



EUROPEAN UNION
**EUROPEAN REGIONAL
DEVELOPMENT FUND**

CENTRAL EUROPE

Strategic Project Concepts

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Project Concept 1: Boosting innovation through new cluster concepts in support of emerging issues and cross-sectoral themes

1.1 Transnational relevance to the Programme and to all the 8 EU Member States participating in the CENTRAL EUROPE Programme

To foster clusters is one of the most widely used tools in regional innovation policy to enhance competitiveness and adapt economies. The increasingly popular concept of clusters is reflected in a growing number of cluster policies and cluster initiatives. While cluster policy remains foremost the task of regions and Member States, the initiatives at EU-level are striving for more evidence-based cluster policy-making in view of a new generation of improved and excellent clusters.

The mapping of Cluster organisations by the European Cluster Observatory shows that all CENTRAL EUROPE countries have developed clusters.

From the early 1990ies, most of the CE old Member State countries have promoted the creation of industrial clusters in their respective territory (approx. 300 cluster organisations exist). There is a tendency of recognising that forming strong and capable cluster initiatives in terms of professionalization, specialisation, internationalisation in tackling the lack of critical mass and strategic orientation is of pivotal importance. However, this awareness may not be spread evenly in all regions. Moreover, regional cluster organisations often show a lacking interest in cross-border cooperation and internationalisation.

In this respect Member States and regions in CENTRAL EUROPE are encouraged to work more closely together at the policy level to improve transnational cluster policies.

CENTRAL EUROPE is seen as a very good context to jointly tackle the need for strategic policy level approaches concerning certain, relevant cluster issues. In this respect CE can act as a "model region" to join forces and act in synergy (e.g. creating joint services where it is seen as beneficial).

The European Cluster Policy Group (ECPG) promotes action - among other recommendations - at supporting the role of clusters in supporting emerging industries and in tackling the insufficient integration of clusters in terms of cross-cluster policies to bring together competent actors with complementary expertise (cross-fertilization between clusters).

The general cluster policy focus is to bundle existing strengths and to develop existing clusters. In the case of emerging economic sectors/branches/themes neither existing strengths nor existing clusters can be assumed. Moreover, there is a bias towards technology-intensive clusters as service clusters are often less supported by cluster policies, but offer large potentials. Emerging economic sectors/branches can be found in growing innovative services such as creative industries or around new themes where a trend of growing demand is evident due to societal challenges or business potential, e.g. active ageing (care services design + ICT solutions + housing); Well-being (food industry + tourism + health/sports), Sustainable development/technologies (sustainable materials including nanotechnology + clean energy + green technologies); Intelligent machines (ubiquitous computing + logistics & traffic systems).

Overall, a great and unexploited innovation potential is seen in better interlinking production clusters with the service sector.

The different role of clusters for emerging and for established industries calls for different action and for different cluster policy tools. However, discussion about the role of clusters is at an early stage and this leaves much room for mutual policy learning in CE. There is a need for developing recommendations and integrated actions on how clusters may be used as policy instruments to enhance the development of emerging industries and services.

The project concept's topic is also addressing the internationalization of cluster initiatives in CE as an important prerequisite for the active support of companies in their effort to gain access to international markets and to knowledge and research networks. CE companies need strong clusters and business environments to compete successfully on world markets.

The project concept's topic to pave the way for new cluster concepts through joint action in support of emerging economic sectors/branches and new cross-sectoral themes is relevant to all CE countries and regions. According to National Strategic Reports 2009 all CE Countries are investing in innovation and clustering. Existing CE projects, which deal with practical action such as good practice exchange, benchmarking, qualification, handbooks should be complemented by a policy type project addressing this highly relevant topic. The added value of a strategic project is seen at the policy level (in the sense of operational policy development).

1.2 Objectives and scope

The Overall Objective of the project is to develop and test a joint strategy on new cluster concepts in support of emerging economic sectors/branches, cross-technology and cross-sectoral themes. The project concept is part of a wider innovation agenda and shall be relevant for all eight Member States in the CE Programme co-operation area. The project targets new cluster issues in a broad sense (open for any competence area) and involves policy makers (responsible for innovation and cluster policy at national, regional and local level), analysts and practitioners.

The specific objectives of the project are

- To establish a **policy dialogue** by a concerted effort in all partner countries to address and involve key stakeholders (policymakers) and experienced practitioners (represented by national and European cluster associations) on the topic boosting innovation through new cluster concepts. All activities will be embedded in this facilitated policy dialogue.
- To undertake a **systematic effort in analysing** existing concepts and potentials (map new industries and themes, capitalize on existing experiences, identify opportunities for strategic partnerships). There are significant gaps of consistent data on emerging sectors, cross-technology and cross-sectoral themes in CE. It is of pivotal importance to get a better knowledge on existing potentials (across sectors) and how they can be activated and exploited by trans-national action. An international expert group should carry out studies and analysis. At the same time special interest groups (such as National Cluster Associations, Confederations of Clusters and Networks or National Cluster Platforms, European Cluster Alliance) are expected to provide their input. The results of the studies and the experiences brought in by the analysts and special interest groups are discussed with policy makers in a structured form.
- To develop a **joint strategy on how new cluster concepts** can be stimulated and introduced. A joint strategy in this respect is not aiming at "standardizing" different approaches and imposing overall policy guidelines but to tackle common challenges by transnational cooperation and action. The strategy should define the goals and approaches on how to adapt existing cluster portfolios, cluster support programmes and financing mechanism to the needs of emerging clusters and cross-cluster collaboration. Moreover the joint strategy is serving for the definition of joint action. Pilot schemes should be proposed in order to demonstrate that support of emerging industries and cross-cluster collaboration can work. This includes the concrete identification of opportunities to establish platforms for cross-cluster collaboration around adequate themes. Policy group meetings and conferences at transnational level demonstrating visibility will accompany the working process.

- To implement **practical pilot actions** in line with the joint strategy. These pilot actions should include joint development of practical tools and solutions and bundling efforts to internationalise clusters (e.g. develop training courses and programmes, exchange of staff, involvement of new players such as universities, research facilities, common marketing activities and joint appearance at events, common promotion concepts, joint technology foresight). Sufficient freedom should be allowed in the project framework (e.g. by following an umbrella projects` model) for integrating practitioners –complementing the project partners at a later stage of project implementation – who are able to implement practical testing of certain elements of the joint strategy. This could lead to “soft” small-scale investments to improve services and tackle relevant gaps. Action could include also better information and dissemination of emerging needs and demand, analyse cluster portfolios with respect to current clusters and possible emerging clusters to help identify opportunities, adjust cluster support programme objectives and financing mechanism to target emerging industries, improve capabilities of cluster organisations to act on new trends, bring together competent actors with complementary expertise by cross-cluster collaboration.
- To elaborate an **action plan** based on the overall strategic goals and on lessons learned by practical pilot action that defines measures to be taken up in near future programmes and initiatives as there is a need to pave the way timely for post 2013 programmes and “place based” action at national and transnational level. The Action Plan should be accompanied by intense dissemination activities to support the introduction of recommendations into the national and regional systems.

As an option the **cross-cutting issue gender and innovation** with relation to new cluster concepts could be targeted. Equal participation of men and women is essential for Europe to exploit the full potential of innovative strengths – not only for demographic reasons, but also in case of innovation processes and results. There is a need to clarify what (new) cluster policy related measures can support the process to get more women involved in the innovation process of business and research.

1.3 Technical content/short work plan overview to be developed within 36 months

The following interrelated work packages are planned.

WP 0: Detailed project preparation by finally selected partners

- Preparation of a full project proposal including a detailed activity, time- and resource plan.

WP 1: Project Management and Coordination

- Regular coordination and management of project by the Lead Partner Management team and project partners.
- Project Steering Committee Meetings.
- Project monitoring and evaluation.

WP 2: Communication and Dissemination

- Communication and Capitalisation Strategy and corporate identity
- Communication tools
- Website
- Reporting

WP 3: Establish a policy dialogue in CE on new cluster concepts and cluster cooperation

- Establish a policy dialogue at national level by a concerted effort in all partner countries to address and involve key stakeholders and experienced practitioners.
- Prepare and facilitate high-level policy group meetings and conferences involving European policy actors to discuss findings from the analysis (WP3) and to agree on the joint strategy (WP4).

WP 4: Mapping and exploring cluster potential related to emerging economic sectors/branches and new cross-sectoral themes in CE

- Survey on existing studies, data, approaches by international expert groups (it is important to capitalize on existing information to avoid duplication of data mining efforts).
- Fill information and data gaps by international national expert groups.
- Identify activities and competence areas for which transnational cooperation is feasible and beneficial (among others, attention should be given to the cluster collaboration potential in clean technologies).
- Identify common challenges in developing new cluster concepts which can be tackled by transnational action.

WP 5: Develop a joint strategy on new cluster concepts and cluster cooperation in support of emerging and new cross-sectoral themes in CE

- Draft a joint strategy based on systematic analysis efforts and on inputs from the policy dialogue.
- Prepare and facilitate a decision making process through several feedback loops to reach an agreement on the joint strategy.
- Develop joint action to be implemented in the cooperation area in pilot schemes (see WP 6) and in near future programmes and initiatives at the transnational or macro-regional level (outside the project).
- Disseminate policy recommendations to a variety of stakeholders and support the uptake on the political agenda in every partner country.

WP 6: Implement pilot actions

- Depending on the joint strategy and on actual participants a limited number of practical pilot actions should be implemented. Investments should be restricted to “soft investments”.
- Development of an Action plan based on the outcomes of the Pilot Actions in relation to WP2 (dissemination activities to support the introduction of recommendations into the national and regional systems).

1.4 Identification of the profile of the ideal partners to be involved in the project (provision of the characteristics of the partners, like institutional role, competencies, internal capacity, know-how, etc)

The ideal partners for this policy type project (with practical pilot action elements) are:

- a) Policy Makers: Public authorities and institutions responsible for innovation and cluster policy at national and regional level.
- b) Special Interest Groups: National Cluster Associations, Confederations of Clusters and Networks or National Cluster Platforms and European Cluster Alliance, universities and research institutions/agencies. They have the function of enlighteners and can have

project partner status. It is not intended to involve single implementing cluster organisations as project partners to avoid conflicts of interest.

Analysis and drafting work should be carried out by universities and research institutions/agencies or innovation consultants with a practical point of view.

Cluster organisations (operating bodies) acting as Pilot project Implementers. They could be involved by project partners at a later stage of project implementation (after having developed the basic features of the strategy)

For each CENTRAL EUROPE country there should be one or two project partners. This adds up to a maximum of approx. 16 partners. For the success of the project is important to find a good mix of policy makers and special interest groups forming the partnership.

Through the interlinking of operational policy development and practical testing (depending on the strategy) a financial arrangement has to be designed that allows to involve pilot project implementers at a later stage of project implementation.

