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**Ex-Post Evaluation of the INTERREG III
Community Initiative (funded by the ERDF)**

**TASK 5: IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS OF A REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLE
OF PROGRAMMES**

**PROGRAMME: INTERREG IIIA Alpenrhein – Bodensee -
Hochrhein**

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Table of contents

1	INTRODUCTION	7
1.1	BACKGROUND OF THE PILOT STUDY	7
1.2	RESEARCH INTEREST AND METHODOLOGY	7
1.3	OUTLINE AND CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES OF THE PROGRAMME	8
2	ANALYSIS SECTION (PART 1): CHARACTER OF THE PROGRAMME: WHAT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED?	9
2.1	IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS OF THE FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION	9
2.2	EFFECTIVENESS ANALYSIS (TREND PATTERN AND ACHIEVEMENT RATE AT MEASURE LEVEL, RELEVANCE OF ACHIEVEMENTS)	17
2.3	EVALUATION AT PROJECT LEVEL	29
2.4	THE CHARACTER OF THE PROGRAMME, ITS CONSTITUTING FEATURES AND FACTORS OF BARRIER AND CO-OPERATION	45
2.5	EXTRAPOLATING RESULTS OF EFFECTIVENESS AND IMPACTS TO INTERREG	53
3	ANALYSIS SECTION (PART 2): THE OVERALL PERFORMANCE: IMPACTS IN TERMS OF UTILITY AND COMMUNITY VALUE ADDED – HOW HAVE ACHIEVEMENTS BEEN OBTAINED	55
3.1	EVALUATION OF THE POLICY COHERENCE OF THE PROGRAMME	55
3.2	ANALYSIS OF THE INTRINSIC PERFORMANCE OF THE PROGRAMME	60
3.2.1	<i>Evaluation of the programme management</i>	60
3.2.2	<i>Evaluation of sustainability and durability</i>	66
3.3	EXTRAPOLATING RESULTS & CONCLUSIONS ON MAJOR IMPACTS IN TERMS OF UTILITY AND COMMUNITY VALUE ADDED FOR INTERREG III	71
4	CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	73
	ANNEXES	77

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The ABH programme belongs to the strand A programmes with still rather favourable preconditions of co-operation in terms of economic integration and common historical ties. This can be stated despite the fact that the programme includes non-member states and in spite of the topographic reality (Alps and the large lake). The programme also reveals a good performance on financial absorption, effectiveness and sustainability (both in terms of programme sustainability as well as durability of co-operation at project level). In terms of the overall depth and intensity of co-operation the programme has scored amongst the best performing programmes as it belongs to a cluster with synthetic indicator values in the upper quarter of the distribution and highly above the mean for strand A. Especially the density of common actions is excellent in the ABH co-operation.

The ABH programme covered most of the sectors defined in the Commission Communication from 2000.

Rural development has been covered by a slightly over-average expenditure on code 130 (rural development). But also across the single measures there have been activities related to rural development, i.e. under tourism services, environment and nature and networking. Urban development has not been explicitly addressed by the programme.

SME development, R&D and human resources development have been the major focus of the ABH programme. This can be proved by the strong emphasis on the so-called Lisbon interventions compared to the INTERREG average (in terms of certified expenditure). Support to transport has been less of a focus, however even here there were specific interventions with an over-average expenditure like for rail and multimodal transport. The environment has been another focus in terms of budgets. The original budget of the corresponding priority axis was more than 6 million Euro from the ERDF and has been the financially largest priority axis. In terms of effectiveness measured by the monitoring indicators, the results also show that more projects have been executed than originally planned. Expenditure for renewable sources of energy, air, noise and particularly energy efficiency, have been highly over-average in comparison to INTERREG as such and also in comparison to the strand A and the cluster to which ABH belongs.

The Community Value Added generated by the INTERREG supported co-operation in the ABH region can be summarized as follows:

The programme clearly reveals that performance of programmes does not necessarily depend on formal legal structures and agreements, although the ABH programme might represent a minority of programmes with that character. Here, what is more important has been flexible networking. Awareness building, subsidiarity and partnership plus a sustainable administrative partnership despite different structures are criteria of the highest relevance for the ABH programme activities. The co-operation between different tiers of administration and across different legal systems has been oriented to the problems to be addressed rather than to a formalization of administrative co-operation. This approach has been so far highly successful and could be also largely fostered by the long historical ties among the participating entities in Austria, Germany, Switzerland and Liechtenstein. It can be confirmed that the programme could contribute to a further dynamic of institutional flexibility (in terms of action based on agreement over needs) and further mobilization of financial resources (incentive of co-financing). Although ABH is built on minimum formality, its synthetic indicator scores among the top programmes.

Formalised cross-border structures are hence no unequivocal criterion for good performance in cross-border co-operation, a clear message from the evaluation of ABH.

Furthermore, the mobilisation of cross-border economic potentials could be indirectly effected. This is at least probable. Important but hardly observable impacts are always to be interpreted in the context of small budgets. The ABH programme with overall expenditure of around 30 Million Euro is not only petty in terms of investment and multiplier potential, it is also small in comparison to most other INTERREG programmes. Within the cluster it is the second smallest one¹. An improved programme monitoring based on empirical social and economic research would be necessary to better capture such indirect impacts.

Opening-up cross-border labour markets have been addressed by ABH as well, although there are no serious bottlenecks in the participating regions. Yet, the programme succeeded to further stabilize the potentials by e.g. reaping economies of scale for vocational training by intensified co-operation of the involved institutions.

The programme has certainly contributed to an improved transparency on the regional markets for goods and services. However, this is also hardly an observable transmission mechanism. With monitoring indicators, such mechanisms will not become visible. So we can only assume such impacts. At least all five projects assessed in more detail reported to contribute to that important 'value added'. More empirical research will be necessary to analyse such indirect effects.

In terms of socio-cultural cohesion, the programme benefits from a virtuous circle, as the long-lasting historic ties automatically reinforce cultural cohesion (circular causation).

In conclusion it can be said that the ABH programme strongly supports the evidence on three major points, found by the *Barca* report 2009:

"First, cross-border and transnational programmes have often helped to overcome institutional inertia, mobilising financial resources, stimulating economic, social and cultural exchanges and new relationships. Second, they have facilitated policy transfer and institutional adaptation through networks. Third, the intensity and effectiveness of territorial cooperation vary greatly, with the greatest impact occurring in regions where integration and cooperation are already well developed ...".

Findings suggest to acknowledge the important role of flexible and informal modes of co-operation:

The INTERREG IV programme Alpenrhein-Bodensee-Hochrhein is largely a continuation of the former INTERREG III programme. The participating regional entities are identical; In Bavaria, the districts Memmingen and Unterallgäu joined the so-called 20% area.

The ex-ante evaluation of the INTERREG IV programme established a focused strategy and a clear intervention logic built on the approach of the INTERREG III programme. The programme should further concentrate on quality projects with network effects and impulse impacts. The perhaps too ambitious expectations that the programme will have a major impact on growth and integration have been dropped, as the small financial budgets do not suggest that, although indirect effects can be

¹ Only PAMINA is endowed with a smaller budget. The largest programme is D-NL (Rijn-Waal and Rijn-Maas-Noord) with expenditure of around 190,000 Euro.

considerable. The rather strong focus on 'economic competitiveness' has been reduced to allow also some focus on strategic spatial goals.

The ABH programme represents a fund of lessons learned and good practices in addressing cross-border regional development by experimentation and networking. The experiences are certainly not suitable to replace them everywhere in the world for cross-border co-operation. A major precondition for that success story is long historic ties and the attainment of an advanced level of wealth. If this is ensured, and only then, the peculiar approach of the ABH programme could be considered. Formal cross-border administrative structures are not necessary, perhaps in some cases even counter-productive. This can be proved by the ABH programme. Therefore, a meanwhile introduced fashion in INTERREG, namely the introduction of the European Grouping of Territorial Co-operation (Regulation 1082/2006) becomes questionable, the more its application is expected to be generalized. For the ABH programme the EGTC would not at all add value. A recent example of counter-productive impacts of compulsory formalization has been the obligation of a formal cross-border memorandum of understanding under INTERREG IV. For the ABH, under those circumstances expenditure control and audits were no longer possible in Switzerland endangering the lead partner principle and now a special agreement between Switzerland and the EU partner countries has been stipulated which came into force only very recently. External audits from the Certifying Authority (a formal compulsory act) were formally forbidden in Switzerland. Under INTERREG III there was still readiness of Switzerland to accept such controls on a voluntary basis. The formal memorandum has been thus a step behind in effective co-operation with Switzerland, forcing partners to conclude further bi-lateral agreements to neutralize negative consequences implied from that formal memorandum.

A major lesson learned from the ABH programme is that 'learning', more transparency and indirect impacts should be a major aim, rather than direct developmental results generated by small INTERREG funds. INTERREG cannot directly affect development, except for some local entities, when expenditure is focused on hard infrastructure and 'catching-up projects'. Otherwise the Initiative would become over-ambitious and thus no longer credible. But if INTERREG is going to put more emphasis on learning and unobservable impacts, the traditional monitoring system (with all the vague proxy-indicators) is not adequate. Indirect unobservable effects can be substantial, perhaps in some cases influencing regional development paths to a large extent. INTERREG can however only initiate projects with a potential to trigger such effects, it cannot steer such a process by planning techniques. Therefore, as an important recommendation for INTERREG as such is to put more emphasis on accompanying social and economic research instead of monitoring. It is this way important that project partners should ex-ante forecast direct effects and specify potential indirect effects. Those should be observed and there should be a regular questionnaire disseminated to the project partners showing direct effects and possible indirect effects (e.g. a new sectoral network, more foreign investment because of improvement of transparency, incidental impulses from the project to found a joint business, that would have never happened without the facilitated contact through INTERREG etc.). Furthermore, a panel of the public in the programme region should be established to find more evidence of specific indirect effects of INTERREG over time.

Apart from that, the ABH programme evaluation suggests to put more emphasis on the justification of the INTERREG programme as such. So far, and that is a general issue for INTERREG, a negative border effect is assumed but not specified or proven. For such proof a counterfactual situation needs to be simulated. Thus, the question of whether or not there are negative border effects where INTERREG is a necessary tool to alleviate them, can hardly be answered so far. It is even imaginable that there are positive border effects. This statement should not question INTERREG as such, but should be more

interpreted in a way to view those programmes from a more economic point of view. A typical border effect can be that short-distance phone connections are relatively expensive because they are international. This combined with a floating exchange rate might influence the cost and risk the burden of co-operating private sector agents. It would be a very useful progress to focus the socio-economic analyses of INTERREG programmes on those border effects instead of general descriptive statistics along the sectors addressed by the strategy of the programme. Such a border-effect focus should also be visible in the SWOT synopsis, which should be concise and clear and without inherent contradictions.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

The ex-post evaluation of Interreg III comprises a number of tasks interactively and iteratively linked. One of the tasks is the in-depth evaluation of a sample of sixteen Interreg III programmes from all three strands. The expected outcome of these in-depth assessments is quite demanding (e.g. the evidence-based extrapolation of results to the Community Initiative). The methodological approach of the in-depth evaluation is likewise highly complex and it is hard to anticipate whether all steps work as smoothly as described in the theory. Therefore, it was agreed that the approach should be pre-tested with a pilot in-depth programme evaluation prior to the first interim report.

In this context it was envisaged to run this pre-test on a programme that displays a sufficiently broad variety of INTERREG characteristics in terms of programme structure and co-operation. Furthermore, this programme should be sufficiently complex to better capture possible methodological weaknesses of the above-outlined approach. The practical experiences gained with this pre-test should help to further streamline the approach and to better coordinate and guide the process of the in-depth evaluation at a later stage (including all analytical grids, proposals for dealing with insufficient or contradictory information, uniform text structure and the structure of conclusions with cross-references to the main text.).

The programme proposed for the pilot study was the *Alpine Rhine – Lake Constance – Upper Rhine (ABH)*². Due to its complexity (four states involved, two of them non-EU member states), this Interreg IIIA programme also exhibits some spirit of strand B (transnational co-operation). Hence, within one programme, the patterns of two strands can be viewed at least informally. Apart from substantial political and economic border effects (non-EU, non-Schengen, floating exchange rate between Euro and SFr etc.) the programme is furthermore characterised by major natural border effects, like the Alps and the Lake Constance, being the second-largest lake in the Alpine space. Furthermore, the programme enjoys the reputation of being successful³, and might show important results and conclusions how to successfully run a complex programme (with major socio-economic and natural barriers).

The pilot study was elaborated, at a later stage, in this final evaluation report.

1.2 Research interest and methodology

The scope of research is closely determined by the terms of reference for the Ex-post Evaluation for INTERREG III and the method proposed in the Inception Report. In this pilot evaluation we follow strictly the terms of reference and the corresponding methodology.

² The report was elaborated by Rolf Bergs, assisted by Moneim Issa (both PRAC)

³ The ABH programme has been partner of the Complex Regions Net (Seminar May 2008 Eupen)

1.3 Outline and characteristic features of the programme

The geographical coverage of the German part of the programme includes the rural districts of the south of Baden-Württemberg⁴ and Bavaria (Bodensee, Constance, Schwarzwald-Baar and Waldshut, Lindau, Oberallgäu and the city of Kempten). In Austria, the entire Bundesland Vorarlberg belongs to the ABH programme, the Swiss partner regions are the Kantone Aargau, Appenzell, Glarus, Graubünden, Schaffhausen, St. Gallen, Thurgau and Zürich. The Principality of Liechtenstein is also a member of the programme. As a specificity, a common language (German) is spoken in the entire programme area.⁵

The programme has been managed by the 'Regierungspräsidium' Tübingen (the administration of the German NUTS II region to which the rural districts in Baden-Württemberg belong). This authority also hosts the Joint Technical Secretariat. The Paying Authority responsible is the 'Amt der Landesregierung' Vorarlberg.

Thus the programme administration in the context of the provisions of the Regulation 1260/1999 is shared by Austrian and German authorities. Interestingly, the Managing Authority is at the NUTS II level administration (the only case in Germany), while the Paying Authority is administered at an Austrian NUTS I level. This will be further discussed below.

The programme aims to support the regional economy, the environment and physical development and social and cultural development. The three priorities are rather evenly budgeted, although a major emphasis is on the environment as one can see in the following table.

The priorities and measures of the INTERREG IIIA-Programme 'Alpenrhein-Bodensee-Hochrhein'

Priorities and measures	Budget ERDF
1. Economic Development	5,768,103
1.1 Place management	1,385,420
1.2 Support to SME	887,347
1.3 Support to services and tourism	2,374,599
1.4 Agriculture and forestry	1,120,737
2. Environment and spatial development	6,271,779
2.1 Nature protection and environment	2,988,253
2.2 Spatial planning	819,333
2.3 Technical infrastructure	2,464,193
3. Socio-cultural development	4,819,357
3.1 Education and R&D	1,144,170
3.2 Public health and social affairs	1,977,195
3.3 Culture and sports	507,745
3.4 Networking and awareness building	1,190,247
4. Technical assistance	1,015,353
4.1 Administration, management, monitoring	725,252
4.2 Other support	290,101
TOTAL	17,874,592

The INTERREG IIIA programme Alpenrhein-Bodensee-Hochrhein is a smooth continuation of the forerunner programmes under INTERREG I and II. Cross-border co-operation could be further deepened and extended to new themes. Since INTERREG I there has been a growing emphasis on projects with sound analytical justification (feasibility study based) and networks of cross-border actors testing new project approaches and themes.

⁴ The rural districts of Ravensburg, Sigmaringen and Tuttlingen have been programme region in the sense of paragraph 2 of the INTERREG guidelines. Only up to 20% of the funds may be spent in those areas beyond the NUTS III border areas.

⁵ Other languages like Italian and Ratoroman are only spoken in the Swiss Kanton Graubünden.

2 Analysis section (part 1): Character of the programme: What has been achieved?

2.1 In-depth Analysis of the financial implementation

The ToR envisages an in-depth analysis of the financial implementation and an examination of the patterns of expenditure and its distribution among the different intervention fields (at 3-digit code level). Budgeting and expenditure patterns are considered to be major factors characterising the programmes. This will lead to further deepening of policy-level conclusions in relation to the budgeting for the different interventions.

In our study we look at the character of the programme in terms of budgets and expenditure at the three-digit code level i.e. how sectoral patterns of financial budgeting and expenditure of the pilot programme differ from the usual (average) patterns under INTERREG, in how far the financial targets have been achieved and why, in any case, were targets were not achieved. Furthermore, we examine the expenditure for interventions associated with 'Lisbon' and finally view the dynamic of expenditure at the level of the measures

For an in-depth financial analysis we have had access to the entire database at the three-digit code level for INTERREG; this was necessary since the two-digit aggregated database does not show the variations that can underpin a rigorous analysis.⁶

The analysis at this low aggregation level makes it possible to view the distribution patterns of the codes, the characteristic features of that distribution in comparison with INTERREG in general, the expenditure rate (thus giving some insight into financial performance within the programme). Furthermore, the analysis will provide evidence on whether or not the respective field of intervention has the same weight as the average in the cluster to which the programme belongs. If expenditure for an INTERREG-relevant field of intervention is relatively small, it might reveal problems or weaknesses in the programme with respect to the declared strategies of the respective INTERREG strand. Finally, we will shed light on the absorption patterns for different fields of intervention.

In addition to the analysis of areas of intervention, the dynamic of financial implementation is to be examined as well (different trend patterns in implementation). This analysis, which can only be based on the trends at measure level, will display the financial performance over time and will also provide insight into the distribution of funds among the different themes addressed.

The codes of intervention should help to compare programme expenditure in the context of policy intervention sectorally. A first analysis relates to the 'financial character' of the programme, i.e. the thematic selection and in how far the ABH programme follows the sectoral intervention patterns of INTERREG.

Before further analysing that data, we first explored the general perception of the codes of intervention and the usefulness from the viewpoint of the Managing Authority. Our impression after a first analysis of

⁶ Hence, in addition to the overall analysis at the two-digit code level, an overall analysis of all 79 programmes will be executed at the three-digit code level.

the three-digit-code databank on budget and expenditure and an interview with the Managing Authority is that those codes do not facilitate sound and comprehensive ex-ante budgeting and financial monitoring at programme level. The ex-ante distribution of the budget for an area of intervention is in most cases only roughly calculated. In many cases three-digit reference codes like 130, 200 etc., that are in fact one or two-digit codes, are used, because there was no clear ex-ante forecast for the required repartition of the budget. Hence, the financial programming along the codes is highly indicative. This finding was strongly confirmed by the Managing Authority. According to the Managing Authority a precise longer-run budgeting at the aggregation level of particular interventions was simply not possible. It is also to be stressed that the codes are not understood as clear-cut definitions. Hence, there is for instance the alternative to budget studies either under code 413 (studies) or thematically under any other code (further such examples are addressed below). The following analysis on budget and expenditure for the individual codes is to be interpreted under these methodological caveats.

The analysis at the three-digit code level

The funding support from INTERREG III was thematically rather broad. 94 codes were covered ranging in a frequency between one and 64 programmes. The most frequent codes under INTERREG have been those of Technical Assistance (e.g. monitoring/implementation, evaluation, studies, information, all belonging to the code family 41), furthermore rural development (130) and non-physical investment in tourism (172), education (230), human resources (220) and basic infrastructure (31-35).

The Codes with a high frequency are more or less completely covered by the ABH programme. The only exception is code 312 (roads) and 315 (ports), for which activities were neither scheduled nor implemented under the programme. The less frequent codes are also less represented in the ABH programme. By and large, the sectoral structure of codes of intervention of ABH is strongly associated with the sectoral structure at the CI level. Annex 1.1 aims to show the ranking of the frequency of codes under INTERREG and how the ABH programme corresponds to this.

The ABH programme is covered by relatively numerous fields of intervention. For 55 codes funds are allocated. That means that for more than 1/3 of all codes activities are to be generated by the ABH programme. Hence, the programme belongs to the programmes with the broadest scope of intervention, among them also Interreg IIIB NWE (66 codes), Czech (57 codes) and Slovakia (55 codes). In consideration of the relatively small budget it would suggest that the programme could lack concentration (at least at a first sight). Concentration is a major criterion under EU cohesion policy, including INTERREG. By comparing the INTERREG programmes we see that in fact most other programmes support a lower number of different codes (around 35 on average). And in fact there was a controversial discussion on this issue between the Commission and the Managing Authority during the programming phase. The major argument put forward by the Managing Authority was related to the relatively high level of wealth of the participating regions. The argument was that the long-lasting co-operation experiences over a broad scope of fields did not suggest concentration on a limited number of selected topics. The overarching intention for the INTERREG programme ABH has been to develop good-practice with a view to triggering sustainable co-operation and further deepening the historically grown ties across the borders. Therefore, the broad sectoral range of interventions (dispersion) was deliberately chosen, not despite the relatively small budget, but rather because of it.

In reflecting on the regional economic situation and the specific history of co-operation in this transnational region, the evaluator strongly supports this respective choice of regional policy. But it is to

be highlighted, that the specific circumstances are somewhat peculiar and not applicable to any INTERREG programme.⁷

The comparison of frequency alone does not yet sufficiently reveal the characteristic budgetary weights of the single fields of intervention and thus the real financial character of the ABH programme. The overview table (Table Annex 1.2) gives a more comprehensive overview of the different codes of intervention covered by the ABH programme in terms of budget, certified expenditure, achievement rate, shares of expenditure and the comparison with the average expenditure shares and achievement rates compared between the programme and Interreg, strand and the cluster (For this purpose an 'Intensity Measure' for the relative financial weight of a code and a Gap Measure for the relative absorption rate of a code has been calculated).

For the ABH programme, the most important codes, in budgetary terms, are 323 (services and applications for citizens), interventions in the field of employment and business (240 and 164), environment (353), adaptation of rural areas (130) and others. While 411 (preparation, implementation, monitoring, publicity) is also among the stronger positions, 412-415 (evaluation, studies, information to the public, innovative actions) have a negligible budgetary weight (cf. also annex 1.3). This is in stark contrast to the strong financial weight of all those technical assistance codes related to INTERREG in general. Here, for a number of interventions the ABH programme strongly deviates from the average. This finding is however restricted on the overall INTERREG average. With respect to the strand and the cluster, the deviation of ABH is less visible.

This can also be illustrated by comparing the ten most and least financially important codes in INTERREG, the strand and the cluster⁸ with those in the ABH programme.

<i>Fields of intervention</i>	<i>ABH: Code expenditure/ Programme expenditure %</i>	<i>INTERREG: Code expenditure/ CI expenditure %</i>	<i>Strand A : Code expenditure/ Strand expenditure %</i>	<i>Cluster : Code expenditure / Cluster expenditure %</i>
414. Innovative actions	0.19	7.61	1.08	0.15
413. Studies	0.19	6.05	4.00	0.32
130. Adaptation of rural areas	4.95	4.71	5.12	5.64
131. Encouragement of Tourist activities	1.10	3.47	3.75	5.71
172. Non-physical investments (development and provision of tourist services, sporting, cultural and leisure activities, heritage)	1.93	2.60	3.37	3.11
323. Services and applications for the citizen (health, administration, education)	8.09	2.34	2.89	2.38

⁷ For the evaluation at the supra-national policy level (i.e. for the Community Initiative), therefore further differentiated reflection is suggested in order to do justice to all possible circumstances in which a programme is embedded.

⁸ A-SLO – Austria-Slovenia
D-NL - Ems Dollart
D-A-CH-LI - Alpen-Bodensee
D-NL Germany-Netherlands
I-A - Italy-Austria
PAMINA
D-L-B - Ger-Lux-Belgium
D-F - Saarland-Moselle-Westpfalz
D-NL-B Euregio Maas-Rhein
F-CH France-Suisse
B-F-Lux – WLL

353. Protection, improvement and regeneration of the natural environment	6.08	2.21	2.72	2.28
322. Information and Communication Technology (including security and safe transmission measures)	1.37	2.20	2.27	0.55
163. Business advisory services (information, business planning, consultancy services, marketing, management, design, internationalisation, exporting, environmental management, purchase of technology)	2.34	2.09	2.61	3.10
411. Preparation, implementation, monitoring, publicity	3.55	2.04	1.82	4.12
143. Processing, marketing and promoting of fisheries products	0.13	0.17	0.22	0.01
331. Electricity, gas, petrol, solid fuel	0.27	0.15	0.12	0.01
342. Noise	0.80	0.14	0.11	0.04
122. Improving harvesting, processing and marketing of forestry products	0.39	0.12	0.17	0.06
113. Agriculture-specific vocational training	0.26	0.07	0.04	0.06
128. Forestry-specific vocational training	0.13	0.05	0.03	0.18
144. Aquaculture	0.13	0.04	0.01	0.01
141. Adjustment of the fishing effort	0.13	0.02	0.00	0.01
123. Promoting new outlets for the use and marketing of forestry products	0.39	0.01	0.02	0.15
124. Establishment of associations of forest holders	0.13	0.00	0.00	0.01

We note that, on the lower end, the expenditure levels are similar in a way that all of the ten least important INTERREG codes score lower than 1% of expenditure in the ABH programme (for INTERREG, the strand and for the cluster). We also note that – on the one hand - some of the important INTERREG codes are also among the most important ones in the ABH programme, as e.g. Services for citizens, natural environment, business services. However, on the other hand we also see that important INTERREG codes like innovative actions do not play a major role in the ABH programme, however only compared to the INTERREG average, but not compared to the strand and particularly the cluster. Altogether, a comparison of the ranking of codes ABH compared to INTERREG shows a rather moderate correlation. The *Spearman* rank correlation coefficient r_s , a statistical value showing how strong two ranked samples or universes correlate, is highly significant, but at only 0.565.⁹ The value for *Spearman* r_s is significantly higher in correlating ABH with the cluster.

The relative weight of the codes can be calculated by comparing the budgetary share of a code in the programme to that share the code has within INTERREG (or cluster or strand) in general. The results for that intensity measure (IM) are given in the overview table (annex 1.2). Values > 1 show codes that have an over-average significance for the ABH programme. As regards that index we find at the lower end: studies, publicity, evaluation and at the upper end (with more budgetary weight): Workforce flexibility, services to citizens, regeneration of the environment, Investment in physical capital, business services. Rural development (130), another code with more budgetary weight is on a par with INTERREG (IM=1.05). Out of the financially most important codes we see that 'shared business services' (code 164), workforce flexibility (code 240), services for the citizen (code 323), protection of the natural environment (code 353) show the strongest relative representation compared to INTERREG and the

⁹ Spearman Rank Correlation Between VAR1 & VAR2
 Number of cases without missing values = 55
 Spearman Rank Correlation = 0.565
 t-test value for hypothesis $r = 0$ is 4.983
 Probability > t = 0.0000

strand (with Intensity Measure values > 2)¹⁰. For codes 164 and 240 the expenditure in ABH is more than the fourfold of the INTERREG average of 1.85 and 1.88% respectively and shows the importance of those codes for the ABH programme, also compared the strand A (2.5%) but only to a lesser extent with respect to the cluster (6.1%). Economic co-operation and improvement of the supply side of labour is a deliberate and major goal of the ABH programme. This also underscores the anticipation of the Lisbon spirit in the ABH programme under INTERREG III. (see further below). There are also some outliers (e.g. establishment of associations of forest holders) with an IM of around 300 for INTERREG and still even 20 for the cluster. But this code is of financially negligible importance in the ABH programme (less than 20,000 Euro) and thus represents a statistical base effect.

Even more interesting is to look at the areas of intervention with a relatively high budgetary share under INTERREG. These are codes 130, 131, 172, 413, 414. While code 130 (adaptation of rural areas) is represented by the ABH programme on par with the average of INTERREG, the strand and the cluster, code 131 (tourist activities in rural areas) is represented to a much lower extent, only 1.1% resulting in an IM of only 0.32 compared to INTERREG and interestingly even less (IM=0.19) in the cluster¹¹. In the cluster, 5.8% have been allocated for code 131¹². Also the codes 412-415 (Studies, innovative actions, information) show a strikingly low relative financial intensity, not only compared to INTERREG but also to the strand A and the cluster. These interventions do not only appear strongly under-represented (between 3 and 10% of the INTERREG average), even the absorption rate is very poor. Also the absorption rate of codes 413-415 is at only 39% (for all of them). This clearly shows that accompanying technical measures have been of only minor importance for the ABH programme. To a lesser extent this finding also applies to code 411 (evaluation)¹³.

According to the Managing Authority and the JTS, the reluctant use of visibility activities was deliberate. The representatives of the ABH programme are convinced that printed information for programme publicity does not meet the needs to promote the programme. Brochures and lengthy project folders were perceived rather boring and not supporting the interest for collaboration.

Finally, a rather interesting finding is that for code 414 (Innovative Actions) there are practically no budgets allocated under the ABH programme because innovative actions are by definition understood as the central standard for all projects. Similarly, studies were commissioned under the thematic codes (e.g. Feasibility study Cross-border business zone Jestetten D-CH) and not booked under code 413. This also clearly shows that the codes are not clear-cut.

Apart from viewing the frequency of codes and comparing their budgetary weight, the absorption patterns are also worth being analysed. In comparing the absorption rate of a code within the ABH programme to the absorption rate of the same code under INTERREG we can calculate a relative absorption rate. If the absorption rate of a code under the ABH programme exceeds the absorption within INTERREG in general, the fraction takes a value >1 . The overview table (annex 1.2) shows that absorption rates are in most cases on par or above the rates at the INTERREG level. Only services in

¹⁰ As regards the IM calculated for codes 323 and 353 with regard to the cluster we see that the share of ABH share is even more over-represented than related to the INTERREG average.

¹¹ Code 131 as such is in fact not existing. The code family 130 includes fifteen sub codes related to rural development. Code 1310 is rural tourism, code 1301 is land improvement. In the ABH programme budget and expenditure for support to rural crafts is allotted to code 131. Encouragement for craft activities is however covered by code 1311.

¹² A closer look at the list of codes reveals some inconsistency due to redundancy. Besides the code 1310 (rural tourism) for which nothing was spent under the ABH programme, the code family 170 also represents tourism. Here in fact, budgets of around two Million Euro were allocated. In fact, the Managing Authority could have also allocated part of the funds under code 131.

¹³ The mid-term evaluation and its update were carried out in accordance to the Regulation 1260/1999 and rather meet minimum standards in scope of tasks and analysis.

support of the social economy (providing care for dependents, health and safety, cultural activities) and notably the abovementioned publicity, study and evaluation activities deviate negatively from the INTERREG average. With respect to the cluster and the strand A, the ABH programme scores with 84.12% slightly below the average, which is at 86.67% and 85% respectively. It is to be noted that, if one views the comparative absorption rates between the programme and the cluster, it becomes evident that the ABH programme scores lower, as compared to the overall INTERREG average, since the cluster, to which ABH belongs, represents only 'good performers'.

Even though the absorption rate is good but not particularly high, 84% still indicates a good dynamic. High absorption rates are on the one hand a positive indication of a dynamic programme, but can – on the other hand - also indicate that funds are spent without sufficient consideration of need and efficiency. While the n+2 rule has created a skewed incentive to consider quick absorption rather than need orientation (cf. the findings of the literature analysis, Interim Report¹⁴) for the ABH programme, n+2 has not been a problem. There were reports, that especially in 2003, at the time when the programme started its activities with a rather long delay, there was pressure on the Managing Authority to launch projects in order to avoid losses of funds (even at the risk that projects lack quality). But in fact, there was determination from the part of the Managing Authority not to sacrifice project quality¹⁵. Maintaining quality despite pressure on absorption was also possible because of the mostly small pilot projects, that could not only start without major delay but also in most cases be completed within the scheduled time horizon. Large infrastructural investment with less certainty in the implementation schedule has not been funded under the ABH programme.

