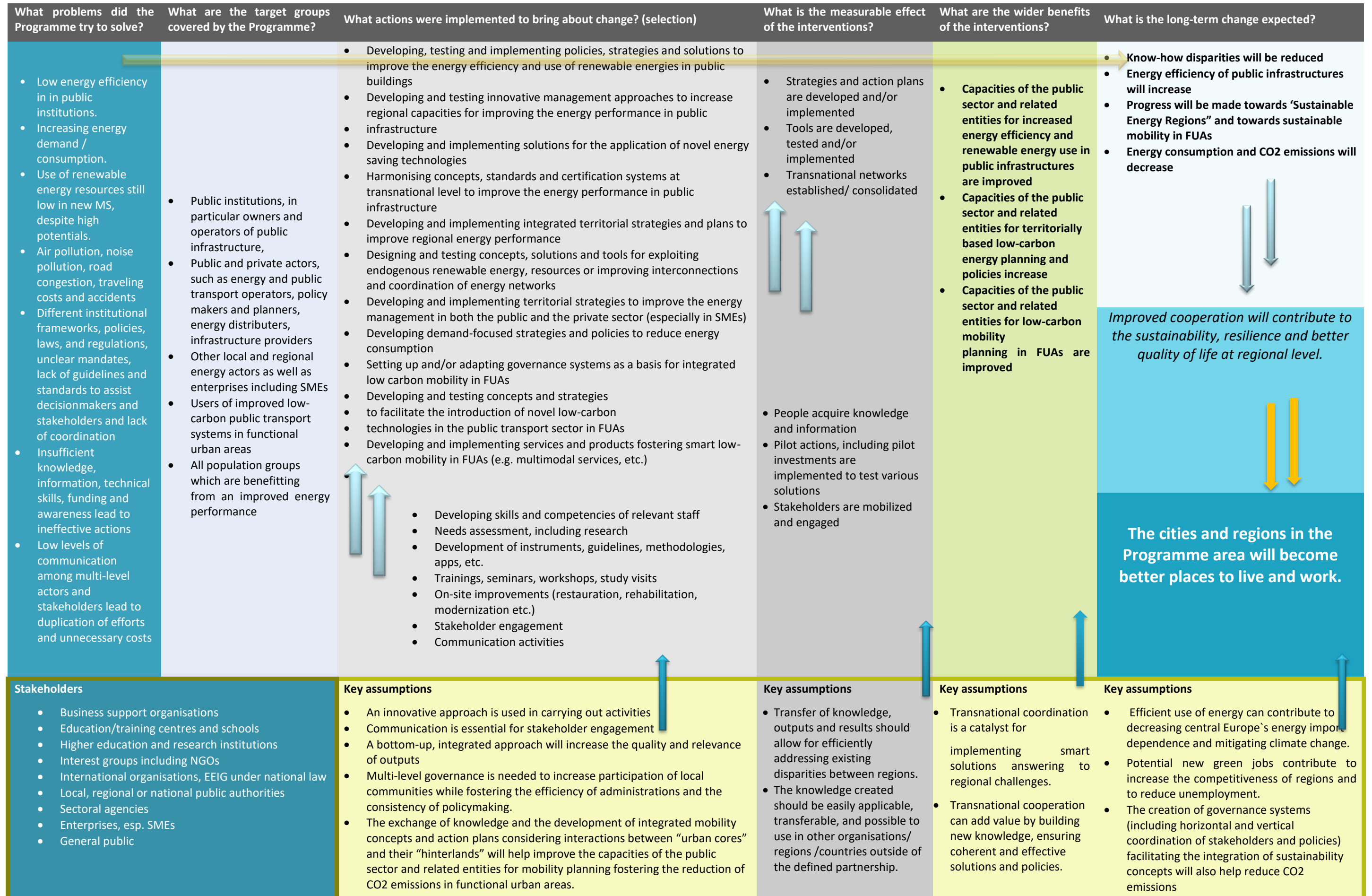
PROGRAMME DESIGN ASSUMPTIONS	POTENTIAL RISKS AND 'CHANCES'
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Transnational cooperation enabled regions and cities to jointly tackle challenges that go beyond borders (2) Projects supported are “living laboratories creating opportunities for developing and testing new ways of addressing major challenges” (3) The knowledge created in the projects is applicable, transferable, and possible to use in other organisations/ regions /countries outside of the defined partnership. (4) Interventions followed an integrated bottom-up approach involving and coordinating relevant actors from all governance levels. (5) Interventions were able to reach the types of territories initially envisaged 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (6) Implementation mechanisms were able to determine the adoption of innovative approaches in the financed interventions. (7) Implementation mechanisms were able to ensure the transnational character of the financed interventions. (8) Implementation mechanisms were able to trigger multiplication and synergetic effects / spillovers / capitalization/ leverage effects. (9) Implementation mechanisms were able to ensure the sustainability of project outputs and results. (10) Implementation mechanisms were able to capitalize on the strategic role of communication in achieving the results. (11) Implementation mechanisms allowed for integrated / place-based interventions combining environmental management measures with protection of natural/ cultural heritage. (12) Implementation mechanisms allowed the specific territorial characteristics of the respective targeted areas to be taken into consideration.

2.2. BY THEME

2.2.1. INNOVATION

What problems did the Programme try to solve?	What are the target groups covered by the Programme?	What actions were implemented to bring about change?	What is the measurable effect of the interventions?	What are the wider benefits of the interventions?	What is the long-term change expected?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uneven distribution of economic strength, rooted in the historical and structural differences between regions - urban and industrialised areas vs. rural and peripheral areas. Transnational and regional links and networks between actors within the innovation systems are weak. Lack of competences and skills within SMEs in terms of innovative products and services. Disparities in entrepreneurial culture at regional level Different institutional frameworks, policies, laws, and regulations, unclear mandates, lack of guidelines and standards to assist decisionmakers and stakeholders and lack of coordination prevent effective collaboration Insufficient knowledge, information, technical skills, funding and awareness lead to insufficient, ineffective actions Low levels of communication among multi-level actors and stakeholders lead to duplication of efforts and unnecessary costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enterprises (with a specific focus on SMEs) and their employees, Entrepreneurs Cluster organisations, The public sector Intermediaries Private and public research institutions R&D facilities Centres of R&D excellence Public and private actors dealing with social and economic All population groups which are affected by the issue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing and further strengthening transnational innovation networks and clusters, also supporting their internationalisation Enhancing the transfer of R&D-results from research institutions to the business sector (in particular SMEs) leading to new services and products Building transnational links for improving existing and developing new services which support innovation in businesses Strengthening links between the public sector, finance institutions as well as the business sector (in particular SMEs) to design and test new structures and services that facilitate the access to financing of innovation Increasing cooperation between research, the public and private sectors to stimulate innovation and entrepreneurship Increasing skills of employees in the business sector (particularly SMEs) regarding novel technologies, innovative products, services or processes and social innovation contributing to regional smart specialisation strategies Developing and implementing strategies and tools to improve creativity and entrepreneurial mind-sets building on different business cultures and on all levels of education and to increase technological and managerial competences for entrepreneurship for economic and social innovation Adapting, developing, and testing innovative learning systems for increasing skills and entrepreneurial competences considering demographic change challenges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing skills and competencies of relevant staff Needs assessment, including research Development of instruments, guidelines, methodologies, apps, etc. Trainings, seminars, workshops, study visits Investments Stakeholder engagement Communication activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategies and action plans are developed and/or implemented Innovation networks are established Tools are developed, tested and/or implemented <ul style="list-style-type: none"> People acquire knowledge and information Pilot actions, including pilot investments are implemented to test various solutions Stakeholders are mobilized and engaged 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Linkages among actors of the innovation systems are consolidated Skills and competences of employees and entrepreneurs driving economic and social innovation in central European regions are improved 	<p>Increased cooperation between actors of the innovation systems, especially between business and research, will improve access to research results for enterprises, notably SMEs, thus stimulating further investment in innovation.</p> <p>Collaboration between research and public administration will contribute to both economic and social innovation transfer.</p> <p>Enterprises will develop and implement innovative products, services and/or processes contributing to regional smart specialisation strategies.</p> <p>Improved cooperation will trigger economic opportunities and employment at regional level.</p> <p>The cities and regions in the Programme area will become better places to live and work.</p>
Stakeholders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business support organisations Education/training centres and schools Higher education and research institutions Interest groups including NGOs International organisations, EEIG under national law Local, regional or national public authorities Sectoral agencies Enterprises, esp. SMEs General public 	Key assumptions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An innovative approach is used in carrying out activities There is a high potential for mobilisation of synergies between business and research and investments in product and process innovations. A bottom-up, integrated approach will increase the quality and relevance of outputs 				Key assumptions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better interlinking advanced regions will support the competitiveness and resilience of transnational and regional clusters in central Europe. Skills improvement is an important factor for increased innovation capacity in the CE programme area.
		Key assumptions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transfer of knowledge, output and results should allow for efficiently addressing existing disparities between regions. The knowledge created should be easily applicable, transferable, and possible to use in other organisations/ regions /countries outside of the defined partnership. 	Key assumptions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transnational coordination is a catalyst for implementing smart solutions answering to regional challenges. Transnational cooperation can add value by building new knowledge, ensuring coherent and effective solutions and policies. 		

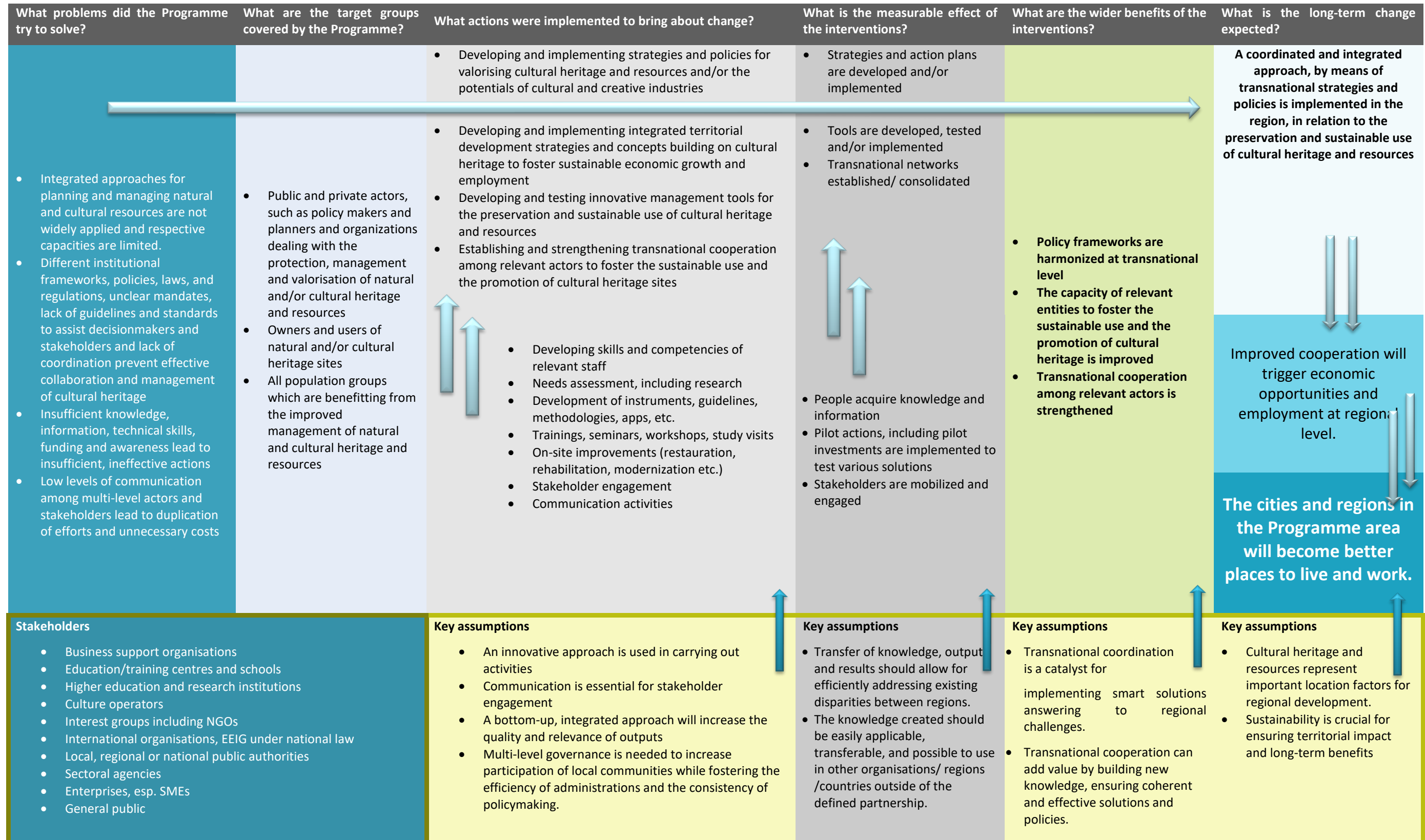
2.2.2. LOW CARBON



2.2.3. ENVIRONMENT

What problems did the Programme try to solve?	What are the target groups covered by the Programme?	What actions were implemented to bring about change? (Selection)	What is the measurable effect of the interventions?	What are the wider benefits of the interventions?	What is the long-term change expected?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Natural heritage and resources (including water, soil, fauna and flora) are subject to numerous pressures and usage conflictsFragmentation and loss of biodiversity, the vulnerability of natural heritage and landscapes as well as the effects of climate change have a strong impact at territorial levelLack of a cross sectorial (integrated) approachesLegal gaps in protection of ecosystems, ecosystem networksUnequal and insufficient effort dedicated to environmental management and measures for mitigation of pollution sourcesInsufficient or lack of spatial planning powers for metropolitan regions prevents effective response for challenges such as urban sprawl, ineffective mobility systems etc. (constant)Different institutional frameworks, policies, laws, and regulations, unclear mandates, lack of guidelines and standards to assist decisionmakers and stakeholders and lack of coordination prevent effective collaboration and managementInsufficient knowledge, information, technical skills, funding and awareness lead to insufficient, ineffective actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Public and private actors, such as policy makers and planners and organisations dealing with the protection, management and valorisation of natural heritage and resources as well as owners and users of natural and/or cultural heritage sitesAll groups which are benefitting from the improved management of natural heritage and resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Developing and implementing integrated strategies and tools for the sustainable management of protected or environmentally highly valuable areas (e.g. biodiversity, landscapes, eco-systems, etc.)Developing and implementing integrated strategies and tools to sustainably use natural resources for regional development, thus avoiding potential use conflictsDeveloping and testing the application of innovative technologies and tools that facilitate effective integrated environmental management and efficient management of natural resourcesHarmonising environmental management concepts and tools on the transnational level for risk prevention and managementDeveloping and implementing strategies and tools to manage and improve environmental quality and to tackle natural and manmade risks in FUAsStrengthening the capacity for environmental planning and management in FUAsDeveloping and implementing integrated strategies, policies and tools to reduce land-use conflicts in FUAsDeveloping concepts and implementing environmental pilot applications to support the development towards smart citiesDeveloping skills and competencies of relevant staffNeeds assessment, including researchDevelopment of instruments, guidelines, methodologies, apps, etc.Trainings, seminars, workshops, study visitsOn-site improvements (etc.)Stakeholder engagementCommunication activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Strategies and action plans are developed and/or implementedTools are developed, tested and/or implementedTransnational networks established/ consolidatedPeople acquire knowledge and informationPilot actions, including pilot investments are implemented to test various solutionsStakeholders are mobilized and engaged	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The integrated environmental management capacities of the public sector and related entities for the protection and sustainable use of natural heritage and resources are improvedThe integrated environmental management capacities of the public sector and related entities in functional urban areas has improvedPolicy frameworks are harmonized at transnational levelTransnational cooperation among relevant actors is strengthened	<p>A coordinated and integrated approach, by means of transnational strategies and policies is implemented in the region, in relation to: a) preservation and sustainable use of natural heritage and resources and b) environmental planning and management in FUAs</p> <p>Improved cooperation will trigger economic opportunities and employment at regional level.</p> <p>The cities and regions in the Programme area will become better places to live and work.</p>
Stakeholders <ul style="list-style-type: none">Local, regional or national public authoritiesBusiness support organisations, sectoral agenciesEducation/training centres and schoolsHigher education and research institutionsInterest groups including NGOsInternational organisations, EEIG under national lawInfrastructure operatorsEnterprises, esp. SMEsGeneral public	Key assumptions <ul style="list-style-type: none">An innovative approach is used in carrying out activitiesCommunication is essential for stakeholder engagementA bottom-up, integrated approach will increase the quality and relevance of outputsMulti-level governance is needed to increase participation of local communities while fostering the efficiency of administrations and the consistency of policymaking.The complexity of the challenges requires integrated approaches based on sustainable long-term strategic visions linking different policies, sectors and administrative levels.	Key assumptions <ul style="list-style-type: none">Transfer of knowledge, output and results should allow for efficiently addressing existing disparities between regions.The knowledge created should be easily applicable, transferable, and possible to use in other organisations/ regions /countries outside of the defined partnership.	Key assumptions <ul style="list-style-type: none">Transnational coordination is a catalyst for implementing smart solutions answering to regional challenges.Transnational cooperation can add value by building new knowledge, ensuring coherent and effective solutions and policies.	Key assumptions <ul style="list-style-type: none">Natural heritage is an important location factor and the use of its assets can serve as a driver for economic developmentSustainability is crucial for ensuring territorial impact and long-term benefitsImproving the quality of the urban environment would increase the attractive and liveable cities and regionsEnhanced governance will contribute to better planning, management and decision making thereby reducing usage conflicts and negative externalities on the environment.	

2.2.4. CULTURE



2.2.5. TRANSPORT

What problems did the Programme try to solve?	What are the target groups covered by the Programme?	What actions were implemented to bring about change? (examples)	What is the measurable effect of the interventions?	What are the wider benefits of the interventions?	What is the long-term change expected?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accessibility and connectivity is weaker in peripheries and rural areas.• Transport systems not adapting fast enough to the new trends in respect to mobility.• Rural areas have lower quality of public transport, compared to larger cities.• Integrated passenger transport systems and multimodality are unevenly implemented• Freight transport is not adapting fast enough to sustainability requirements• Insufficient knowledge, information, technical skills, funding and awareness lead to insufficient, ineffective actions• Different institutional frameworks, policies, laws, and regulations, unclear mandates, lack of guidelines and standards to assist decisionmakers and stakeholders and lack of coordination prevent effective collaboration administrations, transport operators and actors in the transport sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Public and private sector, such as institutions responsible for planning and managing regional transport networks or freight transport• Public transport operators,• Providers and operators of freight transport and logistics services• Infrastructure providers and other local or regional passenger or freight transport actors• All population groups which can benefit from improved regional passenger or transport services (e.g. commuters, tourists, etc.)• Commercial customers of freight transport services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Developing and implementing strategies, tools, pilot actions (including innovative financing and investment models) to increase connectivity and mobility or improve regional public transport systems for passengers (e.g., commuter connections, interoperability, etc.)• Developing coordinated concepts, standards and tools for improved mobility services in the public interest• Developing and implementing coordinated strategies, tools, pilot actions for strengthening the multimodality of environmentally friendly freight transport systems (e.g. rail, river, or sea transport)• Developing and implementing coordination and collaboration mechanisms between multimodal freight transport actors• Developing and implementing coordinated concepts, management tools and services aimed at increasing the share of environmentally friendly logistics through optimized freight transport chains (e.g., multimodal transnational freight transport flows) and logistics planning• Developing skills and competencies of relevant staff• Needs assessment, including research• Development of instruments, guidelines, methodologies, apps, etc.• Trainings, seminars, workshops, study visits• On-site improvements (e.g. buss stations)• Stakeholder engagement• Communication activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strategies and action plans are developed and/or implemented• Tools are developed, tested and/or implemented• Transnational networks established/ consolidated• People acquire knowledge and information• Pilot actions, including pilot investments are implemented to test various solutions• Stakeholders are mobilized and engaged	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Policy frameworks are harmonized at transnational level• Planning capacities of the public sector and related entities for regional passenger transport systems linked to national and European transport networks are improved• Coordination among freight transport stakeholders for increasing multimodal environment-friendly freight solutions is improved• Transnational cooperation among relevant actors is strengthened	<p>A coordinated and integrated approach, by means of transnational strategies and policies is implemented in the region, in relation to passenger transport systems and multimodal environment-friendly freight transport</p> <p>Improved cooperation will trigger economic opportunities and employment at regional level</p> <p>The cities and regions in the Programme area will become better places to live and work.</p>
Stakeholders <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Business support organisations, interest groups, NGOs• Education, training and research institutions• Transport operators• International organisations, EEIG under national law• Local, regional or national public authorities• Sectoral agencies• Enterprises, esp. SMEs• General public	Key assumptions <ul style="list-style-type: none">• An innovative approach is used in carrying out activities• Communication is essential for stakeholder engagement• A bottom-up, integrated approach will increase the quality and relevance of outputs• Multi-level governance is needed to increase participation of local communities while fostering the efficiency of administrations and the consistency of policymaking.	Key assumptions <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Transfer of knowledge, outputs and results should allow for efficiently addressing existing disparities between regions.• The knowledge created should be easily applicable, transferable, and possible to use in other organisations/ regions /countries outside of the defined partnership.	Key assumptions <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A coordinated approach will pave the way for designing future infrastructure in a sustainable manner and a more effective transportation of goods to and across central European regions.• Transnational coordination is a catalyst for implementing smart solutions answering to regional challenges.• Transnational cooperation can add value by building new knowledge, ensuring coherent and effective solutions and policies.	Key assumptions <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sustainability is crucial for ensuring territorial impact and long-term benefits• Increased connectivity would reduce regional disparities and would contribute to competitiveness of central European regions.• Efficient multimodal and combined transport is a key driver of economic and environmental benefits.	

3. ANNEX 3 - CASE STUDIES

3.1. INDIVIDUAL CASE STUDIES

3.1.1. INNOVATION – DIGITALLIFE4CE

OVERVIEW

Duration	01.05.2017 – 31.10.2019 (30 months)
Budget	Total Budget: 1.551.182,37 Euro ERDF co-Financing: 1.274.752,00 Euro
Partnership	University of Applied Science Burgenland (AT - LP), STEP RI Science and Technology Park of the University of Rijeka Ltd (HR – PP), Pannon Business Network Association (HU – PP), Wrocław Technology Park (PL – PP), Technology Park Ljubljana Ltd. (SI – PP), Gesundheitsforen Leipzig GmbH (DE – PP), HEALTHY SAXONY - VFG e.V. (DE – PP), Autonomous Province of Trento (IT – PP), Bruno Kessler Foundation (IT – PP)
Main topics⁴⁹	Health and social services Institutional cooperation and cooperation networks

Brief description of the project / Context

digitalLIFE4CE aimed to overcome the fragmentation of healthcare systems across Central Europe by identifying and sharing innovative solutions in the field of digital integrated healthcare systems. The fragmentation that the project sought to address is actually twofold: first, healthcare systems *across* CE countries are different in terms of institutions, funding schemes, laws, etc.; second, healthcare systems *within* CE countries show some disconnection between healthcare services and institutions.

The project set up a global framework for exchanging on existing solutions, best practices and cooperation opportunities to a variety of stakeholders, in particular policy-makers, technology solution providers and citizens. The creation of so-called Digital Healthcare Excellence Spots to facilitate cooperation and transfer of healthcare solutions between stakeholders, along with a joint Transnational Roadmap to synthesise digital healthcare solutions in Central Europe, is a major achievement of the project.

The main outputs of digitalLIFE4CE include an interactive toolbox for the visualisation of the Digital Healthcare Excellence Spots, a transnational learning hub with several thematic learning modules, an innovation-oriented Think Tank, a series of pilots actions and innovation networks across different CE locations, seven regional and two policy action plans as well as the Transnational Roadmap 2019-2025.

Partnership

Project Partner	Budget share	Type
University of Applied Science Burgenland(lead)	15%	Academia
Fondazione Bruno Kessler	13%	Research institute
Autonomous Province of Trento	7%	Regional authority
Gesundheitsforen Leipzig GmbH	7%	Private company
HEALTHY SAXONY - VFG e.V.	13%	Private company
STEP RI Science and Technology Park of the University of Rijeka Ltd	11%	Business Support Organisation

⁴⁹ Themes in Keep.eu

Pannon Business Network Association	11%	Business Support Organisation
Technology Park Ljubljana Ltd.	12%	Business Support Organisation
Wrocław Technology Park	12%	Business Support Organisation

The project partnership was made up of nine entities from seven different CE countries, combining one university, one research institute, one regional authority, two private companies and four business support organisations. The partnership combined different types of organisations (policy, research, higher education, business accelerators, etc.) and was further established based on the following assets: excellent cases in policy frameworks, R&D transfer mechanisms to SMEs, vertical and horizontal digital solutions, investment models, enterprises, digitalised hospitals and services.

To ensure that each partner would benefit from the project, the project idea was aligned with each partner entity's strategic objectives. An internal project management handbook was then drafted, clearly outlining decision-making processes, communication flows with online and on-site meetings and a project management platform (online tool) for all partners to refer to. Project activities were implemented through bilateral cooperation between two or more partners rather than by mobilising the whole project partnership, reflecting the respective partners' level of engagement in single project activities and outputs.

Project design

The project's overarching objective was to address the pervasive fragmentation of healthcare systems across Central Europe, both in terms of institutional and regulatory set-up and stakeholders. The project idea was developed by following a three-step approach:

- First, learning how healthcare systems are structured and financed in the different territories of Central Europe;
- Second, identifying best practice examples – in particular 'smart healthcare solutions' – across Central Europe;
- Third, transferring those identified solutions to other territories within Central Europe.

In short, digitalLIFE4CE aimed at creating "a CE area of excellence in the field of digital integrated healthcare systems solutions where flexible, solution-oriented cooperation mechanisms can be rapidly activated and transferred to all its strategic actors"⁵⁰.

Communication strategy

The project used a well-developed communication strategy and a wide range of different communication tools to reach its target groups: dedicated project website and social media account, online newsletters, etc. There were two key aspects for target group outreach and engagement:

- Story-telling and visual approaches (e.g. using bricks to illustrate the fragmentation of healthcare systems)
- Language (translating news and flyers into the pilot region's language)

Communication was easier with target groups that typically show a high level of interest in digital solutions (e.g. SMEs and students) but was more difficult with others (e.g. clinicians and policy-makers), which required more efforts to have them involved in project activities. Leveraging on national stakeholder networks was very helpful in that regard.

⁵⁰ Source: <https://keep.eu/projects/18167/digitalLIFE4CE-Fostering-in-EN/>

Support of relevant stakeholders

Significant support was received from regional authorities: each project partner had an associated partner from the region to best understand and tailor project activities to the regional healthcare system specificities. Project partners also tried to connect these associated partners together in order to foster transnational outcomes.

Target group/end users

The project widely addressed all healthcare system actors, including SMEs, students, clinicians, policy-makers, etc. Therefore, tailoring project activities and outputs to both the profile of target groups and regional characteristics of the healthcare systems they are involved in was of great importance for the success of the project.

Aimed and achieved target group numbers are summarised in the table below:

Target group	Aim	Achieved
Local public authority	28	28
Regional public authority	14	36
National public authority	7	31
Education/training centre and schools	14	49
Higher education and research	21	100
SME	210	264
Large enterprises	14	40
Business support organisations	14	32

Overall, digitalLIFE4CE reached a much larger audience than initially anticipated, especially with actors of the education sector as well as regional and national authorities.

IMPACTS

Results

As a result of the project, a number of outputs were produced:

- two tools (one toolbox system for mapping and visualisation of integrated digital healthcare solutions and one modular innovation learning toolbox for a multi-actor approach in a quadruple helix context),
- eight innovation networks (seven CE innovation network alliances for comprehensive healthcare systems solutions and one CE task force for future foresight and strategic cooperation),
- one multi-pilot action (one hub for leading edge pilot demonstration cases in seven CE Digital Healthcare Excellence Spots) and
- three strategies (one strategy and action plan on joint digital healthcare innovation potentials, one joint transnational roadmap system for CE Digital Healthcare Excellence Spots and one CE capitalisation strategy for integrated digital healthcare solutions with mutual EU linkages).

Overall, the transfer of healthcare solutions across territories was a major achievement of the project. This further materialised in:

- Cooperation with different types of healthcare organisations such as nursing homes, hospitals, research institutes, etc.
- Exchange of knowledge and networking possibilities between healthcare systems and stakeholders.

The seven CE Digital Excellent Health Sports were a flagship result of digitalLIFE4CE, allowing for further results to be produced locally (multiplication effects): in Trentino for instance, the provincial government created a competence centre called TrentinoSalute4.0 (TS4.0) including several project partners and the Trentino Health Trust. A set of guidelines for the exportation of TS4.0 model to foreign SMEs was developed and cooperation with foreign SMEs was established.

Sustainability

The durability of the project partnership beyond the project end materialises on a bilateral basis, with some project partners cooperating with each other on specific project results (e.g. teaching courses). In addition, project partners developed follow-up project ideas and applied for funding (fund leverage), with some applications being successful (e.g. in Interreg CE and Interreg cross-border programmes). It is noteworthy in that regard that the transnational roadmap, in which long-term established solutions are listed, can serve as a starting point for follow-up initiatives. Finally, the creation of networks (in particular through the CE Digital Excellence Health Spots) provides a pool of experts with which formal and informal contacts for further cooperation and knowledge exchange can be achieved.

Therefore, project results are sustainable at the level of the partnership.

Even though the end of the project was affected by the pandemic, project results were still embedded into solutions for its target groups through e.g. learning materials for students where project results are integrated in the study programme, new electronic documentation and information systems for hospitals, living labs, etc. This should contribute to the sustainability of project results beyond project partners towards its target groups.

At the territorial level however, the sustainability of project results is hindered by the relatively low level of uptake in policy-making.

CONCLUSIONS

The following aspects seem to have contributed to the success of the project:

- **Right combination of skills, expertise and assets between projects partners**, also ensuring that each partner would benefit from the project for its own strategic objectives;
- **Tailoring project activities and outputs** to both the profile of target groups and regional characteristics of the healthcare systems they are involved in, thanks in particular to local associated partners.

3.1.2. LOW-CARBON – LOW-CARB

OVERVIEW

Duration	01.06.2017 - 30.11.2020 (42 months)
Budget	Total Budget: 2.636.268,77Euro ERDF co-Financing: 2.170.577,74 Euro
Partnership	Leipziger Verkehrsbetriebe GmbH (DE – LP), Sveučilište Sjever (HR - PP), Grad Koprivnica (HR – PP), Statuárni město Brno (CZ – PP), Szegedi Közlekedési Kft (HU – PP), The Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe (HU – PP), Gmina Skawina (PL – PP), City of Kraków (PL – PP), Stadt Leipzig (DE – PP), Mitteldeutscher Verkehrsverbund GmbH (DE – PP), Tranvie Elettriche Parmensi - TEP S.p.A. (IT – PP)
Main topics⁵¹	Green technologies Urban development Transport and Mobility

⁵¹ Themes in Keep.eu

Brief description of the project / Context

The objective of the LOW-CARB project was to improve the planning capacities of public and private stakeholders for low-carbon mobility and transportation. The project thereby intended to support Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMP), a concept set out in the 2013 Urban Mobility Package, by contributing to sustainable, integrated mobility plans in functional urban areas. Ultimately, LOW-CARB aimed to “increase the use of public transport, foster multimodal mobility and reduce CO2 emissions from private motorized modes” thanks to improved low-carbon mobility planning.

The main outputs of the project include a series of pilot actions demonstrating low-carbon mobility solutions, a series of trainings, a series of actions plans with over 200 sustainable mobility measures, a SUMP Self-Assessment Tool, a SUMP GIS Monitoring Tool and a Central Europe SUMP Competence Centre (SUMP-Central). Together, these outputs are thought to have helped reduce carbon emissions in Central Europe by 60,000 tons until 2020. By 2025, these carbon emissions savings are expected to amount to more than 120,000 tons thanks to the uptake and upscaling of LOW-CARB outputs.

Partnership

Project Partner	Budget share	Type
Leipziger Verkehrsbetriebe GmbH	28%	Public company
Sveučilište Sjever (University North)	3%	Academia
Grad Koprivnica	8%	Municipality
Statuárni město Brno	9%	Municipality
Szegedi Közlekedési Kft	9%	Public company
		International
The Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe	2%	organisation
Gmina Skawina	3%	Local Authority
City of Kraków	15%	Municipality
Stadt Leipzig	7%	Municipality
Mitteldeutscher Verkehrsverbund GmbH	11%	Public company
Tranvie Elettriche Parmensi - TEP S.p.A.	6%	Public company

The project partnership was made up of 11 entities from six different CE countries, combining four public companies, one university, one international organisation, one local authority (grouping of cities and villages) and four municipalities. The partnership combined public transport operating companies with municipalities for the practical implementation of outputs as well as a university and international organisation focusing on cooperation. The partnership was deemed important to gain new experiences and generate learning effects.

