



European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation
Gruppo europeo di cooperazione territoriale
Evropsko združenje za teritorialno sodelovanje

EGTC GO ITI PROGRAMMING DOCUMENT

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This document summarizes and upgrades the documentation, that have been already prepared and presented during the period of preparation of the CP INTERREG V-A ITALY SLOVENIA 2014-2020 for the area comprised within the municipalities of Gorizia, Nova Gorica and Šempeter-Vrtojba covered by EGCT GO:

- Documento di sintesi Degli obiettivi, azioni e proposte progettuali per la programmazione comunitaria e la stesura del Piano strategico – Povzetek ciljev, ukrepov in projektnih predlogov za prihodnje evropsko programsko obdobje ter oblikovanje strateškega načrta, approved by the Assembly of GECT GO / EZTS GO on November the 11th 2013. (Annex 1)
Territorial development strategy, presented to Task Force for the preparation of CP 2014-2020 in Gorizia, on September the 9th 2014. (Annex 2)
Detailed description of general, specific objectives and activities of the ITI pilot actions approved by the Assembly of GECT GO / EZTS GO on August 5th 2015. (Annex 3)
The Cooperation Programme Interreg V-A Italy-Slovenia 2014-2020, Decision C (2015) 9285 of 15 December 2015 (in particular to chapters 1.1.1.1., 4, 5.3.1.e, 5.3.2.a, 5.3.2.b)
- Project “Prospettive in chiave turistica dell’isonzo tra l’Italia e la Slovenia / Projekt turistično-gospodarske promocije Soškega parka in čezmejnega prostora, cofinanced by Interreg IIIA Slovenija-Italija 2000-2006”
- Project E-health nella macroarea transfrontaliera – E-zdravje na čezmejnem območju, CBC Programme Italy-Slovenia 2007-2013
- European Committee of Regions: The potential of closing the missing links of small scale infrastructure in Europe’s border regions for growth and employment, Recommendations for the way ahead (2016).
Gorizia e il GECT GO tra innovazione e declino. Un’analisi comparata di smartness. Project SEA (2014), CBC Programme Italy-Slovenia 2007-2013

Legal framework

- Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006;
- Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on specific provisions for the support from the European Regional Development Fund to the European territorial cooperation goal;
- Commission Delegated (EU) Regulation No 480/2014 of 3 March 2014 supplementing Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund
- Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 481/2014 of 4 March 2014 supplementing Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council with regard to specific rules on eligibility of expenditure for cooperation programmes;
- Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 821/2014 of 28 July 2014 laying down rules for the application of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards detailed arrangements for the transfer and management of programme contributions, the reporting on financial instruments, technical characteristics of information and communication measures for operations and the system to record and store data;
- Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 1011/2014 of 22 September 2014 laying down detailed rules for implementing Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the models for submission of certain information to the Commission and the detailed rules concerning the exchanges of information between beneficiaries and managing authorities, certifying authorities, audit authorities and intermediate bodies;
- Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 184/2014 of 25 February 2014 laying down pursuant to Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the

European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund, the terms and conditions applicable to the electronic data exchange system between the Member States and the Commission and adopting pursuant to Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council on specific provisions for the support from the European Regional Development Fund to the European territorial cooperation goal, the nomenclature of the categories of intervention for support from the European Regional Development Fund under the European territorial cooperation goal;

- Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 215/2014 of 7 March 2014 laying down rules for implementing Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund with regard to methodologies for climate change support, the determination of milestones and targets in the performance framework and the nomenclature of categories of intervention for the European Structural and Investment Funds;
- Regulation (EC) No 1082/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 on a European grouping of territorial cooperation (EGTC);
- The Cooperation Programme Interreg V-A Italy-Slovenia 2014-2020, Decision C (2015) 9285 of 15 December 2015;
- Convention and Articles of Association of the GECT GO / EZTS GO “Conurbation: Municipality of Gorizia (I), Municipality of Nova Gorica (SLO) and Municipality of Šempeter-Vrtojba (SLO)” (2010).
Regulation on the Internal Organisational Structure of EGTC GO (2015).

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Cooperation Programme V-A Italy-Slovenia 2014-2020 has chosen to apply the approach outlined in Art. 36 Reg. (EU) 1303/2013 to develop an integrated cross-border strategy for the specific case of the twin cities of Nova Gorica – Gorizia – Šempeter Vrtojba acting as EGTC from 2011.

As stated in Art. 11 Reg (EU) 1299/2013, ITI will be managed by the Office for Intermediate Body (hereinafter: OIB), a separate and functionally independent unit of EGTC GO. Furthermore, in order to implement the territorial strategy with an integrated approach, Art. 12 c. 3 Reg. (EU) 1299/2013 will be applied. As a consequence, EGTC GO will implement the strategy as “sole beneficiary” (hereinafter: SB) to strengthen a new, innovative concept of territorial cooperation, considered the most advanced form of cross-border territorial cooperation. In the functional structure of EGTC GO the two bodies (OIB and SB) will operate separately and independently. This methodological approach is highlighted by the Cooperation Programme V-A Italy-Slovenia 2014-2020 in its section 5.3.2.

Having shortly summarized Cooperation Programme V-A Italy-Slovenia 2014-2020 decisions for ITI implementation, it would be useful to recall the steps that led to these management choices.

EGTC added value

In spite of many years of cooperation, the three cities of Gorizia, Nova Gorica and Šempeter-Vrtojba have never achieved in the past 14 years of EU programming periods concrete results in delivering joint services or joint management of natural and cultural resources, because of the lack of instruments to deliver a common strategy in a cross-border context.