Proposed Partners	Definition of partners	Lead Partner Suitability (management capabilities)	Specific characteristic	Institutional competence in relation to the project concept	EU-Project Management –Capacity (technical and financial)	Internal structure and Financial capacity	Capacity of involving the relevant stakeholders	Capacity to generate high visibility and strong media impact
Policy makers	National, regional Public Authorities	The Lead partner should come from this group. Ideally the LP has successfully completed at least one international project as Lead Partner	Public authorities and institutions responsible for innovation and cluster policy at national and regional level.	Decision making and Mainstreaming	Availability of skills in EU project management	Availability of skills in cluster policy formulation	Leading position in formulation and funding of cluster policies	Availability of skills for PR (Involvement of PR information department)
Special Interest Groups	Public equivalent bodies / Private institutions including private companies	Not suitable for Lead Partner	National Cluster organizations/ Confederations and intermediary organizations experienced in emerging industries and/ or cross-cluster cooperation. Universities and research institutions/agencies. They can have project partner status or act as associated institutions/observers.	Technical know-how Networking	If project partner: Availability of skills in EU project management	Availability of skills in cluster cooperation and emerging industries	Leading position in emerging industries and/ or cross-cluster cooperation	Access to relevant communication channels (media contacts, newspapers, journals, etc.)

1.5 Presence of transnational investments (not compulsory)

The project includes “soft” small-scale investments to improve services and tackle relevant gaps in developing new cluster concepts if strongly supported by the joint strategy.

1.6 Clear identification of the main outputs and results

WP Activity (WP2 - 6)	Output	Quantities (minimum)	Result
Mapping of existing studies, data, approaches by international expert groups	Report (covering all CE countries)	1	Better access to existing materials
Fill information and data gaps by international national expert groups	Study (covering all CE countries)	1	Consistent data and information on emerging economic sectors / branches and new cross-sectoral themes and on potential cluster collaboration opportunities
Establish a policy dialogue at national level to address and involve key stakeholders and experienced practitioners	Commitments of policy actors and practitioners to facilitate the project	60	Facilitated cooperation between innovation policy makers
Prepare and facilitate high-level policy group meetings and conferences involving European policy actors	Transnational meetings implemented National meetings implemented	4 12-16 (2 per CE country represented by financing partners)	Development of a shared View amongst key stakeholders
Prepare and facilitate a decision making process in developing a joint strategy on tackling common challenges	Joint strategy formulated and adopted	1	Basis to adjust cluster policies to the needs of emerging industries and new cross-sectoral themes; definition of pilot action
Implement pilot actions	Test of strategy elements by operating bodies	5	Launch of new cluster concepts and new transnational cooperation
Develop joint action to be implemented in the cooperation area in near future programmes and initiatives at the transnational or macro-regional level	Proposals for joint action formulated and adopted	5	Targeted preparation for macro-regional support in future programmes
Disseminate policy recommendations to a variety of stakeholders and support the uptake on the political	Dissemination initiative in each CE country	6-8 (1 per CE country represented)	Multiply opportunities to adjust cluster policy at national and regional level

agenda in every partner country		by financing partners)	
Development of an Action Plan	Action Plan	1	Ensure long term sustainability of the results

1.7 Sustainability in the CENTRAL EUROPE area

The proposed cluster policy dialogue in CE in strong interaction with experts goes beyond the practical level of cluster collaboration projects and offers a unique opportunity to explore systematically on how to better support emerging economic sectors/branches and new cross-sectoral themes by clusters through a concerted effort by all 8 Member States.

The project will influence future cluster policy development through

- Consistent data and information on emerging economic sectors/branches and new cross-sectoral themes in CE
- Facilitated cooperation between innovation policy makers in CE
- Development of a shared vision amongst key stakeholders on new cluster concepts
- Concrete guidelines on the how to adjust cluster policies to the needs of emerging industries and new cross-sectoral themes
- Launch of first new cluster concepts and cluster cooperation by pilot actions
- In the long run better targeted public support programmes for a new generation of more effective clusters in CE.

1.8 Indicative total budget for the implementation of the project proposal

Estimated total budget: approx. 3 million EUR (depending strongly on the quantity of practical testing and soft/small scale investments) for appr. 16 project partners.

Project Concept 2: Upgrading of Inland Waterway and Sea Ports (INWAPO)

2.1 Transnational relevance to the Programme and to all the 8 EU Member States participating in the CENTRAL EUROPE Programme

The CE area disposes of more or less extensive inland waterways which in all cases under perform in terms of utilisation of their respective capacities for freight transport. The Danube waterway system, corresponding to Corridor VII of the pan-European Corridors, is but the most prominent example for this – touching directly four CENTRAL EUROPE countries. According to the European Agreement on Main Inland Waterways of International Importance (AGN) there are class IV or class V waterways of the Danube navigation system in Italy, Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia. Only in Slovenia the (planned) waterway connection via the Drava is not yet classified. Accordingly, also river ports are listed in the AGN including some only planned ones. However, the transport performance of these waterways is very low, albeit for very different reasons, affecting also the potential of the ports.

Major reason for the unsatisfactory role inland navigation plays in coping with the ever growing freight volumes in CENTRAL EUROPE is the lack of functional integration of the ports with their potential hinterland as well as with other ports and a little developed function of tri-modality.

In order to secure relevance of the project for all the CENTRAL EUROPE area two approaches are proposed:

- a) To focus on the relations between inland ports and the maritime ports (in particular river-sea-ports) on the Adriatic and Baltic Sea, thus putting the emphasis on intermodality of the hubs rather than exclusively on inland navigation, which is in line with European Ports Policy.¹
- b) In any case concentrate on the port-hinterland relations, defining the hinterland rather wide in accordance with the potential capacity of the port and the waterway.

This would create new forms of (territorial) cooperation, both between the port locations and their hinterland and between port locations constituting a unique opportunity for the CE Programme to foster innovation in the public/private (overlap) sphere, which cannot be accomplished by any other EU programme.

2.2 Objectives and scope

The overall objective of the project is

- to pave the way for the partner-ports to establish them as fully equipped and adequately serviced tri-modal transport hubs with the clear intention to shift additional cargo onto the waterway.

The specific objectives of the project are

- To survey and analyse the transport volumes in the hinterland of each (partner-) port which potentially may be shifted to inland waterways, distinguishing also by type of goods (bulk, liquid, containerised, etc.).
- To gain knowledge in the CE area about good practice in tri-modal inland waterway and sea ports infrastructure, operation and cooperation.

¹ COM/2007/0616, 23/10/2007

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- To assess the different needs of improvement at each location in order to achieve better intermodality and interoperability of ports, including investments in equipment, service adaptation, cooperation agreements, etc.
 - To plan new transport service links (with inland navigation integrated or railways integrated) between and beyond the partner-ports.
 - To raise awareness among the participating and the non-participating ports about the potential of ports to act as amplifiers in inland navigation volumes. Every port has to be seen separately concerning the specific hinterland relations but there could be model concepts developed showing how to implement a hinterland-strategy and/or a cooperation strategy with maritime shipping.

2.3 Technical content/short work plan overview to be developed within 36 months

The following work packages are planned:

WP 0: Detailed project preparation by finally selected partners

- Preparation of a full project proposal including a detailed activity, time- and resource plan.

Work Package 1 Project Management

Work Package 2 “Dissemination”

- Communication and capitalisation strategy and corporate identity
- Communication tools
- Definition and demonstration (study tours) of good practice examples.
- Conferences on the potential of shifting cargo to inland waterways.

Work Package 3 “Analysis”

- Investigation and analysis into the potential waterborne transport volume of each individual partner port’s hinterland both originating from and destined for the hinterland.
- Development of a common methodology for this analysis.

Work Package 4 “Needs Assessment”

- In order to improve the trimodality each partner-port will have different shortcomings, e.g. in investment, in equipment, in certain services or in cooperation with market partners. These needs should be assessed along jointly defined benchmarks.

Work Package 5 “Feasibility of new links”

- On the basis of the identified transport volumes potentially apt for navigation new or enhanced links between the port locations of the project but also between the partner ports and non-partner-ports particularly with direct sea-access will be developed and their feasibility checked.

Work Package 6 “Pilot Actions”

- Depending on the actual participants there could be some pilot action involving small scale investment or larger scale investment preparation or pilot service operations. The (eligible) investment or investment preparation should be restricted to (a) handling

equipment, (b) infrastructure adaptation for better accessibility to waterborne transport and (c) other investment with direct effect on the waterborne side of port operations including ICT. Pilot actions can only be foreseen for those port locations where planning of such activities has already started before the project start and the transnational financing would speed up implementation of the plan.

- Development of Strategy and Action plan based on the findings of the Pilot Actions.

2.4 Identification of the profile of the ideal partners to be involved in the project (provision of the characteristics of the partners, like institutional role, competencies, internal capacity, know-how, etc)

The partners for this project are

- a) Inland waterway and maritime port operating companies (public or private) and/or (river-) sea port authorities,
- b) Municipalities with an existing port-location and an interest in its up-grading,
- c) Regional or national authorities with responsibility for inland navigation,
- d) Regional Development Agencies.

From each CENTRAL EUROPE country there should be one or two partners of group a) or b) and not more than one from group c) and/or d).

The AGN lists some 50 international inland ports (existing) and a number of planned ones in the CE countries/regions from which the partners of group a) and b) can be chosen. Additional criteria for the selection of ports are:

- Existing (basic) or planned tri-modal access
- Overall volume of handling over 1 Mio t p.a. in total
- Integrated competence for transport services, and strategic development of the port(s) at the location

If the potential applicant can prove a clear benefit for the CE Programme and the strategic project scope, then the possibility exists to involve institutions from port/locations outside the CE cooperation area as associated partners, e.g. from the Lower Danube, or from the Rhine navigation system or the ports at the waterways ending at the Baltic Sea.