Project design

The project's objectives were defined so as to address the need to better connect industrial development areas to public transport and introduce multimodal traffic solutions to reduce private transport and its negative externalities like traffic congestions and GHG emissions. More specifically, the project pursued three specific objectives:

1. Integrated low-carbon mobility planning for functional urban areas
2. Capacity building for integrated low-carbon mobility planning in functional urban areas
3. Pilot actions for low carbon mobility in functional urban areas

The Interreg programme was deemed a suitable platform for addressing such important challenges, in comparison to other national and European platforms.

Communication strategy

LOW-CARB activities and results were conveyed through different channels, such as the project website, biannual newsletters and a bulletin board with many news and event articles. Importantly, the LOW-CARB non-binding [declaration](#) of transitioning towards low-carbon mobility planning and services for functional urban areas could serve as both a communication and engagement tool, in particular to support policy uptake.

Since project partners were directly linked to local and regional policy-making processes, there was no need to develop a more detailed communication strategy.

Target group/end users

The project addressed a wide range of different stakeholders, namely LRAs, infrastructure and service providers, SMEs and large enterprises, interest groups, education and training centres, etc.

Aimed and achieved target group numbers are summarised in the table below:

Target group	Aim	Achieved
Local public authority	180	381
Regional public authority	45	91
National public authority	7	9
Sectoral agency	11	14
Infrastructure and (public) service provider	180	80
Interest groups incl. NGOs	10	40
Education/training centre and schools	5	6
Higher education and research	23	24
SME	30	51
Large enterprises	14	48
Business support organisations	10	17
International organisations	7	4
General public	700	3463

Overall, LOW-CARB reached a much larger audience than initially anticipated, especially with LRAs, interest groups, small and large businesses and the general public. Only the number of infrastructure and service providers and international organisations reached was lower than initially planned.

IMPACTS

Results

As a result of the project, a number of outputs were produced:

- Eight strategies and actions plans: three strategies for improving integrated low-carbon mobility planning for functional urban areas, four action plans for implementation of integrated low-carbon PT services in functional urban areas, and one action plan for implementation of multipurpose charging infrastructure for multimodal PT e-services
- Three tools and services: one tool for SUMP implementation monitoring and evaluation of low-carbon impact of mobility measures, one regional SUMP Self-Assessment Tool, and one Central Europe SUMP Competence Centre
- Five pilot actions: two pilot implementations of multimodal mobility information systems and applications, two pilot implementations of innovative multimodal PT services for low-carbon mobility, and one pilot application of novel low-carbon PT service
- 23 trainings on integrated low-carbon mobility planning and novel integrated PT offers for FUAs.

These outputs contributed to the elaboration of integrated FUA strategies and action plans for low-carbon mobility in four CE cities: Leipzig, Kopřivnica, Brno and Szeged. Action plans in particular helped to develop new or revised outdated SUMP, while tools also served as means to engage with a wide array of stakeholders, including citizens. As reported in the project final report, the SUMP Self-Assessment Tool was so far used by 430 cities and regions worldwide, including 80 in Central Europe, thereby demonstrating its utility for low-carbon mobility planning. Other key results of the LOW-CARB project include the creation of permanent jobs within partner organisations.

Sustainability

The capitalisation on LOW-CARB results through the Dynaxibility4CE project (e.g. for maintaining the Central Europe SUMP Competence Centre), funded through the experimental call for Interreg CE, helps to exploit the full potential of LOW-CARB achievements on the longer-run.

At the local and regional level, the integration of LOW-CARB results in governance models (e.g. in Leipzig) contributes to the sustainability of LOW-CARB achievements. The uptake of project results at the EU level through the SUMP Topic Guide “Planning sustainable mobility for functional urban areas and peripheral districts” should further ensure their sustainability on a wider territorial scale.

CONCLUSIONS

The following aspects seem to have contributed to the success of the project:

- **Policy uptake at different governance levels** thanks to the relationship between project partners and institutional stakeholders, on the one hand, and the integration of project results into follow-up projects and EU-level tools, on the other;
- **The practicality and utility of the tools developed for municipalities and regions.**

3.1.3. ENVIRONMENT – RAINMAN

OVERVIEW

Duration	36 months, between 01.07.2017 and 30.06.2020
Budget	3,045,286.89 EUR (2,488,510.24 EUR ERDF contribution)
Partnership	10 partners, 6 countries (DE, CZ, AT, PL, HU, HR)
Main topics⁵²	Managing natural and man-made threats Risk management

Brief description of context and of the project

Heavy rains are a major environmental risk in Europe, one which is increasingly visible in the CE area, as well. They can hit any location with only very short warning time and often result in loss of property, environmental damage and even loss of life.

At the time of the project initiation, several other initiatives were being developed or implemented, most of which at local, smaller scale, as stakeholders acknowledged the urgent need for action. Wider efforts to support climate change adaptation and mitigation were also being made at EU level, through clear [strategic commitment](#) and access to [evidence](#). Public awareness was relatively high and local and regional authorities were open to engaging in the proposed actions, which provided a positive context for the implementation. Initial assumptions in this respect proved right and contributed to the successful implementation of the project.

Data availability, complex modelling capacities and visualization techniques have expanded significantly in recent years. This enabled the development of more accurate and user-friendly tools, supporting

⁵² Themes in Keep.eu

stakeholders' engagement, including participation of the public in mapping risks and implementing solutions. They also contributed to communication and to decision-making and were essential for the project success.

The project responds to common needs across the Programme area. RAINMAN aimed to improve integrated management capacities of public authorities to mitigate heavy rain risks, to reduce the losses in the natural and built environment caused by heavy rain. Throughout a comprehensive approach, the project started from mapping the risks and developed practice-oriented new tools and innovative methods for risk prevention and mitigation. These were tested through six pilot actions in participating regions.

The pilot actions were implemented in urban, semi-urban, rural and agricultural areas, covering flatland, hilly, mountainous terrain, at the level of river basins, so as to capture a variety of possible contexts, risks and to test multiple solutions.

The results of all activities carried out in the project were encompassed in the [RAINMAN Toolbox](#), an information platform which contains a large collection of tools and methods for assessing and mapping heavy rain risks, for risk communication, as well as a catalogue containing over 100 measures that can contribute to the mitigation of heavy rain risks. The platform is available in six languages, targeting municipalities, private individuals, practitioners and experts in Central Europe.

Partnership

The project partnership was made up of ten entities in six countries, combining two state authorities, four regional ones, two water management authorities and three research institutions, as well as the leading agency in Austria, state-owned, specialized in water management. There are no private entities in the partnership structure.

The partnership was formed at the lead partner's initiative, by reaching out to its network and further, to their partners' networks. The final members in the consortium were selected considering their potential contribution to the project, particularly in terms of technical expertise and decision-making power.

In addition to the main partners, the project relied on the support and expertise of the associated partners, such as the Office of the Upper Austrian Provincial Government and the Ministry of Agriculture, Regions and Tourism in Austria, to enable the implementation of the pilot actions, gain access to data and information and to disseminate the project. Having had the relevant state authorities leading and supporting the project has also facilitated access to relevant municipalities in risk-prone areas, proving an asset for the implementation.

Some activities were implemented with the help of subcontractors at the [University of Innsbruck](#), the [Federal Research and Training Centre for Forests, Natural Hazards and Landscape](#) and [the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences](#) in Vienna. A private company [INFRASTRUKTUR und UMWELT](#) supported the project on behalf of the lead partner and Partner 2, by coordinating and technically implementing the development of the RAINMAN Toolbox.

Project design and implementation

The project idea was initiated by the lead partner – Saxon State Office for Environment, Agriculture and Geology (DE), which was looking for ways to reduce the risks arising from torrential rains. Since the problem was widespread in other CE regions, the lead partner saw the Interreg CE programme as an opportunity to learn about other experiences and to develop solutions which could then be used on a wide scale.

The partners worked jointly to develop and implement the activities. The project was organized in four work packages: mapping risks, proposing solutions for reducing risks, testing the solutions through pilot actions and developing the toolbox.

Both risk mapping and development of solution starting from an extensive stocktaking exercise of what had previously been achieved, particularly because some regions already had risk management plans in place. This provided a wide understanding on the common problems and possible solutions, the general level of awareness and preparedness and guided the future action in the project.

Locations for the pilot actions were selected based on their relevance for the project and depending on the willingness and municipalities to collaborate and commit to future actions. Several rounds of discussions were carried out in this respect by project partners, in their respective countries. In order to gain in-depth knowledge about the local needs and challenges, a survey was carried out in the pilot regions. The survey was then repeated after the finalization of the pilots, to assess the results achieved, and was also used as a means for raising awareness for the project and the toolbox.

A highly participatory, grass-roots approach was employed in carrying out the pilot actions, which served both as a means to gather information, but also to mobilize the local communities and gain the support of the relevant decision-makers. Efforts were made to reach out wide categories of population including, for example, school children.

State-of-the-art technology and instruments were used in determining risks and determining the possible solutions. In this respect, the project benefited from support from various stakeholders, including [Hagel](#), an Austrian insurance company which provided damage data and two German private companies - [Geomer](#) and [Hydrotec](#) – which provided software licenses for numerical studies free of charge.

Throughout the implementation, the project benefited from critical review and guidance from the RAINMAN Advisory Board, made up of external experts from state authorities or higher education and research institutions. This mechanism has contributed to safeguarding the quality of the project outputs.

As the project came to conclusion, the COVID crisis posed significant challenges, given the movement restrictions. At that time, the project was essentially implemented from 30-40 home offices, which put a strain not only the internal management and communication flows, but also on the interactions with the other stakeholders in the project.

Communication strategy

The project's communication strategy was centred around raising awareness in relation to risks related to heavy rain. This provided an anchor for reaching out to wide categories of public and presented the opportunity for combining communication with educational messages on how individuals can take action in case of heavy rains. Special materials were developed, including the [RAINMAN board game](#), which was used in schools in the Hungarian pilot action. A video contest and a postal campaign were organized, to support awareness on the topic.

Engagement of local decision-makers, particularly mayors, water administrators, practitioners, was an essential component of the communication strategy. To this end, direct communication was used, and public hearings were held in individual localities in the pilot regions. These were complimented by other activities, such as an information trail.

The project partners considered this communication strategy a good method for supporting the long-term sustainability of the project results and is likely to have contributed significantly to the overall positive feedback in relation to the activities carried out.

The communication events organized by the project also gathered approximately 400 participants, 20% less than initially targeted. However, it needs to be noted that the final conference of the project could not be organized due to COVID restrictions. Participations to other events were also prevented, for the same reasons.

Support of relevant stakeholders

Having as partners leading state and regional authorities and agencies has provided easy access to wide networks. As such, throughout the implementation, the project has sought and received support from a broad range of stakeholders, private and public, some already mentioned in above subsections.

Support from the local stakeholders - municipalities, water companies, emergency services etc. - was a very important factor for the success of the pilot actions and for ensuring the relevance for the local contexts. In this respect, having selected the pilot locations based on the local administrations' responsiveness to the project theme has contributed to the success of the implementation and has

facilitated the uptake of solutions in the local action plans and procedures for risk management. The project partners have prioritized mayors of the local municipalities, placing them at the heart of the pilot actions and empowering them in relation to their communities.

Endorsement of political stakeholders, at all levels, is crucial for ensuring the sustainability of results. In this respect, the support of the Directorate-General for Climate Action and of the Saxony Liaison Office Brussels has created the premises for dissemination of the project results, even beyond the Programme area.

Exchange of information and collaboration with other projects has proved an effective means to capitalize on the knowledge and tools that had already been developed and also to avoid duplication. Through its partners, RAINMAN collaborated with several projects in the field of flood protection, climate change adaptation, heavy rain risk management, including LUMAT, FramWat or MagicLandscapes, also financed through Interreg CE, and also different projects financed from cross-border programs, LIFE or HORIZON. The extensive network of the project partners has provided added value for the project implementation and has also enabled capitalization of results from other initiatives.

Target group and end-users

A variety of target groups were reached throughout all the project stages. Approximately 530 entities were directly reached by the project, with local and regional authorities making almost 80% of them. In fact, the focus of the project was to support small-size municipalities, which do not have the capacity to implement appropriate risk management measures. Further target groups are research institutes, universities, associations and private individuals. Almost 1000 persons were also directly engaged in at least one of the project activities.

Local authorities are end-users of the project outputs, as they are the main decision-makers in relation to developing and implementing risk-management measures. Private individuals may be end-users of the education and communication materials in the toolbox.

All stakeholders which could be identified by the consortium, the associated partners in the seven pilot activities and any further institution that could deliver a valuable input, were consulted through a survey. This enabled the members of the target group / end users to be involved in the tool development process. The consultation resulted in 367 responses, mainly from experts and practitioners working in fields like spatial planning, urban planning, building permissions, environmental planning and nature preservation, water management / flood risk management. Consequently, the survey has proved a valuable tool for gathering information in support of the project's activities.

Ensuring that stakeholders have appropriate expertise to use the tools was a priority of the project. As such, the partnership conducted 33 trainings, for 554 persons, the majority with local and regional municipalities, but also practitioner workshops, and European Workshops, with EC representatives. At study tour in the Austrian pilot region was also organized, during which 15 experts were trained.

IMPACTS

Results

The flagship result of the project is the [Rainman Toolbox](#), which contains guidance on who should act and how, guidance for the planning and implementation of risk reduction measures, support for conducting communication and awareness actions, as well as good practice examples. The toolbox also contains a catalogue of over 100 risk reduction methods, collected from all project partners. In addition to the list, a detailed description of the measure and the area of possible application (fields of action) are given.

The toolbox is tailored the needs of the different target groups, particularly municipalities, practitioners, experts and private individuals, providing information, practical recommendations and examples. Acknowledging that smaller municipalities and local communities may not be able to access information in English, all the materials were translated into the languages of the six participating countries. This was an effort which had not been anticipated before the project start.

In the pilot regions, significant progress has been made in relation to risk assessment and risk management planning. All pilot municipalities and regions, 23 locations and 38 institutions in total, applied the new and improved methods on assessment and mapping of heavy rain risks. The hazard maps which were created as part of the project are currently integrated into the daily planning decisions and taken into account for the management concepts for the river catchments for: Oderwitz, Leutersdorf, Meißen in Germany; Annabach, Stufenbach, Stiftingbach, Katzbach, Schloss Eggenberg, Leonding, Schwertberg, Seewalchen in Austria; Popelin, Pisek, Strakonice, Lipi in the Czech Republic; Zgorzelec, Czerwona woda in Poland; Tiszakecske, Kunhegyes in Hungary; Umag, Zagreb in Croatia.

Numerous institutions adopted or updated their strategies and action plans in relation to heavy rain risk management, having improved their early-warning systems, emergency management action plans, updated guidelines for integrated urban development concepts etc. Ten institutions adopted strategies for integrated heavy rain risk reduction, including municipalities (Graz, Umag), regional authorities (Lower Silesia, Altsella) and water management agencies (Middle Tisza Water directorate).

Specific risk reduction measures have been integrated into the regional spatial planning of South Bohemia and Lower Silesia. Small scale investments were also made, to put specific measures in practice. This is the case of the early warning systems installed and of a rain reservoir, built in the Hungary pilot region, to protected against flooding.

The local and regional administrations have potentially gained the knowledge and tools to assess the risks of heavy rain for their territory, and they are likely to be using the tools for integrated territorial management and decision making for environmental and infrastructure projects as well as urban developments. They also have the necessary information and guidance to raise public awareness and inform local and regional actors about existing risks. A significant pool of practitioners has been exposed to new knowledge in respect to heavy rain risk management and preparedness.

The first steps in raising awareness and educating the public have also been made by the project. Compared to the initial situation, the target groups now understand their specific risk situation better and are better prepared to implement prevention measures. More than 67% of the authorities responding to the online survey carried out by the project have already implemented such measures.

Potentially, the project has effectively contributed to reducing the risks for future damages and casualties caused by heavy rains in the participating regions, thus improving the quality of life for the local communities.

The transnational approach has contributed to gaining access to a wide range situations, tools and practices, making the project outputs better adapted and replicable in various contexts. It has also created the premises for taking EU-level actions in respect to heavy rain risks management. To this end, recommendations have been issued for future EU legislation in the field.

Sustainability

Project partners bear the main responsibility for ensuring the sustainability of results. In this respect, the Toolbox will be maintained online and (technically) updated within the next 5 years from the project completion.

The various stakeholders from different countries, who have been involved in the Toolbox development, and the pilot municipalities are likely to act as multipliers promote the Toolbox further. Programme authorities, as well as national and EU institutions, agencies or thematic networks may support the uptake of the tools and measures at policy level or may include them into their own instruments. In this respect, the Toolbox was included on the [The European Climate Adaptation Platform Climate-ADAPT](#) a platform managed by the European Environment Agency (EEA) in partnership with the European Commission, with support from the European Topic Centre on Climate Change Impacts, Vulnerability and Adaptation (ETC/CCA). The platform provides an extensive database that contains quality checked information and including the RAINMAN Toolbox is a recognition of its potential at EU level. Since March 2021 the RAINMAN-toolbox has been recommended as a climate protection service by the [German Climate Prevention Portal of the German government](#) (KLiVO).

At the level of the pilot municipalities, it is expected that the adopted plans for risk management will be implemented and that the tools developed by the project will be further used. It is also expected that other local communities will follow their example.

Additionally, some RAINMAN partners have joined together with other CE projects in the capitalization project TEACHER-CE to promote the Toolbox further and to integrate it into a broader context. In this context, funds leveraged add up to 416,171.46 Euro (RAINMAN part of TEACHER-CE budget).

An expert cooperation has been established. Heavy rain risk management was a relatively new topic and RAINMAN has brought some of the leading scientists from DE, AT, CZ, HR, HU and PL together. The project partners have committed to present the project in the scientific community for five years following project completion. This is likely to generate new opportunities for updating and developing the Toolbox, as well as for expanding its uptake by local communities or at policy level.

CONCLUSIONS

Both the initial needs identified and the wider trends have intensified during the project implementation and after its completion, increasing the relevance of the project outputs and the general interest towards the topic.

High-level political commitment for climate resilience increased, through the [EU Green Deal](#), [EU Adaptation Strategy](#), [EU Mission for a Climate resilient Europe](#) and [EU's sustainable finance agenda](#) etc., as well as through global agreements, such as the [Paris Agreement](#), the [Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction](#) and the [Sustainable Development Agenda](#). This increased public awareness and pressure in respect to taking action at local level, making the results of the project even more relevant for future actions.

The following aspects seem to have contributed to the success of the project:

- **Transnational cooperation** in mapping risks, tools and solution, in a variety of contexts;
- Use of **state-of-the art instruments** and high expertise;
- **Careful selection of the pilot locations**, taking into consideration the willingness and capacity of the local authorities to engage in the project activities;
- **Bottom-up approach** to mapping risks and designing tools and measures for risk management in the pilot actions;
- **Highly transferable, versatile and widely applicable output** – the RAINMAN Toolbox;
- **Flexible budgeting** – from no money, to a lot of money for implementing the solutions proposed;
- **Close engagement** of local decision-makers, particularly mayors of municipalities, who were empowered to act in their communities;
- Focus on **raising awareness** in respect to the topic of interest, for wide categories of public;
- **High visibility and/or decision-making power of the project partners**, which enabled access to relevant stakeholders, at all levels and facilitated the dissemination of results;
- **The changes achieved by the project** – at individual and organizational level – are likely to be sustainable, supported by the increased public awareness and policy prioritization of the climate change adaptation topic.

3.1.4. CULTURE – INDUCULT 2.0

OVERVIEW

Duration	1 June 2016 – 31 May 2019
Budget	3 000 295.16 EUR; 2 448 851.62 EUR ERDF funding
Partnership	9 Partners, 7 Countries (DE, AU, HR, CA, SI, PL, IT)
Main topics⁵³	Cultural heritage and arts Tourism

Brief description of the project and context

Against the rapid technological advancements, all European regions have undergone through profound changes in their economic structure, relying increasingly on high-tech industry and knowledge intensive services. At the same time, the role creativity and culture, as a cross-cutting factor of competitiveness has become more widely recognized. However, these developments have affected territories in very different and uneven ways. Small and medium-sized towns in rural environments were often left outside of the development trends, not being able to shift from their former industrial based and, at the same time, failing to attract knowledge and creativity in the same way as large cities. This has led to limited opportunities, driving away new investments and causing brain drain, further accentuating the economic downturn.

Against the background of these trends, the focus of the INDUCULT2.0 project was to valorise place-specific, endogenous potentials that these regions already possess in connection to their industrial past, present and future. INDUCULT2.0 aimed at reviving the cultural spirit of long-standing industrial regions in Central Europe, by building upon the positive elements of industrial communities and using the concept of *Industrial Culture* as a common ground for an internal reference point of industrial communities.

In order to reconnect the current needs of industries with the historic pioneering culture for which these regions once were known, the project focused on utilizing the often-attractive assets of old-industrial sites for establishing creative and cultural centres, as well as on measures fostering innovation, entrepreneurship and local value chains in an industry-based setting.

Partnership

The project partnership was made up of 9 entities in 7 countries, combining municipalities, district administrations and private partners, and 2 academic institutions. The members in the consortium were selected considering a list of criteria, including a strong economic focus in the past and present on industrial production (i.e., the place regards itself as "industrial" and is also perceived as such from the outside), and the need to cover an area between 200,000 and 1,000,000 residents.

Two scientific partners supported the regional partners - the Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography and the Department of Geography and Regional Science of the University of Graz. They were responsible for the overall strategic framework of the InduCult 2.0 project as well as the organisation and sustainability of the transnational knowledge transfer in the project's learning network. Both scientific partners supported the regional partners by giving thematic input as well as structural and methodological guidance for the development of the pilot actions. Furthermore, they were monitoring and evaluating the implementation and documentation of the pilots.

The district of Zwickau was the lead partner of the consortium, being responsible for the overall management including partner coordination, communication with and reporting to the program authorities as well as networking with other national and European initiatives.

⁵³ Themes in Keep.eu

The project had one partner from outside the CE area (Stebo Competence Center Community Development, from Belgium). By their previous experience in relation to revitalizing communities affected by industrial decline, they provided important added value, particularly in relation to engaging the relevant stakeholders.

Project design

The project promoted the idea of *Living Industrial Culture* in Central Europe and set out to reveal, strengthen and valorise the unique cultural spirit of industrial regions for delivering integrated cultural measures and initiative for fostering regional identity, influencing the industrial labour market and company commitment and promoting creativity and pioneer spirit as a means of economic revitalization.

The project brought together regions with a distinct industrial past and present, situated outside major agglomeration areas in Central Europe. In recent years, all of them have undergone deep transformation processes due to automation, adaptation to globalized production patterns and the opening of markets in the former state-led economies. The long economic predominance of industrial production has brought about a particular cultural setting in the project partners' territories. It is made up of certain skills, attitudes, traditions as well as tangible monuments and artefacts. However, these regions are usually considered culturally less attractive and they are not utilizing the existing industrial culture to their full development potential.

Project partners engaged to jointly work out the idea of Industrial Culture, adapt it to regional contexts, promote it towards the stakeholders and anchor it strategically on different spatial levels. This resulted in a transnational strategy, regional strategies and a CE Network of Regional Coordinators. The network serves as a platform for linking the InduCult2.0 regions and as a contact base for interested further regions.

Another set of actions focused on promoting cultural resources of industry. Actions mainly aimed at showcasing the regions' industrial past and present through exhibitions, cultural landmarks and visitor information schemes. Cultural events in the partner regions were used to connect industrial past and present closer to the general public. Then, a better interlink between existing tourism activities, museums and the industrial past and present companies was explored, either through new accommodation concepts or the creation of regional and transnational thematic maps or new joint tourist products.

The cultural impact of heritage and current industries was presented to the public, industrial tourism promoted and industry-related cultural events carried out, aiming at creating a positive perception towards old, industrialised regions, as a means to attract people and businesses to the area.

The project also explored new ways for securing labour force and attracting companies to provide jobs for the local communities, by making Industrial Culture a unique and significant regional feature. For this, the partners tested measures for raising interest of youth in industrial culture and work options. The project underlined the importance of the establishment of networks of employers willing to take on student trainees, offering internships, supporting graduates of industry-relevant subjects, mentoring young people in training, as well as willing to participate in school projects and career events to keep them in or bound to their study region.

Connection between the creative sector and industry was also one of top priorities. One set of sub-actions focused on 'bridging the gap' between industry and creative via formats like living labs, innovator camps and workshops, improving the interplay between the sectors in the regions. Another set of activities addressed the material substance foreseeing the upgrading and face-lifting of industrial buildings via art. A second set of activities did also focus on the material substance, but more in a functional way. Actions in the section 'Reviving Space through Creatives' aimed at the establishment of working and exhibition spaces for the creative sector in old industrial settings. Manifested results were showrooms, pop-up stores, co-working spaces and innovation labs. In a last set of activities, project partners have put emphasis on concepts targeting innovation culture over time. Here regions have analysed regional innovation culture over time as a regional asset and derive measures for enhancing innovation capability and pioneering spirit in the future. In the following chapter, some examples beyond the project context will be highlighted for all three types of actions and an outlook to further possible activities will be discussed.

Support of relevant stakeholders

The project aimed at establishing a long-lasting discourse on industrial culture overarching the industrial past, present and future within the partner regions. For this purpose, a diverse range of regional stakeholders was involved from the very beginning in the project. Regional focus groups were initiated by the project partners, and they were used as “stakeholder boards” in all regions. Contributions of the established focus groups were relevant for major project deliverables, e.g. regional argumentation papers, thematic action plans, regional strategy papers, regional actions plans. Further on, they promoted the concept of Industrial Culture in the regions and have supported the partners with implementing their pilot actions.

Relevant European networks, namely ERIH, TEH and others were regularly informed about project outcomes and invited to public events.

Communication strategy

The project relied on numerous and diverse communication channels and activities, from movies, to presence on the social media, exhibitions, installations, as well as a wide range of events.

With the support of the Belgian partner, an event was organized at the European Parliament, for showcasing the project and for bringing the topic of industrial cultural to the attention of the representatives of the regions. The event was well received by the audience and, during the interviews carried out as part of this evaluation, it was recommended as a good practice for engaging politicians and decision-makers.

Target groups/end users

A variety of target groups were reached throughout all the project stages. Approximately 715 entities were directly reached by the project:

- 171 public bodies including local, regional, and national authorities and sectoral agencies;
- 166 higher education and research institutions, education/training centres and schools;
- 188 SMEs and 37 large enterprises.
- 153 interest groups including NGOs and business support organisations.
- More than 1,000 persons were also directly engaged in at least one of the project activities.

Different “clusters” of actions were designed to focus on different categories of target group – some of the actions did mainly address local inhabitants, while others focused on a broader outreach, like visitors and tourists. Additionally, the regions carried out a variety of pilot actions showcasing industry and its cultural offers through exhibitions, installations, maps and other features.

Other actions mainly targeted pupils, students and graduates through new collaborations between educational staff and stakeholders in business, culture and public administration. Yet another category focused on linking companies, museums, and schools.

Results

At the end of InduCult2.0, the concept of Industrial Culture has been introduced and tested in all partner industrial regions.

- Regional strategy papers have been developed in all 8 regions and adopted / acknowledged by political bodies, ensuring continuation of the initiated processes.
- Additional funds of 3,310,000 EUR have been leveraged.
- Awareness for Industrial Culture and its regional development potential is as well increased on European level. A lean, but effective and lasting network of coordinators for Industrial Culture in CE is in place. A strategic work programme serves the CE network and was adopted by institutions in all 8 partner regions.

- The mapping tool was adopted by 16 institutions.
- A number of scientific publications are available which will generate impact beyond the project runtime and beyond the geographic scope of partner regions.

Beyond the tangible results obtained by the project, two aspects were highlighted as outstanding in respect to the projects achievements: on the one hand, interviewees repeatedly mentioned the sense of pride of the local communities (municipalities, museums, schools etc.) in having been selected and taking part in the project activities; on the other hand, they highlighted the fact that for many of the communities where the pilot actions were carried out, Inducult2.0 was the “spark” which ignited the interest towards valorising industrial culture and opened the way for new actions and investments.

Sustainability

Regional strategies, supported by work plans, adopted within InduCult2.0 are used by the regions as a new policy. Additionally, focus was placed on influencing other policies, e.g. LEADER, RIS, operational programmes. The CE network of Industrial Culture is still active, albeit the fact that its activity has been affected by the COVID crisis. The mapping tool, a key transnational outcome, is maintained by an institution in the reach of the Italian project partner.

All partners foresee follow-up activities. Substantial funds were leveraged as a result of the project. More importantly, in the communities and regions where the project carried out its activities, the topic of industrial culture has been embedded in the strategic planning documents and will be further valorised during the 2021-2027 Cohesion Policy cycle.

National dissemination as well as mid-term/final events were used to inform beyond regional borders and partnership scope resulting in an uptake of InduCult2.0 results on national and European levels. Illustrating examples: Non-partner regions from CZ (Plzen) and DE (Hessen) took part in final event resulting in continued exchange. Cooperation with thematically relevant networks established in InduCult2.0 supported mainstreaming and transfer (e.g. ERIH).

Conclusions

The following aspects seem to have contributed to the success of the project:

- **The topic of industrial culture is highly relevant across the CE area**, and many communities were very receptive to valorising its potential;
- **Careful selection of the pilot locations**, taking into consideration the willingness and capacity of the local authorities to engage in the project activities;
- **Close engagement** of a wide variety of local stakeholders;
- Using art, culture and creative industries to **showcase the project activities** and to engage the target groups;
- Working on developing **local pride** in the industrial traditions and building trust in their future potential;

3.1.5. TRANSPORT – RUMOBIL

OVERVIEW

Duration	01.06.2016 – 31.05.2019
Budget	2,654,918.31 EUR (2,200,128.44 EUR ERDF contribution)
Partnership	13 partners, 6 countries (DE, PL, HR, CZ, IT, SK, HU)
Main topics⁵⁴	Demographic change and immigration Rural and peripheral development Improving transport connections

Brief description of the project and context

While local contexts are quite different, all participating regions share common needs. These include demographic change, depopulation, lower population density, isolation. Against the backdrop of low demand and under-utilization, the quality of public transport services is low and the costs are unsustainable for the local municipalities. Lack of access to proper mobility services leads people to migrate towards urban areas, further deepening structural problems. To address the challenges, the project aimed to identify innovative, suitable solutions, which could be implemented with limited resources.

The regional governments of RUMOBIL partners are responsible for planning and programming the public transport and mobility services at a regional and local level. Each regional government designs its own interventions in rural areas, usually in terms of “minimum services”. Among others, they share a common objective of improving the sustainable mobility in the regional territory, optimizing the urban and peri-urban public transport services through the planning of mobility strategies. Having the decision focal point at regional level was an advantage for carrying out the pilot actions, mobilizing local actors and enabling the adoption of the strategies.

Technological state of the art solutions in transport and mobility, mainly “Internet of Things”, have changed the way public transport services are designed, delivered, managed. Digitalization, real-time GPS tracking and accessible apps have changed consumer (users) behaviour and expectations in relation to the quality of these services. These wider trends and technological developments provided an excellent opportunity for testing various innovative solutions within the framework of the project.

The [Urban Mobility Package of the EU](#) (2013) provided the wider policy framework to enhance commitment towards green and inclusive public transport. This has encouraged public authorities at all levels to seek and adopt sustainable solutions, making them more responsive and motivated to engage in the project.

RUMOBIL aimed to support transnational cooperation between public authorities and their transport entities. These are confronted with a similar challenge to respond to pressures on regional public transport systems caused by demographic change in peripheral areas. The project addressed the need to link rural areas to European and national transport networks and shows how this can be accomplished with the limited resources available.

Working together in RUMOBIL provided them with a platform to exchange knowledge, to generate learning through launching pilot applications of state-of-the art tools and solutions, and to revise their transport policies to better suit changing mobility needs.

The project acknowledged the attitude of people living in rural areas towards lower adoption of technological development, ICT tools, and above all the awareness of them.

Main outputs of RUMOBIL therefore are pilot actions, the elaboration of a RUMOBIL strategy and policy-decisions to implement this strategy in the eight partner regions through an improvement of their transport plans. Pilot actions allowed testing a number of innovative applications during a period of 12 to

⁵⁴ Themes in Keep.eu

18 months how sparsely populated peripheral areas can be better linked to a primary, secondary or tertiary transport node (access to European and national passenger transport networks).

