



Alpine Space Heading for Excellence

St. Johann im Pongau, Austria, 28th and 29th of June 2007

EventLetter

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The Alpine Space Programme 2007-2013

The new programme is launched!



On 28th and 29th of June 2007, about 400 participants - politicians, current and potential new project partners, representatives of European and Alpine organisations and institutions, representatives of local, regional, national and European level - met for a two-days conference in St. Johann im Pongau (Austria). The event combined the grand finale of the INTERREG IIB Alpine Space Programme with the ceremonial launch of the European Territorial Cooperation Programme 2007-2013.

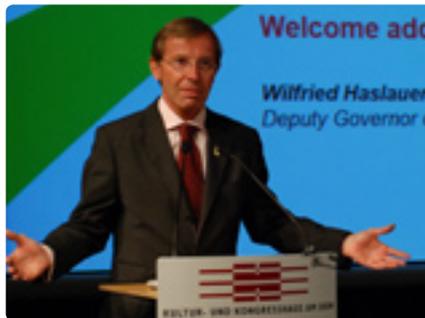
The exchanges on results and best practice experiences gathered in 2000-2006 pave the way for exchanges on new ideas and future project development.

The hosts, **Mrs. Petra Nocker-Schwarzenbacher** (*City of St. Johann im Pongau*), **Mr. Wilfried Haslauer**, (*Deputy Governor of the Land of Salzburg*) and **Mrs. Heidrun Silhavy** (*State Secretary at the Federal Chancellery, Austria*) warmly welcomed their guests.

During the opening, Mrs. Silhavy and Mrs. Nocker-Schwarzenbacher officially launched the Programme by unfolding a parchment and revealing the new logo of the Programme.



Mrs. Petra Nocker-Schwarzenbacher



Mr. Wilfried Haslauer



Mrs. Heidrun Silhavy

Territorial Cooperation in Europe

The subsequent plenary session introduced the political dimension of the programme and illustrated how INTERREG IIB has integrated a new dimension: the "European Territorial Cooperation" objective of the European Union. Politicians and representatives of different territorial level highlighted the benefits of past, present and future transnational Alpine and European cooperation.

Mr. Colin Wolfe (*European Commission - DG Regio*) gave an overview on the upcoming Structural Funds period. He pointed out that the upgraded transnational cooperation, now an objective, shall "act on big problems we can't solve

alone", "ensure we pull together" and "facilitate a strategic response". He motivated current and future project partners and programme bodies to develop ambitious objectives to be reached until 2013 and to search for modern and even sophisticated solutions.



Mr. Colin Wolfe

Mr. Peter Jung (*Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Affairs, Germany*) informed the audience about the "Territorial Agenda". In May 2007, the European ministers for urban and regional planning met in Leipzig to discuss about two essential and comple-



Mr. Peter Jung

→ **The Alpine Space Programme 2007 - 2013**

mentary documents: “the Leipzig Charta” on sustainable urban development and the “Territorial Agenda” of the EU. The latter does not substitute the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP), but shall be seen as an action plan making all sectoral policies aware of the territorial dimension. From this perspective, projects shall be developed especially in three areas:

- ✦ approaches facing climate change,
- ✦ solutions to handle the demographic change, the aging population and the interior and exterior migration,
- ✦ networks of regions and towns aiming at a polycentric and balanced spatial development.

Mr. Bernard Soulage (*Vice-President of the Regional Council of Rhône-Alpes, France and member of the Committee of Regions*) could unfortunately not join the event personally, but gave useful impulses by a video message. He introduced the main challenges for the programming period 2007-2013 shared by the partners of the programme and the capacities of the regions to find common and relevant solutions within the Alpine Space. Moreover he highlighted the great interest of the Committee of Regions for the results of the projects implemented within the Alpine Space Programme and expressed its support for the future programming period.

Mr. Marco Onida (*Secretary General of the Alpine Convention, Austria*) highlighted that the Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention has a very strong interest in further cooperating with the programme. In the past programming period it already participated to various projects and also its future success is strongly dependent on initiatives at regional and local level. The Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention welcomes the opportunity to become

an observer in the Alpine Space Programme Committee. As such, it will have no direct involvement in projects anymore, but will direct its energies to-



Mr. Marco Onida

wards specific initiatives (e.g. ongoing research for best practices on prevention and adaptation to climate change) and concentrate on giving feedback and advice. First recommendations for the future would be to prefer projects leading to concrete actions and their follow up, to ensure geographical balance and an Alpine wide perspective, to avoid project “nationalism” (at both national and regional level) and finally to further develop strategic calls.