This is why the three cities have decided to establish an EGTC, having in mind that only genuine joint operations would have led to a real impact on the involved area. EGTC represents de facto the only tool able to (i) realize an integrated strategic approach for urban development, (ii) represent the needs of the three communities thanks to a representative Assembly, which eliminates the threat of domination by any of the three city (iii) capitalize past cooperation experiences, (iv) preserve the continuity of the cooperation (v) act on the whole cross-border area without the border limitations met by each single municipality.

It was a process of rethinking the entire government of the cross-border area to give life to a unique model in Europe, thanks to the particular shape of the neighbouring urban agglomeration which allows to consider the three cities as one, "unique" reality.

Through accurate territorial analysis and discussion, three main pillars have been taken into consideration for the finalization of the territorial strategy of the EGTC GO area:

- Capitalization of two European programming periods of the Italy – Slovenia Programme, in order to maximize the effectiveness and efficiency of public investments;
- Revitalization of the “border economy” converting, thanks to an innovative approach, the point of strengths of the area;
- Growth of joint local services to the citizens of the three municipalities, enhancing the excellence of the territory.

On the basis of these three pillars, in 2013 EGTC GO started to work concretely thanks to the important and scrupulous “work on the field” developed by the EGTC GO Committees (Health, Culture, Energy, Urban Planning, Youth, Transport), taking into account the principle of concentration of the resources in the thematic objectives set out by the Union strategy.

The work was performed by a bottom up approach, endorsed by the EGTC GO Committees as main “think tanks”, with direct link and reflection of the needs of the territory.

As a result of this one-year process, the strategic document “Objectives, actions and planning proposals for EU Programming Period and the establishment of the Strategic Plan” was adopted unanimously by the EGTC GO Assembly on November 11th 2013.

ITI added value

Thanks to EU Programming period 2014-2020, a new instrument called “Integrated Territorial Investment” has been introduced by the Regulatory framework giving the opportunity for the three cities to use this tool for the implementation of the Strategy.

In line with the EU strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, as stated in point n. 22 of the preambles of Reg (UE) 1299/2013, the European Structural and Investment Funds should provide a more integrated and inclusive approach to tackling local problems. In order to strengthen such an approach, support from the ERDF in border regions should be coordinated with support from the EAFRD and the EMFF and should, where appropriate, involve European groupings of territorial cooperation (EGTCs) set up under Regulation (EU) No 1302/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council where local development is one of their objectives.

The main purpose of ITI tool is precisely that of exploiting potentials of a place-based policy, i.e. to deliver a long-term strategy aimed at facing social and economic challenges for a well-defined geographical area.

That's why EGTC GO representatives in 2014 submitted to the task force, established to design the future Italy Slovenia Cooperation Programme, the proposal, which combining the two fundamental instruments for territorial integration, EGTC and ITI, represents a significant added value to the programme.

At last, the combination of these two instruments provides the possibility to translate strategies into concrete actions, going beyond the administrative borders.

Sole Beneficiary added value

Considered that EGTC and ITI could be mixed together to deliver the strategy of the three cities, the choice to adopt sole beneficiary model came as a reasonable and logical consequence for the correct implementation of the operation.

After so many years in which the principle of co-operation was based on the territoriality of the interventions, for the very first time border related constrains can be removed thus shifting focus to the joint urban dimension without the borders and deviations caused by national based financial allocations.

For the very first time, a cross-border strategy will be delivered by a single organisation – EGTC GO - which will promote territorial dialogues, coordinate both Slovenian and Italian involved authorities (implementing bodies), strengthen multilevel governance, promote partnership with Slovene and Italian territorial development stakeholders such as representatives of businesses, local community groups, other public bodies, acting as a “one stop shop” to the whole citizenship to provide information about the state of the art of the activities.

The decision to implement ITI through the sole beneficiary principle represents a new methodology in cross-border cooperation, which is strongly supported by ETC strategic documents. The entire community is deeply convinced that in a such cross-border territorial context, the economic and social regeneration have to pass through a high level of innovation and concentration (in term of resources and competences) to produce a significant territorial growth.

In this perspective, EGTC GO has to be in charge of the implementation of the strategy, through the two pilot actions implemented by the ITI of the CP Italy-Slovenia, acting as sole beneficiary to reduce

administrative barriers, caused by the existence of the border. EGTC GO is the only organization who has territorial competence on the whole cross-border area and is at the same time owned by the three municipalities, on an equal basis. This management procedure guarantees the three communities to share decision making process and to jointly control the achievements of the outputs.

Therefore, the two pilot actions “Isonzo – Soča” and “Health” will contribute to the delivery of new solutions to support the integration of the single urban area of the three cities, offering the citizens the opportunity to understand the value of living in the core of the European Union and not at the margin of two Countries.

