Operational Programme 2007-13: *South East Europe*

1. **Transnational Co-operation Programme for a European area in transition on the way to integration "South East Europe (SEE)" 2007-2013 under the European Territorial Cooperation Objective co-funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).**

MAP OF THE PROGRAMME REGION

Structural Funds 2007 - 2013: Transnational Cooperation South East Europe

- EU27 Cooperation areas
- Other cooperation areas

0   500 Km

2. Overview

On 20 December 2007 the European Commission approved the Transnational Co-operation Programme "South-East Europe" for the period 2007-2013. This programme involves Community support for regions in 16 countries- Member States, candidate, potential candidate countries and third countries.

- For 14 countries the eligible area is the whole territory of the country, namely for Albania, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Romania, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Greece, Hungary, Serbia, Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia and Moldova;

- In 2 countries only certain regions are eligible: in Italy these eligible regions are: Lombardia, Bolzano/Bozen, Trento, Veneto, Friuli-Venezia-Giulia, Emilia Romagna, Umbria, Marche, Abruzzo, Molise, Puglia Basilicata, and in Ukraine: Cjermovestka Oblast, Ivano-Frankiviska Oblast, Zakarpatska Oblast and Odessa Oblast.

This represents a total population of 200 million people. The total budget of the programme is € **245** million and the Community assistance through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) amounts to € **206** million.

3. Aim and purpose of the programme

The overall strategic goal of the programme is to improve "the territorial, economic and social integration process and contribute to cohesion, stability and competitiveness" through the development of trans-national partnerships. The programme focuses on four thematic priorities: Innovation, Environment, Accessibility, and Sustainable urban development. This will be a concrete opportunity for Western Balkans to move towards the European Union and will deepen relations with the EU neighbouring countries.

The South-East Europe area is the most diverse, heterogeneous and complex trans-national co-operation area in Europe, made up of a broad mix of countries. The emergence of new countries and with it the establishment of new frontiers has changed the patterns of political, economic, social and cultural relationships.

The area is undergoing a fundamental change in economic and production patterns after the 1990 changes. While some regions, especially the capital cities, are adapting well to the new challenges, others are trying to re-orientate themselves. Significant for the programme area are regional disparities in terms of economic power, innovation, competitiveness and accessibility between urban areas and rural areas.

In the European transportation network, South-East Europe is acting as a bridge between North, South, East and West Europe. The existing networks however cannot keep pace with the rise in demand and the increasingly demanding standards specifications. A large number of instruments and concepts like the Trans-European Networks (TENs) and the Pan-European Transport Corridors cross the area, but need to be further developed.

There are rivers suitable for freight transportation, maritime borders and the Danube, an important international inland waterway and integrating factor in many fields, such as transport, trade and environment. South-East Europe is characterised by broad biodiversity and natural resources of high environmental value**.** The potential for the use of environmentally-friendly technologies and the assets for future economic and social development are the strong points of the area, but inherited environmental damage has to be addressed as well.

4. Expected impact of investments

The programme shall facilitate **innovation, entrepreneurship, knowledge, the economy and information society** by concrete co-operation action and visible results. It is also aimed at improving the **attractiveness of regions and cities** taking into account **sustainable development**, physical and knowledge **accessibility** and **environmental quality** by integrated approaches and concrete co-operation action and visible results. Finally, it will foster **integration** by supporting **balanced capacities for trans-national territorial co-operation at all levels**.

5. Priorities

Priority 1: Facilitation of innovation and entrepreneurship aims to contribute specifically to the future development of South-East Europe as a place of innovation, to facilitate innovation, entrepreneurship andthe knowledge economy and to enhance integration and economic relations in the co-operation area. These objectives can be achieved through the development of technology & innovation networks, the promotion of an enabling environment for innovative entrepreneurship and the enhancement of the framework conditions for innovation. Examples of projects which could be supported include: feasibility studies, joint training courses connected to innovation and technology, creating networks of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) etc.

Priority 2: Protection and improvement of the environment aims to contribute to the improvement of environmental conditions and better management of protected and other natural/semi natural areas, to override the constraints imposed by national barriers, to foresee future environmental threats and opportunities and to develop common trans-national action for the protection of nature and humans. This can be achieved through integrated water management and flood prevention and management, the prevention of environmental risks, the management of natural resources and the promotion of resources and energy efficiency. Examples of projects would include: common civil protection systems, common alert mechanisms, strategies for rural and maritime tourism, developing networks on "green industries" etc.

Priority 3: Improvement of accessibility is aimed at connecting local and regional actors to the European Networks (including road, rail, inland and sea transport). This includes physical infrastructure as well as access to the Information Society. It also promotes co-ordinated preparation for the development of accessibility networks and the support of multi-modality. This objective can be achieved through co-ordinating the promotion, planning and operating of primary and secondary transportation networks, the development of strategies tackling the "digital divide" and the improvement of framework conditions for multi-modal platforms.

Priority 4: Development of trans-national synergies for sustainable growth areas. It aims to address the increasing disparities between certain regions and cities in South-East Europe and to lead to a "polycentric" type of development. The objective can be accomplished by referring to the challenges of crucial problems affecting metropolitan areas and regional systems of settlement, the promotion of a balanced pattern of attractive and accessible growth areas and the promotion of cultural values as a development asset. Examples of actions would include: developing cooperation in the field of public infrastructure and public services, cooperative solutions for urban renewal, plans for the restructuring of former military camps, for better management of archaeological sites etc.

Priority 5: Technical assistance to support implementation and capacity building shall contribute to the smooth implementation of the programme and increase capacity of institutions and beneficiaries in the programme area.

6. Managing Authority: National Development Agency (Hungary)

Joint Technical Secretariat: Hosted by VÁTI Kht (Budapest), Hungary

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7. Title: Operational Programme "South East Programme"
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8. Breakdown of financing by priority (in euros)

Priority	EU Contribution	National Public Contribution	Total Public Contribution
1. Innovation	44 051 157	7 773 734	51 824 891
2. Environment	53 739 828	9 483 499	63 223 327
3. Accessibility	55 160 834	9 734 265	64 895 099
4. Sustainable growth areas	41 338 329	7 294 999	48 633 328
5. Technical Assistance	12 401 497	4 133 832	16 535 329
TOTAL	**206 691 645**	**38 420 329**	**245 111 974**