The Member States’ perspective was expressed by **Mrs. Rosella Rusca** (*Ministry of Economic Development, Italy*). The objectives and priorities of the new Italian strategy for regional devel-



Mrs. Rosella Rusca

opment was presented. It was stressed that the Italian strategy for territorial cooperation takes into consideration the fact that for many territories coopera-

tion with cross-border areas or with other poles or regions outside the country is essential for getting real development results. The territorial cooperation in Italy will be governed in a new way: for each transnational programme a new national committee chaired by a region will be set up. In addition Mrs. Rusca stressed the main Italian expectations for the Alpine Space Programme: results, results, results! These results shall be visible, understandable, measurable and applicable.

→ The Alpine Space Programme 2007 - 2013

New priorities for shared challenges

The objective of this session was to offer information on the new programme priorities, their generation process and development background. Representatives of the programme highlighted the new contents as well as the programme developers' intention in the conception process. External experts commented the new contents and underlined the necessity to develop projects within the given thematic fields.

Firstly, **Mr. Christian Salletmaier** (*Managing Authority - Land of Salzburg*) gave an overview on the generation process of the new programme. He pointed out how key topics have been identified and exploited and to which priorities the partner states finally committed themselves. Subsequently each priority was presented by one of the National Coordinators and annotated by an expert in the relevant field.



Mr. Christian Salletmaier



Priority 1
Competitiveness
and Attractiveness

Mrs. Silvia Jost (*Federal Office for Spatial Development, Switzerland*) gave a flashlight on the priority which aims to encourage innovation, entrepreneurship and to strengthen research and innovation capacities for SMEs. Another objective is to enhance a balanced territorial development to make the Alpine



Mrs. Silvia Jost

Space an attractive place to live, work and invest. Therefore projects shall develop measures to stimulate innovation, reduce disparities among regions and to diversify economic activities.

Mr. Christophe Clivaz (*Sierre University of Applied Sciences Western Switzerland*) shared his expertise on the priority. Development of (new) economic activities, "good" governance and co-

operation are essential keys to face problems like low innovation capability, depopulation etc.



Mr. Christophe Clivaz



Priority 2
Accessibility
and Connectivity

Mr. Fabio Croccolo (*Ministry of Infrastructure, Italy*) pointed out the relevance of the "transport" issue recalling the milestones like the first conference of regions (July 2003) and the thematic workshop on transport in Venice (June 2005). Since then and with the results elaborated, the programme responsables developed the contents of the second priority. He highlighted some wishes and ambitions to be reached until 2013 such as "safeguarding the existing quality degree of the environment", "increasing the performance of the mobility systems" and "enhancing

of the quality of life for inhabitants and of the welcome capacity for tourists".



Mr. Fabio Croccolo

Mr. Bernard Simon (*Région Rhône-Alpes, France*) expressed that more transport activities and needs for logistics on the one hand, difficulties in building base tunnels on the other, clearly show future challenges.

The continuity of networks, partnerships and approaches is essential as well as the coordination of all relevant



Mr. Bernard Simon

→ The Alpine Space Programme 2007 - 2013

activities in the Alpine Space, e.g. with the Alpine Convention, the “Zürich Group”, the “Udine Initiative” and other programmes.



Priority 3
Environment
and Risk Prevention

Mr. Peter Eggensberger (*Bavarian State Ministry of the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection, Germany*) introduced the priority on environment and risk prevention. Projects under this priority shall focus on the management and the safeguard of environmental resources and cultural heritage as well as on natural and technological hazards. Coping with the effects of climate change will be an essential challenge for future projects within this priority. In addition, Mr. Eggensberger illustrated useful hints for future project partners. He pointed out that in their project generation, partners shall make use of the political background. Decisions on transnational level, e.g. taken in Heiligendamm (G8 summit 2007) or within the Alpine Convention as well

as on national or regional level shall not only induce, but also warrant new



Mr. Peter Eggensberger

projects. He motivated project partners to step forward from “developing methods” to “applying methods”, from “awareness of assets” to “valorisation of assets” and from “developing sustainable concepts” to “visible results and products”.

