Support in drafting the Interreg Alpine Space Programme 2021 – 2027

WP1: Analysis of cooperation area and definition of a programme strategy

Task T1.1: First analysis of cooperation area

Activity: Deepening the analysis of the various documents and studies relevant for the cooperation area and the ongoing programme period including existing structures and procedures like EUSALP, Arge Alp and the Alpine Convention

Input Paper 1: Analysis of literature

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Content

Abbreviations:

AC	Alpine Convention
ASP	Alpine Space Programme
CF	Cohesion Fund
CLLD	Community Led Local Development
CP	Cooperation Programme
EC	European Commission
EARDF	European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development
EMFF	European Maritime and Fisheries Fund
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESF	European Social Fund
ESI	European Structural and Investement Funds
ESPON	European Spatial Obersvatory Network for Territorial Development and Cohesion
ETC	European Transnational Cooperation
EU	European Union
EUSALP	EU-Strategy for the Alpine Region
EUSALP-EB	EU-Strategy for the Alpine Region – Executive Board
Fig.	Figure
FLC	First Level Control
GI	Green Infrastructure
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ISO	Interreg specific objectives
JTS	Joint Technical Secretariat
LP	Lead Partner
MA	Managing Authority
MRS	Macro-regional strategies
MS	Member State
PA	Policy Area (EUSALP)
PA	Priority Axis (Alpine Space Programme 2014-2020)
PO	Policy Objective
TEN	Trans-European Networks
TF	Task Force
TFEU	Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union

ToR	Terms of Reference
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SGEIs	Services of general economic interest
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprise
SWOT	Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats
WP	Work Package

1. Introduction: Input-paper 1 based on literature analysis

The first step of work package 1 (Analysis of the cooperation area and definition of a programme strategy) consists of Task T1.1: The first analysis of the cooperation area. We prepared a **first "Input-paper"** by screening various documents and studies relevant for the cooperation area and the ongoing programme period, considering existing structures and procedures like EUSALP, Arge Alp and the Alpine Convention.

The Input-paper comprises the outcomes of this first desk-research of relevant literature. The chapters of the input paper follow the content foreseen by the draft regulation for the future Interreg programmes - as each Interreg programme shall set out: (COM(2018) 374 final, Art 17):

a) the programme area (including a map thereof as a separate document);

b) a summary of the main joint challenges, taking into account:

(i) Economic, social and territorial disparities;

(ii) Joint investment needs and complementarity with other forms of support;

(iii) Lessons learnt from past experience;

(iv) Macro-regional strategies and sea-basin strategies where the programme area as a whole or partially is covered by one or more strategies.

The Input-paper gives a **first overview** of the **above mentioned challenges**. The structure follows the **key-points** listed under point b) of the draft-proposal.

Each chapter starts with a short presentation of the main findings and leads to conclusions and/or recommendations (with relevance for the strategy) as well as **questions we propose to discuss at the TF-meeting on 24 June 2019.**

The Input-paper should be viewed as a **« rolling » or «learning document»** which evolves and will be deepened through the working process. Quotation will also be harmonized within a next working step.

As **annex we provide a "reader"** containing all the results and texts from the desk research in order to enable transparency and traceability.

2. Joint challenges (and opportunities) based on recent megatrends

Several studies have described ongoing meta- and megatreands that are also relevant for the Alpine area (see Horx 2011, EC Communication 2015, Lückge 2018, ESPON Alps 2050).

Meta-trends are long term development trends that have impacts on all spheres of life. Relevant meta-trends of the past were e.g. electrification and motorisation. Relevant meta-trends of today are e.g. climate change and digitization. Globalisation has been a meta-trend throughout the history of humankind. **Mega-trends** are development trends that are difficult to influence, too. They are supported or accelerated by metatrends and have different spatial and social impacts. Different to meta- and megatrends, **trends** are predictable in the short and medium term and have less spatial and social impacts.

The most relevant ongoing meta- and megatrends are:

- **Globalisation** has been mainly driven by communication and transport technologies, costs for trans-actions (trade regulations and tariffs), the availability of energy and energy costs. Since the industrial revolution, several technological innovations have taken place. Climate change and digitization are supposed to introduce the next phase of globalisation.
- **Climate change** is a global trend with highly relevant – and often uncertain – impacts on types of ecosystems, territories and economic sectors. As we know from numerous research work, the Alps are even more affected by climate change than lowlands. The societal reaction to climate change is twofold: On the one hand societies try to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions (mitigation), on the other hand they try to adapt to changing climate conditions. The tasks of the public sector are: implement different kinds of regulations triggering GHG reduction, support basic and applied research, develop mitigation and adaptation strategies and deal with the damages caused by climate change.
- **Digitization** is a global and far reaching technology-driven transition that is supposed to change our daily life as well as working procedures, mobility, industrial production as well as services and social interaction among individuals but also among groups and organisations. The digitization trend is mainly driven by the private sector, whereas public bodies have the task to define framework conditions, regulations, financing and basic research, ensure safety and personal integrity, social inclusion and justice concerning the access to network infrastructures in areas that are not competitive on the market.
- **Urbanisation** is a phenomenon with a global dimension. In the year 1800 only 10% of Europeans lived in cities, in 2017 it were 75%. This trend also affects the Alps and will continue. It will lead on the one hand to shrinking rural areas on the one hand and to growing urbanised areas on the other hand. One of the main challenges for the public sector is on the one hand to ensure the availability of services of general interest in peripheral areas and on the other hand to manage growth and conflicting land use interests in urbanised regions. This requires cross-sectoral approaches and strategies.
- **Acceleration of transport and communication** has been a constant trend in human history. It is mainly driven by societal and technical innovation (invention of the wheel, steam engine, railway, combustion engine, aviation, high speed trains, light-wave cable etc.). Drones, hyperloops and autonomous driving are introducing the next steps of innovation. Acceleration has significantly influenced trade, transport and settlement patterns with far reaching spatial impacts. The

tasks of the public sector are to provide transport and communication infrastructure and to define legal and financial conditions for the use of the infrastructure provided.

» **Demographic change** has been a key factor for the development of societies and economy. It is mainly based on three elements: birth rate, death rate and migration. Actually Alpine societies are facing slight increase of the overall population combined with constant ageing. In addition, the slight population growth in the Alps is mainly based on immigration from non-Alpine countries. Inside the Alpine areas a discrepancy between (mostly urban) areas with population growth and (mostly rural) areas with decrease of population can be observed. The main challenge for the public sector is to provide social services that correspond to the demographic change.

» **Societal change** goes hand in hand with demographic change: In the recent past, the variety of life concepts and lifestyles in combination with stronger changes in professional careers, working and living places, changing gender roles and age concepts lead to more and more heterogenous, pluralistic society. Single households, patchwork families, mobile teleworkers, people with more than one living place, population shift between day and night in commuter municipalities have changed local societies in urban as well as in rural contexts leading from strong local identities to multiple identities of a multi-local society. This change has impacts on all spatial levels and entities as well as on economic sectors and asks for integrated strategic approaches. The task of the public sector is to create mechanisms and structures that help to cope with and manage migration and a more and more pluralistic society. One key element is awareness raising and a positive approach towards newcomers.

» **Knowledge based economy:** Technological innovation in combination with mechanisation and automatisation resulted in a structural change from agricultural to industrial and to service oriented economy. Global competition and lower labour costs in many parts of the world leads to a focus on innovation- and knowledge based economies in the western world. Highly specialised education and training of workforce is a prerequisite for successful economic performance also in the Alpine region. Life-long learning as well as the co-operation among enterprises in clusters as well as with research and development are other relevant success factors. The task of the public sector is to provide adequate framework for education and research as well as for co-operation between the different actors. Digitization will lead to a new phase of rationalisation in the service sector.

» **Increasing energy consumption:** The International Energy Agency estimates a global increase of energy consumption by 30% until the year 2040 (IEA 2018). The main driver is Asia (China, Indioa), whereas In Europe a slight decrease is expected. An even higher increase is expected for electricity mainly because of the digitization of economy, households and mobility. The planned energy-transition of European countries leads to an additional shift from fossil energy to renewables with possibly strong impacts on land use and environment, especially in the Alps. The task of the public sector is to define framework conditions enabling and supporting the energy transition from fossil to green energy in an environmentally and socially sustainable way.

» **Leisure society:** An increasing life span and societal wealth have significantly increased the “free time budget” (temporally and financially) of our society and this trend – combined with increasing health awareness – will continue. An increasing number of members of the silver generation will spend free time on their e-bikes, hiking or on city trips in and outside Europe. In the same time the increasing wealth of societies in China, South-East Asia, the Gulf states as well as in Eastern Europe combined with the global impacts of climate change will lead to a significant increase of tourists coming to the Alps in summer and in winter. Effects of over-tourism have already been observed in the last years. The task of the public sector is to create legal,

administrative and financial frameworks to manage tourism offers and demands. Considering the outstanding ecological value of the Alpine area one of the key challenges for public authorities – and also for the tourism sector – will be to support an Alpine wide shift to sustainable tourism.

» **Increasing safety needs:** Safety has become a political issue in the Alpine countries mainly since 2015, when a high number of refugees immigrated. Besides the question of the safety of borders, social safety and especially safety from natural risks have been on the Alpine agenda at latest since climate change has become obvious. The task of the public sector is to provide a framework which enables social, environmental and economic safety while respecting human rights and the integrity and dignity of individuals.

These meta- and mega-trends are highly relevant for the Alpine area and for the next Alpine space programme, also because they are various and hardly predictable, especially with regards to interdependencies and mutual enhancements.

As described by recent research, meta and mega-trends often trigger counter-trends, that lead to interesting constellations with a high innovation potential. Some examples for these counter-trends are:

» "Regionalision", Regional identities and regional branding as a counter-trend to globalisation;

» Slow food, slow regions, "citta slow", well-being and happiness concepts as counter-trends to acceleration and rationalisation.

Matthias Horx summarises this phenomenon as "new synthesis trends":

» Flexitarism: an eating culture that allows meat consumption but does not put meat in the focus of nutrition;

» Glocalisation: a business orientation according to both local and global considerations;

» We-goism: the combination of individual and collective approaches including sharing concepts;

» Down-aging: phenomena related to an increasing life span: society intends to control the aging process and to optimize life in all phases;

» Flexicurity: a welfare state model with a pro-active labour market policy. It intends to combine labour market flexibility in a dynamic economy and security for workers;

» Omline: a lifestyle with a holistic mind-set combining virtual and real-world elements characterised by a highly reflected mindfulness.

In addition to the above meta- and megatrends, the new programme for the Alpine space has to consider the following global and European policy frameworks:

» United Nations "Sustainable Development Goals" ("SDG`s")

» United Nations "Paris Agreement"

» Territorial Agenda of the European Union 2020

» Urban Agenda for the EU

» EU-Cohesion policy

» Other relevant regulations.

3. Economic, social and territorial disparities

3.1. Main findings

3.1.1. Types of disparities

On the one hand we can observe disparities between (larger) areas as a whole (northern and southern Alps, eastern and western Alps), on the other hand there are disparities between different spatial (development) types. Based on the findings of Strategy Development for the Alpine Space (Gloersen et al., 2013) we can distinguish between 5 types of territories associated with typical socio-economic challenges and opportunities:

- Alpine metropolises
- Alpine cities
- Stable or growing rural areas
- Declining and shrinking rural areas
- Tourism areas

A detailed description of this classification can be found in Gloersen et al., 2013, p. 46ff.

A slightly different classification according to more economy-based patterns has been presented by Politechnico di Milano (2018):

- Industrial pattern with 4 sub-types: high tech large firms, high tech SMEs, traditional large firms, traditional SMEs
- Nature based pattern with 2 sub-types: tourism, agriculture
- Urban development with one sub-type: services.

3.1.2. Disparities concerning population and demography

Large scale disparities:

In the Eastern part of the Eastern Alps we can observe a decline in population, whereas in the rest of the Alps there is a low but stable growth of population (see ESPON BRIDGES, final report, p. 29).

The main territorial challenges are connected to demography: metropolises and larger cities are centres of growth while rural areas are differentiated. Better employment/GDP trends can be found in Northern Alps. These regional differences have impacts on the management of settlement growth, on the question how to respond to climate change, how to reduce the fragmentation of ecosystems and how to steer the agricultural transformation (p.2-3, ESPON GRETA).

Disparities related to spatial development types:

The alpine picture is complex: Metropolises and larger cities are almost always the centre of growth trends, whereas patterns in the rural areas more diverse: We can observe stable and even growing

regions e.g. in the South-western Alps)) whereas decline of population can be noticed especially in the eastern Alps e.g. in in Lower Austria and Styria (see ESPON Alps 2050).

The complexity of demographic development patterns is even increased by the combination of diverse and overlapping in- and out-flows of migrants: In general we can find a highly diversified situation for all parts of the Alpine space. We can find an increase of bi-directional (and circuit) migratory flows, negative natural trends, the significance of specific age groups and gender differences in migration movements, length and frequency of movements; Metropolitan places tend to show the most positive values whereas rural patterns are more diverse (see ESPON Alps 2050).