The transnational RUMOBIL strategy indicates to central Europe regions innovative and transferable public transport approaches - based on jointly analysed good practices, the combined knowledge of the partners and involved stakeholders, learning from the pilots, and fresh ideas put forward through a transnational social media-based competition. The strategies' implementation across the partner regions was prepared through work papers focusing on different aspects of transport policies and forecasts how demand for public transport will develop in coming years. Finally, decisions to revise the transport plans in light of the RUMOBIL strategy were introduced to policy-makers. Communication activities led to political support for a change of transport policies and the strategy's adoption beyond the partner areas. All outcomes were jointly assessed in site-visits, transnational workshops and a coordinated evaluation under the hospices of research institutions participating in RUMOBIL.

Partnership

The project partnership was made up of 13 entities, combining four regional authorities, two local authorities, three transport operators, two academic institutions specialized in transport and mobility, one private company specialized in deploying transport solutions and one non-profit association, representing more than 30 members, companies, or various associations in the rail sector. A quarter of the budget was allocated to the lead partner, which was also the initiator of the project.

Together, they ensured the necessary mix of theoretical knowledge, operational capacity and decision-making power to enable the design and deployment of the pilot actions, the development of the transnational strategy and the adoption of the local/ regional transport strategies. For example, T Bridge S.p.A. ensured the technical coordination in the elaboration of the RUMOBIL strategy and its implementation in the partner areas, while the University of Zilina developed the common set of monitoring indicators to assess the success of the pilots in each region. Transport operators and public authorities engaged in selecting the locations for the pilot actions and implementing the solutions on-site.

The partners also had solid knowledge and experience in respect to developing and implementing EU-funded projects, as well as the necessary capacity. The lead partner (Ministry for Regional Development and transport of Saxony-Anhalt (DE), through its Department for Demographic Development and Forecasts, has commissioned a specialized consultancy company - [Core-Consult](#) – to develop the application for the project.

The Agency for mobility and local public transport Modena S.p.A. was eligible for cofinancing from the "Fondo di rotazione" (IT nat. government; 20% of the certified eligible amount). The cofinancing was paid out retrospectively. Hungarian partners received 10% co-financing from the their national government. The remaining partners did not receive additional funding for project activities from external public sources.

Project design

The project started from the shared challenges in the partner regions. The overall concept was that availability of a service is not enough to ensure social inclusion and of economic development and that efficiency, attractiveness and user-friendliness of the transport system are also required, so that it may be used by the people. This means that everything from affordability, safety and territorial deployment to real-time knowledge of schedules, traffic and ticketing needs to be considered.

RUMOBIL tested eight innovative solutions in different regions with the aim to learn how sparsely populated peripheral areas can be better linked to a primary, secondary or tertiary transport node (access to European and national passenger transport networks). These pilots were experimental trials, short-term projects, which helped partners to learn how a larger-scale project might work in practice, in future.

Pilot projects provided platform for the organizations to test measure, prove value and reveal deficiencies before spending a significant amount of time, energy or money on a larger-scale project or new transport infrastructure.

Communication strategy

Citizens' engagement was considered a cornerstone for success, as people needed to be aware and willing to test/ use the new solutions. Advertising campaigns to inform citizens were performed, as part of the pilot actions and people were consulted at local level, by the municipalities.

Communication through the project website, Youtube channel, Facebook page was rather modest, with engagement below expectations. Participation to project communication events (such as the closing conference) was also below expectations.

Outside the project context, various opportunities were used by the partners to showcase the project, such as international thematic conferences. Project records boast of an active participation of project partners in 40 European and national events of the PT community

Support of relevant stakeholders

During the pilot phase partners invited key stakeholders and transport-policy decision-makers to participate in study-trips to learn first-hand about the pilots taking place in other partner territories. Ten study trips were organised in total, with the most visited pilot locations being Modena (IT) and Osterburg (DE). 45 persons who participated in the study trips were trained and received additional knowledge about public transport state of the art solutions. The participants had included both project partner representatives and public transport stakeholders.

At local level, partners made the necessary actions to ensure stakeholders and decision-makers commitment. For example, the Italian partner (aMo), decided to include the *Shareholders' Meeting* and the *Standing Committee for Mobility* as recipients of the actions / solutions of the Project, as these are the bodies directly responsible for decision-making in respect to local public transport planning process of the Province of Modena. This idea has proved particularly effective since the AMo Standing Committee for Mobility has decided, even before the conclusion of the RUMOBIL project, to extend the experience gained in the pilot project based on the service on call from Castelfranco Emilia to all other similar services in the province of Modena, located in the cities of Modena, Carpi, Maranello, Mirandola and Pavullo.

Target group/end users

RUMOBIL addressed stakeholders of public transport in peripheral regions of Central Europe. Those included public administrations responsible for the planning and coordination of PT services, service providers and the general public as users of the services.

The main end-users envisaged by the project are inhabitants of rural areas and of the regions in which the pilot actions were implemented. Some of the pilot actions also had a particular focus on ageing and disabled citizens, as well as tourists.

Detailed mapping of users' needs was the starting points of all the interventions. This included aspects such as: flexibility, accessibility, awareness of available services, better distribution of stops and stations, better interchange nodes, real time information etc.

A variety of target groups were reached throughout the project stages, either for exploring the needs of the end-users, raising awareness, gaining support for future engagement etc.

IMPACTS

Results

As a result of the project, nine strategies (one transnational and eight regional/local) were developed. The responsible institutions at regional or local level adopted draft decisions to mainstream recommendations of the RUMOBIL Transnational Strategy. Eight pilot actions were implemented, out of which five had an investment component. Additionally, four work papers were developed, enhancing knowledge in the field.

Pilots were undertaken in three fields of concern:

- New approaches and transport services to link rural areas to national and EU transport;

- Improvement of access points to public transport networks to render offered services more attractive;
- Enhancement of passenger information to promote the use of public transport in rural areas.

The pilot actions showed a variety of ways for increasing accessibility of rural areas and the quality and attractiveness of public transport. However, given the different regulatory and administrative frameworks, they are not readily transferable to other regions. Moreover, since most solutions require operational costs, their uptake and sustainability depend on the capacity of the local or regional administrations.

Sustainability

One of the main assumptions of the project is the planning and implementation of actions through limited resources available and an approach of financial self-sustainability. A sustainability strategy was set-up from the design phase. In line with it, partners have prepared draft decisions and managed to receive the endorsement of key decision-makers to mainstream recommendations defined in the Transnational Strategy and approaches successfully tested in pilot actions to existing mobility plans and public transport strategies.

A number of partners decided to earmark the financial resources to continue and extend the roll-out of actions initiated in the pilots. These are: Saxony-Anhalt's citizen bus, Modena's Prontobus, Mazovia's tropKM passenger information system and app, new bus lines in the South Bohemian Region and Vysocian Region, rail services between Zagreb and Ozalj in Croatia, and the maintenance of stations in Rajecke Teplice (SK) and Nagykálló (HU) where infrastructure investments were carried out to improve the service quality to public transport users. As a result, 454,245 euros were leveraged, almost double than initial estimates of 250,000 euros. The Zilina Region and Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County committed to invest additional financial resources, currently not quantified.

Some partners of RUMOBIL continue working on improving public transport in rural areas in the [YOU MOBIL](#) project (Interreg Central Europe) where a focus on services addressed to young people living in smaller towns and cities is given. As RUMOBIL has also been identified as a project for capitalisation potentials, some partners aim to collaborate in the RegioMobil operation (4th call Interreg Central Europe).

Successfully tested approaches to improve public transport in rural areas have already led to an interest beyond the partner regions and beyond Central Europe. In the Baltic Sea Region programme, partners of the MAMBA and MARA projects aim to capitalise on approaches seen in RUMOBIL, including a citizen bus which a Latvian delegation visited in Saxony-Anhalt. Interest in the same concept has also led to an invitation to present RUMOBIL to local public authorities from Ukraine in Kiev.

In order to support the successful implementation of similar initiatives, particularly with limited resources, RUMOBIL partners have also highlighted key take-aways, namely:

- It is necessary to continuously strengthen the stakeholder network, connecting the partners with other public bodies, suppliers, firms, etc., so as to ensure political commitment for action.
- Soft actions require a low or medium level of resources (approx. between € 20,000 and 75,000 per single pilot case); these refer to implementing communication campaign, to raise citizens' awareness of PT services, improvement actions of bus stops, services for disabled and elderly people and planning activities on the already existing public transport offer
- Hard investments, to develop new PT services require a higher level of funding (approx. > € 75,000 per pilot case).

CONCLUSIONS

The following aspects seem to have contributed to the success of the project:

- **Careful selection of the pilot locations**, taking into consideration the capacity of the local authorities to engage in the project activities and maintain the investments
- **Close engagement of relevant decision-makers at all levels**, to ensure that the developed solutions are implemented and to support transfer of results

- **Bottom-up approach** in designing public transport solutions, to be adapted to the needs and preferences of the different target groups.

3.2. COMPARATIVE CASE STUDIES

3.2.1. INNOVATION – KETGATE & SYNERGY

OVERVIEW

	KETGATE	SYNERGY
Duration	Start: 2017-07-01 End: 2020-08-31	Start: 2017-08-01 End: 2020-10-31
Budget	2,025,197.62 EUR (1,662,790.07 EUR ERDF)	EUR 1,739,392.72 EUR (1,425,445.00 EUR ERDF)
Partnership	8 partners, 8 countries	7 partners, 6 countries
Main topics	SME and entrepreneurship Knowledge and technology transfer	Institutional cooperation and cooperation networks Clustering and economic cooperation

Brief description of the projects

KETGATE	SYNERGY
<p>Context</p> <p>Key-Enabling Technologies (KET) are essential for businesses, in particular to upgrade products, improve processes and open market opportunities, thereby contributing to increased competitiveness.</p> <p>The project aimed at improving the access of SMEs to KETs through the development of a transnational network to bridge the gap between Research and Technology Organisations (RTOs) and SMEs.</p>	<p>Linkages, cooperation and synergies between companies, industry, research, intermediaries and policy-makers remain under-developed in Central Europe, especially with regard to key industrial sectors such as additive Manufacturing and 3D Printing, Micro- and Nanotechnology-related Processes and Materials, as well as Industry 4.0.</p> <p>The project aimed at strengthening these underdeveloped linkages, cooperation and synergies between CE companies, industry, research, intermediaries and policy-makers.</p>
<p>Partnership</p> <p>The project partnership was made up of 8 entities, combining 3 research centres with a strong focus on knowledge transfer and networking and 5 business support organisations.</p> <p>The budget was relatively proportionately distributed among the two types of partners (i.e. research centres and business support organisations), with the lead partner being allocated 23%.</p>	<p>The project partnership was made up of 7 entities, combining 3 universities (associated centres) and 4 research centres.</p> <p>The budget share of each partner ranged from 28% (lead partner) to 5%.</p>
<p>Project design</p> <p>The project was born from the observation that many Central European SMEs are innovative but need support from research organisations to develop their ideas further. This is especially true in some eastern CE countries such as Croatia, Slovenia and Slovakia.</p>	<p>The project was designed further to a former Interreg CE project in which the SYNERGY lead partner participated. The project partnership was gradually developed based on a quadruple helix collaboration model.</p>

KETGATE	SYNERGY
<p>At the same time, many research organisations (ROs) have strong capacities to support SMEs but lack knowledge about the SMEs in need of their support.</p> <p>The aim of the project was therefore to connect these actors together, with the help of Business Support Organisations (BSOs) as third players knowing best the needs and languages of SMEs in the targeted territories.</p> <p>Main outputs developed by the project are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 pilot actions • 1 innovation network • 10 strategies / actions plans • 7 tools / services • 6 trainings 	<p>The project aimed at strengthening linkages, cooperation and synergies between companies, industry, research, intermediaries and policy-makers by analysing funded and finalised innovation projects and clustered institutions involved in projects into three above-mentioned Key Project Areas.</p> <p>Main outputs developed by the project are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 pilot actions • 3 innovation networks • 1 strategy / action plan • 3 tools / services • 7 trainings

Communication strategy

<p>The project's Communication Strategy was structured around three points:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Defining the target groups 2) Defining the message to be communicated 3) Deciding on the communication channels to be used <p>The newly created website for the network was an important tool to promote the project. It includes a mapping of ROs, videos with success stories, feedback from SMEs, etc.</p> <p>A series of communication events was also organised, tailored to targeted audience, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Press conferences with leaflets outlining the different KET access points for the local communities • Info-days for SMEs, where KET access points were addressing the needs of the SMEs located in the targeted region • Round tables with regional policy stakeholders • Videos explaining the potential of KET for SMEs • LinkedIn account to mobilise professional networks • Brokerage events where ROs could introduce themselves and discuss the needs of SMEs. 	<p>The project's communication strategy was adapted to the target sectors of the project, namely high-tech manufacturing technological sectors. Different types of small-scale, targeted events (e.g. thematic conferences), were organised.</p> <p>Social media, short animated movies and promotional videos were additionally used for stakeholder engagement and community-building.</p>
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Support of relevant stakeholders

KETGATE	SYNERGY
<p>Project partners had very extensive networks, which enabled them to extend invitations to events and thereby increase participation.</p> <p>Round tables with policy stakeholders were very useful for identifying funding opportunities for SMEs.</p> <p>Finally, the JS proved very responsive to questions raised by project partners.</p>	<p>Project partners received valuable support from the JS.</p> <p>At the same time, project partners encountered difficulties in involving local and regional authorities for the dissemination of results.</p>

Target groups / end users

Target group	Target	Reached	Target group	Target	Reached
Regional public authority	24	27	Regional public authority	10	35
National public authority	5	21	Higher education and research	40	139
Higher education and research	40	127	Large enterprises	20	91
SME	90	498	SME	400	351
Business support organisations	40	146	Business support organisations	100	103
			General public	300	1005

IMPACTS

KETGATE	SYNERGY
<h3>Results & what works best</h3>	
<p>The project was addressing three main types of stakeholders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research organisations (ROs) SMEs Business Support Organisations (BSOs) <p>In particular, the project was targeting innovative SMEs to ensure strong interest and willingness to participate in the project from their side.</p> <p>The most important point for the project's success was to precisely identify and understand the needs of SMEs, hence the organisation of dedicated round tables with SMEs and research organisations.</p> <p>SMEs were overall very satisfied with the project's key outcome to connect them with research organisations, as it allowed them to e.g. develop new products.</p> <p>There were also 27 institutions adopting new and/or improved strategies and action plans and applying new and/or improved services.</p>	<p>Key results of the project include the development of IT tools and platforms (SYNERGY platform for crowdsourcing) and infrastructure sharing.</p> <p>For project partners, the learning and network expansion effects were very important. The use of different tools and approaches was both beneficial and successful (e.g. design thinking proved to be a very interesting experience).</p> <p>Furthermore, the result indicators 'Number of institutions adopting new and/or improved strategies and action plans' and 'Number of institutions applying new and/or improved tools and services' were both over-achieved, reaching 21 and 146, respectively.</p> <p>Positive, unintended effects were also produced, such as innovative solutions developed by stakeholders to answer Covid-related challenges.</p>
<h3>Sustainability</h3>	
<p>The sustainability of the project results was to be maintained thanks to a well-defined business model after the project closure. A detailed cost-benefit</p>	<p>Capitalisation on the project results could be achieved through follow-up projects both within (e.g. CEUP 2030 funded by Interreg CE 4th call) and outside Europe, as</p>

KETGATE	SYNERGY
analysis was carried out in that regard, taking into account the lower financing capabilities of SMEs. A follow-up project funded under Horizon 2020 (coordination and support action) ensures that KETGATE results are maintained over the Horizon 2020 project lifetime, after which a membership system is foreseen to cover the maintenance costs.	the interest in SYNERGY results from new partners is high. The collaboration between SYNERGY partners is continued, and the connexions established during the project are expected to be further cultivated through future cooperations.

3.2.2. LOW CARBON – ENERGY@SCHOOL & ECENTRAL

OVERVIEW

	ENERGY@SCHOOL	eCENTRAL
Duration	Start: 2016-07-01 End: 2019-06-30	Start: 2017-09-01 End: 2020-02-28
Budget	2,581,379.75 EUR (2,127,776.10 EUR ERDF)	2,515,235.59 EUR (2,103,060.92 EUR ERDF)
Partnership	12 partners, 7 countries	8 partners, 5 countries
Main topics	Energy efficiency Cooperation between emergency services	Construction and renovation Energy efficiency

Brief description of the projects

ENERGY@SCHOOL	ECENTRAL
Context	
<p>The building sector has a high potential for energy optimisation, in terms of e.g. energy efficiency and renewable energy usage. Public buildings also represent important costs for municipalities. In that regard, CE regions have very different levels of performance.</p> <p>The goal of the ENERGY@SCHOOL project was to increase the capacity of the public sector for implementing energy smart schools.</p>	<p>Financing the renovation of public buildings towards the EU Energy Efficiency Directive standards is a major challenge in CE.</p> <p>The eCENTRAL project aimed at raising awareness and motivating public authorities to achieve more ambitious energy renovation standards of buildings and to test the applicability of innovative financing models.</p>
Partnership	
<p>The project partnership was made up of 12 entities, combining 1 association of municipalities, 7 municipalities, 1 business support organisation, 1 university and 2 sectoral agencies.</p> <p>The budget was relatively proportionately distributed between partners, with the lead being allocated 13% of the total budget.</p>	<p>The project partnership was made up of 8 entities, combining 3 sectoral agencies, 3 LRAs and 2 research institutes.</p> <p>The budget shares of the project partners ranged from 30% (lead partner) to 3% for one of the LRAs.</p>

ENERGY@SCHOOL	ECENTRAL
<p>Project design</p> <p>The project idea was supported by strong political commitment in the field of energy efficiency in buildings.</p> <p>Schools were deemed a good target for such a behavioural change approach and a municipality was chosen for the pilot.</p> <p>Main outputs developed by the project are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 pilot actions • 10 strategies / actions plans • 6 tools / services • 24 trainings 	<p>The project was designed so as to focus on two key dimensions of energy efficiency in buildings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Going beyond the minimal requirements in terms of building renovation and develop solutions for preparing the market to new energy standards, • Identifying the most cost-efficient solutions from across CE to achieve net-zero-energy-buildings (nZEB), • Identifying innovative financing models (beyond the traditional grants and loans) and testing their applicability to energy efficiency renovation. <p>Main outputs developed by the project are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 pilot actions for testing innovative financing models • 4 strategy and roadmaps for financing and renovating public buildings • 5 tools to help LRAs develop complex energy efficiency projects • 12 trainings for public authorities and energy agencies
<p>Communication strategy</p> <p>The cultural campaign was a central point of project's communication.</p> <p>Energy saving practices were first defined through a creative process and then professional expertise in communication helped develop brochures, flyers, etc.</p> <p>Cultural events, conferences were also organised. Common toolkits and common guidelines were developed by project partners together.</p>	<p>Testing on a small sample of target group LRAs was very important to ensure that the tools are adequate for and can be communicated to the wider group of public authorities.</p> <p>The general public was engaged indirectly through public authorities (round tables with citizens).</p> <p>Communication channels were somewhat disrupted by the confinement measures imposed during the pandemic, but solutions were gradually put in place.</p>
<p>Support of relevant stakeholders</p> <p>Political commitment towards addressing the issues addressed by the project was very beneficial.</p> <p>Local organisations helped with the organisation of campaigns, stakeholder participation and citizen engagement. This proved to be a very fruitful process for internal learning.</p>	<p>The project partners received valuable support from the JS.</p>

ENERGY@SCHOOL

ECENTRAL

Target groups / end users

Target group	Target	Reached
Local public authority	100	48
Regional public authority	30	5
Sectoral agency	30	43
Higher education and research	50	10
Education/training centres	100	103
General public	1000000	67344
Other	1000	106

Target group	Target	Reached
Local public authority	130	135
Regional public authority	15	16
National public authority	15	15
Sectoral agency	20	26
Infrastructure and (public) service provider	10	11
Interest groups including NGOs	10	18
Higher education and research	10	16
Large enterprises	10	12
SME	50	56
General public	1000	271
Other	5	15

IMPACTS

ENERGY@SCHOOL

ECENTRAL

Results & what works best

The cultural campaign was probably the most important factor of success for raising awareness on energy savings potentials in public buildings.

Many 'practical' instruments were key in translating awareness into energy-saving behaviours:

- The toolkit to train staff and pupils
- The contest between pupils, using an app to measure energy consumption
- School visits abroad

These instruments were believed to be drivers of multiplication effects for an even greater impact of the project, as pupils share their experience with their families and the wider local community.

Overall, the project's target groups were considered to be very engaged and committed to making the project successful, due to their strong sensitivity to energy consumption issues and climate change more generally.

The project yielded two important achievements:

- The wide use of the energy performance certificate tool, and
- The engagement of a large number of interested parties besides LRAs.

Developing a unique methodology to cover all the different national standards and approaches to energy efficiency proved challenging, but a common, widely applicable tool was successfully developed through the project.

The training curriculum was also very important for capacity-building. Since countries have different knowledge levels on e.g. materials or innovative financing models, transnational cooperation helped fill in the knowledge gap.

In addition, pilot actions were key in demonstrating how the tool is applicable, and laid the ground for designing new projects and for developing public-private partnerships. Pilot action results reached up to the government level.

The development of a joint strategy to gather all the know-how from the project is another key result of the project.

ENERGY@SCHOOL	ECENTRAL
Sustainability	
<p>The strength of the project lies in the transferability of project results (e.g. the toolkit, the digital app, etc.) that can be used by other schools, including in other territories.</p> <p>Capitalisation of project results through follow-up projects funded by Interreg should extend, from a territorial perspective, the transfer of ENERGY@SCHOOL results.</p>	<p>Policy uptake by LRAs as well as national authorities should ensure the sustainability of the project results.</p> <p>Pilot actions were major drivers of policy uptake.</p> <p>Importantly, the project results gain even more in importance with the momentum created by the Green Deal.</p>

3.2.3. ENVIRONMENT – GREENERSITES & LUMAT

OVERVIEW

	LUMAT	Greener Sites
Duration	Start: 2016-05-01 End: 2019-07-31	Start: 2016-06-01 End: 2019-07-31
Budget	2,500,100.25 EUR (2,073,547.31 EUR ERDF)	3,795,769.00 EUR (3,117,919.00 EUR ERDF)
Partnership	13 partners, 7 countries	11 partners (plus 14 associated partners) 5 countries
Main topics	Urban development Regional planning and development Sustainable management of natural resources	Sustainable management of natural resources Regional planning and development

Brief description of the projects

LUMAT	GREENER SITES
Context	
<p>Throughout the CE territory, urban land management faced common challenges stemming from growing land use pressure, increasing unbalanced urban developments, declining urban areas with vacant and brownfield land, fuzzy interrelation of governance systems (jurisdiction).</p> <p>Poorly integrated and unsystematic environmental and spatial policies increased land-related conflict.</p> <p>New concepts of ecosystem services were not sufficiently applied.</p>	<p>Industrial contamination in brownfield areas affect numerous areas, all across Europe.</p> <p>GreenerSites sought to improve the environmental management of unused/ underused industrial areas through the definition of strategies & tools based on a sustainable integrated approach to make involved Functional Urban Areas (FUAs) cleaner, healthier & more liveable places.</p>
Partnership	
<p>The project partnership was made up of 13 entities, combining four local authorities, two state authorities, 1 regional development agency, three academic institutions and one spin-off (private company) specialized in innovation, one non-profit entity and one local hub - platform for networking and exchange of experience.</p>	<p>The project partnership was made up of 11 entities from the CE area (2 regions, 4 cities, 2 port authorities, 1 development agency, 1 private institution).</p> <p>Other 14 institutions were involved as Associated Partners, representing (1) important networks at EU level in the field of brownfield management and (2)</p>

LUMAT	GREENER SITES
<p>The budget was relatively proportionately distributed among partners, with the lead allocated 14% and none of the others lower than 3%.</p>	<p>organisations which are responsible for the involved sites.</p>
<p>Project design</p> <p>The main challenge and focus of the project were to provide solutions which could be applied in various administrative contexts, at the level of functional urban areas (FUAs), which transcend administrative borders and jurisdictions and often rely on poly-centric governance, fuzzy and soft governance modes.</p> <p>Diversity of local contexts was key for success – seven regions were selected for the pilot actions, presenting various types of FUAs which are representative of other regions in CE.</p> <p>Main outputs developed by the project are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 pilot actions for integrated environmental management in 7 FUAs; • 15 strategies and action plans (incl. an Integrated Environmental Management Strategy, Action plans for integrated land and soil management and strategies of implementation of action plans); • 4 tools and services (methodologies, ToR, etc.) • 2 investments – targeting (1) the rehabilitation of brownfield sites (in Ruda Śląska) for converting the area into recreational public space and (2) the restauration of neglected natural park for sports and recreation zone in Štrky; • 11 trainings <p>The main land use conflicts and threats have been identified and, based on these, common concepts were developed for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diagnosis of main specific issues/ threats in the FUA, • Technical, financial and organizational actions, • Tools supporting the actions 	<p>GreenerSites project was built on know-how from previous EU projects and existing networks.</p> <p>Main outputs developed by the project are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11 pilot actions in 9 FUAs, which tested more sustainable and novel sustainable solutions in brownfields; • 9 strategic action plans to ensure the sustainability in the medium/long term of the solutions tested; • One common transferability manual for the deployment of project results beyond the partnership; • One common geo-information tool to manage brownfield data. • Training package addressed to public employees and their stakeholders to increase the capacity of the public sector in the management of the brownfield areas; <p>The concept for action “From brownfields to greener sites” builds upon the following steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing an Integrated Knowledge Framework • Developing Capacity Building programs • Testing, evaluating and scaling up solutions 4. Planning strategic actions • Promoting a shared governance for a long-term sustainable development
<p>Communication strategy</p> <p>Highly focused on the technical and scientific aspects of the activities, targeting mostly authorities, but also researchers and professionals involved in the management of FUAs, former industrial areas and environmentally compromised areas.</p>	<p>Highly focused on the technical and scientific aspects of the activities, targeting mostly authorities and actors in the sector.</p>

LUMAT	GREENER SITES
Support of relevant stakeholders	
<p>The Action Plans were presented at local public meetings, with the participation of various groups of stakeholders and using tools in form of application available in mobile phones. Establishing management structures is one of the most important visible project results. They should guarantee further implementation of the Action Plans, especially in the aspect of applying for financial means.</p> <p>Several stakeholder workshops were held with local decision makers, mayors, land owners / operators, / or heads of office and / or construction manager etc., as well as individual meetings with mayors/heads of administration in the municipalities in the FUAs.</p> <p>Collaboration with other ongoing projects in the regions</p>	<p>Focus on local stakeholders, directly involved in the rehabilitation of brownfields (municipalities, land owners, companies etc.)</p> <p>Partners identified their group of stakeholders among the site owners, companies located in the brownfield area, local and regional authorities and actors involved in the governance of the sites.</p> <p>Stakeholders were also involved in the elaboration of the Strategic Action plans which set concrete actions to continue the rehabilitation of brownfields after the project end.</p>

Target groups / end users

Target group	Target	Reached	Target group	Target	Reached
Local public authority	70	84	Local public authority	87	52
Regional public authority	40	41	Regional public authority	12	24
Sectoral agency	35	37	National public authority	12	17
Infrastructure and (public) service provider	15	15	Sectoral agency	14	14
Higher education and research	35	78	Infrastructure and (public) service provider	5	14
SME	30	49	Interest groups including NGOs	21	15
Business support organisations	30	31	Higher education and research	11	26
General public	2000	5108	Education/training centre and school	7	3

IMPACTS

LUMAT	GREENER SITES
Results & what works best	
<p>7 FUAs adopted the action plans - The agreements achieved in the seven pilot project FUAs certified by letters of commitment became a visible result which is now a subject of interest of the regional authorities in Silesian region as a good example of common activities in a specific area. Also in Czech Republic the success of the project can be seen in the fact that, thanks to a two-year discussion, when the project research team and expert company evaluated and described 52 sites in total, the Ministry of the Environment was convinced to decide to register so far unregistered potentially contaminated sites in the Czech Republic and to include</p>	<p>11 partner institutions and 56 other public and private entities signed the MOU to support the deployment of the strategic action plans.</p> <p>The Web GIS tool was installed in all the 11 partner territories and it has been extended to other institutions, as well.</p> <p>More than 400 people from about 60 institutions were engaged in training activities at local and transnational level involving numerous experts and academic specialists across Europe.</p>

LUMAT	GREENER SITES
<p>them in the Contaminated Sites Database System registration (it is expected to be 20,000 sites in the Czech Republic).</p> <p>184 persons were trained regarding the application of innovative tools (inVITO tool, LUMATO) and concept and methods elaborated within the project as well as on the integrated environmental management subject.</p>	<p>The state-of-the-art solutions are unlikely to have been accessible to smaller municipalities. Also, direct collaborations between them and well-renowned research institutions or researchers would have been unlikely in the absence of the project</p>

Sustainability

<p>Political acceptance to develop and implement the Action Plans is the key challenge, as well as ensuring funding for the necessary works and maintenance. However, where FUA-level administrations or associations already exist, it is easier to build upon.</p> <p>The project managed to leverage 3,501,361 EUR, including the continuation of 2 project investments ("Ruda Route" project concerning the system of green infrastructure for the whole city linked to the LUMAT project investment I1) and €229 717 in Trnava - the city has added funds to increase the framework of the pilot), but also local, regional and national funds and subsidies, as well as through involvement in the SALUTE4CE project for the Polish FUA.</p>	<p>Results are highly transferable, given the wide applicability of the tools created and the numerous sites needing rehabilitation across the EU, well beyond CE territory.</p> <p>The project managed to leverage 25.545.000,00 euros of funds in the FUAs of Bydgoszcz and Venice to finance new initiatives in the rehabilitation of the brownfield areas.</p>
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4. ANNEX 4 - COST-EFFECTIVENESS ANALYSIS

4.1. INTRODUCTION

The cost-effectiveness analysis (CEA) is an integral part of answering evaluation question 3: “What mechanisms of programme implementation have delivered the observed impact? - understanding impacts and showing what works best in terms of effectiveness and efficiency”.

The following sections present the results of the CEA for the Interreg CE programme’s 1st and 2nd call projects, starting with an explanation of the CEA methodology.

4.2. METHODOLOGY

The CEA consists of three methodological steps including a) the definition of effectiveness, b) the estimation of costs and c) the thematic clustering of projects.

Starting with effectiveness, it is defined at the projects’ output level and includes six output types:

- Innovation networks,
- Pilot actions & Investments, i.e. pilot actions that include investment activities,
- Pilot actions, i.e. pilot actions without investments,
- Tools,
- Trainings,
- Strategies.

The effectiveness of the outputs is defined along five categories that jointly reflect the main overall aims of the Interreg CE programme. These categories are:

- The **contribution** of the output to improving the economic, social, and territorial development in CE (Co)
- The **importance** of the output for reaching the respective project’s goals (Im)
- The extent to which the output contributed to generating **synergies** with other projects and/or EU/national/regional/local strategies, policies and programmes (Sy)
- The outputs **transferability**, i.e. the extent to which the output was transferred to public policies, other regions, sectors (Tr)
- The output’s **sustainability**, i.e. to what extent is it used after the respective project’ end (Su)

To measure each element, the analysis employed a rating scheme from 0 to 5 (including half steps) with 0 being the worst degree (e.g. absolutely no contribution to economic, social and territorial development) and 5 being the best degree. The outputs were rated by JS project managers as they have an unrivalled insight into the projects as well as by experts from the project team, who based their assessment on the available project documents. The aggregate rating for each output and category is the average of the JS programme managers and the experts’ ratings.

The overall output effectiveness is calculated using the following formula:

$$Effectiveness_i = 0.2 Co_i + 0.2 Im_i + 0.2 Sy_i + 0.2 Tr_i + 0.2 Su_i$$

Hence, the effectiveness of an output *i* is the weighted average of the five effectiveness categories, whereby all are equally high weighed.

The costs are calculated from ERDF expenditure data provided by the JS. For each project, these data include ERDF expenditures by partner at the work-package level. All expenditures are in Euro. In most cases the work-packages covered only one type of outputs (e.g. strategies) so that the expenditures could be directly related to the respective output. In cases where the work-package included two or more different output types (e.g. strategies and tools), the expenditures were evenly split across all different types of outputs in the respective work-package. In case a work-package produced more than one output of the same type, we calculated the unit costs, i.e. dividing the total ERDF expenditures of the work-package by the number of outputs (of the same type).