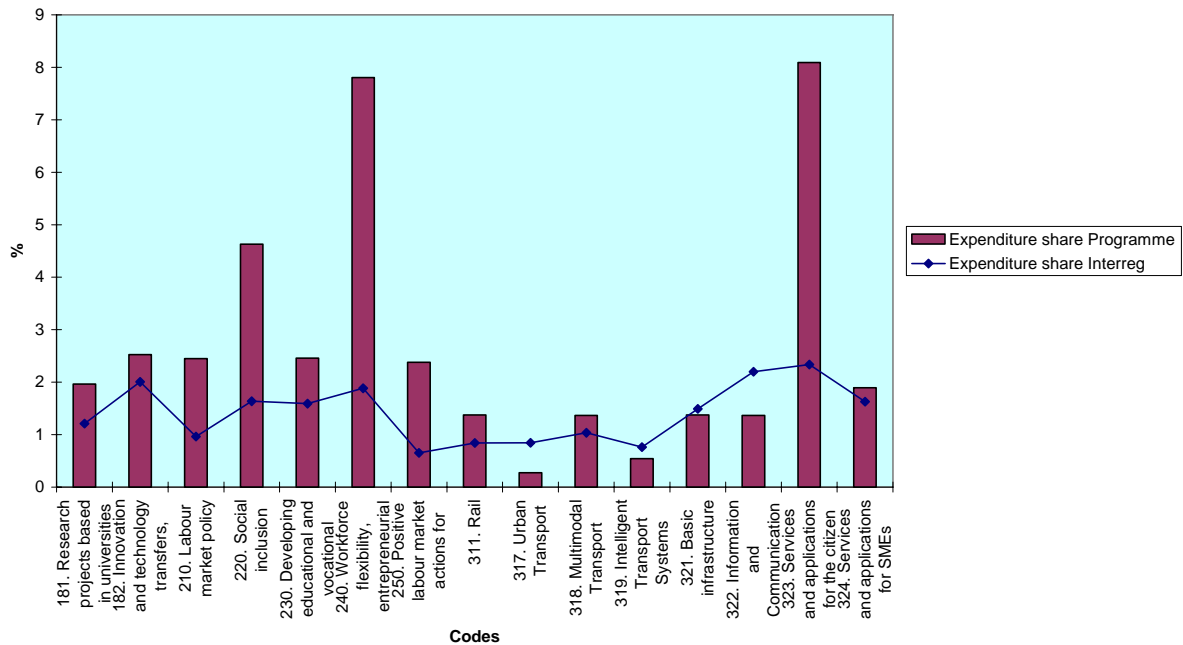
The character of projects can be associated with the *Lisbon* spirit (small experimental and innovative initiatives). Even though the programme was elaborated before the official publication of the *Lisbon* strategy, we can confirm that the programme had emphasised fields of intervention related to Lisbon to a large extent.¹⁶

¹⁴ Panteia and Partners 2009, Ex-post Evaluation – Interim Report

¹⁵ INTERACT 2006, Programme summary INTERREG IIIA Alpenrhein-Bodensee-Hochrhein, Vienna

¹⁶ Determined by the annex IV (Categories of expenditure referred to Article 9(3), Regulation 1083/2006)

Expenditure for 'Lisbon' interventions compared



The figure above shows that in most fields associated with 'Lisbon', the ABH programme is relatively strong compared to INTERREG. This is particularly the case for 'workforce flexibility' and 'services and applications for the citizens'. Social inclusion and labour market policy (codes 210, 220, 250) are also relatively strong in the ABH programme. Urban transport, intelligent transport systems and 'Information & Communication' are represented below average. Here the ABH programme appears weak which might be attributed to the fact that the programme region is already highly developed in terms of ICT and that there is no substantial need to further boost such infrastructures. The ABH programme has a clear 'Lisbon' orientation.

Dynamic financial analysis

By comparing the budget and expenditure data at code level on the one hand with the respective data at measure level we note that sums differ slightly. This has possibly to do with different points of time in reporting.¹⁷

At measure level, the dynamics of the single measures are strikingly uniform, all more or less following the same trend such as at programme level with only very little variation. Virtually all measures show a more or less linear trend starting 2003. Expenditure for studies, publicity and evaluation as well as health and social affairs appear low performing. Here expenditure was low and declining (concave). Expenditure trends for networking, agriculture/forestry and SME are the best performing ones. The financial implementation of the programme (all measures aggregated) is shown by the following figure. In the annex 1.4, the trends of expenditure over time for all measures are shown.

¹⁷ In the CIP and the Programme complement the contributions of Switzerland and Liechtenstein are not included. The Swiss government contributed with a budget consisting of a splitted pseudo-ERDF share (3.7 Million Euro) and national funds (8.8 Million Euro). The contribution from Liechtenstein has been 1,4 Million Euro. However these funds were not budgeted specifically for the ABH programme. The contribution from the non-member countries has been sufficient and proportional. In budgetary terms both countries have been well represented in the programme.

Financial implementation of the programme

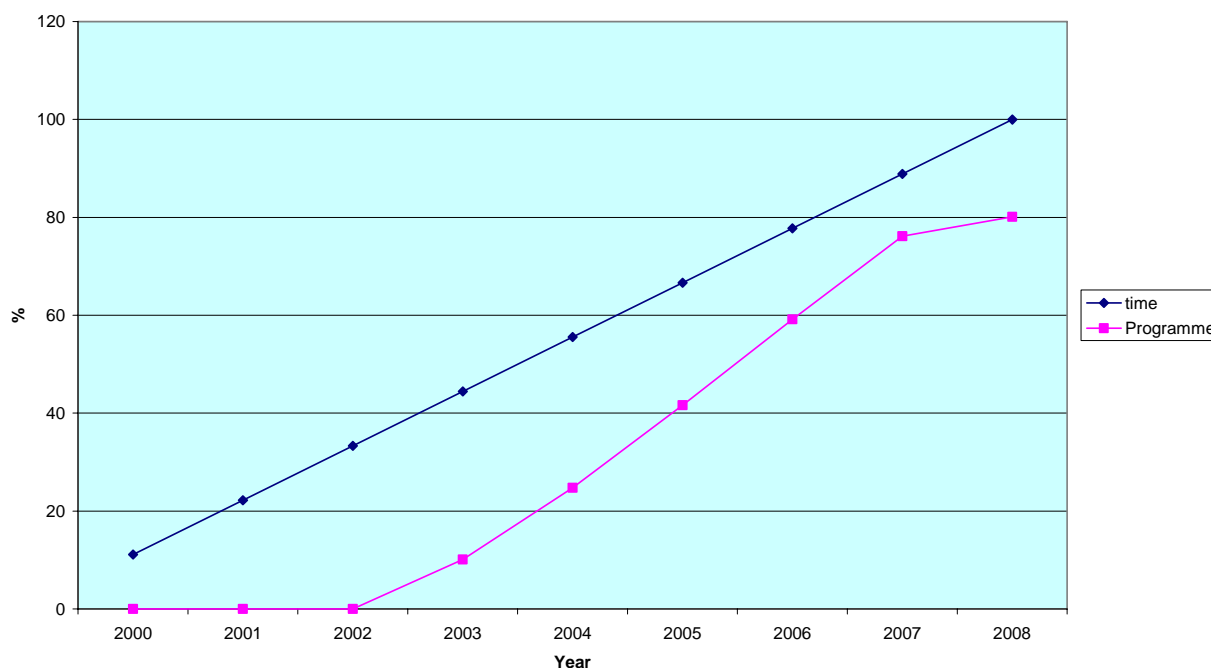


Chart above: calculated on budget and expenditure data provided by the EU Commission

In principle, we can conclude that the expenditure over time (slopes and the shape of the curves) strongly corresponds to the findings of the horizontal analysis (draft Interim report, pp. 55 ff.).

The private share of the ex-ante budgeting was at around 24% of the ERDF budget. During the years the real private share in expenditure deviated from that. 1.6 Million Euro were spent from private sources. With only 11.4% (from the ERDF expenditure) this is less than half of the originally planned private involvement. Hence, 5.3% of the overall eligible expenditure has been of a private origin. However, in comparison to the other programmes of the cluster, we see that the ABH private involvement is around average. In two of the programmes there was even no private involvement :

Private financial involvement (compared to the cluster)

Programme	Private share %
A-SLO	8.2
D-NL (Eems-Dollart)	3.6
D-A-CH-FL (ABH)	5.3
D-NL (Rijn-Maas, Rijn-Waal)	4.8
I-A	17.8
D-F (PAMINA)	3.3
D-L-B	0
D-F (Saar, Moselle, Westpfalz)	0
B-NL-D (Maas-Rhin/Rijn)	8.8
F-CH	10.9
B-F-L (Wallonie)	10.6

As there was no need to re-programme the intervention and the budgets were spent in a rather linear trend, the ex-ante budget has met the effective demand. While certified expenditure has achieved about 80% of the original budget, per 31 December 2007, commitments could already reach 97% (annual monitoring report). Part of the not yet spent commitments will be allocated to 2009 (extension of the expenditure deadline because of the financial market crisis).

Conclusion

The financially most important codes are 323 (services and applications for citizens), interventions in the field of employment and business (240 and 164), environment (353) and adaptation of rural areas (130).

The comparison between the ranking of the ABH programme with that of INTERREG shows that there are some deviations of the ABH programme from the INTERREG average. Altogether, a comparison of the ranking of codes shows a quite moderate rank correlation. With respect to the Intensity Measure (IM) and the Gap Measure (GM) we find that the variation of relative intensity of an area of intervention is much higher than the relative performance (i.e. the achievement level of the ALU programme compared to the Interreg average). The codes 412-415 (Studies, innovative actions, information) show a strikingly low relative financial intensity. These interventions appear strongly under-represented (between 3 and 10% of the Interreg average).

By comparing deviations between budget and expenditure we find at the lower end: studies, publicity, evaluation and at the upper end: Investment in physical capital, business services.

Absorption rates are in most cases on a par or above the absorption rates at the INTERREG level. Services in support of the social economy (providing care for dependents, health and safety, cultural activities) and notably the above mentioned publicity, study and evaluation activities deviate negatively from the INTERREG average. As there was no need to re-programme the intervention and the budgets could be spent in a rather linear trend, the ex-ante budget has met the effective demand.

In the CIP and the Programme complement the contributions of Switzerland and Liechtenstein are not included. The Swiss government contributed with a budget consisting of a splitted pseudo-ERDF share (3.7 Million Euro) and national funds (8.8 Million Euro. The contribution from Liechtenstein has been 1,4 Millionen Euro. However, these funds were not budgeted specifically for the ABH programme. The contribution from the non-member countries has been sufficient and proportional. In budgetary terms both countries have been well represented in the programme.

Virtually all measures show a more or less linear trend of financial performance. Expenditure for studies, publicity and evaluation as well as health and social affairs appears low performing. Here expenditure was little and declining (concave). Expenditure trends for networking is the best performing one.

2.2 Effectiveness analysis (trend pattern and achievement rate at measure level, relevance of achievements)

This chapter aims to shed light on the degree of achievement of the goals initially set as well as analysis of the degree of relevance with regard to local needs. Effectiveness means the achieved share of a pre-defined objective. In its simplest form it is just a comparison of plan and achievement. Achieved results are, however, not necessarily relevant; at least results may also be obtained at high opportunity cost. This means, there might have been alternatives to achieve a goal or even alternative goals.

In the context of a programme like INTERREG, relevance of achieved results is closely determined by the quality of the programme and its intervention logic and by the adequacy of the goals and their quantification. It should be stressed that the emphasis on the use of indicators in the ABH programme

has been rather low. Indicators are applied, however the programme administration emphasizes much more the ex-ante quality of the projects. According to the Managing Authority indicators, such as those listed in the Commission Working Paper on indicators, are not sufficiently defined and do not help in a dependable monitoring. They also do not measure quality but just whether or not anything planned before has been achieved. For programmes with more emphasis on tangible investment, monitoring indicators might be more appropriate, but for programmes with a more experimental approach and with the intention to trigger learning, adequate indicators are hard to define and to quantify. Furthermore, indicators support a programmatic approach as in indicative development planning. However, co-operation in the ABH region has never been programmatic in that sense (with indicative long-term goals). Co-operation has always been flexible and need-oriented leading to ad-hoc decisions rather than defined developmental goals. Therefore, the INTERREG CI as such does not fully fit the historic circumstances of co-operation in the ABH region. Here, the ERDF is perceived just as an additional, yet important financial tool to support and trigger further pilot and good practice projects with a view towards learning. The understanding is that the more projects of long-term co-operation can be supported by ABH the better will be the performance of the programme itself.

Direct developmental impacts in terms of enhanced economic growth or welfare in the border areas are not that much expected from the ABH programme. Rather, the programme aims to trigger deepened and more sustainable co-operation with learning effects leading in the end to more integration and welfare.

In the following we address both kinds of effectiveness analyses.

Plan and achievement

The strategic objectives of the programme comprise

- The support to sustainable spatial development in the programme area; and
- The establishment and improvement of cross-border networks in all relevant sectors

The second objective stresses the deliberately open and broad approach of intervention.

In terms of indicators and quantification of strategic objectives the programme has aimed to generate the following results:

Programme level indicators

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Quantification</i>
• Number of projects	150
• Number of INTERREG supported co-operations	80
• Number of studies and planning tools	30
• Number of visitors of supported events	n.a.
• Number of networks	15
• Number of publicity actions	10
• Number of projects for infrastructural improvement	7

Auxilliary qualitative Indicators

- Scope and composition of actors
- Emphasis on sustainability of projects
- Quality and intensity of cross-border networks

- Consideration of equal opportunity
- Consideration of the environment

With a similar logic the indicators were formulated and quantified at the priority level (specific indicators). These are included in Annex 2.1.

Within the mid-term and the updated mid-term evaluations a closer assessment of those indicators was made¹⁸. Although the indicators are rather simple and sometimes even without an ex-ante quantification (in most other cases just the number of intended projects) the system was assessed by the interim evaluators as pertinent and pragmatic. Since the final outcome is open and less concrete in its definition, we can say that, for the present, the applied simple indicator (number of [good] projects) makes sense. However, not only the indicators but also the indicator system needs to be further analysed.

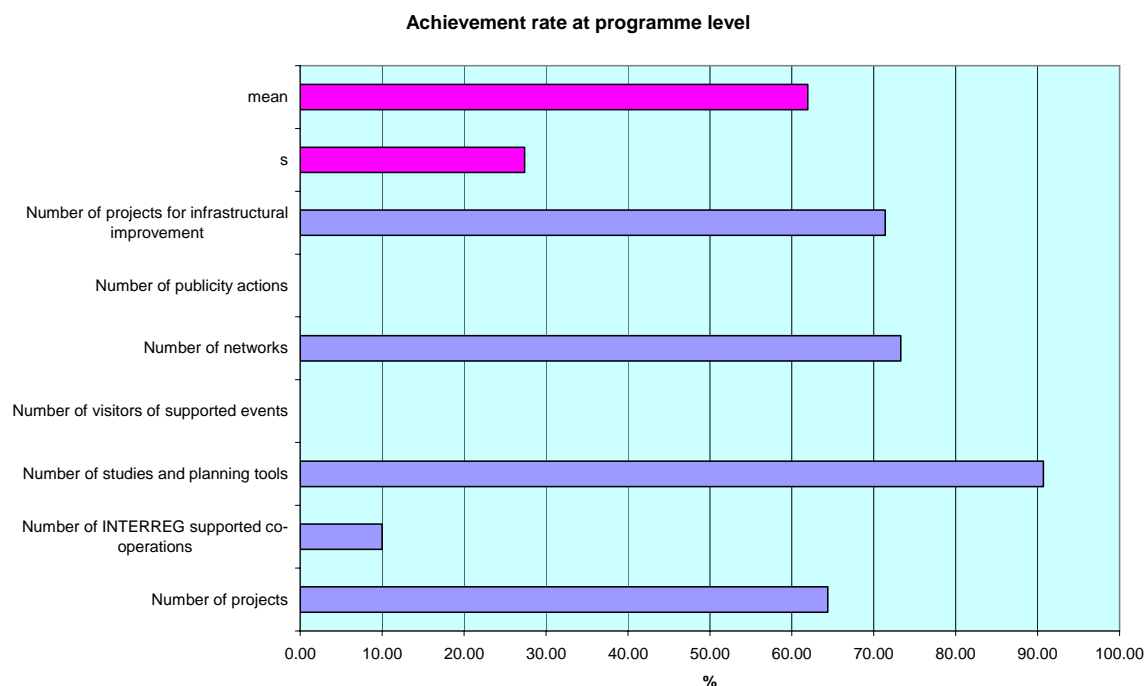
Major critical points at issue have been deficiencies in consistency and clarity of the system of variables. The intended broad scope of policy intervention (i.e. the deliberate renunciation of concentration) is clearly visible among the indicators. At programme level it is intended to support 150 projects. At priority level we can only count 49 projects to be supported. It needed therefore further enquiry to understand the relationship between the two intervention levels. In fact, '150 projects' is a target value, while the sum of 49 projects is just a minimum objective. At programme level the difference of 'co-operations' and 'networks' is not fully clear, if 'co-operations' differ from the definition of 'project'. The auxiliary qualitative indicators have been examined as limited in their significance as most of them are just binary scaled (yes/no).

Although this is certainly true, we find that these auxiliary indicators could bestow more comprehensiveness on the quantitative indicators as these come closer to a measurement of learning and other unobservable positive but indirect effects (e.g. new markets, variety of themes of cross-border exchange of experience, institutional formation, acceptance and awareness building etc.).

However, those auxiliary indicators were not further operationalised¹⁹ and used. Apart from a snapshot of programme effectiveness in the update mid-term evaluation also the specific quantitative indicators at the priority level were not largely used by the programme management. Despite this, the result of the effectiveness snapshot of the 2005 evaluation was quite favourable and shows that the performance of the programme in terms of pure effectiveness has been very strong. On average more than 60% of the originally planned targets could be achieved despite the fact that funding started only in 2003 (after a long delay in approving the programme).

¹⁸ There has not been further use of the indicators at priority level in the context of the regular monitoring. Therefore, the analysis of the actual achievements can only be done at the level of the measures.

¹⁹ Even though it is not possible to quantify such indicators, focused research on representative groups could help capturing unobservable effects, e.g. by commissioning an accompanying study looking at group panels and their incremental learning and the possible indirect effects (e.g. did INTERREG facilitate market access or market transparency?)



At programme level, slightly more than 60% of the intended goals (unweighted average) were already achieved by 2005. Among the different indicators shown, two were not monitored (in reality they are not zero as indicated in the figure above). Therefore the average estimated is still underrated. Among the single indicators only the number of INTERREG supported co-operations was still relatively low by 2005.

By comparing the programme level with the level of the priorities (cf. annex 2.1) we note a further major inconsistency between the goals at programme and priority levels. In fact the mean achievement rates at priority level are substantially higher than at the programme level (in all cases more than 200%), even though some indicators have not been monitored and are thus treated as an equivalent to zero.

A further striking fact is the strong spread of achievement rates. In case of priority 2 the standard deviation is only slightly below the average. The achievement rates range between 16% and 566%. This variation strongly corresponds to the findings of the horizontal analysis (Interim Report Task 2) and supports the argument against application of traditional monitoring indicators without clear definition.

In conclusion we can say that in the context of the applied indicator system, by 2005 the programme had performed very well. However, at priority level, indicators were not well geared towards the goals at programme level showing inconsistency in the indicator system. The high average achievement rates and at the same time the strong spread (high standard deviation) of those rates suggest that ex-ante quantifications were less than realistic. For the programme monitoring, either an explicit weighing of the different indicators²⁰ or more realistic target values should have been applied.

To update the effectiveness analysis for the ex-post view we based our assessment on the 2007 annual report. Here only the performance data at measure level are shown. Although it is possible to aggregate those results at the priority level, the two levels do not correspond. If we compare the mean achievement rate of priority 2 which is by 2005 at more than 250%, the aggregated mean value based on the measure level indicators is only 151% in 2007, as the following table shows.

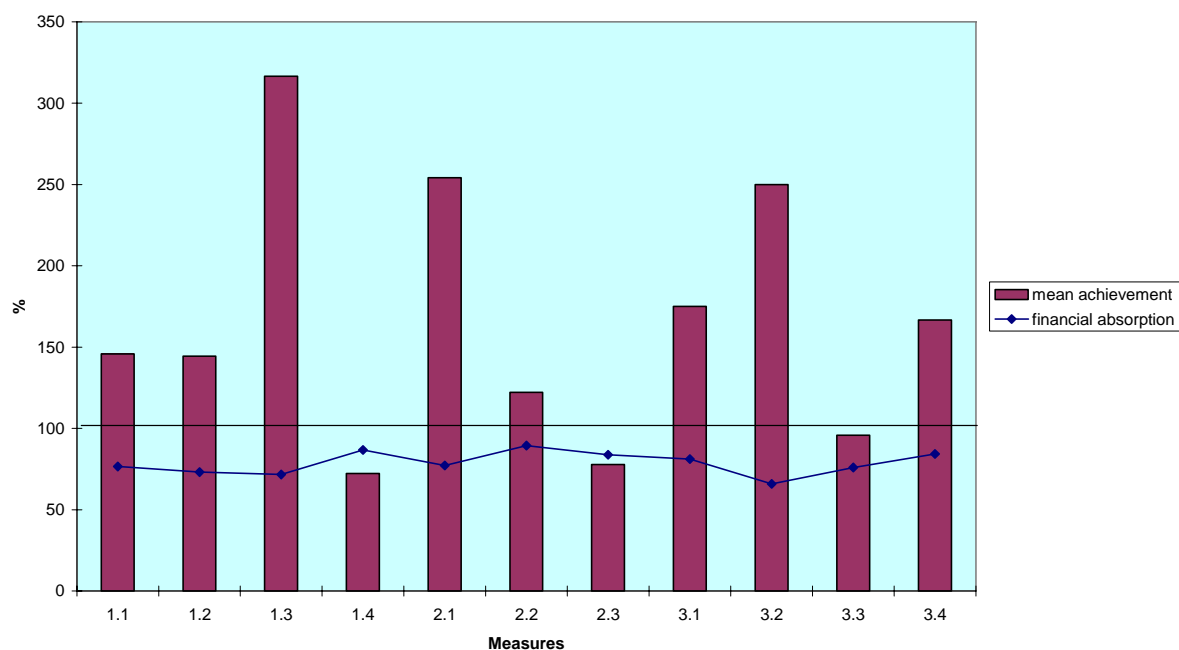
²⁰ so far every indicator scores with the same weight.

Achievement rates at measure level 2007

	<i>Variable</i>	<i>Ind.</i>	<i>target</i>	<i>achievement</i>	<i>achievement rate%</i>	<i>mean %</i>
1.1 Place management	New IT platforms	No.	2	2	100.00	145.83
	Business networks	No.	3	2	66.67	
	Trade fair presentations	No.	2	3	150.00	
	Projects for place marketing	No.	3	8	266.67	
1.2 Support to SME	Trade fair presentations	No.	2	3	150.00	144.44
	SME involvement	%	20	30	150.00	
	University-SME co-operation	No.	3	4	133.33	
1.3 Tourism services	Projects for exchange of experience	No.	2	5	250.00	316.67
	training projects	No.	2	2	100.00	
	projects for tourism marketing	No.	3	18	600.00	
1.4 Agriculture & forestry	Projects for place marketing	No.	2	2	100.00	72.22
	Projects for exchange of experiences	No.	2	1	50.00	
	Co-operation networks agriculture	No.	3	2	66.67	
2.1 Environment & nature	Projects for cross-border environmental protect.	No.	2	14	700.00	254.17
	Projects for cross-border design concepts	No.	3	4	133.33	
	educational projects	No.	3	4	133.33	
	IT based environment information systems	No.	2	1	50.00	
2.2 Spatial planning	Basic studies	No.	3	6	200.00	122.22
	IT based spatial informations system	No.	1	1	100.00	
	cross-border hearings for village renewal and town planning	No.	3	2	66.67	
2.3 Technical infrastructure	Basic studies	No.	3	4	133.33	77.78
	Improvement of cycling and hiking paths	No.	2	2	100.00	
	Projects for regenerative energies	No.	2	0	0.00	
3.1 Education, R&D	IT based platforms for education	No.	1	1	100.00	175.00
	Network for incubator and transfer centers	No.	1	2	200.00	
	Exchange of experience on voc. Training	No.	2	4	200.00	
	Parent organisation for university co-operation	No.	1	2	200.00	
3.2 Public health/ social affairs	joint utilisation of medical infrastructure	No.	1	2	200.00	250.00
	Exchange of experience in the health sector	No.	2	5	250.00	
	joint planning activities in the health and social sector	No.	2	7	350.00	
	Projects for medical post-therapy treatment	No.	2	4	200.00	
3.3 Culture & sports	Basic planning activities for culture and sports	No.	2	1	50.00	95.83
	Marketing and network projects for local culture	No.	3	4	133.33	
	IT based information platforms	No.	1	1	100.00	
	projects for enhancement of co-operation	No.	1	1	100.00	
3.4 Networking & awareness	Networks for civic involvement	No.	2	5	250.00	166.67
	Support to regional identity	No.	3	3	100.00	
	contact points for civic involvement	No.	10	15	150.00	

To better illustrate the performance at measure level and the ex-ante realism of indicators and their quantification the following comparative figure depicts the mean achievement rates related to the financial absorption rate:

Comparison: Mean achievement rate and financial absorption



With the exception of measures 1.4, 2.3 and 3.3 all other interventions grossly exceed the original plan. A striking fact is that, except for measures 1.4 and 2.3, the physical achievement rates of all other measures (based on the monitoring indicators) grossly exceed the absorption rates. Furthermore, the database is from the 31st of December, 2007, thus representing a status of one year before closure of commitments and 1,5 years before closure of payments. The difference in variation between financial and physical results again clearly reveals a deficiency in the indicator system applied. For measure 1.3 (Tourism services), the physical achievement rate is more than the fourfold of the financial absorption showing the monitoring indicators and the ex-ante quantification had been inadequate. The only measures where physical achievement and financial absorption rates are more or less in line, are the measures 1.4 (agriculture and forestry), 2.3 (technical infrastructure) and 3.3 (culture and sports). However, even here we cannot confirm that indicators and quantifications had been realistic.

Therefore a sound effectiveness analysis stipulates more analysis of the relevance of such results.

Relevance of achieved results

A further important question relates to the relevance of the achieved results. Relevance is linked to the intervention logic and the realism of objectives. The above suggests that targets have been too low, while a lack of weighing among the indicators makes it difficult to distinguish between really important objectives and less important ones. In a strict sense, only the overall programme indicator 'Number of projects: 150' can reveal whether the achieved results have been relevant. By end of 2007, 130 projects were committed. If we assume that all 130 projects were soundly assessed and have coped with the strict criteria of generating good practice in the sense of cross-border co-operation and sustainability, we can say that these have been relevant. We can also say that the programme succeeded in realising the broad sectoral scope of its interventions. No measure can be assessed as insufficient in its performance. We can furthermore say that 130 projects with an average project volume of 260,000 Euro have been supported by the ERDF. This is fully in line with project costs in comparable developed cross-border regions. By the beginning of 2009, monitoring sources reported about 152 projects (including technical

assistance). This means that the originally intended number of projects could be achieved, and the ex-ante specified minimum of only 49 projects could be thus grossly exceeded. However, as shown above, there is no link between the physical achievement and the expenditure, hence we do not know how much a good INTERREG programme for the ABH region (with need-oriented and/or justified experimental projects) might cost.

We can neither say that the results achieved have been achieved efficiently nor that they were too expensive. In consequence, as we do not have a counterfactual to compare, it is only possible to approximate the results of the programme by viewing the quality of the intervention logic.

The major question here is whether the programme has been designed to systematically address the strengths and weaknesses that had been diagnosed.

As already mentioned above, a peculiarity is the broad scope of the interventions. The socio-economic analysis (or SWOT analysis respectively) covers the spatial structure of the cross-border regional economy, environment and nature, transport and communications, education and science, culture and sports as well as public health and social affairs. Hence, thematically all major aspects of spatial development are considered in the baseline analysis. Agriculture and forestry is addressed under the chapter on environment. Forestry –is mentioned but not analysed systematically. The support to those sectors is funded under the priority of economic development. This appears as a minor inconsistency between the needs assessment and the specific programme strategy but does not suggest a major implication for the intervention logic of the whole programme.

Provided that the data analysis for the baseline study are accurate, we see that in most fields strengths are much more pronounced than weaknesses. Weaknesses are in many cases attributes of ubiquitous nature (cross-border specific or just assumed but not proved) or just 'the other side of the coin', i.e. in cases where a strength automatically implies a weakness, as the following comparisons show:

Spatial structure: attractive habitat, polycentric settlements and attractive cultivated landscape vs. ageing society and urban sprawl in some areas

Economic space: highly differentiated and developed economic structure, strong emphasis on services, qualified labour, sound qualification infrastructure, strong R&D structures, strong tourism sector vs. not yet fully reaped cross-border potentials of the market, bottlenecks of qualified labour (excess demand), unemployment of unskilled labour.

Environment: strong institutional co-operation, various large scale biotopes of national importance and intact landscape vs. pollution of the Lake Constance, over-exploitation of vulnerable eco-systems, emigration of labour

Transport and communications: good transport connections, good transport and telecom infrastructure vs. single deficiencies in the road network and cross-border public transport and highly different tariffs for local and international telecommunications

Education and science: Broad supply of primary to tertiary education, strong teacher co-operation, Strong co-operation density of universities, internationally renowned educational establishments,

practice-oriented education and emphasis on PPP vs. differences of mandates and responsibilities, different admission requirements and less developed capacities in peripheral areas.

Culture and sports: Existence of famous large events, strong co-operation at the level of sports associations, long-standing co-operation in cultural affairs vs. lack of further developmental perspectives of the cross-border sports and recreation, insider-oriented co-operation in sports, partly conflicting historical identities.

Public health and social affairs: Long-standing cross-border co-operation of specialised hospitals, strengths of spa tourism, strong tradition of civic involvement, awareness of self-help and strong engagement of women groups vs. inconsistencies of cross-border legal and administrative settings, different political priorities, deficiencies of medic care in peripheral areas, limited capacity of NGOs in the social sector and partly insufficient awareness of cross-border co-operation in public institutions of social affairs. (cf. CIP pp.31-62)

In terms of spatial development, the SWOT synopsis reveals the relatively high level of development of this cross-border area. There is no immediate need to alleviate pressing issues or combat economic and social decline. The challenge is rather to stabilise and further develop the achieved level of the cross-border spatial system. A weakness, however, is that the SWOT analysis does not show the direct border effects, although there are major factors suggesting that the tri-lateral border with involvement of non-member states, a floating exchange rate and topographic barriers hampers regional market processes to a large extent, or in other words, the cross-border regional economy suffers from a market failure.

The effects from the border are not systematically examined in the CIP. In other words, in the SWOT analysis there is no direct justification why an INTERREG programme is needed anyway²¹. A more systematic analysis how the border affects the economy and the public life would probably allow a methodologically more focused programme strategy, and this could further sensitise stakeholders in addressing border effects from different perspectives.

If we assume that the border effect – although not established by the SWOT - justifies INTERREG interventions, we can see that the programme strategy consequently tackles stabilisation and further improvements of the common economic area, the common environment and living space, the quality of life, the physical infrastructure and the established cross-border co-operation. Virtually all points at issue raised in the SWOT analysis are also addressed by the strategy. The types of intervention are focussed on light projects aimed to trigger good practice and not to directly foster development, growth and employment. Hence, the intervention logic does is consistent, and the relevance of the programme can be confirmed.

²¹ To do justice to the ABH programme, we have to say that this is a weakness in every INTERREG programme. Due to the fact that automatically all border regions in Europe are eligible for INTERREG (cross-border and transnational), there has never been a need to intrinsically justify such a programme. However, so far there is no substantiated argument why all border regions suffer from negative border effects, thus needing INTERREG support (cf. e.g. ECA 2004, *Special Report 4/2004 of the European Court of Auditors on the programming of the Community Initiative concerning trans-European cooperation – Interreg III*). It is throughout imaginable that there are borders which do not need INTERREG funds. It is even imaginable that there are borders with positive rather than negative developmental effects, like e.g. the Dutch-German border, which is already functionally and economically well integrated and where the border itself evolved as a strength (cultural diversity, a win-win situation due to easy cross-border commuting etc.).

The interview with the managing authority made clear that the defined strategy has been supported by all partners of the programme²². Activities have been co-ordinated between all participating countries within a broad scope of policy intervention. Those have been need-oriented rather than programmatic.

Overview: Assessment of the quality of the intervention logic and the indicator system

<i>Criterion</i>	<i>excellent</i>	<i>sufficient</i>	<i>poor</i>
Data use and analysis		The baseline situation for all relevant fields were analysed. However, the evidence is largely qualitative and sources are not well documented.	
Focus	The focus of analysis fully corresponds to the sectors and themes addressed by the programme.		
Quality and logic of the SWOT (conclusions/synopsis)		The multiple SWOT synopses are highly complex with too many inter-related variables. The conclusions are clear, but could be easier determined.	
Consistency of the Strategy		All major points raised in the SWOT analysis are addressed by the strategy. Some weaknesses are found with respect to agriculture and forestry.	
Determination of measures		The determination of measures is clear and consistent, but based on the assumption of border effects rather than empirical evidence of it	
Cross-border-agreement on the strategy	The strategy has been fully supported by all partner regions.		
The indicator system			Lack of correspondence between measures, priorities and the programme.