Proposed Partners	Definition of partners	Lead Partner Suitability (management capabilities)	Specific characteristic	Institutional competence in relation to the project concept	EU-Project Management – Capacity (technical and financial)	Internal structure and Financial capacity	Capacity of involving the relevant stakeholders	Capacity to generate high visibility and strong media impact
Inland port operators Maritime port authorities (preferably with inland waterway access)	Public/ private	Preferred LP if previous ERDF/or EU international funds experience (LP can only be public or public equivalent)	Cargo handling volume over 1 mill t. p.a. existing (basic) or planned tri-modal access Integrated competence for strategic development and transport services	Implementing Networking	Previous involvement in ERDF or other EU-funded projects	Existing regional and transnational links with freight market	Existing networks of transport industry	Available skills in Public Relation
Municipalities with port location	Public	As above	Economic relevance of the port activities	Implementing	As above	Department for urban development and economic policy (location policy)	Involvement in networks of locations	As above
Ministries (Departments) for inland navigation; or Regional navigation authorities	Public	Not suitable as LP		Technical know-how Disseminating Mainstreaming	Not required	No specific requirement	No specific requirement	As above
Regional Development Agencies	Public	Not suitable as LP	Covering the ports' hinterland	Technical Know-How Disseminating Networking	Not required	Experience with transport/logistic projects	Involvement with transporting industries of hinterland region	As above

2.5 Presence of transnational investments

See Work Package 6

2.6 Clear identification of the main outputs and results

WP Activity	Output	Quantities (minimum)	Result
2.1 Study tours	Study tours Participants	4 200	Comparison of achievements and bottlenecks; Awareness raising of waterway potential and the role of ports for making use of it
2.1 Conferences	Conference documentation Participants	4 1000	Awareness raising Good practice dissemination
3.1 Methodology of quantifying waterborne potential	Study	1	Improvement of the effectiveness through comparison
3.2 Survey of potential waterborne transport volumes	Port-Hinterland-Reports	1 per participating port	Quantification of market potential for partner ports
4.1 Benchmarking	Study on tri-modal interoperability	1	Agreement on benchmarks for tri-modality of inland ports; Standards for intermodal facilities and services Identification of good practice
4.2 Needs Assessment	Reports	1 per participating port	Identification of investment needs, innovation gaps in services provided, cooperation shortcomings
4.3 Planning	Investment Plans	1 per participating port	Tested skills
5.1 Market review (existing services, by cargo type, origin and destination,	Reviews	6-8 (1 per CE country represented by financing partners)	Identification of new opportunities for waterway transport from and to the CE regions
5.2 Development of new links/services	Market partner cooperation meetings	Ca. 100	Validation of identified opportunities
5.3 Feasibility	Reports	1 per participating port	Description and Evaluation of new services linked to the upgrading of the ports
6.1 Investments	Small scale investments	3	Improvement of port operations on the waterborne leg
6.2 Pilot Actions	Test of new Services	3	Launch of new services Reduction of risk for introducing full scale service innovations
6.3 Strategy and Action Plan	Strategy Paper	1	Ensure long term sustainability of the results

2.7 Sustainability in the CENTRAL EUROPE area

Aspects of necessary follow-up activities, built-in strategies, ownership, etc.

Financial sustainability

The resulting activities of the ports and the market partners will and can be financed by the market (prices). Eventual larger investment at individual location and its financing should be tackled within WP "Feasibility".

Institutional sustainability

The partner institutions (ports/municipalities) will - by the very nature of their tasks - take over and maintain ownership of the project results; spreading to other locations is initiated through the WP "Dissemination".

Political sustainability

The project could impact on the general role of municipalities and their inland and sea ports as to the understanding of the strategic and operational function with respect to coping with transport volumes in the region as a whole. Also the way of cooperation between national transport planning and local trans-port operation could improve through this project.

2.8 Indicative total budget for the implementation of the project proposal

Estimated total budget: approx. 4,5 mill EUR for 8 (minimum) to 22 (maximum) partners. The budget must be adjusted according to the proposed pilot actions in WP6.

Pilot Actions should be approximately 20% of the entire budget. Depending on the number of the project partners the final budget will have to be readjusted

Project Concept 3: Railway Hub Cities and TEN-T network (RAILHUC)

3.1. Transnational relevance to the Programme and to all the 8 EU Member States participating in the CENTRAL EUROPE Programme

While the intercity railway services have improved in many CE countries over the last years and in particular the high speed connections are in the course of up-grading, the rail bound feeder lines are by no means keeping pace. To the contrary, in many regions the existing distributing rail network feeding into the hubs is deteriorating. This affects in the long run not only the quality of the public transport service within the individual region but also the rail transport service quality in the regions connected via the long distance rail network. The feeder railway services considered here encompass both local and regional train services as well as light rail, tram and (if applicable) underground. This situation applies only to passenger transport since freight transport is organised completely different, hence the projects only deals with passenger transport.

Although the situation differs in detail from country to country, the basic issue of embedding the urban and regional transport system into the intercity rail transport is the same throughout the whole CE area. Hence the relevance for every Member State of CE is given by model solutions how to implement such railway hubs and by participation of cities and regions from all CE countries.

3.2. Objectives and scope

The overall objective of the project is

- To enhance rail transport by improving the feeding functions on rail of major hub-cities and their respective regions.

The specific objectives of the project are

- To develop common concepts of better linkage of urban and regional rail transport with intercity transport.
- To explore the options and bottlenecks for better integration of urban and regional rail transport with the intercity rail networks in each individual hub city participating.
- To conduct a transnational impact assessment of the implementation of the short- and mid-term priorities of the participating hub cities.
- To organize public participation in the individual steps of development of the concepts and the priorities.

3.3. Technical content/short work plan overview to be developed within 36 months

The following work packages are planned:

WP 0: Detailed project preparation by finally selected partners

- Preparation of a full project proposal including a detailed activity, time- and resource plan.

Work Package 1 Project Management

Work Package 2 “Dissemination”

- Communication and Capitalisation Strategy and corporate identity
- Communication tools

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- Dissemination actions
 - Via participatory planning methods in the individual regions;
 - Via 2 transnational conferences presenting the aggregate/synthesized results;
 - Via internet addressing the transport-planning and transport-operator community.

Work Package 3 “Concepts”:

- Definition of a baseline of rail hub functioning and
- operational standards for different types of hubs and corresponding agglomerations and to local public transport.

Work Package 4 “Options and Bottlenecks”

- Involvement of all relevant actors on local and regional level including operators, which includes also non-rail bound operators (busses).
- Definition of options for desirable changes in the feeder rail services.
- Survey on the existing bottlenecks in these services and the obstacles to overcome them.
- Elaboration of a strategic planning document addressing all identified issues - particularly the identified bottlenecks - for each hub city.

Work Package 5 “Hub City Priorities”

- Development of concrete measures to be taken within the individual hub and/or region,
- Examination of synergies with ongoing investments, coordinating and escorting with other funding sources,
- Identification of leading actor(s) for each measure and the timing (short- medium- and longer term).

Work Package 6 “Transnational Impact Assessment”

- Identification of the character of impacts (including environmental impacts) outside the individual region.
- Quantification of these effects across the CE area.
- Development of a Transnational Strategy and Action Plan based on the findings of WP5 and WP6.

3.4. Identification of the profile of the ideal partners to be involved in the project (provision of the characteristics of the partners, like institutional role, competencies, internal capacity, know-how, etc)

The ideal partners are the Departments for (strategic) Transport Planning of a hub city, (in cases of metropolitan areas the Regional Authority might be the appropriate partner depending on the competences). The partner cities should be nodes of the TEN-T network, so that the urban transport system plays a dominant role in the adjoint region and the technical capacity of the department is sufficient. Given the minimum size these departments have the administrative and technical competence to run such a sophisticated planning project (transnationally). Last but not least, the departments must be engaged in activities related to the TEN-T nodes and network.

In order to keep the number of partners manageable, there should not be more than three hub cities per CE country (preferably one or two).

Additional criteria for selection of hub cities as partners: location within the intercity network (preferably close to border; etc.)

Involvement of local/regional (rail) transport operators as partners would be particularly useful.

Proposed Partners	Definition of partners	Lead Partner Suitability	Specific characteristic	Institutional competence in relation to the project concept	EU-Project Management –Capacity (technical and financial)	Internal structure and Financial capacity	Capacity of involving the relevant stakeholders	Capacity to generate high visibility and strong media impact
Municipalities of selected hub (Public transport department)	Public	Preferred LP if adequate capacity and EU project experience	Nodes of the TEN-T network Sufficient planning capacity within the city and efficient cooperation structures in the agglomerations Relative to the functional region	Implementing	Previous involvement in ERDF or other EU-funded projects	Public transport department Experience in Intermodal transport planning	Involvement of local and regional stakeholders (incl. Civil society)	Ideally involvement of PR/citizens' information departments
Public (rail) transport companies	Public (equivalent bodies)	As above	Operating also in the region of the selected hub city	Implementing Decision making	As above	Territorial competence of the implementing unit/department for the hub city/region		Availability of Skills for PR/advertising
Regional governments with a competence for transport planning in or around the selected hubs	Public	As above		Implementing Decision making Networking	As above	No specific requirements	Involvement of other relevant municipalities and transport industry	Involvement of p.r./citizens' information departments
Transport Ministries (Rail Department; urban/local transport departments)	Public	Not suitable as LP		Technical Know How Mainstreaming	No specific requirement	No specific requirement	Involvement of public transport stakeholders	As above

3.5. Presence of transnational investments

Not foreseen

3.6. Clear identification of the main outputs and results

WP Activity	Output	Quantities (minimum)	Result
2.1 Participatory Planning	Public discussion events	4 in each participating hub city	Broad participation of interested public in the improvement of rail transport services; Integration of interested groups into public transport planning
2.2 Conferences	International Technical Conferences on issues of hub cities and their regions	2	Support from the transport planning community
2.3 Web Platform	Special Interest Group Internet Sites	6 linked channels (different language and content) of one common site	Awareness raised (of general public), knowledge about feasible solutions and progress in (railway) planning spread
3.1 Baseline and benchmarks	Workshops Peer Group Report	4 1	Exchange of experience with urban/regional transport planning
3.2 Good Practice	Catalogue of criteria	1	Identification of good practice
4.1 Hub city options	Strategic Planning Documents	1 per participating hub city	Public information about mid-/longer-term development activities
4.2 Building Actors Group for Implementation	Round Tables with operators	3 per participating hub city	Involvement of all relevant actors for each hub city
5.1 Priority Negotiations	Documentation of negotiations	1 per participating hub city	Action and investment plans of relevant actors
5.2 Priorities agreement	Actors Group Document	1 per participating hub city	Formal agreement
6.1 Impact Assessment	Report	1	Demonstration and quantification of improvements and (remaining) shortcomings from a CE-area perspective including network effects
6.2 Transnational Strategy and Action Plan	Strategy Paper	1	Ensure long term sustainability of the results

3.7. Sustainability in the CENTRAL EUROPE area

Aspects of necessary follow-up activities, built-in strategies, ownership, etc.

Financial sustainability:

- The project will as one result define the financial means necessary by individual actors for improvement of the situation. These means can be very different but very substantial. The financing of the follow up therefore has to be secured individually and not within the CE programme.

Institutional sustainability:

- Since the projects assembles all relevant and partners legally and operationally competent the continuation of the planning process on the level of individual hub city seems guaranteed.

Political sustainability

- The project will show the potential of alternatives for regional transport organisation with a better integration of public (rail bound) transport.
- The impact assessment could lay the basis for a shift in national awareness about these potential in other regions and in each Member State as a whole.
- The project will provide an innovative planning approach which could be applied by other cities and regions and which could be integrated in national transport and development planning.

3.8. Indicative total budget for the implementation of the project proposal

Estimated total budget: approx. 4,5 mill. EUR for (min.) 8 to 20 project partners. The applicants must decide whether they will choose a narrower partnership with more depth in their actions or a wider partnership, for a broader base of the agreements.

Project Concept 4: Introduction of Regional Energy Concepts

4.1. Transnational relevance to the Programme and to all the 8 EU Member States participating in the CENTRAL EUROPE Programme

In the Context of the EU 20-20 by 2020 plan, all Member States are set before ambitious but achievable targets in the utilisation of renewable energy sources. Especially the Directive 2009/28/EC on Renewable Energy Sources (RES) sets the cornerstone for all further developments.