In the third step the projects and their outputs were clustered in thematic groups, to ensure a good comparability of the outputs' effectiveness. The clustering was done in a two-step process. The first clustering step defined 8 main clusters of projects, while the second clustering step defined for each main cluster secondary clusters, thus providing an even higher level of disaggregation. The respective main and secondary clusters are defined as:

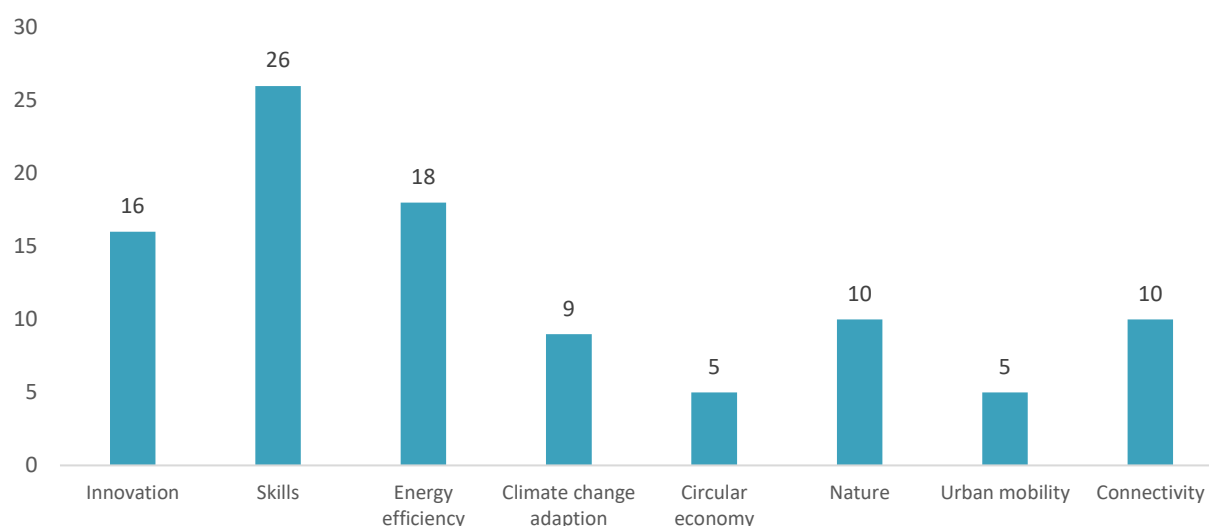
- **Innovation**
 - General innovation, i.e. projects dealing with innovation general
 - Social innovation
 - Specific innovation, i.e. projects dealing with innovation in specific sectors and areas
- **Skills**
 - Cultural heritage and CCI
 - Social innovation / entrepreneurship
 - Other
- **Energy efficiency**
 - Energy efficiency
 - GHG
 - Mobility
- **Climate change adaption**
 - Cultural heritage, i.e. projects protecting cultural heritage from climate change effects
 - General CCA
- **Circular economy**
 - NA, i.e. no secondary cluster was defined due to the low number of projects
- **Nature**
 - Nature, i.e. projects protecting landscapes, bio-diversity etc.
 - Urban, i.e. projects related to urban environment
- **Urban mobility**
 - NA, i.e. no secondary cluster was defined due to the low number of projects
- **Connectivity**
 - Freight transport
 - Rural transport
 - General transport

Combining the information on the clusters, effectiveness and costs a cost-effectiveness index is calculated as the ratio of the cluster relative effectiveness to the cluster relative costs, i.e. both the effectiveness measure and the output costs are normalised by the average output effectiveness and costs by the eight main clusters.

4.3. RESULTS

The analysis focuses on the Phase 1 +2 Interreg CE projects, as Phase 3 + 4 projects are not completed yet. Hence, 85 projects are considered. Of those, 4 projects were not included in the analysis because of missing output data⁵⁵. The remaining 81 projects were grouped in the 8 main clusters and their respective secondary clusters. Depending on their characteristics they could enter more than one cluster.

FIGURE 1 NUMBER OF PROJECTS PER MAIN CLUSTER



Source: JS data, own calculations

The distribution of the projects across clusters is illustrated in Figure 1 for main clusters and Table 3 for main and secondary clusters. The highest number of projects is in the skills cluster (26 projects) of which 13 are in the cultural heritage and CCI secondary cluster. Regarding the main clusters there are additional 18 energy efficiency and 16 innovation projects, 10 projects in each, the nature and connectivity cluster, 9 projects related to climate change adaptation. At the lower end, there are 5 circular economy as well as urban mobility focussed projects.

The projects are fairly evenly distributed across the secondary clusters, for example in the energy efficiency main cluster, 7 projects relate directly to energy efficiency, 6 to energy related mobility topics and 5 to greenhouse gases. The exceptions to these are social innovation projects. They are underrepresented, as there was a low number of projects focussing on this topic. At the same time their social innovation focus was quite specific so that they could not be included in other main or secondary clusters.

Notably, the total number of projects in the clusters is 99. Hence, projects are allocated to two clusters.

⁵⁵ The 4 projects are: 3Lynx, ENTeR, eCentral and VirtualArch.

TABLE 3 NUMBER OF PROJECTS PER MAIN AND SECONDARY CLUSTER

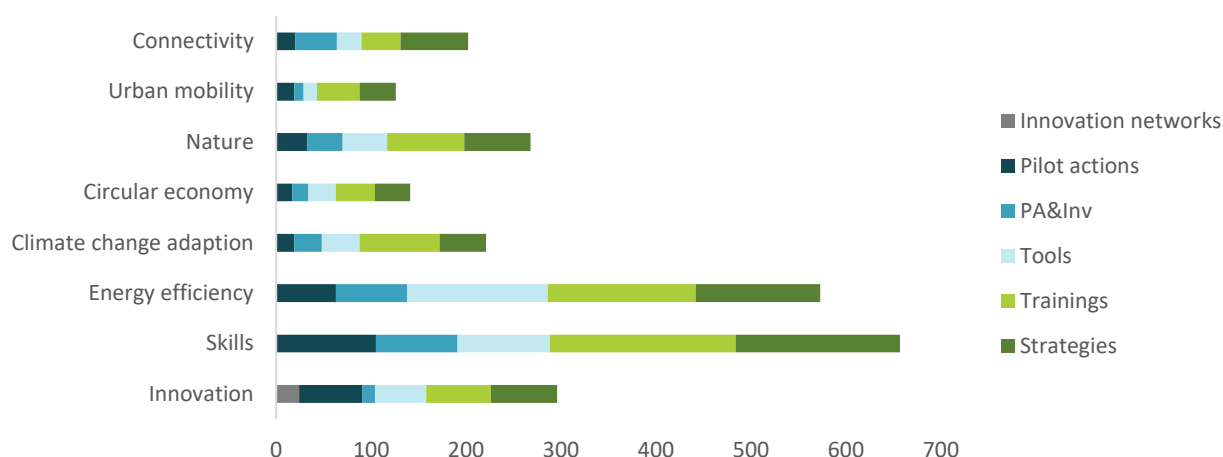
Main cluster	Secondary cluster	Number of projects
Innovation		16
	General innovation	8
	Social innovation	1
	Specific innovation	7
Skills		26
	Cultural heritage and CCI	13
	Other	10
	Social innovation / entrepreneurship	3
Energy efficiency		18
	Energy efficiency	7
	GHG	5
	Mobility	6
Climate change adaption		9
	Cultural heritage	3
	General CCA	6
Circular economy		5
	NA - Circular economy	5
Nature		10
	Nature	4
	Urban	6
Urban mobility		5
	NA - Urban mobility	5
Connectivity		10
	Freight transport	3
	General transport	4
	Rural transport	3

Source: JS data, own calculations

Together, the 81 projects produced 2484 outputs, thereof 712 trainings, 639 strategies, 455 tools, 342 pilot actions, 311 pilot actions in combination with investments and 25 innovation networks. The distribution of these outputs is illustrated in Figure 2 and Figure 3 for the main clusters as well as in Table 4 and Table 5 for the secondary clusters in the data annex to the CEA. Figure 2 shows the absolute number of outputs produced by main clusters. The projects in the skills cluster generated the highest number of outputs, i.e. 657, of which 196 were trainings, 173 strategies, 105 pilot actions, 96 tools and 86 pilot actions including investment.

The second highest number of outputs (573) was generated by projects in the energy efficiency cluster. The other clusters generated less outputs. The innovation cluster projects produced in total 296, the nature cluster projects 268, the climate change adaption projects 221 and the connectivity cluster projects 202 outputs. Circular economy and urban mobility focussed projects produced the least number of outputs, i.e. 141 and 126, respectively, though both clusters also had the lowest number of projects.

FIGURE 2 NUMBER OF OUTPUTS PER MAIN CLUSTER, BY OUTPUT TYPE – ABSOLUTE NUMBERS

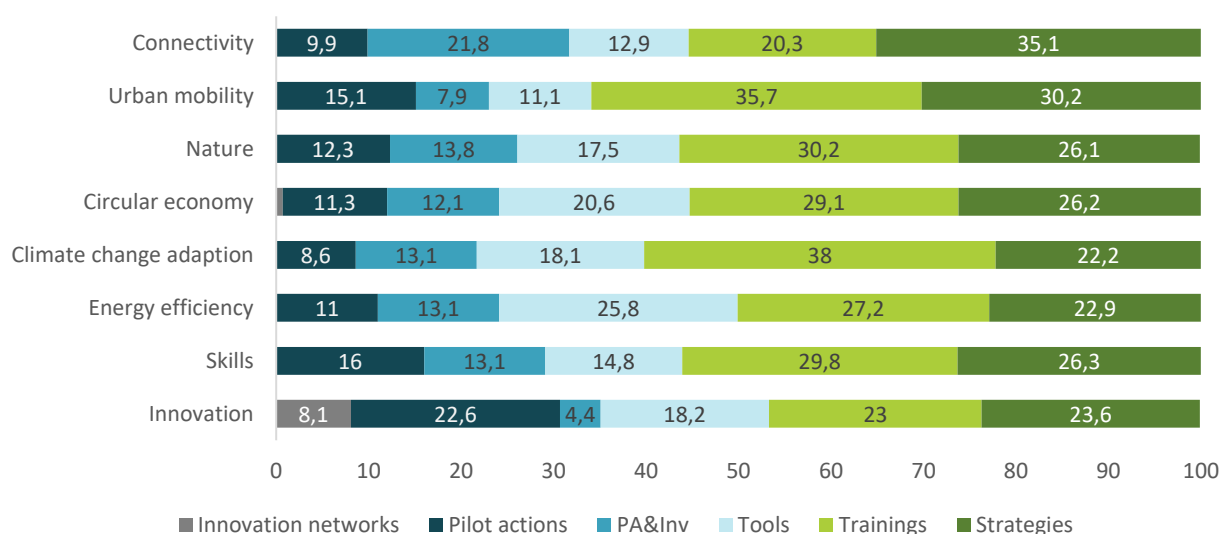


Source: JS data, own calculations

Figure 3 illustrates the “popularity” of the various outputs types by main clusters, showing the output types’ shares in the total number of outputs by main cluster. Overall, strategies and trainings were the most frequent output types. Depending on the cluster, around 22% (climate change adaption) to 35% (connectivity) of outputs were strategies, while between 20% (connectivity) and 38% (climate change adaption) were trainings.

Investments in combination with pilot actions were particularly frequent in connectivity projects (ca. 22% of all outputs in this cluster), while quite rare in innovation projects (only 4.4% of total outputs). Instead the latter projects focussed heavily on pilot actions (22.6% of all output), and innovation projects were also the only ones to generate innovation networks. The importance of tools varied across clusters. They were very important for energy efficiency, circular economy, natura and innovation cluster projects (between 17.5 and 25.8% of all outputs), while for connectivity and urban mobility cluster projects they played a lesser role (ca. 11% and 13% of total outputs).

FIGURE 3 NUMBER OF OUTPUTS PER MAIN CLUSTER, BY OUTPUT TYPE – IN PERCENT OF TOTAL OUTPUTS BY CLUSTER

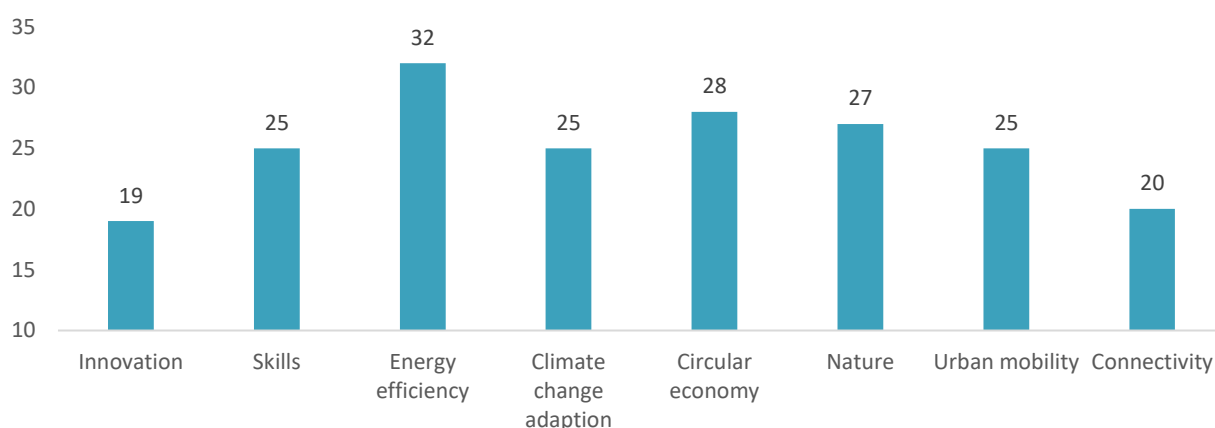


Source: JS data, own calculations

Figure 4 shows the average number of outputs per projects for the main clusters. Among the 81 projects, the highest number of outputs per project was produced by the energy efficiency cluster. Here, the projects on average generated 32 outputs. The average project in the skills, climate change adaption, circular economy, nature and urban mobility cluster produced between 25 to 28 outputs each. By contrast the average project in the innovation and connectivity cluster had 19 and 20 outputs, respectively.

Notably, these averages do not reflect differences in “productivity” of projects by clusters. Rather, they are the expression of the different characteristics of the clusters and the projects within them that cause such differences in the average number of outputs.

FIGURE 4 AVERAGE NUMBER OF OUTPUTS PER PROJECT, BY CLUSTER



Source: JS data, own calculations

4.3.1. EFFECTIVENESS RATINGS

Turning to the first element of the cost – effectiveness rating, the outputs’ effectiveness, it has been determined, as described above, by expert assessments. Thereby, the JS project managers rated the projects they themselves were working on, while consortium experts rated all outputs. Particularly the JS rating has some implications for the comparability of the effectiveness rating. This is because differences can arise because of actual differences of the outputs’ qualities, but they can also arise because of the JS project managers’ differences in interpreting the rating guidelines or the rating scale.

To reduce such expert bias it would be beneficial to have more ratings per output. However, this runs in the practical problem that there is rarely knowledge on the projects’ outputs outside the sphere of the JS and – in a more limited way – the evaluation consortium.

An alternative method to reduce the bias is the use of a correction mechanism based on the main cluster average ratings. This is because the 8 main clusters tend to overlap, though not perfectly, with the JS project managers’ working areas. This means, by dividing the output effectiveness ratings by the cluster average effectiveness (e.g. the average effectiveness of all outputs in the innovation cluster), we derive at a standardised effectiveness measure with a reduced expert bias.

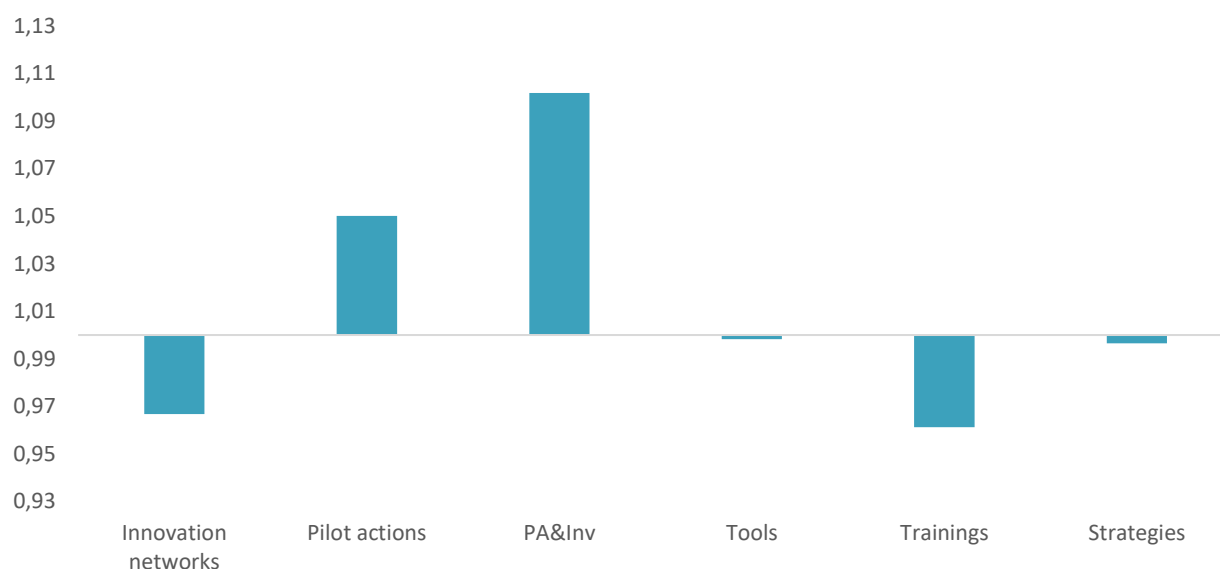
The results of this standardisation are shown in Figure 5 for the aggregated outputs and Figure 6 (for the outputs by main clusters as well as Table 11 in the data annex (for the outputs by secondary clusters). They provide the following insights:

- Pilot actions in combination with investments are considered to be the most effective type of output. This tends to hold almost over all main and secondary clusters, except for climate change adaption and urban mobility, where their rating is lower, but still slightly above average.
- Pilot actions in combination also tend to score highly – and higher than other output - in the individual elements of the effectiveness rating, i.e. their contribution to CE development, their

importance for the project success, synergies with other policies etc., their transferability as well as sustainability (see Figure 7).

- Pilot actions without investments are also regarded as highly effective, foremost for innovation related projects, i.e. the cluster, where pilot actions with investments are rare. For the other clusters their effectiveness is rated above average (except for urban mobility).

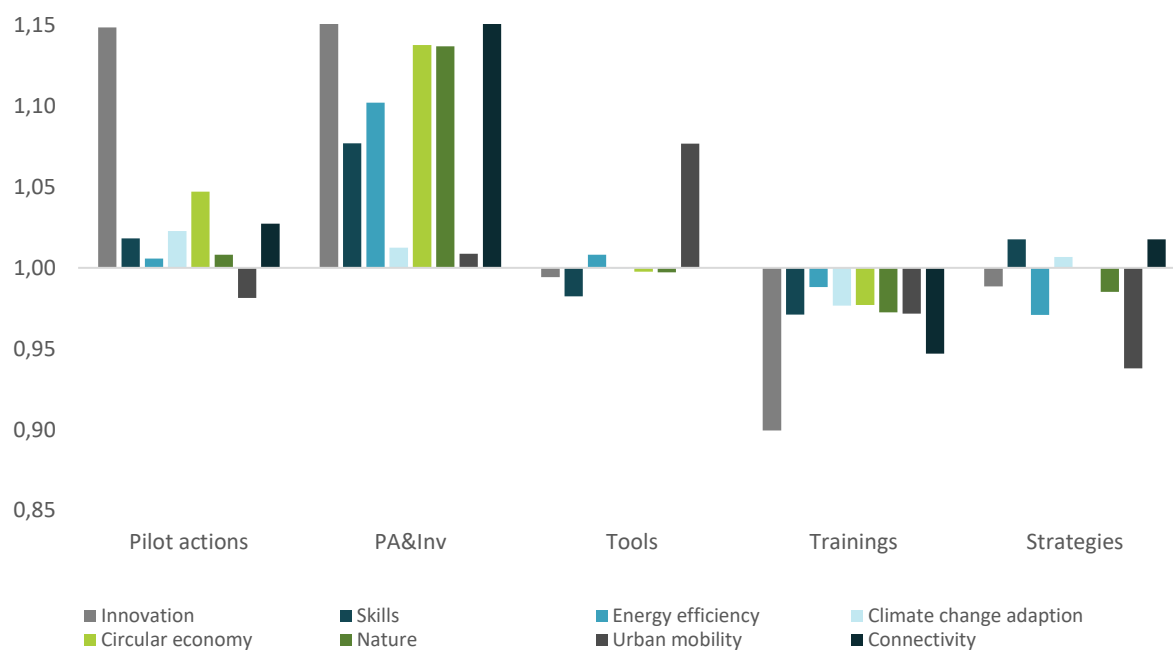
FIGURE 5 AVERAGE CLUSTER RELATIVE EFFECTIVENESS RATING



Source: JS data, own calculations

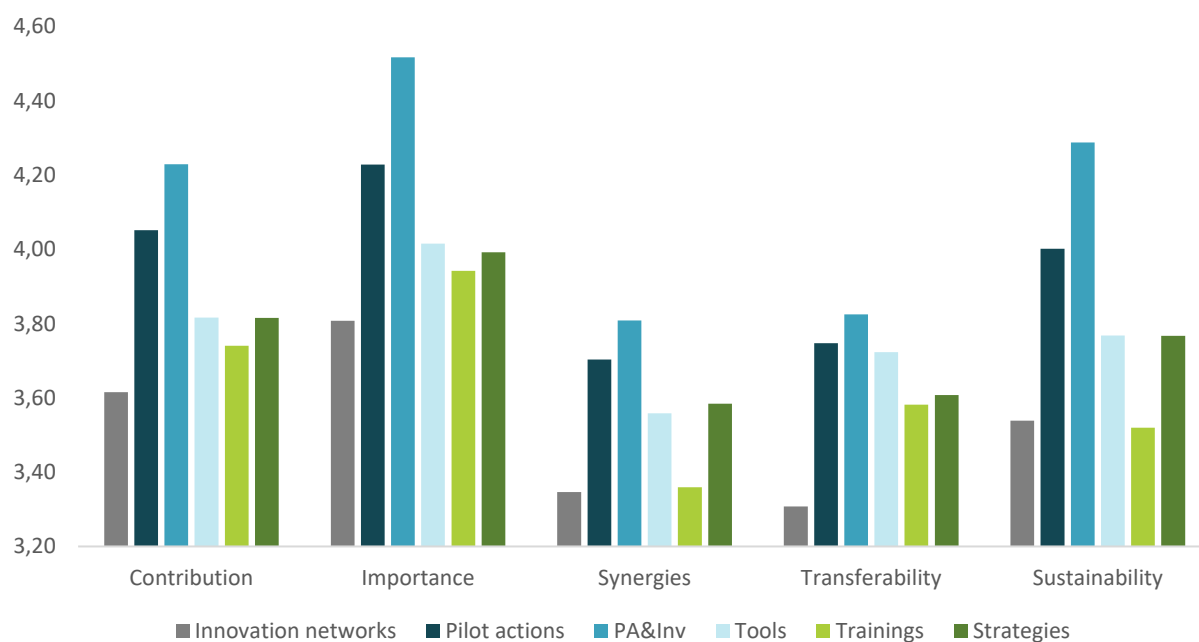
- Pilot actions without investments also have high scores for the individual elements of the effectiveness rating and are only surpassed by pilot action with investments in their perceived contribution, importance, synergetic effects, transferability and sustainability.
- Tools and strategies have an average overall effectiveness of all the output types. At the main cluster level there is some differentiation, though. Tools seems to be highly effective in urban mobility related projects, but could have some weakness in the skills projects. Strategies are above average effective in skill and connectivity related projects, but have a perceived below average effectiveness in the energy efficiency and urban mobility clusters. The average effectiveness of tools and strategies correlates strongly with their assessments in the individual components of the effectiveness rating.
- Innovation networks and trainings were rated with a below average effectiveness, both in all main and secondary clusters. This corresponds to the on average low rating the outputs got for the individual components of the effectiveness rating. In particular, innovation networks scored very low regarding their synergies with policies and/or projects etc. as well as their transferability.

FIGURE 6 AVERAGE CLUSTER RELATIVE EFFECTIVENESS RATING, BY MAIN CLUSTERS



Source: JS data, own calculations

FIGURE 7 AVERAGE CHARACTERISTIC RATING, BY OUTPUT TYPE AND CHARACTERISTIC



Source: JS data, own calculations

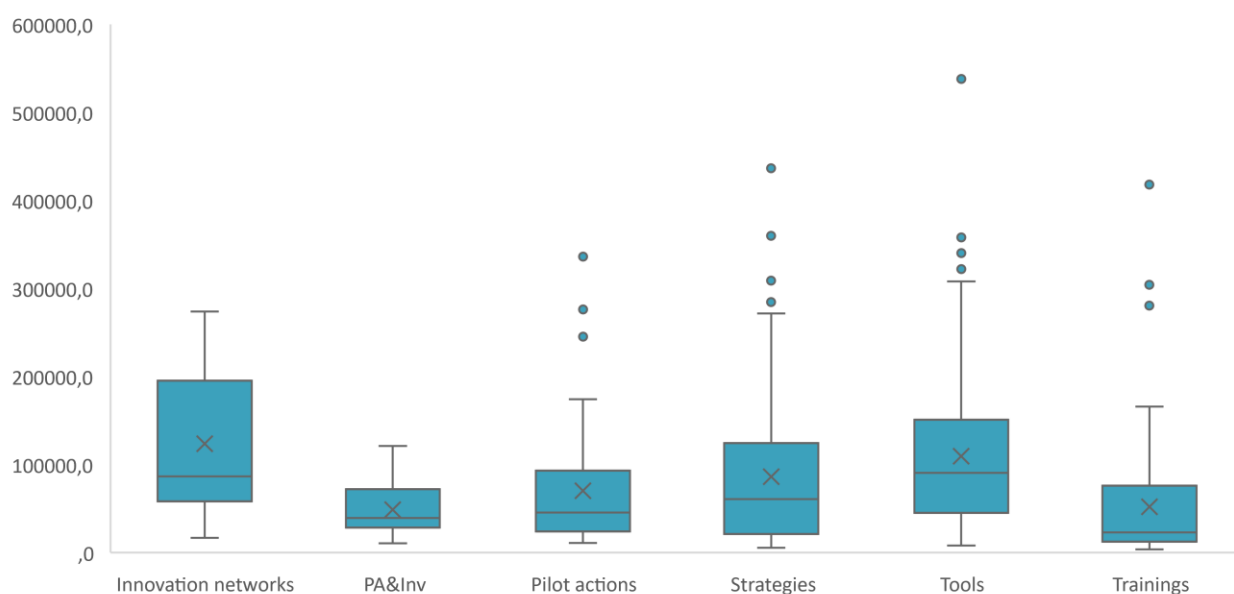
4.3.2. COSTS

Turning to the cost measure, it is defined as ERDF expenditures by output. This definition takes into account that project work-packages may produce more than one output of the same type. In these cases unit costs are calculated, i.e. the average ERDF expenditure for one unit of output (e.g. if the costs of a work-package are 100 EUR and it produces ten strategies, the unit cost for one strategy is 10 EUR).

The distribution of costs across outputs is illustrated in Figure 8 and across clusters in Figure 9. Both figures use box-and-whisker plots⁵⁶. They show the following facts:

- Trainings have the lowest expenditures, their median expenditure is around 23 thousand Euro, hence 50 percent of all trainings costed less than this amount. Nevertheless there are also outliers, like for example one training output in the Social(i)Makers project with ERDF expenditures over 418 thousand Euro or the YouInHerit project (over 304 thousand Euro) and the INNO-WISEs project (over 280 thousand Euro).
- Pilot actions with and without investments also tend to have low unit costs. The median expenditure for pilot actions with investments was slightly less than 40 thousand Euro, and for pilot action without investment around 45 thousand Euro. While the former output shows no outliers, there are some for the pure pilot actions, such as in the FEEDSCHOOLS project (336 thousand Euro) or the SURFACE (275 thousand) and the ROSIE (245 thousand) project.
- Strategies, on average, have a middle position in terms of expenditures. The median expenditure is slightly more than 60 thousand Euro. However there is a wide upward variation culminating in high expenditure strategies such as those from the ECRR project (436 thousand Euro) or the SMART_watch strategy output (360 thousand Euro).

FIGURE 8 DISTRIBUTION OF EXPENDITURES, BY OUTPUT TYPES

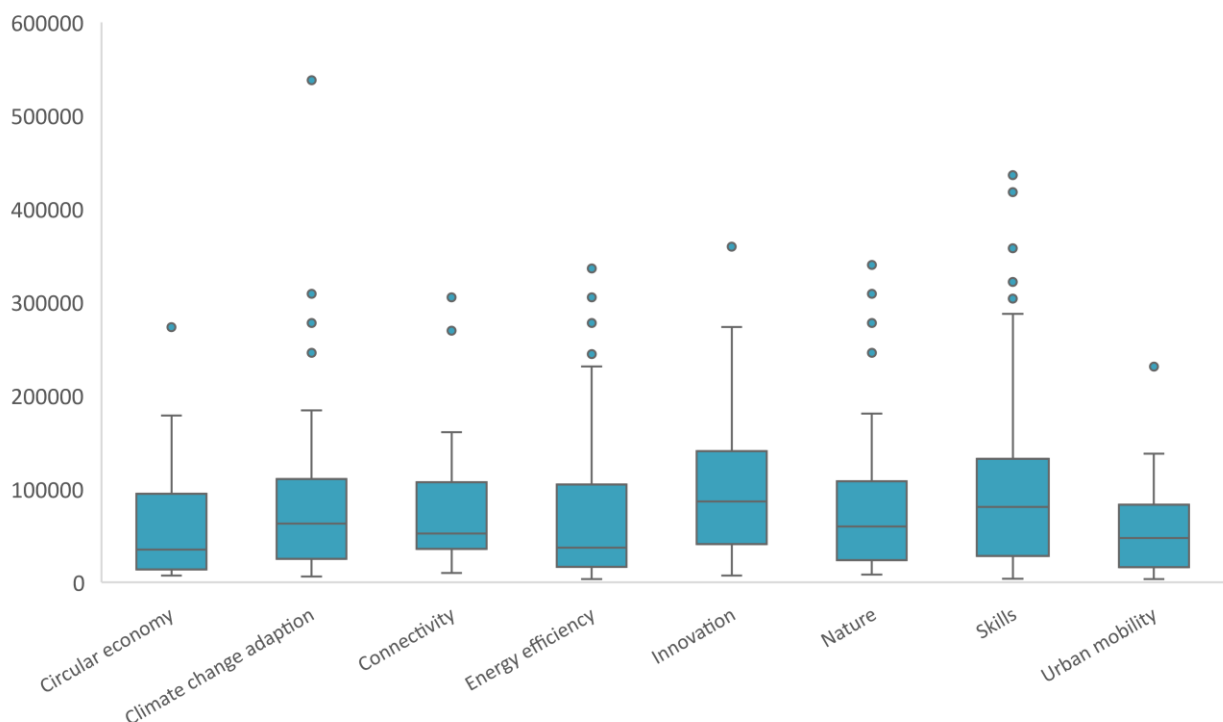


Source: JS data, own calculations

⁵⁶ A boxplot is constructed of two parts, a box and a set of whiskers. The box represents the observations between the 1st and 3rd quartile, hence covers 50% of the total observations. The line within the box is the median value, i.e. the value of the observation exactly in the middle of the observations (sorted by size). The x marks, the average expenditure. The upper and lower whiskers are calculated as 1.5 times the inter-quartile range, i.e. the distance between the third and first quartile (or the box size). Any values above or below the whiskers are considered to be outliers and are indicated as dots in the graph.

- Innovation networks and tools are the outputs with the, on average, highest expenditures per output unit. The median innovation network is around 87 thousand Euro, while the median tool costs even more than 90 thousand Euro. Both show a high upward variability, i.e. more than 25% of the innovation networks costed 195 thousand Euro; for tools the respective number is 150 thousand Euro. Thereby, tools feature the single most expensive output, i.e. the AIR TRITIA tool for almost 538 thousand Euro.
- From a cluster perspective, circular economy and energy efficiency project output tend to require less funds than for other clusters, the median expenditure in both clusters is 35 thousand and 37 thousand Euro respectively. Climate change adaption, connectivity, nature and urban mobility output have median values around 50 to 60 thousand Euro. On average outputs in the skills and innovation cluster have the highest costs, i.e. 80 thousand and 86 thousand Euro median expenditures, respectively.
- All clusters have a high variability in costs per output, i.e. as both very low cost and very high cost outputs are produced in each cluster.