Pilot Actions

The two pilot actions of EGTC GO included in the CP Italy-Slovenia, must be seen, therefore, as a first step towards the realization of the overall designed strategy for the economic and social regeneration of the entire cross-border community, focused on:

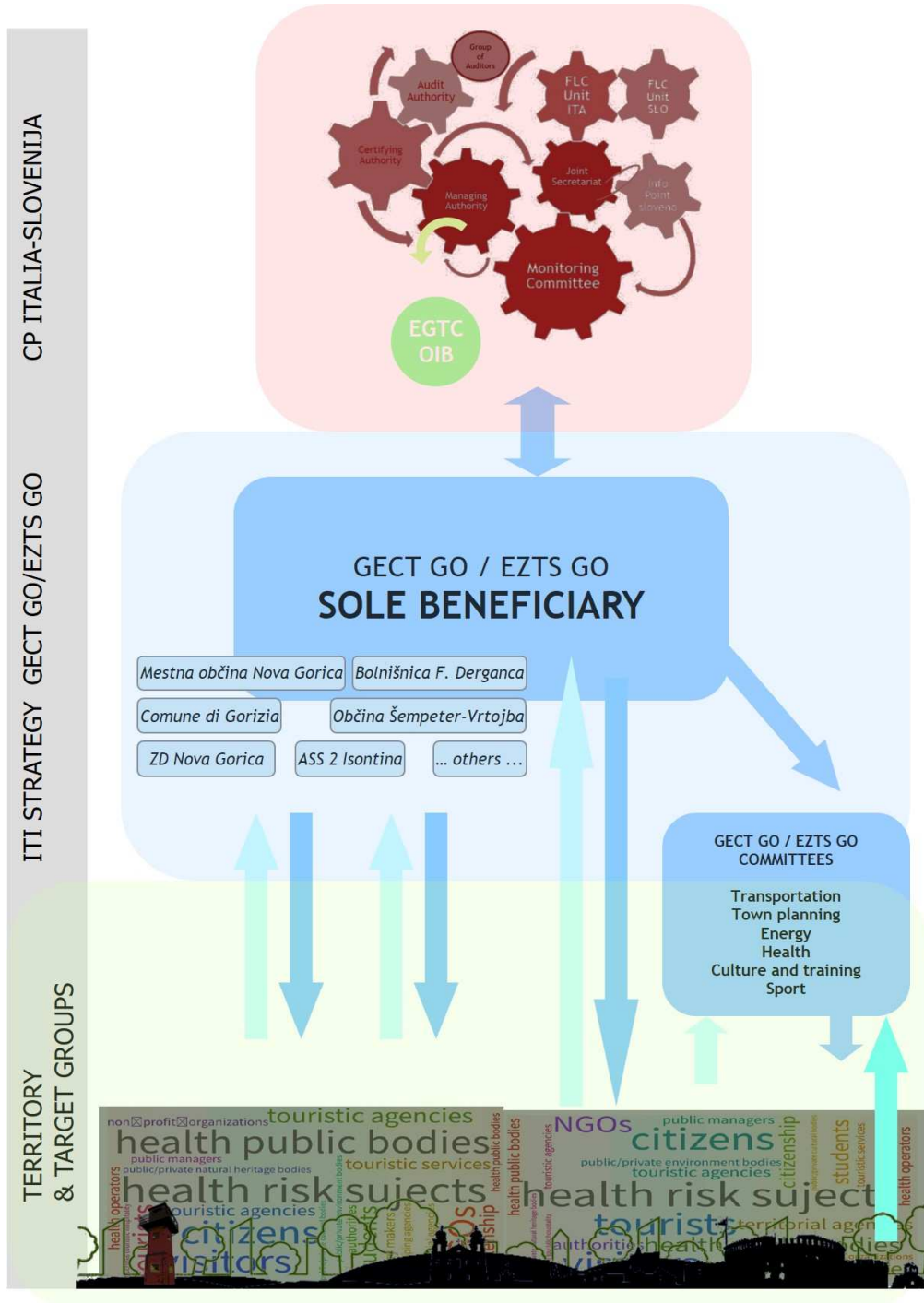
- investing in our common natural and cultural heritage for both preserving and creating an economic leverage effect. Pilot Action: “Natural cross-border Park – Isonzo Soča”.
- guaranteeing joint services to the population of the EGTC GO area. Pilot action: “Building a network of cross-border health services”;

“**Isonzo – Soča**” pilot action will develop an integrated cross-border network of cycling and walking paths to establish the first urban cross-border park to increase sustainable mobility in the urban area and to attract tourists with a sustainable impact on the economy of the whole urban territory. EGTC GO - SB will act as a contracting authority for the procurement, following the procedures indicated in the Italian D.lgs 50/2016. The three municipalities will support EGTC GO - SB facilitating and issuing the plans and permissions on the basis of the national framework. A cross-border conference of services will be established by EGTC GO - SB to ask for the necessary authorizations from the delegated bodies in charge of the single permissions.

“**Health**” pilot action intends to build a network of integrated services providing a joint use of the health systems of the EGTC GO area, to implement the Directive 2011/24/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 March 2011 on the application of patients’ rights in cross-border healthcare. At the moment, Italian and Slovenian informative systems are not connected making

difficult for citizenship to have information about health services in EGTC GO area. Both Slovenian and Italian citizens have to move outside the three cities, in case its own local hospital doesn't provide needed health service, also if Slovenian and Italian hospitals are on a distance of one kilometre. Thanks to the pilot action, a new IT network will be created, giving the opportunity to provide cross-border citizenship a wider range of healthcare services. EGTC GO will act as a sole beneficiary to establish a single information system in Slovenian and in Italian language, connecting and upgrading the existing ones. A single booking system will be set up, offering the citizenship a more efficient sanitary system. Specific protocols for the free movement of patients will be set up between the two sanitary systems for the reimbursement of health services. In connections with this horizontal activity, two specific actions will be developed to establish joint medical working group in the field of mental disease and pregnancy. Through the pilot actions, EGTC GO - SB will cover costs of the personnel dedicated to the specific action, paving the way to the creation of integrated team of doctors and nurses for the exchanges of best practices in the specific working field. Particular attention for the realization of this action will be given to the best practice of the "EGTC Hospital de Cerdanya", where a unique hospital was set up and is managed by an EGTC. EGTC GO - SB will be in charge of the procurement procedures for the work and supply, in coordination with the Italian and Slovenian health authorities (implementing bodies). At the end of the pilot actions, once the single information system will be fully operational, the maintenance costs will be sustained by the Slovenian and Italian sanitary systems, thanks to the protocols signed as an output of the pilot actions activities.