CENTRAL EUROPE is a densely populated, highly urbanised area but has also a large number of remote, sparsely inhabited peripheral regions. In the past energy supply was heavily centralised and “standardised”. However, the decision to introduce RES on a large scale makes the established energy supply paradigm obsolete. RES are characterised by their locally bound availability and by the transport limitations. Hence, each region must rely much more on its endogenous resources and apply a smart mix of energy imports or exports. In this effort no universal solutions apply; it is rather the correct RES mix, which can promise success. Some countries have already introduced Regional Energy Concepts defining Energy Demand and Supply on a mid-term base. In the near future a broad need for the implementation of strategic decisions on energy balance at the regional level will be manifest. CENTRAL EUROPE can play a pioneer role by promoting “model-regions” willing to design, implement and improve Regional Energy Concepts and assist in the introduction of the instrument of the Regional Energy Concept on a wide base through dissemination and mentoring.

The CE Programme underlines within Priority Axis 3 and specifically AoI P3.3 elements like strategies for the use and exploitation of renewable and endogenous energy resources. Within the present concept, these elements are directly addressed in a combined way at the regional/local level, where little capacity and large potential meet.

The topic of the concept is relevant to all CE regions. While some countries have such concepts, they are not widely established. The concept would have been difficult to generate in a bottom-up approach, due to the difficulty of establishing balanced structures in all Member States and guiding a “universal application” in all MS. The common umbrella of a “CENTRAL EUROPE strategic project” can significantly assist in the acceptance and adoption of the Regional Energy Concepts at a broad scale. Last but not least the Regional Energy Concept is an important prerequisite for the formulation and decision on investments and technology choices in the field of RES. For these reasons the concept is considered to fulfil the Strategic Project requirements.

4.2. Objectives and scope

The overall objective of the project is the promotion of renewable energy sources and the utilisation of their exploitation as a development engine and a sustainability factor at the regional/local level on the one hand and as a premium carrier for environmental sustainability and the minimisation of the ecological footprint of regions.

The specific objectives of the project are

- the visualisation and quantification of energy demand at the regional/local level as a first step in the effort for the promotion of renewable energy sources (related to WP3),
- the mobilisation of the endogenous energy and business potential as guarantees of sustainable energy supply (related to WP4),
- the support of the discussion on the regional energy demand and supply and the negotiation on the strategy to be followed (related to WP 4),

- the promotion of the instrument of the Regional Energy Concept as a prerequisite for sustainable energy supply at the regional/local level (vertical) and at the national and CE level (in relation to the EU energy targets) (horizontal) (related to WP 2).

Finally, the project will **endow** the project partners with a **detailed concept** on the utilisation of renewable energy sources containing concrete directions about **economic growth and sustainable development**. It will also promote the **public discourse** about energy demand and supply and the implications for everyday life at the regional level. At the CE level, the project will provide on the one side “ready to use” **templates and guidelines** for every Member State and a network of experienced peers to act as Mentors.

4.3. Technical content/short work plan overview to be developed within 36 months

The following interrelated **Work Packages** are planned:

WP 0: Detailed project preparation by finally selected partners

- Preparation of a full project proposal including a detailed activity, time- and resource plan.

WP 1: Project Management and Coordination

- Regular coordination and management of project by the Lead Partner Management team and project partners.
- Project Steering Committee Meetings.
- Project monitoring and evaluation.

Work Package 2 “Dissemination”

- Communication and Capitalisation Strategy and corporate identity
- Communication tools
- Promotional campaigns and dissemination activities in the framework of the regional energy concepts (see WP 5) (regional/local level).
- Promotional campaigns and dissemination activities via the associated partners (national level).
- Promotional campaigns and dissemination activities via the CE Programme (e.g. with running CE projects on RES) and relevant DGs and/or international associations (international level).
- Development and promotion of Regional Energy Concept Templates through “honourable” awards.
- Development of mentoring schemes during and after the project among the project partners (Mentors) and their peers (Mentees).

Work Package 3 “Demand side”

- Assessment of the current and future energy demand, including utilisation of existing databases and/or acquisition from external sources.
- Formulation and comparison of the baseline situations (including the RES national action plans), generation of typologies of regions (rural, peri-urban, etc.).
- Assessment and planning of interregional RES energy transfers.
- Compilation of a “how-to” templates and guides for the documentation of the Regional Energy Demand.

Work Package 4 “Supply side”

- Assessment of the existing potentials for RES, assessing also synergies and potential conflicts (e.g. potential land use conflicts, sustainability / viability of the different energy options).
- Mapping of the activities, potential and perspectives of related branches in the region (primarily and secondarily involved in the energy supply).
- Mapping of existing and intended regional chains of supply and value.
- Documentation and projection of intended mid-term investments in energy.
- Development of a Regional Energy Supply Toolkit including concepts for Life Cycle Cost approaches, innovative tax schemes, funding schemes, feed-in tariffs, energy contracting for RES (to be chosen as applicable for each participating region and Member State).
- Compilation of a “how-to” templates and guides for the documentation of the Regional Energy Supply.

Work Package 5 “Strategy”

- Generation of Regional Energy “Balance Sheets”.
- Formation of publicity and participation (e.g. Local Support Groups encompassing environment, business and social actors) for the accommodation of discussion on the strategies to be selected.
- Definition of implications for the development path of the region (economic development, land use and spatial planning, distribution of benefits etc.).
- Development of an agreement, joint strategy, action plan, activities for the identification and implementation of joint projects for regional energy roadmap 2020, acting as an “example to follow” for other CE regions.
- Compilation of “how-to” templates and guides for the dissemination of the Regional Energy Concepts.

4.4. Identification of the profile of the ideal partners to be involved in the project (provision of the characteristics of the partners, like institutional role, competencies, internal capacity, know-how, etc)

For comparability and applicability reasons it would be reasonable to focus on one type of regions. The characteristics of the targeted regions should be

- Approximately NUTS 3 size.
- Existence of potential for an energy mix, e.g. at least two to three energy options should be available in the region (e.g. biomass, wind and micro-hydro). The partnership ideally will build on a core of at least two common RES in order to produce comparable results (e.g. all regions should focus on wind and biomass and escort them by other locally available RES).
- Availability or accessibility to a reliable database on the potential of the region (e.g. either through own research or through the National RES Research Centres or similar institutions or to be bought commercially). This availability is necessary in order to accelerate implementation at the early stages.
- Focus mostly on regions with medium capacity, in order to prove the broad applicability of the concepts. However, 1-2 more advanced regions (model regions) should be included. In any case the partners will have to prove how to exclude double financing from other sources.

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- Selection of a single type of regions within the partnership, e.g. either only predominantly rural, or peri-urban, or urban centres. The partnership must consist of a homogenous group of regions.

Actors are expected from Regions and related Agencies, Professional Associations, NGOs and Energy Providers.

Project partners: Regions and related Agencies, according to the administrative division practice in each MS, since in some countries the responsibilities might be residing at the national level (e.g. Ministries), at the Municipal Level (e.g. in absence of Regions) or at an intermediate bodies` construction. Each Member State should propose the adequate partner level. However, the application of the Regional Energy concepts should be at a **regional level**.

A total of 8 partners, one from each MS, is envisaged with 1-2 "model regions" included. They must have partner status.

Research institutes (e.g. RES centres), Professional Associations, NGOs and Energy Providers and Energy Equipment suppliers should take up a supportive function as associated institutions. A total of 4-8 associated partners is envisaged. They should be either familiar with the technical aspects of RES and Energy Concepts or with Public Relations and Media management (or ideally both). Since the Concept has a significant media connotation, their tasks will be the constant visualisation and exposition of the findings of the WP 3-5. Alternatively, these types of institutions could also be involved as subcontractors to the project partners.

In this concept, there is a strong incentive for cooperation of all Member States. The Regional Energy Concept is a relatively novel instrument, which poses an innovation for the majority of regions in CE. On the other side, pioneers are to be formed in many Member States, however usually focusing on "narrow" technical aspects. For all Partners the main benefit lies in the utilisation of the Regional Energy Concept as a tool for mid-term planning and negotiation in the interwoven domains of energy, economy, environment and social aspects.

Proposed Partners	Definition of partners (cf. Application Manual chapter 3.1.1.)	Lead Partner Suitability	Specific characteristic	Institutional competence in relation to the project concept	EU-Project Management –Capacity (technical and financial)	Internal structure and Financial capacity	Capacity of involving the relevant stakeholders	Capacity to generate high visibility and strong media impact
Regions	Public	The Lead Partner should preferably come from this group. Ideally it has successfully completed at least one international project as Lead Partner.	Among the participating regions there should be ideally 1 or 2 “model regions” which have implemented a Regional Energy Concept.	Decision-making Implementing Mainstreaming	Involvement in at least one international project as partner or successful implementation of at least 2-3 EU-funded projects Instead of implementation of single projects, experience in programming is also adequate.	Environmental and/or energy department	Involvement in the relevant thematic networks (leading / participating / information receiver)	Skills in Public Relations
Regional Agencies	Public equivalent bodies	Not suitable for Lead Partner	As above	As above	As above	Skills in energy issues	As above	As above
Research institutes	Public equivalent bodies	Not suitable for Lead Partner	All those institutions should have experience in RES and ideally a strong connection to the region selected (e.g. local branch, proximity, former research activity etc.)	Technical know-how	Ideally participation in 1-2 projects funded by the EU (e.g. IEE, Life+, FP etc.)	No specific requirements	Long-lasting embedment in the academic framework of the Member State	Links to the regional institutional landscape
Professional Associations	Private	Not suitable for Lead Partner	Mainstreaming Networking	Mainstreaming Networking	Not required	No specific requirements	Not required	Not required
NGOs	Public equivalent bodies	Not suitable for Lead Partner	Mainstreaming Networking	Mainstreaming Networking	Not required	No specific requirements	Experience with stakeholder consultations at regional level	Experience with media campaigns and public relations
Energy Providers and Energy Equipment suppliers	Private	As above	Technical know-how Mainstreaming Networking	Technical know-how Mainstreaming Networking	Not required	No specific requirements	Not required	Not required

4.5. Presence of transnational investments

No direct investments are foreseen. However the Regional Energy Concept contains implications for energy related investments, hence it could be considered an early pre-investment activity.

In such a case it can be seen as an action, which is the result of transnational project cooperation and has a demonstrating/model character.