Mr. Thomas Scheurer (*ISCAR – International Scientific Committee on Research in the Alps*) highlighted existing interfaces within the third priority. Firstly he named the interfaces with research that shall be more actively promoted. The programme and its projects should

integrate results from scientific research of national and transnational level and act as a transdisciplinary programme.

Furthermore he asked to be aware and to make use of interfaces between resource use and competitiveness or - more practical - between environmental policy and resource economy by developing adequate instruments for sustainable resource use and economy in the



Mr. Thomas Scheurer

Alps. These tools shall e.g. focus on valorisation of endogenous resources, promotion of wise resource management or the creation of benefits for local economies.

Technical portrait of the programme

Structures and procedures



Mr. Thomas Fleury

Mr. Thomas Fleury (*coordinator unit of the JTS*) presented the new programme’s implementing bodies, Managing Authority, Joint Technical

Secretariat and Alpine Space Contact Points (former National Contact Points) and put a face on the names.

Mrs. Christina Bauer (*Managing Authority - legal issues*) presented the tasks and duties of the programme bodies and the changes occurring for this new programming period. Lessons have been learnt during the last programming period and were taken on board. The structures and procedures have been simplified for 2007-2013. Mrs. Bauer pointed out how the com-



Mrs. Christina Bauer

mittees and the implementing bodies will interact and come to decisions.

→ **Technical portrait of the programme**

Mrs. Magdalena Maislinger (*Managing Authority - financial issues*) gave an overview on the programme figures. The total budget (including ERDF and National cofunding) is € 129.980.630. The additional budget given by the two non-EU Member States comes to € 4.500.000. The maximum co-financing rate for projects is 76%. In the end of this first overview, **Mr. Fleury** explained the project possibilities and support given by the programme

for the project generation. Moreover he introduced the new two-step application procedure: potential project owners shall hand in an “Expression of Interest” with a short (around 5 pages) description of the project and its partners. After an assesment by the JTS, a Task Force will preselect the project proposals submitted and project promoters will be invited to submit the full application package.



Mrs. Magdalena Maislinger

Framework for Projects and Partnerships

Mrs. Antonia Leitz (*coordination unit of the JTS*) highlighted the philosophy future projects should follow derived from the overall programme strategy: they shall clearly show that they are innovative and mountain sensible, make use of and bulid on achieved results and act sustainable.

snational project management. The project networks shall be composed widely and preferably involve partners from all the seven Alpine countries. In addition these partnerhips should contain a strong vertical and horizontal representation and involve relevant and competent actors of different working fields. Finally, the partnerships shall be stable and go on beyond project objectives.



Mrs. Antonia Leitz

Some other criteria will be essential for the project application: potential Lead Partners shall be experienced in tran-

Outlining the First Call for Project Proposals

Mr. Didier Michal (*DIACT – Interministerial Regional Planning and Competitiveness Delegation, France*) outlined the first call for project proposals. He represented the Programme Committee who will be the selection committee for the project applications. For each call - planned once a year - specific Terms of Reference will be published. The first call will be open to all programme priorities. Projects applying within this call shall find answers to the following questions:

- Space does the project imply?
- + What are the objectives of the project?
- + What concrete results are to be achieved?
- + What use will be made of results? By whom? For what?
- + What type of activities will be implemented witin the project?

Project developpers shall keep in mind the first call’s selection criteria:

- + Transnationality
- + Cross-sectoral and integrated approach
- + Partnership targeted towards the objectives of the project
- + Clear definition of the expected results and their use
- + Transferability of the results
- + Consistency of the project with the objectives and strategy of the programme
- + Management capacities of the Lead Partner
- + Qualification of the project within a transnational programme

- + What challenge or problems does the project address to?
- + What contribution to growth, job creation and sustainable development does the project offer?
- + What added value for the Alpine



Mr. Didier Michal

Exchanging on project ideas

Around 70 project ideas from all over the Alpine Space have been submitted to the JTS in the framework of the conference. Although these ideas tackled a wide range of topics, ideas under Priority 3 showed to be more numerous, followed by Priority 1 and 2. "Transversal" issues like climate change, energy and environment have proven to be especially considered.

During the conference, several possibilities were given to deepen those ideas, receive feedback and to meet interested potential partners.

Three **thematic platforms** (with about 50 to 120 participants), one on each priority, gave the possibility to exchange on concrete project ideas or working fields. After short impulse statements given by the two counterparts of the previous plenary session (National Coordinator and external expert), potential project partners were invited to present existing project ideas.