GOVERNANCE OF THE ITI APPROACH



2. TERRITORIAL CONTEXT and SWOT

2.1 TERRITORIAL CONTEXT

The functional urban region of Gorizia, Nova Gorica and Šempeter is situated at the centre of the border line between Italy and Slovenia and comprises the area between the Soča river and the Collio and Karst regions.

The border, emerged after the WWII, almost insurmountable in the early years - ran along the edges of the city of Gorizia and separated it from its hinterland which was traditionally connected to the city. In 1948, on the Slovenian side a new city was built. It was called Nova Gorica. Following the Udine Agreement (1955), signed by Italy and Yugoslavia, a new border was created. In the following Iron Period years it regulated trade across the borders for those, who hold a specific permit and the farmers, whose lands were crossed by the boundary line. Following the Treaty of Osimo (1975), the land and sea borders between the two countries were finally settled, while the agreements for economic promotion and cooperation gave impetus and contributed to the improvement of the living conditions of the population along the border.

In that period, the border area was extremely important for both countries, since it fostered mutual development (trade, transportation and shipping, customs, police and army, etc.) Despite the significant differences between the two countries, on both sides many were willing to cross the border, especially those involved in sports and cultural activities. In the following decades the two neighbouring cities and their surroundings developed as two adjacent and connected urban areas.

This cooperation area shows territorial development pattern closely linked to the characteristics of the socio-economical and political context. The entire development model of this area has been based on the presence of a shared border that during its existence has offered a different degree of openness.

The entrance of Slovenia into the European Union first and the adoption of Schengen Treaty afterward have indeed increased the opportunities but had also constituted an immediate challenge for an area so strongly tied to a "border based" economy. Additionally, the context of financial crisis has reduced public investments for local services and there is a need for pooling resources and share costs whenever possible.

Tourism

According to UNWTO figures on future trends in the tourism industry, the number of international tourists in Europe will grow at an average annual rate of 3.3% between 2010 and 2030. This will bring about an increase of 43 million arrivals every year and a total of 1.8 billion tourists in 2030 from all around the world. The main destination area in the world continues to be Europe, but its market share will be reduced progressively in favour of the areas with highest growth, namely the Far East and Asia-Pacific.

The Programme area has high tourism potential on the basis of its natural and cultural assets. There are existing developed tourist products (gastronomy, active tourism, cultural, leisure, historic...), which need to be upgraded in line with quality and sustainability standards, including also eco-friendly mobility.

With the aim to exploit cultural and natural resources of the area, the project "Prospettive in chiave turistica dell'isonzo tra l'Italia e la Slovenia", was cofinanced by Interreg IIIA Slovenia-Italy for the implementation of the cross-border park on the Isonzo, connecting urban area of neighbouring cities. On the basis of this study and for the capitalization of the related outputs, EGTC GO has included the implementation of cross-border park in its strategy.

Socio-demographic aspects

With reference to the percentage of population at risk of poverty or social exclusion, the EGTC GO area ranks significantly lower than the European average of areas at risk of poverty and social exclusion, but over the last few years these territory have seen an increase in these phenomena.

Considering the research published by IRES FVG, EGTC GO area is ranked on the bottom of the list in terms of social assistance services offered to cross-border populations. The area is characterized by some unbalances in different fields, in particular in terms of services related to social inclusion and welfare systems. The process of aging of the population, which covers the entire area is a factor that, in the medium term will have a significant impact on health policy and social inclusion. This aspect is aggravated by the effects produced by the economic crisis in terms of an increase in the unemployment rate, even against older workers. The specific expected result is the strengthening of institutional and administrative capacity in the implementation of services addressing social needs and health and that through active aging can be socially cohesive and economically competitive.

Starting from results of project e-health, financed under CBC Slovenija Italija 2007-2013, EGTC GO intends to enhance modernization and quality of health and social services, strengthening public

administration cooperation in order to define common tools to deliver joint services for the cross-border population.

2.2. SWOT

The following SWOT analysis presents internal strengths and weaknesses as well as external opportunities and threats of the EGTC GO area, for the relevant thematic objectives. This represents fundamental basis for the identification of the needs and challenges to be addressed through the present EGTC GO strategy, partially implemented through ITI.

TO 6

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p><i>Existence of attractive natural, historical and cultural sites.</i> <i>Great potential to use natural and cultural heritage as development driver.</i> <i>Strong coordination and systemic approach among territories.</i> <i>Outstanding heritage.</i></p>	<p><i>Increase of polluted areas and bad status of water resources.</i> <i>Need to enhance integration of promotion and valorization activities at CBC level.</i></p>
Opportunities	Threats
<p><i>Increase of sustainable and naturalistic tourism demand that can also provide opportunities in cross-border cooperation and ecologic management.</i></p>	<p><i>Increase of pollution and of unsustainable use of natural resources.</i> <i>Degradation of conservation status of habitats and protected areas.</i> <i>Reduction of public investments for environment and cultural heritage protection and restoration.</i></p>

TO 11

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p><i>High level of participation to ETC Programs for both the two sides of the area.</i> <i>EGTC GO as the institutionalization of the CBC in the area.</i></p>	<p><i>Need for better innovation and efficiency in the Public Administration, in particular through the reduction of administrative burden on citizens and enhancement of cross-border projects in order to strength capacity building.</i></p>
Opportunities	Threats
<p><i>Conception and realization of common solutions and services in health sector.</i> <i>Increase in transparency and Open Data accessibility.</i> <i>Increased multilevel governance in the cross-border area.</i></p>	<p><i>Difficulties of cooperation to take action due to different legislation.</i></p>

2.3 CHALLENGES AND NEEDS

Following the results raised from the analysis of the situation of the EGTC GO area and from the SWOT Analysis, several challenges and needs have been identified for their relevance in terms of Europe 2020 contribution and for their possibility to be effectively addressed by the ITI implementation.