4.6. Clear identification of the main outputs and results

WP Activity	Output	Quantities (minimum)	Result
2.1 Promotional campaigns at regional/local level	Promotion materials and events	6-8 (1 per CE country represented by financing partners)	Increased awareness and uptake at the regional/local level
2.2 Promotional campaigns at national level	Promotion materials and events	6-8 (1 per CE country represented by financing partners)	Increased awareness at the national level
2.3 Promotional campaigns at International level	Promotion materials and events	1	Generation of feedback at the international level
2.4 Award competitions	Promotional event	1	Broad dissemination of the project
2.5 Mentoring schemes	Mentoring tandems	12-16 (2 per CE country represented by financing partners)	Attraction of followers
3.1 Assessment of the energy demand, including baseline data	Reports	6-8 (1 per CE country represented by financing partners)	Improved perception
3.2 Comparison of the baseline situations	Comparative study	1	Improved decision making departure
3.3 Assessment of energy transfer potential	Reports	6-8 (1 per CE country represented by financing partners)	Disclosure of potential regional alliances
3.4 "How-to" templates and guides	Template	1 (with 6-8 variations to fit into the national frame)	Mainstreaming and increased effectiveness
4.1 Assessment of the existing potentials for RES	Reports	6-8 (1 per CE country represented by financing partners)	Improved perception
4.2 Mapping of the energy supply	Reports	6-8 (1 per CE country represented by financing partners)	Improved perception
4.3 Mapping of chains of supply and value	Reports	6-8 (1 per CE country represented by financing partners)	Improved perception
4.4 Documentation of intended mid-	Reports	6-8	Improved decision making

term investments in energy,		(1 per CE country represented by financing partners)	departure
4.5 Regional Energy Supply Toolkit	Toolkit	1	Mainstreaming and increased effectiveness
4.6 “How-to” templates and guides	Template	1 (with 6-8 variations to fit into the national frame)	Mainstreaming and increased effectiveness
5.1 Regional Energy “Balance Sheets”	Reports	6-8 (1 per CE country represented by financing partners)	Improved decision making
5.2 Publicity and participation fora	Fora	6-8 (1 per CE country represented by financing partners)	Facilitated cooperation between stakeholders
5.3 Development path of the region	Reports	6-8 (1 per CE country represented by financing partners)	Improved decision making
5.4 Agreement, joint strategy, action plan	Agreement with Annexes	1	Mainstreaming and increased effectiveness
5.4 “How-to” templates and guides		1 (with 6-8 variations to fit into the national frame)	Mainstreaming and increased effectiveness

4.7. Sustainability in the CENTRAL EUROPE area

The sustainability of the results of the Concept is related to the uptake of the outputs. They on their behalf must be seen as an instrument, which can be embedded in the administrative practice of regional and local authorities. Hence institutional and political sustainability is ensured.

Financial sustainability can be assessed indirectly through the benefits of the mobilisation of endogenous resources, the creation of regional chains of value and the energy “autarky” pursuit and the financial implications thereof.

4.8. Indicative total budget for the implementation of the project proposal

Estimated total budget: approx. 2 mill. EUR for the accommodation of the activities of 8 project partners and 4-8 associated institutions.

Project Concept 5: Demonstration of Energy Efficiency and Utilisation of Renewable Energy Sources through Public Buildings

5.1. Transnational relevance to the Programme and to all the 8 EU Member States participating in the CENTRAL EUROPE Programme

At EU level, the Directive 2009/28/EC on Renewable Energy Sources (RES) and the Proposal on the Recast of the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (2002/91/EC) define the framework for related actions for the next years in the fields of RES and energy efficiency (EE). CENTRAL EUROPE is a densely populated, highly urbanised area with a huge stock of existing public and private buildings with low energy efficiency, which are required to be rehabilitated. On the other hand, Structural Funds also finance a large number of new constructions, which must reach a nearly-zero energy demand in the near future. Hence there is a broad need for new techniques, methodologies and investments. CENTRAL EUROPE can make a substantial contribution by providing an answer to the needs on awareness, demonstration and diffusion on RES and EE issues on buildings.

The CENTRAL EUROPE Programme underlines within Priority Axis 3 and specifically AoI P3.3 and AoI P3.4 elements like transfer of good practices in RES, eco-innovations and sustainable buildings. Within the present concept, these elements are directly addressed in a combined way, e.g. the achievement of near-zero energy demand cannot be achieved without the utilisation of RES.

The concepts topic is relevant to all CE regions, will become increasingly important in the near future and is very well suited for dissemination and visibility. The concept would have been difficult to generate in a bottom-up approach, due to certain technical risks and the difficulty to establish balanced structures in all Member States. Only the CENTRAL EUROPE Programme has the resources and mandate to initiate a simultaneous, coordinated and balanced process at the truly transnational level.

5.2. Objectives and scope

The overall objective of the project is the promotion of energy efficiency and exploitation of renewable energy sources through application demonstration in public buildings.

The specific objectives of the project are

- The mobilisation, assessment and improvement of existing technical and administrative standards through evaluation on comparability and transferability in CE (related to WP 3).
- The enhancement of know-how diffusion and skills acquisition of all engaged actors and stakeholders (related to WP 4).
- The proof of the feasibility and the establishment of near-zero energy demand concepts in the operating environments of constructors, owners and users (related to WP4).
- The broad dissemination and implementation of the project results through a joint strategy, harmonisation of approaches and follow-ups through preinvestment actions, (related to WP4 and 5)
- The demonstration of operation and feasibility with the help of accessible public buildings, to a large audience in all 8 MS (related to WP 2).

As a result, the project will create a common pool of knowledge for the entire CENTRAL EUROPE Programme area, will train professionals in the relevant fields and will produce in all 8 Member States state of the art buildings which tangibly and visibly prove the feasibility of RES and EE. Pioneers and followers will benefit alike through the concentrated and coordinated effort, which has never been attempted before at the CE level.

5.3. Technical content/short work plan overview to be developed within 36 months

The following interrelated Work Packages are planned:

WP 0: Detailed project preparation by finally selected partners

- Preparation of a full project proposal including a detailed activity, time- and resource plan.

WP 1: Project Management and Coordination

- Regular coordination and management of project by the Lead Partner Management team and project partners.
- Project Steering Committee Meetings.
- Project and Construction monitoring and evaluation.

Work Package 2 “Dissemination”

- Communication and Capitalisation Strategy and corporate identity
- Communication tools
- Dissemination of the concept and its findings through existing channels of e.g. home owners, municipal associations, professional associations etc.
- Demonstration of the concept and the buildings for a large audience (e.g. schools, universities, professional associations, constructors, chambers etc.) through openly accessible and visitable buildings.
- Creation of a Common Label and Quality Certificate, e.g. the “CE Building”.

Work Package 3 “Standards”

- Capitalization and categorization of existing knowledge (including work already conducted in former INTERREG, IEE projects etc.).
- Definition of a baseline on average energy efficiency performance, templates for energy surveys on the existing building stock, typologies of buildings (e.g. based on the introduction of the Energy Performance Certificate and available innovative technologies, materials, construction concepts and financing schemes (e.g. energy contracting).
- Assessment and introduction of novel approaches like Life Cycle Costs, innovative financing schemes for low-energy public buildings, tools for measuring and visualising the energy consumption, etc.
- Design of comparative grids and evaluation with a view to applicability and transferability.

Work Package 4 “Skills and Demonstration”

- Compilation of study compendia in the national context and lessons from the other countries (based on the findings of WP 3).
- Organisation of trainings for a representative sample of professionals including study visits.
- Selection of professionals that can be used as “knowledge transmitters” later on to participate in the actual rehabilitation/construction.
- Construction/rehabilitation of 8 buildings based on jointly defined selection criteria.
- Accessibility concepts for the public to be able to visit the building.
- Elaboration of pre-investments (feasibility studies and planning concepts for future public buildings) in addition to pilot investments as immediate follow-ups.

Work Package 5 “Broad Adoption”

- Preparation of standardised documents for the delivery of a near-zero energy demand public building (specifications, cost/benefit templates to be applied on the entire building stock of the municipalities, planning, tender documents etc.).
- Elaboration of guidelines for the transfer of the public building model to private households and office buildings.
- Development of a joint strategy and action plan for new public buildings of low energy character, utilising the national frameworks for the Energy performance certificates. This strategy should be expandable to all interested bodies in the CE area (in relation to the Common Label and Quality Certificate in WP2).
- Formation of Transnational Working Groups (with balanced mixture of Mentors, Instructors, “Auditors”, Trainees) for the period beyond project implementation.
- Design of a Permanent Transnational Observatory to gather existing platforms in the Member States under one portal and umbrella, hence collecting, updating and spreading data and information on the involvement of local authorities in energy/environment issues, on the performances of the productive sectors involved, on monitoring the state of energy certification at the CE level.

5.4. Identification of the profile of the ideal partners to be involved in the project (provision of the characteristics of the partners, like institutional role, competencies, internal capacity, know-how, etc)

Actors are expected from Municipalities, public buildings owners, Managing Authorities (SF), Special Interest Groups, Professional Associations, Media.

Project partners:

- a) Municipalities, public buildings owners: A total of 8 partners, one from each CE MS is envisaged. If necessary, in some Member States this role could be taken over by regional authorities.
- b) Special Interest Groups (e.g. Associations, EPC Authorities, stakeholders unions, research groups, regional agencies, research institutes and NGOs): A total of 3-4 partners is envisaged.

Managing Authorities (SF), Professional Associations (technical chambers, constructors associations etc.), end users associations can be involved as associated partners. A total of 4-8 associated organisations is envisaged.

The concept can be attractive to partners from all Member States. Institutions from regions and Member States with little experience have a strong incentive to enter the project, since they will be direct recipients and beneficiaries of State of the Art techniques and methodologies. Partners from more advanced regions can benefit from the testing of their methods in new surroundings and from the expansion of their scope of operations.

Size of the demonstration buildings: The selected buildings should be of a size of 300-500 square meters. The building should have a separate demonstrative/educational room/area where the used energy efficient techniques can be demonstrated.