FIGURE 9 DISTRIBUTION OF EXPENDITURES, BY MAIN CLUSTERS



Source: JS data, own calculations

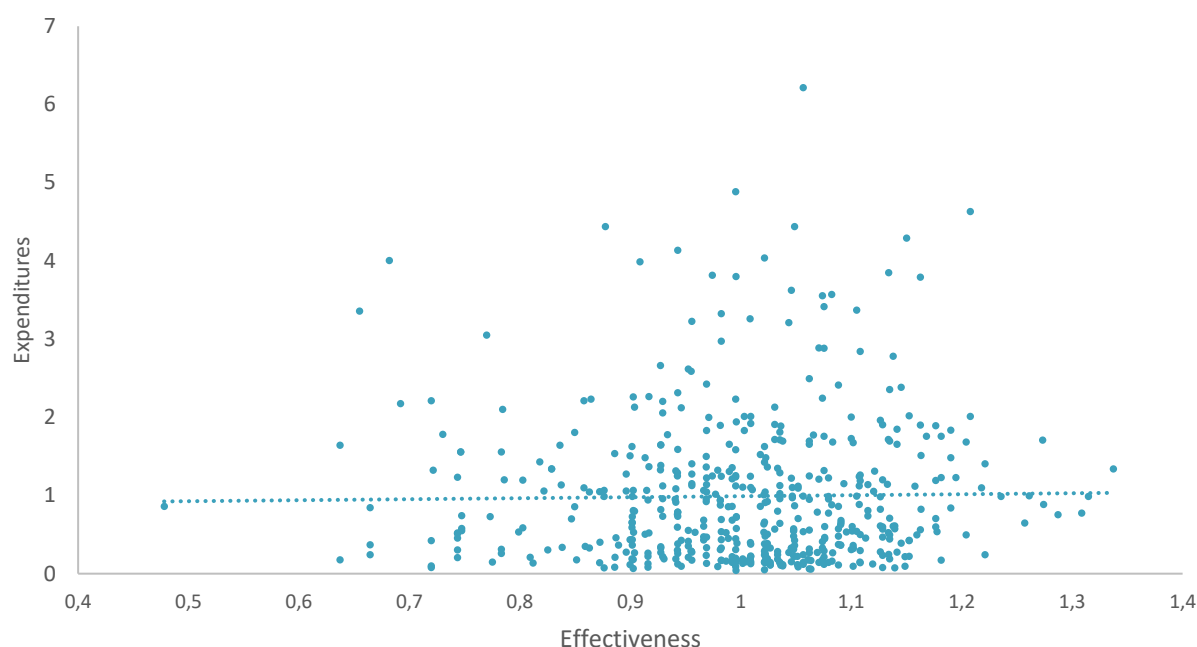
4.3.3. COST EFFECTIVENESS

As a final step we calculated the cost-effectiveness index as the ratio of the outputs' effectiveness and their costs. For this we used a relative costs measure to be consistent with the relative effectiveness measure. It was calculated according to the method used to derive the relative effectiveness measure.

Unfortunately, there are some principal problems with the cost-effectiveness index. The way it is constructed it assumes a specific cost to effectiveness relationship, which is hard to be backed up empirically. This relationship implicitly assumes that if the cost of an output doubles, the effectiveness of the output has to double as well for the index to stay constant. In practice this is not given, because the presently, the effectiveness rating is an ordinal measure, i.e. it measures categories or a ranking, rather than quantities. Hence, we know that an effectiveness rating of 5 is better than a rating of 4, but we do not know by how much – or how much the difference between 4 and 5 is worth in Euro.

Secondly, it is doubted whether such needed relationship can be estimated from the available project and expenditure data, particularly as there is no apparent correlation between the size of expenditures for and the effectiveness of the outputs. This is illustrated in Figure 10, showing the correlation between relative costs and relative effectiveness. Accordingly, highly effective outputs can be either very cheap or very expensive, and the same is true for less effective outputs.

FIGURE 10 CORRELATION BETWEEN COST AND EFFECTIVENESS MEASURE



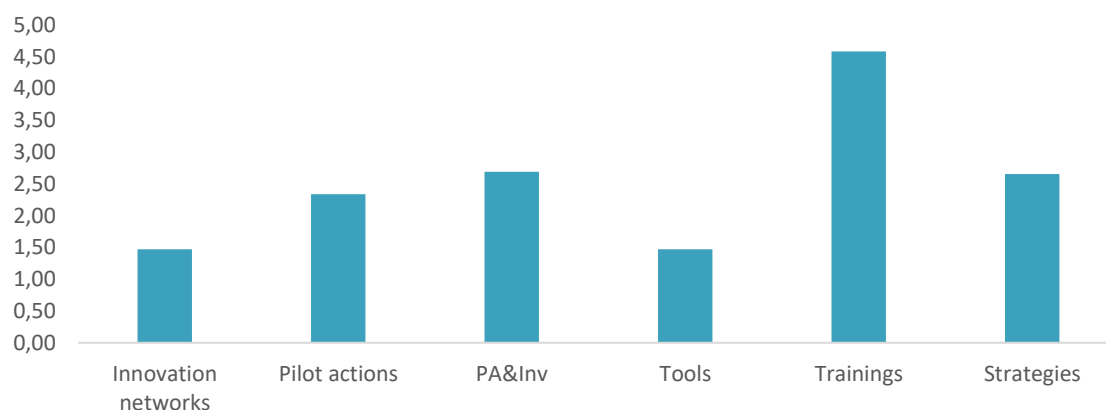
Source: JS data, own calculations

Consequently, the resulting index must be interpreted with extreme caution and conclusion should rather be drawn by combining the individual results for effectiveness and the expenditures rather than on the mechanically calculated index.

Nevertheless, the index provides interesting insights, some of which are apparent from the previous section, but also others that show potential dilemmas for project or output evaluation and selection. For this, Figure 11 and Figure 12 as well as Table 12 in the data annex, show the index for the aggregate level, the main clusters and the secondary clusters. From the index we can derive the following points.

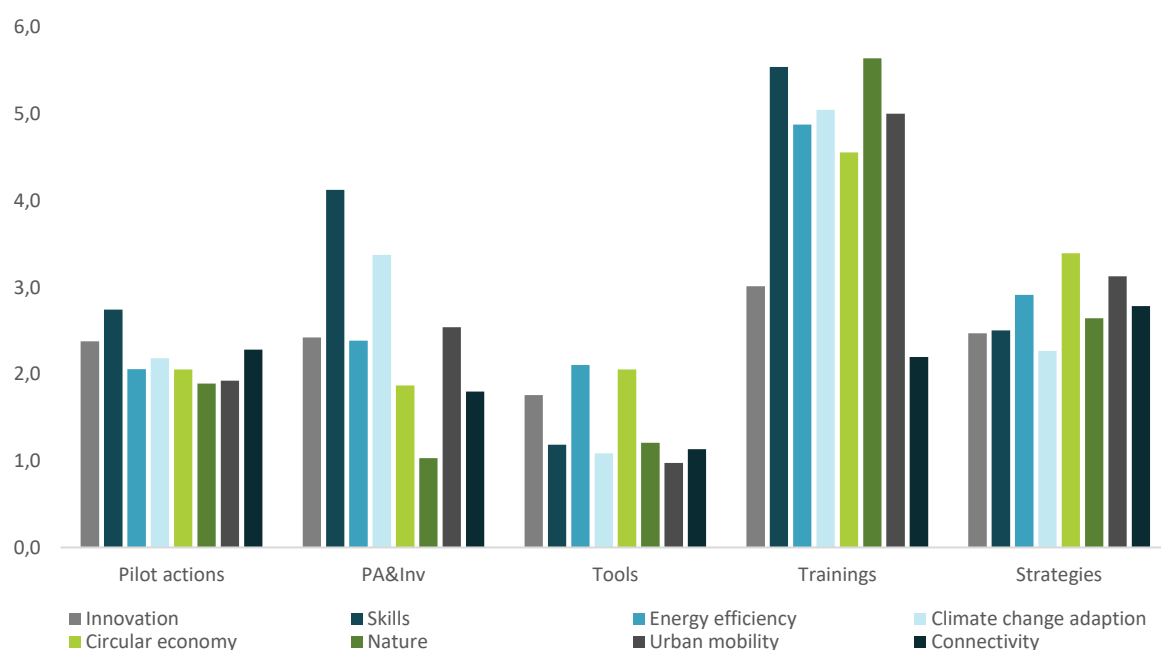
- Pilot action with and without investments seem to be cost-effective measures. This was already clear from above analysis, as both output types have high effectiveness ratings and, at least on average low costs.
- Tools and innovation networks seem to have lower cost-effectiveness. Again this can be read from above results as both are on average relatively expensive outputs paired with either a below average (innovation networks) or average effectiveness measure (tools).
- Strategies seem to be reasonable outputs, with average costs and effectiveness.
- Trainings are a dilemma. They got a below average effectiveness rating, yet they are also the least expensive tools. Hence, because of the implicit cost-effectiveness relation assumed by the index, it shows trainings as being most cost-effective. This result needs to be treated cautiously for the aforementioned reasons.

FIGURE 11 AGGREGATE AVERAGE COST EFFECTIVENESS MEASURE



Source: JS data, own calculations

FIGURE 12 AVERAGE COST EFFECTIVENESS MEASURE I, BY MAIN CLUSTERS



Source: JS data, own calculations

4.4. CONCLUSIONS

Considering the analysis presented in the chapters above the main results of the cost-effectiveness analysis for the interventions financed under Interreg CE are:

1. The results indicate that pilot actions with and without investments seem to be cost-effective (relative to the other analysed outputs) as they have both high score for effectiveness and comparatively low unit costs.
2. Strategies are rated slightly below, as their effectiveness is rated lower, but their costs are approximately comparable to that of pilot actions.
3. Trainings are more difficult to judge, as their effectiveness is rated lower than that of other outputs, yet their unit costs are - on average – the lowest. The available data cannot determine

with a certain precision that this means they are more cost-effective than pilot actions, as this depend on a variable that cannot be determined by the analysis (the monetary worth in EUR). Nevertheless, we can conclude that their relative cheapness makes trainings attractive, while their effectiveness potentially needs to be worked on.

4. Tools and innovation networks in general have a below average performance in terms of effectiveness rating, while in terms of costs they are more on the expensive side. Thus, they seem to be less attractive outputs than others.

The above results should be interpreted considering the following hypothesis, and in consequence, should be used only by triangulation with the other analysis conducted under this evaluation:

- The results of CEA should be rather interpreted as trends. As for all outputs (pilot actions, trainings, tools etc.), there are always highly / less effective as well as highly / less expensive data inputs.
- There is no evident correlation between output costs and output effectiveness rating. Therefore, CEA by itself cannot recommend certain outputs or advise against others, as there are other factors to be considered (such as the needs of the territory, the socio-economic dimension, etc).
- The ratings are based on expert judgements. Clearly, this is the best information available on the effectiveness of the outputs. But still, it is a judgement based on the experts' characteristics, knowledge, experiences etc. So, almost by definition, these judgements are incomplete and may show some expert bias. It cannot be fully ruled out that, for example, pilot actions, with or without investments, are more popular amongst experts - and thus get a high rating – because these outputs produce an immediate and tangible utility. These immediate effects are much less tangible for trainings, networks, strategies or tools. Instead, they may have strong longer run effects that are not yet visible. For example, it may be sufficient to train one person that uses this knowledge to move things at larger scale. Similar, for strategies, they may enter local, regional or even national planning considerations, but because of the inertia of political processes may materialise only after project competition. It is impossible for experts to know such effects.
- Another limitation of the cost-effectiveness analysis is the bottom-up nature of the projects. Because of this, projects and their outputs are highly individual and tailored to the local needs and thus it is highly difficult to recommend specific output solely using the results of CEA.

All these represents limitations for the CEA especially in the context of a programme with such a high diversity of outputs as Interreg CE is. This is also explained in the “Economic Appraisal Vademecum”⁵⁷, which states that a cost effectiveness analysis *“is based on the assumption that all options considered are technically and economically viable and deliver the same single typology output (or process the same single type of input) even if in different intensities/volumes”*⁵⁸. Additionally it also states that the *“CEA is a practical tool for project comparison when the following conditions apply:*

- *the project⁵⁹ produces only one output which is homogenous and easily measurable;*
- *[...]*
- *there is a wide evidence of benchmarks to verify that the chosen technology meets the minimum cost performance requirements.”*⁶⁰

The data analysed lead to the conclusion that these conditions are not met, given the highly individual types of outputs that are produced by each project of the Interreg CE programme.

Nevertheless, the cost-effectiveness had some valuable merits, such as:

⁵⁷ DG Regio, 2021, Economic Appraisal Vademecum - Part I General Principles, Draft Final Report 17 June 2021

⁵⁸ Ibid. p. 26

⁵⁹ Note: or programme

⁶⁰ Ibid. p. 27

- Evaluating the projects and their outputs along the defined efficiency criteria and characteristics was a valuable experience for the JS project managers and may help them in their future work on managing projects and evaluating project proposals.
- The cost analysis produced new and interesting information on the distribution and range of expenditures across output types. Such information may be of use for future project (proposal) evaluations as benchmarks, e.g. to check whether certain outputs are potentially overpriced and need an additional review.

The analysis also led to some valuable lessons learned concerning any future attempts to engage in a cost-effectiveness or similar type of analysis, and in consequence some recommendations for future CEA, as follows.

- In the current analysis costs per output were estimated. This certainly can be improved on by an a-priori clearer allocation of costs (or estimation thereof) to the individual outputs produced by each project, that needs to start already at the project application phase, with the consequence that either each output is defined through a separate work package or within each work package the respective outputs and their planned budgets are clearly separated. This would also facilitate the evaluation of project applications.
- The subject of the effectiveness analysis needs to be clearly defined. In the current analysis, these were the outputs' achievements in terms of a) its contribution to economic, social and territorial development, b) the importance of the output for the respective programme's goals, c) synergies created, d) transferability and e) sustainability. A future analysis will have to apply a similar type of categorisation, to make the projects' outputs and achievements - which may be highly individual – at least to some extent comparable. The main issue with this is that all effectiveness assessment can only be made in a qualitative manner – even if it involves a rating scheme like in the current cost-effectiveness analysis. Such qualitative ratings only allow statements that one output was more effective than another, but it does not allow statements on how much it was more effective. This creates difficulties when combining the effectiveness assessment with the output costs and makes any cost-effectiveness measurement difficult, if not impossible.
- The actual measuring of effectiveness needs to be carefully considered. Optimally, each output is analysed individually, which however may result in a significant amount of work, given that the 2014-2020 programme had over 1800 individual outputs.
- Potential options to keep the workload reasonable include:
 - Experts' ratings, as in the current cost-effectiveness analysis. However, much of the effectiveness assessment was based on information on the project level rather than the output level. This requires the collaboration of the project managers as they are the only ones with a detailed knowledge of the projects and their outputs. It also bears the danger of potential expert biases. Therefore, prior to the experts' rating a common understanding on the rating has to be developed.
 - Case studies based on random draws. This would allow a detailed output analysis for a subsample of all outputs. For this, representativeness issues need to be considered, so that the randomly drawn outputs reflect the full sample, in terms of output types, territories, target groups etc.
 - Self-assessment 1 – since for each output an output factsheet needs to be produced it could be considered to replace/enrich it by a short multiple-choice questionnaire asking for a self-assessment regarding the effectiveness criteria defined earlier in the process.
 - Self-assessment 2 – the project final and interim reports' structure could be revised to ensure more precise answers on the projects/outputs effectiveness. Already now, some reports allow drawing conclusions e.g. on the synergies and transferability of outputs. However, the reporting style across projects differs substantially. Therefore dedicated sections/question on

the effectiveness would require the beneficiaries to provide more precise answers. Additionally, since those reports may have the tendency to be overly optimistic, the quality of the effectiveness answers would improve if they have some evidence-based examples.

- Final beneficiaries' assessment 1 – For an effectiveness analysis it would be interesting, though difficult to get the assessment of the final beneficiaries. The current evaluation is an example for this, as it is incredibly difficult to get access to final beneficiaries for the evaluation case studies. One approach to get the final beneficiaries' assessment is via mandatory or at least recommended online surveys that optimally can be done on the phone, tablet or computer, with a few effectiveness related questions. These surveys are standardised to cover all projects/outputs and should take place immediately after the output has been produced.
- Final beneficiaries' assessment 2 - Alternatively, it the possibility of the programme/the projects to collect longitudinal data could be explored. That is, at least for some projects, information and data on the projects' outputs, effects and effectiveness will be collected also after the projects' main phase has ended. This includes for example, surveying the participants of trainings or networks during the project, but also one, two and/or more years after the project has ended. In this way a deeper knowledge on the effects of outputs may be gained. To make such long monitoring attractive for project partners it may be compensated financially, e.g. as a separate project task.
- Notably, depending on the method used to collect data on effectiveness, this may raise issued of data protection (e.g. in the case of final beneficiaries) but also data management, as potentially a large amount of data will be collected over time. This means the necessary infrastructure, technical and staff capacities need to be in place for data collection.
- The cost-effectiveness analysis or ensuring cost-effectiveness starts at project selection. The present analysis on the cost ranges of individual outputs may provide some yardstick to the proposal assessments. Indeed, if proposals suggest much higher than average expenditures for an output, it could be worthwhile looking more into detail on what the output is about and how the price is made up.
- In the project selection process it needs be ensured that some assessment on the potential quality and the potential effects of the planned outputs is made. Importantly, these assessments need to be comparable across project application evaluations. Therefore common standards need to be developed regarding a) the definition and understanding of expected effects and b) how these effects are to be rated. Additionally, it has to be ensured that the level of technical expertise is adequate to evaluate the project outputs' costs in relation to their expected effects. This is particularly the case for more technical outputs, for example tools, that require specific knowledge. If not directly available, this may be acquired from external experts.
- Optimally, such effectiveness analysis including data collection is done for all TNC projects, which would allow a) a centralised data collection, reducing the burden for the JSs of the programmes b) a cross programme comparative analysis and learning.

4.5. DATA ANNEX

TABLE 4 NUMBER OF OUTPUTS PER MAIN AND SECONDARY CLUSTER

Main cluster	Secondary cluster	Innovation networks	Pilot actions	PA&Inv	Tools	Trainings	Strategies
		24	67	13	54	68	70
Innovation	General innovation	12	33	13	30	38	38
	Social innovation	8	1		2		3
	Specific innovation	4	33		22	30	29
			105	86	97	196	173
Skills	Cultural heritage and CCI		41	72	57	134	98
	Other		46	14	32	59	59
	Social innovation / entrepreneurship		18		8	3	16
			63	75	148	156	131
Energy efficiency	Energy efficiency		9	55	70	61	65
	GHG		28	10	59	49	26
	Mobility		26	10	19	46	40
			19	29	40	84	49
Climate change adaption	Cultural heritage		13	15	14	28	25
	General CCA		6	14	26	56	24
Circular economy		1	16	17	29	41	37
	NA - Circular economy	1	16	17	29	41	37
			33	37	47	81	70
Nature	Nature		15	0	26	23	19
	Urban		18	37	21	58	51
			19	10	14	45	38
Urban mobility	NA - Urban mobility		19	10	14	45	38
			20	44	26	41	71
Connectivity	Freight transport		7	12	10	2	24
	General transport		7	12	15	21	16
	Rural transport		6	20	1	18	31
Total		25	342	311	455	712	639

TABLE 5 NUMBER OF OUTPUTS PER MAIN AND SECONDARY CLUSTER, IN PERCENT OF TOTAL OUTPUTS BY CLUSTER

Main cluster	Secondary cluster	Innovation networks	Pilot actions	PA&Inv	Tools	Trainings	Strategies
		8.1	22.6	4.4	18.2	23.0	23.6
Innovation	General innovation	7.3	20.1	7.9	18.3	23.2	23.2
	Social innovation	57.1	7.1	0.0	14.3	0.0	21.4
	Specific innovation	3.4	28.0	0.0	18.6	25.4	24.6
			16.0	13.1	14.8	29.8	26.3
Skills	Cultural heritage and CCI		10.2	17.9	14.2	33.3	24.4
	Other		21.9	6.7	15.2	28.1	28.1
	Social innovation / entrepreneurship		40.0		17.8	6.7	35.6
			11.0	13.1	25.8	27.2	22.9
Energy efficiency	Energy efficiency		3.5	21.2	26.9	23.5	25.0
	GHG		16.3	5.8	34.3	28.5	15.1
	Mobility		18.4	7.1	13.5	32.6	28.4
			8.6	13.1	18.1	38.0	22.2
Climate change adaption	Cultural heritage		13.7	15.8	14.7	29.5	26.3
	General CCA		4.8	11.1	20.6	44.4	19.0
Circular economy		0.7	11.3	12.1	20.6	29.1	26.2
	NA - Circular economy	0.7	11.3	12.1	20.6	29.1	26.2
			12.3	13.8	17.5	30.2	26.1
Nature	Nature		18.1		31.3	27.7	22.9
	Urban		9.7	20.0	11.4	31.4	27.6
			15.1	7.9	11.1	35.7	30.2
Urban mobility	NA - Urban mobility		15.1	7.9	11.1	35.7	30.2

		9.9	21.8	12.9	20.3	35.1
Connectivity	Freight transport	12.7	21.8	18.2	3.6	43.6
	General transport	9.9	16.9	21.1	29.6	22.5
	Rural transport	7.9	26.3	1.3	23.7	40.8
Total	1.0	13.8	12.5	18.3	28.7	25.7

TABLE 6 CONTRIBUTION TO CE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND TERRITORIAL COHESION

Main cluster	Secondary cluster	Innovation networks	Pilot actions	PA&Inv	Tools	Trainings	Strategies
Innovation		3.6	4.2	4.5	3.7	3.5	3.7
	General innovation	3.5	4.0	4.5	3.7	3.5	3.5
	Social innovation	3.5	4.8		4.0		3.4
	Specific innovation	3.9	4.4		3.6	3.5	3.9
Skills			4.0	4.1	3.7	3.8	3.9
	Cultural heritage and CCI		4.1	4.0	3.6	3.6	4.0
	Other		4.0	4.6	3.8	4.2	4.0
	Social innovation / entrepreneurship		3.7		3.7	3.7	3.6
Energy efficiency			4.0	4.5	3.8	3.9	3.7
	Energy efficiency		3.8	4.6	3.7	4.2	3.7
	GHG		4.4	4.5	3.9	4.0	3.7
	Mobility		3.6	3.8	3.9	3.5	3.5
Climate change adaption			4.0	4.1	3.9	3.8	3.9
	Cultural heritage		3.7	3.8	3.6	3.4	3.8
	General CCA		4.5	4.2	4.2	4.0	4.0
Circular economy		3.5	4.7	4.8	4.2	4.1	4.3
	NA - Circular economy	3.5	4.7	4.8	4.2	4.1	4.3
Nature			4.0	4.8	4.0	3.9	3.9
	Nature		4.5		4.1	4.0	3.9
	Urban		3.6	4.8	4.0	3.9	3.9
Urban mobility			3.5	3.8	4.0	3.6	3.5
	NA - Urban mobility		3.5	3.8	4.0	3.6	3.5
Connectivity			3.8	4.0	3.6	3.2	3.6
	Freight transport		3.5	4.0	3.5	3.5	3.8
	General transport		3.8	4.0	3.6	3.1	3.5
	Rural transport		4.0	3.9	3.5	3.3	3.6
Total		3.6	4.1	4.2	3.8	3.7	3.8

TABLE 7 THE OUTPUTS' IMPORTANCE FOR PROJECT SUCCESS

Main cluster	Secondary cluster	Innovation networks	Pilot actions	PA&Inv	Tools	Trainings	Strategies
Innovation		3.8	4.3	5.0	3.9	3.8	3.9
	General innovation	3.8	4.3	5.0	3.9	3.9	3.6
	Social innovation	3.0	4.5		4.0		3.8
	Specific innovation	4.3	4.4		3.9	3.6	4.1
Skills			4.1	4.4	4.0	3.9	4.1
	Cultural heritage and CCI		4.4	4.3	3.9	3.8	4.2
	Other		3.9	4.8	3.9	4.1	4.0
	Social innovation / entrepreneurship		3.8		4.2	4.0	3.8
Energy efficiency			4.2	4.7	4.1	4.0	3.9
	Energy efficiency		4.0	4.8	4.0	4.3	3.9
	GHG		4.4	4.5	4.1	4.1	3.9
	Mobility		4.0	4.5	4.1	3.8	3.8
Climate change adaption			4.3	4.2	4.2	4.0	4.2
	Cultural heritage		4.2	4.5	4.0	3.5	4.2

	General CCA		4.5	4.1	4.3	4.2	4.2
Circular economy		4.0	4.7	5.0	4.1	4.3	4.3
	NA - Circular economy	4.0	4.7	5.0	4.1	4.3	4.3
Nature			4.3	4.8	4.1	4.3	4.2
	Nature		4.5		4.3	4.3	4.0
Urban mobility	Urban		4.2	4.8	4.0	4.3	4.3
			4.0	4.5	4.1	3.9	3.9
Connectivity	NA - Urban mobility		4.0	4.5	4.1	3.9	3.9
			4.0	4.5	3.7	3.5	3.7
Connectivity	Freight transport		3.5	4.5	3.5	3.5	3.9
	General transport		4.0	4.5	3.8	3.3	3.6
	Rural transport		4.5	4.4	4.0	3.7	3.7
Total		3.8	4.2	4.5	4.0	3.9	4.0

TABLE 8 SYNERGIES OF PROJECT OUTPUTS

Main cluster	Secondary cluster	Innovation networks	Pilot actions	PA&Inv	Tools	Trainings	Strategies
Innovation		3.4	4.1	4.5	3.5	3.2	3.5
	General innovation	3.3	4.1	4.5	3.5	3.1	3.3
	Social innovation	2.8	4.0		3.3		3.3
	Specific innovation	3.8	4.0		3.5	3.3	3.7
Skills			3.6	3.7	3.5	3.4	3.7
	Cultural heritage and CCI		3.8	3.5	3.3	3.3	3.7
	Other		3.5	4.8	3.8	3.8	3.8
	Social innovation / entrepreneurship		3.3		3.5	3.2	3.4
Energy efficiency			3.5	3.6	3.5	3.3	3.5
	Energy efficiency		3.8	3.9	3.6	3.5	3.6
	GHG		3.7	3.5	3.5	3.3	3.6
	Mobility		3.1	2.8	3.4	3.3	3.2
Climate change adaption			3.8	3.7	3.7	3.5	3.7
	Cultural heritage		3.7	3.8	3.4	3.3	3.6
	General CCA		4.0	3.7	3.8	3.5	3.8
		3.0	3.6	4.5	3.6	3.5	3.8
Circular economy	NA - Circular economy	3.0	3.6	4.5	3.6	3.5	3.8
			3.7	4.5	3.9	3.5	3.8
Nature	Nature		4.1		3.9	3.6	3.9
	Urban		3.3	4.5	3.9	3.4	3.7
Urban mobility			3.3	2.8	3.6	3.3	3.3
	NA - Urban mobility		3.3	2.8	3.6	3.3	3.3
Connectivity			3.3	3.8	3.4	3.3	3.4
	Freight transport		3.0	3.3	3.5	3.5	3.5
	General transport		2.8	4.3	3.2	3.2	3.2
	Rural transport		4.0	3.8	3.5	3.3	3.4
Total		3.3	3.7	3.8	3.6	3.4	3.6

TABLE 9 TRANSFERABILITY OF PROJECT OUTPUTS

Main cluster	Secondary cluster	Innovation networks	Pilot actions	PA&Inv	Tools	Trainings	Strategies
Innovation		3.3	4.0	3.8	3.4	2.9	3.4
	General innovation	3.0	3.8	3.8	3.3	2.8	3.2
	Social innovation	2.8	3.5		3.5		3.3
	Specific innovation	3.9	4.3		3.6	3.0	3.7
Skills			3.6	3.8	3.6	3.5	3.6

	Cultural heritage and CCI		3.6	3.7	3.5	3.4	3.6
	Other		3.8	4.5	3.7	3.9	3.6
	Social innovation / entrepreneurship		3.3		3.6	3.4	3.6
			3.6	3.9	3.9	3.8	3.7
Energy efficiency	Energy efficiency		4.0	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1
	GHG		3.8	3.5	3.8	4.2	3.9
	Mobility		2.9	3.5	3.6	3.3	3.0
			4.0	3.8	3.8	4.1	3.8
Climate change adaption	Cultural heritage		3.5	4.0	3.7	3.3	3.5
	General CCA		4.6	3.7	3.9	4.3	4.1
Circular economy		3.8	3.8	4.5	4.3	4.1	3.8
	NA - Circular economy	3.8	3.8	4.5	4.3	4.1	3.8
			4.0	4.0	4.0	4.1	3.9
Nature	Nature		4.4		4.3	4.3	4.5
	Urban		3.5	4.0	3.9	3.9	3.6
Urban mobility			3.5	3.5	3.9	3.5	3.3
	NA - Urban mobility		3.5	3.5	3.9	3.5	3.3
			3.1	3.8	3.2	3.1	3.2
Connectivity	Freight transport		4.0	3.5	3.4	3.0	3.1
	General transport		1.8	4.3	3.0	3.0	2.9
	Rural transport		3.5	3.7	3.5	3.3	3.4
Total		3.3	3.7	3.8	3.7	3.6	3.6

TABLE 10 SUSTAINABILITY OF PROJECT RESULTS

Main cluster	Secondary cluster	Innovation networks	Pilot actions	PA&Inv	Tools	Trainings	Strategies
Innovation		3.5	4.2	4.0	3.5	2.9	3.4
	General innovation	3.3	4.1	4.0	3.3	2.9	3.3
	Social innovation	3.5	4.8		3.8		3.4
	Specific innovation	3.8	4.2		3.6	2.9	3.6
Skills			3.9	4.3	3.7	3.6	3.9
	Cultural heritage and CCI		4.0	4.3	3.6	3.4	4.0
	Other		3.8	4.4	3.8	4.0	3.9
	Social innovation / entrepreneurship		3.7		3.9	3.8	3.4
Energy efficiency			4.0	4.4	4.0	3.8	3.8
	Energy efficiency		3.8	4.5	4.0	4.1	4.1
	GHG		4.3	4.5	4.0	4.0	3.9
	Mobility		3.7	4.0	3.9	3.5	3.3
Climate change adaption			3.8	3.9	3.8	3.6	3.9
	Cultural heritage		3.6	4.5	3.4	3.5	3.8
	General CCA		4.1	3.8	4.1	3.7	3.9
Circular economy		4.0	4.5	4.3	4.0	3.7	4.0
	NA - Circular economy	4.0	4.5	4.3	4.0	3.7	4.0
Nature			4.2	4.8	3.9	3.8	4.0
	Nature		4.3		4.3	3.8	4.2
	Urban		4.2	4.8	3.7	3.8	4.0
Urban mobility			3.8	4.0	4.1	3.6	3.2
	NA - Urban mobility		3.8	4.0	4.1	3.6	3.2
Connectivity			3.6	4.3	3.4	3.2	3.6
	Freight transport		3.0	4.3	3.4	3.3	3.6
	General transport		3.5	4.3	3.3	3.2	3.6
	Rural transport		4.3	4.4	3.5	3.2	3.7
Total		3.5	4.0	4.3	3.8	3.5	3.8

TABLE 11 CLUSTER RELATIVE EFFECTIVENESS BY MAIN AND SECONDARY CLUSTER AND OUTPUT TYPES

Main cluster	Secondary cluster	Innovation networks	Pilot actions	PA&Inv	Tools	Trainings	Strategies
Innovation		0.97	1.15	1.20	0.99	0.90	0.99
	General innovation	0.93	1.12	1.20	0.98	0.90	0.94
	Social innovation	0.86	1.19		1.02		0.96
	Specific innovation	1.09	1.18		1.00	0.90	1.05
Skills			1.02	1.08	0.98	0.97	1.02
	Cultural heritage and CCI		1.06	1.05	0.96	0.93	1.03
	Other		1.01	1.22	1.01	1.06	1.02
	Social innovation / entrepreneurship		0.94		1.00	0.96	0.94
Energy efficiency			1.01	1.10	1.01	0.99	0.97
	Energy efficiency		1.01	1.14	1.01	1.06	1.02
	GHG		1.08	1.07	1.02	1.02	0.99
	Mobility		0.90	0.97	0.99	0.91	0.88
Climate change adaption			1.02	1.01	1.00	0.98	1.01
	Cultural heritage		0.96	1.06	0.93	0.88	0.97
	General CCA		1.12	1.00	1.04	1.01	1.03
Circular economy		0.90	1.05	1.14	1.00	0.98	1.00
	NA - Circular economy	0.90	1.05	1.14	1.00	0.98	1.00
Nature			1.01	1.14	1.00	0.97	0.99
	Nature		1.08		1.05	1.00	1.01
	Urban		0.93	1.14	0.97	0.96	0.97
Urban mobility			0.98	1.01	1.08	0.97	0.94
	NA - Urban mobility		0.98	1.01	1.08	0.97	0.94
Connectivity			1.03	1.18	1.00	0.95	1.02
	Freight transport		0.99	1.13	1.01	0.97	1.04
	General transport		0.92	1.24	0.98	0.92	0.98
	Rural transport		1.18	1.18	1.05	0.97	1.04
Total		0.97	1.05	1.10	1.00	0.96	1.00

TABLE 12 COST EFFECTIVENESS MEASURE BY MAIN AND SECONDARY CLUSTER AND OUTPUT TYPES

Main cluster	Secondary cluster	Innovation networks	Pilot actions	PA&Inv	Tools	Trainings	Strategies
Innovation		1.6	2.4	2.4	1.8	3.0	2.5
	General innovation	1.5	2.7	2.4	1.9	2.3	2.6
	Social innovation	2.9	0.8		1.0		0.9
	Specific innovation	1.0	2.3		1.7	4.2	2.8
Skills			2.7	4.1	1.2	5.5	2.5
	Cultural heritage and CCI		3.1	4.0	1.6	7.1	3.2
	Other		2.5	5.0	0.8	4.7	2.1
	Social innovation / entrepreneurship		2.4		0.8	0.4	1.0
Energy efficiency			2.1	2.4	2.1	4.9	2.9
	Energy efficiency		1.9	2.2	2.7	4.7	3.7
	GHG		1.9	2.6	2.3	4.8	2.2
	Mobility		2.4	2.9	1.1	5.1	2.7
Climate change adaption			2.2	3.4	1.1	5.0	2.3
	Cultural heritage		2.6	8.8	1.0	7.8	3.3
	General CCA		1.5	2.0	1.1	4.0	1.6
Circular economy		0.2	2.1	1.9	2.1	4.6	3.4
	NA - Circular economy	0.2	2.1	1.9	2.1	4.6	3.4
Nature			1.9	1.0	1.2	5.6	2.6
	Nature		2.3		1.7	5.4	1.8
	Urban		1.5	1.0	1.0	5.8	3.2
Urban mobility			1.9	2.5	1.0	5.0	3.1
	NA - Urban mobility		1.9	2.5	1.0	5.0	3.1
Connectivity			2.3	1.8	1.1	2.2	2.8
	Freight transport		1.2	4.6	0.6	0.8	2.2
	General transport		3.5	1.3	1.5	2.6	1.9
	Rural transport		2.2	1.2	1.1	2.3	4.3
Total		1.5	2.3	2.7	1.5	4.6	2.7

5. ANNEX 5 - SURVEYS

5.1. PROGRAMME BENEFICIARIES

Survey targeting Interreg CE Programme Beneficiaries

1. ABOUT YOU (drop-down list) (all compulsory)

- 1.1. Country (predefined, single choice, text field available for Other, outside programme area)
- 1.2. Region (NUTS 2) – (predefined, multiple choice, based on 1.1., text field available for other, outside programme area and for entire national territory) – please refer to the region(s) you are located in, NOT to the one where the project was implemented. It will also include as option “I don’t know”, “Other”
- 1.3. Please let us know under which call(s) for proposals you received funding from Interreg CE 2014-2020; If you received funding for more than one project, please refer to one of your choice and answer all questions in reference to that project. (predefined, single choice – Call 1, call 2, I don’t know).
- 1.4. Please let us know the Specific Objective under which you received funding from the Interreg CE 2014-2020
- 1.5. Please let us know your role in the project (predefined, single choice)
 - lead partner
 - project partner
- 1.6. Organisation type (predefined, single choice, text field available for Other)
 - Local public authority
 - Regional public authority
 - National public authority
 - Sectoral agency
 - Infrastructure and (public) service provider
 - Interest groups including NGOs
 - Higher education and research
 - Education/training centre and school
 - Large enterprise
 - SME
 - Business support organisation
 - EGTC
 - International organisation, EEIG
 - Other (please specify) – text box available
 - I don’t know

2. PROGRAMME EFFECTS (2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.7 compulsory)

- 2.1. In your opinion, without funding from Interreg CE, would you have been able to achieve similar results (with your organisation’s/institution’s own funding or with another external source of funding)?
YES, NO, I don’t know (single choice)
- 2.2. In your opinion, what are the most significant benefits obtained by your organization from accessing Interreg CE, compared to cooperating only nationally? (multiple choice)
 - Accessing funds which are not available nationally
 - Accessing knowledge/ good practices which are not available nationally

- Accessing facilities which are not available nationally
- Accessing networks which are not available nationally
- Implementing activities that would be very difficult or even impossible to finance nationally
- Expanding your activity internationally
- Requiring less administrative effort to manage than experienced in a national project
- I don't know

Textbox – If you observed other benefits of participating in a project funded by the Interreg CE Programme, compared to one with only national partners from your own country, let us know in brief.