These elements represent the basis for the selection of pilot actions within the EGTC GO strategy partially implemented through ITI.

Europe 2020 Strategy	CHALLENGES	NEEDS
Sustainable growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discourage car users and improve accessibility, quality and innovation of public transport - Avoid marginalization of less accessible areas from main functional urban areas and services - Increase multimodality exploiting proximity among different transport system - Reduce road traffic and congestion, air pollution and energy consumption - Decrease CO2 emissions caused by transport - Capitalize relevant experiences and initiatives in the field of energy and mobility planning - Reduce pressure and usage conflicts affecting environment and natural and cultural heritage - Exploit the endogenous natural and cultural potential as important impulse to green growth and green jobs - Fight against degradation and pollution of natural and cultural sites due to human behaviours and activities - Promote the natural and cultural sites of the area in a better integrated and coordinated manner - Stimulate economic activity within the concept of sustainable development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raise air quality level promoting integrated low carbon strategies - Develop more sustainable mobility systems in urban and local areas, leading to livelihood, air quality and human health - Define cross-border solutions improving natural and cultural resources management, contrasting negative effects (pollution, natural risks, loss of biodiversity, etc.) and promoting their potential as development factor - Develop knowledge, accessibility and attractiveness and enhance the state of conservation of the natural and cultural heritage also favouring territorial and touristic marketing shared strategies - Stimulate eco-friendly behaviours of citizens and tourists - Share better knowledge on ecosystems and improve capacities in their management and protection.
Inclusive growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Answer adequately to raising demand of citizens and enterprises for simplification and digitalization - Develop new models, tools networks increasing coordination and cooperation in order to equilibrate development disparities and unbalances and improve territorial cohesion of the area - Decrease percentage of the population at risk of poverty and social exclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve e-health and better quality of social services for most vulnerable categories - Provide efficient and innovative public services, improving e-government - Encourage cross-border cooperation at different level (institutional, political and administrative) to converge decision makers' attention on common issues

3. STRATEGY AND OBJECTIVES

To tackle common challenges and to exploit cross-border potentials, the three municipalities have decided to prepare jointly a territorial development strategy, based on an integrated approach, considered most appropriate to tackle the different needs and challenges of the area. At the same time, in order to fully exploit the opportunities offered by the shared EU context and framework, Gorizia, Nova Gorica and Šempeter-Vrtojba have set up, in February 2011, a European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (GECT GO/EZTS GO) based in Gorizia and that is in charge for the implementation of the joint strategy.

In the context of the Cooperation Programme V-A Italy-Slovenia 2014-2020 the following needs and challenges will be tackled:

- promote the natural and cultural sites of the area in a better integrated and coordinated manner;
- answer adequately to raising demand of citizens and enterprises for joint services while developing new tools and networks increasing coordination and cooperation in order to improve territorial cohesion of the area;
- define cross-border solutions improving natural and cultural resources management, promoting their potential as development factor while stimulating eco-friendly behaviours of citizens and tourists;
- encourage cross-border cooperation at different levels (institutional, political and administrative) to converge decision makers' attention on common issues.

The rationale was based on a new management model for a cross-border area that has already become a unique case in Europe. The special arrangement of the urban sprawl offers the opportunity to consider the three cities as a unique single city.

Drafting such a plan is a step that should not be neglected, as it requires clearly defined spatial needs and a strong vision for the future.

EGTC GO has completed a serious and thorough analysis of the requirements and is ready to tackle the challenge. The research was done with a bottom-up approach so that EGTC GO had the opportunity to listen to the needs of the three cities and thus lay down a path that could match their requirements and peculiarities. In examining the draft projects, EGTC GO's committees applied the programme's requirements and the goals of the 2020 Strategy to trace a strategic path in line with European Union's priorities.

The following criteria were applied for selecting the pilot projects to be financed through ITI:

1. Relevance of the draft proposals to the local problems and needs (We checked the proposed project's impact on the important problems of the area, which emerged from the meetings of the committees.)
2. Compatibility of the proposed project. The following questions needed to be answered: Do the projects comprise measures (the ones described separately on the applications) and activities in line with the goals set and the expected results?
3. Feasibility of the project in view of the Cooperation Programme V-A Italy-Slovenia 2014-2020:
4. Implementation capacity. The basic question for assessing the implementation capacity is the following: The draft projects are based on specific feasibility studies, which enable us to assess the real capacities to make good use of the funds awarded with no risk of losing them.