Proposed Partners	Definition of partners	Lead Partner Suitability (management capabilities)	Specific characteristic	Institutional competence in relation to the project concept	EU-Project Management – Capacity (technical and financial)	Internal structure and Financial capacity	Capacity of involving the relevant stakeholders	Capacity to generate high visibility and strong media impact
Municipalities/Regions	Public	The Lead Partner should preferably come from this group. Ideally it has successfully completed at least one international project as Lead Partner.	Partners should have at their disposal a mature concept for a rehabilitation/construction of a building with high visibility and public accessibility (See 4.2.4) All preliminary procedures, if necessary, should be finished (e.g. land acquisition, zoning decisions, permits etc.). Ideally they all should be of medium sized settlements (50.000-100.000 Inh.), in order to ensure maximum visibility. The CE support should be mainly used for the additional investments related to RES and EE and not for basic construction.	Implementing Mainstreaming	Involvement in at least one international project as partner or successful implementation of at least 1 EU-funded project	Financial capacity to secure the investment	Ideally active participation in Energy Saving activities and in the National Municipalities associations	Ideally specialised skills in Public Relations, Ability to act as a model for similar sized authorities
Public Buildings owners	Public	Not suitable for Lead Partner	As above	Implementing	As above.	As above.	Only under the umbrella of a municipality (written certification)	Only under the umbrella of a municipality
Special Interest Groups	Public equivalent bodies	Could be Lead Partner under the prerequisite of a long experience of leading large cooperation projects	Should ideally have hands-on experience on RES, EE and long standing presence and practice in the fields of training, demonstration of techniques, public relations etc.	Technical know-how Disseminating	Ideally participation in at least 4-5 projects funded by the EU (e.g. IEE, Life+, FP etc.) with a large number of partners	No specific requirements	Central position in the fields of Energy Efficiency, Environment, Public Consultation etc.	Experience with media campaigns and public relations

Proposed Partners	Definition of partners	Lead Partner Suitability (management capabilities)	Specific characteristic	Institutional competence in relation to the project concept	EU-Project Management – Capacity (technical and financial)	Internal structure and Financial capacity	Capacity of involving the relevant stakeholders	Capacity to generate high visibility and strong media impact
EPC Authorities	Public/ Public equivalent bodies	Not suitable for Lead Partner	Authorities and institutions regulating the issue of Energy Performance Certificates	Decision making Technical know-how	Not required	No specific requirements	Institutionally regulated	Not required
Managing Authorities (SF)	Public	Not suitable for Lead Partner	Ideally MA will be involved which are spatially relevant (e.g. ROP MA) and have (or can include) relevant actions within their OPs.	Decision making Mainstreaming	Technical capacity	No specific requirements	Institutionally regulated (through the OP, e.g. in the MC)	Provisions in the OP Communication Plan
Professional Associations	Private	Not suitable for Lead Partner	Bodies like manufacturer unions (e.g. union of heat pump producers), Chambers of Engineers which are involved in RES and EE.	Disseminating	Technical capacity, Multiplier effect	No specific requirements	Not required	Not required
End users associations	Private	Not suitable for Lead Partner	Building owners, tenants associations etc.	Disseminating	Multiplier effect	No specific requirements	Not required	Not required

5.5. Presence of transnational investments

The concept foresees investments in the form of the buildings to be rehabilitated or constructed.

These investments will be undertaken in all partner regions and have a demonstrating and pilot character. The transferability of the results is one of the specific objectives of the concept.

5.6. Clear identification of the main outputs and results

WP Activity (WP 2,3,4,5)	Output	Quantities (minimum)	Result
2.1 Common Label and Quality Certificate	Label	n.a.	Visibility and dissemination
2.2 Transnational Working Groups	Working groups	2	
2.3 Permanent Transnational Observatory	Observatory	1	Visibility and dissemination
3.1 Capitalisation	Report	1	Mobilisation of existing knowledge
3.2 Study on baseline situation	National Reports	6-8 (1 per CE country represented by financing partners)	Understanding of the specific needs in each country
3.3 Assessment and introduction of novel approaches	Study	1	Improvement of the effectiveness through comparison and transferability
3.4 Comparative evaluation	Study	1	Improvement of the effectiveness through comparison and transferability
4.1 Course materials	Study books on Subject to be identified in WP3	4	Availability of a usable hands-on knowledge base
4.2 Courses	Trained professionals	1000	Improved skills
4.3 Learning by doing	Participation in rehabilitation/ construction	200	Diffusion of knowledge
4.4 Construction/rehabilitations	Constructions	6-8 (1 per CE country represented by financing partners)	Feasibility of the concepts
4.5 Visitable objects	Buildings	1 per Member State	Demonstration of effectiveness
4.6 Pre-investment studies	Studies	4	Enhanced capacity at local level and Long term sustainability
5.1 Preparation of documentation	Sets of template documents for passive buildings (tenders, planning, specifications)	6-8 (1 per CE country represented by financing partners)	Enhanced capacity at local level through availability of standardised documents
5.2 Transfer guidelines	Sets of template documents	6-8 (1 per CE country represented by financing partners)	Enhanced capacity at local level and Long term sustainability

5.3 Joint Strategy	Strategy	1	Long term sustainability, visibility and dissemination
5.4 Transnational Working Groups	Working groups	2	Long term sustainability, visibility and dissemination
5.5 Permanent Transnational Observatory	Observatory	1	Long term sustainability, visibility and dissemination

5.7.

5.7.Sustainability in the CENTRAL EUROPE area

According to the EU Directives and the necessities imposed by upcoming limitations and constraints in the energy sectors, all public building owners and users are obliged to adopt the near-zero energy demand requirements.

Financial sustainability is ensured through life cycle costs savings for the public buildings owners. Indirectly a decrease of the threshold for entering the market for professionals can also be achieved.

Considering institutional and political sustainability, the framework by the EU Directives and subsequent national legislation and the local ownership through demonstration objects and the diffusion and assumed long term demand for similar actions will ensure sustainable structures.

5.8. Indicative total budget for the implementation of the project proposal

Estimated total budget: approx. 5 mill EUR (including approx. 300.000-500.000 EUR pilot investment per building) for 8-12 project partners and 4-8 Associated Institutions.

However, **extent and focus of each investment must be negotiated** in detail with each project partner and the CE Programme with the support of the Transnational Working Groups envisaged under WP 2, in order to safeguard the optimum utilisation of the funds at the CE level. In this context, also the mix of new constructions and rehabilitations can be decided.

Project Concept 6: Innovative housing and care solutions for the elderly and vulnerable persons in Central European cities

6.1. Transnational relevance to the Programme and to all the 8 EU Member States participating in the CENTRAL EUROPE Programme

Due to socio-demographic changes, the number of elderly and vulnerable people² in CE increases dramatically. At the same time these groups **become increasingly diverse** in terms of age, health conditions, financial possibilities, life-styles, consumption patterns and needs. While the overall life-span of elderly people increases, the need for intensive care of the individuals decreases as the health conditions are overall improving. Similarly, also with regard to vulnerable people – both younger and older persons - the primary aim nowadays is to give them as much control over their lives as possible to mitigate the circumstances that make them vulnerable.

These factors have considerable **impacts on the housing and care needs** of such population groups: more and more elderly and vulnerable people continue to live in their own flats/houses and want control their own futures and need support for active re-integration. When it comes to **services and structures** at disposal for the elderly and vulnerable people, however, it becomes evident, that CENTRAL EUROPE is still characterized by rather paternalistic and centralistic approaches. This is the case with large housing estates and care structures from the 1960ies and 1970ies and even from later periods: These centralist structures have often difficulties in matching with the needs of such population groups. They tend to offer standardized solutions for supposedly homogenous needs. In territorial terms they may even favour the institutionalisation and the separation of such population groups from other residential areas and/or population groups. In functional terms they focus heavily on intensive care-provision while other needs (neighbourhood based contacts, cultural exchange etc.) are neglected.

In **innovative responses to housing and health promotion**, however, the immediate **neighbourhood level plays an increasingly important role**: it is the immediate housing neighbourhood, where elderly and vulnerable people expect to find social contacts, services, cultural facilities, etc. Neighbourhood-based care and housing solutions increase the autonomy and self-determination of these groups and contribute to maintain their abilities.

The topic is relevant to the whole CE cooperation area – and in particular **for large and medium-sized urban areas** which traditionally take over considerable shares of care and housing provision also for the hinterland. **Innovativeness** is sought in terms of “innovative” and decentralised housing and care solutions which have the clear potential to be transferred to other areas and to a bigger scale.

The project will **ensure visibility and dissemination** through a careful selection of partners, which guarantee, that the outcomes are mainstreamed to a wider context. The project concept would have been difficult to generate in a bottom-up approach as innovative care and housing solutions in the field tend to be rather isolated and fail to reach the critical mass in the cooperation area. The **transnational approach** will create considerable synergies and know-how in an area, where sometimes only local experience and know-how is available. The topic will **activate mutual learning** from very isolated and particular solutions over the cooperation area. The project would have been difficult to fund under other programmes: ESF is focused on individuals and fails to address the topic in a territorial sense; other programmes focus only on information exchange and do not allow for pilot approaches. In contrast to ongoing CENTRAL EUROPE projects under this topic, this project focuses stronger on the intermediate residential

² A person or group is vulnerable when support is required to enable or promote independent living and safe and active participation in the Community. N.B.: This group includes also young people.

neighbourhood level and adds thematic focus on care and how to reduce negative effects of institutionalisation.

6.2. Objectives and scope

Against the above-mentioned background the **overall objective** of the project is to foster innovative housing and care solutions for elderly and vulnerable people (younger and older) with a view to increase their autonomy. These actions may refer to management solutions in integrative housing, the participation of the elderly and vulnerable groups the coordination of relevant stakeholders, etc. In territorial terms the interventions refer to the immediate residential and neighbourhood level of these groups.

Specific objectives:

- More and better organized and managed housing solutions in order to help the elderly and vulnerable groups to maintain their autonomy and to retard the need for “institutional help”.
- Overcome hurdles (administrative, transport, social) which limit the autonomy of elderly and vulnerable groups by promoting complex and integrated approaches (involving more sectors, administrative levels, etc.).
- Better re-integration of elderly and vulnerable population groups into daily life by using integrated ICT based solutions (e.g. Ambient Assisted Living technologies and services, social networking technologies, etc.).
- Better standards for tailor-made housing and care solutions for elderly people and vulnerable groups with a view to increase the self-determination and autonomy these groups.
- Improved cooperation of relevant stakeholders in order to promote innovative solutions in care and housing solutions and to decrease functional and spatial separation of different age groups in urban areas both in planning as well as in daily life.
- More targeted services based (e.g. based on neighbourly help) to support elderly and vulnerable people in living in their own homes. Improved and reviewed practices and services with a more coherent attempt to tackle vulnerability.
- Stronger networks and structures for the coordination between planning, housing and health care services for the elderly and vulnerable groups by benchmarking among the policies carried by participating institutions.

The **main outcomes** of the project will comprise a small number of piloted **newly developed or reviewed services and housing solutions** for the targeted population groups. The pilots will be based on a sound review of innovative practices and the lessons learnt will be mainstreamed in the partner countries with a view to disseminate the most promising approaches for further adoption. It has to be noted that ERDF support directly on housing investment projects is excluded and expenditure is only eligible as stated in Article 7 (2) of the ERDF Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006.

6.3. Technical content/short work plan overview to be developed within 36 months

The following interrelated Work Packages are planned: While the work packages are consisting of various case-works and pilot actions, it is however expected, that core work packages are elaborated jointly by the project partners.

WP 0: Detailed project preparation by finally selected partners

- Preparation of a full project proposal including a detailed activity, time- and resource plan.

WP 1: Project Management and Coordination

- Regular coordination and management of project by the Lead Partner Management team and project partners
- Project monitoring and evaluation (e.g. through steering group, scientific board etc.)
- Preparation of a fine-tuned project proposal including a detailed activity, time- and resource plan and final proposal of piloted actions.

WP 2: Communication and Dissemination

- Communication and Capitalisation Strategy and corporate identity
- Communication tools
- Interlinking competences of relevant stakeholders in tackling issues of the elderly and vulnerable groups based on project and pilot work.
- Networking events of professionals including study visits and networking with similar projects (e.g. Q-Ageing project etc.) with a view to create synergies.
- Ongoing dissemination the results of the project.