A further feature of the ABH programme with importance for relevance of results is its experimental character. Although the programme strategy is rather broad, the programme partners share an implicit focus on innovative projects. 'Innovative' is understood as tools for deepening and broadening co-operation.

This criterion seems to be taken for granted; otherwise, it would have been made more explicit in the programme complement (cf. the critical remark in the Interact Programme Summary of the Alpenrhein-Bodensee-Hochrhein INTERREG IIIA Programme, Vienna 2006, p. 16). Further evidence for that is also the fact that virtually no funds were scheduled for innovative actions (see above for the financial analysis). This finding is important for the ex-post view.

The selection of projects has followed a strictly quality-oriented approach with a preference for experimental projects and avoiding any replication of project activities already existing in the region. Projects with a chance to be selected have been either activities with a deliberate goal of good practice or activities implied by direct need. Coaching and counselling of the applicants from the outset of a project idea have been a central tool of project generation and development. Projects should trigger change and partnerships should show from the outset that they are capable of being sustained. Therefore, main objectives of the projects are sustainability of partnerships across the borders rather than creation or safeguarding of jobs. This is clearly revealed by the strategy of priority 1 (economic development). Although the private sector is supported, the aim of economic support is to trigger an

²² In contrast to Interreg II, the programme 2000-2006 has even broadened the scope of intervention since it was recognised that more emphasis could be laid on the health sector which had not been addressed by the forerunner programme.

impulse to better embrace the regional goods markets and to deepen co-operation in developing new products. In the past, the municipalities had been prone to parochial policies that often entailed major efficiency losses for the regional economy. The EU enlargement with an increased competitive pressure on better-off regions (like that of the programme area) has led to further decline of economic co-operation for the sake of national economic interests. The Interreg IIIA programme ABH aimed to counteract unilateral national interests. The updated mid-term evaluation emphasised this approach and advised to continue and even reinforce this strategy because the indirect impact on regional growth is greater than simple subsidisation of capital to generate jobs (Schnell et.al 2005, Interreg IIIA Programm ABH: *Aktualisierung der Halbzeitbewertung*, Sankt Gallen).

The majority of projects funded under the programme are experimental. Even though individual project activities could have failed, a continuing co-operation with a view to improved or alternative project ideas is seen as a success. Hence, programme impacts are expected and measured at the project level rather than at measure or priority level. Therefore, projects are regarded in terms of their individual sustainability profile.

To ensure effectiveness at the project level, a major emphasis is laid on the application and selection process. Programme monitoring is anticipatory rather than confirmative. Therefore, the quality of the project is at the centre of consideration rather than the performance of aggregated measures. The eligibility of a project depends on the expected and probable impacts on sustainability. For this purpose, projects have undergone so-called sustainability checks, that are in fact accompanied self-reported ex-ante assessments and forecasts. The JTS and the national contact points assess the validity and plausibility of the self-reported assessments independently. In the context of the sustainability check, the value added for the cross-border integration, the support to cross-border structures, equal opportunity and the environment will be discussed. On a rank scale from very positive (++) to very negative (--) impacts are classed. For all impacts expected, arguments are to be formulated independently. Those arguments are compared and consistency-checked and presented to the steering committee. All arguments are further used as benchmarks to evaluate the interim and final project reports; i.e. the reports have to consider the original benchmarks and to prove the achievements.

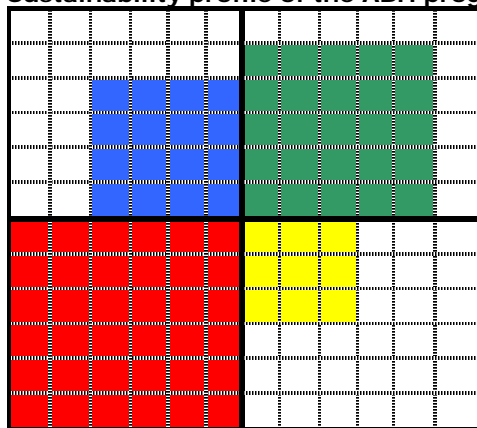
The application has to further show the baseline situation and why the project is needed, the specific objectives and the methodological approach and the relationship to other related activities in the region. Furthermore, the application asks for the definition of concrete milestones and the plans for further activities after the INTERREG support. The quality of cross-border co-operation is to be proven by co-operation at the level of planning, management, finance, implementation and utilization of results. Everything has to be supported by arguments and facts. Two very important questions to be answered comprehensively are the expected utility for the region for the intensification of networking and the final value added for the cross-border region (e.g. welfare effects, indirect trigger-off-effects).

For the entire programme, the expected and verified project effects are to be aggregated at the programme level. Basic impacts on sustainability are expected for the economy (innovation, supply of local goods, value added, jobs and attractiveness for investment), the social system (life quality, gender sensitisation, integration etc), the environment (nature protection, energy, waste, noise, water mobility land use etc.) and some kind of global fairness (in terms of fairness between groups, regions and gender, poverty alleviation, education, health etc.). These four criteria make up the sustainability profile of a project. The profile is illustrated by a stylised four-field-table with impact on the economy (blue),

environment (green), the social system (red) and global fairness (yellow). The more the squares are covered, the more the single project could contribute to the programme sustainability.

Based on an assessment of eighteen completed projects, the overall sustainability profile of the ABH programme was derived as follows:

Sustainability profile of the ABH programme by 2005



Source: Updated mid-term evaluation

Based on this, the updated mid-term evaluation concluded that the INTERREG projects could generate important impacts on sustainability in all four fields, particularly for the social system, where some projects could considerably deepen co-operation structures (examples Bodensee-Agenda 21, Internationale Bodensee-Hochschule). Even in terms of global fairness the projects could prove to have contributed, although there was no project that pursued that aim from the outset.²³

The updated mid-term evaluation also concluded that the types of projects being funded could considerably contribute to the broadening and deepening of cross-border co-operation. Despite the relatively small budgets the projects could increase the volume of 'social capital' in the cross-border region and could stabilise existing co-operation ties. It is admittedly hard to ascertain such indirect impacts of fundamental relevance like that of social capital. From the viewpoint of the writer, it is surely plausible that INTERREG and the numerous networks established might have had an impact on the increase of the social capital, however, it is recommended to keep such estimates conservative. We simply neither know the transmission mechanism nor the quantifiable impact. Furthermore, while projects might have indirect effects with more importance than their direct effects, the question arises whether there are projects with no or disappointing direct effects (i.e. the observable effects) but positive indirect effects. For the ABH programme there are virtually no projects that fall into that category. For project ideas with a high cost risk and uncertainty, in-depth feasibility analyses have been carried out. An illustrative example is the idea of a cross-border business park between Germany and Switzerland. Although the idea itself is not very new for cross-border co-operation between Member States, the attempt to test such a project with a state outside the Common Market was pioneering. As the project study reveals, legal and administrative burdens due to different legal systems led to the decision not to further pursue this project. (R. Scherer, K. Hailbronner and J Schweizer 2004, *Grenzüberschreitender Gewerbepark Jestetten (D)/Neuhausen (CH) – Expertisen zur Beurteilung der ökonomischen Chancen und Prüfung der rechtlichen Machbarkeit*, Konstanz, St. Gallen).

²³ A final corresponding assessment of all projects (as a parallel effectiveness assessment of the programme at the project level) has not been carried out because this is not required by the Regulation 1260/1999. Projects underwent the regular auditing and the final reports were subject to an approval process. It could have been a major benefit for the programme, if the projects were more closely followed-up in the process of implementation and in accordance to the above structured sustainability profile approach.

In conclusion we can say that the ABH programme has been formally monitored by programme monitoring indicators. These however have been of only limited use to monitor the performance of the programme. The programme has put much more emphasis on the quality of the projects and the indirect effects triggered by networking and learning. The pursued emphasis on the quality of the projects is strongly supported by the writer since the intended learning and indirect effects materialize on the ground rather than in the context of aggregated measures or priorities. However, a focus of the monitoring on the projects would require a different programme monitoring approach, more based on accompanying empirical research on the projects and even representative samples of people affected by the programme in any way. The approach of the updated mid-term evaluation to address the impacts of projects and to aggregate those at the programme level has been a very important step to a better system of performance control (instead of traditional programme monitoring), but such a system needs to be further developed and employed on a permanent base (e.g. panel surveys)²⁴.

Comparison with horizontal results across INTERREG III

Analyses in the context of the horizontal evaluation of the strand A programmes²⁵ have revealed that the overall average percentage of target values achieved is generally high. This can be also confirmed for the ABH programme, although it is always important to consider the respective quality of the indicators. In case of the ABH programme, indicators as such are too simple to monitor performance and do not reflect quality and relevance. However, the strict quality criteria at the project level and the high performance observed here suggest, that the achievement of the programme has also been highly relevant.²⁶

The further results of the horizontal analysis of the ex-post evaluation say

‘...If looking at performance in relation to the priority topics of strand A programmes, as laid out in the INTERREG III Communication, we see that the relatively high average achievement ratio was spread over the priority topics, with the lowest average achievement ratio within the priority topic 6 “basic infrastructure of cross-border importance” and within priority topic 7 “cooperation in administrative fields” and the highest within the priority topic 4 “cooperation on research, technological development, education, culture, communications, health and civil protection” and ‘8 “Cooperation between citizens and institutions”....’

Compared to the ABH programme there is a high correspondence in the results, although the measures/priority areas are not fully geared towards the priority topics laid out in the Communication.

Average Achievement rates of the ABH programme²⁷ are for the corresponding measures:

Measure	Achievement rate
Technical infrastructure	77%
Networking and awareness building	166%
Research and R&D	175%

²⁴ There might be certainly considerable initial costs to develop and launch such research-based monitoring and evaluation systems, but if a pilot research on any INTERREG A programme provides evidence on important indirect impacts showing that relatively little money triggered growth processes in cross-border regions, it should be worthwhile to further develop and test such approaches with a view to establish an adequate monitoring and evaluation system for cross-border co-operation and eventually also transnational co-operation.

²⁵ Ex-post Evaluation INTERREG III: Interim Report on task 2

²⁶ Cf. Schnell et.al 2005, Interreg IIIA Programm ABH: *Aktualisierung der Halbzeitbewertung*, Sankt Gallen

²⁷ See table above: Achievement rates 2007

Other general results of the horizontal analysis suggest that the INTERREG III programmes have achieved a lot within the framework of the wider INTERREG III goals. According to that, a variety of physical, institutional, informational, and educational outputs have been achieved in various fields, such as transport, communication, environment, tourism etc. Additionally, a large number of networks have been created or are operating within the framework of INTERREG III. Apparently, these outputs have generated socio-economic results, such as employment opportunities, and have had beneficial effects for businesses.

Regarding the ABH programme we can only say that the physical achievements are in line with the findings of the horizontal analysis, however the data on the ABH programme do not allow an estimation of the further impacts on the co-operation area (i.e. employment or growth of the private sector or the environment).

Conclusion

As regards the more global viewpoint (priority topics defined in the Communication) our findings suggest that there is a high correspondence between the results of the ABH programme and INTERREG (especially when restricted on strand A only).

The intervention logic sufficiently justifies the intervention (there are only minor weaknesses); indicators are less useful for estimating the achieved results as they are too simple, not well co-ordinated between the different levels of intervention and not capturing the important experimental outcomes and indirect effects. Only the applied quality criteria at the level of the project selection ensure the relevance of the achieved results. Projects funded by the ABH programme are by their nature rather experimental and complex. It is not so much the intention to carry out projects that meet their originally scheduled physical outputs but rather to establish sustainable networks. Trial and error are information tools of overarching importance.

The implementation corresponds to the pattern of the financial performance, however the simple indicators do not allow a dependable dynamic monitoring. The analysis at the priority level differs from that at the measure level.

There were no delays in implementation. A shortcoming has been the rather poor achievement rate for studies, evaluation and publicity. The reason for that has been the perceived moderate utility of those instruments.

2.3 Evaluation at project level

Based upon the structure of the ex-post assessment at programme level that has been outlined, a further in-depth evaluation at project level is to be executed. This represents a core step in further deepening the empirical character of the evaluation of the programme.

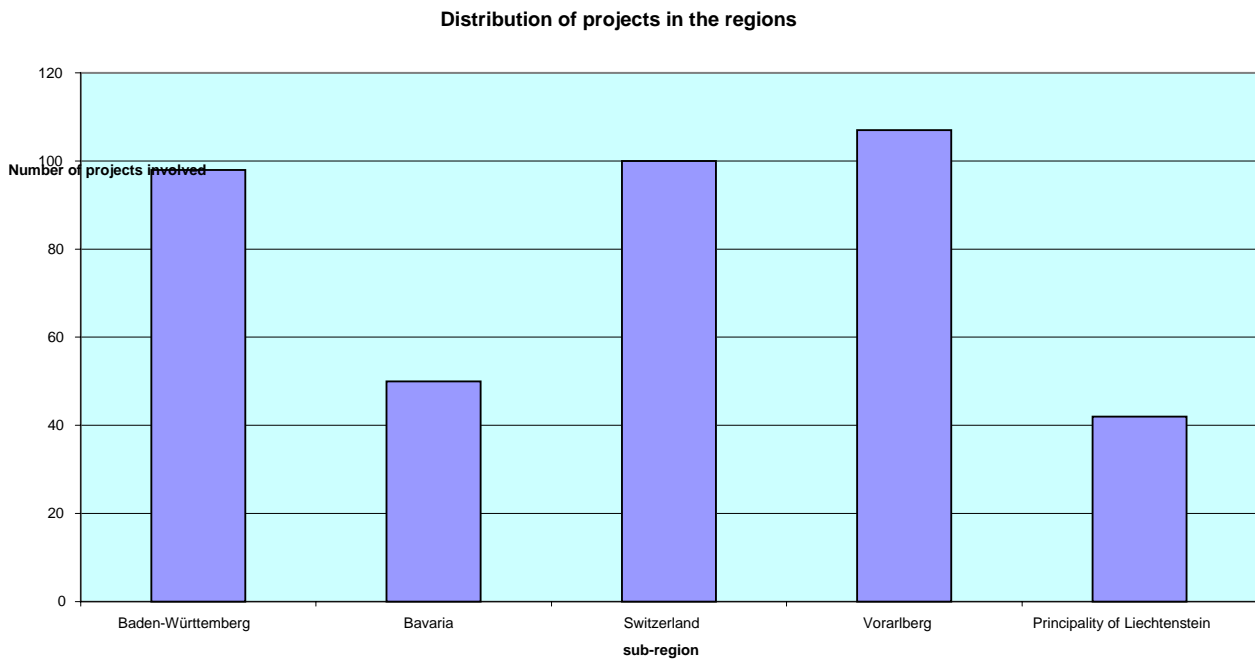
The selection of projects has been done in a way that optimally cover the "priority topics" that have been set out for INTERREG III strand A.

The appraisal of the projects has been carried out in strict compliance to the approach defined in the Inception Report.²⁸

The distribution of projects and the degree of networking

Before looking at individual projects in the context of the evaluation questions, the character of the projects and the geographical distribution is analysed.

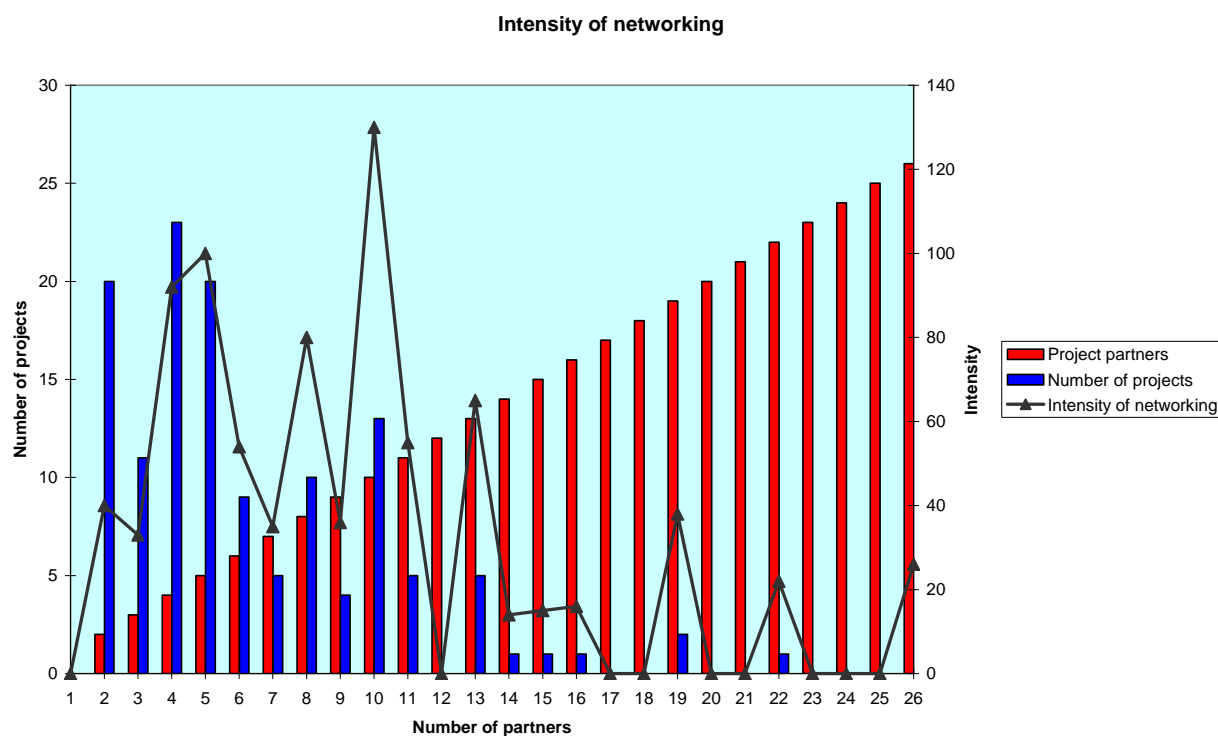
The following table shows the regional distribution:



We see that there is a rather even distribution among the major participating regions Vorarlberg, Switzerland and Baden-Württemberg. The minor partner Bavaria and Liechtenstein are represented to a lower extent. Apart from the geographical distribution it is also possible to look at the intensity of networking. The programme has supported projects ranging from two to 26 partners involved. In combination with the number of funded projects it is possible to determine the respective intensity of networking (number of projects x number of project partners) and to depict the combination with the highest intensity of networking.

²⁸ Panteia & partner institutes (2009), *ibid.* pp. 97 ff.

The following graph shows this distribution.



There have been many projects with a smaller participation (2-5 partners), while projects with a greater number of partners (more than 15) are only few. The highest intensity of partnership can be found for projects with ten partners. Under the ABH programme thirteen projects with ten partners each have been funded. The intensity of partnership is therefore 130.

This shows that networking (emphasis on projects with many partners) plays a major role at the project level. This is also further analysed in the following project studies.

The selection of projects

The number of projects and the scope of themes under the ABH programme is rather large. In a pre-selection of projects the evaluators first looked at the themes and their relationship with the priority topics of the INTERREG Communication. Secondly we explored the available project documents to determine projects that reveal interesting insight into the mechanisms to be analysed and could generate sufficient results for such project case studies. The pre-selection concluded with the following projects:

INTERREG-A Priority Topics (Communication)	Pre-selection of projects
Promoting urban, rural and coastal development.	1. DACH+ (a long-standing co-operation in spatial planning in the entire programme area)
Encouraging entrepreneurship and the development of small firms (including those in the tourism sector) and local employment initiatives.	2. <u>Spatial concept Alpine Rhine</u> 3. Cross-border business zone Jestetten between Germany and Switzerland (study with a highly experimental background)
Promoting the integration of the labour market and social inclusion.	4. Creative Industries (an experimental network for promoting cross-border structural change) 5. <u>Innovationsoffensive VORAN (an SME network)</u> 6. Chance for low-qualified (a study to be implemented under INTERREG IV)
	7. Euregio Adipositas (cross-border network for prevention and therapy of children and youngsters with Obesity)

Sharing human resources and facilities for research, technological development, education, culture, communications and health to increase productivity and help create sustainable jobs.	8. International School Rheintal (a top-level cross-border primary and secondary school with English as instruction language) 9. International University Lake Constance (University network aimed at the initiation of science and research synergies)
Encouraging the protection of the environment (local, global), increase energy efficiency and promote renewable sources of energy.	10. Ecological assessment of the Alpine Rhine mouth 11. Water Information System
Improving transport (particularly measures implementing more environmentally-friendly forms of transport), information and communication networks and services and water and energy systems.	12. Flex tax (a cross-border public transport tariff system)
Developing co-operation in the legal and administrative spheres to promote economic development and social cohesion.	13. Learning Administrations (a cross-border approach of exchange of experience with a view to improving effectiveness and efficiency in administration)
Increasing human and institutional potential for cross-border co-operation to promote economic development and social cohesion.	14. Kulturregion Untersee (a sectorally and regionally defined cross-border network of improving human resources and institutions)

The final selection of five projects to be more closely assessed was done in close co-operation with the JTS. The selection has been oriented to the criteria of the terms of reference and the adequacy of the projects (stock of information and experience).

The finally selected projects are:

- (1) Euregia Adipositas,
- (2) International School Rheintal,
- (3) DACH+,
- (4) Creative Industries und
- (5) Kulturregion Untersee

The analyses were primarily based on documentary analysis, pre-announced and co-ordinated phone interviews.

For project 66 (DACH+) a 4-hour face-to-face meeting with the lead partner (Regionalverband Hochrhein-Bodensee) took place in Waldshut-Tiengen on the 12th of March, 2009. This meeting was attended by Moneim Issa and Rolf Bergs (task co-ordinator of the ex-post evaluation INTERREG III).

Due to the long history, the important results and the importance of that project for the entire programme area it is intended to propose that project as one of the mini case studies for publication on the DG REGIO Regions for Economic Change database of good practices.

Appraisal of the projects according to the evaluation criteria

The following contains the reports of the five project case studies,. More technical background information (budgets, partners, duration etc.) about the single projects can be found in the annex 3.1.

Project study 1: Kulturregion Untersee (Promotion of cultural heritage and tourism in the lower Lake Constance)

I. General Project information

Goals of the project are qualitative improvement of cultural tourism and cross-border cultural activities between Germany and Switzerland, promotion of the transnational integration of cultural and tourism products and fostering the intercultural communication. Ultimately, sustainable cross border cooperation among the regional tourism industries and project partners is intended.

II. Selection process

The project was selected by a rolling application procedure²⁹.

There is a long regional co-operation history and several specific traditional ties between Germany and Switzerland. The cross-border cooperation among the border regions of the 2 countries is more than 100 years old. The cultural-historical aspect has always constituted a major basis of this cooperation. During this period the partners across the borders have gained substantial cooperation competencies, particularly in the management of cultural-historical projects. Worth mentioning is the *Association of the History of the Lake Constance and its Neighbourhoods*, already founded in the 19th century with a rather active pursuit of cultural cross-border co-operation.

The cross-border cultural-historic activities have been facilitated by the fact that this region has a huge wealth of cultural-historical heritage and attractive natural resources. Visitors to the region can experience the symbiotic relationship between nature and culture (e.g. the 'Pfahlbauten' near Meersburg are archaeological reconstructions of 15 pile works from the Stone and Bronze Ages 4.000 – 850 B.C. The reconstructions are being displayed in an open-air-museum). However before the commencement of the INTERREG project, the major activities were concentrated for the promotion of Tourism. Less attention has been paid to promote the cultural-historic heritage of the region and to link it to tourism. Here a further strengthening of administrative co-operation and development of human resources has been necessary.

III. Partnership and sustainability

The project has been a genuine common action by German and Swiss project partners has contributed to the enhancement of further common activities such as:

- Kunstroute (Art route): which is accompanied by various arts exhibitions
- Klosterroute (Abbey route) which allows the visitors to undertake cultural excursions along the various abbeys in the region
- Themenjahre (annual cultural-historical topics) Every year the project partners introduce a specific cultural topic. This is always accompanied by various cultural events (e.g. focusing on the poet Hermann Hesse) and cultural exhibitions

The interviewed project partners expect that these cross-border activities will continue even after the INTERREG programme and the termination of the ERDF support.

The partnership approach (cross-border partnership with a lead partner) has been fully applied and was accorded paramount importance. The lead partner Tourismus Untersee e.v. was in charge of the financial, administrative and marketing tasks of the project. The partners are responsible for the implementation of the different events relevant to the project. The lead partner usually takes the initiative to plan and to organize (in cooperation with the partners) the execution of the events and exhibitions. This requires a well-co-ordinated inter-institutional co-operation across the Swiss-German border. Despite the high organisational burden the partners have learned to cooperate (sometimes by trial and error) and have established a workable business routine in supporting and organizing high quality cross-border cultural tourism. Besides inter-institutional co-operation among the municipalities, associations and museums, co-operation takes place on the individual and personal level.

The needs assessment for that project was done jointly. The long traditional cross-border cooperation between the partners and the specific situation of the region initially motivated all partners to develop the project idea and to jointly apply for this project. The partners could prove specific prior co-operation experience to run such a project. E.g. in 2002 all of the partners had organized the first events and exhibitions on Hermann Hesse (a famous German author of the 19th century, who was born in Gaienhofen). The feedback from the visitors was positive, suggesting that the cultural tourism potential of the region has potential for further development. In this connection it is worthwhile mentioning, that the institutionalisation of the cross-border cooperation in the area of cultural-tourism between all partners corresponds with the European Commission culture programme and policy. The EC programme aims at the development of adequate "initiatives to celebrate Europe's cultural diversity" and at the enhancement of the shared

²⁹ Under the programme Alpenrhein-Bodensee-Hochrhein calls for proposals are not offered as an alternative to the rolling allocation procedure applied.

cultural heritage in Europe. These efforts can mainly be carried through the development of cross-border co-operation between cultural operators and institutions. The effective institutional and administrative cooperation between the partners within the framework of the project was made possible through the financial support by INTERREG. The on-going cooperation among the regions in the cultural-tourism sector has become more systematic after INTERREG.

Because the main concept and the objectives of the project were acceptable to all partners, the expectations among the partners were quite homogeneous. Nevertheless it is evident that some small participating municipalities, such as Gottlieben in Switzerland, which has a total population of only 300 people, may have had slightly different preferences with regard to the definition of objectives and agenda-setting. Due to their limited financial and personnel capacities they had originally preferred to run a smaller programme.

Kulturregion Untersee is partly an experimental project. At the beginning, the project partners could not make dependable estimates of the project outcome and whether the project would succeed or not. This uncertainty stemmed from the nature of the tourism sector. The implementation of the various cross-border activities is subject to specific factors of uncertainty (including different cost levels on both sides of the border and preferences of partners and prospective 'clients'). But due to the professionalism of the participating authorities and institutions in administrative co-operation and the ability to anticipate impacts of project activities, the project partners could be confident that the project would achieve the aspired results showing good practice but in particular cases also conceptual weaknesses, that have to be accepted.

The impacts of the project can be summarized as follows:

- The visitors to the cultural events have mostly expressed their satisfaction with the contents and organisation of the events
- The number of the daily inquires about the project activities shows the great interest of the public
- The number of the visitors to the project website and the number of disseminated brochures indicate the growing interest of the public in the project activities. This also corresponds to increased numbers of visitors of cultural events.
- The positive response by the local press and the media
- The lead partner and the partners have become major players with regard to cultural tourism in the region. The authorities regularly involve the project partners to participate in regional planning conferences related to cultural activities or strategies.

The impacts of the project are hence traceable in the sub-region of the lower Lake Constance.

The financial contribution of INTERREG was necessary for the implementation of the project. One important result of the INTERREG programme was learning to deal with co-financing in a way that the municipalities had to financially contribute to the project, not just taking ERDF funds but to ensure that own funds are invested efficiently. This has led to more sensitization for prudent public budgeting and expenditure. Sustainable results are only achievable if the project activities will become self-reliant after some years. According to the project lead partner, it is intended that the initiative will continue, even after the INTERREG programme. The partners can secure the necessary funds to finance similar activities in the future. The financial sources can be generated through sponsoring and revenues from advertisements (e.g. Hotels etc.). Future project activities will be more smoothly implemented because all partners have gained the necessary experience in managing cultural tourism. Up to now specific activities of that project were executed without INTERREG funds and they have become an important part of the cultural life in the region, for example:

- The Garten-Rendezvous (Garden rendezvous) of 2008 comprised events in the gardens of the region
- The literarischer Radweg (cultural excursions using the bicycle)
- The Cultural walking-tours

These and those further INTERREG supported initiatives mentioned above (Kunstroute, Klostrerroute, Themenjahre) can be seen as catalytic effects of Kulturregion Untersee. The initiation and implementation of such activities has taken place because of the substantial demand and the successful publicity. INTERREG III has facilitated those activities. The programme has created the basis for these activities. Through INTERREG the region is now in a position to develop various similar activities in the future. Hence, INTERREG has facilitated the launching of that specific tourism sector. Sustainability will depend on the economic self-reliance of the partners and the success of marketing. The co-operation among the partners and the experience and qualification suggest favourable preconditions for sustaining co-operation in that sector.

Organisational learning is the major benefit from this project. In order to ensure a smooth implementation of the project and a continuous professional communication between all partners, numerous organisational bodies, working groups and tools have been developed. This has been supplemented by a comprehensive project management system. The lead partner organisation has learned and gained vast experience from the cross-border cooperation. The project partners have continuously utilised the tools and the project management system to run the project activities. The lead partner confirmed that the partner organisations have also learned from the cross-border cooperation work.

As regards the INTERREG programme as a framework for the initiative, the project partners do not see deficiencies in the Programme concept or the project planning. Nevertheless they do see significant problems with regard to the bureaucratic administration of INTERREG III. In this regard the lead partner argues that this unfavourable situation will unfortunately also affect INTERREG IV. Sometimes the project partners receive forms and other documents as well as new regulations without any notice. Some of the project partners felt overstrained due to the complex procedures of INTERREG. Many procedures (, e.g. the applications forms, accounting systems and procedures, eligibility of expenditure etc.) have become difficult and are hardly comprehensible by the project partners. For this reason the project partners assigned private consulting companies to assist with INTERREG application procedures. Another problem which is directly affecting the project finance is the exchange rate of the SWISS Frank. Due to the currency fluctuation the project has been faced with an exchange rate loss of almost 5000 Euro.

IV. Learning and indirect effects

Exchange of experience and mutual learning through networking was a major aim of that project. All project partners gained vast professional experience and knowledge in the sectors of tourism and cultural tourism. The exchange of information and the Transfer of Knowledge between the partners have always accompanied the project activities. Differences in the administrative structures between Switzerland and Germany did not cause a problem in the course of project implementation. The only minor problem was caused by the differences in the human resource availability within the local authorities. While in German municipalities personnel resources are high, they are limited in Switzerland due to the size of counties and villages. Despite these differences the project contributed to the enhancement of procedures through the mutual exchange of knowledge.

According to the project partner, awareness building and knowledge exchange was supported very strongly by that project. In order to assess the awareness on common issues and perspectives, the project recently (2008) conducted a survey among many stakeholders and other target groups (communal/regional politicians, tourism companies, hotels, museums etc.). The questionnaire was executed within the framework of the overall future strategy on the perspectives of the tourism sector in the region. The results of the questionnaire concluded that the project has well strengthened toward the current issues of cultural-tourism and the cross-border cultural activities. The cross-border cooperation in this sector contributes to a balanced regional and economic development in the project region. Several small and medium enterprises will be established and hence new jobs will be created. The further development of the sector will promote growth-enhancing conditions that will contribute to a sustainable economic and social development. It should also be stipulated that most visitors have shown great acceptance to the activities implemented by the project. In addition the project has contributed to increase the awareness of the public toward the cultural and historic heritage of the region. Through the various activities of the project, particularly with regard to the aspects of cultural-Tourism as well as culture and nature the region has become one of the renowned tourist regions in the 4 countries.

Despite the differences in the local languages and the regional cultural differences none of the project partners has experienced any form of prejudices. On the contrary the different language dialects and the cultural differences are increasingly being appreciated by all partners as an enrichment.

From an economic point of view, the project addresses culture as an important asset for tourism development and upstream and downstream linkages in that sector. Through the project the cross-border cooperation between the tourism industries and private sector has further developed. This has contributed to the improvement of mutual information (in terms of cross-border market transparency) leading to more competitiveness and to the strengthening of regional economies. Particularly the tourism sector in Switzerland has visibly benefited by the project. This is due to the fact, that in Switzerland, and particularly in the lower part of the Lake Constance (Untersee) the tourism sector was weak due to the lack of capacities. The municipalities in this region comprise very small town and villages.