Population densities in the Alpine area may be as high as in some of the European capitals due to the concentration of people in valley bottoms with limited space. In these limited areas – the Permanent Settlement Areas – the average population density reaches 414 people/km2, which is comparable to densely populated areas outside the Alps. Favourable areas may have even much higher densities such as the regions around Grenoble 6,282 people/km2, Lugano 2,097 people/km2, and Innsbruck 1,444 people/km2. This is comparable to European capitals such as Berlin (3,812 people/km2) and Vienna (4,025 people/km2) (see Alpine Convention 2019, RSA6).

In general spatial polarisation is increasing and future development trends indicate that the gap between metropolises and rural areas will become even bigger. Nevertheless we can also observe some opposite trends at small scale level.

Spatial polarisation leads on the one hand to challenges concerning the maintenance of public services, financial systems, and cultural dynamics in peripheral areas. On the other hand the growth phenomena in urbanised areas lead to increasing environmental pressure and land use conflicts.

Conclusions and recommendations with regards to the programme strategy:

- Strategies to reduce spatial polarisation are urgently required. Political action addressing the territorial potentials can make a difference – place based approaches for tourism and economic innovation are just prominent key issues in this context. (see ESPON Alps 2050).
- Differentiated strategies for urbanised areas, stable and declining rural areas as well as tourism areas help to ensure accessibility and maintain public services in peripheral areas, as well as to valorise the potentials of urbanised areas: sustainable mobility, energy efficiency, innovation, education and research.
- Alpine strategies have to cope with increasing migration and with increasing social diversity of the Alpine society. Pluralism is an opportunity for the Alps. The programme 2021-2027 should support strategies to increase attractiveness of Alpine regions for newcomers, especially in regions with declining population.

3.1.3. Disparities concerning economic development

Large scale disparities:

The economic performance of the Alpine region is rather strong. Most indicators, including GDP per capita, are above European average (Alps 2050). We can observe a North-South divide: the trends in employment and in GDP (economic strength) have developed much more positive on the Northern side of the Alps 2050 space than on the Southern side. This refers to the post 2008 economic crisis that (most regions of) Germany, Switzerland, Liechtenstein and Austria mastered quicker and with less frictions than the Italian and Slovenian regions. A similar North-South divide is given in the field of innovation patterns (EPO data) (ESPON Alps 2050).

Because of the economic crisis after 2008, the long-term GDP growth rate has declined in some regions of Italy. In most Alpine regions, the GDP growth rate has slightly increased by 1-4% in real terms as an annual average for the period 2001-2011 (ESPON & BBSR 2014, p. 40). A more detailed picture is delivered by a composite benchmark index of the ESPON programme, which takes into account seven of the 14 Lisbon indicators. These consider the areas of employment, innovation and research, economic reform, social cohesion and the environment. GDP per capita has dropped particularly in the French and Italian parts of the Alps. However, Lisbon-performance in most Alpine countries is above or significantly above the European average (cf. Figure 1.1.3-4) (Alpine Convention 2019, RSA 6).

Having a closer look at the changes in recent years caused by the economic crisis, it is interesting to see which shares the various economic branches have in the Alpine countries compared to EU averages. According to the results of the ESPON atlas, parts of the German, Italian and Slovenian Alpine areas have a high share in manufacturing and agricultural economy whereas in Austria construction and retail dominate. France and Switzerland are close to the EU average with an overrepresentation of public services (Alpine Convention 2019, RSA 6).

We can also observe the East-West gradient of the share of labour in the agricultural sector: It is the highest in the Eastern Austrian and in the Slovenian regions (in both cases relevant for all regions except capital regions).

Also national differences are relevant, at least on the NUTS3 level. In other words: Belonging to a specific nation-state determines the economic level and path to a high extent. The question, if a region is situated in the inner-Alpine or pre-Alpine area (i.e. AC or EUSALP) seems much less decisive.

The Alpine Region is home to global key players in the field of R&I, offering a strong potential for further global development. There are notable concentrations of small and medium-size enterprises (SMEs) in different parts of the Region, and many of them are organised in clusters, building up a territorial economy which offers a solid basis for innovation based on smart specialisation strategies and allows the companies to become more competitive in areas of particular relevance to the Region (such as energy and green technologies, mechatronics and engineering; chemistry and new materials, and ICT) (see ESPON Alps 2050).

Besides the natural conditions, structural limitations for the economy exist in some areas of the Alps i.a. due to limited accessibility from and within the Alpine area to urban centres and to small and remote settlements, market barriers for small or new companies, limited availability of knowledge or a limited supply for consumers. These conditions require integrative approaches for sustainable devel-

opment and form a framework that predestines the Alps as a pilot area for a Green Economy approach (Alpine Convention 2019, RSA 6).

SME´s: The Alpine area is characterized by SMEs and micro enterprises. In CH and DE we can also find a relevant share of large enterprises. In CH, DE and FR there is a sectoral focus on knowledge economy and ICT (related to industry and services). CH and IT show diverse sectoral foci. SI has a strong industrial focus and AT a focus on services/tourism (ESPON SME, maps p.29). Generally there is a diverse situation in relation to SMEs and ways of supporting them, differing between regions and countries (specific info on disparities between alpine countries could be picked from the report). All in all there is a good basis for SME´s also because the Alps are a relatively well performing region (ESPON SME).

Innovation: There are few extremely highly innovative regions lacking qualified human capital which are scattered around-synergic knowledge creation could take place from northern/western parts where qualified human capital is present.
Creators of knowledge" (high tech firms) are concentrated in southern Germany and some in northern Italy (e.g. Monza, Brianza) as well as in Upper Austria (e.g. Steyr) and Styria, potential appliers of this knowledge are in northern IT and DE. (p.35). Creators of knowledge in the food sector can be found in in DE (few in Aargau and Steyr) and low performing in agriculture and tourism in AT, FR and IT. Regions with agri and touristic patterns and branding capacity and presence of SMEs: There is a north-south divide (see Politechnico di Milano 2018, Maps 11-13).

As regards **innovation and SMEs** the Alpine region faces some limitations relating to inter-Alpine research and innovation cooperation, the uptake of existing research and innovation (R&I) results, spatially fragmented local markets, social disparities in innovation, funding opportunities, information and communication technologies, strong migration from rural areas due to poor infrastructure availability and the capitalisation of applied research results (see ESPON Alps 2050).

Innovation can be interpreted as the total of research and development expenditures within a statistical unit, independent of the source of funds, in relation to GDP (total intramural expenditures). ESPON data (cf. Figure 1.1.3-6) show EU average values for large parts of the Alpine Space area and for the Alpine Convention area. In some areas the values are even clearly above average (> 3% of GDP). The employment rate in knowledge-intensive services (cf. Figure 1.1.3-7) in the southern part of the Alpine Convention area is lower than in the northern and north-western parts (Alpine Convention 2019, RSA 6, p. 28).

Tourism intensity based on overnight stays shows a 'central-peripheral pattern': the gradient goes from the (inner-Alpine) centre to the 'periphery' of the Alps 2050 space. The relative importance of the tourism economy is very high in the inner Alpine areas (comprising destinations like Graubünden, Tyrol, Southern Tyrol etc.). This shows the role of the Alpine massif as a touristic hot spot with much economic potential and also the potential to threat. The region is a key destination for tourism, especially in the winter, but tourists are very unevenly spread across the Region (see ESPON Alps 2050). The economy of only 10% of alpine municipalities is mainly based on tourism (based on AC, 2013).

Agriculture and forestry. Products, including mountain products and quality products, and services based on agriculture and forestry offer significant potential (e.g. for the bioeconomy) throughout the value chain (including for example the pharmaceutical and wooden building sector). Moving higher up in the value chain provides opportunities for rural and urban parts of the region to work together.

Farmers contribute to sustainable land management and provide for 'ecosystem services' (see ESPON Alps 2050).

In the **communication-commercialisation filière** and small and medium enterprises in agriculture and tourism services there is a north-south divide: Northern regions are more characterized by branding capacity and southern regions by the heavy presence of SMEs without branding activity (p.6). In tourism, branding capacities are concentrated in the centre of the macro-region, especially regions in the south-western areas could benefit from learning (p.6). Agricultural areas with branding of their geographical indication/denomination of origin can be observed especially in the central and eastern parts of the Alps (Politechnico di Milano (2018).

Employment in the Alpine area is generally at a high level compared to the 2012 European employment rates (cf. ESPON & BBSR 2014). A detailed look at the Alpine Convention area (cf. Figure 1.1.3-1) reveals lower employment rates for areas such as the south-eastern French and south-western Italian Alps, as well as the Italian-Slovenian border. The unemployment rate ranges from 2.5% in Liechtenstein to 11.2% in the Slovenian Alpine area. With the exception of Slovenia, the average unemployment rate is lower in the Alps than in the country as a whole. In some small inner Alpine areas, unemployment rates exceed 20%. The youth unemployment rate is higher in the southern fringe of the Alpine Convention area (Alpine Convention 2019, RSA 6).

The **GDP** distribution per capita in the Alpine Convention area is available at NUTS 3 level and shows disparities particularly between the central parts of the Alps and the eastern and western parts, even within a single country. The southern parts of the Italian Alps and the central parts of the Austrian and the Swiss Alps have a relatively high GDP per capita (cf. Figure 1.1.3-5) (Alpine Convention 2019, RSA 6). **Comparing GDP and productivity growth** in plain, peri-alpine and alpine EUSALP areas against the EUSALP as a whole we can observe the following phenomena: In plain areas the SME patterns show the highest productivity, tourism the lowest. In peri alpine patterns the highest productivity is with large high-tech and traditional SMEs. The most surprising finding is that industrial patterns have the highest productivity while touristic pattern do not show a significant performance (Politechnico di Milano (2018, p. 20-22).

Conclusions and recommendations with regards to the programme strategy:

- Future Alpine strategies should help to find answers to the following questions: How to ensure the targeting of sustainable development goals? What kind of economic performance is preferred, i.e. what sectors are most preferable, what kind of growth is the objective? How can endogenous potentials be used? How can the current strength of the economic performance be maintained and ensured? What does economic cohesion mean in respect to the Alps 2050 area, i.e. how far should harmonization of regional performance go, and which scale should be used as reference base? (see ESPON Alps 2050).

- Innovation orientation: in order to safeguard the relative economic strength of the region, and in order to enhance sustainability in economic activity, the focus will lie on innovation. This comprises technical R&D, economic post-growth models, pilot projects, social innovation etc. (see ESPON Alps 2050).

- Technological development (digitization) offers new options of SGI provision – medical care via internet, online courses for learning, online communication tools and many more economic, social

and cultural applications. Most relevant questions: highs of investments, acceptance of shifts in infrastructure installations. (see ESPON Alps 2050).

» The development of the tourism sector could be improved through a concerted approach to sustainable and accessible tourism, involving in particular R&I, SMEs and training for the labour force. This could help to improve the geographic and seasonal distribution of the tourism market in the Region, while creating growth and jobs. (see ESPON Alps 2050).

» The Alpine programme should help to strengthen green economy based on key Alpine resources and fostering integrated approaches in agriculture, forestry, tourism, energy and the water sectors. Fostering urban-rural co-operation is a key success factor for Alpine green economy. Circular economy approaches as well as bio-economy van help to pave the way from low carbon to post-carbon economy, from a general "efficiency" approach to approaches that are more oriented on sufficiency.

3.1.4. Transport and accessibility

Transport and connectivity: The Alpine region is a major European crossroad with several transit corridors. Various corridors of the road network are close to saturation and cause serious health issues (noise and air pollution). Major challenges include: **i**ncreasing traffic volumes, the absence of harmonised regulation of transport policies for freight transport and the large proportion of road freight transport. The amount of transported net tons per year has grown at almost all transit corridors, but to a different degree. Corridors of pan-European importance play a major role on all political levels whilst environmental damage is mainly experienced in the transit areas (see ESPON Alps 2050).

Accessibility and Services of General Interest (SGI): The inner-Alpine perimeter shows clearly lower values of accessibility than the pre-Alpine and more urbanized areas. Accessibility is highly relevant for the provision of SGI, which are a key factor for a good quality of life. This question is closely linked to the settlement system: In areas with scattered settlements the provision of SGI is more difficult than in densely settled areas (see ESPON Alps 2050).

Accessibility of remote and depopulating areas is also a challenge in many areas where public transport (mainly local railways) needs to be modernised (ESPON Alps 2050).

Conclusions and recommendations with regards to the programme strategy:

» Alpine strategies should put a focus on sustainable transport on the one hand for links between the Alpine core area and the surrounding regions, to the benefit of both. On the other hand strategies for sustainable transport are also urgently required for inner alpine mobility and for transport in tourism. This is relevant for passenger as well as for freight transport (ESPON Alps 2050).

» Moreover, enhancing multi-modality, combining in particular road and rail, is of high priority. A transnational toll policy might be an important element in this respect (ESPON Alps 2050).