The participants, programme bodies, experts, former and potential project partners and politicians were invited by a moderator to give a feedback on the specific ideas. This presentation, the

subsequent discussion and feedback given were the basis for the definition of working groups and clusters for day 2.

On day 2 **Working Groups** on specific project ideas or clusters met to deepen the discussion and concretely start the project generation.

During the whole event, project promoters were offered the possibility to add their idea to the **partner search area**. All ideas submitted were displayed on pillars. Visit cards and message bags for each proposal eased the exchange.



→ Exchanging on project ideas

Thematic platforms



Thematic platform

Competitiveness and Attractiveness

Around 90 participants took part in the thematic platform on priority 1 moderated by **Mr. Thomas Egger** (*SAB, Swiss Group for Mountain Regions, Switzerland*).

The participants first followed a detailed introduction on possible project activities by the Swiss National Coordinator Mrs. Jost. Further, five project ideas tackling territorial development, eco-

nomic cluster and cultural products were presented by their promoter. The promoters benefited from the comments of the expert Christophe Clivaz as well as from the feedback given by the audience.

Mr. Egger led a discussion on the issues raised and suggested the constitution of 10 Working Groups, ranging from tourism to energy and innovation and from culture to territorial development.



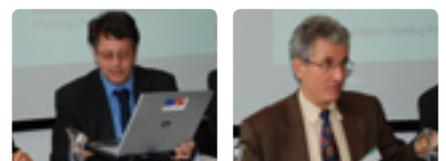
Thematic platform

Accessibility and Connectivity

The thematic platform on the second priority was moderated by **Mr. Romain Molitor** (*Trafico – Transport Planning, Austria*). About 50 participants joined this session which has shown to be rather balanced as the participants were equally distributed between transport related and connectivity/accessibility to services groups. Beside on some ideas presented, most of the discussions were focused on possibilities of merging pre-

liminary ideas and exploiting synergies. Mr. Croccolo highlighted three keywords for this priority: “practicability”, “sustainability” and “safety”. The external expert, Mr. Simon recalled the need of coherence with the existing tunnels of the Alps and the importance of capitalising results and developing a common database.

The thematic fields that have actively been discussed dealt with easing access, road and rail accessibility, infrastructure impact on landscape, and accessibility in small municipalities.



Thematic platform

Environment and Risk Prevention

Around 120 participants took part in the biggest thematic platform moderated by **Mr. Wolfgang Pfefferkorn** (*CIPRA International, Liechtenstein*). Ideas presented and further developed focused on landscape protection (considering also the dynamic changes: “landscape as a changing process”), water scarcity, overall risk assessment in the Alps and prevention measures as well as adaptation strategies, energy efficiency and microhydroplants and last but not the

least biodiversity in the Alps. Peter Eggenberger gave a feedback on the presented ideas taking into consideration the compliance with the programme. Mr. Scheurer commented the approaches from a scientific point of view.

For the second day’s working groups, the following clusters were defined: climate change, environmental quality (including health risk assessment), nature protection/biodiversity/landscape, tourism, water management, natural hazards and energy.



→ Exchanging on project ideas

Working groups

Based on the results of the thematic platforms, around 25 small working units were formed to meet and exchange on



existing project ideas or common working fields. These sessions were not moderated – the potential future project partners were asked to steer their discussion on their own in a bottom-up approach. Technical framework and material was provided by the organis-

ers and support was given by the programme responsables upon request to ease the exchange when needed. The groups discussed very actively in an open working atmosphere. As a result, project ideas were deepened and future partnerships and networks further developed.

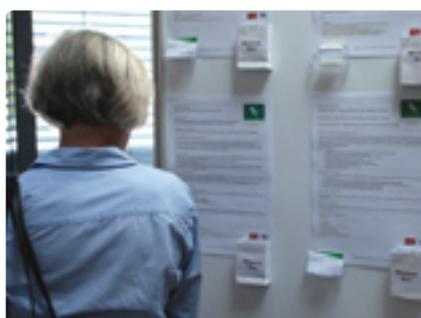
For future project generation, project ideas can benefit from a feedback given by the programme responsables. As it has been stated during the conference an online project idea and partner search section on the new programme's website will be entirely dedicated to this matter. This section will be opened in early autumn. In the meanwhile the current website (www.alpinespace.org) offers the possibility to submit project ideas in order to receive a feedback.