In conclusion, all the partners are rather satisfied with the results of the project activities and are eager to continue co-operation after INTERREG III. The partners are particularly satisfied with the project, because it has contributed to strengthening the cultural-tourism and the regional economies. Jobs have been created (at least through indirect effects of that project) and probably the revenues of the tourism companies have increased, yet an accurate estimate on that cannot be provided so far. Overall, it can be assessed that the project has triggered the development of a local sector with a potential of contributing to regional growth and to create or safeguard jobs.

Project study 2: Internationale Schule Rheintal (International School Rhine Valley) (ISR)

I. General Project information

The aim of this project was to address the lack of high-standard international education in a complex border region with strong influx of FDI from all over the world. Therefore the project aimed at the provision of a high quality education in English language for students from Pre-School to Grade 12 and the provision of a balanced program of instruction, which is designed to meet the intellectual, physical, social and emotional needs of the child. Furthermore it is aimed to offer a child-centred, welcoming environment that fosters an enjoyment of learning and where student achievements are celebrated. An overall project aim has been to strengthen attractiveness and infrastructural competitiveness of the cross-border region.

II. Selection process

The project was also selected by a rolling application procedure. The idea of the project was originally based on a private initiative. Five industrial associations have initiated and supported the development of the project. Prior to the initialisation and commencement of the project these associations have never been involved in any form of mutual cross-border cooperation. This was a major risk, but it opened opportunities and broadened the potentials for co-operation. The INTERREG-funded project made this possible. Another feature of the project was that the school is located in a rural area; most of the international schools are usually located in urban areas or large cities. The rural character of the region and distance to cities should contribute to a higher standard of learning and cohesion between student and school. But the acceptance of that philosophy among parents and children had not been certain before. This justified the project as something innovative and experimental. In addition the project may also contribute to strengthen the cross-border cooperation between the educational institutions and to offer further capacity of international primary and secondary education.

The main initiators of the project were the project leader (ACV Treuhand) and the industrial enterprise HILTE (machinery manufacturer). HILTE and several other companies in Switzerland employ many international managers and other expatriate personnel. The children of these employees need adequate school education. Because of the cultural diversity of the students the establishment of an internationally oriented school was necessary.

III. Partnership and sustainability

From the outset (idea and concept) the project was a common action among all partners. The collaboration among the project partners (industrial associations and companies) became much stronger after the start of the project and will – as it is envisaged – continue in the future. This is due to the fact, that the co-operation between the partners has been already institutionalised. The character of a school is anyway something long-lasting as it is related to public infrastructure.

The partners meet regularly twice a year to discuss the various issues not only related to the international school but also to several other issues with respect to the development of the region and to the cross-border cooperation affecting the further evolution of the school (e.g. transportation).

The partnership approach has been fully ensured from the project idea to the daily administration. The project lead partner is responsible for all administrative and financial tasks related to the project. The regional representatives, the promoter teams as well as the representatives of the industrial associations fulfil their own tasks in their fields of responsibilities and in accordance to the institutional agreements. They support the project through their professional advice and their specific fields of expertise.

The needs assessment was fully shared by the project partners. The expectations and interests of all project partners were homogeneous. Different initial standpoints (e.g. the choice of the school system or the teaching language) were discussed with a view to reach a consensus. Basically, the need for an internationally-oriented school was obvious due to the fact that many international families live in the region and work for Swiss and other companies across the borders. Therefore, two major decisions had to be taken at the beginning of the project:

The initiators discussed whether to adopt the British school system or any other international system (e.g. the US system). In order to avoid the dominance of a particular school system, the initiators have decided to introduce the international baccalaureate system. Subsequently, the school has been approved for Candidate Status for the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program (IBPYP) and Middle Years Program (IBMYP). Accordingly the ISR has followed the curriculum framework of the programs of the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO). Throughout the school, from kindergarten (from the age of 3) to grade 8 (age 14) classes are held on the basis of the guidelines defined by the IBPYP and the IBMYP.

The second decision concerned the teaching language. The initiators decided to introduce English as the main teaching language. German and French are taught as second languages. The native languages of the students (e.g. Swedish, Spanish etc) are taught separately. The children will then speak up to 4 languages when they complete the school.

In the initial phase the project was of strongly experimental nature. This is firstly because the school was not an extension of an existing international school, but a new establishment, and secondly, according to the lead partner, the school has been the first international school to be established in a rural area and not in an urban region. This was conceived as a major risk – particularly due to the general infrastructural situation in rural areas, the geographic distance from the national educational authorities and the acceptance on the part of parents and students –, however, anticipatory caution and resorting to external advice could help to minimize that risk. The international school in Zurich provides support to the International School Rheintal (ISR). Besides the experimental nature of the school, the concept and curricular contents of the ISR has been complex by nature. The school hosts international students and teachers from various nationalities. The design of the curricula takes this fact into consideration (e.g. accompanying care for students from different cultural backgrounds). It also takes into account that the school shall not be dominated by a specific school system. This stipulates a differentiated and individual-oriented approach of curricula and teaching providing a balanced programme of instruction in English designed to meet the intellectual, physical, social and emotional needs of the child (cf. further below the mission/objectives of the ISR). The ISR has participated in several international and European conferences to exchange ideas and gain experience.

The objectives of the school are to

- Offer a child-centred, welcoming environment which fosters an enjoyment of learning and where student achievements are celebrated;
- Provide a challenging intellectual environment for exploring the academic disciplines from a global perspective;
- Encourage and challenge its students to reach their full potential;
- Encourage its students to think for themselves and acquire the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary for effective life-long learning;
- Encourage its students to strive to be: inquirers, knowledgeable, thinkers, communicators, principled, open-minded, caring, risk-takers, balanced and reflective;
- Create an atmosphere where diversity is valued;
- Develop in its students a respect, tolerance and acceptance for people from a variety of cultural, ethnic, religious, and economic groups;
- Help its students to become citizens of the world, to become aware of global issues and guide them to show concern for themselves, for others,
- for the community and for the environment;
- Develop in its students a lasting commitment to international understanding and responsibility.

The outreach of the ISR is the entire ABH region except Liechtenstein, which only joined the project under INTERREG IV. There are many impacts of the project, such as the following self-reported ones:

- The school improves the infrastructural preconditions of the region for highly qualified immigrants
- So far, about 100 expatriate families have moved into the project region contributing to the tax income at local levels and boosting demand for local products and making the region more widely known.
- The project contributes to an alleviation of demographic change, because many young people have moved into the region.
- The company HILTE has supported the project financially (so far around 2 Million Swiss francs were sponsored)

- A new chip factory will be established in the near future. About 360 local and further 100 foreign employees will work in the factory. The ISR is expected to be capable to provide schooling for their children.

The demand for such a school was substantiated by the immigration of international highly skilled labour. Due to the demand, a second similar project has been funded by the INTERREG programme in the cities of Constance and Kreuzlingen. Both projects co-operate closely.

Interreg III has financed the physical construction of the school. This was essential. The running costs were covered by the project partners (the industrial associations and the companies). ERDF or other public co-funding covering running costs was not necessary so far. The cross-border cooperation between the partners and their financial support to the school will continue after the termination of INTERREG support. It is important to charge cost-covering tuition fees and to secure further sponsoring from the local business sector. The ISR has a plan for the development of the school during its first 10 years. This plan includes moderate yearly increases in tuition fees. For this school year tuition fees were raised in general by 3%. A similar rise in tuition fees is to be expected in future years. This increase is based on what is needed to cover the costs of the school (source ISR). The partners have established a regular annual conference to discuss further financial issues related to the school and the region.

According to the lead partner, one minor deficiency must be noted, namely the time limitation with regard to the project duration. A school as an educational institution undergoes a longer gestation period than many other types of projects. The school needs more time to establish and further develop its curricula and learning process. This implies costs and those activities cannot be limited by short funding cycles. It is hoped that under INTERREG IV the support to the school (in terms of improvement and extension of the education capacities) will continue.

Under INTERREG III, the initiators of the project waited almost three years to receive approval for their project. INTERREG – according to the lead partner – was perceived as complicated. Sometimes it was very difficult for all partners to comprehend INTERREG-regulations. The situation becomes even more difficult, because the involved countries have different laws and regulations, particularly with regard to Switzerland as a non-EU member. So far, the JTS has been active to support the project partners in avoiding formal mistakes with adverse consequences for the school.

IV. Learning and indirect effects

Value added in terms of organisational learning could be partly obtained due to the diversity of the organisational structures of the involved partner. The project partners have different professional backgrounds. The exchange of information and know-how among them has been regular. This also applies to the school management. Due to the different nationalities of the teaching and the managerial staff, several elements of international school issues are being continuously introduced into the existing curricula. Through the regular participation in international conferences the project partners as well as the school management continuously acquire additional knowledge. However, the school is still young and it is still in its trial and error process (experimental phase). Due to the support of the International School Zürich, organizational learning is ensured.

Between the school and the partners, which are industrial associations and companies, the exchange of knowledge is limited.

Apart from co-operation among the partners, the school indirectly contributed to improved policy and administrative processes. For example, during the implementation of INTERREG III Liechtenstein was not a project partner, because formal execution of some project procedures were not commensurate with some legal provisions of Liechtenstein. Under INTERREG IV Liechtenstein is a partner in this project. This was a concrete result of INTERREG III. Due to reformed laws in Liechtenstein the formal procedures and processes within the project will become easier than under INTERREG III. The introduction of the international health insurance system with participation of Liechtenstein has improved the legal basis of the health insurance contracts. This has strengthened the international orientation of that project.

From a socio-cultural viewpoint, at the beginning of the project the local population of the region was still reserved about the new neighbours from different cultural backgrounds and the school, a typical problem in rural areas. Through various trust building measures (e.g. encounter and cultural events) the population was made more familiar with the new situation. Meanwhile, the foreign families have integrated into the rural society and there is broad acceptance of the immigrants among the local population.

From an economic point of view the school could contribute to more market transparency due to its visible pull factor. The existence of the school improves the attractiveness of the region and thus stimulates the interest in gaining more information on the economic potentials and risks of the region.

The school could facilitate more market transparency across the borders through the following activities:

- The annual meetings of the partners have contributed to the initiation of several cross-border economic cooperation contacts
- The planned industry projects (e.g. the Chip factory) and the existing companies in the region such as HILT will contribute to the further development of the cross-border markets

Due to the wealth and prosperity of the participating regions, the cross border area of the ABH programme has become an international local labour market which largely differs from national local labour markets. The need for excellence and international standards in education gives the school the status of an important pull factor.

The school is internationally oriented and does not pursue a specific concept regarding the establishment of a common awareness among the partners. It has been intended right from the beginning of the project to avoid the dominance of a specific culturally-oriented school system.

In conclusion the project partners are satisfied with the results achieved so far. All project partners could contribute to the success of the project, either financially or conceptually and all of them have actively accompanied and supported the various development phases of the school.

High satisfaction among the stakeholders and the target group can also be confirmed. This is because the school has been growing rapidly. From about 20 children at the outset, the School has grown to 60 students today. The School is developing faster than originally anticipated. So far, the School offers classes from kindergarten to Grade 8 and in each successive year one grade level will be added until the school has a Grade 12. By now, the students are cared for by a total staff of sixteen, with plans existing to raise the staffing level continuously over the next few years. Students from 19 different nationalities attend this multicultural school.

Project study 3: DACH +

I. General Project information

The main objective of the project is to develop a conceptual and technical basis for a sustainable cross-border Spatial planning and development. This approach aims to facilitate the framework conditions for a further development of the existing economic potentials in the four regions across the borders. The four regions retain a distinct quality of natural and cultural resources, which are of paramount importance for the development of the tourism sector. The establishment of an information exchange platform and a data bank for the collection and processing of data on spatial planning and development constitute two central issues of the project. The technical data mainly focuses on:

- (a) Transport planning,
- (b) Settlement planning and
- (c) Cultural and land use planning.

II. Selection process

Like all projects under the ABH programme DACH+ was selected by a rolling application procedure. Under the programme Alpenrhein-Bodensee-Hochrhein calls for proposals are not offered as an alternative procedure.

There were neither spatial/land-use planning nor development concepts prior to the project. Through the INTERREG III-funded project this was made possible. The unavailability of reliable data on spatial planning, regional economic planning necessities was a major reason to press ahead in a co-ordinated approach to spatial development. All the project partners had the necessary professionalism and experience to develop spatial planning concepts. The project co-operates with renowned engineering bureaus in the four countries who are specialised in spatial/land-use planning and development.

III. Partnership and sustainability

From the outset, the project has been a common action. There has always been a cross-border cooperation among the four regions but there was a perceived lack of harmonized spatial development strategy and the corresponding planning. The cooperation process has developed successively through many years, starting already as a project under INTERREG II. In recent years several further common activities were further initiated by the project. For example many districts and municipalities are currently utilising the data bank and the material collected and processed by the project for their spatial planning activities.

The partnership approach has been fully applied from the idea and the planning phase until now. The needs assessment of the project was fully joint and guided by the common need to improve the spatial strategies of the cross-border region. Initially the project concept prepared by the initiators was discussed and approved within the meetings of the „Bodensee Raumordnungskommission“ (ROK-B). This commission is the successor of the German-Swiss Spatial planning Commission (Raumordnungskommission) and was established in 2000. The objective of the commission is to intensify the cross-border cooperation in the area of spatial planning and development within the Lake of Constance area. The ROK-B comprises Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Liechtenstein.

The lead partner, the “Regional Verband Hochrhein” is in charge of the administrative and financial issues for to the project. The project partners in Switzerland, Austria and Liechtenstein coordinate implementation of project activities in their areas of expertise. Despite this division of tasks amongst the partners, the project has a common management. The steering work group is the actual management body of the project.

The activities and all aspects related to the project are decided within the group, particularly with regard to:

- Settlement Planning
- Transport planning
- Cultural landscape planning

The steering work group meets twice a year

From the outset, the expectations among the partners were homogenous to a large extent, although a common understanding had to evolve through ongoing dialogue. At the beginning there were some minor controversies regarding the thematic focus of the project. The Swiss partners were rather pragmatic and theme-oriented and requested concrete actions and results from the project, that should be directly related to their spatial planning and development. Liechtenstein requested the same. Germany pursued a more general approach, i.e. the main focus should have been put on the development of a general spatial concept. Austria occupied a middle position. Within the steering group all these issues were discussed. A mutual agreement was reached, namely to adopt the general approach on the one hand and to consider the requests of all partners on the other hand (one can say that the Austrian compromise had been accepted). The general approach should be operational enough to facilitate a follow-up with more concrete activities and projects.

Such minor controversies over the right approach fuelled the experimental nature of this project. The project does not build on former co-operation in spatial development in the ABH border area. The major field of experimentation has been the improvement and harmonisation of the databank and the finding of a common denominator of the highly different planning structures in the participating countries (especially between the EU member and non-member states). All partners are convinced that the project should remain experimental, testing the feasibility of further initiatives of spatial monitoring and development. A future aim is the elaboration of a comprehensive cross-border physical development plan for the entire region, the elaboration of specific sectoral and sub-regional planning concepts, the launch of important pilot projects to examine how cross-border spatial planning materialises in practice (e.g. settlement development, public transport, land use), spatial monitoring and implementation of international and EU European legal provisions relevant for spatial development.

The success and usefulness of the project for municipalities and districts in the entire ABH area is obvious. Cities and municipalities are using the data and material of the project for their spatial planning at the local level. The major value added of DACH+ is that differences and similarities of national spatial planning have been made visible, that co-operation within DACH+ has facilitated integration of different spatial policy systems and that local spatial planning can now better be integrated into local cross-border spatial planning, and can thus strengthen the natural and cultural heritage of the whole region.

In terms of sustainability the project has aimed to strengthen the strategy and capabilities of cross-border spatial development in the entire ABH region. Hence, the project pursue by its very nature a strategy with a long-term horizon.

The cross-border cooperation among the partners as well as the project activities will continue after INTERREG III. The project has created solid structures, particularly through the data-bank and the vast Information material related to the areas of:

- Settlement Planning
- Transport planning
- Cultural landscape planning

As an example of actual relevance, the project results will be of direct importance to the local government authority of "Landesentwicklungsplanung" (Spatial development planning) in Baden Württemberg.

The cooperation among the partners has been successfully institutionalized to a large extent. The databases and the information are regularly updated and improved by all partners. This will contribute to a deepening of the cross-border cooperation among the partners. Apart from enhanced sustainability of DACH+ itself, it could trigger important further initiatives in the region, some of institutional importance.

For example the „Hochrheinkommission“ which was established in 1997 (launched by the project DACH I under INTERREG II) operates as an independent public body (for spatial development) and will continue to exist after INTERREG III (also without further ERDF funds, although further support would enhance the performance and weight of the 'Hochrheinkommission'). The main objective of the commission is to intensify the cross-border cooperation in the upper Rhine River.

For securing long-run sustainability the initial financial contribution from the Community Initiatives INTERREG II and III was absolutely necessary for DACH+.

No deficiencies in the programme strategy with a likely negative effect on DACH+ can be perceived by the project partners. There were also no inadequate measures that have hampered the selection and implementation of the project. According to the lead partner, the design of the project is flexible and can always accommodate new regulations and procedures. In addition, all partners, and particularly the lead partner, have long-standing experience with INTERREG, thus capable to apply a sound anticipative management in project planning and also maintaining the original thrust of the project for the future.

Nevertheless, local politicians are prone to expect specific results from the INTERREG project (e.g. infrastructure projects such as streets, bridges etc.), that can not be realized, neither by the program nor by the project. Over-expectation or lack of realism in the political sphere can harm the success and sustainability of that project.

IV. Learning and indirect effects

The exchange of knowledge and information among the partners has constituted a central issue during the planning and implementation of the project. Workshops, publications and professional symposia as well as frequent contacts have facilitated a smooth exchange of know how between the project partners.

Organisational learning has also been evident. There was a continuous professional communication among the partners throughout project implementation. The partners have acquired important knowledge and know-how. The German partner could learn from the Swiss partner organisation, particularly as regards organisational and infrastructural issues. For example: The Swiss partner had already established a functioning system of administration of the spatial planning and its inter-institutional co-operation between data provision and planning; The Swiss partners rely on a data processing department staffed with 10 employees, who are in charge of collecting and processing the information for spatial planning. The Federal German State Baden Württemberg does not have such a facility to swiftly process the data for spatial planning. Although there are four different systems of spatial planning in the four countries, all partners have jointly collaborated to harmonize the methodologies of data collection and processing. Another source of organisational learning was the local and international events and the conferences

Despite visible learning effects, the project impact on policy processes is still very difficult to assess, because the partner countries have rather different administrative and infrastructural systems. Particularly the scientific measurement methodologies in specific areas are different (units of measurements). For example the instruments to

generate, process and evaluate data for spatial planning are not similar. In addition the engineering data collection and calculations systems differ substantially. The failure in the construction of the bridge over the Rhine River in Laufenburg which was planned to connect Germany with Switzerland reveals a clear evidence for the diversity of the data collection and technical measurement methods³⁰.

Spatial development is a common challenge. The project has had so far a major relevance for the spatial development of the whole cross-border region. It has the potential to trigger an important structural impact on the economy and the environment. Through the services rendered by the project (data banks and material on Settlement Planning, Transport planning and Cultural landscape planning) the awareness for cross-border cooperation among the partners as well as among the local authorities has increased enormously.

From a socio-cultural viewpoint, during the course of project implementation, some minor prejudices were evident. The Swiss partner has expressed a subjective feeling that the German partner is dominating the project. ("the Germans are arrogant"). Intensive mutual discussions in the course of project implementation have however helped to eliminate these prejudices. The interest of the Swiss/Liechtenstein and Austrian partners were given due consideration so that in the end a feasible compromise could be reached.

From an economic viewpoint, the project has an enormous potential to boosting the regional cross-border economy. Sound spatial planning tools are a necessary pre-condition for dynamic regional economic development. Since the project cross-border cooperation between the partners in shaping settlement, transport, environmental and land-use has been intensified.

The data bank and the information on spatial planning provided by the project and supported by all partners have improved the transparency of spatial and also economic contexts across the German-Austrian-Swiss and Liechtenstein borders. Besides, the project operates its own homepage also addressing the paths and possible scenarios of economic evolution in the project region.

By and large, the stakeholders are generally satisfied with the results of the project. Nevertheless some stakeholders and local authorities wish further results from the project. These target groups expects to obtain specific concepts and data related to spatial planning and development directly on their own Computers. As the spatial strategies need time to evolve, it is important to bear in mind that the production of tangible outcomes and public goods generated by that project is also a matter of time.

Project study 4: Creative Industries

I. General Project information

The project aims to animate the evolution of a sustainable new cross-border economic sector "Creative Industries". The dissemination and exchange of innovative and creative knowledge and information across the borders ought to contribute to the establishment of sustainable economic relationships. The implementation of regional exhibitions and conferences should facilitate the realization of the project..

II. Selection process

The project was selected mainly because of the apparent prospects of such a sector in the region and the fact that the project partners have proved specific solid competencies and related experience which should allow a successful implementation of the project. The Exhibition Centre (Messe Friedrichshafen) has extensive experience in the execution of Exhibitions. In 2007 the Centre hosted the Exhibition: „ Creative Industries Marketing, Medien Digital"

The second partner of the project, the Bregenzer Festspiele and Kongress Centrum, can build on an outstanding experience in the planning and organisation of conferences. In 2008 major international conferences were organised by the Centre, e.g modern architecture, cultural design and presentation technique.

The project aims to promote and further develop the conditions for creative industries and is thus considered economically relevant for the Bodensee region (Lake Constance Region) due to its specific industrial and economic situation:

- The Bodensee region is a knowledge-based-economy with strong potentials in innovative service and industries
- The region takes a leading position in the innovation index and patent registration
- The region possess highly qualified working force particularly in high technologies
- Several high technology industries are located in the region such as, ADRS, ZF und Dornier and automotive industries.

The focus of creative industries is on public relations, marketing, TV, cinema, video, broadcasting, multimedia, internet, electronic publishing, print media, design, photographs, fashion, architecture, education, arts and culture.

The neighbouring project regions in Austria have already developed a cultural infrastructure and highly creative economy. The Bregenz Festspiele has an international reputation. One of the largest companies, Unterzumtobel, manufactures highly qualitative Light and Laser products. In addition Bregenz has an internationally renowned Arts Centre (Kunsthau).

III. Partnership and sustainability

The project was conceptualised and developed jointly by all partners. An established routine of cross-border cooperation among the partners fostered a smooth process of project implementation. Through the Exhibition 2007

³⁰ Both countries apply different concepts of Normal Null; while the Swiss approach is based on the normal sea level of the Mediterranean Sea, Germany's approach is based on the North Sea normal level. This difference led to a mistake in constructing the bridge.

(Messe) and the conference 2008 further cross-border exchange between the partners, multipliers of the creative industries and clients took place. The cross-border cooperation – particularly between the leader partner and the Wirtschaftstandort Voralberg GmbH - has contributed to the initiation of two further new projects:

- Exporeal Messe in München (Exporeal Exhibition in Munich). The Exhibition focuses on the marketing of industrial areas and takes place annually ('Messe für Gewerbe-immobilien', trade fair for commercial real estate)
- Karriere (Career): The project partners have designed an internet Portal to exchange job-information and other topics relevant to the market. The project organises several visits to industrial enterprises, almost every year.

The partners intend to carry out these activities jointly in the future.

The authorities in Switzerland rejected funding for the first project. As stated by the lead partner, the nature of the project did not seem to be in line with the national industrial policy in Switzerland. Despite this, the Swiss partners are still an active self-financing member of the project. It is expected that the deepening of the project activities will lead to the institutionalisation of cross-border cooperation between Germany and Austria in the creative industries sector leading to some kind of a cluster development.

The Wirtschaftsförderungsgesellschaft Region Friedrichshafen mbH had been nominated as the lead partner. The lead institution was in charge of all administrative and financial aspects. There is a regular consultation among the partners, but the lead partner has been responsible for the implementation of the project components in all geographic project areas. The other partners contributed with their specifically defined roles (i.e. place marketing and economic development, organization of fairs and events etc.).

To assess the demand for the project the partners contracted the consulting firm WISTO to prepare a "regional structure analysis study". The study stressed the usefulness and the justification for the project and fostered a common view on the needs for such a project. The partners were eager to commence with the activities so that the project began even before the application for the project was formally approved.

The expectations among the partners were to a large extent homogeneous. All partners had a common objective, to initiate and strengthen the cross-border creative sector of the economy. A common understanding was also facilitated by the feasibility study. A common view – at least on strategic issues - is also ensured through the exchange and dissemination of knowledge and information and through the facilitation of activities which would allow the companies to address specific structural issues, to pool resources and band together into networks, clusters, quarters and other kinds of partnerships. Through this strategy and common objective the project has been built on consensus.

The nature of the project and the activities were not necessarily complex but the project itself has been highly experimental. The two project components refer to the implementation of cross-border exhibitions and conferences. The initiation of a creative industry cluster Lake Constance was the major strategic goal. Whether this will evolve in reality depends on more than a prudent and well conceptualized approach and experienced partners. Structural change, business cycles and local economic conditions have an enormous influence on the establishment of clusters that follow path-dependent and market-related trajectories rather than public development planning. The idea of the project is not to plan but to trigger efforts. Nobody knows, whether that will happen. The project is therefore a pure experiment.

So far, the project and its two components have contributed to strengthening the cross-border cooperation structures. The exhibition in Friedrichshafen has initiated and stimulated cross-border economic cooperation, although the number of visitors at the Friedrichshafen exhibition was still rather small and at that time the label 'Creative Industries' could not mobilize the public as such. Despite that, several entrepreneurs from Germany as well as from Austria, who participated in the exhibition, have entered into mutual business relationships. The congress in Bregenz (2008) stimulated and strengthened the cross-border innovative and competitiveness process.

All project partners have decided to continue implementing the project activities even after the termination of the INTERREG III and the EU funds. This decision was taken after the self-evaluation which took place after the exhibition (2007) and the congress (2008). Questionnaires were distributed among the participants of the 2 events to evaluate contents, organisation and future demand of similar events. The feedback from the participants was positive.

Both activities will be further pursued in the future. For example another exhibition will take place on the 5-6. November 2009. This activity will be therefore carried out after the termination of INTERREG III. In addition it is envisaged to carry out a congress in 2010 that will be organised and fully financed by the partners.

In terms of financial sustainability the partners appreciated that the financial funds from INTERREG III were sufficient to finance the project activities and to help to sustain the initiated cross-border cooperation.

As regards the institutional implementation, none of the partners has expressed uncertainty or dissatisfaction with regard to the project and the programme with the exception of Switzerland. Due to different laws regulations and organisational structures, Switzerland withdrew from one of the projects.

No inadequate or cumbersome decision-making processes hampered the implementation of the project. EU regulations and procedures and provisions defined by the Managing Authority were perceived as clear and pertinent so that the project experienced a smooth implementation.

IV. Learning and indirect effects

The lead partner institution gained substantial experience from the cross-border cooperation facilitated by the project. An intensive communication has taken place among the partners during the project implementation. The exchange of information and knowledge has helped to initiate a comprehensive learning process. This was particularly the case

during the congress and the exhibition. To intensify the communication and the project work seven workshops were organized and executed.

According to the interviewee, his partner institution learned how to tackle problems arising from the day to day co-operation work across the border. Through the exchange of knowledge and information and through the practical work within the course of project implementation the lead partner expects to be able to successfully plan and design future such cross-border cooperation projects. The experience gained will facilitate a smooth implementation of similar future projects. Despite the different organisational structures, the partner organisations have also gone through a similar learning process.

Awareness building has been another important factor in that project. Both project components, the exhibition and the congress, have contributed to intensify cross-border cooperation, particularly through the dissemination and exchange of information. Several active relationships and networks have been initiated. The participants of the exhibition and the congress have recognised the importance of cross-border cooperation for supporting structural change in a border region. It is rather obvious that the border economy, the people and the culture of the partner countries will more benefit from addressing structural change with a cross-border perspective rather than with a simple local strategy.

In the public policy sphere the project has been influential and visible. The project has not formulated but initiated a new and experimental sector policy. Since local administrations are involved in the project, a local economic policy will certainly adopt a more defined creative cluster policy. Due to the different policy and administrative processes in the countries of the project partners, it can be assumed that the project has made the administrative structures and prevalent policies more transparent for the participating institutions.

From a socio-cultural viewpoint prejudices about laws and regulations were prevalent before the project. However, cross-border cooperation and learning experiences, particularly between the partner institutions, has removed those prejudices to a large extent. The congress and the exhibition were perceived as successful thus helping to remove other existing prejudices. Even the public could be supported in overcoming prejudices. The feedback from the exhibition suggested that the project could contribute to more acceptance of the role of artists.

From an economic viewpoint, the project has aimed to foster structural change and innovation by exploring the perspectives of 'creative industries' for the ABH region. The congress and the exhibition have helped initiating several sustainable business relationships and networks with strong involvement of the private sector. Mutual confidence and mutual understanding were the basis for the new initiated contacts that are mostly informal but often durable. This has certainly improved transparency of the cross borders markets, not only in the sector of creative industries.

The partners were satisfied with the project concept and results. Due to the fact that the objectives of the project have been reached to a large extent, there was satisfaction among the shareholders beyond the direct partners of the project. However, so far it can not be empirically confirmed whether the project has already contributed to structural change of the region. The purpose of the project has only been to initiate a network further developing insight into the potentials of the sector of creative industries.

Project study 5: Euregio Adipositas

I. General Project information

The project aims to establish a cross-border Competence Centre for the prevention and treatment of juvenile obesity. The centre shall conduct courses and further training seminars on the prevention of dipositas for medical personnel and health professionals involved in the healthcare sector to acquire more competency in this field.

II. Selection process

The project was selected by a rolling application procedure. The reason for selection was based on several conceptual strengths:

The project leader and the project partners are qualified and well known in the specific field of paediatrics and the treatment of juvenile adipositas. Most of the partners are involved in the healthcare sector. The initiators of the project are medical doctors, but the purpose has been to develop a tool to integrate affected children and youngsters. Therefore, not only medical institutions but also administrations are involved in that project. The problem of obesity is rather prevalent in the project region i.e. in all three countries. The activities of the healthcare centres - before the start of the project - were mainly concentrated on the therapy of obesity rather than on the prevention of this illness. In this project, prevention is seen as a major tool for social inclusion.

III. Partnership and sustainability

The project was a common action, although much more in implementation than in the original idea and the planning process.

Originally the project was a joint idea and action of Austrian, German and Swiss medical doctors. To assess the real need of effort in prevention of juvenile adipositas, a joint feasibility study was developed. The feasibility study clearly confirmed the need for the project.

Initially the expectations of the partners were not homogenous. The Swiss partners favoured a focus on the issue of rehabilitation. The German partners emphasised prevention and the Austrian wanted both aspects. At the end all partners agreed on the concept of obesity prevention as a major focal point of the project.

The following partnership structure was applied:

- The lead partner undertake the administrative and financial activities

- The project steering group organizes all the project activities including the various management issues related to the project implementation
- The project partner in Austria is in charge of all issues related to rehabilitation, the partner in Switzerland is in charge of the primary prevention issues, and the partner in Germany is in charge of secondary prevention issues.

The nature of the project is complex and experimental.

So far, the following evident impacts of the project are worth mentioning:

- Several medical institutions and hospitals have adopted the obesity prevention concept
- eight medical care centres for children have adopted the concept
- Switzerland has integrated the prevention concept into the national health policy
- Several publications (e.g. Suchtmedizin Bodensee) on the prevention concept were published and have sensitised the public and local politics for this issue

In terms of expected sustainability there is a high demand among the partners to further strengthen the cross-border cooperation in this field even after the termination of INTERREG III. The concept of obesity prevention has become important and is now accepted by many social groups and institutions. Due to the increasing prevalence of juvenile obesity there is a need for prevention and the involved institutions have already integrated this concept into their healthcare systems.

Further autonomous and INTERREG-related initiatives were triggered by Euregio Adipositas. The cross-border competence Centre for the prevention and treatment of obesity was a directly initiated project that has been also funded by INTERREG III. The Centre has become a solid institution that is integrated into the healthcare systems of the countries in the region. It is thus a complementary structure in addition to the established network.

In Germany the project has motivated several medical institutions to adopt the adipositas prevention concept. In addition local politicians have been sensitized by the project and are willing to support similar future activities.

The Swiss national authorities have completely adopted the concept of adipositas prevention.

Austria has partly adopted the concept, because some specific experience on the prevention of adipositas already exists in Austria.

In terms of the financial sustainability the financial contribution from INTERREG III was necessary but made it even more necessary to ensure further fund raising.

Only in combination with the in-kind-contribution from several districts, municipalities and hospitals – through the provision of personnel and infrastructure – it was possible to effectively run the project activities. INTERREG III has created the basis for the current and future cross-border cooperation activities.