In November 2013 the Assembly of the EGTC GO has approved a Strategic plan selecting three pilot actions:

- The pilot action “**Isonzo – Soča**” will contribute to the achievement Conserving, protecting, restoring, and developing natural and cultural heritage seeking the change for valorisation of a valuable cross border natural site through sustainable tourism, environmental protection and green growth.
- The pilot action “**Health**” will contribute to the achievement of Strengthening the institutional cooperation capacity through mobilizing public authorities and key actors of the Programme area for planning joint solutions to common challenge, seeking the change for a closer integration and understanding of the legislative framework and administrative practices implemented in the two countries while paving the way for a joint use of the health systems of the target area that could be furthered to the whole cooperation area and beyond.
- **The Gorizia - Nova Gorica - Šempeter-Vrtojba railway Hub** is one of the two operating railway border crossings between Italy and Slovenia and thus one of the links between western Europe and the Balkans. The relaunching of Gorizia - Nova Gorica - Šempeter-Vrtojba railway Hub would pave the way for allowing sustainable and efficient transport modes for passengers and goods serving a large area comprising the upper Adriatic hinterland. It is also of a great relevance for the rail transport of passengers for the future development of tourism.

EGTC GO representatives in 2014 submitted to the task force established to design the future Italy Slovenia CBC programme the Territorial development strategy to be implemented by the combination

of the two instruments EGTC and ITI. The Territorial development strategy included 3 mentioned pilot actions for the cumulative amount of 19.019.693 EUR. Taking into account the total allocation of the ERDF funds for the whole Italy Slovenia CBC programme, the task force decided to allocate 10 million euros and asked to include the pilot actions into the CP priority axis in compliance with the thematic objectives included in the CP. Therefore the pilot action related to transport in the CP Italia-Slovenija was not included. Nevertheless EGTC GO promoted towards EC, EP and COR the importance of this pillar of the strategy discovering that was already included by the EP transport commission in its strategic planning. The COR report "The potential of closing the missing links of small scale infrastructure in Europe's border regions for growth and employment" considers EGTC GO logistic platform as one of the most problematic missing link for regional crossborder development in rail connections. Thanks to this EP initiative, EC has already announced that the next call for proposals of the Programme CEF will be devoted to missing link issue to solve this crucial gap in regional cooperation. Therefore, EGTC GO is preparing to apply in order to find out financial allocation for the realisation of the crossborder hub, thus implementing the third pillar of the strategy and adding, in the medium term, a new fund for the implementation of Territorial development strategy.

In order to deliver the EGTC GO strategy, the Cross-border Cooperation Programme ITA-SLO 2014-2020 decided to apply the approach outlined in Art. 36 of the Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 since EGTC GO strategy requires an integrated approach involving investments and activities under more than one priority axis ITI was selected as the most appropriate tool on the basis of the aforementioned article of the Reg. (EU) No. 1303/2013.

Several elements ensure the coherence of the activities carried out under the coordination of the EGTC GO under the ITI framework with the overall Programme Strategy:

- the EGTC GO is acknowledged as the most advanced form of cross-border territorial cooperation unfolding its potentials by supporting joint management and modernization in health, environment and infrastructural sector, urban transport, logistics, energy and economic development initiatives;
- the pool of pilot actions proposed in the EGTC GO development strategy have been recognized by the stakeholders of the target area as the most appropriate to tackle the needs and challenges as identified in Section 1 of the CP;
- the involvement of the decision making level at early stage of the process (presentation and endorsement of the EGTC GO strategic Plan to Autonomous Region Friuli Venezia Giulia President and Republic of Slovenia President on [December 6th 2013](#) - Joint Declaration signed by

Italian and Slovenian Government on [May 27th 2014](#)) is ensuring the sustainability of the outcomes of the ITI;

- there is a clear link of the proposed pilot actions with a number of strategic operations of the past Italy – Slovenia programming period 2007 – 2013 whose achievements have demonstrated to be successful and worth to be capitalized for furthering impacts;
- the results achieved will unfold their impacts beyond the target area as the outputs of the actions are envisaged as replicable in other parts of the Programme area.

ITI is mono-fund and multi-axis since the strategic programming of the EGTC GO area needs interventions in different Thematic Objectives and Investment Priorities to tackle the common future challenges of a joint economic and social growth.

The ITI constitutes the main instruments for the implementation of the territorial development strategy of the target area, taking into account its three main pillars:

- capitalization of the experiences and outcomes of previous Italy – Slovenia Programmes in order to ensure highest efficiency and effectiveness of public investments;
- revitalization of the “border based” economy while supporting its reconversion by use of identified strengths and assets;
- improvement of the quality of life of residents of the area by fostering the use of joint CB services.

4. ITI PILOT ACTIONS

4.1 PILOT ACTION: CROSS-BORDER NATURE PARK ISONZO-SOČA

Information about the priority axes, investment priority, expected results cofinancement, indicators and target groups follow the framework set out in the Cooperation Programme V-A Italy-Slovenia 2014-2020. This elements represent the general indications and basis for the selection of the pilot actions.

Priority Axis 3	Protecting and promoting natural and cultural resources
Investment Priority 3.1	Conserving, protecting, restoring, and developing natural and cultural heritage
Expected result	Valorization and promotion of natural and cultural assets of the cooperation area in order to attract sustainable tourism demand.
Fund and calculation basis for Union support	€ 5.000.000,00 (ERDF+national co-financing) Total eligible expenditure

In accordance with the Cross-border Cooperation Programme ITA-SLO 2014-2020 the pilot actions must contribute to the realization of the following indicators:

ID	Indicator Measurement	Unit	Source of Data	Frequency of reporting
3.1.	Level of Cross-border cooperation in the sustainable valorization of cultural and natural heritage	Number of visitors	National/Regional statistic	2018-2020-2023

Target groups

The target groups will include potential visitors (citizens, tourists, students), structures providing touristic hospitality or services, SMEs and creative industries, public and private subjects dealing with the management and valorization of natural and cultural assets of the area. Potential visitors (residents, tourists, students) public and private bodies engaged in managing and enhancing the natural and cultural heritage. Development agencies, regional marketing agencies and tourist agencies

NGOs, not-for-profit organisations and other professional and civic associations operating in the fields of environment, natural resources, social and cultural issues.

