



Assessor's guide

in the frame of the

INTERREG V-A SLOVAKIA-HUNGARY COOPERATION PROGRAMME

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INTRODUCTION

The aim of the Assessor's guide is to provide background and practical information to external assessors involved in the quality assessment of application forms submitted under the Call for Proposals SKHU/1703 of the Interreg V-A SKHU Cooperation Programme. The document is aimed at regulating project quality evaluation process in the Interreg V-A SKHU Cooperation Programme. In its present form it builds on

- the Co-operation Programme document, approved by the European Commission on 30 September 2015 and amended on 1 September 2016,
- Assessment Manual in the frame of Interreg V-A SKHU Cooperation Programme,
- in order to express continuity with the 2007-2013 programming period, on the best practices gathered in project selection during the assessment of the five calls for proposals of the Hungary-Slovakia Cross-border Co-operation Programme 2007-2013.

The rules governing the assessment of project proposals submitted to calls for proposals published under the Programme are contained in several documents, all of them regulating the assessment process in different detail and depth. The basic rules are laid down in Chapter 5 of the CP document.

The Guide builds upon the Assessment Manual of the Interreg V-A SKHU Cooperation Programme and is primarily focused on practical information and steps to be taken in the quality assessment process. Assessors are strongly advised to perform their assessment duties in line with the Guide as well as other Programme related documents. Present Guide is providing professional support in scoring range for each of the evaluation criteria; nonetheless the scores and the connected explanations are rather indicative and serve the orientation of the assessors.

1 Selection procedure

1.1 Admissibility assessment

The first condition that must be met by Lead Beneficiaries upon submitting their applications is that the application has to be submitted in a predefined form in paper format signed (and stamped) by relevant Beneficiaries before the Call for proposal is closed. Applications have to meet the following criteria:

- *Application form – Part I. has to be filled, submitted and signed by the statutory representative of the Lead Beneficiary of the Coordination and communication project;*
- *Application form – Part II. has to be filled, submitted and signed by the statutory representative of the Lead Beneficiary of the Coordination and communication project;*
- *Letters of intent have to be signed by the statutory representatives of each Beneficiary/Associated partner involved into the Consortium.*

In case the submitted application does not meet the admissibility criteria application is automatically rejected. Application can be submitted again under the same Call for proposals until the Call for Proposals is open. Applications fulfilling the admissibility criteria are forwarded to quality assessment process.

1.2 Quality assessment

Applications fulfilling admissibility criteria will be included into the first part of quality assessment process. The quality of each application is assessed against a set of criteria laid down in the Quality assessment grid. Quality assessment criteria are grouped into following two categories:

Strategic evaluation

- project environment and coherence
- relevance of the submitted proposal for the set objectives
- level of cross-border cooperation
- added value
- project partnership
- sustainability of project results

Operational evaluation

- management capacities
- feasibility of project activities
- requested financial resources
- project working schedule
- horizontal principles

Quality assessment is divided into three parts according to the competency of different stakeholders.

2 Objective assessment (Joint secretariat)

The first part of assessment is accomplished by the Joint Secretariat. Program managers examine primarily whether the specific objectives of the submitted application are in line with the specific objectives of the Priority axis. Secondly the Joint secretariat examines the basic operational criteria important for smooth implementation. The maximum points given by the Joint secretariat are 20 points. The final score is made up from the average of two individually accomplished assessments.

2.1 Strategic evaluation

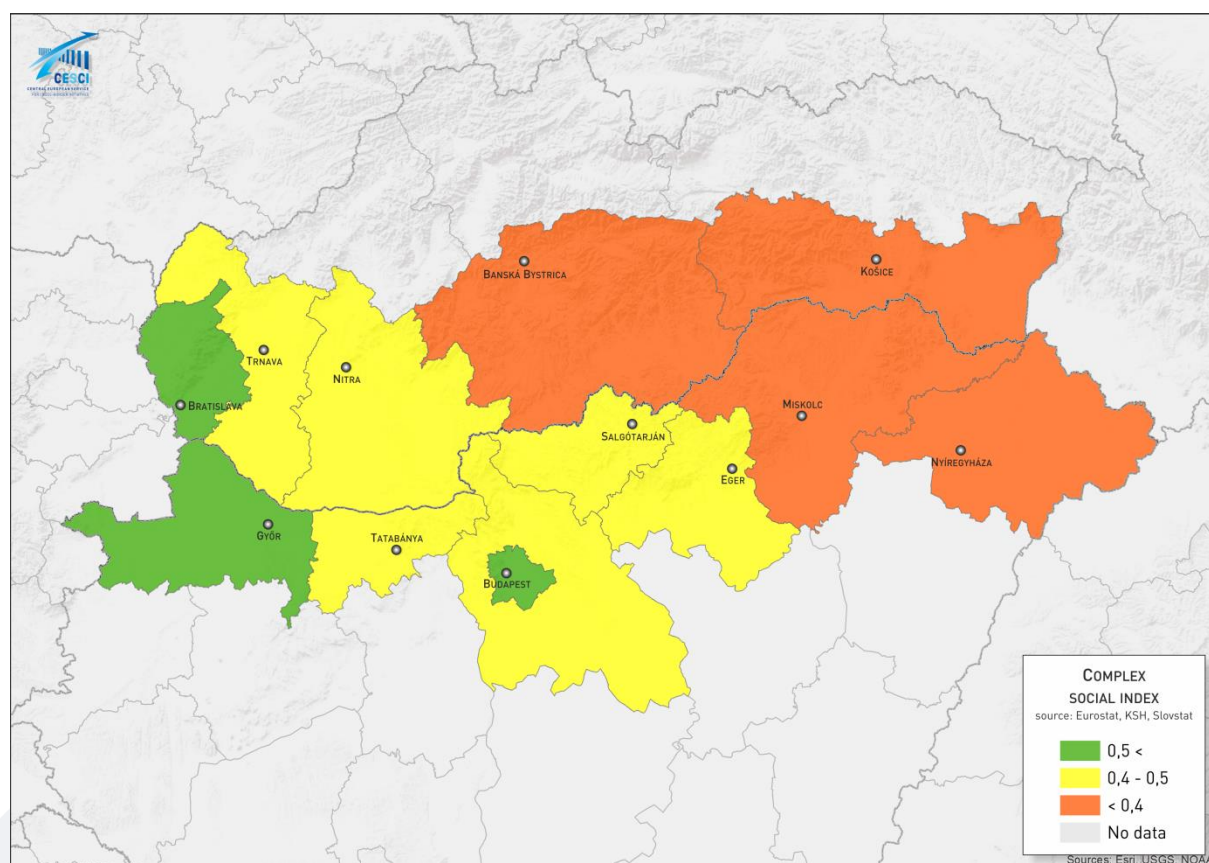
Target area is located in one of the less developed regions