Under institutional aspects no specific deficiencies are reported by the initiators of the project. But with regard to the project budget, more flexibility could have had further positive impact on the general outcome of the project. For example the lead partner intended to extend the project activities and to offer more prevention services. The local Government has been approached, but the application was rejected. The authorities argued that since the project is financed by EU funds, other funds can not be provided.

Project promoters found bureaucratic barriers and some have even considered not to apply for an INTERREG project again but to increase the efforts of fund raising and use of sponsoring. The reason for this rising reservation among the project partners against the provisions under INTERREG III can be summarized as follows:

- The INTERREG application system appears insufficiently transparent
- The accounting system is too complicated
- The issue of the exchange rate with regard to Swiss Frank (and the related loss of funds) is an issue with considerable influence of sustainable finance³¹.

IV. Learning and indirect effects

Organisational learning within that project can be confirmed in the following aspects:

Through the work within the steering group the partners could open doors to important medical knowledge and specific information on concepts of prevention to be exchanged.

Exchange on the administration of prevention has become possible. Learning and adoption of useful procedures and policies have led to more effectiveness. The partners have co-operated to establish and run the project homepage in order to disseminate information on the project activities. This helped to accelerate the exchange of knowledge.

The partners also experienced the specific value of cross-border cooperation in broadening and applying specific knowledge, thus fostering trust for future co-operation. Finally the common language of the partners facilitated the implementation of the project.

The project initiated a number of processes and raised the public awareness toward the juvenile obesity issue. During the project implementation several municipalities, counties across the borders of the four countries expressed their wish to participate in the project and to implement the concept of adipositas prevention. Due to the project regulations these institutions could not be included in the project as further formal partners. Therefore, these municipalities and districts have started implementing and financing similar projects of the same structure. This is politically significant, because of two facts, firstly revealing the enormous need for such special projects and secondly that the problem is

³¹ Certainly not a problem of immediate relevance for the Community Initiative but at least one of financial sustainability that should be more considered in INTERREG programmes where partners co-operate under floating exchange rate regimes.

directly related to the regional and national healthcare policies. Switzerland has even adopted the prevention concept of that project in its national health care policies, showing that an INTERREG project can have the potential to influence and support national public policies.

Mutual knowledge exchange has also been practiced. There has been a permanent professional consultation among the partners. This was facilitated through the work in the steering committee. The partners met about 20 times to discuss several professional and other issues related to the project. In addition the partners also attended several conferences that were organized by the project and other international conferences dealing with adipositas and related research in paediatrics.

Among the public, the concept of adipositas prevention instead of therapy has become very popular. Also politicians have realized the important welfare effect of such prevention measures (leading to lower prevalence of illness in professional life and thus a higher activity rate leading to more productivity and wealth).

At the beginning of the project there were some reservations on the German side regarding the results and the cross-border cooperation structure of the project. It has been argued that the Swiss would not participate in the project, due to their prevalent regulations.

In the end this was not the case because Switzerland has even adopted the Adipositas prevention concept in their national healthcare policy.

Overall no major prejudices hampered the success of the project. This is also ensured because of the common language, and, to some extent due the similar cultural background.

From an economic viewpoint, the project is primarily service-oriented and not production-oriented. But it offers an important public good with a view to enhance productivity and competitiveness of labour. It is however rather difficult to assess the direct regional economic benefits of the project. Several healthcare institutions across the borders are cooperating in many ways and may have also created jobs. The rehabilitation centres as well as the various medical units benefit directly and indirectly from the project. These institutions as well as the partners have the right to utilize and market the „trade mark“ of the project (Adipositas).

In conclusion, the project partners are satisfied with the results achieved so far. They have formally agreed to continue with the project activities after the termination of INTERREG III³². The prevention concept has become important and successful as it is clearly need-oriented, not only in the ABH area but in many European regions.

Conclusions

All aspects of the synthetic indicator have been explored across the project sample. It can be concluded that all reviewed projects have been common actions, although with a different emphasis on developing ideas, planning and implementation. There has not been an issue of lack of ownership. In some cases, feasibility studies were carried out. Those have further strengthened the cohesion of partners. The partnership approach (lead partner principle) has been applied in all cases. The level of complexity and experimental nature among the projects is mixed. A major part of the projects is experimental by nature as these are pioneering new project ideas and concepts (notably International School, DACH+), The geographical impact of the projects also varies. Some intervene at the level of the whole ABH region (e.g. DACH), others focus on sub-regions like e.g. Kulturregion Untersee. In all cases there had been a shared diagnosis and need assessment among the partners of the project. Although in some projects expectations and need assessments differ in the beginning of the co-operation, consensus could be reached in a way to ensure the success of the co-operation.

Some of the projects are based on forerunner projects, like e.g. DACH+. Most of the projects aim at sustaining long-term co-operation by nature of the projects. This is notably the case for the International School, DACH + and Kulturregion Untersee. The project Euregio Adipositas is not necessarily aimed to sustain forever, whereby durability of the co-operation contacts will be certainly ensured as long as there is a joint need (e.g. other issues of medical care in general or pediatrics in particular). Euregio Adipositas as such should rather help to solve a problem and to establish stable structures of prevention. Creative Industries is more an experimental project. Whether creative industries will become a sector with comparative advantages in the region cannot be said by now. Sustainability of cross-border 'creative industries' is not ensured, however, co-operation between the partners can be durable despite that. So

³² The project has been however re-named and is labeled now with a title suggesting a more positive association than Adipositas: 'Children in Balance'

far, sustainability of the projects can also be substantiated by the impact on cross-border market transparency. Most projects viewed could contribute to enhanced information exchange and thus more mutual knowledge of markets and possible barriers. By and large the likelihood of durable co-operation and the respective sound justification of funding have been major selection criteria which seem to materialise in the project reality. INTERREG funds were necessary in all cases. Nothing can be said about deadweight effects. Financial viability of the projects have been affected to some extent by the floating exchange rate and the related risks of financial losses.

The programme structure and the choice of priority fields and measures have been adequate from the viewpoint of the project partners. A major issue for some project partners have been the apparently complicated formal and administrative provisions of INTERREG itself. Others perceived the EU regulations as useful and clear.

Individual and organisational learning can be confirmed to a large extent in virtually all projects. Learning and indirect effects are of even more importance than the direct effects from the projects.

2.4 The character of the programme, its constituting features and factors of barrier and co-operation

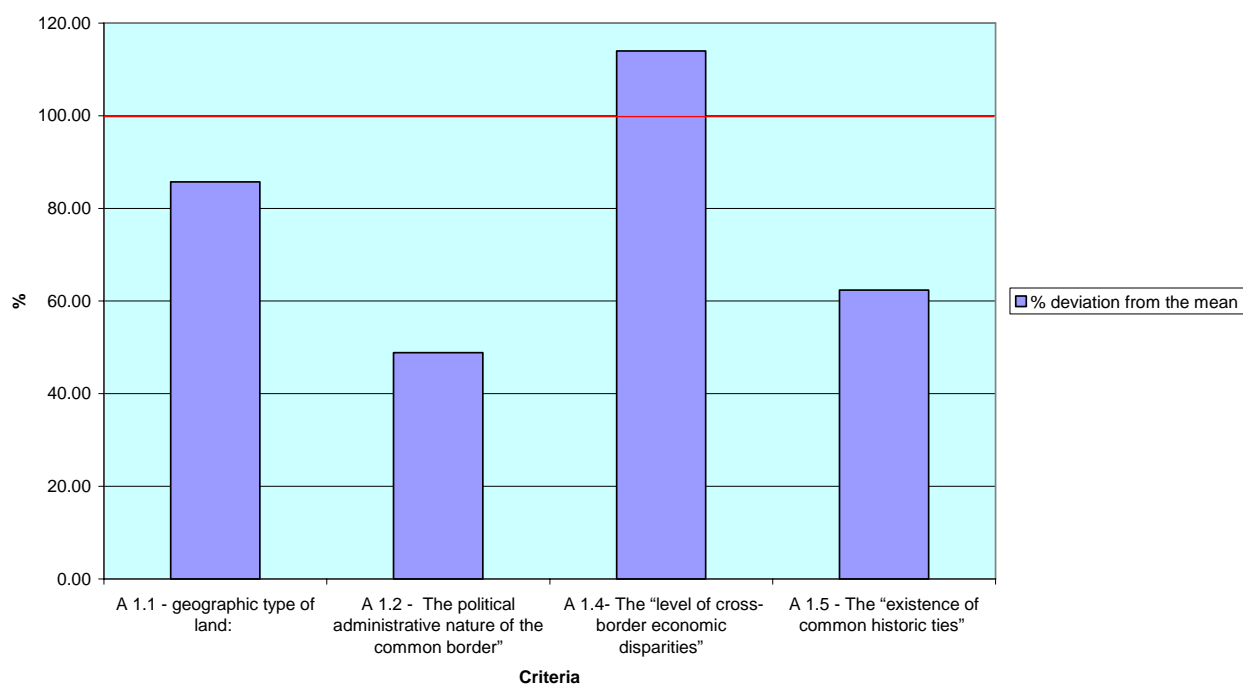
Contextual factors

Under the task 4 of the ex-post evaluation, a typology of the programmes has been jointly developed for all strands, based on the data from task 2³³. This typology includes the features and factors for the programmes. Those are the geographic type of land borders, the political administrative nature of the common border, the "density of border crossing possibilities ", level of cross-border economic disparities and existence of common historic ties.

The following figure depicts the position of the ABH programme in relation to the average of strand A programmes with respect to contextual factors. The lower the score the better are the preconditions for cross-border co-operation.

³³ Cf. Panteia (and partner institutes) 2009, Ex-post evaluation INTERREG III – interim report

The taxonomic position of the ABH programme I



We see that for all criteria except that for disparities, the ABH programme is in a more favourable situation. In regards to the geographical type of land to which the programme belongs, the ABH programme scores a 3, representing a mixed mountain-river-green border. On average, the INTERREG A programmes score a 3.5, so that the ABH programme belongs to the programmes with better accessibility across the borders. In fact, due to the big lake and the Alpine region located on the Eastern and Southern parts of the lake, for that indicator the programme could also score a 4 (a high & low mountain border).

As regards the political and administrative nature of the programme, we see that the programme belongs to those without major cross-border administrative bottlenecks, although two non-EU countries participate in the ABH programme. The fact that all participating countries belong to the Schengen area justifies classing the ABH programme in the group as internal EU or Schengen border.

The level of cross-border disparities is scored with 2, meaning that there are still no major disparities, but it is above the average. A score of 1.76 represents the average score across the strand A. The determination of that score is based on ESPON data. In fact the ABH region is characterized by an advanced level of wealth and without major disparities. However, in comparison to other programmes like e.g. that of Germany-Poland (where the disparity score is only 0.75, which means that there is apparently no disparity at all), the score for the ABH programme appears rather high. The reason for that can be that GDP exchange rate parities (Euro – SFr) are not transformed into PPS.

The existence of historical ties can be clearly confirmed. Here the programme scores a 1, meaning that there are strong common historic ties, a shared culture and a common language.

A fifth contextual criterion "density of border crossing possibilities", not included in the figure above, classes the programme with a score of 177 to the top group with most favourable preconditions, together

with Austria-Bavaria, Oberrhein-Mitte-Süd, France-Wallonie-Flandre and few others. The positive deviation from the strand A mean is at 382 %. In the following table the data are shown.

Contextual criteria

	A 1.1 geographic type of land border	A 1.2 The political administrati ve nature of the common border	A 1.3 The "density of border crossing possibilities"	A 1.4 The "level of cross-border economic disparities"	A 1.5 The existence of common historic ties"
ABH	3.00	1.00	177.91	2.00	1.00
Mean strand A	3.50	2.05	46.61	1.76	1.60
%- from the mean	85.71	48.85	381.66	113.95	62.37

In conclusion and related to the character of the programme ABH belongs to those with the most favourable contextual conditions.

The success of the programme in addressing the initial priority topics & concentration principles of the INTERREG Communication

This group of criteria consisting is related to the extent of priority topics listed up in the INTERREG communication and the concentration of financial resources. The scales are different, so that the results are displayed by the following table

Priority topics and concentration

	A 2.1 Extent of "priority topics"	A 2.2 Concentratio n
ABH	6.00	0.70
Mean strand A	4.77	0.87
%- from the mean	125.90	80.58

As regards the extent to which ABH addresses priority topics, 6 topics are identified by the typology. The mean value across strand A is at only 4.77, so that the programme scores with 25 percentage points above the average. The reason why a considerable number of priority topics is addressed by the ABH programme might be the fact that the programme pursues a deliberately broad thematic approach.

In terms of concentration, 0.7 (=70%) allocated to the six largest measures (in terms of the budget) the programme scores under-average, confirming that the use of ERDF funds is rather strongly spread among the measures.

With respect to the character of the programme, we can hence conclude that ABH belongs on the one hand to the programmes with a focus on priority topics, but on the other hand to those with a low concentration of funds.

The effectiveness and efficiency of the overall implementation process

The sub-criteria for that field of programme character are related to efficiency (financial performance), effectiveness and sustainability at programme and project level. The scales given in the table below are

different. For financial performance, degree of achievement and robustness of projects more than 100% suggests over-average performance, while for the degree of programme stability less than 100% shows over-average performance.

Effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability

	<i>A 4.1 financial performance of the programme</i>	<i>A 4.2 degree of programme sustainability</i>	<i>A 4.3 degree of achievement</i>	<i>A4.5 degree of robustness / durability of projects</i>
ABH	0.83	2.00	1.21	70.00
Mean strand A	0.82	2.33	1.51	50.78
%- from the mean	102.17	85.71	80.01	137.85

In terms of financial performance the programme has spent 83% of the budget. This is 2.17 percentage points above the average³⁴.

The score for programme stability (intensity of re-programming and re-budgeting) is given with 2 (little changes). It is true that a very marginal amount of funds was transferred from the neighbouring programme to ABH. Nevertheless the programme appears to be highly stable.

The degree of achievement is given with 1.21 (121% achievement rate). Although the result is under-average (only 80% of the average score of strand A), any achievement beyond 100% is to be judged as effective in its pure sense. This does not take into account the relevance of the achievements.

The robustness of the projects is with 137% favourable. With 70% of the projects sustaining after two years, the ABH programme scores rather high.

With respect to the character of the programme we can conclude that the programme is stable and characterized by a high absorptive capacity. It furthermore convincing with a more than 100% achievement rate in effectiveness and has generated many sustainable projects.

In the following table the determining factors of the programme character are summarized.

Determining factors of the ABH programme

<i>Determining Factors</i>	<i>Effect at programme-level</i>	<i>Effect at project-level</i> ³⁵
Context factors characterising the cross-border area		
Cross-border: topographic / geographic nature of the common border	Physical co-operation across borders is not seriously hampered neither by the lake nor the alps, although co-operation between Bavaria and Austria is easier than between the Bodenseekreis and the Kanton Thurgau or between Liechtenstein and Vorarlberg.	Co-operation at the project level is also not seriously hampered by the heterogenous topographic structure. As regards direct co-operation across the border, the Alpine Rhine valley (Vorarlberg-Appenzell, Liechtenstein-Appenzell-Graubünden and Singen-Radolzell-Schaffhausen-Upper Rhine) is more favourable than co-operation

³⁴ There may be differences between the results of the taxonomic analysis carried out under tasks 2 and 4 of the ex-post evaluation and the Commission data on which we have based our analysis of financial performance. The achievement rates of the three-digit codes are on average higher than those calculated in the table above. It might be that data of different points of time lead to different results.

³⁵ The distinction between effects at project and programme level is necessary because in many cases projects do not intervene across the entire programme area. Hence, effects can be rather different.

		across the lake or between the Eastern part of Liechtenstein and Austria (cf. K.-H. Hoffmann-Bohner, 2008: <i>DACH+ - Raumentwicklung im Grenzraum Deutschland, Österreich, Schweiz, Liechtenstein</i> , Waldshut, p.41).
Cross-border: political / administrative nature of the common border	The border region is not homogenous. It is neither a homogenous EU internal border nor completely part of the Euro zone. The only common denominator is the Schengen region. Hence, co-operation in terms of formal agreements is hampered by the fact that Switzerland and Liechtenstein are not entitled to ERDF funding and that the provisions of the regulation 1260/99 and the various Communications are not binding there. The lead partner principle and the related need to regular audits is therefore difficult to apply in the non-member countries. Only a high level of flexibility and informal co-operation can offset this administrative bottleneck to some extent.	As for the overall co-operation, co-operation at project level is generally easier between Germany and Austria, as here the regular provisions for INTERREG co-operation can be applied. The co-operation with Switzerland and Liechtenstein can only work on a more informal basis, as national laws are not harmonized with the Acquis Communautaire.
Cross-border: density of border crossing possibilities	The density of border crossings varies strongly along the border. Across the Lake Constance, transport is ensured by ferries, but only in the summer months. Land transport between Liechtenstein and Austria is also hampered by a high mountain range (Schesaplana). The Rhine valley south-east and west of the lake provides more border crossing possibilities.	At the project level the same effects of the heterogenous structure of border crossings are to be considered.
Cross-border: economic disparities	Economic disparities in the programme area are only very little. Moreover, the area represents one of the most prosperous European regions, so that co-operation is fostered rather than hampered. A risk to co-operation can be the floating exchange rate. Especially in cross-border retail or in cross-border business co-operation, uncertainties stemming from the floating exchange rate can lead to a risk premium increasing costs and thus a loss in efficiency.	The same can be said at the level of the project co-operation.
Cross-border: existence of historic ties & converging cultural / linguistic circumstances	The historic and cultural ties are the major driving force of cross-border co-operation in this area. Especially the common language is a major asset.	The grown historic ties have fostered more mutual knowledge and trust and thus open doors for more co-operation in various fields of projects. This is also the reason why the ABH programme pursues a broad approach.
Historic factors determining cross-border co-operation		
Previous co-operation tradition	Co-operation tradition is strong and long-standing (starting in the 19 th century). This has fostered trust and continuity in addressing the development of the international region jointly.	Project co-operation can build upon the long-standing co-operation tradition. The various cross-border structures and networks can initiate and catalyse sustainable projects with a strong ownership.
Prior existence of specific legal instruments	Legal instruments of co-operation going beyond the Regulation 1260/1999 have not	At the project level, the exclusion of Switzerland and Liechtenstein from the

	been applied. There are agreements with Liechtenstein and Switzerland.	application of the EU law has made it difficult to act as a lead partner. Only informal agreements have made the application of the lead partner principle possible.
Prior existence of permanent co-operation structures	There are various important co-operation structures besides INTERREG, like e.g. the IBK or the Arge Alp. These transnational networks are important facilitators of co-operation.	The existence of the various thematic cross-border network structures has largely facilitated the development of prudent and sustainable project concepts.

The synthetic indicator

The synthetic indicator (real rate defined in the typology³⁶ as indicator A3.1) aims to measure the depth and intensity of co-operation. It is composed of the following variables:

Intensity of shared diagnosis, partnership and decision making power, management structures, nature and location of joint projects and impact of projects. The detailed definition of those indicators is given in the Inception Report³⁷.

The aggregation of the sub-variables has been defined as the so-called 'real rate', a normative synthetic indicator (arithmetic mean) measuring the performance of an INTERREG programme. Furthermore, a separated historical criterion has been added to estimate by regression analysis how historical ties have had an impact on the performance (Real Rate). The arithmetic mean of all scores for the ABH programme is at 84 as the following table will show. The 'real rate' as such does not include the historical criteria. Those have been used to estimate the influence of history and experience in co-operation on the performance of the programme, i.e. to observe the differences between a predicted (expected) rate and the 'real rate' as such.

The performance of the ABH programme measured by the synthetic indicator:

1. Historical criteria (not included in the 'real rate')	si01 ³⁸	56
	si02	30
	si03	50
	Σ	136
2. Criterion Joint identification of needs	si04	70
	si05	70
	Σ	140
3. Criterion Governance and partnership	si06	90
	si07	50
	si08	50
	Σ	190
4. Criterion Nature and location of joint projects	si09	90
	si10	100
	si11	70
	Σ	260
5. Criterion Density of common actions	si12	100
	si13	100
	si14	100
	si15	100
	si16	100
	si17	100
	Σ	600
6. Criterion Impact of projects	si18	70
	Σ	70
Gross Score	SI 4-S I18	1260
Real Rate	(RR)	84

³⁶ Panteia (and partner institutes) 2009, Ex-post evaluation INTERREG III - interim report on task 4

³⁷ Panteia (and partner institutes) 2009, *Ex-post Evaluation of INTERREG 2000-2006 – Inception report to the European Commission DG Regio*, pp.62 f.

³⁸ Labels of the sub-indicators are listed in the annex 4.1.

This classifies the ABH programme to those strand A programmes placed above average. The mean value for strand A is at 72.03.

The synthetic indicator of ABH compared to the strand A:

	The depth / intensity of co-operation (=real rate)
ABH	84.00
Mean strand A	72.03
%- from the mean	115.69

Now it is interesting to have more insight into the distribution of the 'real rate' across the strand A and the position of the ABH programme within the cluster it is classed to. The following programmes have been classed by cluster analysis into one of six clusters.

The Cluster compared

<i>Programme</i>	<i>Real Rate</i>
A-SLO – Austria-Slovenia	74
D-NL - Ems Dollart	81
D-A-CH-LI - Alpen-Bodensee	84
D-NL Germany-Netherlands	90
I-A - Italy-Austria	75
PAMINA	88
D-L-B - Ger-Lux-Belgium	80
D-F - Saarland-Moselle-Westpfalz	80
D-NL-B Euregio Maas-Rhein	87
F-CH France-Suisse	75
B-F-Lux – WLL	80

The cluster is specified as:

- Low levels of cross-border economic disparities or no significant levels of cross-border economic disparities (only Germany-Netherlands and France-Suisse).
- Mostly above-average / clearly above-average density of border crossing possibilities & partly above-average density of border crossing possibilities (except PAMINA & Ems Dollart).
- Internal EU-borders including CH (except Austria-Slovenia).
- Mostly average / below-average concentration of ERDF-support on a limited number of "priority topics" listed in the INTERREG III Communication and partly also above-average concentration.
- The depth & intensity of co-operation achieved under the programmes is mostly at a very high/high level & partly at a medium level (B-F-L – Wallonie, D-L-B, I-A, F-CH, A-SLO).
- Existence of strong / few common historic ties, a shared culture and in some cases also of a common language.

We see that all programmes of the cluster score above the average 'real rate' of INTERREG A. Within the cluster, the ABH scores also above average. Only the Dutch German programme (Rijn-Waal and Rijn-Maas-Noord), The Euregio Maas-Rhin/Rijn and PAMINA score higher.

In the annex 4.2 the comparative distribution of the programme and cluster values across the distribution of the Real Rate for the entire Community Initiative is shown by a box-whisker plot illustrating the respective positions.

We first see that the distribution of the 'real rate' across INTERREG is uneven and skewed. The 'Real Rate' is not normally distributed. The programmes between the 25th and 75th percentile are placed in the small range of 'real rate' values between 72 and 81.5. The range of scores up to the lower 10th

percentile is much larger than that up to the 90th percentile. The cluster, to which the ABH programme is classed, is located in the upper area of the distribution, all of the programmes scoring around or above the median. Six programmes are within the 25-75% percentile, three of them are above the arithmetic mean. The ABH programme is the only one from the cluster placed in the upper 75th -90th percentile. The remaining four programmes are positive outliers.

We can thus conclude that the ABH programme belongs to the best performing programmes in the context of INTERREG A – at least when the statement is based on a comparative analysis of the 'Real Rate'.

In regards to the relationship and influence of historic variables on the 'real rate', a corresponding regression analysis resulted in only marginal residuals, thus revealing a good fit of the theory and the resulting estimate for the ABH programme³⁹.

2.5 Extrapolating results of effectiveness and impacts to INTERREG

The section above has dealt with the analysis of the character of the programme. The chapters addressed the in-depth financial performance of the programme, an in-depth effectiveness analysis (degree of achievement of the goals initially set and the corresponding degree of relevance), an in-depth analysis of projects under the priority topics of the initiative, a comparative analysis of the factors determining the character of the programme, the comparative analysis of the degree of depth of co-operation (synthetic indicator) and the factors that fostered or hampered the integration of the programme. Most of the analyses (like the financial analysis and the taxonomic analyses have been were already viewed comparatively, so that the position of the ABH programme within INTERREG, the strand A and even the cluster to which the programme has been classed can be depicted.

As for the effectiveness analysis the analysis has been referred to the results of the horizontal part of the ex-post evaluation (task 2). Some important statements can be made here.

Regarding financial performance the concentration of budgets and the expenditure rate determine major characteristic results. Furthermore, major results are related to the physical achievement rate, the sustainability of projects and the stability of the programme. The following table illustrates the share of the programmes along the strands and the entire Community Initiative, where a concentration of budgets, a high performance rate in financial implementation, stability of programming, a high physical achievement and robust projects were found.

Results from the typology analysis compared

<i>Major results</i>	<i>Budgets are rather concentrated.</i>	<i>High performance rate in financial implementation</i>	<i>There were no or only minor shifts of budgets during 2000-2006</i>	<i>High achievement rate at programme level (> 100%)⁴⁰.</i>	<i>Projects are robust and sustainable</i>
Share in strand A	0.56	0.60	0.54	0.65	0.62
Share in Interreg	0.53	0.57	0.53	0.68	0.53

³⁹ Cf. Panteia (and partner institutes) 2009, Ex-post evaluation INTERREG III – interim report on task 4

⁴⁰ Achievement rates show overwhelmingly results exceeding 100%, as reported by the Interim Report on task 2. The utility of such an indicator in comparing the programmes is probably limited.

For strand A all structured results were achieved by more than half of the programmes (i.e. a majority); this is also true for INTERREG as such, whereas for the two other strands, the results vary a bit more.

In conclusion we can say that, except for the result 'budgets are concentrated', the ABH programme is fully in line with the results for INTERREG and the strand A.

In the following table those above and some further specific results of the ABH programme are compared.

Results of the in-depth analysis of the ABH programme	Already suggested by the results of tasks 1 and 2 (Yes - to some extent - no)	Strength of evidence for INTERREG (clear - with uncertainty - no evidence)
1. High performance of financial implementation	yes	Clear evidence from the typology analysis
2. There were only minor shifts of programming	yes	Clear evidence from the typology analysis
3. High achievement rate at programme level	yes	Clear evidence from the typology analysis
4. Projects are robust and sustainable	yes	Clear evidence of the typology analysis
5. The contribution from the non-member countries has been sufficient and proportional.	no	with uncertainty
6. Measures show a more or less linear trend in financial implementation.	yes	clear evidence
7. Indicators are less useful for estimating the achieved results as they are too simple and not well co-ordinated between the different levels of intervention.	yes	clear evidence, as traditional indicators are incapable to capture learning and indirect effects
8. A shortcoming has been the rather poor achievement rate for studies, evaluation and publicity. The reason for that has been the perceived moderate utility of those instruments.	no	No evidence
9. Projects funded are by their nature rather experimental and complex. It is not so much the intention to carry out projects that meet their originally scheduled physical outputs but rather to establish sustainable networks. Trial and error are information tools of overarching importance.	To some extent, depending on the character of the respective programme	Clear evidence for part of INTERREG: There are various programmes that emphasise complex and experimental projects

Based on the inputs from the horizontal analysis, further comparative conclusions cannot be made.

3 Analysis section (part 2): The overall performance: Impacts in terms of utility and Community Value Added – how have achievements been obtained

3.1 Evaluation of the policy coherence of the programme

Policy coherence is defined by the level of interaction and co-ordination with other spatially relevant Community- / national- / regional-level policies and the systematic embedding of a programme into the overall regulatory framework. A high level of policy coherence can contribute to enhanced policy synergy and is thus a major determinant of programme efficiency and effectiveness. For this task we can again consider the findings of the ex-ante and the two mid-term evaluations (since this task was also compulsory in those evaluations) and complement them with a further review from the ex-post point of view.

The 'Alpenrhein-Bodensee-Hochrhein' Programme and the supra-national policy context

The ABH programme belongs to INTERREG strand A. The regulatory and policy framework of the ABH programme during the programming cycle 2000-2006 consists of The initial Communications on INTERREG III (2000/C 143/09), the Communication of the Commission of 23 August 2001 (2001/C 239/03), the Communication from the Commission (2004/C 226/02) and furthermore the general Structural Funds regulation Council Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999 and the Regulations on the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) (Regulation (EC) No 1783/1999). Furthermore, the Commission Regulation 438/2001 on administration and control systems of structural fund interventions is relevant here.

A first step of our analysis is to qualitatively assess the reference made to the original regulatory and policy documents by sifting through the programming document. In a second step we look at the monitoring reports to see whether later introduced regulatory and policy modifications were explicitly considered. Finally we report on our interview with the Managing Authority.

The programme and its implementation was in line with the relevant regulations mentioned above.

As regards the original INTERREG Communication (2000/C 143/09) the Programming Document refers to it in describing the compliance of the programme area with the annex of the Communication. Regarding the scope of intervention there is reference in the chapter on general programme objectives and the strategy. The Commission Communication (2004/C 226/02) (a consolidation of the separate INTERREG communications (2001/C 141/02) and (2000/C 143/09)) did not necessitate a change in programme strategy or management.

In viewing the compliance of the programme with the regulation and communication documents there were only minor controversies with the European Commission. The Commission withheld an amount of 1.07 Million Euro from the total of 14.6 Million Euro placed to the Commission's account. The reason for that has been the opinion of the European Commission that under priority I (economic development) not 50% but only 45% ERDF co-financing rate would be possible. This is still an open legal issue to be solved between the Managing Authority and the European Commission.

Coherence with other Interreg programmes (including ESPON and INTERACT)

Three other INTERREG III A programmes intervened in the direct Eastern and Western neighbourhood of the ABH area. These are INTERREG Bavaria-Austria in the East, Upper-Rhine Germany-France in the West and Switzerland-Italy in the South. The ABH programme area is also covered by the INTERREG III B programme 'Alpine Space'. Co-operation between the ABH programme and the two neighbouring INTERREG A programmes 'Bavaria-Austria' and 'Upper Rhine Germany-France' was ensured by close networking and long-standing personal ties among the stakeholders. There has been a mutual representation in the steering committees of all three programmes. Network units inform mutually about the selection of projects after coordinated consultation processes. A particularly close co-ordination was required between the ABH programme and the programmes 'Bavaria-Austria' and 'Upper-Rhine Germany-France'. Here projects intervene in more than one programme area. This implied the need for so-called 'splitting project applications', which was generally feasible, but that caused problems with the rather unbalanced distribution of budgets for Bavaria in the respective programmes. In the ABH Programme the budgetary allocation between Bavaria (0.5 million Euro) and Vorarlberg (6.8 million Euro) was disproportionate, so that project applicants had to submit two proposals (one to ABH and another one to 'Bavaria-Austria') and were then obliged to co-operate in a larger area.

However, within the ABH programme, Bavaria could further benefit from a minor financial shift of budgets from the neighbouring programme 'Bavaria-Austria'. For the Austrian part, all INTERREG programmes, where Austria participated (i.e. also those with Italy, Slovenia, Slovakia, Czech Republic and strands B and C) were jointly co-ordinated by a special co-ordination group (annual meeting).

In regards to INTERACT and ESPON the ABH programme has made use of INTERACT. Through the close co-operation of the Paying Authority in Bregenz with the INTERACT secretariat in Vienna, co-operation has been intensive. The ABH programme management and involved institutions benefited from various INTERACT seminars on technical aspects of programme management, quality assessment and financial monitoring. Regrettably, there was no use of the results of the ESPON studies and data, at least not at the programme level.⁴¹

Coherence with other EU policy interventions

Structural fund interventions other than INTERREG but with relevance to the programme region are Objective 2 interventions in the rural districts Bludenz-Bregenzer Wald (A), Rheintal-Bodensee (A), the rural district Oberallgäu (Bavaria) and the district Waldshut and Sigmaringen (Baden-Württemberg). With the exception of the district Bludenz-Bregenzer Wald all others are Objective 2 phasing-out. The co-ordination between the ABH programme and Objective 2 was mainly related to the project selection and avoidance of double-funding. During the project screening process there was a close consultation between the INTERREG network units and the authorities responsible for Objective 2 in Austria and Germany. This co-ordination of project selection was further facilitated due to the fact that involved authorities have the administrative mandate for both kinds of intervention. In terms of thematic demarcation between Objective 2 and INTERREG there is no financial support to enterprises under INTERREG further than *de minimis*, while those projects are required to have a visible cross-border impact, other than the Objective 2 interventions. The co-ordination with the support to labour market and social inclusion (Objective 3), the demarcation is again the clear cross-border approach under

⁴¹ At project level, ESPON has been referred to, (e.g. in DACH+)

INTERREG which supports labour market activities under its priority 1 (especially with respect to EURES). The coordinative approach between ABH and the global Objective 3 interventions was complementary. Regarding LEADER+ there was more potential overlapping, as under that Community Initiative a cross-border approach of co-operation among LEADER groups is also possible, and there is a lively co-operation between German and Austrian LEADER groups. Co-ordination between LEADER and INTERREG has been mainly ensured through the different eligibility criteria of regulations 1257/1999 (EAGGF and LEADER) and 1260/1999 (Structural Funds). In Austria, the consultation process seems to be more institutionalised than for the German part. Here, every project application, regardless the kind of policy intervention, was subject to a close coordinative consultation process at different levels. This included expert comments from sector departments, broad public hearings and further such consultations. Especially with respect to Objective 2 there was a half-yearly meeting of the so-called 'Co-ordination Body'. Prior to every meeting of the different monitoring committees (INTERREG, Objective 2 and 3, LEADER, EAGGF etc.), there were preparative meetings of the administrative stakeholders from Vorarlberg. With respect to LEADER there was an institutionalised 'Hearing Group', where projects for LEADER or INTERREG were screened and appraised.