Providers of tourist services and products

Residents of the EGTC GO's area

Common and programme-specific output indicators

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Source of data	Frequency of reporting
CO09	Increase in expected number of visits to supported sites of cultural and natural heritage and attractions	Visits/year	Programme monitoring	Annually
3.1.1	Number of investments implemented or services/products created supporting preservation/restoration of natural and cultural heritage	Number	Programme monitoring	Annually
3.1.2	Km bicycle path/lane completed	Km	Programme monitoring	Annually

4.2. PILOT ACTION: BUILDING A CROSS-BORDER HEALTH SERVICES NETWORK

Priority Axis 4	Enhancing capacity building and cross-border governance
Investment Priority 4.1.	Strengthen the institutional cooperation capacity through mobilizing public authorities and key actors of the Programme area for planning joint solutions to common challenges
Expected result	Increased intensity of CBC between citizens and institutions in the programming area.
Fund and calculation basis for Union support	€ 5.000.000,00 (ERDF+national co-financing) Total eligible expenditure

In accordance with the Cross-border Cooperation Programme ITA-SLO 2014-2020 the pilot actions must contribute to the realization of the following indicators:

ID	Indicator	Measurement Unit	Source of Data	Frequency of reporting
4.1	Increased capacity of public authorities and stakeholders in cross-border cooperation and governance	%	Survey	2017-2019-2023

Target groups

Actions will affect the groups involved in strengthening of public health services, such as enterprises and SMEs engaged in the sectors most exposed to international competition and innovation, civil protection and organization of environmental risk management, subjects living in areas at risk of natural disasters, elderly at risk of poverty, operators in the field of health, low skilled unemployed, subjects vulnerable to high health risk.

Common and programme-specific output indicators

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Source of data	Frequency of reporting
4.1.1	Cross-border agreement and protocols signed	Number	Programme monitoring	Annually
4.1.2	Joint solutions increasing integration, coherence, harmonization of the Programme area governance (shared politics, legislative frameworks or regulations, joint strategic documents, e-government tools, etc.)	Joint solutions	Programme monitoring	Annually
4.1.3	Number of beneficiaries participating in joint training schemes	Number	Programme monitoring	Annually
4.1.4	Number of cross-border medical teams full-formed and operational	Number	Programme monitoring	Annually

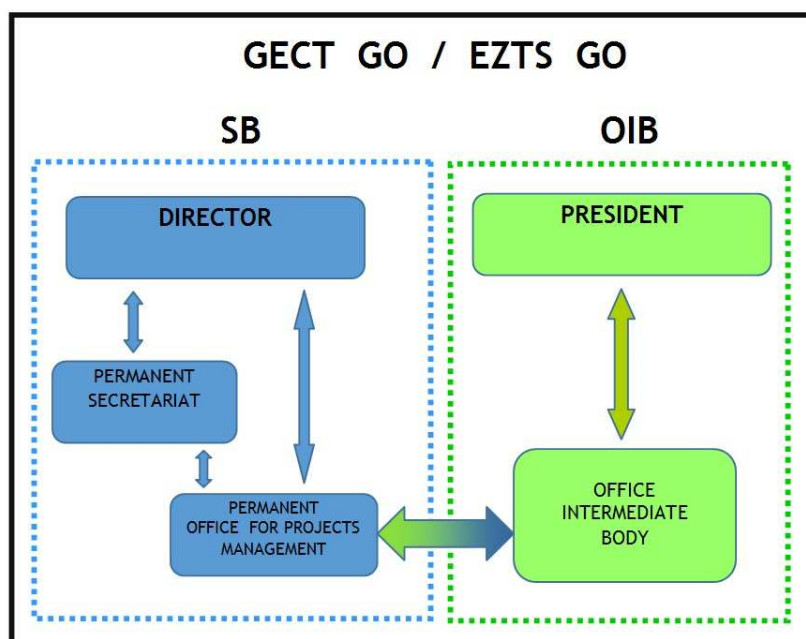
5. FINANCIAL PLAN

Priority axis	Thematic objective	Pilot Action	ERDF allocation	National Co-financing	Total Allocation
Priority axis 3	Thematic objective 6 (6c)	Isonzo - Soča	4.250.000	750.000	5.000.000
Priority axis 4	Thematic objective 11 (ETC)	Health	4.250.000	750.000	5.000.000

6. GOVERNANCE

According to the Regulation on internal structure, EGTC GO has the following organisation:

- a) Permanent Secretariat;
- b) Permanent office for project management;
- c) Office for Intermediate Body;



In compliance with the Cooperation Programme V-A Italy-Slovenia 2014-2020, the ITI will be managed by the Office for Intermediate Body (OIB) in the role of intermediate body for a part of the Cooperation Programme V-A Italy-Slovenia 2014-2020.

This Unit of the EGTC GO, that will act as intermediate body in line with the provisions of Art. 11 of the Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013, is separated and functionally independent to the Permanent Office for the Projects Management of the EGTC GO that will act as sole beneficiary (SB).