» E-connectivity (especially by high speed internet) at an Alpine scale would also open up new technological opportunities for developing services and decentralising businesses (ESPON Alps 2050).

» Accessibility of SGI should be fostered as a key element of good quality of life.

- The TEN-T has to be completed, including connecting routes, completing a transnational accessibility regime (ESPON Alps 2050).
- The alignment tariff systems is a key requirement for cross border public transport.
- Transport policy has to be closely interwoven with general spatial planning processes. There has to be a clear differentiation of transit flows of high quantities that have to be organised along few corridors that are capable to handle large flows in a way that does not harm environmental quality. Accessibility on the regional and local level have to be closely linked to questions of the settlement system including services of general interest and to economic dynamics. (ESPON Alps 2050).

3.1.5. Energy consumption

- The ESPON Locate project offers some findings concerning disparities and differences concerning energy consumption: In the residential buildings in the Alpine space generally high level of final energy consumption for space heating, hot water and cooling but the demand is decreasing (p.6). High final electricity consumption for appliances and lightning in the residential sector can be observed in FR, CH, AT, lower in DE, IT, SI, the same for service sector differentiated (pp. 8-9). Final energy consumption for road transport is differentiated but high in Western Austria and SI. Final energy consumption for rail is high in AT, IT, FR, lower DE; SI. There are no data for CH (pp. 10—11).
- Share of renewable energy carriers for heating and hot water higher in AT, IT, SI, lower in DE, CH, (p. 13), total share of electricity from renewable sources high in AT, lower in DE, IT, SI, no data for CH low levels of onshore with potential for electricity generation (p.17), solar energy potential differentiated, some potential for hydropower across alpine regions (pp. 19-21) (all ESPON LOCATE).
- Support schemes and European, national and regional policies regarding non-financial barriers to renewable energy and energy efficiency differ across countries and need to be better aligned. The efficiency of existing hydropower plants could be increased, and other renewable energy sources could be considered. Energy efficiency offers opportunities for technology and consulting/engineering investments in low carbon services, helping the Region to develop a leading position in R&D and renewable energy resources led by the growth in climate protection measures to support a shift to low carbon technology. Increased cooperation can help develop future opportunities for the Region as an energy storage space for peak load power, as well as developing instruments and procedures to balance the interests of sustainable energy production and other land use and protection functions. (Alps 2050)

Conclusions and recommendations with regards to the programme strategy:

- The programme should support actions that help to increase energy efficiency in all sectors, especially those who make a step further: from efficiency to more sufficiency oriented approaches.
- The programme should foster actions that strengthen the intelligent use of renewable energy in an ecologically and socially sound manner.
- The programme should support actions dealing with the energy transition and the transition to low carbon and sustainable lifestyles.

» The programme should support alignment in the support schemes and the national regulatory frameworks in the energy sector.

3.1.6. Environment, biodiversity and climate change

Green infrastructure (GI): The Alps have a high potential for Green infrastructures, especially in the Eastern Alps. Interestingly, the Alpine region is also among those with the lowest contribution of protected areas to the total area of potential GI (ESPON GRETA, p.22 final).

Ecosystem services (ES): An obstacle to potential multi-functionality of GI is the elevation of areas and presence of bare rock on the surface (results in low values for most ecosystem services); only SI and part of FR have a highest capability for multi-functionality for policies; rest of region difficult, e.g. in Austria there is large network of protected areas but low capacity to provide ecosystem services. The project also analysed trade-off between different ES and identified some potentials for improvement (ESPON GRETA p.7).

The more urbanised areas play an important role by demanding and using ecosystem services, in particular with regard to water, leisure supply (including second homes), tourism demand, but also clean air, ecological benefits ESPON Alps 2050).

Air quality is poor in many areas, it would be useful to bring transport measures into line with regional sustainable mobility plans, regional air quality plans and national air pollution control programmes to improve coherence between them and increase synergies (ESPON Alps 2050).

Environment, biodiversity and climate change: ESPON Alps 2050 has delivered several relevant results concerning environment, biodiversity and climate change: The share of protected spaces is not necessarily higher in the Alpine Convention area than in lowlands. There are clear differences between national protection regimes: For example, national parks are much more frequently enacted in AT, FR and IT, whereas DE and CH have less national parks which are relatively small in size. Another difference between Alpine countries is the varied implementation path of the EU protection directives that display very different average sizes of protection areas within these countries (going up to 37% protection area in SI). Even if a series of cross-border protection initiatives exists (e.g. Naturpark Nagelfluhkette between Austria and Germany), the potential of cross-border formats is certainly not yet exploited.

Environment and cultural heritage: The Alps are the second largest biodiversity reservoir in Europe after the Mediterranean Sea and one of the most important water towers of Europe. The Region's cultural and historic heritage is also one of its strongest assets. These resources are widely used and there is strong competition for land and water for several purposes.

Climate & climate change: The changes of the (air-)temperature in the Alps 2050 perimeter show the following patterns and characteristics: There are higher increases in annual mean temperature in the inner-Alpine areas than in the area of the spaces beyond the mountain topography. This displays a strong correlation with the morphological picture of the Alps: the higher the mountains, the stronger the increase of temperature (even if the relatively lower temperature rise in the pre-Alpine areas means already considerable adaptation challenges). In particular, the Southern side of the Alpine mountain range is characterized by the highest changes in annual mean temperature, in particular in the Western Alps. This observation shows that in particular the French-Italian, Swiss-Italian and Aus-

trian-Italian border regions are those Alpine regions which are most severely affected by climate change.

Climate change and risk prevention: The Alpine region is highly vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change, and faces a particularly high risk of floods, landslides and changes in water resources. Tourism, agriculture and forestry are among the most vulnerable sectors, directly impacted by global warming and extreme weather events. Given its morphology, less than one fifth of the territory within the Alpine Convention perimeter is suitable for settlements and therefore most human activities are concentrated in valleys, often densely populated, where natural disasters can cause considerable damage. But the damage potential is high also in more rural areas, particularly if they are used intensively for tourism. Moreover, risk and hazard evolve dynamically, especially because of changing climate conditions: this may exacerbate the intensity of hazards and contribute to a shift in hazards-prone areas (Alpine Convention 2019, RSA7, p.9).

Conclusions and recommendations with regards to the programme strategy:

- The programme should support action that strengthens green infrastructure as well as ecosystem services in the Alpine area.
- Ecological fragmentation and the loss of biodiversity in general are key concerns due to the function of the Alps as a biological hotspot. Moderating the demands of protection and development is the key political challenge for the next programme (based on ESPON Alps 2050).
- Obviously, the change of annual mean temperature is representing a common challenge for mountain areas and especially of Alpine regions on the Southern side of the mountain range. Consequently, dealing with climate change impacts expressed through rising temperatures, increase of natural hazards, precipitation changes etc. calls for transnational policies and measures. The relevance of rising temperatures and climate change impacts is not limited to national contexts.
- Better coordinated European, national and regional policies and the early implementation of actions coordinated at macro-regional level, could reduce natural risks.

3.1.7. Governance

There is little material available about “governance disparities” in the Alps. Whereas a relevant number Alpine municipalities and Alpine cities are co-operating in networks like Alliance in the Alps and Alpine town of the year, there are no networks bringing together explicitly rural Alpine areas. Tourism-oriented networks at Alpine level are e.g. Alpine Pearls and Via Alpina. Governance practices differ between Alpine states and Alpine cultures. Conclusions and recommendations with regards to the programme – see chapter 5.2. (“lessons learnt”)

3.2. Questions to be concerned by the Task force members:

- Is something unclear?
- Do you agree with the conclusions?
- Are there any points you disagree with?
- Is some important issue missing?

4. Joint investment needs (and complementarity with other forms of support)

4.1. Main findings

The issue of joint investment needs to be depicted within territorial cohesion programmes as baseline touches large infrastructure investments with EU relevance and EU added value - i.e. large scale infrastructure, which could not be established by a single MS or neighbouring MSs, but has to be established on a transnational scale. Moreover the issue of compatibility with the basic EU rules of free market economy and free movement of goods, services and labour/ persons will have to be taken into consideration. - i.e. mainly in the field of public goods/ services, which help to rectify market distortions.

The findings from the territorial analysis show that the programming area of the Alpine Space programme is comparably well covered with public services. The only indications for investment needs may be found in the following fields:

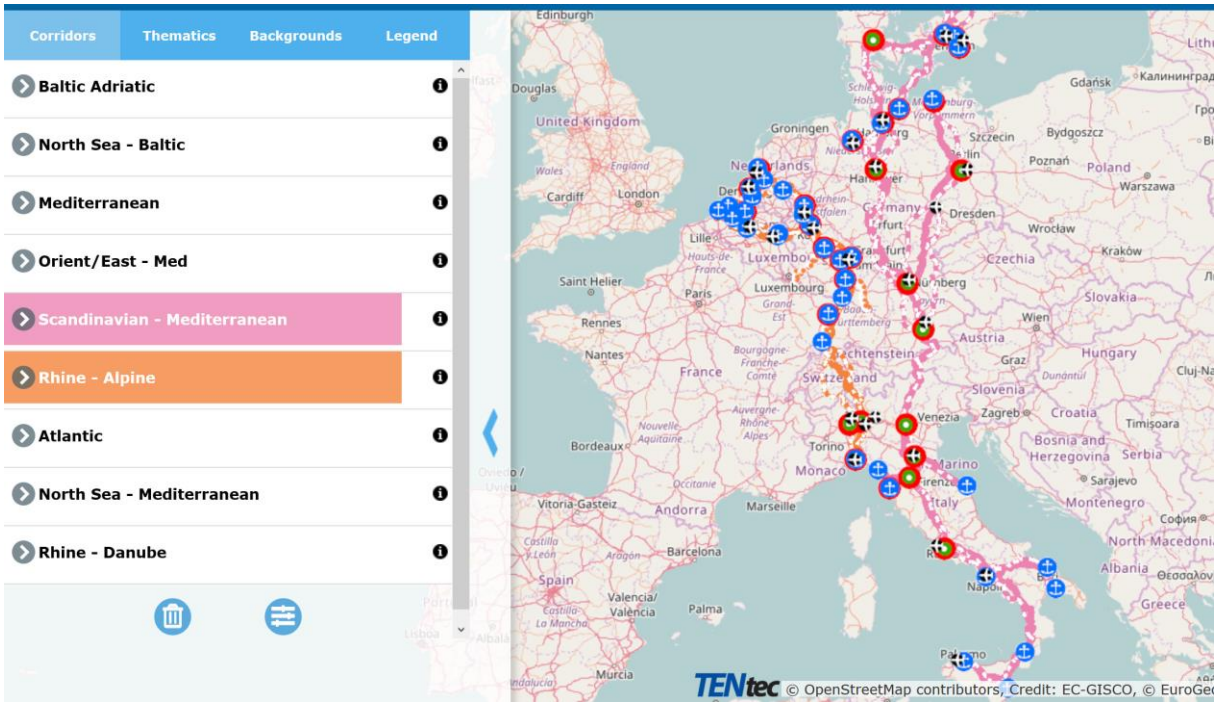
Services of general economic interest (SGEIs) - due to the topography of the area some parts are facing significant demographic change, which is followed by a thinning of public services and thus perpetuating the overall trend of brain drain and net-population loss. The need for investments would be strong across borders in remote alpine regions (valleys). Moreover the seasonality of tourism leads to season dependent living conditions and in some highly attractive tourist destinations to a crowding out of local population due to the increase of land- and real estate prices. This phenomenon also speeds up the thinning of public services (child care, elderly care, MDs)

Transport infrastructure - as pointed out above the Alpine Space area is confronted with significant transit burdens - bottleneck for North-South transit. The overall EU planning foresees the completion of the TEN-T network - for Alpine Space two corridors are specifically relevant (see also TEN-T corridors map below):

1) Rhine-Alpine → is mostly completed and therefore no immediate investment need

2) Scandinavian-Mediterranean → is under construction, but especially the Alpine crossing along the Inn valley is lagging behind - problems of priorisation of the rail corridor between Austria-Germany. The Austrian-Italian rail connection is well on the way. – Especially this corridor is deemed to reach its limits (see ESPON Alps 2020).

An issue which has to be addressed however is the problem of MS de facto abandoning the Schengen agreement and introducing border controls, which is especially relevant for the key Alpine transversal roads (especially for the borders between Germany and Austria). This situation counteracts any attempt of transport infrastructure improvement.