Partner search area

In the partner search area, the participants could discover and learn more about existing project ideas. The area was combined with the project fair - experiences and new ideas intertwined!

The partner search area allowed the participants to get the complete overview of all existing 70 project ideas sorted by priority. Visit cards summarising the ideas in short as well as message bags motivated to exchange and get in contact.



Projects in action

“Projects in action” were presented through presentations of concrete pilot activities (in and around St. Johann) and through a project fair highlighting the results of running projects. The objective has been reached: to inspire potential project partners in their project generation.

Project fair

In the project fair stands from around 30 projects of the Alpine Space Programme 2000-2006 were shown.

The project partners displayed posters, brochures, leaflets and prepared also some other surprises attracting visitors and stimulating discussions.

Some of the projects presented their results on shared stands, which underline the synergies the project partners developed, such as on “regional products”, “soft mobility” or “risks”.



Project visits

Alps Mobility II

The project visit to the Gemeinde Werfenweng, one of the Alpine Pearls of the INTERREG IIIB Alps Mobility II project, has been a brilliant occasion to see how it is possible to consider mobility and tourism in an environmental friendly way.

The Alpine Pearls are mountain villages and resorts which have adapted innovative ecotourism and eco mobility solutions. After a presentation by the mayor of Werfenweng, the participants had the opportunity to try various soft means of transportation, which are being used by the local population and the tourists in Werfenweng.



→ Projects in action

**ANP -
Automotive Network Pongau**

ANP (Automotive Network Pongau) is a project of the ERDF “Innovative Actions Programme”. Companies of the Salzburg automotive sector created a network improving the regional cooperation and knowledge flow. The participants visited a company producing “quads” and learnt about the existing strategies to overcome challenges of SMEs in rural areas by developing synergies within a supplier cluster in the Pongau valley.

Finally the group was invited to test the “quads” – specially adapted to mountainous areas!



Habitatp

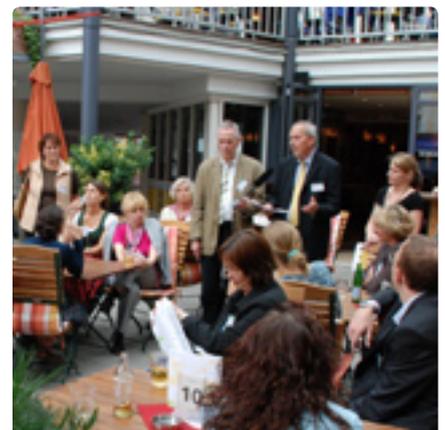
The participants visited the national parc Hohe Tauern to get an overview on the INTERREG IIIB Habitatp project activities. The objectives of this project was to develop a transnational spatial planning database supporting the analysis of the Alpine landscapes, their structure and diversity, in a long term perspective, especially for NATURA 2000 habitats.

The group made a tour through the environment of the Hohe Tauern getting an insight on the facilities and could compare the developed maps with the real surroundings.



Qualima

Austrian project partners of the INTERREG IIIB project Qualima presented their successful approach to mitigate the process of marginalisation and depopulation of the rural areas of the Alps. The project faces this situation by defining an innovative approach of goods and services supply as well as their management. Various activities have been implemented in three small towns in the Land of Salzburg – among others in St. Johann im Pongau.



Closure

Wrap-up

Mr. Ivan Curzolo (*Joint Technical Secretariat*) gathered live impressions on the entire event in a vivid wrap-up session. Pictures taken during the event demonstrated the challenges occurring in everyday programme and project life. After this humorous introduction, Mr. Curzolo interviewed three of the programme's National Coordinators.



Mrs. Margarita Jančič (*Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning, Slovenia*) pointed out that the ideas which are in the air have shown that we are, at least partly, moving on the right way from a Community Initiative such as INTERREG to “European Territorial Cooperation” as a mainstream objective. However, things have still to improve: project

developers shall try not to be too ambitious, focus on specific and defined projects, and bring innovative actions to their territories. Concrete results should be produced through solutions that are applicable and transferable to extensive parts of the programme area.



Mr. Roland Arbter (*Federal Chancellery, Austria*) highlighted the need for potential project partners to pool their resources, for drawing up project ideas that can achieve concrete outputs and results. There is a strong need to show that also transnational cooperation can provide for solutions that can contribute to the goals of the cohesion policy.