2.3. In your opinion, how successful was the project in achieving the following:

Scale 1-5, options: 1 – not successful, 2 – slightly successful, 3 – moderately successful, 4 – successful, 5 – very successful, I don't know/ Not applicable (multiple choice)

- Reducing and counterbalancing regional disparities
- Building trust beyond national borders
- Addressing strategically important issues, such as enabling the implementation of macro-regional strategies
- Enabling regions and cities to make better use of limited resources
- Supporting public authorities to offer new or better services for citizens and companies
- Supporting further public and private investment (leverage of funds)
- Enabling regions and cities to jointly tackle challenges that go beyond borders
- Improving policy making (generating policy learning and change, improving existing policies, developing new ones).
- Increasing knowledge, capacity and competences
- Fostering cooperation, enhancing the governance and coordination at all the different levels.
- Initiating or producing changes which are likely to last longer compared to national initiatives
- Delivering higher quality outputs and results than what is expected in a national project
- Delivering results in less time than it is expected in a national project
- Inducing behavioural change

2.4. In your opinion, how successful was the project in delivering the following programme specific results:

Scale 1-5, options: 1 – not successful, 2 – slightly successful, 3 – moderately successful, 4 – successful, 5 – very successful, I don't know/ Not applicable (multiple choice)

[This question appears only for the SO indicated in the beginning of the survey]

Specific Objective 1.1: To improve sustainable linkages among actors of the innovation systems for strengthening regional innovation capacity in central Europe.

- Increased and more sustainable linkages of actors in the innovation systems achieved through transnational cooperation strengthening the innovation capacity within central European regions.
- Increasing knowledge and technology transfer between research organisations and businesses, in particular SMEs improving the performance of clusters and innovation networks and their degree of internationalisation
- Increasing the availability of public services for innovation support to businesses (including finance)
- Reinforcing the bottom-up implementation of Smart Specialisation Strategies in key sectors of regional economy
- Other (please specify)

Specific Objective 1.2: To improve skills and entrepreneurial competences for advancing economic and social innovation in central European regions.

- Improved capacities of the public and private sector for skills development of employees and entrepreneurial competences achieved through transnational cooperation driving economic and social innovation in central European regions
- Stimulating mutual exchange and learning for employees and entrepreneurs across borders
- Supporting entrepreneurship through the development of technological and managerial competences as well as entrepreneurial mindsets
- Developing skills and competences for social innovation and entrepreneurship to meet social challenges linked to demographic change, migration and brain drain
- Contributing to the roll-out of smart specialisation strategies through the adaptation of workforce skills to market needs and innovation processes
- Other (please specify)

Specific Objective 2.1: To develop and implement solutions for increasing energy efficiency and renewable energy usage in public infrastructures.

- Improved capacities of the public sector and related entities for increased energy efficiency and renewable energy use in public infrastructures in central Europe achieved through transnational cooperation
- Reducing know-how disparities and strengthening the capacity and competences of the public sector to design and implement energy efficiency solutions for public infrastructure.
- Increasing knowledge of the public sector on financing schemes for energy efficiency and renovation measures to leverage further investment
- Other (please specify)

Specific Objective 2.2: To improve territorially based low-carbon energy planning strategies and policies supporting climate change mitigation.

- Improved capacities of the public sector and related entities for territorially based low-carbon energy planning and policies in central European regions achieved through transnational cooperation
- Stimulating exchange of knowledge and experience and fostering new knowledge in the public sector across borders to help planning, financing and implementing concrete sustainable energy actions and measures
- Developing managerial approaches and strategies to improve the energy performance of the public and private sectors
- Supporting (innovative) renewable energy planning strategies at the local and regional level to better exploit endogenous renewable energy potentials
- Linking approaches between the demand and supply sides, taking into account the quality and capacity of energy distribution grids
- Other (please specify)

Specific Objective 2.3: To improve capacities for mobility planning in functional urban areas to lower CO2 emissions.

- Improved capacities of the public sector and related entities for low-carbon mobility planning in central Europe's functional urban areas achieved through transnational cooperation

- Increasing knowledge and planning capacity of the public sector for integrated low carbon mobility solutions in functional urban areas
- Fostering smart low-carbon mobility in public urban transport through new services, products and technologies
- Supporting the creation of new governance systems for integrated mobility concepts in functional urban areas, in particular through the horizontal and vertical coordination of stakeholders and policies
- Other (please specify)

Specific Objective 3.1: To improve integrated environmental management capacities for the protection and sustainable use of natural heritage and resources.

- Improved integrated environmental management capacities of the public sector and related entities for the protection and sustainable use of natural heritage and resources in central Europe achieved through transnational cooperation
- Increasing integrated management capacities of the public sector for the protection and sustainable use of natural resources, including risk prevention and reduction of climate change effects
- Supporting the development and adoption of comprehensive approaches for the sustainable and efficient management of natural resources encompassing ecological, social, and economic objectives
- Linking different policies, sectors and administrative levels to adopt sustainable long-term strategic visions
- Other (please specify)

Objective 3.2: To improve capacities for the sustainable use of cultural heritage and resources.

- Improved capacities of the public and private sector for the sustainable use of cultural heritage and resources in central Europe achieved through transnational cooperation
- Raising awareness of the public and private sectors on the economic potential of cultural and creative industries to trigger economic opportunities
- Increasing knowledge and developing management and preservation skills of the public and private sectors for the sustainable use of cultural heritage
- Improving transnational linkages and coordination between cultural heritage sites and/or institutions working in culture-related fields (incl. across borders)
- Other (please specify)

Specific Objective 3.3: To improve environmental management of functional urban areas to make them more liveable places.

- Improved integrated environmental management capacities of the public sector and related entities in central Europe's functional urban areas achieved through transnational cooperation for making them more liveable places
- Increasing knowledge and implementation capacity of the public sector for integrated environmental management and planning to reduce land use conflicts in functional urban areas
- Increasing knowledge and implementation capacity of the public sector for integrated environmental management and planning to rehabilitate and reactivate brownfields in functional urban areas

- Increasing knowledge and implementation capacity of the public sector for integrated environmental management and planning to improve environmental quality (air, water, waste, soil, climate) in functional urban areas
- Enhancing governance and improving vertical and horizontal coordination of policy-making for integrated environmental management in functional urban areas
- Other (please specify)

Specific Objective 4.1: To improve planning and coordination of regional passenger transport systems for better connections to national and European transport networks.

- Improved and coordinated planning capacities of the public sector and related entities for regional passenger transport systems in central Europe linked to national and European transport networks achieved through transnational cooperation
- Increasing knowledge and implementation/planning capacities of the public sector and related entities for linking regional passenger transport systems to national and TEN-T networks
- Developing smart mobility solutions and services to connect regions to transport nodes through improved standards and interoperability
- Improving the coordination of passenger transport actors within and between regions (incl. across borders)
- Other (please specify)

Specific Objective 4.2: To improve coordination among freight transport stakeholders for increasing multimodal environmentally-friendly freight solutions.

- Improved coordination among freight transport stakeholders for increasing multimodal environmentally-friendly freight solutions in central Europe achieved through transnational cooperation
- Increasing knowledge and implementation capacities of freight transport stakeholders for multimodal environmentally-friendly freight transport systems and logistics
- Improving coordination among freight transport stakeholders contributing to more environmentally friendly freight transport systems
- Developing multimodal platforms to consolidate, optimise and make freight transport flows greener, incl. across borders
- Achieving more balanced public-private partnerships among freight transport stakeholders
- Other (please specify)

2.5. Please select the external factors that influenced the results of your project and provide details on this influence (you can select as many as you want)

Factor	Positive / Negative / no influence	Intensity of influence 1- very low influence, 2 - low influence 3 - moderate influence 4 - high influence 5 - very high influence, I don't know/Not applicable
COVID crisis		
Changes in legislation at EU level		
Changes in national or regional government/policy priorities		
Changes in national or regional legislation		
Changes in policy priorities at EU level		
Changes in socio-economic situation in your sector of activity		

<i>Changes in the socio-economic situation in your country or region</i>		
<i>Community-led initiatives</i>		
<i>Emergence of new technologies and methods</i>		
<i>Existence of other EU funds</i>		
<i>Migration from third countries</i>		
<i>Natural disasters/ climate change</i>		
<i>Social media</i>		

Textbox – if you observed other external factors that have influenced your project, please let us know.

2.6. In your opinion, how long do you think the main outputs of your project will be sustained (used, implemented, monitored, maintained active) after the project end? Please check and provide estimates for all that apply to your project.

Output	Up to one year	Up to two years	Up to three years	More than three years	I don't know	Not applicable
<i>Trainings</i>						
<i>Pilot actions</i>						
<i>Tools and services</i>						
<i>Strategies/ action plans</i>						
<i>Networks</i>						

2.7. Please select the factors which are likely to positively influence the sustainability of your project outputs and results. (multiple choice) (you can select as many as you want)

- Durability of the project partnership;
- Stability of legislation / rules / norms;
- Access to funds in the future;
- Increased interest from citizens/businesses in your field of activities;
- Political buy-in;
- Development of commercial products;
- Synergies with other initiatives/projects;

Textbox (optional) – if other factors are likely to positively influence the sustainability of your project's outputs and results, please let us know.

2.8. Did your project accelerate and/or lead to follow-up leverage of funds (related to the project theme)?

Scale: 1-5, options: 1 - no leverage of funds, 2 - low leverage of funds (less than 100 000 EUR), 3 - moderate leverage of funds (100 000 to 500 000 EUR), 4 - high leverage of funds (500 000 -1 000 000 EUR), 5 - very high leverage of funds (above 1 000 000 EUR), I don't know/ Not applicable (multiple choice)

Open text box: Please provide additional details in respect to your answer

2.9. Did your project lead to new partnerships or cooperation opportunities?

Options: Yes, No, I don't know, Not applicable (single choice)

Open text box: Please provide additional details in respect to your answer

2.10. In designing / preparing your project, did you specifically consider coordination with initiatives or projects funded from other instruments and programmes?

YES, NO, I don't know (single choice)

Textbox: If yes, please provide some more details for your answer

2.11. To your knowledge, was your project implemented in synergy with other initiatives funded from:

Options for each item: YES, NO, I don't know/not applicable (single choice)

- EU – funded - Other Interreg projects
- EU funded Research projects, e.g. H2020
- EU funded – other instruments (ERDF, ESF etc.)
- National funded projects/initiatives
- Regionally or locally funded projects (CLLD, RIS3)

Projects funded from other programmes (text box)

2.12. To your knowledge, were the results and outputs of your project transferred to other sectors?

YES, NO, I don't know/Not applicable

Open text box: Please provide additional details in respect to your answer

2.13. To your knowledge, were the results and outputs of your project transferred to other territories (e.g. to other regions, to territories with a different demographic/economic structure than yours etc.)?

YES, NO, I don't know/ Not applicable

Open text box: Please provide additional details in respect to your answer

2.14. To your knowledge, were the results and outputs of your project transferred to / adopted by other levels of governance (e.g. from the local to the regional, national or transnational level, or EU level)?

YES, NO, I don't know/Not applicable

Open text box: Please provide additional details in respect to your answer

2.15. In your opinion, was the project able to contribute to better coordination between decision-making bodies?

YES, NO, I don't know/Not applicable

- *Horizontally, at national level*
- *Horizontally, at regional level*
- *Horizontally, at local level*
- *Vertically, between the national and EU levels*
- *Vertically, between the regional and national levels*
- *Vertically, between the local and regional levels*
- *Vertically, between multiple governance levels*
- *Other (please specify)*

Open text box: Please provide additional details in respect to your answer

2.16. In your view, is there a type of territory (urban areas, rural areas, industrial areas, touristic areas, economically or demographically growing/shrinking areas, etc.) for which your project produced significant benefits and why? (open text box)

2.17. In your view, is there a target group (local/ regional/ national public authorities, interest groups, universities, research institutes, enterprises, education/training centres and schools, business support organizations for which your project produced significant benefits and why? (open text box)

2.18. To what extent did your project results and outputs lead to a change of practices at organisational and individual level?

Scale: 1 - no change, 2 - low change, 3 - moderate change, 4 - high change, 5 - very high change, I don't know/ Not applicable (single choice)

– separate for organisational and individual levels

Open text box: Please provide additional details in respect to the observed change

2.19. Did your project results and outputs have unintended effects, either positive or negative, that were not foreseen at the project's start?

Answers as Yes, positive/Yes, negative/No/I don't know/Not applicable

Open text box: Please provide additional details with respect to your answer

Final message: "Thank you for your contribution!"

5.2. PROGRAMME STAKEHOLDERS

Survey targeting institutional and policy-making stakeholders at different governance levels

1. About you

1.1. **Country** (predefined, single choice, text field available for Other)

1.2. **Organisation level** (predefined, single choice: national / regional / local / other, text field available for other)

[The following question appears only if the previous answer is 'regional' or 'local']

1.3. **Region (NUTS2)** (predefined, multiple choice based on 1.1 – It will also include as option "I don't know", "Other", text field available for other)

1.4. **Organisation type** (drop-down list)

- Local public authority (e.g. Municipality, Municipality district, etc.)
- Association of local public authorities (e.g. association of municipalities)
- Regional public authority/institution (e.g. Regional Ministry)
- National public authority/institution (e.g. National Ministry)
- Local public agency (e.g. Local Environmental Agency, Local Business Agency, Local Research and Development Office, etc.)
- Regional public agency (e.g. Regional Environmental Agency, Regional Business Agency, Regional Research and Development Office, etc.)

- National agency (e.g. National Environmental Agency, National Business Agency, National Research and Development Office, etc.)
- Local business association
- Regional business association
- National business association
- Other (text box available)

2. Questions

2.1. How long have you been member of the National Committee for the Interreg CE programme?

- Less than one year
- Between 1 and 3 years
- Between 3 and 6 years
- More than 6 years

2.2. In your opinion, at the **national level**, did Interreg CE contribute to any of the following results in your municipality/ region/ country? Please select all that apply. (multiple choice)

- Delivering new/better public services
- Enabling regions and cities to make better use of limited resources
- Enabling policy learning and institutional change, e.g. improving existing policies and developing new ones
- Improving collaboration between public and private actors
- Improving coordination and cooperation across governance levels
- Improving the integration of vulnerable citizens
- Improving the quality of life of all citizens
- Increasing awareness with respect to opportunities for collaboration and cooperation
- Increasing expertise, knowledge and capacity of regional or national actors in the public and private sectors
- Reducing disparities between the rural and urban areas and/or increase their functional relationships in your country
- Supporting job creation
- I don't know

(Textbox: Please tell us if you know of any other contribution that Interreg CE successfully delivered in your municipality/ region/ country)

Answers: multiple choice

2.3. In your opinion, **at the transnational level**, was Interreg CE successful in **achieving** the following **outcomes**? Please select all that apply. (multiple choice)

- Addressing strategically important issues, such as enabling the implementation of macro-regional strategies
- Building trust beyond national borders
- Delivering higher quality outputs and results than what is expected in a national context
- Enabling regions and cities to jointly tackle challenges that go beyond borders through cooperation
- Improving coordination and cooperation across governance levels
- Initiating or producing changes which are likely to last longer compared to national initiatives
- Reducing and counterbalancing regional disparities **across borders**
- Supporting additional private or public investment and/or the leverage of additional funds from national or European sources
- I don't know

(Textbox: Please tell us if you know of any other aspect which Interreg CE successfully supported across borders)

Answers: multiple choice

2.4. Which of the following **thematic priorities** of the **Interreg CE Programme 2014-2020** are you most familiar with? Please select all that apply up to a maximum of 3 fields. (multiple choice)

- Innovation
- Low carbon economy
- Environment
- Culture
- Transport
- None in particular

2.5. In your opinion, to what extent did Interreg CE succeed in delivering the following results:

Answers as Likert scale: from 1 to 5 (1 – Not at all, 2 - To a small extent, 3 - To some extent; 4 - To a large extent; 5 - To a very large extent, I don't know) (multiple choice)

[These questions appear only if the thematic priority specific answer to Q2.3 is 'Yes']

Innovation 1: In which way and to what extent did the Interreg CE programme contribute to the **innovation systems and the regional innovation capacity** in central Europe?

- Increasing the number of sustainable linkages of actors in the innovation systems
- Increasing knowledge and technology transfer between research organisations and businesses, in particular SMEs improving the performance of clusters and innovation networks and their degree of internationalisation
- Increasing the availability of public services for innovation support to businesses (including finance)
- Reinforcing the bottom-up implementation of Smart Specialisation Strategies in key sectors of regional economy
- Other (please specify)

Innovation 2: In which way and to what extent did the programme contribute to **improving skills and entrepreneurial competences** for advancing economic and social innovation in central European regions?

- Improving capacities of the public and private sectors for skills development of employees and entrepreneurial competences
- Stimulating mutual exchange and learning for employees and entrepreneurs across borders
- Supporting entrepreneurship through the development of technological and managerial competences as well as entrepreneurial mind sets
- Developing skills and competences for social innovation and entrepreneurship to meet social challenges linked to demographic change, migration and brain drain
- Contributing to the roll-out of smart specialisation strategies through the adaptation of workforce skills to market needs and innovation processes
- Other (please specify)

Low carbon economy 1: In which way and to what extent did the Interreg CE programme support **solutions for increasing energy efficiency and renewable energy usage in public infrastructures?**

- Improving capacities of the public sector and related entities for increased energy efficiency and renewable energy use in public infrastructures
- Reducing know-how disparities and strengthening the capacity and competences of the public sector to design and implement energy efficiency solutions for public infrastructure.
- Increasing knowledge of the public sector on financing schemes for energy efficiency and renovation measures to leverage further investment
- Other (please specify)

Low carbon economy 2: In which way and to what extent did the Interreg CE programme contribute to improving **territorially based low-carbon energy planning strategies and policies supporting climate change mitigation.**

- Improving capacities of the public sector and related entities for territorially based low-carbon energy planning and policies
- Stimulating exchange of knowledge and experience and fostering new knowledge in the public sector across borders to help planning, financing and implementing concrete sustainable energy actions and measures
- Developing managerial approaches and strategies to improve the energy performance of the public and private sectors
- Supporting (innovative) renewable energy planning strategies at the local and regional level to better exploit endogenous renewable energy potentials
- Linking approaches between the demand and supply sides, taking into account the quality and capacity of energy distribution grids
- Other (please specify)

Low carbon 3 and Transport 1: In which way and to what extent did the Interreg CE programme support capacities for **mobility planning in functional urban areas to lower CO2 emissions?**

- Improving capacities of the public sector and related entities for low-carbon mobility planning in functional urban areas
- Increasing knowledge and planning capacity of the public sector for integrated low carbon mobility solutions in functional urban areas
- Fostering smart low-carbon mobility in public urban transport through new services, products and technologies
- Supporting the creation of new governance systems for integrated mobility concepts in functional urban areas, in particular through the horizontal and vertical coordination of stakeholders and policies
- Other (please specify)

Environment 1: In which way and to what extent did the Interreg CE programme contribute to improving integrated environmental management capacities for the **protection and sustainable use of natural heritage and resources?**

- Improved integrated environmental management capacities of the public sector and related entities for the protection and sustainable use of natural heritage and resources
- Increasing integrated management capacities of the public sector for the protection and sustainable use of natural resources, including risk prevention and reduction of climate change effects

- Supporting the development and adoption of comprehensive approaches for the sustainable and efficient management of natural resources encompassing ecological, social, and economic objectives
- Linking different policies, sectors and administrative levels to adopt sustainable long-term strategic visions
- Other (please specify)

Culture 1: In which way and to what extent did the Interreg CE programme support improving capacities for the **sustainable use of cultural heritage and resources**?

- Improving capacities of the public and private sectors for the sustainable use of cultural heritage and resources
- Raising awareness of the public and private sectors on the economic potential of cultural and creative industries to trigger economic opportunities
- Increasing knowledge and developing management and preservation skills of the public and private sectors for the sustainable use of cultural heritage
- Improving transnational linkages and coordination between cultural heritage sites and/or institutions working in culture-related fields (incl. across borders)
- Other (please specify)

Environment 2: In which way and to what extent did the Interreg CE programme contribute to improving **environmental management of functional urban areas** to make them more liveable places?

- Improving integrated environmental management capacities of the public sector and related entities in functional urban areas
- Increasing knowledge and implementation capacity of the public sector for integrated environmental management and planning to reduce land use conflicts in functional urban areas
- Increasing knowledge and implementation capacity of the public sector for integrated environmental management and planning to rehabilitate and reactivate brownfields in functional urban areas
- Increasing knowledge and implementation capacity of the public sector for integrated environmental management and planning to improve environmental quality (air, water, waste, soil, climate) in functional urban areas
- Enhancing governance and improving vertical and horizontal coordination of policy-making for integrated environmental management in functional urban areas
- Other (please specify)

Transport 2. In which way and to what extent did the Interreg CE programme support the planning and coordination of **regional passenger transport systems for better connections to national and European transport networks**?

- Improving and coordinating planning capacities of the public sector and related entities for regional passenger transport systems linked to national and European transport networks
- Increasing knowledge and implementation/planning capacities of the public sector and related entities for linking regional passenger transport systems to national and TEN-T networks
- Developing smart mobility solutions and services to connect regions to transport nodes through improved standards and interoperability
- Improving the coordination of passenger transport actors within and between regions (incl. across borders)
- Other (please specify)

Transport 3: In which way and to what extent did the Interreg CE programme contribute to improving coordination among freight transport stakeholders for increasing multimodal environmentally-friendly freight solutions?

- Improving coordination among freight transport stakeholders for increasing multimodal environmentally-friendly freight solutions
- Increasing knowledge and implementation capacities of freight transport stakeholders for multimodal environmentally-friendly freight transport systems and logistics
- Improving coordination among freight transport stakeholders contributing to more environmentally friendly freight transport systems
- Developing multimodal platforms to consolidate, optimise and make freight transport flows greener, incl. across borders
- Achieving more balanced public-private partnerships among freight transport stakeholders
- Other (please specify)

2.6. In your opinion, to what extent was Interreg CE able to contribute to better coordination between policy - making bodies at **different levels** (EU, national, regional and local)?

- *Horizontally, at transnational level*
- *Horizontally, at national level*
- *Horizontally, at regional level*
- *Horizontally, at local level*
- *Vertically, between the national and EU levels*
- *Vertically, between the regional and national levels*
- *Vertically, between the local and regional levels*
- *Vertically, between multiple governance levels*
- *Other (please specify)*

Open text box: Please provide additional details in respect to your answer

Answers as Likert scale: *from 1 to 5 (1 – Not at all, 2 - To a small extent, 3 - To some extent; 4 - To a large extent; 5 - To a very large extent, I don't know)*

2.7. In your opinion, to what extent did the Interreg CE outputs and results **contribute to changing practices**:

- at organisational level?
- at individual level?

Open text box: Please provide additional details in respect to the observed change

Answers as Likert scale: *from 1 to 5 (1 - no change, 2 - low change, 3 - moderate change, 4 - high change, 5 - very high change, I don't know/ Not applicable)*

2.8. In your opinion, to what extent were Interreg CE **outputs and results taken up in the policy-making process**, either at local, regional or national level (i.e. used for or integrated into policy-making)?

Answers as Likert scale: *from 1 to 5 (1 – Not at all, 2 - To a small extent, 3 - To some extent; 4 - To a large extent; 5 - To a very large extent, I don't know)*

2.9. To what extent were the results and outputs of the Interreg CE projects **transferred to other territories** (e.g. to territories with a different demographic/economic structure than yours etc.)?

Answers as Likert scale: from 1 to 5 (1 – Not at all, 2 - To a small extent, 3 - To some extent; 4 - To a large extent; 5 - To a very large extent, I don't know)

2.10. To what extent were the results and outputs of the Interreg CE projects **transferred to / adopted by other levels of governance** (e.g. from the local to the regional, national or transnational level/EU level)?

Answers as Likert scale: from 1 to 5 (1 – Not at all, 2 - To a small extent, 3 - To some extent; 4 - To a large extent; 5 - To a very large extent, I don't know)

2.11. To the best of your knowledge, which of the following **types of territories** benefited the most from the actions supported by Interreg CE? (multiple choice)

- Cities, towns and suburbs
- Functional urban areas
- Rural areas
- Industrial areas
- Touristic areas
- Sparsely populated areas
- Economically / demographically declining areas
- Economically / demographically growing areas
- Isolated areas / poorly accessible areas
- Areas already well-connected to other regions and countries
- Other (please specify)
- I don't know

(Textbox: Please provide additional details for your answer)

Answers: multiple choice

2.12. To the best of your knowledge, which of the following **target group(s)** benefited the most from the actions supported by Interreg CE? (multiple choice)

- Workforce (e.g. through improving their skills of employed and unemployed)
- Entrepreneurs (e.g. through improving their technological and management competences)
- SMEs (e.g. through improving their innovation capacities and networks)
- Large enterprises (e.g. through improving their capacities for environmentally friendly freight transport)
- Public authorities (e.g. through improving their capacities regarding energy efficiency, low carbon economy and mobility etc.)
- Higher education and research institutes (e.g. through improving innovation networks)
- NGOs or other interest groups (e.g. through raising awareness regarding sustainability, social innovation or cultural heritage)
- Business support organisations (e.g. through establishing networks and increasing competencies)
- General public
- Other (please specify)
- I don't know

(Textbox: Please provide additional details for your answer)

Answers: multiple choice

2.13. In your opinion, to what extent was the Interreg CE programme relevant for achieving the **objectives of national/regional strategies** in your country?

Answers as Likert scale: from 1 to 5 (1 – Not at all, 2 - To a small extent, 3 - To some extent; 4 - To a large extent; 5 - To a very large extent, I don't know)

(Textbox: Do you know any example of synergies between Interreg CE and regional/national strategies? Box only appearing if answer to the question is either 4 or 5)

- 2.14. In your opinion: How effective is the Interreg CE programme in delivering results per Euro spent, compared to mainstream EU Cohesion policy programmes? Is it:

Answers as Likert scale: from 1 to 5 (1 – much less effective than mainstream programmes, 2 - less effective than mainstream programmes, 3 – approximately even to mainstream programmes; 4 – more effective than mainstream programmes; 5 – much more effective than mainstream programmes, I don't know)

(Textbox: Please provide additional details for your answer)

- 2.15. In your opinion, should the (financial and strategic) **importance of the Interreg CE programme** (and European Territorial Cooperation programmes more generally) in relation to mainstream EU Cohesion policy programmes increase or decrease **in the future**?

Answers as Likert scale: from 1 to 5 (1 – Not at all, 2 - To a small extent, 3 - To some extent; 4 - To a large extent; 5 - To a very large extent, I don't know)

(Textbox: Please provide additional details for your answer)

- 2.16. In your opinion, what are the **most pressing needs and challenges that the Interreg CE programme should address in the future** (during the period 2021-2027)?

Open text box

Final message: "Thank you for your contribution!"

5.3. PROJECT END-USERS

Engagement of end-users at project level through survey

1. ABOUT YOU (drop-down list) (all compulsory)

- 1.1. Country (predefined, single choice, text field available for Other, outside programme area)
- 1.2. Region (NUTS 2) – (predefined, multiple choice, based on 1.1., text field available for other, outside programme area and for entire national territory) – please refer to the region(s) you are located in, NOT to the one where the project was implemented. It will also include as option "I don't know", "Other"
- 1.3. Please indicate the project(s) under which you took part in organised activities. (predefined, single choice, includes "I don't know").
- 1.4. **What motivated you to be part of the project's target group?** (multiple choice, plus text box for other)
 - Immediate benefits I envisaged

- Long-term benefits I envisaged
- The project design/ topic/ activities were interesting
- The project responded to the needs of my organization
- I knew/ trusted the partner organisations
- I had participated in similar projects previously, with positive results

1.5. How were you selected to be part of the project's target group? *(multiple choice, plus text box for other)*

- My organisation applied and participated after undergoing a selection process
- My organisation applied and participated, but I am not aware of a selection process
- My organization was invited by the project partner(s)
- Other (please specify)
- I don't remember/I don't know

1.6. Which type of activities was your organization (or its members) involved in? *(multiple choice, plus text box for other)*

- Trainings
- Mentoring
- Contests
- Implementing pilot actions
- Meetings
- Consultations (events, surveys etc.)
- Information and communication
- Other
- I don't remember/I don't know

1.7. Has your organization used one or more of the outputs (such as tools, strategies, guides etc.) produced as part of the project?