Work Package 3: Transnational review of innovate practices of housing and care solutions for elderly and vulnerable people in Central European cities

- Mapping and comparison of the current state of housing policy, housing status quo and care solutions in the old and new Member States (based on existing material)
- Comparative transnational analysis of innovative examples of housing and care solutions for elderly and vulnerable groups (with a specific focus to residential and neighbourhood based solutions)
- Participatory definition of needs and recommendations

Work Package 4 “Piloting innovative actions”

- Piloting innovative housing and care solutions for elderly and vulnerable groups , such as
 - Implementing practices to foster self-determination and autonomy of the elderly and vulnerable groups in their homes.
 - Developing integrative housing concepts, standards for the needs of the elderly and vulnerable groups.
 - Testing participatory approaches to include elderly and vulnerable groups in housing and neighbourhood development.
 - Experimenting innovative housing and neighbourhood-management for elderly and vulnerable groups (e.g. fostering intergenerational living, ambient assisted living technologies and services etc).
- Drafting case study reports and lessons learnt.

Work Package 5 “Transnational design of strategies and actions for mainstreaming pilot cases”

- Joint transnational strategy development in expert workshops, cross-country workshops for the intended pilot actions.
- Developing actions plans to mainstream pilot cases.
- Sensibilisation of the target groups and relevant stakeholders through sensibilisation workshops.

6.4. Identification of the profile of the ideal partners to be involved in the project (provision of the characteristics of the partners, like institutional role, competencies, internal capacity, know-how, etc)

Actors are generally expected from public authorities (housing department, local housing agency, health department, etc.), housing management companies, NGOs (supporting elderly and vulnerable people etc.), relevant research institutes, interest groups, social partners and citizens.

Project partners: Public authorities (housing department, local housing agency), housing management companies, NGOs (supporting elderly and vulnerable people etc.), national authorities, public service providers, relevant research institutes. A total of 8-16 partners (1- 2 per MS) is expected. Project partners should ideally bring an innovative pilot concept into the project partnership.

In addition, the partnership should be enhanced from the group of stakeholders: interest groups, social partners, citizens, organisations. They should bring in additional technical capacity or a strong multiplying capacity (e.g. in terms of mainstreaming innovation solutions beyond the project end). In general, they will have a status of associated institutions (envisaged 1 per Member State).

Proposed Partners	Definition of partners	Lead Partner Suitability (management capabilities)	Specific characteristic	Institutional competence in relation to the project concept	EU-Project Management – Capacity (technical and financial)	Internal structure and Financial capacity	Capacity of involving the relevant stakeholders	Capacity to generate high visibility and strong media impact
Municipalities	Public	The Lead partner should preferably come from this group and have a track-record of successfully coordinated or participated in international projects in the field	Municipalities with a population of at least 80.000 and a relevant stock of public housing / care institutions for elderly and vulnerable persons.	Decision-making Implementing Mainstreaming	Availability of skills in EU project-management /financial management	Housing department / health department / urban planning department	Ideally high experience in participatory approaches of project implementation.; access to relevant networks	Skills/unit for PR
Regions (e.g. housing, health department)	Public	The Lead partner could come from this group and have a track-record of successfully coordinated or participated in international projects in the field	Regions in countries where public housing / care is a regional competence.	Decision-making Implementing Mainstreaming	Availability of skills in EU project-management /financial management	Housing department / health department /	Ideally high experience in participatory approaches of project implementation; access to relevant networks	Skills/unit for PR
National Authorities	Public	Not suitable for Lead Partner	Engagement in relevant policies, programmes etc.	Decision-making Mainstreaming	Involvement in EU projects	Ministries for social affairs, Ministries for construction and regional development, Ministries for Health and Welfare etc	Access to relevant networks	Involvement in activities and initiatives in order to ensure mainstreaming

Proposed Partners	Definition of partners	Lead Partner Suitability (management capabilities)	Specific characteristic	Institutional competence in relation to the project concept	EU-Project Management – Capacity (technical and financial)	Internal structure and Financial capacity	Capacity of involving the relevant stakeholders	Capacity to generate high visibility and strong media impact
Housing management companies	Public equivalent bodies	The Lead partner could come from this group under the condition of a track-record of successfully coordinated projects in the field	Experience not only in technical matters but also on “management practices”	Technical and organisational know-how	Skills in EU project-management /financial management	No specific requirement	Ideally experience in participatory approaches / stakeholder involvement	Access to relevant communication channels (media contacts, newspapers, journals, etc.)
Public Service providers	Public equivalent bodies	Not suitable for LP	Ideally these actors should have a strong relation to or a specific expertise in relation to the topic of elderly and vulnerable people	Technical and organisational know-how	Availability of skills in EU project-management /financial management	No specific requirement	Ideally relevant experience in participatory approaches / stakeholder involvement	Access to relevant communication channels (media contacts, newspapers, journals, etc.)
Research institutes	Public equivalent bodies	Not suitable for LP	Experience in housing and demographic research, ICT applications, health and other topics related to the objectives	Scientific Know-how	Involvement in relevant EU projects and other research projects in the field	No specific requirement	As above	Access to relevant communication channels (media contacts, newspapers, journals, etc.)
NGOs (supporting elderly and vulnerable people etc.),	Public equivalent bodies	Not suitable for LP	As above	Mainstreaming Networking	Involvement in EU projects	No specific requirement	As above	Access to relevant communication channels (media contacts, newspapers, journals, etc.)

Proposed Partners	Definition of partners	Lead Partner Suitability (management capabilities)	Specific characteristic	Institutional competence in relation to the project concept	EU-Project Management – Capacity (technical and financial)	Internal structure and Financial capacity	Capacity of involving the relevant stakeholders	Capacity to generate high visibility and strong media impact
Others (social partners, citizens, etc:	Public / Private	Not suitable for LP	As above	Mainstreaming Networking	Involvement in EU projects	No specific requirement	As above	Access to relevant communication channels (media contacts, newspapers, journals, etc.)

6.5. Presence of transnational investments

The presence of transnational investments depends on the presented pilot case studies and must be dealt with on a case-to-case basis.

Pre-investment and pilot investments into housing facilities as outcomes of the pilot activities may have the form of barrier-free solutions or custom-made innovative technical appliances aimed at improving autonomy of the elderly people and vulnerable groups.

6.6. Clear identification of the main outputs and results

WP Activity	Output	Quantities (minimum)	Result
Interlinking competences of relevant stakeholders	Website	1 per case study	Better coordination of relevant stakeholders.
Networking with professionals and projects	Event documentations (series of events)	To be defined	Better coordination of relevant stakeholders and projects
Dissemination action	Dissemination product (website, newsletter, brochures etc.)	To be defined.	Improved awareness on housing solutions and health promotion for the elderly and vulnerable groups
Mapping and comparison of the current state of housing and care solutions in the old and new Member States (based on existing material)	Mapping-Report	1	Better overview about current state and possible needs in relation to housing and care solutions
Review of practices of innovative housing and care solutions/services	Report	1	Improved understanding about innovate practices and approaches in the selected case study regions.
Analysis and needs of the elderly and vulnerable groups	Paper	1	Improved understanding on strengths and weaknesses of reviewed practices, and of transnational definition of needs of the elderly and vulnerable groups
Pilot actions	Study report	1 per pilot action	Successful implementation of pilot actions
Joint Pilot action Report including lessons learnt	Report	1	Better understanding of implementation of pilot actions including cross-analysis
Strategy development workshop	Workshop documentation	1 per pilot action	Joint vision in pilot areas
Strategies and action plans for mainstreaming pilot cases	Action plan	1 per pilot action	Improved operational basis for the mainstreaming of pilot actions.
Sensibilisation of the target groups and relevant stakeholders through sensibilisation workshops	Workshop documentation	1 per pilot case	Better validation of intended pilot actions.
Pilot investments and pre-investment	Documentation	To be defined	Long term sustainability of the results

6.7. Sustainability in the CENTRAL EUROPE area

Demographic change has far reaching implications for our societies and economies. The implementation of strategies, programmes and projects provides a more differentiated picture of the implications of demographic change and the challenges cities and regions face. Taking ageing and shrinking together, demographic change will generally be stronger in future (2004-2030) than it was in the past (1990-2004).

Financial sustainability is ensured through a needs-driven and efficient provision of services/solutions for the targeted population group, avoiding over-institutionalisations and fostering self-help and autonomy.

The innovativeness of the piloted solutions linked with the mainstreaming activities for the most successful outcomes will ensure sustainability of the adopted solutions and procedures.

Considering institutional and political sustainability, the ownership through stakeholders and the diffusion and assumed long term demand for similar actions will ensure sustainable structures.

6.8. Indicative total budget for the implementation of the project proposal

Estimated total budget: approx. 3 mill EUR for 8-16 project partners and 8 associated institutions. The budget will be adjusted to the scope of activities and pilot actions.

Pilot Actions are expected to be soft measures of punctual nature, and have demonstration character. For that reason a budget of approximately 50.000-80.000 per pilot action should be considered. Pilot Actions should be approximately 20% of the entire budget. Depending on the number of the project partners the final budget will have to be readjusted.

Project Concept 7: Improved governance and management of infrastructures and services in regions and cities affected by demographic change

7.1. Transnational relevance to the Programme and to all the 8 EU Member States participating in the CENTRAL EUROPE Programme

At EU level **demographic changes** (e.g. ageing, migration, population losses) are among the issues **addressed by the Territorial Agenda**. Due to less migration surplus and a negative natural population development demographic and social changes influence urban and rural structures. They affect life style patterns, location decisions and have also **significant territorial implications** for urban and regional spatial structures, for housing markets, for infrastructures and also for decision-making processes.

Shrinking regions and cities are an increasingly relevant issue in CENTRAL EUROPE. While four of the ten most-severely shrinking cities are located in Romania, the other six cities are well spread out across the EU, including cities in Slovenia, East Germany and Italy. The biggest decline was observed in Maribor in Slovenia (Urban Audit 2008). For many cities and regions that are facing population decline and economic stagnation, however, this goes also along with additional costs, as fewer residents have to pay more for oversized infrastructure facilities. Oversized infrastructure is a financial burden for public budgets in shrinking regions. The physical decay of the infrastructure, the maintenance costs and the low usage rates result in severe problems.

Border regions, as one of the typical regional characteristics in CENTRAL EUROPE, are particularly affected and disadvantaged by demographic and social change. This especially applies to the countries along the “Iron Curtain”, which for over 40 years formed the national and EU periphery. These regions have large cost-sharing potentials and pooling effects e.g. in the fields of infrastructure (waste disposal, water treatment, wastewater disposal), innovation and research or health care. New governance models need to be developed and implemented to make full use of these potentials.

These areas are typically characterized not only by depopulation trends but also by a lower level of quality of life, worse quality standards of public services, less job opportunities, disadvantages conditions in terms of accessibility, social services, health care, education, etc. Integrative strategies are therefore needed to actively try to stop and reverse the shrinking processes. Transnational cooperation is vital for the achievement of these goals due to the complexity and transnational dimension of demographic change in CE.