Electricity infrastructure - Within the TEN infrastructure networks the Alpine area is regarded as part of “Projects of Common Interest”[1]. – Projects situated within Alpine Space listed:

- Under the project Priority Corridor North-South Electricity Interconnections in Western Europe ('NSI West Electricity') the following activities are relevant for the Alpine Space:
  - Interconnection between Thusis/Sils (CH) and Verderio Inferiore (IT) [currently known as "Greenconnector"]
  - Interconnection between Airolo (CH) and Baggio (IT)
  - Capacity increase of hydro-pumped storage in Austria — Kaunertal, Tyrol (AT)
- Under the project “Priority Corridor North-South Electricity Interconnections in Central Eastern and South Europe (‘NSI East Electricity’)” the following activities are relevant for the Alpine Space:
  - Increase of cross-border transmission capacity & integration of renewable energy sources – consisting of several connectivity activities between Austria and Germany:
  - Interconnection between St. Peter (AT) and Isar (DE)
  - Internal line between St. Peter and Tauern (AT)
  - Internal line between Westtirol and Zell-Ziller (AT)
  - Internal line between Lienz and Obersielach (AT)

[1] Ref.: accompanying the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2016/89 of 18 November 2015 amending Regulation (EU) 347/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council on guidelines for trans-European energy infrastructure as regards the Union list of projects of common interest

  - Interconnection between Wurmlach (AT) and Somplago (IT)

- Under the “Priority Thematic Area Smart Grids Deployment” the activity ALPGRID (Austria, Italy) – an innovative integration of synergetic, mature, technology-based solutions in order to simultaneously increase the operational efficiency of the Italian and Austrian regional electricity systems is foreseen. The ALPGRID project integrates the deployment of mature technology elements with an innovative, open, cross-border flexibility platform operated jointly by aggregators in Austria and Italy. DSOs will enhance their ability to monitor and control their respective distribution grids, whereas market players both provide additional flexibility both from new and existing flexible assets , including storage, and increase their ability to forecast non-dispatchable RES generation. Aggregators located both in Italy and Austria cooperate to jointly set up and operate a crossborder flexibility platform.

4.2. Conclusions and recommendations with relevance for the strategy

It has become clear that the **prevalent issue** with regard to **investment needs** are the fields of **SGEIs, transport infrastructure** (especially with regards to public transport) as well as **energy grid infrastructure** and **energy storage infrastructure**.

These pan-European priorities will have to be taken into consideration when defining the priorities of the Alpine Space Programme as synergies will have to be sought. Moreover all three components of investment needs fit into the existing strategy as well as the EUSALP.

4.3. Questions to be concerned by the Task force members:

- Is something unclear?
- Do you agree?
- Are there any points you disagree with?
- Is some important issue missing?

5. Lessons learnt from past experience

5.1. Main findings

Lessons learnt in regards to the design of the programme

The evaluation of communication, effectiveness and stakeholder involvement (Spatial Foresight, 2018) (henceforth "the ASP evaluation"), while generally noting a positive progress of the programme`s effectiveness, as well as communication and stakeholder involvement, provides also important statements about what the programme can improve. A first important point to explore, which is also emphasized by other evaluations and analyses (e.g. (EC, 2016) and BMVI (2017), BMVI (2018)), in regards to complementarities is the need to strengthen **synergies with other ESIF-programmes** (INTERREG A programmes, regional and national Operational Programmes). According to evaluation of 2007-2013 Interreg programmes (EC, 2016) the synergies between Interreg and ESIF funds were generally not sufficiently explored; also the Working Paper on Evolution of Interreg B 2020+ points out that this is an important issue (BMVI, 2017). The ASP evaluation suggests that this could be explored through cooperation of MAs including establishment of systematic communication or activities such as workshops where MAs exchange and coordinate their activities in order to ensure that synergies between funds are taken advantage of.

Importantly, the authors further recommended that **EUSALP** should be involved into this coordination. This is especially beneficial considering that it was also noted that EUSALP, despite the relevance of ASP to the strategy, should also explore other sources of funding than ASP. As a macro-regional strategy, EUSALP is an integrated framework for addressing common challenges, among others, through ESIF[2]. While the ASP is an important and most recognizable source of financing, EUSALP may also find benefits in taking advantage of other ESIF present in the region, especially once synergies between ASP and other funds are explored. Thus, the ASP evaluation suggested that it would be of benefit to ASP if the general role of other ESIF instruments for EUSALP should be clarified.

The ASP has sought the **integration of ASP and EUSALP** at different levels, including at the level of projects through cooperation between ASP project partners and EUSALP AGs. The ASP evaluation shows that some ASP project partners are uncertain about how to communicate with EUSALP AGs given that their structures and work do not always seem clear and transparent to outsiders, which constitutes a barrier for project partners to approach AGs. As a result, ASP project partners may benefit from further support of the programme in facilitating the exchange. It was also shown that clarification of roles of EUSALP AGs within ASP projects, such as on questions of whether AGs should be involved as project partners or observers, would be welcome. The evaluation of efficiency and effectiveness (Alpine Space programme, 2018) also suggested that opportunities of alignment with EUSALP should be discussed at the level of programme committee. Based on the findings of the ex post evaluation of European Territorial Cooperation 2007-2013, the example of integration of Interreg Baltic Sea Region and the EUSBSR showed very positive results and added value for the programme and its area, which means that ASP and EUSALP could use their alignment as an example.

[2] https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/policy/cooperation/macro-regional-strategies/

Involvement of different types of stakeholders from different territories is important for the programme. Despite the fact that the programme undertakes measures to ensure this, the ASP evaluation observed that there is a concentration in terms of project partners and observers in regards to territories and types of stakeholders. In terms of participating **project partners**, the authors clearly noted that some regions are more active than others. For this reason, further measures targeting less active regions and types of stakeholders would be beneficial. Furthermore, the concentration of private partners from Italy and Germany in projects from Priority axis 1 and Priority axis 2 shows that involvement of private actors is possible and the programme could target their involvement in other regions as well as PAs. To that end, targeted communication measures as well as awareness-raising were recommended. Furthermore, given that the programme foresees different target groups for different SOs, the programme can use this to produce target group-specific communication measures. In regards to **project observers**, it was also noted that there is an overrepresentation of actors from certain geographical locations and types. Moreover, the authors of the ASP evaluation observed that there were some misunderstandings in regards to the role and involvement of observers between project partners and observers. It may be beneficial for the programme to communicate more on the aim of involving observers as well as clarifying what their role in the projects could potentially be.

Match-making and other events were emphasized in multiple sources (ASP evaluation, Politechnico di Milano(2018) and Lückge(2018), as well as Alpine Space programme (2018)) as an important and effective tool for bringing together different actors to network. Lückge suggests development of this concept towards an ASP festival, exploring different innovative formats and target groups. Such innovative formats could involve an Alpine tourism “Hackathon”, a marketplace of ideas, Creativity Flash Mob. The evaluation of efficiency and effectiveness (Alpine Space programme, 2018) also suggested that such events can contribute to networking between ASP project partners and EUSALP AGs.

The ASP evaluation also suggested that changes and improvements can be made to the current **communication** strategy which may serve as lessons for preparation of the new communication strategy. Thus, particular attention in preparation of the communication strategy should be paid to appropriate selection of indicators and target values, monitoring of communication activities and satisfaction with events and tools as well as better targeting the communication to specific audiences. In addition, the communication strategy would benefit from a risk analysis in regards to internal and external risk factors as well as preparation of mitigation measures.

The evaluation of efficiency and effectiveness (Alpine Space programme, 2018) noted that the programme has decreased administrative burden for **applicants**, mostly through introducing a 2-step procedure, which has been deemed positive and should be taken onboard in the upcoming programme. However, applicants note some difficulties in the complexity of national requirements which vary for different countries. In addition, the selection criteria of transparency and harmonisation of the process would benefit from further clarifications while Terms of Reference could give more substantial guidance. The evaluation also suggested that the programme should strive at providing a more harmonised approach to supporting all applicants in the same extent (to achieve this, direct consultations, increased guidance and more events were suggested) as well as reconsider the number of selection criteria, given they increase the complexity of evaluation of proposals.

The ex post evaluation of European Territorial Cooperation 2007-2013 (EC, 2016) has linked performance in competitiveness to policy choices and thanks to a **demand-driven approach**, the fact that regions and actors could identify the policy obstacles contributed to provision of tailored programmes. However, this resulted in a very broad understanding of what Interreg cooperation should contribute to and lack of understanding of what transnational cooperation can achieve. In effect, it resulted in pro-

grammes being driven by common concerns while issues of potential higher transnational relevance were not always clearly identified. Another difficulty for transnational programmes was to define the most appropriate functional level of cooperation. The evaluation concluded that programmes which had best defined objectives were ones that faced common challenges, concerns and economic and geographical similarities. Programmes which had less economic and geographical coherence were more generic and less territory-specific (EC, 2016).

Another important finding to be considered by the programme is more focus on **sharing of practices, policy tools and learnings** between projects and Interreg programmes alike. Most projects in the 2007-2013 were evaluated to have implemented their work in isolation. The same can be said for Interreg programmes in general; a more intensive sharing of knowledge and experiences needed was emphasized after the 2007-2013 programme (EC, 2016), but it remains in focus also for the upcoming programme period based which is made evident also in the draft Interreg regulation[3]. In terms of internal coordination between different bodies, the ASP evaluation found it generally positive, however cooperation between JS and ACPs could be strengthened, what might also be considered for work-package 3 ("structures and procedures").

Finally, the **sustainability of programme outcomes** was an important point in the ex post evaluation 2007-2013 (EC, 2016) as well as was pointed out in the Interreg documents prepared by BMVI (BMVI, 2018). It remains important to further ensure that programmes are designed to produce outcomes which are not only short-term effects. While sustainability of outputs of some projects indeed depends on continued funding and institutional stability, evidence of sustainability of practices was found as well. This included cases where activities stemming from Interreg projects were mainstreamed in domestic programmes and by other actors than project partners and when Interreg projects were continued and financed from domestic public sources.

In order to explore programme`s potential in addressing different and cross-cutting thematic areas, Lückge (Lückge, 2018) as well as BMVI (2018) suggests to allow more flexibility for **experimental approaches.** Through setting aside a specific share of a budget for projects. Lückge lists examples such as living labs, new funding mechanisms (crowd-funding, concept of co-operative such as "Genossenschaftsmodell" linked to energy contracting concepts and developing new regional value chains for mountain agriculture), voucher system or incentive mechanisms that support a involvement of private stakeholders as well as approaches that explore capitalization of other projects as an experimental "follow- up of such projects" (Lückge, 2018).

Lückge also suggests that ASP has the opportunity to address the "**implementation gap**" which characterizes incapacity to implement the solutions into policy-making. The programme can focus on supporting measures on a coaching/twinning for dissemination and marketing, mentoring for policy-implementation of development of new funding solutions (Lückge, 2018).

Finally, the issue of appropriate **indicators** for monitoring of Interreg programmes cannot be omitted, as observed by BMVI (BMVI, 2018). It has been emphasized in the past that measuring of Interreg programmes is challenging given the specificity of their intervention. For this reason, several ESPON projects (ESPON TEVI, ESPON CBC TIA) have focused on provision of appropriate methods and indicators for selection of tailor-made, specific and appropriate indicators that would successfully provide information on the impact of programmes. ASP can take onboard this work in regards to provision of more appropriate indicators for Interreg programmes and place a stronger focus on selection of indicators for the upcoming programming phase.

[3] COM(2018) 374

Thematic areas of importance to the programme

The ex post evaluation of European Territorial Cooperation 2007-2013 (EC, 2016) delivers findings about the thematic areas where Interreg programmes were particularly successful and areas where they were less successful, therefore it can serve as an important resource is selecting areas of intervention which can be effectively addressed by the programme. Its findings largely overlap with the orking paper by BMVI (BMVI, 2017). It has been shown that Interreg programmes fostered a high number of improvements and cooperation e.g.: innovation, accessibility, education, training and science, environmental cooperation, risk management, protection from natural hazards and notably contributed towards the reduction of cultural and physical barriers, improved social integration as well as transnational governance. They generally successfully supported cooperation and collaboration in many fields as well as contributed to creation of regional identity and to the visibility of an area as a coherent entity. The areas which were found more difficult to address were legal barriers concerning health services, labour regulation, taxes, business development and barriers linked to differences in administrative cultures.

On the other hand, one problem of programmes is that they remain very broad, as noted in the ex post Interreg evaluation (EC, 2016). It was also noted in ASP SEA that the programme does not provide a detailed overview of which type of projects will be supported but rather leave the range of possible projects wide (BOKU, 2014).

Interestingly, Lückge also notes the importance of policy foresight for **governance** challenges in relation to driving forces in the alpine space such as tensions on the energy market, economic globalization, rise of the information society and the knowledge economy, migration/refugees, increased mobility of goods and persons.

The ESPON SME (2018) project as well as the study on strategic assets in EUSALP (Politechnico di Milano, 2018), point out the strong and important **SME and industrial** basis in the Alpine area. Especially the latter study shows that there is much economic potential in specific types of cooperation between different regions through analysing endowment of strategic resources and productivity of different development patterns (industrial, tourism, agriculture and large urban). The findings of this analyses may form an important basis for needs and opportunities assessment in addressing SME-related issues.