YES, NO, I don't know (single choice)

2. IMPACT OF THE SUPPORT YOU RECEIVED

2.1. In your opinion, if you hadn't taken part in the Interreg CE project activities, would you have been able to access similar benefits (for example: services, tools, knowledge, opportunities, experiences etc.), from other free or paid sources?

YES, NO, I don't know (single choice)

2.2. How satisfied are you with the participation in the project activities?

Answers as Likert scale: 1-5, where 1 is least and 5 is most

2.3. In your opinion, what are the most significant benefits obtained by your organization from participating in the project activities?

Answers as Likert scale: 1-5, where 1 is least and 5 is most, I don't know

- Accessing knowledge/ good practices
- Accessing facilities
- Accessing networks
- Implementing activities that would be very difficult or even impossible to finance otherwise
- Expanding your activity internationally
- Improving the overall performance of the organization

- Changing practices at organisational and individual level
- I don't know

Textbox – If you observed other benefits of participating in the project, please let us know in brief.

2.4. Did your participation in the project activities lead to unintended effects, either positive or negative, that were not foreseen at the project's start?

Answers as Yes/No/I don't know

Open text box: Please provide additional details with respect to your answer

2.5. To your knowledge, how successful was the project in achieving the following:

Answers as Likert scale: 1-5, where 1 is least and 5 is most, I don't know/ Not applicable (multiple choice)

- Supporting the delivery of new or better services for citizens and companies
- Supporting further private investment (leverage of funds)
- Increasing knowledge, capacity and competences
- Fostering cooperation (in particular across borders)

Final message: "Thank you for your contribution!"

6. ANNEX 6 - INTERVIEWS

6.1. OVERVIEW

The table below summarises all interviews performed by the Evaluation team during Phase 1 of the Impact Evaluation.

Type of interviewed stakeholders	Number of interviews performed
Programme stakeholders (MA, JS, MC members, NCP, etc.)	18
Representatives of MRS and other Interreg programmes	4
Project beneficiaries	19
Project end-users	1
Thematic experts	5

The following sections provide the interview guidelines for each type of interviewed stakeholders.

6.2. STAKEHOLDERS AT THE PROGRAMME LEVEL

Guidelines for key-informant interviews

Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme stakeholders

Discussion topics and interview questions *(for interviewers only, not shared with interviewees)*

The following topics for discussion and listed questions are indicative. Depending on your knowledge and expertise, the discussion will be adjusted accordingly.

1. Initial conditions, needs and expectations regarding the projects supported by Interreg CE

1. *[Question only for the JS/MA/EC]* **In your opinion, to which extent were the projects financed by Interreg CE adequate to respond to the needs of central Europe territories at the time of launching each of the calls (Call 1 in 2015, Call 2 in 2016, Call 3 in 2017 and Call 4 in 2019)?**
2. *[Question only for national-level interviewees, e.g. NCP]* **To which extent are the projects financed by Interreg CE responding to the needs of your country?**

Please consider any sectoral aspects (either by thematic priority or specific objective) or territorial aspects which you may consider relevant. Also, please consider the evolution of the context in relation to the timing of the calls launched. If possible, please provide examples of needs/challenges specifically addressed by one or more Programme calls.

3. *[Question only for the JS/MA/EC]* **How has the fiscal and investment capacity of the public sector changed across the CE area during the implementation of Interreg CE, i.e. between 2014 and 2020?**

Please consider any sectoral aspects (either by thematic priority or specific objective) or territorial aspects which you may consider relevant.

4. *[Question only for national-level interviewees, e.g. NCP]* **How has the fiscal and investment capacity of the public sector changed in your country during the implementation of Interreg CE, i.e. between 2014 and 2020?**

Please consider any sectoral aspects (either by thematic priority or specific objective) or territorial aspects which you may consider relevant.

5. *[Question only for the JS/MA/EC]* **How has the socio-economic environment for the private sector changed across the CE area during the implementation of Interreg CE, i.e. between 2014 and 2020?**

Please consider any sectoral aspects (either by thematic priority or specific objective) or territorial aspects which you may consider relevant.

6. *[Question only for national-level interviewees, e.g. NCP]* **How has the socio-economic environment for the private sector changed in your country during the implementation of Interreg CE, i.e. between 2014 and 2020?**

Please consider any sectoral aspects (either by thematic priority or specific objective) or territorial aspects which you may consider relevant.

7. **How did these changes affect Interreg CE implementation/projects and, in particular, the achievement of the expected results?**
8. *[Question only for national-level interviewees, e.g. NCP]* **How familiar are you with the 4 Thematic Priorities (Innovation, Low-carbon, Culture and environment, and Transport) of Interreg CE and its 10 Specific Objectives?**

2. Gross effects, Results and net effects of Interreg CE

9. *[Question only for JS Project Managers, depending on their thematic focus]* **What were the most important contextual changes observed in the CE territory⁶¹ between 2014 and 2020 regarding the following topics?** *(this question will only refer to the sector covered by the interviewed Project Managers)*
- Innovation
 - Low-carbon
 - Environment
 - Culture
 - Transport.
10. *[Question only for interviewees having a detailed knowledge of Interreg CE, based on Q.8]* **To what extent do you think that Interreg CE actually contributed to the following in the CE area/your territory:** *(Only refer to the sectors you are familiar with)*
- Thematic Priority 1, Specific Objective 1.1: reinforce existing and establish new linkages between innovation actors
 - Thematic Priority 1, Specific Objective 1.2: improve skills and competences of business employees and entrepreneurs
 - Thematic Priority 2, Specific Objective 2.1: improve capacities of the public sector to increase energy efficiency and renewable energy use in public infrastructures
 - Thematic Priority 2, Specific Objective 2.2: improve capacities of the public sector to design and implement low-carbon energy planning
 - Thematic Priority 2, Specific Objective 2.3: improve capacities of the public sector to design and implement low-carbon mobility planning
 - Thematic Priority 3, Specific Objective 3.1: improve capacities of the public sector for the integrated environmental management of natural heritage and resources
 - Thematic Priority 3, Specific Objective 3.2: improve capacities of the public **and** private sectors for the sustainable use of cultural heritage and resources
 - Thematic Priority 3, Specific Objective 3.3: improve capacities of the public sector for the integrated environmental management of functional urban areas and their liveability
 - Thematic Priority 4, Specific Objective 4.1: improve capacities of the public sector to plan and coordinate regional passenger transport systems for their connexion to national and European transport networks
 - Thematic Priority 4, Specific Objective 4.2: improve coordination between freight transport stakeholders for better multimodal environmentally-friendly freight solutions
11. **Can you identify any factor, internal to Interreg CE, that may have influenced, positively or negatively, the results obtained?** (e.g. co-funding rates, change in administrative procedures, etc.)
12. **Can you identify any factor, external to Interreg CE, that may have influenced, positively or negatively, the results obtained?** (e.g. Covid-19 crisis, etc.)
13. **Were there any unintended effects of the projects supported by Interreg CE?**
14. *[Question only for national-level interviewees, e.g. NCP]* **Did you observe any synergies between Interreg CE and national/regional strategies or policies implemented in your country? If so,**

⁶¹ Austria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia, 8 Länder from Germany (Baden-Württemberg, Bayern, Berlin, Brandenburg, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Sachsen, Sachsen-Anhalt, Thüringen) and 9 regions from Italy (Emilia-Romagna, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Liguria, Lombardia, Piemonte, Provincia Autonoma Bolzano, Provincia Autonoma Trento, Valle d'Aosta, and Veneto).

please provide examples of such strategies or policies and explain how they facilitated/were facilitated by Interreg CE projects.

15. How do you assess the sustainability of the funded projects' outputs and results? In your opinion, are there any obstacles to the sustainability of these outputs and results? In your opinion, which factors are favourable to the sustainability of outputs and results?
16. Do you know of any other projects funded from other sources/programmes in the same thematic areas (Innovation, Low-carbon, Environment, Culture, and/or Transport) that have proven effective? In which way were these projects more or less effective than Interreg CE-funded projects?
17. Where do you see the added value of transnational cooperation for achieving the Specific Objectives of Interreg CE? Is there a specific pattern of transnational cooperation that proves to be more effective?

Prompt:

- to reduce regional disparities and increase cohesion in specific territories
 - to build trust across borders and foster European integration for a more competitive Europe
 - to make macro-regional strategies work
 - to develop, new knowledge, share experiences and enhance capacities
 - to make better use of limited resources
 - to jointly tackle challenges that go beyond borders
 - to offer better services for citizens and companies
 - to deliver visible results attractive for cities and regions across Europe
 - to trigger further public and private investment and accelerate urban and regional development
 - to improve policy making and initiate change
18. Do you know of any spill-over effects produced by Interreg CE projects, i.e. effects on other stakeholders than project beneficiaries and their end-users, or effects beyond the territory of the project beneficiaries?

3. Types of projects

19. *[Question only for interviewees having a detailed knowledge of Interreg CE, in particular JS Project Managers]* What were the types of projects most sought after by the applicants/beneficiaries (if any), e.g. in terms of project duration, volume of funding, types of planned outputs, types of partners, etc.?
20. *[Question only for interviewees having a detailed knowledge of Interreg CE, in particular JS Project Managers]* In your opinion, which types of projects supported by Interreg CE produced the most notable effects (e.g. in terms of jobs created, people trained, amount of funds leveraged)? What were these effects? Were these effects linked to a specific type of output?

Please consider sectoral/thematic aspects, as well as additional effects, such as: synergetic and multiplication effects, accessing other funding sources, establishment of new partnerships, contribution to EU or Macro-Regional strategies, transferability to other projects or sectors, contribution to better governance, change of practices at organisational level, value added generated for target groups, territorial coverage.

21. *[Question only for interviewees having a detailed knowledge of Interreg CE, in particular JS Project Managers]* Have you observed any “model” projects (e.g. in terms of budget or duration, Thematic Priority or SO, number or type of partners, etc.), activities (e.g. types of activities outlined in the WPs) or methods (e.g. in terms of cooperation arrangements, communication channels, etc.) that seem to be outperforming in terms of outputs and results?
22. *[Question only for interviewees having a detailed knowledge of Interreg CE, in particular JS Project Managers]* Are there any projects that you would recommend for a more in-depth analysis? Please provide the reasons for your recommendations.

4. Project beneficiaries

23. How do you assess the overall capacity of the beneficiaries to establish transnational partnerships, and design and implement successful projects (i.e. projects which provide a solid contribution to achieving the expected objectives of Interreg CE)?

Please take into consideration the size and type of beneficiary, apart from sectoral/thematic and territorial aspects. Also, please consider any (types of) partnerships that might arise as particularly successful.

5. Target groups and territorial effects

24. To the best of your knowledge, did Interreg CE produce significant benefits to specific target groups? Which target groups experienced the change most?
25. To the best of your knowledge, did Interreg CE produce significant benefits to specific types of territories?

Please refer to, for example: urban areas, rural areas, densely and scarcely populated areas, mountainous areas and flatlands, industrial areas, touristic areas, economically or demographically stable or growing areas, economically or demographically shrinking areas, inner peripheries, , well-connected areas, isolated areas, regions at EU external borders)

Also, please take into consideration the territorial distribution of these Interreg CE effects in the entire Programme area.

6. Policy uptake and contribution to wider strategies

26. How do you assess the uptake of results into policy-making for innovation, low-carbon, environment, culture, and transport?
 - a. At the local (municipality) level?
 - b. At the regional level?
 - c. At the national level?
 - d. At the EU level?
27. *[Question only for the JS/MA/EC]* Have you observed any change of practice at the organisational level within public authorities across the CE area as a result of Interreg CE? Have you noticed any change in the perception of institutions by project beneficiaries and/or the wider public?
28. *[Question only for national-level interviewees, e.g. NCP]* Have you observed any change of practice at the organisational level within public authorities in your country as a result of Interreg CE? Have you noticed any change in the perception of institutions by project beneficiaries and/or the wider public?
29. In your opinion, did Interreg CE help improve multilevel governance between the local and regional levels? Between the regional and national levels? Between the national and EU levels?

30. In your opinion, to which extent did Interreg CE contribute to the Europe 2020 Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth aiming at:

- a. Employment
- b. Research & Development
- c. Climate change & energy
- d. Education
- e. Poverty and social exclusion

31. In your opinion, to which extent did Interreg CE contribute to the following Macro-Regional Strategies:

- a. the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region
- b. the EU Strategy for the Danube Region
- c. the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region
- d. the EU Strategy for the Alpine Region

7. Concluding remarks

32. Is there any other aspect regarding the impacts of Interreg CE that we have not covered in this interview and you would like to mention?

33. In your opinion, what would be the main lessons learned in relation to the overall implementation of Interreg CE?

Thank you very much for your contribution!

6.3. MACRO-REGIONAL STRATEGIES AND OTHER INTERREG PROGRAMMES

Guidelines for key-informant interviews

Representatives of other Interreg programmes and Macro-Regional Strategies

Discussion topics and interview questions

The following topics for discussion and listed questions are indicative. Depending on your knowledge and experience, the discussion will be adjusted accordingly.

Preliminary remarks

Before we start, please let us know how familiar you are with the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme 2014-2020 (Interreg CE). Kindly let us know of any involvement/collaboration you might have had with Interreg CE (e.g. participation in an organised workshop, etc.).

Context

1. In your opinion, how has the contextual situation in the Interreg CE territory evolved over the period 2014-2020 with regard to the following issues (Only refer to the sectors you are familiar with):

- a. Innovation
- b. Low-carbon economy
- c. Environment
- d. Culture

e. Transport

[for Interreg Stakeholders only]

Synergies and Overlaps with other Interreg programmes

- 2. Are there any formal or informal mechanisms in place at the level of Managing Authorities/Joint Secretariats to coordinate the implementation of the different Interreg cross-border and transnational programmes? How effective are these mechanisms in ensuring coordination of Interreg programmes' implementation? How was the coordination with the Interreg CE Programme bodies in particular?**
- 3. Do you see any synergies between the projects funded by Interreg CE and the projects funded by other transnational and cross-border Interreg programmes covering (parts of) the same territory? If so, where do these synergies stem from? (e.g. from projects pursuing congruent/complementary objectives, from projects implemented by similar partners, etc.).**
- 4. In your opinion, do these synergies lead to cost-effectiveness in achieving each of the Interreg programmes' objectives?**

Please detail your answer by thematic sector and region, where relevant, and provide concrete examples, where possible, for this and for the next questions.

- 5. On the other hand, do you see any overlaps (e.g. same target groups addressed by several projects with similar objectives) between the projects funded by Interreg CE and the projects funded by other transnational and cross-border Interreg programmes covering (parts of) the same territory?**
- 6. In your opinion, do these overlaps lead to inefficiencies in achieving each of the Interreg programmes' objectives?**

[for MRS Stakeholders only]

Synergies with Macro-Regional Strategies (MRS)

- 2. Do you know of any mechanism in place, formally or informally, to better exchange on and coordinate Interreg CE with the MRS you are coordinating?**
- 3. In your opinion, to which extent do the thematic priorities/Specific Objectives of Interreg CE dovetail with the objectives of the MRS? How does Interreg CE contribute to the action plan of the MRS?**

Please detail your answer by thematic sector and region, where relevant, and provide concrete examples of contributions, where possible.

- 4. Do you see any obstacle to a greater contribution of Interreg CE to action plan of the MRS? If so, how could this (these) obstacle(s) be overcome?**

Lessons learned

- 5. In your opinion, what are the main lessons learned with respect to the Interreg CE Programme's contribution to MRS?**

Thank you very much for your contribution!

6.4. PROJECT BENEFICIARIES

Guidelines for beneficiaries' interviews

The following topics for discussion and listed questions are indicative. The discussion will be adjusted according to your knowledge and experience. Any other insights, besides those covered by the interview guidelines, are welcome.

1. Project design. How was the project developed?

Please share your insights with respect to design aspects such as: how the project idea was developed, which needs it addressed, how the objectives were defined and targets set, what innovative solutions were chosen and why, how resources were allocated, etc. Also, please refer to how the partnership was set up, how the partners were chosen and which aspects were relevant when establishing the partnership

2. Project results. In your opinion, what were the most successful/important achievements of the project? What was the added value of transnational cooperation for obtaining them?

Please refer to intended and unintended effects, internal (within project partnership) and external (outside project partnership) effects (e.g. synergetic and multiplication effects) that you have observed during and perhaps after the implementation; the type of target groups and territories most impacted by the project; particularly prominent results etc. Also, please refer to any non-observed effects (though intended), where applicable.

3. Implementation context. In your opinion, did any context-related factors influence the success of your project? If yes, please provide further explanations on how this influence manifested itself.

Please consider aspects such as: the location of your project activities, technological developments in your field, wider trends (such as digitalization), local conditions which proved especially relevant etc.

4. Project partnership. In your opinion, how did the partnership contribute to the success of the project?

Please consider the type of entities involved (public/private etc.), their experience and technical capacity, their capacity to implement projects, involvement in (institutional/research/business) networks, sectoral expertise, motivation to participate, added value during the implementation. Also, please refer to the profile of the partnership as a whole (multi-disciplinary, cross-sectoral, territorial representation), previous collaborations, dynamics etc.

5. Project management and implementation. What aspects related to the management of the project would you highlight as particularly helpful/detrimental during the implementation? What were the particular challenges faced during the implementation?

Please refer to aspects such as: people and teams, procedures, information flows, decision-making, mid-term review of the project, voluntary evaluation, etc.

6. Support of relevant stakeholders. In your opinion, were there any stakeholders whose support proved to be particularly effective for the implementation, results and sustainability of the project?

Please refer to aspects such as: political support at local, regional or national level, relationship with the media, support of programme bodies (in particular Joint Secretariat and National Contact Points), other beneficiaries, other stakeholders, etc.

- 7. Target groups / end-users. What aspects related to the target group(s) and end-users of the project outputs and results would you highlight as particularly helpful/detrimental during the implementation?**

Please refer to aspects such as: the type of target groups and end-users, their availability, willingness to reach, understanding of needs, prior engagement by project partners, outreach, communication and engagement strategy etc.

- 8. Change of practices. In your experience, did your project facilitate a change of practices at the organisational and / or individual level, either among project partners or your target groups / end-users?**

Please refer to aspects such as: potential skills and / or competences acquired, type of influence (learning / administrative) etc

- 9. Communication strategy. What aspects related to external communication would you highlight as particularly effective?**

Please refer to aspects which may have contributed to promoting the project and showcasing results, building trust beyond its target groups and end-users.

- 10. Sustainability. How would you assess the sustainability of your project's results? What mechanisms or measures were set up to ensure sustainability?**

Please refer to aspects such as: ownership of project results, transferability and uptake at the policy level, transferability of results to regions and stakeholders beyond the project, possible spill-over effects, leverage of funds, financing through other initiatives or funds etc.

- 11. Any other relevant information.** We would greatly appreciate if you could share any further information you consider useful for the evaluation.

Thank you very much for your contribution!

6.5. PROJECT END USERS

Engagement of end-users at project level through interviews

The following topics for discussion and listed questions are indicative. The discussion will be adjusted according to the knowledge and experience of the interviewee.

- 1. How did your organization come to use one or more of the outputs produced by the project?**

Please share your insights with respect to aspects such as: how did you hear about the project, how did you become involved and why, what motivated you to use the outputs

- 2. Please describe the overall experience of using the outputs resulting from the project.**

Please share your insights with respect to aspects such as: what needs it addressed, if (and how) particular objectives or conditions were set, what resources were allocated from your side, etc.

- 3. Engagement with project partners. What aspects would you highlight as particularly helpful during the implementation?**

Please refer to aspects such as: people and teams, procedures, information flows, decision-making, communication etc. Also, please consider their availability, willingness to reach, understanding of needs, prior engagement by project partners, outreach and engagement strategy etc.

4. **Results and benefits.** In your opinion, what types of effects were produced and what was the added value of using the outputs of the project?

Please refer to the internal and external effects that you have observed.

To include: Contribution to change of practices at organisational and individual level, added value for specific types of territories, added value for specific target groups

5. **Sustainability.** How would you assess the sustainability of results / benefits achieved by using the outputs/results of the project? What mechanisms or measures were set up to ensure their sustainability for your organization?

Please refer to aspects such as: leverage of funds, ownership, financing through other initiatives, upscaling etc.

6. **Any other relevant information.** We would appreciate if you could share any other information you consider useful for the evaluation.

Thank you very much for your contribution!

6.6. THEMATIC EXPERTS

The expert should be aware of and knowledgeable about the Interreg CE programme in order to give informed feedback on the contribution of the programme to the discussed topics – this should be considered while selecting the experts and/or included here in the guidelines.

Guidelines for thematic expert interviews

The following topics for discussion and listed questions are indicative. The discussion will be adjusted according to your knowledge and experience.

INNOVATION

Contextual developments

1. **To which extent are you familiar with the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme 2014-2020 (Interreg CE)?**
2. **In your opinion, how has the contextual situation in the Interreg CE territory evolved over the period 2014-2020 with regard to the following issues** *(only refer to the issues you are familiar with)*:
 - a. Linkages between actors of the innovation systems: research institutes and universities, SMEs and large companies, public sector, etc.
 - b. Performance of clusters and innovation networks, including their degree of internationalisation and cross-border exchange of knowledge and technology
 - c. Availability of public services for innovation support to businesses (including finance)
 - d. Implementation of Smart Specialisation Strategies in key sectors of the CE regional economies
 - e. Entrepreneurial competences and mindsets
 - f. Social innovation to meet demographic challenges such as migration and brain drain

SYNERGETIC AND MULTIPLICATION EFFECTS

3. How would you assess the effectiveness of the policies and strategies promoting innovation in the CE territory at local, regional, national and EU level? Do you know of any policy or strategy that works particularly well, and why?
4. How would you assess the level of coordination of innovation policies across the CE territory (incl. in a multilevel governance and cross-border/transnational context)? In particular, does cross-border/transnational coordination help exploit synergies and achieve greater impact?

TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION

5. How would you assess the level of transnational cooperation on innovation in the CE territory? What is the potential for and barriers against further transnational cooperation on innovation in the region?
6. Where do you see the added value of transnational cooperation for promoting innovation in the CE territory? Is there a specific pattern of transnational cooperation that proves to be more effective?

SPECIFIC TARGET GROUPS

7. In your opinion, are there any actors of the innovation systems in the CE territory who need to build more capacity and knowledge? And actors that are already at the forefront of innovation? *E.g. entrepreneurs, SMEs, large enterprises, business support organisations, public authorities, higher education and research institutes, NGOs or other interest groups, the general public.*

SPECIFIC TYPES OF TERRITORIES

8. In your opinion, are there any types of regions in the CE territory that are lagging behind in terms of (economic and social) innovation? And types of regions that are leading? *E.g. Cities, towns and suburbs, functional urban areas, rural areas, industrial areas, touristic areas, sparsely populated areas, economically / demographically declining areas, economically / demographically growing areas, isolated areas / poorly accessible areas, areas already well-connected to other regions and countries.*

FUTURE CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS

9. In your opinion, what are the most pressing innovation needs and challenges that the CE territory will be facing in the near future (2021-2027)?

IMPACT OF THE INTERREG CE PROGRAMME

10. In your view, in which ways and to what extent has Interreg CE been successful in responding to the regional innovation challenges of the CE territory? In particular, what has been Interreg CE impact on each of the issues listed in Question 1?
11. In your view, has Interreg CE produced a greater impact for specific target groups? If so, how?
12. In your view, has Interreg CE produced a greater impact in specific types of territories/regions? If so, how?

Thank you very much for your contribution!

LOW-CARBON ECONOMY

CONTEXTUAL DEVELOPMENTS

1. To which extent are you familiar with the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme 2014-2020 (Interreg CE)?
2. In your opinion, how has the contextual situation in the Interreg CE territory evolved over the period 2014-2020 with regard to the following issues (*only refer to the issues you are familiar with*):
 - a. Energy efficiency and use of renewable energy in public infrastructures
 - b. Territorially based low-carbon/sustainable energy planning
 - c. Exploitation of endogenous renewable energy potentials at the local and regional levels
 - d. Approaches linking the demand and supply sides, taking into account the quality and capacity of energy distribution grids
 - e. (Integrated) low-carbon mobility planning and solutions in functional urban areas
 - f. Smart, low-carbon mobility in public urban transport through new services, products and technologies

SYNERGETIC AND MULTIPLICATION EFFECTS

3. How would you assess the effectiveness of the policies and strategies promoting the low-carbon economy in the CE territory at local, regional, national and EU level? Do you know of any policy or strategy that works particularly well, and why?
4. How would you assess the level of coordination of low-carbon policies across the CE territory (incl. in a multilevel governance and cross-border/transnational context)? In particular, does cross-border/transnational coordination help exploit synergies and achieve greater impact?

TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION

5. How would you assess the level of transnational cooperation in the low-carbon economy in the CE territory? What is the potential for and barriers against further transnational cooperation in that field in the region?
6. Where do you see the added value of transnational cooperation for supporting the low-carbon economy in the CE territory? Is there a specific pattern of transnational cooperation that proves to be more effective?

SPECIFIC TARGET GROUPS

7. In your opinion, are there any actors of the low-carbon economy in the CE territory who need to build more capacity and knowledge? And actors that are driving the low-carbon economy? *E.g. entrepreneurs, SMEs, large enterprises, business support organisations, public authorities, higher education and research institutes, NGOs or other interest groups, the general public.*

SPECIFIC TYPES OF TERRITORIES

8. In your opinion, are there any types of regions in the CE territory that are lagging behind in terms of low-carbon/sustainable economy? And types of regions that are leading? *E.g. Cities, towns and suburbs, functional urban areas, rural areas, industrial areas, touristic areas, sparsely populated areas, economically / demographically declining areas, economically / demographically growing areas, isolated areas / poorly accessible areas, areas already well-connected to other regions and countries.*

FUTURE CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS

9. In your opinion, what are the most pressing low-carbon economy needs and challenges that the CE territory will be facing in the near future (2021-2027)?

IMPACT OF THE INTERREG CE PROGRAMME

10. In your view, in which ways and to what extent has Interreg CE been successful in responding to the regional challenges of the low-carbon economy in the CE territory? In particular, what has been Interreg CE impact on each of the issues listed in Question 1?
11. In your view, has Interreg CE produced a greater impact for specific target groups? If so, how?
12. In your view, has Interreg CE produced a greater impact in specific types of territories/regions? If so, how?

Thank you very much for your contribution!

ENVIRONMENT

CONTEXTUAL DEVELOPMENTS

1. To which extent are you familiar with the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme 2014-2020 (Interreg CE)?
2. In your opinion, how has the contextual situation in the Interreg CE territory evolved over the period 2014-2020 with regard to the following issues (*only refer to the issues you are familiar with*):
 - a. Protection and sustainable use of natural heritage and resources
 - b. Risk prevention, adaptation to and reduction of climate change effects
 - c. Reduction of land use conflicts in functional urban areas
 - d. Rehabilitation and reactivation of brownfields in functional urban areas
 - e. Environmental quality (air, water, waste, soil, climate) in functional urban areas

SYNERGETIC AND MULTIPLICATION EFFECTS

3. How would you assess the effectiveness of environmental policies and strategies in the CE territory at local, regional, national and EU level? Do you know of any policy or strategy that works particularly well, and why?
4. How would you assess the level of coordination of environmental policies across the CE territory (incl. in a multilevel governance and cross-border/transnational context)? In particular, does cross-border/transnational coordination help exploit synergies and achieve greater impact?

TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION

5. How would you assess the level of transnational cooperation to develop and adopt environmental policies/practices in the CE territory? What is the potential for and barriers against further transnational cooperation in that field in the region?
6. Where do you see the added value of transnational cooperation for adopting environmentally-friendly and sustainable practices in the CE territory? Is there a specific pattern of transnational cooperation that proves to be more effective?

SPECIFIC TARGET GROUPS

7. In your opinion, are there any actors in the CE territory who need to build more capacity and knowledge with regard to environmental practices? And actors that already have advanced environmental capabilities? *E.g. entrepreneurs, SMEs, large enterprises, business support organisations, public authorities, higher education and research institutes, NGOs or other interest groups, the general public.*

SPECIFIC TYPES OF TERRITORIES

8. In your opinion, are there any types of regions in the CE territory that are lagging behind in terms of environmental practices (i.e. protection and sustainable use of natural resources, liveability, etc.)? And types of regions that are leading? *E.g. Cities, towns and suburbs, functional urban areas, rural areas, industrial areas, touristic areas, sparsely populated areas, economically / demographically declining areas, economically / demographically growing areas, isolated areas / poorly accessible areas, areas already well-connected to other regions and countries.*

FUTURE CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS

9. In your opinion, what are the most pressing environmental needs and challenges that the CE territory will be facing in the near future (2021-2027)?

IMPACT OF THE INTERREG CE PROGRAMME

10. In your view, in which ways and to what extent has Interreg CE been successful in responding to the regional environmental challenges of the CE territory? In particular, what has been Interreg CE impact on each of the issues listed in Question 1?
11. In your view, has Interreg CE produced a greater impact for specific target groups? If so, how?
12. In your view, has Interreg CE produced a greater impact in specific types of territories/regions? If so, how?

Thank you very much for your contribution!

CULTURE

CONTEXTUAL DEVELOPMENTS

1. To which extent are you familiar with the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme 2014-2020 (Interreg CE)?
2. In your opinion, how has the contextual situation in the Interreg CE territory evolved over the period 2014-2020 with regard to the following issues (*only refer to the issues you are familiar with*):
- a. Sustainable use of cultural heritage and resources
 - b. Cultural and creative industries (incl. their potential for job creation)
 - c. Transnational linkages and coordination between cultural heritage sites and/or institutions working in culture-related fields (incl. in a cross-border context)

SYNERGETIC AND MULTIPLICATION EFFECTS

3. How would you assess the effectiveness of cultural policies and strategies in the CE territory at local, regional, national and EU level? Do you know of any policy or strategy that works particularly well, and why?
4. How would you assess the level of coordination of cultural policies across the CE territory (incl. in a multilevel governance and cross-border/transnational context)? In particular, does cross-border/transnational coordination help exploit synergies and achieve greater impact?

TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION

5. How would you assess the level of transnational cooperation to develop and adopt cultural policies in the CE territory? What is the potential for and barriers against further transnational cooperation in that field in the region?
6. Where do you see the added value of transnational cooperation for supporting the cultural sector in the CE territory? Is there a specific pattern of transnational cooperation that proves to be more effective?

SPECIFIC TARGET GROUPS

7. In your opinion, are there any actors of the cultural sector in the CE territory who need to build more capacity and knowledge? And actors that already have advanced cultural capabilities? *E.g. entrepreneurs, SMEs, large enterprises, business support organisations, public authorities, higher education and research institutes, NGOs or other interest groups, the general public.*

SPECIFIC TYPES OF TERRITORIES

8. In your opinion, are there any types of regions in the CE territory that are lagging behind in terms of protection and exploitation of cultural resources? And types of regions that are leading? *E.g. Cities, towns and suburbs, functional urban areas, rural areas, industrial areas, touristic areas, sparsely populated areas, economically / demographically declining areas, economically / demographically growing areas, isolated areas / poorly accessible areas, areas already well-connected to other regions and countries.*

FUTURE CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS

9. In your opinion, what are the most pressing needs of and challenges for the cultural sector that the CE territory will be facing in the near future (2021-2027)?

IMPACT OF THE INTERREG CE PROGRAMME

10. In your view, in which ways and to what extent has Interreg CE been successful in responding to the regional challenges of the cultural sector in the CE territory? In particular, what has been Interreg CE impact on each of the issues listed in Question 1?
11. In your view, has Interreg CE produced a greater impact for specific target groups? If so, how?
12. In your view, has Interreg CE produced a greater impact in specific types of territories/regions? If so, how?

Thank you very much for your contribution!

TRANSPORT

CONTEXTUAL DEVELOPMENTS

1. To which extent are you familiar with the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme 2014-2020 (Interreg CE)?
2. In your opinion, how has the contextual situation in the Interreg CE territory evolved over the period 2014-2020 with regard to the following issues (*only refer to the issues you are familiar with*):
- a. (Integrated) low-carbon mobility planning and solutions in functional urban areas
 - b. Smart, low-carbon mobility in public urban transport through new services, products and technologies
 - c. Connection of regional passenger transport systems to national and European transport networks
 - d. Smart mobility solutions and services to connect regions to transport nodes through improved standards and interoperability
 - e. Multimodal environmentally-friendly freight transport systems and logistics
 - f. Public-private partnerships among freight transport stakeholders

SYNERGETIC AND MULTIPLICATION EFFECTS

3. How would you assess the effectiveness of transport policies and strategies in the CE territory at local, regional, national and EU level? Do you know of any policy or strategy that works particularly well, and why?

4. How would you assess the level of coordination of transport policies across the CE territory (incl. in a multilevel governance and cross-border/transnational context)? In particular, does cross-border/transnational coordination help exploit synergies and achieve greater impact?

TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION

5. How would you assess the level of transnational cooperation to develop and adopt (low-carbon and interconnected) transport policies in the CE territory? What is the potential for and barriers against further transnational cooperation in that field in the region?
6. Where do you see the added value of transnational cooperation for supporting passenger and freight transport in the CE territory? Is there a specific pattern of transnational cooperation that proves to be more effective?

SPECIFIC TARGET GROUPS

7. In your opinion, are there any actors of the transport sector in the CE territory who need to build more capacity and knowledge to achieve low-carbon and interconnected transport systems? And actors that are ahead of others in that regard? *E.g. entrepreneurs, SMEs, large enterprises, business support organisations, public authorities, higher education and research institutes, NGOs or other interest groups, the general public.*

SPECIFIC TYPES OF TERRITORIES

8. In your opinion, are there any types of regions in the CE territory that are lagging behind in terms of passenger and freight transport? And types of regions that are leading? *E.g. Cities, towns and suburbs, functional urban areas, rural areas, industrial areas, touristic areas, sparsely populated areas, economically / demographically declining areas, economically / demographically growing areas, isolated areas / poorly accessible areas, areas already well-connected to other regions and countries.*

FUTURE CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS

9. In your opinion, what are the most pressing needs of and challenges for the transport sector that the CE territory will be facing in the near future (2021-2027)?

IMPACT OF THE INTERREG CE PROGRAMME

10. In your view, in which ways and to what extent has Interreg CE been successful in responding to the regional challenges of the transport sector in the CE territory? In particular, what has been Interreg CE impact on each of the issues listed in Question 1?
11. In your view, has Interreg CE produced a greater impact for specific target groups? If so, how?
12. In your view, has Interreg CE produced a greater impact in specific types of territories/regions? If so, how?

Thank you very much for your contribution!

7. ANNEX 7 – FOCUS GROUPS

7.1. MINUTES OF THE FOCUS GROUPS

7.1.1. GENERAL SESSION

IMPACT EVALUATION OF THE INTERREG CENTRAL EUROPE PROGRAMME GENERAL FOCUS GROUP MEETING MINUTES, 8 TH NOVEMBER 2021	
PARTICIPANTS	ETF members, JS members, MA members, Evaluation team (Civitta and wiiw), MC members, NPCs, Thematic experts, Observers
DISCUSSION THEMES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • presentation of the preliminary findings of the Impact Evaluation of the Interreg CE Programme • validation of the results at the programme level
Welcome and meeting objectives	
<p>The Evaluation team addressed a welcome note.</p> <p>The JS – opening word</p> <p>The meeting rules and objectives were presented.</p>	
Presentation of the main results included in the Preliminary Findings Report	
<p>The Evaluation team made a presentation of the main findings of the Progress Report, structured as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of the programme • General needs and challenges of CE area • Net effect of the Programme • Understanding of impacts and what works best • Cost effectiveness • Lessons learned • Preliminary findings from interviews with Programme stakeholders • Preliminary general conclusions • Recommendations 	
Open discussion regarding the Preliminary Findings Report	
<p>The following aspects were brought into discussion by the Evaluation team:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>The Evaluation team asked the focus group participants to what extent the findings and conclusions are consistent with their own views and experience and what could have been done differently by the beneficiaries, or by the Programme authorities to have even better achievements / greater impact? Additionally, the Evaluation team highlighted the fact that the feedback from projects partners was widely positive, but asked the focus group participants to provide additional information that might have been missed during the Evaluation and to share their view on what had the greatest contribution to producing the observed effects.</i> <p>The Evaluation team was advised not to put much emphasize on the pilot actions alone, as there are also complementary types of outputs depending on the maturity of the field. For example, innovation tools have to be developed and tested and in that case all types of outputs are necessary.</p> <p>It was important to see that partnerships were part of thematic communities. Capitalization process important and the Programme did it in the FS call, the next phase will address some relevant assessment on those process. Additionally, it was highlighted the importance of shifting individual projects to communities and partnerships. Evaluation team to include the integrated approach in the recommendation of the report.</p> <p>Participants insisted on the cost-effectiveness of trainings and would consider them to be relevant for the sustainability of the projects.</p>	

IMPACT EVALUATION OF THE INTERREG CENTRAL EUROPE PROGRAMME
GENERAL FOCUS GROUP MEETING MINUTES, 8TH NOVEMBER 2021

2. *The Evaluation team explained, currently, that pilot actions are more visible and more effective than trainings, but trainings might be more effective in the long run.*

Another point raised was related to Programme beneficiaries. While cities and FUA profited more from the program, there is the opportunity of transnational collaboration with the agricultural funds. The cooperation would encourage rural regions to be more involved.

It was brought up that reporting requirements proved to be rather demanding. For the next reporting, the issue will be discussed. The focus should be on milestones delivered rather than on costs. Because of the rigorous reporting requirements, it's probable that partners may struggle.

It was concluded that it would be interesting to see how the projects themselves see this situation, especially after the projects end.

It was presented that feedback on the Programme was gathered from a variety of partners, the feedback being generally good. Furthermore, it was emphasized that reporting seeks to ensure that the activities are carried out effectively. Interreg CE gives more importance to the results of the projects, in comparison to other programmes. Also, it was brought up that for the next Programme, less reporting and more side-by-side work would be valued.

The participants agreed there is a need to move the attention from pilot action to the structure results, which have significant impact on the regional development.

On the other hand, it was underlined that pilot actions are the most attractive elements of the projects. Thus, pilot actions represent necessary means for advertising and arising the willingness of partners to participate and contribute to achieving visible results.

It was surprising for the participants that findings showed that smaller organization are underrepresented in projects because they lack connections. The goal of Interreg CE is to build networks and the organizations had to enrich their connections during projects implementation. It was concluded that this would have to be clearly communicated to partners.

The Evaluation team as advised to improve the graphs in the report.

3. *The Evaluation team thanked all of the participants.*

7.1.2. INNOVATION

IMPACT EVALUATION OF THE INTERREG CENTRAL EUROPE PROGRAMME
INNOVATION THEMATIC FOCUS GROUP MEETING MINUTES, 8TH NOVEMBER 2021

PARTICIPANTS	ETF members, JS members, MA members, Evaluation team (Civitta and wiiw), MC members, NPCs, Thematic experts, Observers
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DISCUSSION THEMES

- presentation of the preliminary finding of the Impact Evaluation of the Interreg Central Europe Programme
- validation of the results for the innovation priority

Welcome and meeting objectives

The Evaluation team addressed a welcome note.

The meeting rules and objectives were presented.

Presentation of the main results included in the Preliminary Findings Report

The Evaluation team made a presentation of the main findings of the Progress Report, structured as follows:

- Main areas covered by the projects within the Innovation thematic
- Innovation needs and challenges
- Net effect of the Programme
- Understanding of impacts and what works best

IMPACT EVALUATION OF THE INTERREG CENTRAL EUROPE PROGRAMME
INNOVATION THEMATIC FOCUS GROUP MEETING MINUTES, 8TH NOVEMBER 2021

- Preliminary findings from interviews with Programme stakeholders
- Preliminary conclusions
- Recommendations

Open discussion regarding the Preliminary Findings Report

The following aspects were brought into discussion by the Evaluation team:

1. *The Evaluation team asked the focus group participants to what extent the findings and conclusions are consistent with their own views and experience and what could have been done differently by the beneficiaries, or by the Programme authorities to have even better achievements / greater impact? Additionally, the Evaluation team highlighted the fact that the feedback from projects partners was widely positive, but asked the focus group participants to provide additional information that might have been missed during the Evaluation and to share their view on what had the greatest contribution to producing the observed effects.*

Participants confirmed the preliminary findings of the Evaluation are commendable and relevant.

It was underlined that the findings show that the Programmes had a efficient approach for the whole community, providing good lessons to learn from.

The Evaluation team was suggested to rethink one of the conclusions bullet points which stipulated that the disparities in the field could be completely eliminated.

It was concluded that the flexibility to adapt to new trends and themes that may occur throughout the implementation Programme is the most important component that has led to projects having a greater impact.

The Evaluation team was asked about the types of territories that have not benefited from the Programme, given that the preliminary findings suggest that industrial urban regions have been the primary beneficiaries.

2. *The evaluation team explained that touristic areas or areas at the border were not particularly benefiting from the Programme, in comparison to Transport priority, however it covers the vast majority of CE territories. With regard to the disparities topic, the Evaluation team stressed that innovation has the mean to reduce the existing disparities.*

It was remarked that the projects from Innovation priority catch up with the trends and addressee a various part of topics to increase the innovation performance of CE region.

A question about pilot actions was raised. It was pointed out that only a tiny proportion of initiatives have pilot actions with investments. The Evaluation team was asked whether the funding have a big influence on the project pilot activities and design.

3. *The evaluation teams emphasized that the projects are designed by the territorial governments, and that specific projects are conducted to meet regional requirements. Investments in innovation are more difficult be realized, compared to the energy-related sector, where the technology can be put into practice.*

It was emphasized that pilot actions are crucial for the partner to join the consortium, as it is important to have tangible outputs.

It was recommended that, in addition to the west-east divide, the core-periphery divide to be considered, particularly in the area of innovation.

The Evaluation team was requested to provide further information about SMEs, specifically the characteristics of SMEs and their involvement in the Programme.

4. *The Evaluation team clarified that SMEs directly participated in project activities and all types of SMEs were represented. As per their profile, SMEs have less than 250 employees, and can be either public or private entities.*

It was stressed the need of focusing on the transferability of outcomes, which would result in a creating a flow of information and knowledge from the west to the east of the EU, from metropolitan to more rural areas, thus reducing the existing disparities.

IMPACT EVALUATION OF THE INTERREG CENTRAL EUROPE PROGRAMME

INNOVATION THEMATIC FOCUS GROUP MEETING MINUTES, 8TH NOVEMBER 2021

CE areas are considered as highly creative by beneficiaries, and the Programme facilitated the communication and networking between many partners and institutions from the area, that have already produced together significant outputs.

It was concluded that the innovation projects are essential for regional development and that the Programme should encourage the stakeholders to involve in innovation projects and should communicate what innovation is about maybe even at political level.

5. *The Evaluation team thanked all of the participants.*

Conclusions

- Focus group participants were positive about the preliminary findings
- There are significant disparities in innovation thematic based on territories, which the Programme aims to address.
- Innovation is a field that offers great opportunities, and it should be presented to all stakeholders more extensively.

7.1.3. LOW CARBON

IMPACT EVALUATION OF THE INTERREG CENTRAL EUROPE PROGRAMME

LOW CARBON THEMATIC FOCUS GROUP MEETING MINUTES, 8TH NOVEMBER 2021

PARTICIPANTS	ETF members, JS members, MA members, Evaluation team (Civitta and wiiw), MC members, NPCs, Thematic experts, Observers
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DISCUSSION THEMES

- presentation of the preliminary finding of the Impact Evaluation of the Interreg Central Europe Programme
- validation of the results for the low carbon priority

Welcome and meeting objectives

The Evaluation team addressed a welcome note.

The meeting rules and objectives were presented.

Presentation of the main results included in the Preliminary Findings Report

The Evaluation team made a presentation of the main findings of the Progress Report, structured as follows:

- Main areas covered by the projects within the Low Carbon thematic
- Innovation needs and challenges
- Net effect of the Programme
- Understanding of impacts and what works best
- Preliminary findings from interviews with Programme stakeholders
- Preliminary conclusions
- Recommendations

Open discussion regarding the Preliminary Findings Report

The following aspects were brought into discussion by the Evaluation team:

1. *The Evaluation team asked the focus group participants to what extent the findings and conclusions are consistent with their own views and experience and what could have been done differently by the beneficiaries, or by the Programme authorities to have even better achievements / greater impact? Additionally, the Evaluation team highlighted the fact that the feedback from projects partners was widely positive, but asked the focus group participants to provide additional information that might have been missed during the Evaluation and to share their view on what had the greatest contribution to producing the observed effects.*

Several points were raised in the beginning: 1) In the renewable energy industry, Austria, Slovenia, and Croatia have made significant progress, while other nations are still catching up. 2) More effort should be put into heating and cooling sector. 3) Although the program focuses on urban regions, rural areas should be linked to long-term mobility. 4) The Program's principal beneficiaries, via capacity building, are local governments. Focus group participants believe that including government-level stakeholders in the program might be beneficial.

It was explained that the TO4 was chosen because of its bottom-up and local approach, as opposed to the TO7, and municipalities were supposed to be the primary beneficiaries. Furthermore, it was noted that there are fewer projects and that they do not cover a broad range of issues because just 18% of the ERDF was allocated to this SO, compared to 28% in Innovation and 36% in Environment.

The Evaluation team was recommended to improve the report's conclusions, based on the information above.

It was emphasized the relevance of renewable energies. The pilot actions of the Programs are attractive to people and to stakeholders. There is, however, a need to shift the low carbon thematic to the rural area.

Another question raised was related to the changes in the EU plans, as well as at the national level, and if they had an influence on project partners and stakeholders. The Program establishes new means, and as a result, project partners are more cautious, compared to other SOs.

It was emphasized that there is no need to focus more on the food industry because there are other EU programs dedicated to that topic.

2. The Evaluation team argued that there is a potential to link different programme's outputs

The Evaluation team to mention it in the report.

The need of capacity building was brought up in the conversation, particularly for local governments that lack access to new technology and information. It is difficult to engage stakeholders at a multi-governmental level and the the Programme does not show many results. Because project durations are sometimes too short to observe tangible outcomes, networking and knowledge sharing are essential. It would take a long time before meaningful benefits are seen.

It was suggested that, following the example of Interreg Europe, a two-phase strategy could be considered to offer projects more time to prove outcomes.

The need of establishing a link between functional urban areas and low-carbon initiatives was emphasized. Low Carbon might also work with Transport and Mobility agendas that are more focused on rural and border areas.

In the case of the food industry, double financing should be avoided, but there should be clever synergies across diverse themes, enabling the development of the circular economy as well.

Focus group participants agreed that some synergies can be crated between Interreg priorities. Synergies are vital for all thematic elements of the Interreg CE Programme, but they are especially important for Low Carbon has links to all other sectors. It is worth considering establishing more initiatives linked to these topics in light of the new Green Deal.

3. The Evaluation team thanked all of the participants.

Conclusions

- Low-carbon is a sector with great of development opportunities.
- It is becoming increasingly vital to address the carbon effect of companies and society in general.
- There are synergies that may be formed between Low Carbon and other Interreg Programme targets.

7.1.4. ENVIRONMENT

PARTICIPANTS	ETF members, JS members, MA members, Evaluation team (Civitta and wiw), MC members, NPCs, Thematic experts, Observers
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DISCUSSION THEMES

- presentation of the preliminary finding of the Impact Evaluation of the Interreg Central Europe Programme

IMPACT EVALUATION OF THE INTERREG CENTRAL EUROPE PROGRAMME
ENVIRONMENT THEMATIC FOCUS GROUP MEETING MINUTES, 9TH NOVEMBER 2021

- validation of the results for the environment priority

Welcome and meeting objectives

The Evaluation team addressed a welcome note.

The meeting rules and objectives were presented.

Presentation of the main results included in the Preliminary Findings Report

The Evaluation team made a presentation of the main findings of the Progress Report, structured as follows:

- Characteristics of environment thematic in Central Europe
- Needs that the Programme addressed
- Expected long-term change
- Outputs of the Programme in numbers
- Net effect of the Programme
- Understanding of impacts and what works best
- Preliminary findings from interviews with Programme stakeholders
- Preliminary conclusions
- Recommendations

Open discussion regarding the Preliminary Findings Report

The following aspects were brought into discussion by the Evaluation team:

1. *The Evaluation team asked the focus group participants to what extent the findings and conclusions are consistent with their own views and experience and what could have been done differently by the beneficiaries, or by the Programme authorities to have even better achievements / greater impact? Additionally, the Evaluation team highlighted the fact that the feedback from projects partners was widely positive, but asked the focus group participants to provide additional information that might have been missed during the Evaluation and to share their view on what had the greatest contribution to producing the observed effects.*

It was emphasised that the progress made in the last 10 years was not only regarding the protection, but also regarding the valorisation of the environment. The second point raised was the cross-sectoral approach of the projects. In the current programming period, complementary solutions were developed to engage both urban and rural territories. On the same note, it was highlighted that the partnerships have laid a solid foundation for the next programming period.

In other programmes, protected areas are underrepresented as project partners due to lack the personnel or financial resources, despite the fact that they are essential and effective consumers of the pilot actions.

2. *Evaluation team confirmed valorization was one of the problems identified during the evaluation. This topic should be further explored and validated throughout the analysis.*

It was stressed that the current programming period benefits from the integrated approach to protection of natural heritage and environmental assets, balancing sustainable development and nature protection.

Additionally it was the importance of NGOs, along with the local community, as target groups of the Programme.

It was emphasized that there were projects that had implemented concrete measures to combat climate change, and provided examples of such projects.

3. *The Evaluation team suggested to further explore the role of stakeholders in the sustainability of the projects.*

Some success factors of the project were mentioned. Not only the framework created by the Programme lead to the success of the projects, but also environmental risks and environmental protection authorities put pressure on the stakeholders to cooperate at transnational level. On the other side, the partnerships in the Programme were strong and had a long-lasting history, but new comers a less numerous. Attracting new comers is a priority for the Programme and It was suggested to further research this topic.

4. *The evaluation team explained that, according to the finding, experienced partners are on of the strong point of the projects. On the other hand, it is harder for smaller organizations to engage in the Programme.*

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It was agreed that integrating territories was challenging because of the administrative boundaries and that the Programme succeeded in capacity building for the environmental management.

The growing need to address environmental concerns was emphasized. The next Program will have 3 specific objectives dedicated to this topic

- SO2.2 – Increasing the resilience to climate change risks in CE
 - SO2.3 – Circular economy
 - SO2.4 – Enhancing the environment
5. *The Evaluation team mentioned that, for the first time, local administration from the FUA worked together on the environmental issues.*

The Evaluation team was asked to elaborate on the transferability and sustainability of the results. Also, the Evaluation team was advised to make a cross reference highlighting the differences between the outcomes of thematic areas.

6. *The Evaluation team confirmed cross-reference would be taken into consideration in future reports. In terms of the project's tools and outcomes, the Evaluation team explained that technology advances at a rapid speed, and solutions developed within projects are could be easily replaced.*

Another point raised was that the research conducted by universities and communication from higher to smaller administrative is time-consuming. At the time of implementation, there are many other possibilities to address the same issue. Language barriers between institutions are also worth considering in this scenario. It was concluded that the implementation team should be prepared to upgrade the solutions.

It was stressed the significance of including local communities in project communication. Communication is viewed as a requirement rather than a tool of boosting the project's impact. The dissemination of information is inefficient and is frequently underestimated by partners.

It was suggested to address the issue of solutions being outpaced by technology in the future and thinking strategically forward.

7. *The Evaluation team stated that the findings revealed that various efforts were made by partners to engage stakeholders beyond the initial plan. Project partners are almost completely in charge for communication, which might be difficult, especially if the organization does not have a large network. Mostly, the smaller organizations find the communication to be challenging. The evaluation team asked what are the potential solutions for this issue.*

An example of a project that organized a successful, professionally moderated final event was brought up in the conversation, and it was emphasized that there are numerous tools and possibilities and techniques to use, that would allow a greater stakeholders outreach.

It was concluded that communication in several cases was underestimated. Next Programme will emphasize the importance of communication as well as active stakeholder participation. Communication workpackage to be integrated in the workplan and higher standards should be imposed on those in charge of communication.

In the past, cross fertilization events were efficient and helped in dissemination. At Programme level better coordination can be performed to help project partners.

8. *The Evaluation team thanked all of the participants.*

Conclusions

- The Focus Group participants confirmed the preliminary findings of the Evaluation Report and that environmental concerns are an important priority for the Programme.

7.1.5. CULTURE

IMPACT EVALUATION OF THE INTERREG CENTRAL EUROPE PROGRAMME
CULTURE THEMATIC FOCUS GROUP MEETING MINUTES, 9TH NOVEMBER 2021

PARTICIPANTS	ETF members, JS members, MA members, Evaluation team (Civitta and wiiw), MC members, NPCs, Thematic experts, Observers
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IMPACT EVALUATION OF THE INTERREG CENTRAL EUROPE PROGRAMME
CULTURE THEMATIC FOCUS GROUP MEETING MINUTES, 9TH NOVEMBER 2021

DISCUSSION THEMES

- presentation of the preliminary finding of the Impact Evaluation of the Interreg Central Europe Programme
- validation of the results for the culture priority

Welcome and meeting objectives

The Evaluation team addressed a welcome note.

The meeting rules and objectives were presented.

Presentation of the main results included in the Preliminary Findings Report

The Evaluation team made a presentation of the main findings of the Progress Report, structured as follows:

- Characteristics of culture theme in Central Europe
- Challenges that the Programme addressed
- Expected long-term change
- Outputs of the Programme
- Net effect of the Programme
- Understanding of impacts and what works best
- Preliminary findings from interviews with Programme stakeholders
- Preliminary conclusions
- Recommendations

Open discussion regarding the Preliminary Findings Report

The following aspects were brought into discussion by the Evaluation team:

1. *The Evaluation team asked the focus group participants to what extent the findings and conclusions are consistent with their own views and experience and what could have been done differently by the beneficiaries, or by the Programme authorities to have even better achievements / greater impact? Focus group participants were asked to provide additional information that might have been missed during the Evaluation and to share their view on what had the greatest contribution to producing the observed effects. The evaluation team pointed out that Culture was the only specific objective where people mentioned they were proud to have their local communities as a part of the projects.*

It was pointed out that, despite high cultural diversity in the area, the common identity was one of the arguments to continue the Programme. The history and the cultural heritage is common for Central Europe.

Cross sectoral endeavours in connection with tourism and regional development was an opportunity to boost regional attractiveness. It was also emphasized the potential of the area in developing Culture related project that would help develop the region.

2. *Evaluation team confirmed culture and tourism are contributing to regional development. Expanding from local to international is defining a good project by testing its readiness to become transnational.*

Another 3 points were raised: 1) culture has a tremendous power to create positive emotions, connect people; 2) there should be focus more on the post-pandemic situations, as COVID-19 had affected the cultural thematic the most; 3) in future to link culture with climate change and environment protection, as the topics are closely related to behavioural change and culture change.

The Evaluation team was asked to elaborate more on the overlaps mentioned in the Preliminary Findings.

3. *The Evaluation team agreed to include the pandemic aspect in the future reports. Also, the Evaluation team confirmed that the pilot actions of this Culture thematic focused on transformation and behavioural change. The Evaluation team explained that there were overlaps of the guidelines developed within different projects. The participants were asked if this kind of overlaps are considered a waste of efforts.*

It was noted that the Program may benefit from organizing and engaging the projects in more exchange and networking. In that context, the question is whether creating project clusters would be sustainable.

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In addition to that it was highlighted that Interreg Programme aims at linking culture with regional development. Moreover, the cross-sectoral approach is rather unique among other existing Programmes. More and more governments recognize the importance of promoting and supporting culture and creative industries.

Everyone agreed that the pandemic had an enormous impact on culture. Transnational cooperation could be a way of helping the stakeholders who are in a struggle in current situation. Transnational collaboration might be one means to assist the stakeholders that are currently struggling. The community in the culture sector proved to be very active, through applications to the Programme, participating in the activities organized by the MA. Thus, it contributes significantly to the Program's added value.

IT was argued that the projects mainly focus on urban areas, and that there small and medium entities/cities among the beneficiaries of the Programme. Metropolitan regions, on the other hand, have a larger concentration of expertise and more modern infrastructure, making project design and implementation easier. At the same time, the Culture projects portfolio includes a wide range of activities, beyond tourism, that are worth considering.

4. *The Evaluation team clarified that the projects were developed in smaller urban regions rather than metropolitan urban centres. Even if the locations had tourism potential, the main motivation for project initiatives was to revitalize the local economy.*

Participants agreed that there is was a visible behavioural change at local administration level, as well as among inhabitants, especially in relation to tangible and intangible heritage for territorial development. The Evaluation team was asked to elaborate more on the high efficiency of the Culture thematic projects.

5. *The Evaluation team believes the vibrance, the diversity of the community, and the communication skills of people from creative industries and culture sector had widely contributed to the success of the activities performed.*

It was confirmed that the community has acquired remarkable communication skills as a result of their area of work, which is why people in the culture sector find it easier to interact and network.

Concern regarding integrating Culture with other priorities and SOs, diminishing its distinguished role as a defining priority of the Programme was expressed. The Evaluation teams were asked to share their opinions on the topic.

6. *The Evaluation team highlighted that the primary goal of the cultural activities was to support territorial development. In the future, it makes sense to include culture and cultural heritage in the activities of the Programme. Projects that adopt a more targeted approach to creativity, on the other hand, may be redirected to alternative sources of funding. The Programme's value will be increased by integrating culture in multiple operations.*

It was remarked that Culture and Creative Industries might be valuably integrated into up to six specific objectives per each Programme.

It was confirmed that the next Programme would have a horizontal approach with Culture being included in other specific objectives. The stakeholders will have to adapt to the new context. The Evaluation team was encouraged to suggest the most promising themes for future applicants to consider.

7. *The Evaluation team agreed to provide the most successful topics, based on the findings from Impact Evaluation. Furthermore, the Evaluation team stated that the findings show that transnational strategies were ineffective since project activities were localized and the partners were unfamiliar with the project's operations outside of their region. The participants were invited to provide their opinions on this preliminary finding.*

It was remarked that this finding is not specific to culture sector, rather it's a generic trait of the Programme. The transnational strategy is seen as a toolbox by project partners, to implement more local activities. One of the Programme's objectives was to bring together partners from various backgrounds, and while certain activities were carried out locally, the knowledge was shared at a translational level. However, the transnational strategy will be given more weight in the upcoming program.

Another point raised was related to the fact that culture thematic has the particularity of having smaller institutions as applicants. The beneficiaries have the advantage of being part of a larger project, thus accumulate knowledge and implement locally the good practices learned from project partners. It was agreed that for the next Programme, more specific and detailed instructions will be prepared, to avoid the umbrella thinking.

IMPACT EVALUATION OF THE INTERREG CENTRAL EUROPE PROGRAMME

CULTURE THEMATIC FOCUS GROUP MEETING MINUTES, 9TH NOVEMBER 2021

The Evaluation team was asked to provide more details on the types of projects' outputs and the changes the projects have made.

8. *The Evaluation team informed the participants that sustainability of the project results depended on the capacity of local authorities. The main cause of interrupting the implementation of tools developed by projects was the lack of funding. The Programme had the most impact in aspects that did not require a lot of investments. The Programme, in particular, raised awareness of various topics, which would then be reflected in other projects financed by other sources.*

Another topic brought up was of digitization. The culture sector has been substantially digitalized in recent years, as a result of the pandemic. Regardless of the COVID-19 situation, digital tools will have a significant increase in use in the next Programme period.

9. *The Evaluation team thanked all of the participants.*

Conclusions

- Culture has proved to have different characteristics compared to other sectors, at the same time having a valuable impact on regional development.
- The culture thematic will be integrated with other priorities of the Programme

7.1.6. TRANSPORT

IMPACT EVALUATION OF THE INTERREG CENTRAL EUROPE PROGRAMME

TRANSPORT THEMATIC FOCUS GROUP MEETING MINUTES, 9TH NOVEMBER 2021

PARTICIPANTS	ETF members, JS members, MA members, Evaluation team (Civitta and wiiw), MC members, NPCs, Thematic experts, Observers
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DISCUSSION THEMES

- presentation of the preliminary finding of the Impact Evaluation of the Interreg Central Europe Programme
- validation of the results for the transport priority

Welcome and meeting objectives

The Evaluation team addressed a welcome note.

The meeting rules and objectives were presented.

Presentation of the main results included in the Preliminary Findings Report

The Evaluation team made a presentation of the main findings of the Progress Report, structured as follows:

- Characteristics of culture thematic in Central Europe
- Challenges that the Programme addressed
- Expected long-term change
- Outputs of the Programme in numbers
- Net effect of the Programme
- Understanding of impacts and what works best
- Preliminary findings from interviews with Programme stakeholders
- Preliminary conclusions
- Recommendations

Open discussion regarding the Preliminary Findings Report

The following aspects were brought into discussion by the Evaluation team:

1. *The Evaluation team asked the focus group participants to what extent the findings and conclusions are consistent with their own views and experience and what could have been done differently by the beneficiaries, or by the Programme authorities to have even better achievements / greater impact? Focus*

group participants were asked to provide additional information that might have been missed during the Evaluation and to share their view on what had the greatest contribution to producing the observed effects. The evaluation team highlighted one particularity of the Programme thematic – convincing stakeholders of usefulness of changing behaviour and introducing new ways of doing business was notably hard. Another issue raised was the importance of political stakeholder participation in this specific objective for guaranteeing long-term outcomes and successful project execution.

It was mentioned the transport priority had 16 highly relevant projects, additionally there was a significant number of projects on mobility. The transport thematic had increased interest from various stakeholders, both public and private institutions and it had huge success.

2. *The Evaluation team confirmed that the projects within the transport thematic had great success.*

It was surprising for focus group participants that in this specific thematic the tools are easily transferable and adaptable to another context. On the other hand, the uptake of what was achieved was dependent on a small number of stakeholders. The conclusion was that in the next Programme more efforts should be made to guide the applicants and help them to transfer the results.

3. *The evaluation team gave an example of a tool produced throughout the program that may be used in a variety of situations. The key challenge is persuading stakeholders to use such technologies, which in many situations may need a significant amount of effort.*

It was suggested that contribution to fuel development, presented by the Evaluation team, would be more relevant for the low carbon mobility thematic. There are several actors that have the capacity to ensure the sustainability of the results.

Three additional points were raised: 1) contribution to fuel development, presented by the Evaluation team, would be more relevant for the low carbon mobility thematic; 2) there are several actors that have the capacity to ensure the sustainability of the results; 3) the imbalance between Eastern and Western Europe is not specific for the transport specific objective.

4. *According to the evaluation team, larger institutions have the capacity to carry out the investment, while it is more difficult for local level, small institutions, who frequently lack the necessary resources. The divide between western and Eastern Europe was more frequently mentioned by the stakeholder in this specific objective. One of the reasons may be the low interest and experience of the local authorities with regards to this topic.*

It was brought to the attention of participants that large scale investments at European level policy would be beyond partnership. The ambition of the program is not to change the European level legislation, but rather to facilitate the cooperation with other instruments.

5. *The evaluation team underlined that preliminary data revealed that programs with long-term relationships had the best results. Being a part of a global program allows for the creation of synergies and the exchange of knowledge. Smaller institutions, on the other hand, have less potential of integrating into bigger collaborations and disseminating their results.*

It was confirmed that long lasting partnerships, had a significant impact on the sustainability of results, since stakeholders adopted them strategically. In comparison to other Programme objectives, the transport sector has a relatively high level of stakeholder engagement, both as associated partners and as financing partners.

6. *The Evaluation team found that writing an application for the transportation theme was particularly difficult for newcomers, and that they need further assistance. The Focus Group participants were asked to share their opinions on that finding.*

Participants agreed that professionalism and experience is crucial at the Programme level in order to have a successful application.

7. *The Evaluation team informed the participants that there were institutions who had the capacity to hire consultancy companies in order to write the application. Also, the general opinion is that the advice from JS on developing the application was instrumental for the successful design of the project. The Evaluation team asked how the procedure can be improved to make it more accessible for more institutions.*

It was stated that many efforts are made in this area, and the Program continues to develop new ways to increase the capacity of candidates. On the other hand, the Program's standards must be restrictive enough to guarantee that the money granted to applicants is used wisely. It is not possible to handle a bigger number of institutions in

this scenario. It was mentioned that special programmes could be created to target smaller institutions, and there is room for improvement.

8. *The Evaluation team mentioned that the administrative burden is seen by the beneficiaries to be quite high.*

It was recommended that newcomers apply as project partners initially, then as lead partners. It was emphasized that Interreg is not an investment program, and that beneficiaries must be carefully selected.

Other two points were brought up: 1) the need of demonstrating to applicants what the Programme aspires to achieve 2) the need of communicating to public institutions how they might benefit from the Programme.

The Programme is being improved in order to make the selection process as effective as possible, but at the same time feasible for the candidates.

9. *The Evaluation team highlighted that the sustainability in the transport sector highly depends on the jurisdiction and the political priorities. The participants were asked to provide their opinions on using the added value of the Programme, as well as on improving the Programme.*

It was emphasized that CE countries are governed by distinct legislative systems. The national law could not be changed, but pilot actions can be transferred from one country to another.

10. *The Evaluation team and the MA thanked the participants for participation and for providing valuable insights and for contributing to the Evaluation.*

Conclusions

- Most of preliminary findings of the Evaluation were confirmed by the Focus Group participants.
- The participants provided relevant information for the Evaluation team to consider in the next report.