The CENTRAL EUROPE Operational Programme addresses the subject of demographic change **in several Areas of Intervention** (1.3, 2.3 and 4.2) and underlines the importance of this topic for the CE programme area. Demographic change has an impact and is linked to several aspects of improving the competitiveness of programme regions and programme actors. The topic is **relevant to all CENTRAL EUROPE regions both at the regional and local level**. As infrastructures affect the daily life of citizens the topic is well suited for **visibility and dissemination**. **Innovation** is reflected in particular in the innovative approaches and solutions that are piloted under this project. The project would have been difficult to generate in a bottom-up approach, as shrinking processes are usually tackled in a very isolated way. The **transnational approach** will create considerable synergies and know-how in an area, where little transnational experience is available. In contrast to ongoing CE projects under this topic, this project has a stronger piloting character and adds a stronger focus on the costs of restructuring. For these reasons, the concept is considered to fulfil the Strategic Project requirements.

7.2. Objectives and scope

The **overall objective** of the project is the development and implementation of new governance solutions in order to tackle the problems of shrinking regions in CENTRAL EUROPE with a special view to issues related to the management of public infrastructures and services of general interest (see http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/legislation/sgei.html).

The specific objectives consist of:

- Better transnational strategies to stabilise or reduce infrastructure costs under the conditions of stagnation and shrinkage.
- Better solutions of urban and regional planning in CENTRAL EUROPE to handle infrastructure costs as limiting factor for the room for manoeuvre regarding regional development.
- More refined downsizing and restructuring measures in order to qualify the surrounding area of formerly densely populated urban structures.
- Improved image and reputation of shrinking regions or cities in terms of public awareness.
- Deepened understanding on the impact of shrinking regions on other regions and cities (e.g. growing cities/regions and their challenges regarding mobility, infrastructure, housing issues).
- Improved and more holistic approaches to counterbalance depopulation trends.

The **main outcome** of the projects consists in the piloting of innovative solutions/practices to restructure infrastructures and services in shrinking regions and cities and in strategies and recommendations for regions and cities to tackle depopulation trends. It will be based on a sound analysis and will further develop the competences to tackle this issue within relevant institutions in Central European cities and regions.

7.3. Technical content/short work plan overview to be developed within 36 months

The following interrelated Work Packages are planned:

WP 0: Detailed project preparation by finally selected partners

- Preparation of a full project proposal including a detailed activity, time- and resource plan

Work Package 1: Project Management and Coordination

- Regular coordination and management of the project by the Lead Partner Management team and project partners.
- Project monitoring and evaluation (e.g. through steering group, scientific board, etc.).
- Preparation of a fine-tuned project proposal including a detailed activity, time- and resource plan and the definition of pilot actions.

WP 2: Communication and Dissemination

- Communication and Capitalisation Strategy and corporate identity
- Communication tools
- Website

Work Package 3: Targeted analysis of shrinking regions and cities in CENTRAL EUROPE

- Comparative socio-economic background analysis of selected shrinking regions against the background of growing regions/cities in CE based on compilation of existing literature.
- Cross-Analysis of infrastructure (public transport, water, road etc.) and service costs (social and health services) in selected shrinking regions (including effects of shrinking regions on the entire system of cities of regions).
- Interactive and participatory definition of needs for shrinking regions within CENTRAL EUROPE (Position Paper).

Work Package 4 “Piloting innovative solutions to restructure infrastructures and services in shrinking regions and cities”

- Piloting management practices / strategies / tools in order to achieve substantial cost savings in infrastructure and service provision of selected shrinking regions in CE (e.g. by improved management, resource pooling, innovative services etc.) and integrated approaches to counterbalance depopulation trends with a clear transnational added value.
- Drafting case study reports and lessons learnt.

Work Package 5 “Designing strategies and governance models for shrinking regions and cities in CENTRAL EUROPE”

- Transnational review and development of strategies and governance models in selected shrinking regions and cities in CE.
- Appraisal of advantages/disadvantages of the different options to cut infrastructure and service costs in shrinking regions, e.g.:
 - The downsizing of physical infrastructures is an expensive process and is vulnerable, since future growth can be hard to predict.
 - Changed infrastructure management as an attempt to reduce maintenance costs at some minimal level rather than removing infrastructure that may later need to be reinstated.
 - Strategies to consolidate areas at higher density to increase their ability to pay for the required municipal services.
- Developing actions plans for mainstreaming piloted cases and adopting integrated approaches to counterbalance depopulation trends.

Work Package 6 “Developing competences and disseminating know-how for managing shrinking regions and cities”

- Developing competences in tackling infrastructure costs in shrinking regions within public authorities and research institutions.
- Organisation of trainings for a representative sample of professionals including study visits.

7.4. Identification of the profile of the ideal partners to be involved in the project (provision of the characteristics of the partners, like institutional role, competencies, internal capacity, know-how, etc)

Actors are expected from local and regional authorities, public infrastructure and service providers at local or regional level, relevant research institutes, interest groups, social partners, citizens, organisations.

Project partners : local, regional and national authorities, public infrastructure and service providers at local or regional level, relevant research institutes. A total of 8-16 project partners, one from each type per MS is envisaged. They must have official partner status.

Associated Institutions (from the target group/stakeholders) (envisaged number 8-16): interest groups, social partners, citizens, organisations.

Proposed Partners	Definition of partners	Lead Partner Suitability (management capabilities)	Specific characteristic	Institutional competence in relation to the project concept	EU-Project Management –Capacity (technical and financial)	Internal structure and Financial capacity	Capacity of involving the relevant stakeholders	Capacity to generate high visibility and strong media impact
Municipalities / Regions	Public	The Lead partner should ideally come from this group and have a track-record of successfully coordinated international projects in the field.	Municipalities / regions with stagnating or declining population within the last 10 years The size of the municipality should be of “middle size” in the national context (according to the rank-size distribution).	Decision-making Implementing Mainstreaming	Availability of skills in EU project-management /financial management	Urban / regional planning department; specific departments related to infrastructures and services	Relevant experience in participatory approaches / stakeholder involvement	Skills/unit for PR
National Authorities	Public	Not suitable for Lead Partner	Engagement in relevant policies, programmes etc.	Decision-making Mainstreaming	Previous involvement in EU projects	Ministries concerned with infrastructures and services	Access to relevant networks	Involvement in activities and initiatives in order to ensure mainstreaming
Infrastructure providers	Public equivalent bodies	The Lead partner could come from this group under the condition of a track-record of successfully coordinated international projects in the field	Providers of urban physical infrastructure	Technical know-how	Availability of skills in EU project-management /financial management	No specific requirement	Ideally relevant experience in participatory approaches / stakeholder involvement	Access to relevant communication channels (media contacts, newspapers, journals, etc.)

Proposed Partners	Definition of partners	Lead Partner Suitability (management capabilities)	Specific characteristic	Institutional competence in relation to the project concept	EU-Project Management –Capacity (technical and financial)	Internal structure and Financial capacity	Capacity of involving the relevant stakeholders	Capacity to generate high visibility and strong media impact
Service-providers (energy, telecommunication etc.)	Public equivalent bodies	The Lead partner could come from this group under the condition of a track-record of successfully coordinated international projects in the field	Providers of energy, telecommunications, transport, radio and television, postal services, schools, health and social services.	Technical know-how	Availability of skills in EU project-management /financial management	No specific requirement	As above	Access to relevant communication channels (media contacts, newspapers, journals, etc.)
Research institutes	Public equivalent bodies	Not suitable for LP	Experience in demographic and socioeconomic research, municipal fiscal policy, infrastructure planning and other issues related to the objectives.	Technical know-how	Involvement in relevant EU projects (e.g. Interreg, Research Framework Programme) and other research projects in the field	No specific requirement	As above	Access to relevant scientific communication channels (scientific, journals, etc.)
NGOs	Public equivalent bodies	Not suitable for LP	As above	Mainstreaming Networking	Involvement in EU projects	No specific requirement	As above	Access to relevant communication channels (media contacts, newspapers, journals, etc.)
Others (social partners, citizens, Interest Groups)	Public / Private	Not suitable for LP	As above	Mainstreaming Networking	Involvement in relevant EU projects	No specific requirement	As above	Access to relevant communication channels (media contacts, newspapers, journals, etc.)

7.5. Presence of transnational investments

The presence of transnational investments depends on the selected pilot case studies and has to be decided on a case-by-case basis.

Pre-investments within the pilot case studies are possible with a view to improve the existing infrastructures in shrinking regions (e.g. physical infrastructure, measures for enhancement of social and health facilities, innovative technical solutions, etc.).

7.6. Clear identification of the main outputs and results

WP Activity	Output	Quantities (minimum)	Result
1.1 Study Report shrinking regions and cities in CE	Case study Report	1	Improved understanding the shrinking processes in the selected case study regions.
1.2 Cross-analysis of infrastructure and service costs	Statistical analysis Report	1	Understanding the per-capita infrastructure and service costs in shrinking regions and cities
1.3 Strategic Position Paper "Needs of shrinking regions and cities in CE"	Position Paper	1	Joint transnational vision for further political use at local, regional, national and EU level.
2.1 Pilot cases of technologies/strategies in shrinking regions and cities	Pilot actions	1 per case study	Demonstrate solutions to achieve substantial cost savings in the infrastructure and service provision of selected shrinking regions in CE
3.1. Strategies and governance models for shrinking regions and cities in CE"	Study report	1	Understanding applied strategies and proposing new models
3.2. Action plans for mainstreaming selected approaches	Action Plan	1 per approach	Improved understanding of operationalizing the strategies and options developed
4.1 Course materials	Study books on Subject to be identified in WP3	To be defined	Developing competences in tackling infrastructure costs in shrinking regions within public authorities and academia
4.2 Courses	Trained professionals	24	Improved skills and competences
4.3 Dissemination	Dissemination actions & products	To be defined	Improved awareness on shrinking processes and solutions in CE
Pilot investments and pre-investment	Documentation	To be defined	Long term sustainability of the results

7.7. Sustainability in the CENTRAL EUROPE area

Demographic change has far reaching implications for our societies and economies. The implementation of strategies, programmes and projects provides a more differentiated picture of the implications of demographic change and the challenges cities and regions face. Taking ageing and shrinking together, demographic change will generally be stronger in future (2004-2030) than it was in the past (1990-2004).

Financial sustainability is ensured through costs savings for public infrastructures and services.

Considering institutional and political sustainability, the ownership through stakeholders and the diffusion and assumed long term demand for similar actions will ensure sustainable structures.

7.8. Indicative total budget for the implementation of the project proposal

Estimated total budget: approx. 3 mill. EUR for 8-16 project partners and 8-16 associated institutions is envisaged.

Pilot Actions are expected to be mainly soft measures of managerial nature, and have demonstration character. For that reason a budget of approximately 50.000-80.000 per pilot action should be considered. Pilot Actions should be approximately 20% of the entire budget. Depending on the number of the project partners the final budget will have to be readjusted.