According to the Art. 125 of the Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 and to the Cooperation Programme V-A Italy-Slovenia 2014-2020 the OIB of the EGTC GO will:

- apply appropriate procedures and criteria approved by MC for the selection of the operations;

- support the work of the MC referred to in Article 47 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 and provide detailed data on the overall progress of the ITI;
- ensure that the SB is provided with a document setting out the conditions for support for each operation including the specific requirements concerning the products or services to be delivered under the operation, the financing plan, and the time-limit for execution;
- ensure that the data is collected, entered and stored in the monitoring system;
- support the MA in drawing up the annual and final implementation reports referred to in Article 50 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013.
- support the Managing Authority with information needed to evaluate the Cooperation Programme V-A Italy-Slovenia 2014-2020;
- prepare and update the audit trails for the operations within its competence;
- support the Managing Authority to ensure compliance with the information and communication obligations.

A specific agreement between the OIB and the Managing Authority (as referred to Art. 123 of the Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013) and the Description of the Management and Control System (DMCS) approved according to Art. 124 of the Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 will detail rules and responsibilities of the parties. The agreement will consider the detailed tasks, as referred in Art. 125 of the Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, delegated by the MA to the OIB, in relation to the support of information to the MC, the selection of operations, as well as management and control in the framework of ITI implementation.

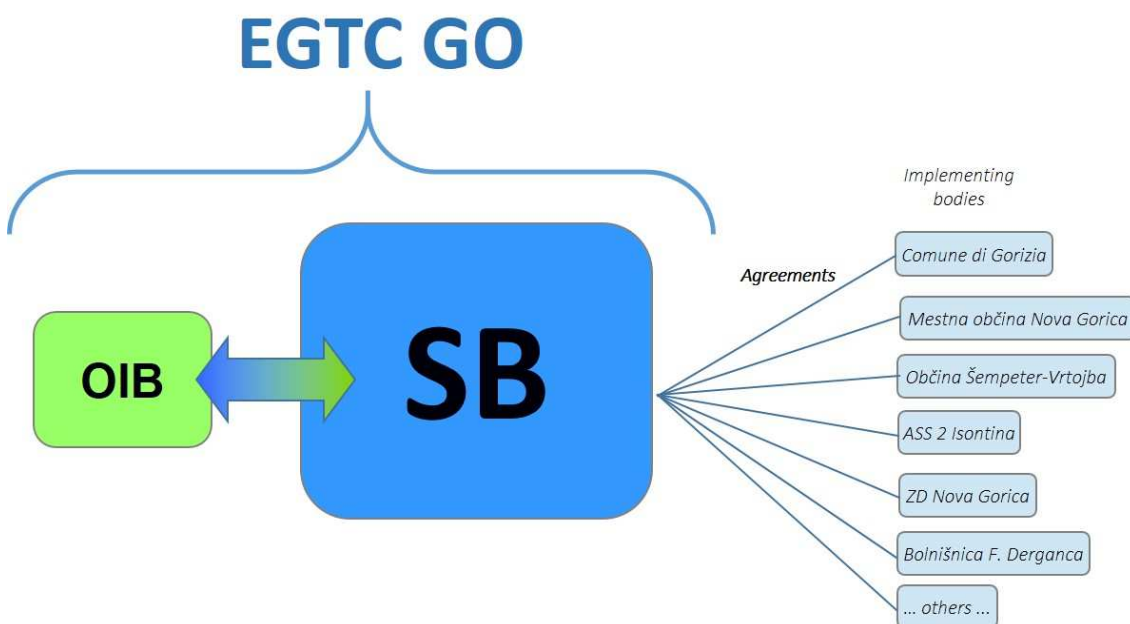
Pilot actions for the ITI implementation, in the scope of priority axes 3 and 4 amount in total of € 8.500.000,00 (ERDF) and € 1.500.000,00 (national co-financing). Pilot actions under the ITI will be implemented by the EGTC “GECT GO/EZTS GO” in its role of sole beneficiary as structure functionally independent from the OIB, while selection, monitoring and evaluation actions will be implemented by the OIB functionally independent office operating within EGTC GO. The functional independence of the OIB is enshrined in Article 8 of EGTC GO's Regulation on the Internal Organisation, where the Office's employees--in carrying out their functions--shall not be considered under the control of EGTC GO Director. Article 10 of EGTC GO Regulation stipulates that the appointing, recall and replacement of the head of the OIB shall be an exclusive competence of the President of EGTC GO Assembly. The OIB shall operate according to the operating guidelines set out by the President .

The Permanent Secretariat operates under the provisions of article 8, paragraph 3, of the EGTC GO Statute, performing secretarial functions of management, territorial coordination and communication. The Office operates within the EGTC GO, reporting directly to the Director.

The Regulation for the internal structure of the EGTC GO establishes the **Permanent office for the project management**, to which are assigned human resources proportionally to the office's tasks. The Office operates within the EGTC GO, reporting directly to the Director.

The Sole Beneficiary model:

In accordance with art. 12 of Regulation (EU) 1299/2013, and as stated in the Cooperation Programme V-A Italy-Slovenia 2014-2020, the "sole beneficiary" model is adopted for the implementation of the ITI. The EGTC GO – Permanent Office for Projects Management acts as SB of two pilot actions to implement the ITI strategy; each action is implemented directly by the SB (also applying the disposals of art. No. 39 of Directive 24/2014 to act as contracting authority), eventually in agreement with authorities competent for permits and for the implementation of specific policies and actions (Implementing Bodies).



The Sole Beneficiary management:

