

# th CONFERENCE on the Evaluation of EU Cohesion Policy

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## Shaping Transitions with Evidence



### Mid-term Evaluation of the Cooperation Programme Interreg V-A Slovakia – Austria



Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic (since 1st October 2020)  
Ministry of Investments, Regional Development and Informatization of the Slovak Republic

#### FUND COVERED

► ERDF

#### PROGRAMMING PERIOD

► 2014-2020

#### PROGRAMME COVERED

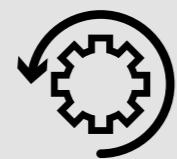
► Interreg V-A Slovakia - Austria

#### THEMATIC OBJECTIVES

- TO1. Research and innovation
- TO6. Environment and resource efficiency
- TO7. Transport and energy networks
- TO11. Efficient public administration

#### TYPE OF EVALUATION

► Process/formative



#### YEAR OF COMPLETION

► 2020

#### MAIN OBJECTIVES

The aim of the evaluation was to assess the programme outputs, its impact on the programme territory and need for a revision of the Programme, while examining possibilities for reducing the administrative burden.

#### METHODOLOGY USED

A non-experimental evaluation design was applied to answer the purely descriptive evaluation questions. Both, quantitative and qualitative methodological tools were applied.

#### DATA SOURCES

Interviews with beneficiaries and project web pages, programming documents and guidelines, programme monitoring system, statistics.

#### MAIN FINDINGS

Among the factors that slowed down the implementation of the Programme were:

- differences in legal frameworks, and broad management and administration processes between Slovakia's and Austria's authorities
- public procurement processes
- complicated and time consuming project tasks (e.g. bilingual preparation of the project documents).

Further simplification and assistance could encourage future applicants to submit an application and form broader network of partners. It is recommended to provide the applicants with sample applications; checklists; "dictionaries" with clear definitions of the basic terms, and examples of (non) eligible expenses; automatic announcement of changes/updates of documents; less documentation required at the application stage; and training for the applicants.

To communicate the results of the Programme that provides support in four very different areas – more targeted communication plan and use of current forms of communication should be utilized.

It was repeatedly expressed that the small projects fund is a tool with significant contribution to the visibility of the cross-border programmes.

#### CONCLUSIONS

For the next programming period – focus on the programme intervention logic and proper determination of relevant output and result indicators including their baseline and target values, and on preparatory work of any large-scale investment project. Unified management system of ESIF, if it's present in the country, should not hamper unique features of cross-border programmes. New monitoring system should enable fully electronic administration of the Programme. The communication activities should focus on modern approaches with a professional support during the whole programming period.

#### SK-AT cooperation programme 2014-2020 ("Interreg V-A Slovakia-Austria") Improve frameworks and policies and deliver concrete solutions

PA 1 Contributing to a smart cross-border region (TO 1)

1.1 Strengthen collaboration in the innovation system (IP 1b)

1.2 Improve higher education and lifelong learning (IP 1b)

PA 2 – Fostering natural and cultural heritage and biodiversity (TO 6)

2.1 Foster natural and cultural heritage valorisation (IP 6c)

2.2 Foster restoration and management of ecological corridors (IP 6d)

PA 3 – Supporting sustainable transport solutions (TO 7)

3.1 Support environmentally-friendly transport solutions (IP 7c)

PA 4 – Strengthening cross-border governance and institutional cooperation (TO 11)

4.1 Strengthen institutional cooperation (IP 11)

4.2 Strengthen the cooperation between educational institutions (IP 11)

PA 5 – Technical Assistance

5.1 Efficient & smooth implementation of the cooperation programme