In the ABH programme region there was no support to URBAN II and Objective 1 during 2000-2006.

In conclusion we can assess the quality of policy coherence between INTERREG and other Structural Fund interventions as good. For Austria, the co-operation structures ensuring coherence are even ideal.

Policy coherence of INTERREG in Switzerland

Coherence between the INTERREG programmes covering Switzerland and Swiss national interventions is likewise of importance, both, for Switzerland itself but also for the EU. The EU has co-operated closely with Switzerland starting with a free-trade agreement in 1972, the insurance agreement in 1989 and two further bi-lateral agreements in 1999 and in 2004. More integration of Switzerland into the European market is of major importance, but with an enlarging EU the readiness to accept individual agreements and solutions declines and there is some pressure for Switzerland to adopt the *Acquis Communautaire*. The co-ordination of the New Federal Regional Policy (NRP) with INTERREG is of major importance. The national evaluation of INTERREG III in Switzerland recommends to co-ordinate INTERREG not only with the Swiss regional policy but also with other EU and national interventions in the neighbour states (e.g. Objective 2), with a view to integrate the interventions into an overall policy system fostering employment and competitiveness in the sense of 'Lisbon'. So far, Switzerland has adopted the EU approach of co-financing by splitting the national contribution into a quasi-ERDF and a national budget. The national contributions, however, were not sufficient to respond to the large interest and the often highly innovative project applications with Swiss participation.

This led to a slow performance of implementation of the bi-lateral INTERREG programme Switzerland-Italy, because without sufficient Swiss financial contributions, an Italian and EU contribution is also hampered. In case of the ABH programme, Swiss involvement was strong in the beginning but declined due to lack of Swiss funding. This could be offset due to the fact that ABH is a multi-lateral INTERREG programme, but with the implication of decreasing involvement of Swiss partners.

Relationship with external organizations and networks

The INTERREG programme is young in comparison to the long-standing cross-border co-operation in that region dating back to the 19th century (foundation of the 'Verein für Geschichte des Bodensees und seiner Umgebung' / *Association of the history of the Lake Constance and its neighbourhood*). This is why there are a considerable number of cross-border institutions and networks in various fields of activity.

Environmental subject matters have been the focus of co-operation, like the activities of the International Commission for the Protection of Waters (IGKB) and the *Arge Alp* (network to protect the Alpine space) which members are Bavaria (D), Vorarlberg (A), St.Gall and Graubünden (CH). The most prominent international organization in the programme area is the 'Internationale Bodenseekonferenz' (IBK). This is a co-operative network consisting of Vorarlberg (A), Baden-Württemberg (D), Bavaria (D), Appenzell (CH), St.Gall (CH) and Graubünden (CH). The IBK has aimed to co-ordinate the spatial strategy in order to stabilize and improve the social living conditions, the nature and the economy of the cross-border region. INTERREG was initiated in the region by beginning of the 1990s and can therefore not be regarded as the 'germ-cell' of cross-border co-operation, as it has been in many other European cross-border regions. But INTERREG has evolved as an important catalyst of those long-standing network structures. Examples for that are the co-operation activities in higher education (organized by the IBK), Communication of the action plan for agro-environmental measures of the IBK or the limnological analysis of the Lake Constance (International Commission for the Protection of Waters of the Lake Constance).

The co-operation under those network structures is flexible and not very formal. Addressing problems of vital importance is the major purpose. The realization of the Agenda 21 of the IBK⁴² or the joint combat against the bird flu in the Bodensee region have been major recent activities of the established institutional network structures that were facilitated and supported by INTERREG.

So far, for most of the network structures, the partner regions have nominated contact persons. Co-operation within those bodies and with INTERREG is more at the level of the 'Länder' and 'Kantone'. But more recently, also the communal level has become more and more involved in those network structures, as e.g. in the context of the Euregio Via Salina in the region Allgäu and Kleinwalsertal.

Public reputation

In the German programme area the intervention is more understood as an insider programme, accessible to actors that anyway co-operate across borders, rather than the public as a whole. For the people the spirit of the programme is more carried by visible flagship projects. People do not necessarily know INTERREG, but rather the projects they benefit from (e.g. sports events, encounters etc.). People are also aware of different policy efforts with a more long-term purpose, such as cycling paths, the uniform tourist signposting around the Lake Constance or notably the re-naturation of former breeding areas of storks. This is the viewpoint of an observer from the regional administration.⁴³

While the public is not yet largely aware of INTERREG, local administrations, NGOs and the media are mostly well informed. We explored the standpoint of the media and how the media report on INTERREG

⁴² Cf. M Walser and R Scherer 2002, *The Crystal Growth of sustainable regional development – The example of the Lake Constance Agenda 21*, working paper, IDT-HSG, University of St. Gall

⁴³ Interview with Mr Wilfried Franke, Regionalverband Bodensee-Oberschwaben

matters. The German daily 'Südkurier' reports quite frequently about activities in connection with INTERREG. Interestingly, the style of the articles is rather much adapted to the major purpose of INTERREG A, i.e. cross-border co-operation. E.g. we find headlines of articles like 'Nature Protection Activists do not know Borders'. Many other activities were and are addressed, like the Swiss-German rehabilitation of the Rhine banks or cross-border tariff co-operation in public transport. However, even though the media report on INTERREG related activities, the Community Initiative as such (as a brand) is not perceived in the public. For the regional media INTERREG is a side-issue, the acronym is used here and there, but not frequently. Instead, a broader public awareness of 'lighthouse projects' funded by INTERREG, especially in the field of the environment or tourism, is confirmed, although the response from the public in that field (e.g. readers' letters to the editors) is very little.⁴⁴

In Austria, reputation of the programme is similar, however, among the public it seems to be slightly more developed. Here, INTERREG has evolved as a brand, so the public of Vorarlberg is largely aware of the existence and to some extent even the rough contents of the programme. The decision to keep the name INTERREG for the programming cycle 2007-2013 (instead of Objective 3) was deliberate in order to ensure its identification among the public. In daily newspapers, INTERREG and the related projects are frequently addressed. Readers with interest in local and regional affairs seem to be rather familiar with INTERREG. Even in schools cross-border co-operation and the role of INTERREG are addressed to some minor extent. In this connection, interesting learning experiences can also be identified. For instance the INTERREG IIIA ABH project 'Adipositas', addressing overweight of children was now re-named into 'Children in Balance'. The change from a negative association (illness) into a positive one has much fostered the interest in that INTERREG project.⁴⁵

Conclusion

The programme was systematically embedded in the regulatory framework. Only minor controversies between the Managing Authority and the European Commission occurred. The programme closely co-operates with neighbouring INTERREG programmes, such as Austria-Bavaria or Germany-France-Switzerland. There have also been activities in participation at INTERACT seminars, however, no use has been made by ESPON. There is a different level of coherence between INTERREG and other interventions in Germany and Austria. In Austria, the policy coherence is much more formalised by standing committees and working groups. On the German part, coherence is rather confined on the controlling of double financing.

Apart from a high level of policy coherence there is also evidence of inter-institutional coherence. Important cross-border bodies (like the IBK) or regional authorities like the regional associations ('Regionalverbände') are closely involved in the INTERREG affairs and there is a permanent consultation structure, also via the monitoring committee..

The public reputation of INTERREG is slightly different in Germany and Austria. While in the German regions there is only very little knowledge about INTERREG, in Vorarlberg, it could evolve to some kind of a trade mark. INTERREG, though not perceived as absolutely important, is recognized by the public. If it comes to projects, both in Germany as well as in Austria, some flagship projects funded by INTERREG are well known.

⁴⁴ Interview with Mr Jörg Braun, editor Südkurier, Konstanz (office Singen)

⁴⁵ Interview with Ms Dr Elisabeth Winner-Stefani, Amt der Landesregierung Vorarlberg in Bregenz

3.2 Analysis of the intrinsic performance of the programme

3.2.1 Evaluation of the programme management

Co-funding rules

Structural interventions in the context of the ABH programme are co-financed, as usual, at a maximum 50% of the eligible cost of a project in accordance with the Council Regulation 448/2004. The minimum of project cost volume is 10,000 Euro. Subsidies to the private sector must not exceed 15% and financial support to public infrastructure with the potential of substantial returns can be co-funded with up to 25%. The co-funding rules in Switzerland and Liechtenstein follow the same pattern with the exception, that here split national budgets have been created: so-called quasi-ERDF plus national funds. This quasi-ERDF-approach of the Swiss authorities contributes to a smoother institutional co-operation between the member- and non-member countries and leads to more integration of non-members into the sphere of the *Acquis Communautaire*.

Application procedures and publicity

There is only a rolling application procedure for all measures. Calls for proposals as an alternative application instrument have not been applied. Applications can be submitted to the JTS (for lead applicants from Baden-Württemberg) and the national network units in Vorarlberg, Bavaria and Eastern Switzerland.

The process of application is organised around the JTS, which is in charge of the overall coordination, from acknowledging receipt of the project application to collecting the assessments carried out by the National Network Offices, the "INTERREG compliance assessment", submitting a "project data form" ("Projektdatenblatt") to the Steering Committee for decision, and finally sending a written decision to the applicant. The JTS is intensively supported by the regional Network Points, particularly in the early stages of a project development process.

The steering committee has developed an application form which is being applied throughout the programme. Applicants can seek conceptual coaching support from the network units. The Network units are responsible for the preliminary formal examination of the applications and for the technical examination. They are co-ordinated and inform each other about received applications. There is a mutual consultation on every application received. In case of a positive result, the other network units and the JTS are to be informed. The JTS examines the applications under consideration of the INTERREG policy goals and can accept or reject the recommendation of the responsible network unit. In case of a positive vote from the JTS the final decision is to be taken by the steering committee, which has been agreed upon in advance, so that no project is rejected after submitting a formal application with coaching of the network units of the JTS. Commencement of project activities before approval of the application has only been possible in exceptional cases and only at the financial risk of the project partners.

The dissemination mode of information has been printed or electronic publicity (e.g. flyers, prospects, a website and a CD-ROM) and seminars and itinerant exhibitions. Several reports about ABH in business magazines and daily newspapers were published. As for most other INTERREG A programmes the Managing Authority has been more sceptical on the effectiveness of their communication strategies in reaching the public in general. The more ad-hoc oral dissemination of information through the channels of inter-institutional co-ordination (e.g. IBK, the regional associations, the local private sector, cultural

networks etc.) has proved to be more effective and less expensive. Furthermore, the high absorption rate confirms that expensive publicity efforts (printed or electronic) have not been necessary, as it is the case for other Structural Interventions. Major and costly publicity effort was very obviously not needed to enhance co-operation in general.

As there is a close coaching procedure, the rate of selection of the steering committee is at 100%. The number of rejected project ideas submitted is at 10% (but these are project ideas without final applications and thus not counted). Altogether sixteen project ideas were not developed further. This can be assessed as rather successful in terms of project identification and generation.

Selection criteria and quality of co-operation at the project level

The selection criteria play a major role in securing effectiveness of the ABH programme. The criteria and how they are employed to ensure sustainability of the programme has been analysed further in the abovementioned paragraph (effectiveness analysis). In this section, it's more the procedures that are described and analysed.

Selection criteria are based on financial viability of the project partners and the project idea, the plausibility of the cost calculation, the expediency of the project in the context of the programme strategy, the selection of useful indicators to monitor the project progress and the exclusion of state-aid induced market distortions.

The criteria of the project selection have been defined by the programme steering committee approved, in accordance to Article 35.3 of the Council Regulation 1260/1999.

Before the joint selection procedure, the national authorities assess the fulfilment of the formal criteria (measure-specific, financial and technical in relation to the CIP and the national and European law). The minimum contents and information of a project application are compared with the selection criteria of the programme. An application consists of the needs assessment including the justification of intervention, the objectives of the project, the concrete contents of the project (activities and results) and the approach of technical implementation including the responsibilities and qualification of the involved partners. In addition to that the cross-border quality of co-operation in planning and implementation; and the expected impacts on a functionally integrated cross-border development are estimated.

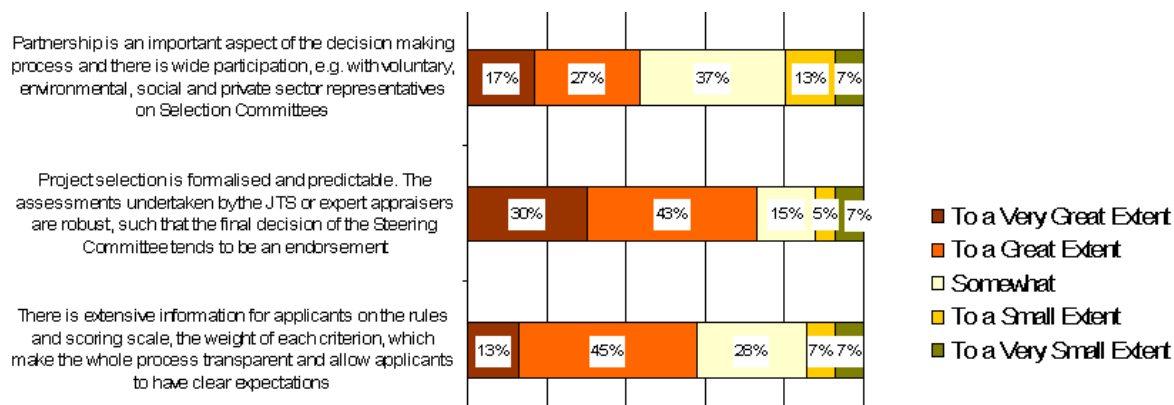
This pre-assessment aims to ensure quality. Quality is that of co-operation and its impact on cross-border economic and social integration. The rules of cross-border co-operation are therefore, strictly formalised.

Co-operation has to be confirmed preferably for all (or at least two) project phases in the evolution of a project: Planning (e.g. regular working meetings of partners, long-standing contacts), organisation/management (e.g. formal contacts, written agreements), finance (e.g. agreements, time schedule for financial implementation, sources of finance), technical implementation (e.g. co-ordinated time schedules, agreements on complementary responsibilities) and regular operation (e.g. a joint operating company, mixed appraiser expert teams). The minimum standard 'B' represents co-operation in the planning phase and at least one further project phase. The superior 'A' standard (co-operation in planning and minimum two further phases) is the actual quality benchmark. Furthermore, the quality of co-operation and the impact on cross-border economic development is assessed. A positive impact is

defined as a developmental stimulus on all participating regions (networking and more transparency of regional cross-border markets), a contribution to economic, social and cultural integration of the cross-border region and as efficient use of natural and human resources, networking and complementary responsibilities. The focus is not on simple 'mirror' activities but rather on the evolution of complementary cross-border integrating structures.

In regards to a comparison with INTERREG strand A in general, we looked at the results of the horizontal analysis (Ex-post evaluation INTERREG III, Interim Report on task 2⁴⁶)

Selection criteria and their perceived importance in strand A programmes



We carried out a feedback interview about those findings with the JTS⁴⁷. The answers confirm that the ABH programme has to be classed for all three selection criteria to the top groups (i.e. to a very great extent).

From the viewpoint of the evaluator the theoretical approach of co-operation at project level is adequate and the important role of co-operation as a means for economic development is clearly recognised. However, a weakness in the implementation of the programme has been that only minor emphasis has been put on evaluation of those important impacts or research on that. In fact, there is no information whether high-quality co-operation (which is strictly supervised) has also led to a developmental dynamic. Indeed, the two interim evaluations addressed these issues to some extent (e.g. the ex-post assessment of the sustainability profiles of the projects in the update of the mid-term evaluation), but there was for instance no particular empirical study on the transmission mechanisms of co-operation leading to regional development. Such an analysis could add tremendous transparency and added value to cross-border policy development.

Governance and management modes: Formalisation of co-operation

Co-operation between the participating countries and regions is not formalised to a major extent in the context of INTERREG. Co-operation is rather based on historical long-standing ties between the participating border regions and networking in different cross-border bodies (e.g. Internationale Bodenseekonferenz, Arge Alp, Internationale Regierungskommission Alpenrhein, Hochrheinkonferenz, Randenkommision). Modern co-operation can be traced back to the 19th century (e.g. foundation of the Association for the History of the Lake Constance) and has intensified during the last twenty years. It is

⁴⁶ Panteia and Partners 2009, Ex-post evaluation INTERREG III – Interim Report

⁴⁷ Phone interview on 9th June, 2009

to be stressed that the informal approach of co-operation is very deliberate since it has contributed to flexibility in co-operation.

In accordance to the results of the horizontal evaluation (Panteia and Partners 2009, *ibid.*) the ABH programme can be classed to the category 'No specific inter-state agreement but use of domestic law to conclude cross-border agreements'. Similarly, regarding the nature and quality of the existing permanent CBC structures between authorities, the ABH programme belongs to those having permanent structures without a legal basis. The ABH programme is classed in a group where Central European programmes and those ones with non-EU members prevail.

Co-operation is based on identifying joint problems and joint solutions. There is no compulsory co-operation, but rather one governed by need orientation and networking, like e.g. the Bodensee Agenda 21 or the cross-border combat against the bird flu. These informal but stable network structures are also used for co-operation under INTERREG. In this connection it is to be noted that the obligatory memorandum of understanding under INTERREG IV has been perceived as a step back since this rule has now complicated the implementation of the lead partner principle in Switzerland (in formal Swiss legal terms, a Swiss lead partner, as receiver and payer of ERDF funds, must not be subject to the compulsory EC controls; under INTERREG III there was just an informal agreement on controls).

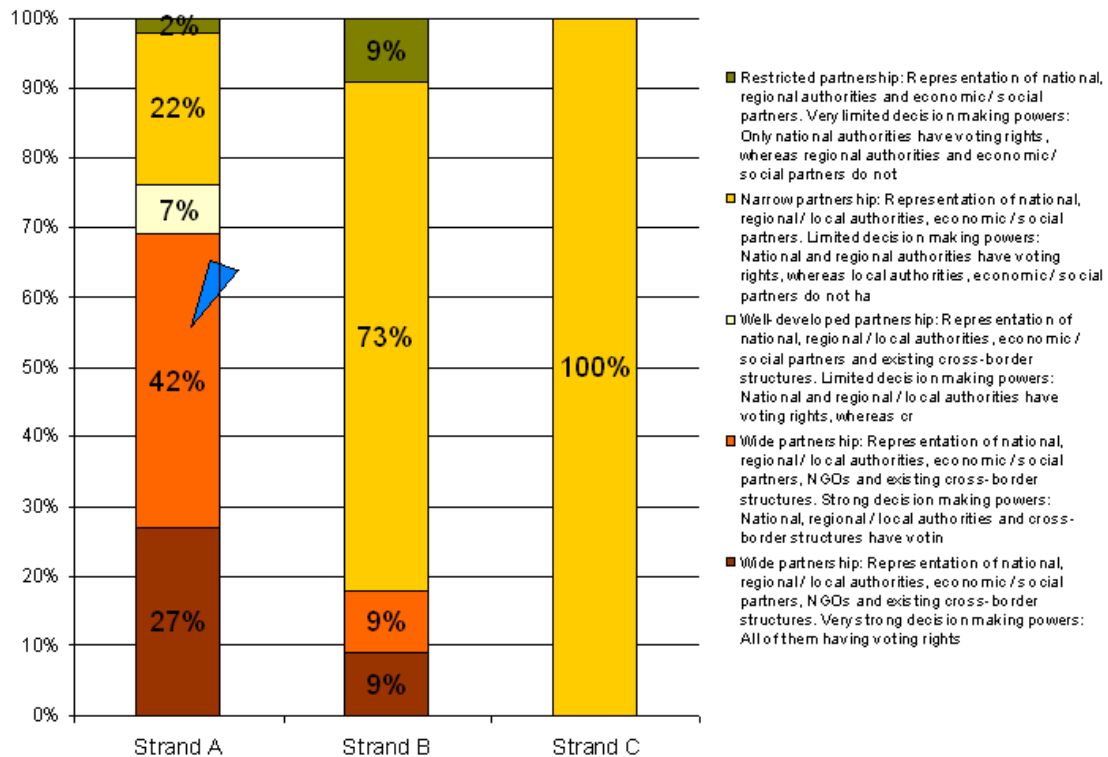
The specific kind of co-operation of the different administrative tiers (and across the countries) was first expected to be a potential problem since the Managing Authority is an administration at the NUTS 2 level and therefore at a lower level than the usual Bundesland-level (NUTS 1) in Germany and Austria. While the Managing Authority is an administration at NUTS II, the Paying Authority (Office of the Government of Vorarlberg) is at the NUTS I level. However, our interviews in Tübingen and Bregenz confirm that policies and strategic decisions are based on needs and not determined by hierarchical patterns of politics. However, this does not mean that funding decisions are isolated from political influence. In Austria all projects are formally decided at the political level, as it is also the case in the neighbouring INTERREG programmes with France.

The monitoring committee and the steering committee

The monitoring committee consisted of 44 participants meeting twice a year. Decisions are based on a 2/3 majority. Decision making is based on formal statutes. The representation is sectoral and regional. Germany is represented by 16 national, regional and district bodies, Austria with nine, Switzerland with 19 and Liechtenstein with one. Economic and social partners are represented by four bodies, furthermore three transnational bodies of the programme region (plus the European Commission) are represented with voting rights. In terms of operation, it is worth mentioning that the decisions of the Monitoring Committee are not based on consensus but on a majority of the votes of two-thirds of the voting members present. This rule has been employed to avoid the risk of blockages in the decision process and is to be appreciated for the sake of the performance of decision making. The monitoring committee is entrusted with all tasks specified in article 35 of the Council regulation 1260/1999 and the INTERREG Guidelines. The composition and mandate of the monitoring committee is therefore in compliance to the Regulation. The steering committee is represented by the six network units and the managing authority. Only those have a voting right which make decision processes easier. The steering committee is the working body of the programme and responsible for implementation and controlling. Here formal decisions on project applications are made. Representatives of the economic and social partners can be invited for further consultations about project applications submitted for approval.

With respect to the results found under task 2 (ex-post evaluation INTERREG III) the ABH programme would be classed in the 42% range of wide partnerships (blue arrow).

The quality of strategic cooperation in the PMC



Co-operation: Managing Authority – Paying Authority: Effectiveness of financial management

The managing authority is hosted by the Regierungspräsidium Tübingen while the Office of the regional government of Vorarlberg acts as the paying authority of the ABH programme. The INTERACT study (Programme analysis INTERREG Alpenrhein-Bodensee-Hochrhein) pointed to the issue that co-ordination between the Managing Authority and the Paying Authority is cumbersome and hampered by geographic distance. The study says

'... The accounting procedure, involving the Joint Technical Secretariat, the Paying Authority, the ERP Fund and the bank, is complex and lasts for weeks on average, from entering the financial claim to paying the final beneficiary. The ERP Fund regulations are stringent. For instance, information from the monitoring system cannot be accepted digitally but has to be printed out, signed and sent by post or fax to Vienna...'

In the ex-post evaluation this issue was addressed, but we could not find evidence that this finding is really valid for hampering the performance of the ABH programme. Although both authorities operate under different administrative provisions and in a larger spatial distance there are apparently no efficiency losses in the programme management. The representatives of both authorities confirm that. The paying authority is entrusted to all tasks specified in article 32 of the Council Regulation 1260/1999. For the operative financial management, the paying authority has delegated the responsibility to the Austrian ERP Fund. For the overall programme payments an Austrian bank account was opened. Here,

the payments from the ERDF are received and from here out all re-payments and payments to project lead partners are made. The ERP Fund has been entrusted with the overall ERDF financial management and monitoring in Austria⁴⁸. The reason why there is a formal responsibility for the paying authority (represented by the Office of the Government of Vorarlberg) and a delegation of the operational tasks to the ERP instead of directly nominating the ERP fund as the paying authority fund is simply a political one. This way the participating Austrian region (Vorarlberg) is represented with an important authority in the programme. This political issue could not be further scrutinized, but we assume that an institutional presence in one of the major partner regions (Vorarlberg) enhances the ownership of the programme in that partner region.

The reported long and cumbersome communication links cannot be proven and there are no visible efficiency losses, otherwise project partners would have reported much more on those weaknesses. Possible efficiency losses (if any) are then to be weighed anyway against the benefit of political ownership on the Austrian part.

Financial monitoring has been a co-ordination task between the Managing Authority and the Paying Authority (or the ERP Fund respectively). The Managing Authority had developed an Excel based synopsis of all projects recording the originally approved contribution, the real expenditure (ERDF or quasi-ERDF and national co-financing), residual funds and the status of financial implementation. The approach is very simple but strikingly effective. The Excel sheet is a large synopsis on one sheet which can be plotted so that the status of the programme, its priorities and measures and the finance of all projects can be depicted immediately at any time. The n+2 rule could be easily monitored since the financial accounting at project level adds up to the financial monitoring at the programme level. As long as the Excel databank is regularly updated (minimum once a week) this instrument can be assessed as simple but highly effective. In fact, the updates have been made even more frequently than once a week.

The Joint Technical Secretariat

The JTS is hosted by the Regierungspräsidium Tübingen. The tasks of the JTS have been carried out by German staff. There were no Austrian, Swiss or Liechtenstein staff seconded to Tübingen although basically this would have been possible. The joint technical implementation was rather ensured by close networking between the formal JTS and the national network units. Hence, the JTS in the context of the ABH programme has followed a decentralised pattern. The tasks of the JTS were:

- Maintenance of the monitoring system;
- Secretariat for the monitoring committee and the steering committee;
- Co-ordination of the programme implementation;
- Regular reporting;
- Administrative implementation of the programme at the level of the projects (assessment of applications, payment applications with respect to the legal provisions (Community law), preparation of decisions of the steering and monitoring committee and preparation of the project; All activities are executed in co-operation with the network units and the Managing Authority; and
- administrative procedure of external services, like e.g. the interim evaluations or activities for publicity and programme visibility.

The JTS works effectively and in accordance to the formal provisions.

⁴⁸ Hence, the independence of the Paying Authority is ensured and even more credible than in programmes where the Paying Authority is just a department in the same institution as the Managing Authority.

Use of indicators and evaluation

The main type of indicators is simple numbers of projects along the different thematic fields of the programme. Although the indicators are rather simple (cf. the critical discussion above) the system was assessed by the interim evaluators as pertinent and pragmatic. The argument has been that the intended impacts are possibly hard to capture by indicators, therefore the representatives of the programme agreed to put more emphasis on the quality of the projects rather than on a sophisticated but inappropriate system of indicators. In order to ensure the effectiveness of the programme more emphasis was laid on the quality of the projects and the selection processes in the screening of project applications⁴⁹. Here approvals of funding have been based on a sustainability profile, described further above.

Although we support the argument that quality control of project applications is of utmost importance, the rather loose application of indicators and also the lack of co-ordination between the different intervention levels can be regarded as a weakness. E.g. indicators at the priority level are not clearly co-ordinated with those at the measure level. Furthermore the indicators at the priority level were not monitored, except for the updated mid-term evaluation. All annual reports included an update of the indicators at measure level. These indicators can be aggregated at the priority level, but they do not correspond with the original indicators at the priority level.

However, even at the level of measures, the use of the indicators was not accorded as a major importance. The annual reporting included an analysis of the indicators at the measure level. Further use of the indicators cannot be confirmed.

Evaluation was carried out in accordance to the Council Regulation 1260/1999, but expenditure for the interim evaluations were rather moderate. Further specific studies or ad-hoc-evaluations were not carried out. However, evaluation results were used, especially in terms of the analysis of project sustainability profile. Recommendations were considered to a major extent.

Administrative costs of the programme (including the JTS) amount to around 6-8% of the programme budget.

3.2.2 Evaluation of sustainability and durability

In terms of Programme stability over time there were no programme adjustments between 2000 and 2006. Except a minor budget shift from the INTERREG IIIA programme Austria-Bavaria to the ABH programme (250,000 Euro), there were also no financial modifications. Consequently, the programme has appeared to be fully stable in financial terms. Furthermore, due to indexation of programme funds, the programme could receive further funds (until 2004 to Euro 145,492⁵⁰). Thematic shifts (removal of measures or introduction of a new thematic orientation within the programme) did not take place between 2000 and 2006.

⁴⁹ In a programme presentation of the Managing Authority on the current INTERREG IV programme even the replacement of indicators by quality standards is proposed.

⁵⁰ INTERACT 2006, *ibid.*

Robustness and durability of projects: The five project case studies cannot represent the 130 projects funded under INTERREG III ABH, first, because the number is too small and second because the projects are not randomly selected. All five project case studies confirm sustainability, as some projects started already under the forerunner INTERREG programmes and are likely to continue further under INTERREG IV or are also prepared to sustain without INTERREG funding. Robustness and durability are definitely more than sustaining co-operation under INTERREG. The updated mid-term evaluation addressed the sustainability profiles in the fields of economic development, environment, social issues and accountability of the 22 projects completed by 2005. Depending on their thematic orientation the majority of projects could succeed with incremental networks (i.e. starting with the core partnership and then involving more and more additional partners). Only one project on cross-border waste recycling failed as it could not develop cross-border networks (due to legal reasons and different political interests) and could only be implemented in the German programme area. Nevertheless, it was worth it to explore the perspectives of co-operation in waste recycling by such kinds of experimental projects. Another project dealing with a children's book on water and environmental sustainability scored low as well, even in the environmental field. It would however be interesting to see, how this book is used in schools and nursery schools and whether there are further editions. Austrian research on the impacts of the ERDF since 1995 have found that INTERREG II and III have largely triggered and reinforced sustainable co-operation networks. Meanwhile, for the Austrian partners, the number of such cross-border co-operation networks without INTERREG support is larger than those with INTERREG support.⁵¹

Identification of the most and least financially sustainable co-operation : Co-operation is not necessarily a matter of money. It is primarily a matter of a common interest in addressing needs. Sustainable co-operation depends on a justified project strategy, a common interest and a co-ordinated approach of implementation. While the Euregio Adipositas has a project volume of 1.5 Million Euro (co-funded by INTERREG with 637,000 Euro), the International School has had a project volume of 874,000 Euro, but with only 99,000 Euro co-funding from ERDF. There is no indication that either project is more or less sustainable because of size or funding. In programmes with more emphasis on tangible investment, it is imaginable that there might be a lower investment ceiling under that investments do not generate a critical mass to trigger sustainable development processes (e.g. a waste water treatment plant that does not meet the local demand and the demand forecast in its operating capacity). It is a bit hard to imagine an upper ceiling of sustainability. In fact, an upper ceiling can only indicate investments that – above the ceiling - are too expensive and thus uneconomic.

At least regarding the ABH programme this question is in principle irrelevant because the proof of potential sustainability of projects is the paramount precondition for funding.

Community Value Added

According to the Association of European Border Regions the Community Value Added is characterized by four different facets:

- The political value added (awareness building, subsidiarity, partnership between people etc.)
- The institutional value added (sustainable vertical and horizontal administrative partnership despite different structures etc.)

⁵¹ Cf. ÖROK 2009, *EU-Kohäsionspolitik in Österreich 1995-2007 – Eine Bilanz*, p. 216

- The socio-economic value added (mobilization of cross-border endogenous potentials, opening-up of labour markets etc.)
- Socio-cultural value added (mutual knowledge of geographical, historic and cultural conditions, broadening of linguistic knowledge etc.)

Awareness building, subsidiarity and partnership plus a sustainable administrative partnership despite different structures are criteria of highest relevance for the ABH programme activities. The co-operation between different tiers of administration and across different legal systems has been oriented to the problems to be addressed rather than to a formalization of administrative co-operation. This approach has been so far highly successful and could be also largely fostered by the long historical ties among the participating entities in Austria, Germany, Switzerland and Liechtenstein. It can be confirmed that the programme could contribute to a further dynamic of institutional flexibility (in terms of action based on agreement over needs) and further mobilization of financial resources (incentive of co-financing). As stated above, the co-operation in the ABH region was never programmatic, but rather oriented on the immediate need. This has stipulated a prior readiness of all involved institutions to co-operate flexibly regardless of the different administrative structures. The observed direct transfer of policies from the project level to the state level (as in case of the project Euregio Adipositas, where Switzerland adopted the concept of adipositas prevention, developed by the project, in its national legislation) is a clear indication that there are successful learning processes in all directions, even between very different tiers of administration. We think, this historically grown cross-border awareness of the need for informal flexible administrative co-operation between Austria, Germany, Switzerland and Liechtenstein is one of the major lessons learned of the ABH programme and thus a major factor of Community Value Added.

Furthermore, the mobilisation of cross-border economic potentials could be indirectly effected, but important but hardly observable impacts are to be interpreted in the context of small budgets. It would be highly interesting to learn more about the transmission mechanisms of INTERREG on economic development across borders. Direct network effects (establishment of incubators or R&D c-operation) are observable. Below is an example from the ABH programme:

Project 128: 'Research Co-operation R&D Cluster Polyhybrid': There is a detailed reports on the results of that project showing the scientific results and the activities planned the intended future results. The reader learns something about the a particular technological innovation evolved. What this report however does not show are the further benefits of the partners in transforming research outcomes into marketable products. The only statement the report put forward on p. 12, is: 'For the industrial partners, the project, based on core processes (SU8-Lithographics, Micro-galvanics), could develop complete product models, that triggered important momentum of the development of new applications.' Of course this statement is too vague to make a statement on indirect effects, but it would be certainly worth to further monitor the indirect impacts of that project in the region. However, the traditional approach of programme evaluation is not adequate to capture such possible impact⁵².

Opening-up labour markets has been of less pressing importance, as the region as such does not seriously suffer from bottlenecks on the labour market. Nevertheless, this issue has been also successfully addressed by the programme. An example is given here:

Project 66 'EXCHANGE': This project deals with exchange of cross-border apprenticeships in all four participating countries. The related major results and expected indirect impacts have been:
-More cross-border labour mobility of the apprentices providing them with a more international horizon
-Economies of scale for vocational training in the overall cross-border region through networking of the various training institutions, employers and other stakeholders and improving transparency in the cross-border market

⁵² Such a project that could also fit to the Fifth or Sixth Research Framework Programme, aiming to support basic co-operative research with a view to foster innovation in production and services and to introduce new standards, should be rather assessed by methods of research evaluation (e.g. EVIMP). This would stipulate a longer-run monitoring of the co-operation beyond the programme cycle and to focus evaluation on more strategic questions (e.g.: Did the project contribute to spin-off investment?, Did the project contribute to the introduction of new standards?, Were impacts of the utilization of the immediate project results local, cross-border-regional or rather international?, Could the cross-border region contain that asset or do major users of the new technology reap the benefits elsewhere?

Like in the case of project 128, indirect effects are only assumable, but so far not directly observable. A follow-up of project assessment beyond the termination of the INTERREG support would provide more insight into the strategic value added to that this project can contribute for the region, but also for other European cross-border regions.

Furthermore, improvement of transparency of cross-border goods and service markets has certainly taken place, however it is again difficult to trace transmission processes, as those are latent and often generated by individual and informal contacts which cannot be traced back to INTERREG. The five project assessments (see above) could all substantiate the assumption that co-operation across border leads to more market transparency based on better information. However, it is not possible to trace such mechanisms and how they lead to concrete impacts. Also here, the question should be focused on whether the traditional planning approach with monitoring indicators is the right tool to assess the effectiveness and the impact of INTERREG.

While for example an inert formal network of twenty institutions without major results will score high in a traditional effectiveness analysis, the informal meeting of e.g. two business people or researchers on a cross-border sports event is not recorded. However, potentially the latter 'network' can have considerably more impact on cross-border market transparency and future economic development than the big formal network. To assess such important factors of Community Value Added, more social and economic empirical research in terms of larger surveys and panel analyses will be necessary, instead of traditional evaluation based on programme indicators.

The improvement of socio-cultural cohesion builds on the excellent preconditions of a common language and close cultural ties. Socio-cultural development across the borders has not only been perceptible but proves to be rather dynamic as it is inspired by the long-standing co-operation dating back to the 19th century. The socio-cultural similarities of the participating sub-regions have been a major pre-condition to co-operate, but this co-operation could also further reinforce the already strong cultural ties. Hence, this Community Value Added is based on a circular flow of causation (i.e. a virtuous circle).

In conclusion it can be said that the ABH programme strongly supports the evidence on three major points, found by Barca 2009⁵³:

"First, cross-border and transnational programmes have often helped to overcome institutional inertia, mobilising financial resources, stimulating economic, social and cultural exchanges and new relationships. Second, they have facilitated policy transfer and institutional adaptation through networks. Third, the intensity and effectiveness of territorial cooperation vary greatly, with the greatest impact occurring in regions where integration and cooperation are already well developed (e.g. Baltic Sea, Benelux area) within a pre-existing political or strategic framework. ...".

In conclusion, the Alpenrhein-Bodensee-Hochrhein region is a wealthy region with more than a century of active cross-border-co-operation. Despite that, the region is still characterized by borders with barrier effects on economy and social living, although co-operation has already progressed to a relatively high level of integration. But further reducing those border effects and thus to improve the transparency and processes of the regional markets is certainly worth future support. INTERREG as a supra-national intervention to co-ordinate a process of cross-border integration across Europe is therefore further useful, not so much because of money to co-finance national expenditure, but because of the role of an 'animator'.

⁵³ Barca, F. 2009, *An Agenda for a reformed cohesion policy – Independent report prepared at the request of the Commissioner for Regional Policy*, Rome

Conclusion

Co-operation across the borders is deep and based on a long tradition of cross-border co-operation in that area. However, formal co-operation has not evolved to a quality criterion in the ABH programme, as here the informal and problem-oriented ad-hoc forms of co-operation proved to be superior to formal ones. Especially the fact that two partner countries are non-EU countries have suggested a more flexible approach

Under the ABH programme there are formal programme structures of co-operation (notably the monitoring and steering committees and the co-operation between the JTS and the national contact points). Apart from that, there are established co-operation structures already in existence before INTERREG (e.g. the Internationale Bodenseekonferenz). Those structures are also represented in the monitoring committee. At the level of projects and co-operation in general, there is a rather informal way of dialogue between different levels of administration. This is also well reflected by the diagonal kind of formal co-operation between the Managing Authority (at the German NUTS II level) and the Paying Authority (at the Austrian NUTS I level).

As regards programme monitoring evidence suggests that the use of indicators is rather limited. Instead the project quality control is of major importance of monitoring at the project level. Both quality as well as use of indicators could be largely improved to better capture the performance of the programme. It is rather difficult to assess the performance of the programme with most simple indicators like 'the number of projects'. Likewise the use of evaluation has been limited to the minimum necessary scope. More thematic analysis to help shaping policies and to reflect impacts of interventions would have been important.

The joint financial management has been efficient and effective. The programme did not undergo conceptual or financial revisions, except a very minor shift of funds of the Austria-Bavaria-programme in order to improve the financial contribution of Bavaria. The budgeted funds have been fully absorbed. There have not been delays with projects and related finance putting the programme at risk of n+2. There was no reporting about inadequate decision making, neither in the interim evaluations nor by the project partners interviewed.

The formal decision making structures as such fully comply to the Regulation 1260/1999. Bureaucracy has been an issue for a number of project partners who complained about the as cumbersome perceived ERDF financial rules.

As regards the selection of projects on the programme has put major emphasis on strict quality criteria related to genuine cross-border co-operation. Calls for proposals were not executed, instead a rolling application procedure has been pursued. The information dissemination was ensured by multipliers rather than printed or electronic information material (except the website). The selection criteria have been strictly oriented to partnership and sustainability of cross-border co-operation. Most projects aim to co-operate in a sustainable way, even without INTERREG support in future. Sustainability is the paramount selection criterion; Financial volumes are not a criterion of project sustainability. For most assessed projects, a long run perspective has been adopted by the nature of the project, e.g. a cross-border spatial development strategy or the International School. The projects assessed could contribute to more transparency of markets and possible barriers through information exchange. The durability of

co-operation between the partners can be confirmed ex-post (e.g. for projects with a longer history, like DACH+) and can be assumed (but not confirmed) for the future.

The ABH programme shows that co-operation can also be successful if it is more informal and less programmatic. Impacts on welfare of the region are difficult to trace, as the transmission is not directly observable but only assumed. The projects assessed show evidence to some extent that indirect impacts play a major role, however, the monitoring approach of the programme and the traditional approach of evaluation is not capable to capture those impacts. Accompanying social and economic research is necessary to get more insight into mechanisms and indirect impacts. A further finding is that close cultural and historic ties (as in the ABH region) are a major pre-condition to further integrate the area socio-culturally (virtuous circle).

3.3 Extrapolating results & conclusions on major impacts in terms of utility and Community Value Added for Interreg III

Prior analyses on major impacts in terms of utility and Community Value Added of INTERREG III are not advanced to a stage where it is possible to compare results in greater detail, so that it is not easy to compare the results for the ABH programme at a level of INTERREG. However, some related results have been found in the context of tasks 2 and 1 of the ex-post evaluation INTERREG III.

(1) A major finding is the fact that the performance of programmes does not necessarily depend on formal legal structures and agreements. The majority of INTERREG programmes also performs successfully without those formalities. The ABH programme is a good example for that. Although it is built on minimum formality its synthetic indicator scores among the top programmes (e.g. D-NL, Euregio Maas-Rhine etc.). As mentioned above the ABH programme can be classed to the category 'No specific inter-state agreement but use of domestic law to conclude cross-border agreements'. Under this category also other successful programmes like Austria-Bavaria or Slovenia-Austria are included. As regards the nature and quality of the existing permanent CBC structures between authorities, the ABH programme belongs to those having permanent structures without a legal basis. The ABH programme is classed in a group where Central European programmes and those ones with non-EU members prevail. Also here, very successful programmes are categorized, such as Skargarden, Oresund or Oberrhein-Mitte-Süd. Formalised cross-border structures are hence no unequivocal criterion for good performance in cross-border co-operation, a clear message from the evaluation of ABH.

(2) Independent research results suggest that 'while many border effects have been removed in the single market, other barriers continue to present considerable barriers to effective integration. These relate predominantly to institutional and administrative differences in neighbouring countries, and / or mental and cultural differences that prevent deeper integration. This is particularly the case for regions bordering the former Iron Curtain, but it even applies to regions with a long history of cooperation.'⁵⁴ The ABH programme results do not support this finding. Border effects were kept low because of long lasting historic and cultural ties. In case of the ABH programme, different administrative systems did not hamper co-operation, on the opposite: flexible co-operation was deliberately employed to ensure problem solving and fostering socio-economic development despite different administrative systems. That means that the research-based finding cannot be generalized for INTERREG.

⁵⁴ Cf. Panteia and partners 2009: Ex-post-Evaluation INTERREG III – Interim Report, p.29

(3) Further independent research reveals that learning has been the major impact of INTERREG. This has immediate consequences for the choice of the monitoring and evaluation system and the related indicators.

The literature survey of the ex-post evaluation concludes that '... the official evaluation frameworks thus rely on the use of quantified indicators to measure the production of tangible and measurable outputs (such as infrastructure investments or the creation of jobs), but they fail to grasp the degree and intensity of cooperation processes between different stakeholders across national borders.'⁵⁵ Learning as an essentially indirect effect of INTERREG is materialized in the mentioned intangible co-operation processes. But if learning and policy transfer is in fact the major outcome of INTERREG, the consequence would be that the impact of that Community Initiative is simply not yet captured, because the monitoring and evaluation techniques have been inadequate. The highly insignificant and erratic effectiveness results based on the monitoring indicators of the ABH programme (sometimes exceeding 300% of the quantified target) is characteristic for INTERREG as confirmed by the horizontal analysis⁵⁶, particularly for strand A. The reservation of the Managing Authority to really seriously consider those indicators can be well understood. The results of the ABH programme study strongly supports the mentioned research finding that the major learning effects cannot be monitored and evaluated by the traditional tools of indicators.

⁵⁵ Ibid. p.38

⁵⁶ Ibid. pp.72 ff.

4 Conclusions and recommendations

The ABH programme belongs to the strand A programmes with still rather favourable preconditions of co-operation in terms of economic integration and common historical ties. This can be stated despite the fact that the programme includes non-member states and in spite of the topographic reality (Alps and the large lake). The programme also reveals a good performance on financial absorption, effectiveness and sustainability (both in terms of programme sustainability as well as durability of co-operation at project level). In terms of the overall depth and intensity of co-operation the programme has scored among the best performing programmes as it belongs to a cluster with synthetic indicator values in the upper quarter of the distribution and highly above the mean for strand A. Especially the density of common actions is excellent in the ABH co-operation.

The ABH programme covered most of the sectors defined in the Commission Communication from 2000.

Rural development has been covered by a slightly over-average expenditure on code 130 (rural development). But also across the single measures there have been activities related to rural development, i.e. under tourism services, environment and nature and networking. Urban development has not been explicitly addressed by the programme.

SME development, R&D and human resources development have been the major focus of the ABH programme. This can be proved by the strong emphasis on the so-called Lisbon interventions compared to the INTERREG average (in terms of certified expenditure). Support for transport has been less of a focus, however even here there were specific interventions with an over-average expenditure like for rail and multimodal transport. The environment has been another focus in terms of budgets. The original budget of the corresponding priority axis was more than 6 million Euro from the ERDF and has been the financially largest priority axis. In terms of effectiveness measured by the monitoring indicators, the results also show that more projects have been executed than originally planned. Expenditure for renewable sources of energy, air, noise and particularly energy efficiency, has been highly over-average in comparison to INTERREG as such and also in comparison to the strand A and the cluster to which ABH belongs.

The Community Value Added generated by the INTERREG supported co-operation in the ABH region can be summarized as follows:

The programme clearly reveals that performance of programmes does not necessarily depend on formal legal structures and agreements, although the ABH programme might represent a minority of programmes with that character. Here, much more important has been flexible networking. Awareness building, subsidiarity and partnership plus a sustainable administrative partnership despite different structures are criteria of highest relevance for the ABH programme activities. The co-operation between different tiers of administration and across different legal systems has been oriented to the problems to be addressed rather than to a formalization of administrative co-operation. This approach has been so far highly successful and could be also largely fostered by the long historical ties among the participating entities in Austria, Germany, Switzerland and Liechtenstein. It can be confirmed that the programme could contribute to a further dynamic of institutional flexibility (in terms of action based on agreement over needs) and further mobilization of financial resources (incentive of co-financing). Although ABH is

built on minimum formality, its synthetic indicator scores amongst the top programmes. Formalised cross-border structures are hence no unequivocal criterion for good performance in cross-border co-operation, a clear message from the evaluation of ABH.

Furthermore, the mobilisation of cross-border economic potentials could be indirectly affected. This is at least probable. Important but hardly observable impacts are always to be interpreted in the context of small budgets. The ABH programme with overall expenditure of around 30 Million Euro is not only petty in terms of investment and multiplier potential, it is also small in comparison to most other INTERREG programmes. Within the cluster it is the second smallest one⁵⁷. An improved programme monitoring based on empirical social and economic research would be necessary to better capture such indirect impacts.

Opening-up cross-border labour markets have been addressed by ABH as well, although there are no serious bottlenecks in the participating regions. Yet, the programme succeeded to further stabilize the potentials by e.g. reaping economies of scale for vocational training by intensified co-operation of the involved institutions.

The programme has certainly contributed to an improved transparency on the regional markets for goods and services. However, this is also a hardly observable transmission mechanism. With monitoring indicators, such mechanisms will not become visible. So we can only assume such impacts. At least all five projects assessed in more detail reported to contribute to that important 'value added'. More empirical research will be necessary to analyse such indirect effects.

In terms of socio-cultural cohesion, the programme benefits from a virtuous circle, as the long-lasting historic ties automatically reinforce cultural cohesion (circular causation).

In conclusion it can be said that the ABH programme strongly supports the evidence on three major points, found by the *Barca* report 2009:

"First, cross-border and transnational programmes have often helped to overcome institutional inertia, mobilising financial resources, stimulating economic, social and cultural exchanges and new relationships. Second, they have facilitated policy transfer and institutional adaptation through networks. Third, the intensity and effectiveness of territorial cooperation vary greatly, with the greatest impact occurring in regions where integration and cooperation are already well developed ...".

Recommendations

The INTERREG IV programme Alpenrhein-Bodensee-Hochrhein is largely a continuation of the former INTERREG III programme. The participating regional entities are identical; In Bavaria, the districts Memmingen and Unterallgäu joined the so-called 20% area.

The ex-ante evaluation of the INTERREG IV programme established a focused strategy and a clear intervention logic built on the approach of the INTERREG III programme. The programme should further concentrate on quality projects with network effects and impulse impacts. The perhaps too ambitious expectations that the programme will have a major impact on growth and integration have been

⁵⁷ Only PAMINA is endowed with a smaller budget. The largest programme is D-NL (Rijn-Waal and Rijn-Maas-Noord) with expenditure of around 190,000 Euro.

dropped, as the small financial budgets do not suggest that, although indirect effects can be considerable. The rather strong focus on 'economic competitiveness' has been reduced to also allow the focus on strategic spatial goals.

The ABH programme represents a fund of lessons learned and good practice in addressing cross-border regional development by experimentation and networking. The experiences are certainly not suitable to replace them everywhere in the world of cross-border co-operation. A major precondition for that success story are long historic ties and the attainment of an advanced level of wealth. If this is ensured, only then can the peculiar approach of the ABH programme be considered. Formal cross-border administrative structures are not necessary and are perhaps in some cases even counter-productive. This can be proven by the ABH programme. Therefore, a meanwhile introduced fashion in INTERREG, namely the introduction of the European Grouping of Territorial Co-operation (Regulation 1082/2006) becomes questionable, the more its application is expected to be generalized. For the ABH programme the EGTC would not at all add value. A recent example of counter-productive impacts of compulsory formalization has been the obligation of a formal cross-border memorandum of understanding under INTERREG IV. For the ABH, under those circumstances expenditure control and audits are not any more possible in Switzerland endangering the lead partner principle. External audits from the Certifying Authority (a formal compulsory act) are now forbidden in Switzerland. Under the INTERREG III there was still readiness from Switzerland to accept such controls on a voluntary basis. The formal memorandum is thus a step back in effective co-operation with Switzerland.

A major lesson learned from the ABH programme is that 'learning', more transparency and indirect impacts should be a major aim, rather than direct developmental results generated by small INTERREG funds. INTERREG cannot directly affect development, except for some local entities, when expenditure is focused on hard infrastructure and 'catching-up projects'. Otherwise the initiative would become over-ambitious and thus not longer credible. But if INTERREG is going to put more emphasis on learning and unobservable impacts, the traditional monitoring system (with all the vague proxy-indicators) is not adequate. Indirect unobservable effects can be substantial, perhaps in some cases influencing regional development paths to a large extent. INTERREG can however only initiate projects with a potential to trigger such effects, it cannot steer such a process by planning techniques. Therefore, as an important recommendation for INTERREG as such is to put more emphasis on accompanying social and economic research instead of monitoring. In this way it is important that project partners should forecast direct ex-ante effects and specify potential indirect effects. Those should be observed and there should be a regular questionnaire disseminated to the project partners showing direct effects and possible indirect effects (e.g. a new sectoral network, more foreign investment because of improvement of transparency, incidental impulses from the project to found a joint business, that would have never happened without the facilitated contact through INTERREG etc.). Furthermore, a panel of the public in the programme region should be established to find more evidence of specific indirect effects of INTERREG over time.

Apart from that, the ABH programme evaluation suggests to put more emphasis on the justification of the INTERREG programme as such. So far, and that is a general issue for INTERREG, a negative border effect is assumed but not specified or proven. To obtain such proof a counterfactual situation needs to be simulated. Thus, the question of whether or not there are negative border effects where INTERREG is a necessary tool to alleviate them, can hardly be answered so far. It is even imaginable that there are positive border effects. This statement should not question INTERREG as such, but should be more interpreted in a way to view those programmes from a more economic point of view. A typical border effect can be that short-distance phone connections are relatively expensive because they are

international. This combined with a floating exchange rate might have an influence on the cost and risk burden of co-operating private sector agents. It would be very useful progress to focus the socio-economic analyses of INTERREG programmes on those border effects instead of general descriptive statistics along the sectors addressed by the strategy of the programme. Such a border-effect-focus should also be visible in the SWOT synopsis, which should be concise and clear and without inherent contradictions.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Related to the financial analysis (chapter 2.1)

- 1.1 Codes of intervention represented by the ABH related to the ranking of frequency of codes under INTERREG
- 1.2 Financial tables for comparative analysis at the three-digit code level
- 1.3 ABH programme: budget shares ranked
- 1.4 Financial implementation: Programme and measure: compared to elapsed time

Annex 2: Related to the effectiveness analysis (chapter 2.2)

- 2.1 Monitoring indicators at the priority level and interim results

Annex 3: Related to the project analysis (chapter 2.3)

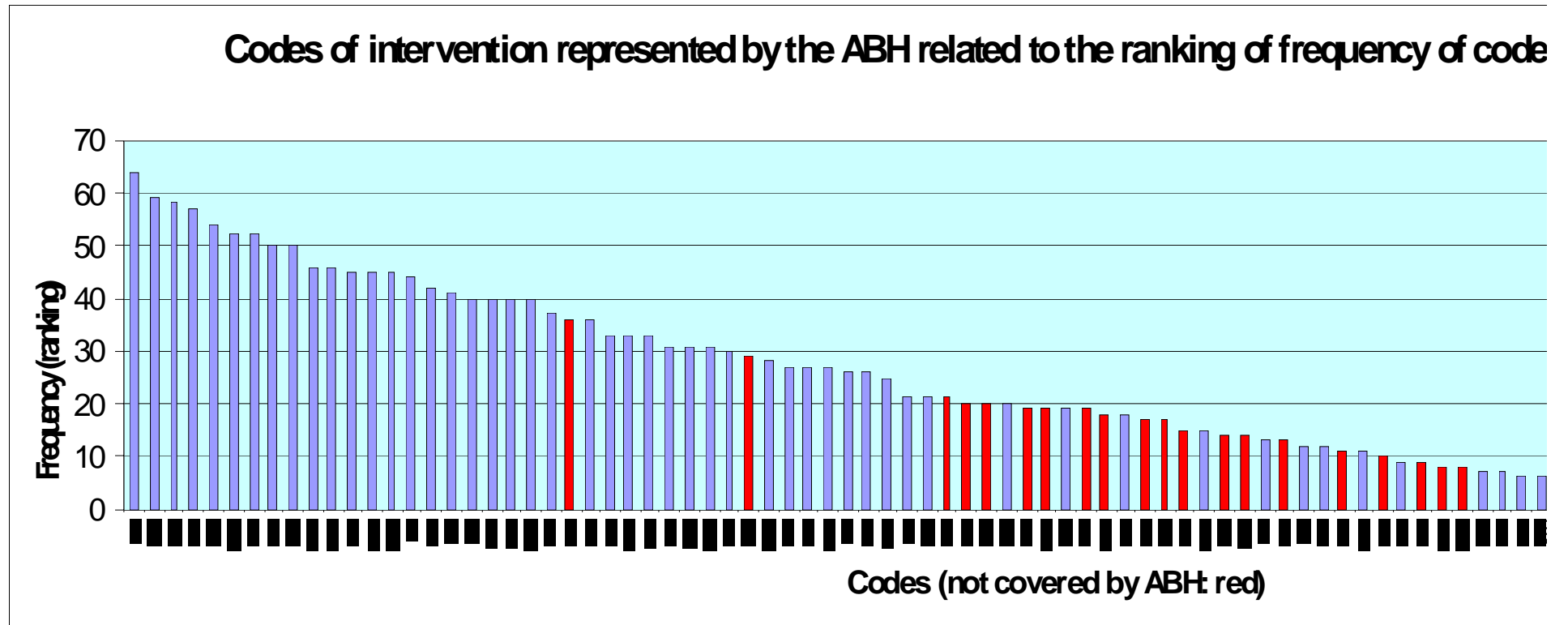
- 3.1 Project background information

Annex 4: Related to the taxonomic analysis (chapter 2.4)

- 4.1 Labels of sub-indicators of the 'real rate' and the historical criterion
- 4.2 The 'Real Rate': Position of the programme and the cluster in the overall distribution

Annex 1 Related to the financial analysis (chapter
2.1)

Annex 1.1 Codes of intervention represented by the
ABH related to the ranking of frequency of
codes under INTERREG



Annex 1.2 Financial tables for comparative analysis at the three-digit code level

Annex 1.2.1 Expenditure, absorption rate and comparison with the INTERREG Community Initiative

Fields of intervention	Decided amount (Euro)	Certified expenditure by MS (Euro)	Absorption rate %	Code expenditure /programme expenditure %	Interreg ref.: absorption rate %	Interreg ref: code expenditure /programme expenditure %	IM interreg	GM interreg
113. Agriculture-specific vocational training	41,629.48	38,937.91	93.53	0.26	80.05	0.07	3.98	1.17
114. Improving processing and marketing of agricultural products	83,258.96	77,875.82	93.53	0.52	80.55	0.23	2.21	1.16
122. Improving harvesting, processing and marketing of forestry products	62,444.22	58,406.86	93.53	0.39	85.61	0.12	3.17	1.09
123. Promoting new outlets for the use and marketing of forestry products	62,444.22	58,406.86	93.53	0.39	84.35	0.01	27.98	1.11
124. Establishment of associations of forest holders	20,814.74	19,468.95	93.53	0.13	93.53	0.00	299.52	1.00
125. Restoring forestry production potential damaged by natural disasters	20,814.74	19,468.95	93.53	0.13	84.15	0.23	0.56	1.11
128. Forestry-specific vocational training	20,814.74	19,468.95	93.53	0.13	77.79	0.05	2.48	1.20
130. Rural development	822,704.17	744,402.15	90.48	4.95	82.12	4.71	1.05	1.10
131. Tourism activities	176,262.46	165,012.66	93.62	1.10	78.73	3.47	0.32	1.19
141. Adjustment of the fishing effort	20,814.74	19,468.95	93.53	0.13	94.85	0.02	7.17	0.99
143. Processing, marketing and promoting of fisheries products	20,814.74	19,468.95	93.53	0.13	82.20	0.17	0.77	1.14
144. Aquaculture	20,814.74	19,468.95	93.53	0.13	84.39	0.04	3.36	1.11
161. Investment in physical capital	44,367.35	42,241.54	95.21	0.28	70.64	0.55	0.51	1.35
162. Environment-friendly technologies	44,367.35	42,241.54	95.21	0.28	76.17	1.22	0.23	1.25
163. Business advisory services	365,818.70	352,411.48	96.34	2.34	75.94	2.09	1.12	1.27

INTERREG Ex-Post evaluation in-depth analysis of PROGRAMME: INTERREG IIIA Alpenrhein – Bodensee - Hochrhein

164. Shared business services	1,213,068.95	1,111,410.10	91.62	7.39	72.01	1.85	3.99	1.27
166. Services in support of the social economy	494,298.75	368,111.09	74.47	2.45	84.74	0.51	4.83	0.88
167. Vocational training	44,367.35	42,241.54	95.21	0.28	73.54	0.46	0.61	1.29
171. Physical investment	544,144.34	454,810.42	83.58	3.02	84.59	1.86	1.63	0.99
172. Non-physical investments	347,008.90	289,540.62	83.44	1.93	74.80	2.60	0.74	1.12
173. Shared services for the tourism industry	911,842.40	795,539.70	87.25	5.29	72.17	1.74	3.03	1.21
174. Vocational training	122,729.95	100,227.92	81.67	0.67	81.39	0.81	0.82	1.00
181. Research projects based in universities and research institutes	327,375.58	295,141.50	90.15	1.96	76.16	1.21	1.62	1.18
182. Innovation and technology transfers	419,144.55	379,705.84	90.59	2.53	77.68	2.01	1.26	1.17
210. Labour market policy	399,813.95	368,156.32	92.08	2.45	77.00	0.96	2.55	1.20
220. Social inclusion	909,240.98	696,051.00	76.55	4.63	82.30	1.63	2.83	0.93
230. Developing educational and vocational training	420,834.95	369,595.00	87.82	2.46	75.01	1.59	1.54	1.17
240. Workforce flexibility, entrepreneurial activity	1,334,781.95	1,173,514.38	87.92	7.80	81.19	1.88	4.15	1.08
250. Positive labour market actions for woman	425,774.85	357,660.56	84.00	2.38	72.47	0.65	3.65	1.16
311. Rail	246,419.30	206,587.25	83.84	1.37	80.64	0.84	1.63	1.04
317. Urban Transport	49,283.86	41,317.45	83.84	0.27	84.99	0.84	0.33	0.99
318. Multimodal Transport	246,227.42	205,360.97	83.40	1.37	82.94	1.03	1.32	1.01
319. Intelligent Transport Systems	98,375.84	81,408.62	82.75	0.54	79.95	0.76	0.71	1.04
321. Basic infrastructure	246,419.30	206,587.25	83.84	1.37	80.03	1.49	0.92	1.05
322. Information and Communication Technology	246,227.42	205,360.97	83.40	1.37	77.42	2.20	0.62	1.08
323. Services and applications for the citizen	1,461,186.05	1,216,338.08	83.24	8.09	78.55	2.34	3.46	1.06
324. Services and applications for SMEs	334,194.60	284,938.91	85.26	1.89	76.14	1.63	1.16	1.12
331. Electricity, gas, petrol, solid fuel	49,283.86	41,317.45	83.84	0.27	84.62	0.15	1.79	0.99
332. Renewable sources of energy	295,703.16	247,904.70	83.84	1.65	77.43	0.86	1.93	1.08
333. Energy efficiency, cogeneration, energy control	295,703.16	247,904.70	83.84	1.65	66.14	0.17	9.65	1.27
341. Air	149,412.65	120,394.58	80.58	0.80	85.79	0.23	3.46	0.94
342. Noise	149,412.65	120,394.58	80.58	0.80	81.90	0.14	5.85	0.98
343. Urban and industrial waste	197,135.44	165,269.80	83.84	1.10	89.27	1.41	0.78	0.94
344. Drinking water (collection, storage, treatment and distribution)	246,419.30	206,587.25	83.84	1.37	83.47	1.41	0.97	1.00

INTERREG Ex-Post evaluation in-depth analysis of PROGRAMME: INTERREG IIIA Alpenrhein – Bodensee - Hochrhein

345. Sewerage and purification	645,373.39	526,453.52	81.57	3.50	82.77	1.05	3.33	0.99
351. Upgrading and Rehabilitation of industrial and military sites	40,966.65	38,464.46	93.89	0.26	82.08	0.57	0.45	1.14
352. Rehabilitation of urban areas	40,966.65	38,464.46	93.89	0.26	87.81	1.50	0.17	1.07
353. Protection, improvement and regeneration of the natural environment	1,101,309.15	914,689.76	83.05	6.08	84.54	2.21	2.75	0.98
354. Maintenance and restoration of the cultural heritage	482,307.60	406,802.86	84.35	2.71	69.04	1.36	1.98	1.22
360. Social infrastructure and public health	494,298.75	368,111.09	74.47	2.45	79.27	1.75	1.40	0.94
411. Preparation, implementation, monitoring, publicity	725,252.00	534,538.62	73.70	3.55	65.15	2.04	1.74	1.13
412. Evaluation	72,525.25	28,302.03	39.02	0.19	60.61	0.32	0.59	0.64
413. Studies	72,525.25	28,302.03	39.02	0.19	78.46	6.05	0.03	0.50
414. Innovative actions	72,525.25	28,302.03	39.02	0.19	75.00	7.61	0.02	0.52
415. Information to the public	72,525.25	28,302.03	39.02	0.19	70.94	1.93	0.10	0.55
ABH Programme	17,874,592.00	15,036,861.94						

Annex 1.2.2: Expenditure and absorption rate compared to the strand A and the cluster