Greater impacts are expected. Such an increase suggests the need for significant change in the types and quality of projects.



Mr. Remo Looser (*Ministry of Environmental Affairs, Land Use Planning, Agriculture and Forestry, Liechtenstein*) stated that cooperation makes a difference and definitely matters – especially for a small country like Liechtenstein. For this country in the heart of the Alps, the cooperation with neighbouring countries is essential and the Alpine Space

Programme is seen as very useful to foster cooperation with neighbours in a variety of working fields.

→ Closure

Final speech

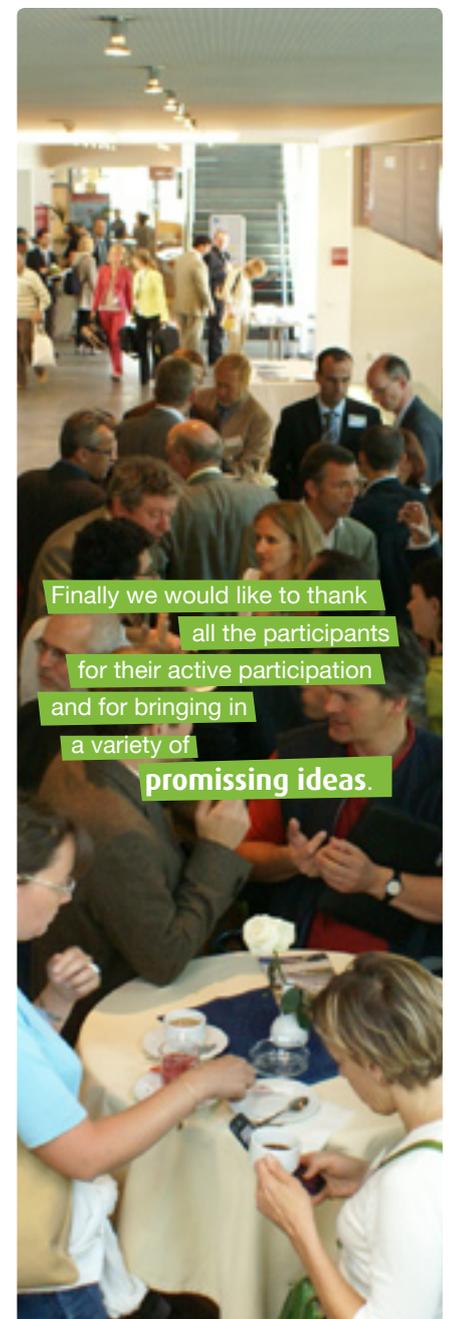


The final speech was given by **Mr. Richard Seeber** (*Member of the European Parliament*). The joint actions enabled by transnational cooperation to face future challenges and to bring shared solutions, regardless of the national borders, are a true contribution to the EU cohesion policy at Alpine scale. Through the Alpine Space Programme,

Europe is becoming more concrete and visible in the Alps. By this Mr. Seeber recalled why it is worth to put great efforts in transnational projects and he encouraged project partners and programme responsables to go on with their work.



Mr. Christian Salletmaier (*Managing Authority - Land of Salzburg*) thanked all participants for their participation and their active contributions. Again it became clear, that the Alpine Space Programme benefits very much from the open mindedness and willingness to cooperate of its project partners.



Finally we would like to thank all the participants for their active participation and for bringing in a variety of promising ideas.

Conclusions

The event was a brilliant occasion to spread information on the new Alpine Space Programme, on its contents, procedures and structures, to present results achieved in past and new ideas for future projects.



It was very useful on the one hand to officially present new requirements and on the other hand to receive an overview on existing ideas and on potential partners interested to join the programme.

We heard of many new ideas and can say that the ground for future success is very well prepared: there are valuable results and experiences to build on, lots of innovative ideas and the willingness to enhance cooperation.

Through a feedback questionnaire, participants evaluated the event as a very good and even excellent possibility to exchange. 68% of the participants had a project idea and 85% of these project ideas were deepened during the conference. The conference has been a first step in the direction of project generation offered by the programme.

Where to find further information and assistance?

The **Joint Technical Secretariat** provides technical support to project applicants during the application process. The JTS monitors selected projects at transnational level during their whole implementation phase.

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