The gap analysis performed by JS also suggested that beneficial would be the formulation of an **innovation** vision for the ASP in order to strengthen the cooperation in this area (Lückge, 2018), this can also contribute to a better SME-approach. However, it should be noted that it was assessed that current activities related to innovation as SME could have a **negative impact on the environment** (BOKU, 2014). In case similar interventions, the SEA recommended that the programme steers these activities towards using already existing spaces or brownfields. Further ideas suggest decoupling economic growth from throughput of material and energy resources as well as fostering of environmentally-friendly technologies, favouring integrated approaches to waste and emission reduction rather than end-of-pipe solutions. In terms of SOs concerned with risk management, the future programme should also consider stronger focus on soft methods rather than technical options (BOKU, 2014).

The ESPON LOCATE (2018) project shows that the Alpine space has a generally high level of **energy** consumption and the use of renewable energy varies greatly across Alpine regions. A gap analysis in the current programming period suggested that more focus should be placed on cross-sectoral approaches in case of low carbon policy instruments, while terms of low carbon mobility, there is a need for a better coordination of multi-modal transport systems as well as participatory approaches (Lückge,

2018). Lückge also observes that in order to support low-carbon transformation there is a need for integrated solutions which create co-benefits; such include approaches that explore the strategic policy-making in the role of consumption patterns and lifestyles. It should also be noted, that the SEA suggests that in relation to energy related infrastructure, programme should place more emphasis on thoughtful selection of type and location in order to mitigate disturbances to ecosystems (BOKU, 2014).

The ESPON GRETA (2018) study has identified a very high **GI (green infrastructure)** potential in the Alpine space, especially in Eastern Alps. At the same time, the region`s protected areas have a poor contribution of protected areas to the total area of potential of GI. The ESPON GRETA project suggests that there are measures which could be undertaken in order to use the GI potential, which could be considered as possible foreseen actions by the programme. These are improvement of data and monitoring of GI, communication and awareness measure, especially at different political levels, as well as all kinds of measures that would aim at consolidation of GI strategies across borders and their integration into spatial planning in order to avoid fragmentation and disconnection of strategies. This is especially important in the context of transnational cooperation, given that GI are not aligned with country or regional borders.

The importance of environmental issues, of which the topic of GI is only one element, is also recognized as one of the emerging trendy by Lückge (2018). The importance of environment has to do with substantial threats posed by the **climate change** which are especially relevant in the Alps. This point is made strongly be different Alpine actors (CIPRA, the Alpine Convention) as well as is evident in assessments, including ASP SEA, as well as wider literature such as ESPON BRIDGES (2019).

In regards to cross-sectoral topics, one which is also relevant in the pan-European context, as identified by Lückge is **digitization** which affects a range of issues such as business development, education as well as civic involvement and social innovation. Focus on this issue needs a cross-cutting approach to digital transformation that will be accompanied by a reflection and personal exchange, in other words, a connection to the “real world”. Digitization is relevant to all actors (not only high-tech SMEs) as well as can help to reduce the innovation gap between urban and rural areas (Lückge, 2018). In line with the needs identified in the gap analysis, digitization can also contribute to increased social innovation.

Another topic which can be perceived as an emerging trend to address by the programme are the **demographic trends and lifestyle** which are characterized by neo-ecology, low-carbon lifestyles, “counter-movement” trends, health and wellness tourism and innovative formats to strengthen mountain agriculture based on voluntary approaches (Lückge, 2018). Capitalization on these trends will not only strengthen Alpine tourism but also making living in the Alps more attractive to Alpine populations.

Connected with the above and other trends is social innovation through cross-cultural, cross-generation and cross-regional learning in the areas of protection of nature and voluntary work, including involvement of tourists. Lückge notes that social innovation has a large potential to develop economic and social structures in the Alps and to enable public-private-people partnerships and initiatives (Lückge, 2018).

Final trends identified by Lückge are processes of creating visions and scenarios which are important for agenda-setting and exploring of synergies. This, as well as other observations (for example concerning social innovation), overlap with the gap analysis made by the ASP as well as the study on strategic assets in EUSALP, notably complementing the statements of synergies between tourism and

agriculture with focus on digitization (cluster 1) and social innovation (cluster 4) as well as demographic and lifestyle trends (cluster 2).

5.2. Conclusions and recommendations with relevance for the strategy

Summing up, the principles listed in the Working paper on the evolution of Interreg B 2020+ (BMVI, 2017) summarize the findings of the literature review in regards to the lessons learnt about the design of the programme very precisely.

The following topics with importance for the next period might be highlighted: **capitalization** based on project outcomes making them more used and contributing to the sustainability of their outcomes, holistic approach characterized by **cross-sectoral topics** and **flexibility of measures**, **synergies** and **complementarity** between projects, Interreg programmes, ESIF programmes and EUSALP, **simplification and easing workload** for both programme authorities and applicants as well as measuring with help of appropriate **indicators,** legal certainty and appropriateness in terms of communication and publicity (BMVI, 2017). Additional conclusions which are specific to ASP focus on striving at a more **balanced geographical and type-related distribution or project partners and observers**, development of **match-making events** which can also contribute to better involvement of actors, refinement of the **communication** strategy as well as possibility to target the **implementation gap**.

In terms of the thematic coverage of the programme, both analysis of emerging trends (Lückge), as well as documents by BMVI suggest that Interreg programmes should have a **holistic, cross-sectoral focus** on topics such as digitization, social innovation, lifestyle changes in relation with low-carbon and environment, governance and identity-making. The five hot topics identified by Lückge can be considered relevant not only to the current programme but also to the upcoming one by complementing the issues which are currently deemed of highest gravity (SMEs and innovation, energy, environment and governance).

The following conclusions might be derived with a focus on “governance” (see also chapter 3.1.7):

Governance and funding: Innovative funding: Reducing the high bureaucratic burden in European funding in general and in particular in cooperation is an ongoing challenge. Beyond this debate, many experts of the Alpine region call for more openness for innovative projects and experimental action that are currently impeded by formal requirements. This includes a more explicit focus on spatial development and goes beyond purely sectoral policy strands.

Alignment: Alignment means stronger links between programmes and easier combination of funding opportunities (multi-funds approach). This is of crucial importance due to the macro-regional three no’s prohibiting new institutions, new regulations and in particular new budgets. Better linkages between the different strands of European Territorial Cooperation (ETC), between ETC and investment oriented funding (cohesion, agriculture, horizon etc.), and the combination with domestic funding is of key importance.

Inter-regional policy processes: The existing platforms on the transnational level (in particular the EUSALP action groups and the Alpine Convention working bodies) are without a doubt a good basis for further political dynamic: Improve data availability, ensure public transparency, pave the way towards transnational action is the promising Direction. Developing such processes for labour market mobility, mountain agriculture support initiatives or ecological connectivity regimes are more than promising.

5.3. Questions to be concerned by the Task force members:

- To what extent can the programme harmonize national requirements for applicants?
- To what extent can further simplification of procedures and workload take place?
- To what extent is it appropriate and wished to secure part of the budget for experimental projects, as suggested by Lückge?
- How can coordination with MAs of different funds take place
- To what extent does the programme want to direct EUSALP towards other ESIF funding options

6. EUSALP and inter-relation with ASP

6.1. Introduction

The Interreg- Alpine Space-Programme (ASP) is one of the current European Transnational Cooperation (ETC) programmes. The area is also covered by a “Macro-regional strategy” (MRS): the European Union Strategy for the Alpine Region.

The ASP is one of the currently 15 transnational cooperation programmes. The ASP is designed for acting in the Alpine region and promotes the cooperation between stakeholders in seven Alpine countries and covers the Alps and their surrounding lowlands. The programme aims at supporting competitiveness, economic growth, improved quality of life, job creation as well as sustainable development. It tries to bring together actors from various thematic sectors and different policy levels. (see e.g.: https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/policy/cooperation/european-territorial/trans-national/).

The **Interreg- Alpine Space-Programme (ASP)** consists of seven partner states: the European Union Member States Austria, France, Germany, Italy and Slovenia as well as the Non-Member States Liechtenstein and Switzerland (for details see see map at next page). In other terms there are 40 NUTS 2 regions participating in 7 countries. The ASP exists since the funding period 2000-2007 and is able to look back on a long history and the development of sophisticated stakeholder and governance systems.

Macro-regional strategies (MRS) otherwise are a much “younger approach”. The European Union MRS were launched as a kind of political and governance experiment in 2009. The MRS are promoted as key instruments for the implementation of EU policies and programmes in order to foster the cohesion and competitiveness across these larger (functional) areas. MRS try to pursue a specific territorial focus. The first MRS to be endorsed by the European Council was the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR) in 2009. Up to then three more macro-regional strategies have come into existence: the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR) in 2011 and the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR) in 2014. (see {SWD(2019) 6 final}; (COM(2019) 21 final).

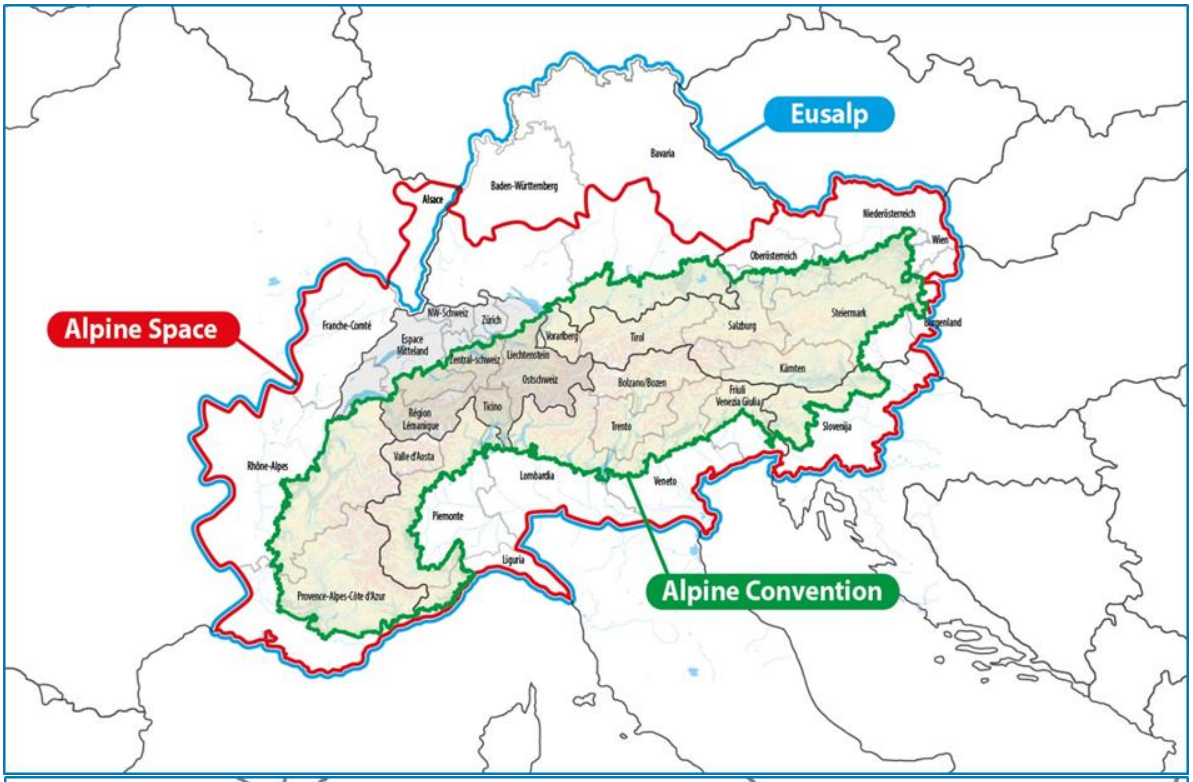
As the youngest of the MRS the **EU Strategy for the Alpine Region (EUSALP)** joined in: The EUSALP was adopted by the European Commission in 2015 and endorsed by the European Council in 2016 (see e.g.: https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/de/policy/cooperation/macro-regional-strategies/).

The EUSALP covers a territory that is in general somewhat larger than the ASP. The German “Bundesländer” Baden-Würtemberg and Bayern form as a whole part of the EUSALP, whereas the Region Alsace in France is part of the ASP but not the EUSALP (see maps at next page).

At the next pages maps of the current geographies of the ASP and the EUSALP are shown as well as an overview of the current priorities and objectives.

As described above, it has to be pointed out that the **MRS constitute a strategic approach** (without any direct funding) whereas the ASP-programme is one of the **transnational ETC programmes** functioning under the regulatory framework of EU-Cohesion-Policy (ERDF).

Geographies of EUSALP, Interreg Alpine Space and Alpine Convention (2019)



Sources: map 1 (source tbc), map 2: https://www.alpine-space.eu/about/the-programme/which-area-is-covered- (2019-04-26)

Overview: Priorities and objectives

ASP		EUSALP			“CPR”, COM(2018) 375
Priority axis	**Specific objectives corresponding to the investment priorities**	**Policy Area (PA´s)**	**objective**	**Actions and Action Groups**	**Policy Objectives 2021+ (PO´s).**
Innovative Alpine Space	1b.1 Improve the framework conditions for innovation in the Alpine Space	**Economic Growth and Innovation**	Fair access to Job opportunities, building on region`s high competitiveness:	Develop an effective research and innovation ecosystem; (Action Group 1: Research & Innovation)	**PO 1:** a smarter Europe by promoting innovative and smart economic transformation
	1b.2 Increase capacities for the delivery of services of general interest in a changing society			Increase the economic potential of strategic sectors; (Action Group 2: Economic development)	
				Improve the adequacy of the labour market, education and training in strategic sectors. (Action Group 3: Labour market, education and training)	
Low Carbon Alpine Space	4e.1 Establish trans-nationally integrated low carbon policy instruments				**PO 2:** a greener, low-carbon Europe by promoting clean and fair energy transition, green and blue investment, the circular economy, climate adaptation and risk prevention and management
	4e.2 Increase options for low carbon mobility and transport	**Mobility and Connectivity**	Sustainable internal and external accessibility for all	Promote intermodality and interoperability in passenger and freight transport; (Action Group 4: Mobility)	**PO 3:** a more connected Europe by enhancing mobility and regional ICT connectivity;
				Connect people digitally and promote accessibility to public services. (Action Group 5. Accessibility)	
Liveable Alpine Space	6c.1 Sustainably valorise Alpine Space cultural and natural heritage	**Environment and Energy**	A more inclusive environmental framework for all and renewable and reliable energy solutions for the future	Preserve and valorise natural resources, including water and cultural resources; (Action Group 6: Resources)	**PO 4:** a more social Europe implementing the European Pillar of Social Rights;

ASP		EUSALP			“CPR”, COM(2018) 375
Priority axis	**Specific objectives corresponding to the investment priorities**	**Policy Area (PA´s)**	**objective**	**Actions and Action Groups**	**Policy Objectives 2021+ (PO´s).**
	6d.1 Enhance the protection, the conservation and the ecological connectivity of Alpine Space ecosystems			Develop ecological connectivity across the whole EUSALP territory (Action Group 7: Green Infrastructure)	**PO 5:** a Europe closer to citizens by fostering the sustainable and integrated development of urban, rural and coastal areas and local initiatives.
				Improve risk management and better manage climate change, including prevention of major natural risks; Action Group 8: Risk Governance)	
				Make the territory a model region for energy efficiency and renewable energy. (Action Group 9: Energy)	
Well-Governed Alpine Space	11.1 Increase the application of multilevel and transnational governance in the Alpine Space	**Governance, including Institutional Capacity**	A sound macro-regional governance model for the Region (to improve cooperation and the coordination of action)		**2 Interreg specific objectives**: better Interreg governance'; and 'a safer and more secure Europe',
Technical Assistance					

6.2. Main findings

What can be summarized on the **relation between EUSALP and ASP** so far? Where might be challenges but also opportunities when looking back at the years since the adoption of the EUSALP?

It has to be pointed out that the **EUSALP** is the "youngest" of the four Macro-regional strategies and achievements are still developing. Nevertheless, EUSALP has already managed to bring together new stakeholders across different sectors, government levels, and countries. A major achievement of the EUSALP appears to be the increase of the cooperation between the Alpine areas and the surrounding metropolitan areas (Study on Macro-regional Strategies and their links with Cohesion Policy, 2017).

When looking at the **inter-linkages** between **ASP and EUSALP** (and also the Alpine Convention), there are a bundle of good examples of constructive collaboration, especially related to climate change, better than in other mountainous regions (ESPON BRIDGES 2019).

Furthermore the **ASP contributes to the EUSALP** considerably and effectively along all EUSALP action groups and alignment takes place at different levels: strategic and operational coordination, information exchange, funding, multi-level governance and capacity building, mobilizing actors, stimulating networks, integration between projects and action groups, coordinated communication and awareness-raising activities (Evaluation of Programme Communication, Effectiveness and Stakeholder Involvement of the Interreg Alpine Space 2014-2020 Programme 2018).

Almost all projects from ASP contribute to EUSALP - at different levels and to different action groups. EUSALP benefits from the ASP-funded projects and thereby is getting access to on-the-ground implementing organisations. On the other hand, ASP benefits from a better visibility of its priorities and projects and better access to high political levels through cooperation with EUSALP (Evaluation of Programme Communication, Effectiveness and Stakeholder Involvement of the Interreg Alpine Space 2014-2020 Programme 2018).

With respect to the **EUSALP Action plan** all the nine defined actions (see table on previous page) are found to be relevant to be addressed in a macro-regional context in the Alpine regions. As mentioned above, strategic alignment with the ASP takes place at different levels and in a wide range of thematic fields. The EUSALP Action plan is gaining more and more traction, and the institutional thickness and stakeholder participation increases. The EC currently does not see any need to revise the action plan (COM(2019 21 final, p 8), what happens to be important for the now starting programming process of the ASP.

Concerning the **financial resources**, support for the activities under the EUSALP mainly comes from the ASP and alignment with other ESIF-programmes is rather limited up to now. In this context it has to be noted that the ESIF-programmes had been drafted before the adoption of the EUSALP in 2015 (Study on Macro-regional Strategies and their links with Cohesion Policy, 2017).

In 2019 the EC published a report on the implementation of the four MRS (COM(2019 21 final). In that report the EC also states that bridging the gap between the MRS and funding opportunities seems to remain a challenge. The EC highlights that the **Interreg programmes** — despite their limited amounts of funding — have played a significant role in supporting the strategies' implementation. The other funds at EU-level as well as national and other sources of funding up to now have not been easily available to support the strategies and its projects.

In the report the EC also points out that the **preparation phase of the post-2020** programming now offers a sound opportunity to plan and organise the leverage of all EU funds – not only Interreg –- in order to support MRS objectives (COM(2019 21 final).

Turning to the **post-2020-programming** in more detail now, within the proposals on EU cohesion policy regulations the **EC emphasises the importance of cooperation** as a general cross-cutting feature of cohesion policy. Member states and regions are invited to put a stronger focus on that feature in the next phase of national and regional policy planning and programming.

The following table gives an overview of the **passages of the draft Interreg-regulation**, where **"macro-regional strategies"** are mentioned in relation to the new Interreg-programmes:

Interreg-regulation (COM(2018) 374 final)	**Cited texts with relevance to the interlinkage of Interreg-programmes (focus: "component 2A-programmes") and MRS**
page 5	The 2021-2027 period will seek to **further strengthen cooperation**. This will be done through the following measures in particular: 1. Adapting the architecture of Interreg programmes to take better account of functional areas …. 3. Strengthening the transnational and maritime cooperation Interreg programmes that cover the same functional areas as the existing macro-regional strategies (MRS). Increasing the alignment between funding and MRS priorities. …
page 23, Art 5	**Geographical coverage** for transnational cooperation and maritime cooperation: 1. For transnational cooperation and maritime cooperation, the regions to be supported by the ERDF shall be the NUTS level 2 regions of the Union covering contiguous functional areas, taking into account, where applicable, macro-regional strategies or sea basin strategies. …
Page 28, Art 14	**Interreg specific objectives:** … 4. Under components 1, 2, and 3, the ERDF and, where applicable, the external financing instruments of the Union may also support the **Interreg-specific objective 'a better Interreg governance',** in particular by the following actions: (a) under component 1 and 2B Interreg programmes: (i) enhance the institutional capacity of public authorities, in particular those mandated to manage a specific territory, and of stakeholders; (ii) enhance efficient public administration by promoting legal and administrative cooperation and cooperation between citizens and institutions, in particular, with a view to resolving legal and other obstacles in border regions; (b) under component 1, 2 and 3 Interreg programmes: enhance institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders to implement **macro-regional strategies** and sea-basin strategies; (c) under external cross-border and component 2 and 3 Interreg programmes supported by the Interreg funds, in addition to points (a) and (b): building up mutual trust, in particular by encouraging people-to-people actions, by enhancing sustainable democracy and by supporting civil society actors and their role in reforming processes and democratic transitions; 5. Under external cross-border and component 2 and 3 Interreg programmes the

	ERDF and, where applicable, the external financing instruments of the Union shall also contribute to the external Interreg-specific objective 'a safer and more secure Europe', in particular by actions in the fields of border crossing management and mobility and migration management, including the protection of migrants.
Page 29, Art 15	**Thematic concentration:** 1. **At least 60% of the ERDF** and, where applicable, of the external financing instruments of the Union allocated under priorities other than for technical assistance to each Interreg programme under components 1, 2 and 3, shall be allocated on a maximum of **three of the policy objectives** set out in Article [4(1)] of Regulation (EU) [new CPR]. 2. **An additional 15% of the ERDF** and, where applicable, of the external financing instruments of the Union allocations under priorities other than for technical assistance to each Interreg programme under components 1, 2 and 3, shall be allocated on the **Interreg-specific objective** of 'a better Interreg governance' or on the external Interreg-specific objective of 'a safer and more secure Europe'. 3. Where a component **2A Interreg programme supports a macro-regional strategy**, the total ERDF and, where applicable, the total external financing instruments of the Union allocations under priorities other than for technical assistance **shall be programmed on the objectives of that strategy.** 4. Where a component 2B Interreg programme supports a macro-regional strategy or sea-basin strategy, at least 70% of the total ERDF and, where applicable, of the external financing instruments of the Union allocations under priorities other than for technical assistance shall be allocated on the objectives of that strategy.

6.3. First conclusions with relevance for the strategy

Deriving conclusions from the literature-analysis at that early stage is not an easy thing to do. The overall framework is still a "moving target", the programming-processes and discussions about the period 2021+ has just started. The question of the **(future) relation/alignment/interlinkages of the ASP and the EUSALP** is also an important issue to be discussed at national and regional level.

Therefore the following **conclusions** have to be seen as a **"first pitch" intended to stimulate discussion** among the Task force members and to help us experts to follow with our work.

Call for alignment & strategic coherence

- There is a general call for **stronger strategic alignment** and **improvement of the coherence** between MRS and ESIF-programmes noticeable. In the course of the programming process this might be achieved by:
  - increasing the (strategic) alignment between funding and MRS priorities;
  - ensuring that activities in key Policy Areas (PAs) of the MRSs can be covered by ESIF funding and stronger matching of the projects funded by the programmes and the MRS-activities already in the phase of programming;
  - preparing/adjusting the processes of coordination and fine-tuning of the governance systems (e.g. clarifying roles and responsibilities,…);
  - taking into account the draft regulations proposals on "thematic concentration".

Need for flexibility

- Although there is a strong call for strategic alignment and planning between MRS and (ESIF/Interreg-)programmes, there should be given special attention to **"the need of flexibility"** e.g. in order to correspond to newly arising topics or current developments with strong need for action. This might be considered in the programming process via
  - allowing appropriate flexibility in the funding planning;
  - preparing for such needs when defining the programme structures and procedures e.g.
    - when defining the selection criteria or the types of projects;
    - enabling specific calls or creative and innovative project-set ups,..
  - the matching of global trends and regional needs in order to foresee and best prepare appropriate reactions.

Strengthening of simplification and harmonization:

- The **simplification and harmonization-issue** also seems to be of high importance for an enhancement of cooperation between MRS and Interreg-programmes. There is no doubt that further simplification and harmonization supports and facilitates the cooperation in complex government systems as MRS and Interreg-programmes. The above mentioned "need for flexibility" will also be complied with clearer and less complex implementation systems.

Consideration of qualitative effects of cooperation & policy learning:

- Previous programming periods have shown, that **policy learning** is a very important aspect of transnational cooperation, not only through the exchange of experience but also through structured cooperation on key issues of transnational concern, mutual learning, "intangible" impacts and so on. With the existing or required (quantitative) indicator-systems it is often difficult to depict these learning effects of transnational cooperation.
  - For the period 2021+ it will be an important issue to give due attention to the **qualitative and learning effects** of cooperation and to think about how these effects might be made "visible", especially with respect to the cooperation between the Interreg-programmes and the MRS.
  - An important question might be how to make the **"intangible" impacts** of cooperation more visible in the next programming period?

Deepening of capacity development & broaden the stakeholder-basis

- Even though the EUSALP is gaining more and more traction, it remains a challenge to motivate and find **members of action groups**. Even in the settled ASP is not easy to attract **new project- or lead partners**.
  - There seems to be the need for a more stable, institutional support in order to "thicken" the institutional basis and to broaden the stakeholder basis.
  - In this context the possibilities of the new interreg-specific objective should be taken into account: the objective **'a better Interreg governance'** is trying to enhance *"the institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders in order to implement **macro-regional strategies** and sea-basin strategies*".

Reflection on communication:

- **Communication** target-oriented to the citizens on the one hand but on the other hand tailor-made communication to programme-stakeholders facilitates the broadening of the stakeholders, the thickening of the institutional basis and the understanding by the citizens.
- Even though communication tools have been developed, the new programming period offers the possibility to take stock, reflect and take the opportunity to think about some new aspects in communication in order to make common efforts more visible.

Setting the geographical and territorial focus, geographical coverage:

- The approach of the MRS and Interreg-programmes entails a specifically **territorial approach** compared to the more thematic-oriented mainstream ESIF-programmes or other EU-policies (such as the EU's research and innovation policy). Territory matters within the MRS and Interreg-programmes.
- With respect to the "Geographical coverage for transnational cooperation" the Interreg draft-regulation sets out that *"for transnational cooperation and maritime cooperation, the regions to be supported by the ERDF shall be the NUTS level 2 regions of the Union covering contiguous functional areas, taking into account, where applicable, macro-regional strategies or sea basin strategies."*
- EUSALP and ASP cover both the same **functional area**, with some small deviations in the selection of NUTS 2-regions taking part in the EUSALP or ASP (see previous pages). The **(fur-**

ther) alignment of the **territorial coverage of the EUSALP and ASP** has to discussed and clarified throughout the programming process. The sooner the considerations and reflections of the member states on that issue are to be discussed, the better the adjustment with the general programme strategy can be carried out.

To summarize, the above mentioned key-points should contribute towards:

- a higher extent of exploiting synergies and rising the effectiveness and efficiency in the cooperation of the EUSALP and the ASP in the next programming period 2021+;
- a stronger mutual reinforcement of the both approaches;
- the deepening of governance and stakeholder structures as well as administrative cooperation;
- a powerful integration between projects and action groups and a straighter access to on-the-ground implementing organisations by defining projects “of the next generation”;
- preparing the ground for a bundle of innovative projects that contribute and support both approaches and bring them closer to the citizens in the Alpine regions.

6.4. Questions to be concerned by the Task force members:

- Is something unclear?
- Do you agree with the conclusions?
- Are there any points you disagree with?
- Is some important issue missing?
- Where should we set the main focus in the next working steps?

7. Links to Policy objectives

7.1. Main findings

This section summarises **first findings and statements** that are **"objective-oriented"** and thus relevant to the five Policy Objectives and the two Interreg Specific Objectives. They are derived from literature anaylsis or from the conclusions and recommendations in the other chapters of this paper.

This chapter can be seen as a kind of synthesis of the other chapters. We want to point out that at this point this is a **first summary** that has to be complemented and revised after the first Task-force meeting.

» **Policy objectives (PO):**

a. a smarter Europe by promoting innovative and smart economic transformation,

a) a greener, low-carbon Europe by promoting clean and fair energy transition, green and blue investment, the circular economy, climate adaptation and risk prevention and management;

b) a more connected Europe by enhancing mobility and regional ICT connectivity;

c) a more social Europe implementing the European Pillar of Social Rights;

d) a Europe closer to citizens by fostering the sustainable and integrated development of urban, rural and coastal areas and local initiatives.

» **Interreg specific objectives (ISO):**

e) a better Interreg governance

f) a safer and more secure Europe

Policy objective 1 (PO1): a smarter Europe by promoting innovative and smart economic transformation

» Digitization: public bodies have the task to define framework conditions, regulations, financing and basic research, ensure safety and personal integrity, social inclusion and justice concerning the access to network infrastructures in areas that are not competitive on the market.

» Knowledge based economy: The task of the public sector is to provide adequate framework for education and research as well as for co-operation between the different actors.

» Leisure society: The task of the public sector is to create legal, administrative and financial frameworks to manage tourism offers and demands. Considering the outstanding ecological value of the Alpine area one of the key challenges for public authorities – and also for the tourism sector – will be to support an Alpine wide shift to sustainable tourism

- Future Alpine strategies should help to find answers to the following questions: How to ensure the targeting of sustainable development goals? What kind of economic performance is preferred, i.e. what sectors are most preferable, what kind of growth is the objective? How can endogenous potentials be used? How can the current strength of the economic performance be maintained and ensured? What does economic cohesion mean in respect to the Alps 2050 area, i.e. how far should harmonization of regional performance go, and which scale should be used as reference base? (see ESPON Alps 2050).

- Innovation orientation: in order to safeguard the relative economic strength of the region, and in order to enhance sustainability in economic activity, the focus will lie on innovation. This comprises technical R&D, economic post-growth models, pilot projects, social innovation etc. (see ESPON Alps 2050).

- The development of the tourism sector could be improved through a concerted approach to sustainable and accessible tourism, involving in particular R&I, SMEs and training for the labour force. This could help to improve the geographic and seasonal distribution of the tourism market in the Region, while creating growth and jobs (see ESPON Alps 2050).

- The Alpine programme should help to strengthen green economy based on key Alpine resources and fostering integrated approaches in agriculture, forestry, tourism, energy and the water sectors. Fostering urban-rural co-operation is a key success factor for Alpine green economy. Circular economy approaches as well as bio-economy van help to pave the way from low carbon to post-carbon economy, from a general “efficiency” approach to approaches that are more oriented on sufficiency.

- Circular economy: Waste prevention and regional material cycles are important factors for a circular economy inside and outside the Alpine area. Regional material cycles can have additional positive environmental impacts like a reduction of pollution and CO2 emissions due to reduced transport needs. The handling of waste and wastewater in huts without connection to municipal sewage and waste collection systems are challenges where individual solutions have to be found for each single hut. In some border regions, a cross-border cooperation on waste management would be desirable. (Alpine Convention 2019, RSA6).

- Natural capital and ecosystem services are new concepts that bear a high potential for greening the economy in the Alpine Convention area. They measure and analyse stocks and flows of natural resources and make them economically assessable. (Alpine Convention 2019, RSA6).

- There is a need to put in place appropriate policies to achieve a successful and just transition to a Green Economy and to create job opportunities. This includes qualification offers (education and vocational training), supporting innovation in small and medium-sized businesses, creating networking structures among all stakeholders of a Green Economy, promoting sustainable investments and setting incentives to stimulate the demand for environmentally friendly products, technologies and services at the private and public level (Alpine Convention 2019, RSA6).

- Fostering regional production and consumption and supporting regional marketing initiatives and instruments can potentially make an important contribution to a Green Economy in the Alps. Local authorities have an important role to play in encouraging regional production cycles (Alpine Convention 2019, RSA6).

- The increased use of certification schemes and the deployment of eco-innovation by businesses across the region might help to reduce negative externalities from air pollution that have resulted in market and social costs for the Alpine economy (Alpine Convention 2019, RSA6).

- Recommendations for fostering a green economy in the Alps:
  1. Use Green Economy as an engine for regional development;
  2. Use climate and energy challenges to trigger eco-innovation;
  3. Consider ecosystems and biodiversity as an economic asset in the Alpine area;
  4. Take steps to turn the Alpine area into a resource-efficient, circular and cost-effective economy;
  5. Use Green Economy to support the competitiveness of the Alpine Convention area;
  6. Use opportunities for the creation of green jobs;
  7. Improve the quality of life and well-being of Alpine residents through a Green Economy;
  8. Improve data availability and monitoring;
  9. Prepare a comprehensive and ambitious Action Programme for a Green Economy in the Alpine area by 2018.

- The five action fields of green economy in the Alps are (see BMU 2019):
  1. Greening finance and the financial support structures;
  2. Encouraging eco-innovation;
  3. Greening regional development;
  4. Valorising ecosystems and biodiversity;
  5. Living and working in a green economy.

Policy objective 2 (PO2): a greener, low-carbon Europe by promoting clean and fair energy transition, green and blue investment, the circular economy, climate adaptation and risk prevention and management

- Climate change: The tasks of the public sector are: implement different kinds of regulations triggering GHG reduction, support basic and applied research, develop mitigation and adaptation strategies and deal with the damages caused by climate change.

- Energy transition: The task of the public sector is to define framework conditions enabling and supporting the energy transition from fossil to green energy in an environmentally and socially sustainable way.

- The programme should support actions that help to increase energy efficiency in all sectors, especially those who make a step further: from efficiency to more sufficiency oriented approaches.

- The programme should foster actions that strengthen the intelligent use of renewable energy in an ecologically and socially sound manner.

- The programme should support actions dealing with the energy transition and the transition to low carbon and sustainable life-styles.

- The programme should support alignment in the support schemes and the national regulatory frameworks in the energy sector.

- The programme should support action that strengthens green infrastructure as well as ecosystem services in the Alpine area.

- Ecological fragmentation and the loss of biodiversity in general are key concerns due to the function of the Alps as a biological hotspot. Moderating the demands of protection and development is the key political challenge for the next programme (based on ESPON Alps 2050).

- Dealing with climate change impacts expressed through rising temperatures, increase of natural hazards, precipitation changes etc. calls for transnational policies and measures. The relevance of rising temperatures and climate change impacts is not limited to national contexts.

- Climate change and water scarcity increase the need for a sustainable Alpine water management and for climate change adaptation measures. Occasional local conflicts among water users and negative ecological impacts may concern the full range of water uses – from irrigation purposes, the production of artificial snow, and drinking water supply during the tourist seasons to naturally low water availability in winter or periods of occasional droughts in summer. In the southern part of the Alps, this needs special consideration, also because of climate change. (Alpine Convention 2019, RSA6).

- Besides water, the second resource with special relevance for the Alpine region is **wood**. A more sustainable forest management can improve the production of wood due to a higher wood mobilisation, and create increasing supply of other ecosystem services, such as CO2 sequestration, soil protection, natural hazard protection, recreation, landscape and biodiversity. Room for increased wood mobilisation has been identified especially in the southern part of the Alpine region. Moreover, wood can be used as an alternative renewable resource, e.g. in the construction sector. (Alpine Convention 2019, RSA6).

- Therefore, an opportunity to **improve biodiversity protection but also an economic opportunity** lies in the development of markets for goods and services based on Alpine biodiversity. Consequently, nature conservation should be viewed as an area of economic opportunity for a Green Economy and not as a constraint. Further development of the **valuation of natural capital and ecosystem services** may, together with assessing or monitoring ESS, better highlight the economic relevance of natural Alpine features and support the Green Economy approaches. Values of ESS should be incorporated into decision-making also in cases where monetary valuation is difficult or controversial (Alpine Convention 2019, RSA6).

- Recommendations from the Alpine Climate Target System 2050: Strengthen cooperation and give a clear priority to implementing the Alpine Climate Target System: including: climate proofing, pilot actions, financial resources, exchange with other mountain areas, monitoring tool; Update the Climate Action Plan Communication and co-operation.

Policy objective 3 (PO3): a more connected Europe by enhancing mobility and regional ICT connectivity

- Acceleration of transport and communication: A key challenge for the public sector is on the one hand to ensure the availability of services of general interest in peripheral areas and on the other hand to manage growth and conflicting land use interests in urbanised regions. This requires cross-sectoral approaches and strategies. Further tasks of the public sector are to provide transport and communication infrastructure and to define legal and financial conditions for the use of the infrastructure provided.

- Technological development (digitization) offers new options of SGI provision – medical care via internet, online courses for learning, online communication tools and many more economic, social and cultural applications. Most relevant questions: highs of investments, acceptance of shifts in infrastructure installations. (see ESPON Alps 2050).

- Alpine strategies should put a foc.us on sustainable transport on the one hand for links between the Alpine core area and the surrounding regions, to the benefit of both. On the other hand strategies for sustainable transport are also urgently required for inner alpine mobility and for transport in tourism. This is relevant for passenger as well as for freight transport (ESPON Alps 2050).

- Moreover, enhancing multi-modality, combining in particular road and rail, is of high priority. A transnational toll policy might be an important element in this respect (ESPON Alps 2050).

- E-connectivity (especially by high speed internet) at an Alpine scale would also open up new technological opportunities for developing services and decentralising businesses (ESPON Alps 2050).

- Accessibility of SGI should be fostered as a key element of good quality of life.

- The TEN-T has to be completed, including connecting routes, completing a transnational accessibility regime (ESPON Alps 2050).

- The alignment tariff systems is a key requirement for cross border public transport.

- Transport policy has to be closely interwoven with general spatial planning processes. There has to be a clear differentiation of transit flows of high quantities that have to be organised along few corridors that are capable to handle large flows in a way that does not harm environmental quality. Accessibility on the regional and local level have to be closely linked to questions of the settlement system including services of general interest and to economic dynamics. (ESPON Alps 2050).

Policy objective 4 (PO4): a more social Europe implementing the European Pillar of Social Rights

- Demographic and societal change, migration: The task of the public sector is to create mechanisms and structures that help to cope with and manage migration and a more and more pluralistic society. Key elements are awareness raising and a positive approach towards newcomers as well as the provision of social services corresponding to demographic change.

- Foster a pluralistic Alpine society by considering four important aspects: Pluralism is not diversity alone, but the energetic engagement with diversity. Pluralism is not just tolerance, but the active

seeking of understanding across lines of difference and pluralism is not relativism, but the encounter of commitments. Pluralism is based on dialogue.

» Support and strengthen intergrated concepts according to the “flexicurity” approach: combine labour market flexibility in a dynamic economy and security for workers.

» Support concepts and action fostering on “We-goism”: the combination of individual and collective approaches including sharing concepts.

Policy objective 5 (PO5): a Europe closer to citizens by fostering the sustainable and integrated development of urban, rural and coastal areas and local initiatives

» Strategies to reduce spatial polarisation are urgently required. Political action addressing the territorial potentials can make a difference (see ESPON Alps 2050).

» Differentiated strategies for urbanised areas, stable and declining rural areas as well as tourism areas help to ensure accessibility and maintain public services in peripheral areas, as well as to valorise the potentials of urbanised areas: sustainable mobility, energy efficiency, innovation, education and research.

Interreg specific objective 1: a better Interreg governance

» Governance and funding: Innovative funding: Reducing the high bureaucratic burden in European funding in general and in particular in cooperation is an ongoing challenge. Beyond this debate, many experts of the Alpine region call for more openness for innovative projects and experimental action that are currently impeded by formal requirements. This includes a more explicit focus on spatial development and goes beyond purely sectoral policy strands.

» Alignment: Alignment means stronger links between programmes and easier combination of funding opportunities (multi-funds approach). This is of crucial importance due to the macro-regional three no’s prohibiting new institutions, new regulations and in particular new budgets. Better linkages between the different strands of European Territorial Cooperation (ETC), between ETC and investment oriented funding (cohesion, agriculture, horizon etc.), and the combination with domestic funding is of key importance.

» Inter-regional policy processes: The existing platforms on the transnational level (in particular the EUSALP action groups and the Alpine Convention working bodies) are without a doubt a good basis for further political dynamic: Improve data availability, ensure public transparency, pave the way towards transnational action is the promising Direction. Developing such processes for labour market mobility, mountain agriculture support initiatives or ecological connectivity regimes are more than promising.

» The programme could be improved by better capitalization based on project outcomes making them more used and contributing to the sustainability of their outcomes, holistic approach characterized by cross-sectoral topics and flexibility of measures, synergies and complementarity between projects, Interreg programmes, ESIF programmes and EUSALP, simplification and easing workload for both programme authorities and applicants as well as measuring with help of appropriate indicators, legal certainty and appropriateness in terms of communication and publicity. Addi-

tional conclusions which are specific to ASP focus on striving at a more balanced geographical and type-related distribution or project partners and observers, development of match-making events which can also contribute to better involvement of actors, refinement of the communication strategy as well as possibility to target the implementation gap.

» Further proposals concerning the improvement of ASP governance with regards to the interplay with EUSALP: Call for alignment & strategic coherence, need for flexibility; strengthening of simplification and harmonization; consideration of qualitative effects of cooperation & policy learning; deepening of capacity development & broaden the stakeholder-basis; reflection on communication; setting the geographical and territorial focus, geographical coverage;

» These key-points should contribute towards a higher extent of exploiting synergies and rising the effectiveness and efficiency in the cooperation of the EUSALP and the ASP in the next programming period 2021+; a stronger mutual reinforcement of the both approaches; the deepening of governance and stakeholder structures as well as administrative cooperation; a powerful integration between projects and action groups and a straighter access to on-the-ground implementing organisations; preparing the ground for a bundle of innovative projects that contribute and support both approaches and bring them closer to the citizens in the Alpine regions.

» In terms of the thematic coverage of the programme, both analysis of emerging trends (Lückge), as well as documents by BMVI suggest that Interreg programmes should have a holistic, cross-sectoral focus on topics such as digitization, social innovation, lifestyle changes in relation low-carbon and environment, governance and identity-making. The five hot topics identified by Lückge can be considered relevant not only to the current programme but also to the upcoming one by complementing the issues which are currently deemed of highest gravity (SMEs and innovation, energy, environment and governance).

Interreg specific objective 2: a safer and more secure Europe

» Increasing safety needs: The task of the public sector is to provide a framework which enables social, environmental and economic safety while respecting human rights and the integrity and dignity of individuals.

» Better coordinated European, national and regional policies and the early implementation of actions coordinated at macro-regional level, could reduce natural risks.

» RSA7 on risk management concludes with the following recommendations for enhancing natural hazard risk governance: Promote risk governance as a concept to enhance risk management; use risk governance to develop integrated measures for hazard prevention; integrate local initiatives in developing solutions for managing natural hazard risks; provide financial and other incentives to include and consider participatory approaches in various steps of developing protection and prevention systems; apply risk governance in a practical and professional way.

8. Literature

8.1. Literature cited in the tables of the annex:

Title in short	Title
Alpine Climate Target System 2050	Alpine Convention (2019): Climate-neutral and Climate-resilient Alps 2050; Declaration of Innsbruck. Alpine Climate Target System 2050 (7th Report on the state of the Alps “Natural Hazard Risk Governance”)
Alps 2050, Final Report	ESPON Alps 2050 – Common Spatial Perspectives for the Alpine Area. Towards a Common vision, Final Report (ESPON by University Erlangen, 2018)
ASP SEA	Environmental Report of the Strategic Environmental Assessment of the “Alpine Space” Cooperation Programme (by Jiricka, A. et al., 2014)
ESPON BRIDGES	ESPON BRIDGES – Territories with Geographical Specificities (ESPON by Spatial Foresight, including partner ÖIR, 2019)
ESPON BRIDGES South Tyrol Case Study (CS Synthesis)	ESPON BRIDGES – Territories with Geographical Specificities, Case Study Synthesis: South Tyrol Case Study (ESPON by Spatial Foresight, 2019)
ESPON PROFECY	ESPON PROFECY - Inner Peripheries: National territories facing challenges of access to basic services of general interest (ESPON by University of Valencia, 2017)
ESPON GRETA	ESPON GRETA Green infrastructure: Enhancing biodiversity and ecosystem services for territorial development (ESPON by Tecnalia, 2019)
ESPON GRETA EUSALP case study	ESPON GRETA Green infrastructure: Enhancing biodiversity and ecosystem services for territorial development (ESPON by Tecnalia, 2019)
ESPON SME	ESPON SME – Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises in European Regions and Cities (ESPON by ÖIR; 2017)
ESPON LinkPas	ESPON LinkPas - Linking Networks of Protected Areas to Territorial Development (ESPON by University of Tor Vergata, 2018)
ESPON LOCATE	ESPON LOCATE – Territories and Low-Carbon Economy (ESPON by ÖIR, 2017)
ESPON TEVI	ESPON TEVI – Territorial Evidence Support of European Territorial Cooperation Programmes (ESPON by ÖIR, ongoing- final delivery August 2019)
ESPON CBC TIA	ESPON CBC - Territorial Impact Assessment for Cross-Border Cooperation (ESPON by ÖIR, ongoing- final delivery May 2019)
ETC-programmes with German participation – future geographies	Transnational Interreg programmes with German participation: the future programme geographies. (by Bundesministerium des Inneren, für Bau und Heimat, 2019)
Evaluation of communication, effectiveness, stakeholder	Evaluation of Programme Communication, Effectiveness and Stakeholder Involvement of the Interreg Alpine Space 2014-2020 Programme (by Haarich, S. et al., Spatial Foresight, 2018)
Evaluation of communication, effectiveness, stakeholder SUM	Evaluation of Programme Communication, Effectiveness and Stakeholder Involvement of the Interreg Alpine Space 2014-2020 Programme, Executive Summary
Ex post evaluation of	European Commission (2017), Ex-post evaluation of Cohesion Policy pro-

the 2007-2013 Cohesion Policy	grammes 2007-2013, focusing on the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the Cohesion Fund (CF). Work Package 11: European Territorial Cooperation (by ADE)
GEAP	Green Economy Action Programme for the Alps (BMU 2019)
Identification of emerging trends, Lückge	Input paper “Interreg Alpine Space Programme - Identification of emerging trends and topics for the 4th call” (by Lückge, H., Climonomics, 2018)
INTERREG B: Potentials for further improvement of ETC	INTERREG B: Potentials for further improvement of transnational INTERREG Programmes post 2020 – some practical suggestions. (by Bundesministerium für Verkehr und digitale Infrastruktur, 2018)
PoliMI Strategic Assets EUSALP	Strategic Assets and Integration for a Competitive and Sustainable EUSALP Macro-Area (by Camagni R., Capello, R., Cerisola, S. ,Politechnico di Milano, 2018)
Pluralism White Paper (PWP)	PlurAlps White paper: Fostering pluralism as a key for local development (draft version, project PlurAlps)(by Ponzo, I. et al (2019)
RSA6 GE	Alpine Convention (2019): Sixth Report on the State of the Alps (Greening the Economy in the Alpine region, 2017)
RSA7 NatRisks	Alpine Convention (2019): Seventh Report on the State of the Alps: Natural risks Governance, Alpine Signals, Special Edition No 7.
Strategy Development for the Alpine Space (SDAS)	Strategy Development for the Alpine Space (by Gloersen, E., et al., 2013)
Study on Macro-regional Strategies and their links with cohesion policy (IHS, M&E factory, COWI)	Study on Macro-regional Strategies and their links with Cohesion Policy. (by IHS, M&E Factory, COWI, 2017)
Sustainable Lifestyles Study	Review of Lifestyle Research relevant to Alpine Regions. (by Guthauser/Seidl, Swiss Federal Institute for Forest, Snow and Landscape Research WSL Birmensdorf, Switzerland (2019)
Working Paper on the Evolution of Interreg B 2020+	Working Paper on the Evolution of Interreg B 2020+ (by: Bundesministerium für Verkehr und digitale Infrastruktur, 2017)
Regulations & Working Documents	
Interreg regulation (COM(2018)374)	COM(2018) 374: Regulation of the European parliament and of the council on specific provisions for the European territorial cooperation goal (Interreg) supported by the European Regional Development Fund and external financing instruments, (=specific “Interreg Regulation”).
Report from EC on the implementation of MRS COM(2019) 21 final)	COM(2019) 21 final: REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS on the implementation of EU macro-regional strategies {SWD(2019) 6 final}
EC-Communication concerning a European Union Strategy for the Alpine Region	COM(2015) 366 final: COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS concerning a European Union Strategy for the Alpine Region {SWD(2015) 147 final}

8.2. Further considered Literature

- Regulatory framework – European Commission draft proposals (April 2019):
  - **COM(2018) 375 final [2018/0196 (COD)]:** Regulation of the European parliament and of the council laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+), the Cohesion Fund (CF), and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) and financial rules for those and for the Asylum and Migration Fund, the Internal Security Fund and the Border Management and Visa Instrument (=”Common provisions regulation – CPR”);
  - **COM(2018) 372 final [2018/0197 (COD)]:** Regulation of the European parliament and of the council on the European Regional Development Fund and on the Cohesion Fund (=”ERDF-Regulation”);
  - **COM(2018) 373 final [2018/0199 (COD)]:** Regulation of the European parliament and of the council on a mechanism to resolve legal and administrative obstacles in a cross-border context.
- EC-Communications:
  - **COM(2015) 366 final:** COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS concerning a European Union Strategy for the Alpine Region {SWD(2015) 147 final}
  - **SWD(2015) 147 final:** COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT Action Plan Accompanying the document COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN CONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMITTEE AND THE COMITTEE OF THE REGIONS concerning the European Union Strategy for the Alpine Region {COM(2015) 366 final}
  - **COM(2019) 21 final:** REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS on the implementation of EU macro-regional strategies {SWD(2019) 6 final} (COM(2019) 21 final)
  - EC (2017): Seventh report on economic, social and territorial cohesion
- Die Macht der Megatrends. Wie die Welt von morgen entsteht (by Horx, M., 2011)
- ESPON Alps 2050 – Common Spatial Perspectives for the Alpine Area. Towards a Common vision, Atlas (ESPON by University of Erlangen, 2018)
- Interreg Alpine Space Programme 2014-2020, Cooperation Programme (Approved by the European Commission in 18 December 2014)
- Report on the Assessment of Territorial Cohesion and the Territorial Agenda 2020 of the European Union (by Böhme, K., Holstein, F. and Toptsidou, M., Spatial foresight, 2015)
- Strengthening Soft Territorial Policy Approaches under the post 2020 European Framework for the Territorial and Urban Agenda. Learnings, conclusions and recommendations of the DG Seminar on 13th of November 2018, Vienna (by Hiess, H. et al., Rosinak & Partner, 2018)
- Working Paper on the Evolution of Interreg B 2020+, Bundesministerium für Verkehr und digitale Infrastruktur, 19. July 2017 (Germany); see: https://www.interreg.de/INTERREG2014/DE/Interreg/Interregnach2020/positionenartikel/positionenartikel-node.html (2019-06-05)

- Transnational Interreg programmes with German participation: the future programme geographies. 5/2/2019 , Bundesministerium des Inneren, für Bau und Heimat, see: https://www.interreg.de/INTERREG2014/DE/Interreg/Interregnach2020/positionenartikel/positionenartikel-node.html (2019-06-05)
- INTERREG B : Potentials for further improvement of transnational INTERREG Programmes post 2020 – some practical suggestions, January 25, 2018, Bundesministerium für Velkehr und digitale Infrastruktur, see: https://www.interreg.de/INTERREG2014/DE/Interreg/Interregnach2020/positionenartikel/positionenartikel-node.html (2019-06-05)