Fields of intervention	Strand ref: absorption rate %	Strand ref.: code expenditure/programme expenditure %	IM strand	GM strand	Cluster ref: absorption rate	Cluster ref:code expenditure/programme expenditure %	IM cluster	GM cluster
113. Agriculture-specific vocational training	81.32	0.04	5.85	0.98	82.13	0.06	4.49	0.97
114. Improving processing and marketing of agricultural products	78.69	0.27	1.90	1.02	87.03	0.39	1.32	0.93
122. Improving harvesting, processing and marketing of forestry products	79.11	0.17	2.25	1.08	77.67	0.06	6.08	1.10
123. Promoting new outlets for the use and marketing of forestry products	84.35	0.02	19.29	1.00	84.96	0.15	2.65	0.99
124. Establishment of associations of forest holders	93.53	0.00	206.48	1.00	93.53	0.01	20.89	1.00
125. Restoring forestry production potential damaged by natural disasters	78.31	0.10	1.25	1.07	91.72	0.09	1.45	0.92
128. Forestry-specific vocational training	75.53	0.03	4.19	1.03	76.49	0.18	0.71	1.02
130. Rural development	81.62	5.12	0.97	1.01	86.70	5.64	0.88	0.95
131. Tourism activities	78.78	3.75	0.29	1.00	84.73	5.71	0.19	0.93
141. Adjustment of the fishing effort	93.53	0.00	206.48	1.01	93.53	0.01	20.89	1.01
143. Processing, marketing and promoting of fisheries products	80.93	0.22	0.60	1.02	93.53	0.01	20.89	0.88
144. Aquaculture	58.76	0.01	15.27	1.44	93.53	0.01	20.89	0.90
161. Investment in physical capital	67.26	0.60	0.46	1.05	95.21	0.01	20.89	0.74
162. Environment-friendly technologies	75.25	1.33	0.21	1.01	86.17	1.79	0.16	0.88
163. Business advisory services	75.76	2.61	0.90	1.00	86.94	3.10	0.76	0.87

INTERREG Ex-Post evaluation in-depth analysis of PROGRAMME: INTERREG IIIA Alpenrhein – Bodensee - Hochrhein

164. Shared business services	71.33	2.20	3.36	1.01	89.35	6.38	1.16	0.81
166. Services in support of the social economy	84.21	0.49	4.98	1.01	90.41	0.62	3.95	0.94
167. Vocational training	71.40	0.51	0.55	1.03	86.80	0.68	0.41	0.85
171. Physical investment	84.50	2.49	1.21	1.00	90.62	3.05	0.99	0.93
172. Non-physical investments	75.33	3.37	0.57	0.99	89.79	3.11	0.62	0.83
173. Shared services for the tourism industry	70.82	1.96	2.70	1.02	90.14	4.48	1.18	0.80
174. Vocational training	80.98	0.72	0.92	1.01	92.12	0.40	1.66	0.88
181. Research projects based in universities and research institutes	71.64	1.01	1.95	1.06	87.02	2.26	0.87	0.88
182. Innovation and technology transfers	77.40	1.97	1.28	1.00	85.29	2.51	1.01	0.91
210. Labour market policy	76.03	1.25	1.95	1.01	85.87	2.93	0.83	0.90
220. Social inclusion	82.64	2.11	2.20	1.00	87.06	3.24	1.43	0.95
230. Developing educational and vocational training	73.65	1.83	1.34	1.02	88.73	3.13	0.79	0.85
240. Workforce flexibility, entrepreneurial activity	80.62	2.21	3.53	1.01	87.36	4.60	1.70	0.93
250. Positive labour market actions for woman	70.66	0.79	3.02	1.03	89.45	1.67	1.43	0.81
311. Rail	80.79	1.13	1.21	1.00	77.87	0.44	3.11	1.04
317. Urban Transport	86.26	1.04	0.26	0.99	96.00	0.32	0.86	0.89
318. Multimodal Transport	84.02	1.08	1.27	0.99	90.55	0.57	2.39	0.92
319. Intelligent Transport Systems	80.64	0.75	0.72	0.99	89.18	0.40	1.35	0.90
321. Basic infrastructure	79.98	2.00	0.69	1.00	93.76	0.22	6.21	0.85
322. Information and Communication Technology	77.76	2.27	0.60	1.00	74.95	0.55	2.50	1.03
323. Services and applications for the citizen	79.95	2.89	2.80	0.98	84.28	2.38	3.39	0.93
324. Services and applications for SMEs	76.56	2.07	0.92	0.99	81.98	1.33	1.43	0.93
331. Electricity, gas, petrol, solid fuel	86.87	0.17	1.58	0.97	83.84	0.01	20.89	1.01
332. Renewable sources of energy	76.51	0.91	1.82	1.01	89.28	0.25	6.72	0.87
333. Energy efficiency, cogeneration, energy control	61.77	0.17	9.76	1.07	86.36	0.37	4.45	0.77
341. Air	89.38	0.24	3.30	0.96	91.79	0.20	4.01	0.93

INTERREG Ex-Post evaluation in-depth analysis of PROGRAMME: INTERREG IIIA Alpenrhein – Bodensee - Hochrhein

342. Noise	86.05	0.11	7.54	0.95	80.58	0.04	20.89	1.02
343. Urban and industrial waste	89.78	1.93	0.57	0.99	91.34	0.61	1.79	0.98
344. Drinking water (collection, storage, treatment and distribution)	84.25	1.72	0.80	0.99	90.38	0.29	4.78	0.92
345. Sewerage and purification	82.70	1.42	2.47	1.00	89.45	0.73	4.80	0.93
351. Upgrading and Rehabilitation of industrial and military sites	81.83	0.48	0.53	1.00	77.78	0.72	0.35	1.06
352. Rehabilitation of urban areas	89.45	1.77	0.14	0.98	90.64	0.68	0.38	0.97
353. Protection, improvement and regeneration of the natural environment	89.24	2.72	2.24	0.95	87.65	2.28	2.67	0.96
354. Maintenance and restoration of the cultural heritage	69.79	1.84	1.47	0.99	92.00	1.82	1.49	0.75
360. Social infrastructure and public health	77.80	2.08	1.18	1.02	85.75	2.56	0.95	0.92
411. Preparation, implementation, monitoring, publicity	64.24	1.82	1.95	1.01	88.14	4.12	0.86	0.74
412. Evaluation	63.26	0.28	0.68	0.96	74.32	0.33	0.56	0.82
413. Studies	78.93	4.00	0.05	0.99	74.37	0.32	0.59	1.05
414. Innovative actions	80.36	1.08	0.17	0.93	45.65	0.15	1.29	1.64
415. Information to the public	70.83	1.31	0.14	1.00	68.10	0.64	0.29	1.04

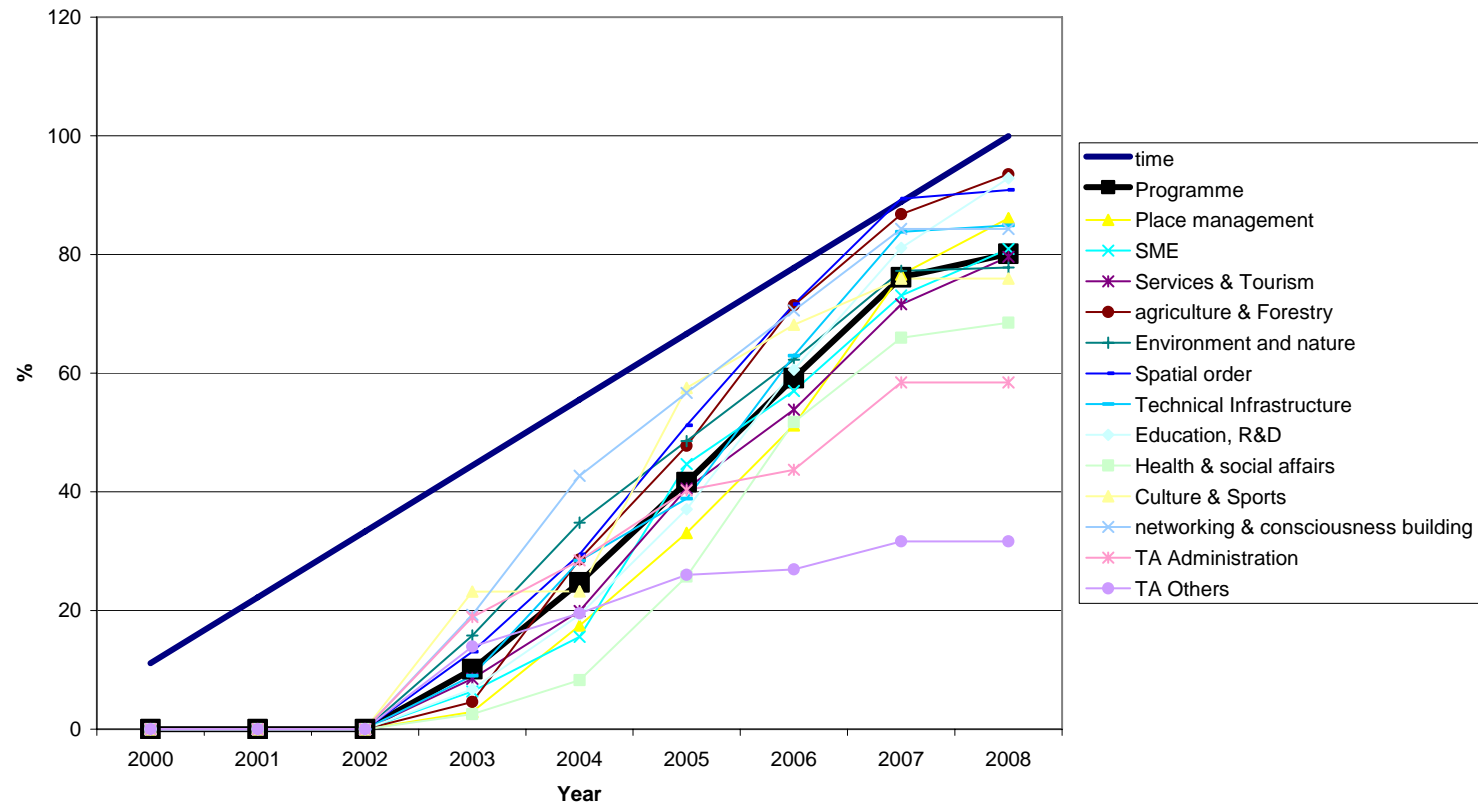
IM & GM:

$$IM = \frac{x_{code}}{x_{prog}} \cdot \frac{X_{code}}{X_{Interreg}} \quad .58$$
$$GM = \frac{x_{real}}{x_{plan}} \cdot \frac{X_{real}}{X_{plan}}$$

⁵⁸ Where X means expenditure at the CI level (sum of expenditure of Interreg) and x expenditure at programme level. If the IM equals or is close to one, the expenditure for the respective code is normal. Higher deviation, e.g. less than 0.75 or more than 1.5 would suggest a further analysis of the underlying reasons (notably for codes of intervention that are of particular importance under INTERREG).

Annex 1.4 Financial implementation: programme and measure: compared to elapsed time

Financial implementation: Programme and measure: compared to elapsed time



Annex 2 Related to the effectiveness analysis (chapter 2.2)

Annex 2.1 Monitoring indicators at the priority level and interim results

Monitoring indicators at the priority level and interim results

Priority 1: Economic Development

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Quantification (min.)</i>
Financial involvement of SME of the projects	20%
Projects for cross-border place marketing and business clusters	5
Projects in agriculture and tourism	2
Projects promoting an integrated labour market and equal opportunity	2
Projects in the field of university co-operation and technology transfer	2

Auxiliary qualitative indicators

Develop new markets
Improvement of environmental standards in business
Increased satisfaction with counselling and cross-border services
Variety of themes of cross-border exchange of experiences

Priority 2: Environment and spatial development

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Quantification</i>
Spatial layout plans realised	5
Studies for joint use of infrastructure	5
Studies for improvement of living conditions and the environmental situation	3
Public cross-border transport	Increase of frequency and capacity

Auxiliary qualitative indicators

Improvement of climate, water soil and habitat quality
Sufficiency of legal and administrative foundation for joint spatial planning
Acceptance and awareness building
Improvement of supply of public utilities (power, water etc.)

Priority 3: Socio-cultural development

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Quantification</i>
Events or festivals with sustainable impact	5
Cross-border networks	5
Projects on innovation transfer	3
Projects for co-operation in education and training	3
Projects for civic involvement	3
Number, origin and gender of participants of cross-border courses or event	n.a.

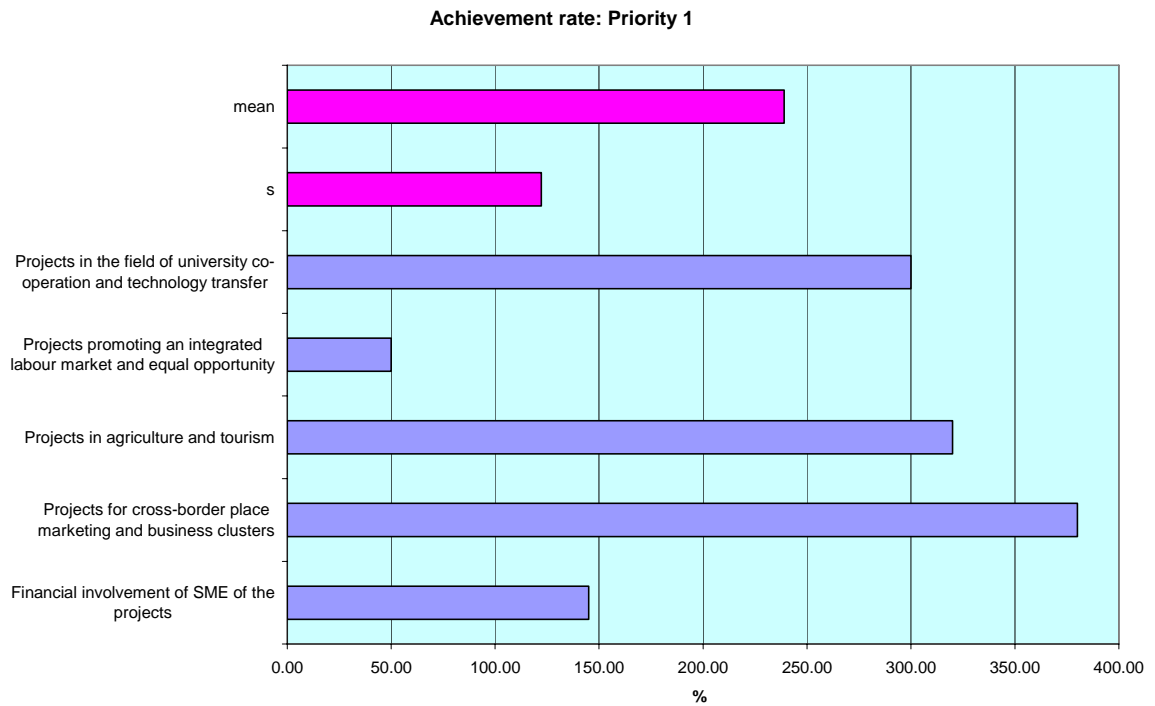
Auxilliary qualitative indicators

Visibility of support opportunities in the public and in the media

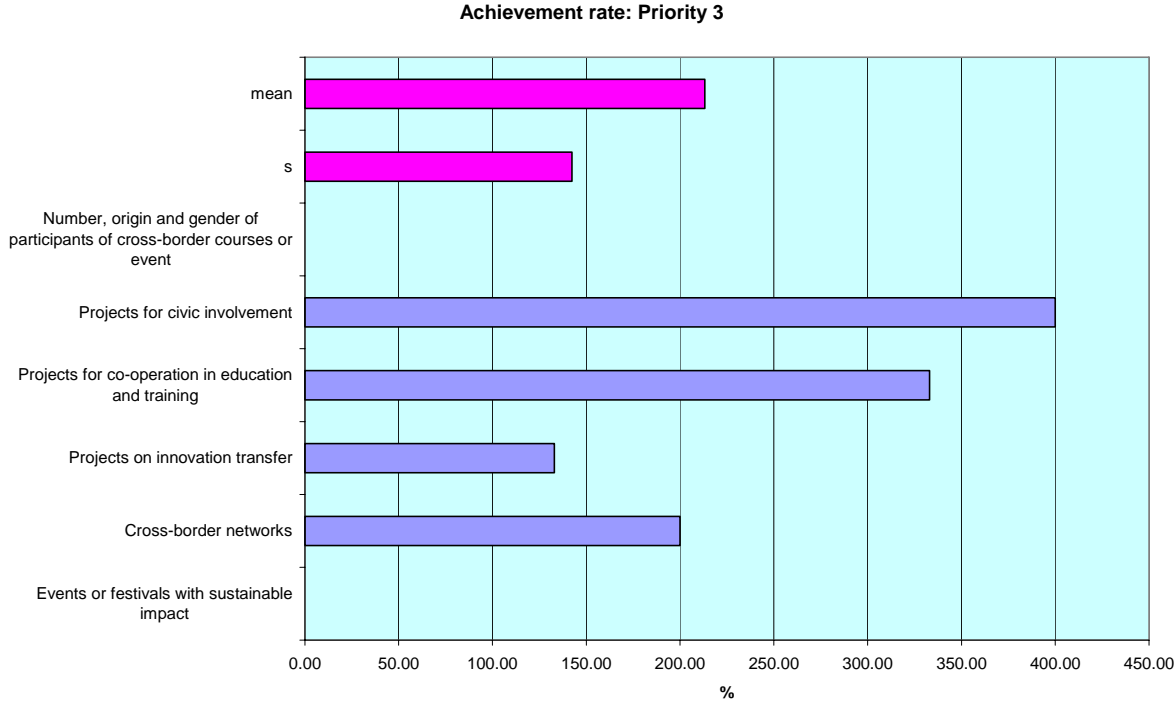
Variety of exchange of experience

Level of institutional formation of cross-border co-operation

Visibility of the Interreg programme in the region



Source CIP



Source of the data: Updated mid-term evaluation; own calculation

Annex 3 Related to the project analysis (chapter 2.3)

Annex 3.1 Project background information

Project study 1: Kulturregion Untersee (Promotion of cultural heritage and tourism in lower Bodensee)

Date and time of Interview: Friday 27.02.2009 10:00-11:15 (via telephone)

Name of interviewee: Frau Lucia Kamp, Tourismus Untersee e.V.

I. General Project information

Name of the Project: Kulturregion Untersee (Promotion of cultural heritage and tourism in lower Bodensee= Lake Constance)

Measure: Service Industry and Tourism

Priority topic(s): Economic Development, Human Resources and Institution Building

Duration:2003-2008

Type of project according to COM Communication 28 April, 2000: Increasing human and institutional potential

Intended results: Qualitative Improvement of cultural tourism and cross-border cultural activities between Germany and Switzerland. Furthermore promotion of the transnational circulation of cultural and tourism output; and fostering the intercultural communication. Ultimately, sustainable cross border cooperation among the regional tourism industries and project partners.

Cost and co-funding: Total costs: 817.747,00€ – EU Funds 269.214,00 € - Interreg funds Switzerland: 91.180,00 €

Lead partner and partners:

Tourismus Untersee e.V.

Lucia Kamp
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Partners:

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Gemeinde Allensbach, Germany
Stadt Radolfzell, Germany
Gemeinde Moos, Germany
Gemeinde Gaienhofen, Germany
Gemeinde Öhningen, Germany
Verkehrsverein Armatingen, Germany
Stadt Stein am Rhein, Switzerland
Stadt Steckborn, Switzerland
Gemeinde Berlingen, Switzerland
Napoleon -Museum Arenenberg, Switzerland
Gemeinde Gottlieben, Switzerland

Project study 2: Internationale Schule Rheintal (International School Rhine Valley) (ISR)

Date and time of Interview: Tuesday 10.03.2009 , 10:00- 11:00 (via telephone)
Name of interviewee: .Mr. Heiner Graf

I. General Project information

Name of the Project: Internationale Schule Rheintal (ISR) (International School Rheintal)

Measure: Place management

Priority topic(s): Economic Development

Duration: 2001 - 2007

Type of project according to COM Communication 28 April, 2000: Sharing human resources and facilities for research, technological development, education, culture and health

Intended results: provision of a high quality education in English language for students from Pre-School to Grade 12. Provision of a balanced program of instruction, which is designed to meet the intellectual, physical, social and emotional needs of the child. Furthermore to offer a child-centred, welcoming environment which fosters an enjoyment of learning and where student achievements are celebrated;

Cost and co-funding: Total costs 874.450 € (EU funds 99.250 € - Interreg funds Switzerland 198.803 € - Funds Liechtenstein 139.038 €)

Lead partner and partners:

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Project study 3: DACH +

Date and time of Interview: Thursday 12.03.2009, 14:00 – 17.00 (face-to-face interview)

Name of interviewee: Mr. Karl Heinz Hoffmann-Bohner

I. General Project information

Name of the Project: DACH+ Raumentwicklung im Grenzraum Deutschland - Österreich - Schweiz – Liechtenstein (DACH + = Spatial Development in the Border region Germany – Austria –Switzerland – Liechtenstein)

Measure: Raumplanung (Spatial planning)

Priority topic(s): Umwelt- und Raumentwicklung (Environmental and spatial development)

Duration: 2004 - 2008

Type of project according to COM Communication 28 April, 2000: Promoting urban, rural and coastal development

Intended results: The main objective of the project is to develop a conceptual and technical basis for a sustainable cross-border Spatial planning and development. This approach shall facilitate the framework conditions for a further development of the existing economic potentials in the four regions across the borders. In particular, the four regions retain a distinguish quality of natural and cultural resources, which are of paramount importance for the development of the tourism sector. The establishment of an information exchange platform and a data bank for the collection and processing of data on spatial planning and development constitute two central issues of the project. The technical data shall mainly focus on:

- (a) Transportation planning,
- (b) Settlement planning and
- (c) Cultural landscape planning.

Cost and co-funding: Total costs: 800.000,00 Euro (EU-Funds 200.000,00 Euro; INTERREG-Funds Switzerland 75.000,00 Euro; Funds Liechtenstein 25.000,00 Euro)

Lead partner:

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Projektpartner

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Wirtschaftsministerium Baden-Württemberg

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Region Bodensee-Oberschwaben

Region Bodensee-Oberschwaben

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Project study 4: Creative Industries

Date and time of Interview: Wednesday 25.02.2009, 10:00 – 11:30 (via telephone)

Name of interviewee: Mr. Michael Mahl, Wirtschaftsförderungsgesellschaft Region Friedrichshafen mbH

I. General Project information

Name of the Project: Creative Industries Bodensee

Measure: Place management

Priority topic(s): Economic Development

Type of project according to COM Communication 28 April, 2000: Encouraging entrepreneurship

Duration: 28.11.2005 – 30.06. 2008

Intended results: Establishment of a sustainable new cross-border economic field "Creative Industries". The dissemination and exchange of innovative and creative knowledge and information across the borders shall contribute to the establishment of sustainable economic relationships. The implementation of regional exhibitions and conferences shall substantially facilitate the realization of the project..

Cost and co-funding: Total costs: 1.069.150,00 € - EU Funds: 228.916,00 €.

The contract has been changed: Co-financing of partners: 457.924 €; the revenues were also changed: 305.281 €

Lead partner and partners:

Wirtschaftsförderungsgesellschaft Region Friedrichshafen mbH

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Wirtschafts-Standort Vorarlberg GmbH (WISTO)

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Telefon: +43 (0) 55 72 / 552 52-0, F. DW 6
E-Mail: wisto@wisto.at

Project study 5: Euregio Adipositas

Date and time of Interview: Tuesday 10.03.2009, 11:00 – 12:00 (via telephone)

Name of interviewee: .PD Dr. Med. Andreas Artlich

I. General Project information

Name of the Project: Euregio Adipositas

Measure: Health and Social Affairs

Priority topic(s): Socio-cultural development

Type of project according to COM Communication 28 April, 2000: Promoting Integration of the labour market and social inclusion

Duration: 2003 - 2008

Intended results: Establishment of a cross-border competence Centre for the prevention and treatment of Adipositas. The centre shall conduct courses and further training seminars on the prevention of Adipositas for medical personnel and health professionals involved in the healthcare sector to acquire more competency in this field.

Cost and co-funding: Total costs: 1.502,000 € – (EU Funds: 637,000 € - Interreg Funds Switzerland: 38,000 €)

Lead partner and partners:

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Fax +49-751-87-3257
E-mail andreas.artlich@oberschwabenklinik.de
Internet <http://www.oberschwabenklinik.de>

Project partners

- Fachklinik Prinzregent Luitpold für Kinder und Jugendliche, Scheidegg der Katholischen Jugendfürsorge e.V. der Diözese Augsburg
- Arbeitskreis für Vorsorge- und Sozialmedizin (AKS) Bregenz
- Ostschweizer Kantone: Ostschweizer Kinderspital und Zentrum für Prävention (ZEPRA), Gesundheitsdepartement, St. Gallen
- Landkreis Lindau (B)

Annex 4 Related to the taxonomic analysis (chapter 2.4)

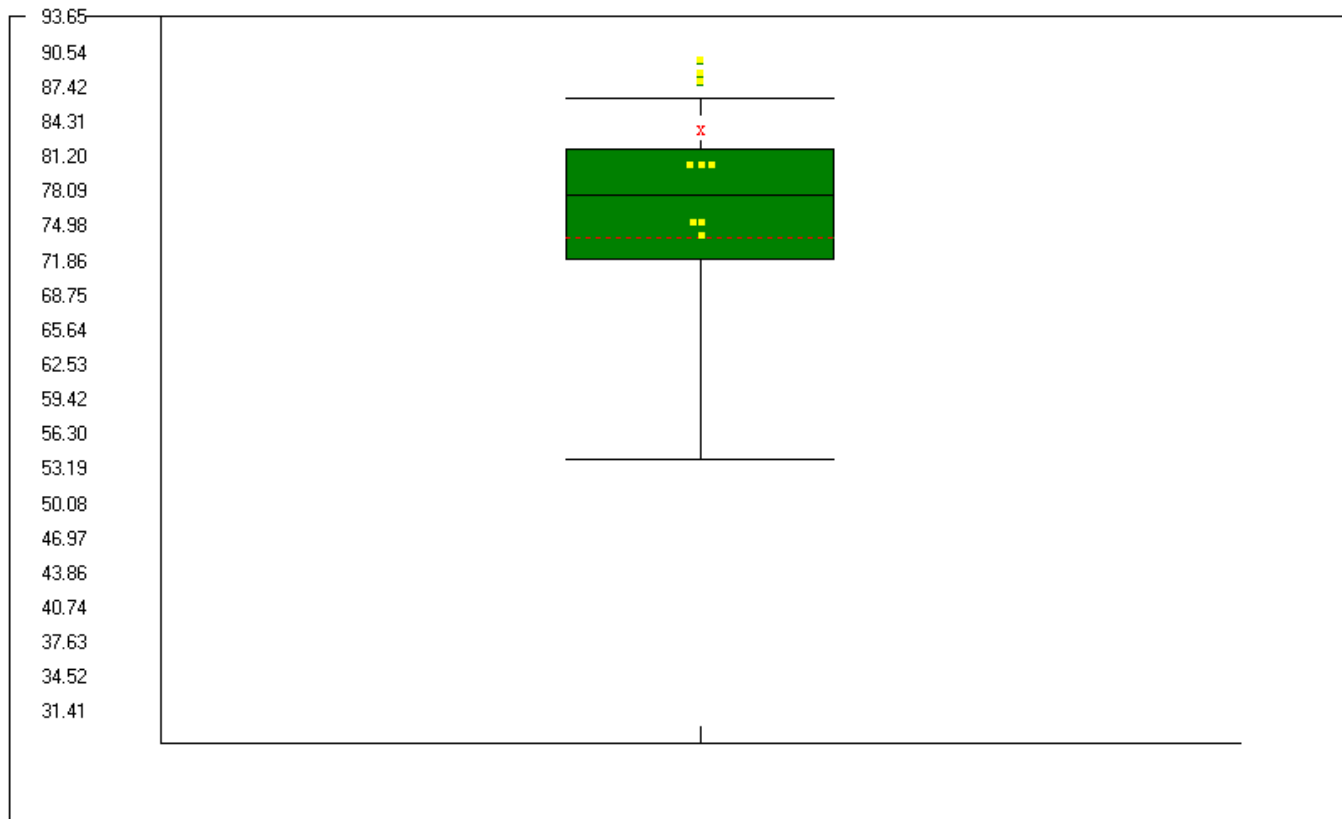
Annex 4.1 Labels of sub-indicators of the “real rate”and the historical criterion

Overview Table 4		
Main Criteria	Sub-criteria	Sub-indicators (SI)
1. Historical Criterion:	1.1: "Duration of already existing cross-border / transnational / interregional co-operation".	SI 1: Number of years the structured and visible cross-border / transnational / interregional co-operation exists within parts or all of the programme area (quantitative).
	1.2: "Existence of directly applicable legal instruments that can be used by territorial authorities in the context of cross-border / transnational / interregional co-operation".	SI 2: Nature & quality of the directly applicable legal instrument that can be used for cross-border / transnational / interregional co-operation within parts or all of the programme area (qualitative).
	1.3: "Existence of permanent cross-border / transnational / interregional co-operation structures that are established between territorial authorities".	SI 3: Nature & quality of existing permanent cross-border / transnational / interregional co-operation structures established between territorial authorities that operate in parts or all of the programme area (qualitative).
2. INTERREG III-related Criterion:	2.1: "How programme needs were identified & to what extent this process was joint".	SI 4: Nature and quality of the information sources used to identify shared needs / problems & range of key stakeholders (i.e. central/regional/local public administrations; socio-economic organizations; NGOs etc) involved in the needs / problems identification process (qualitative).
	2.2: "Relevance / appropriateness of the initial programme strategy".	SI 5: Extent to which the explicit programme objectives did address the needs / problems prevailing in the co-operation area & extent to which the initial priority-level financial allocations did adequately reflected their respective importance (qualitative).
3. INTERREG III-related Criterion:	3.1: "Scope and depth of the strategic partnership put in place at programme-level".	SI 6: Range of actors represented on the Programme Monitoring Committee and extent of their formal powers in the strategic-level decision making process (qualitative).
	3.2: "Nature and quality of shared management structures at programme-level".	SI 7: Extent to which the overall programme management structure is truly joint (i.e. Managing Authority, Paying Authority & joint bank account, Joint Technical Secretariat, other structures providing support to projects) and is – at the same time – characterised by a decentralised delivery of the related tasks (qualitative).
	3.3: "Quality of the joint day-to-day programme management process".	SI 8: Effects of a non-existence / existence of conventions, protocols or agreements concluded between principal programme partners on the joint day-to-day programme management process (qualitative).
	4.1: "The location of projects within the programme".	SI 9: Extent to which the actual "ERDF-demand of approved projects" matched the initial "ERDF-funding supply" at the level of the various programme priorities (quantitative).
	4.2: "The location of projects within the programme area".	SI 10: Share of programme NUTS 3 areas hosting one or more of the Lead Partners / Main Partners involved in all approved projects (quantitative).
	4.3: "Degree of complexity / sophistication of co-operation actions, degree of experimentation, level of ambition".	SI 11: Extent to which the approved projects have realised all of the following project activities (quantitative): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A mutual exchange of experience on the project's themes. • A joint development of policy strategies, policy instruments and other policy support tools. • Individual pilot projects (always realised by one project partner) and /or joint pilot projects (always realised by more than one project partner), which tested or applied joint outcomes and generated tangible cross-border, transnational, or interregional results.
	5.1: "The relative importance of joint projects / operations in the context of overall project-level co-operation	SI 12: The number of joint projects / operations approved as compared to the total number of projects approved under the programme (quantitative).

	realised under the programme”.	
		SI 13: The number of partners directly involved in joint projects / operations as compared to the total number of partners directly involved in all projects approved under the programme (quantitative).
	5.2: “The relative financial importance of joint projects / operations within the programme”.	SI 14: The total cost volume of joint projects / operations as compared to the grand total cost volume of all approved projects (quantitative).
		SI 15: The volume of ERDF-funding allocated to joint projects / operations as compared to the grand total volume of ERDF-funding allocated to all approved projects (quantitative).
	5.3: “The relative importance of joint projects / operations in addressing major needs / problems prevailing in the programme area”.	SI 16: The total cost volume of joint projects / operations approved under the two financially most important programme priorities as compared to the grand total cost volume of all projects approved under these two priorities (quantitative).
		SI 17: The volume of ERDF-funding allocated joint projects / operations approved under the two financially most important programme priorities as compared to the grand total volume of ERDF-funding allocated to all projects approved under these two priorities (quantitative).

Annex 4.2 The “Real Rate”: position of the programme and the cluster in the overall distribution

RED: mean, BLACK: median, BOX: 25th to 75th percentile, WISKERS: 10th and 90th percentile



(red cross: ABH, yellow dots: other programmes of the cluster)