Orientating questions

Is the target area classified as one of the less developed regions?

Explanation

The Regional analysis of the Cooperation Programme identifies three different types of regions according to a complex social index calculated from the time series data of the dependency rate, unemployment rate, outward migration, working-age population compared in time, the average gross income in 2010 and life expectancy at birth in 2012. The NUTS III regions lacking the most TAPE-type interventions are those where the value of the index is below 0,4, consequently the PA3 applies positive discrimination supporting these regions.



Scoring

Score	Justification
3	The target area or its bigger part belongs to one of the following NUTS III regions: Banskobystrický samosprávny kraj, Košický samosprávny kraj; Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén megye, Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg megye
2	The target area or its bigger part belongs to one of the following NUTS III regions: Nitriansky samosprávny kraj, Trnavský samosprávny kraj; Heves megye, Komárom-Esztergom megye, Nógrád megye, Pest megye;
0	The target area or its bigger part belongs to one of the following NUTS III regions: Bratislavský samosprávny kraj, Budapest, Győr-Moson-Sopron megye.

Mission of the TAPE is well defined and it is in line with the specific objective of the PA3

Orientating questions

Is the overall objective of the TAPE really an objective? (In some proposals, objectives and activities are not separated from each other.) Is the overall objective really overall? Is the objective relevant from the point of view of the programme's specific objective? Does it support the achievement of the PA3 indicators? Is the mission of the TAPE clearly defined?

Explanation

The TAPE should be coherent with the internal logic of the programme. For this purpose, the overall objective of the TAPE must reflect on the specific objective of the programme ([SO 3.1] - *Decreasing employment inequalities among the regions with a view to improving the level of employment within the programming region*). This reflection should be mirrored also in the wording of the overall objective representing the mission of the TAPE.

Another aspect which should be assessed is the internal logic of the objectives: do they compose a logical structure or the specific objectives and the overall objective of the project do not feed into the specific objective of the programme?

Scoring

Score	Justification
5	The mission of the TAPE can be identified easily and the structure of the objectives clearly reflects on the objectives of the CP.
4	The TAPE respects the objectives of the CP but the TAPE objectives have a weak internal logic or the TAPE indicators do not fully contribute to the achievement of the specific objective of the programme.
1	The TAPE's mission is clear, the objectives are well designed but they not feed into the PA3 specific objective.
0	The mission is not clear because the structure of the objectives is not well-designed or the objectives do not feed into the PA3 specific objective.

2.2 Operational evaluation

Members of the CCP are experienced and have proper capacities to provide management support for the Consortium

Orientating questions

Is the CCP a well-designed project? Do the members have experience in field of regional development and project management? Does the project ensure the necessary human resources? Does the CCP guarantee the sound and safe implementation of the TAPE?

Explanation

The objective of the CCP is to set up and operate supportive management function for the implementation of the whole action plan. It is highly recommended for the LB-CCP to have relevant project management experience possibly with Interreg projects. Beneficiaries of the CCP are responsible for coordination of the Consortium, preparation and submission of the TAPE, providing support for project development and ensuring the overall consistency of the TAPE. In the second round they are responsible for providing support for the project development and development of the TAPE's communication plan.

Scores

Score	Justification
2	The CCP is well prepared, the organization profile and the dedicated human resources ensure the smooth development and implementation of the TAPE. Beneficiaries have experience with Interreg programmes as well.
1	The CCP has a good structure and the measures to be taken are clearly defined but the explanation is too general. Beneficiaries have limited development and project management experiences.
0	The CCP is too rough; it does not convince the evaluator of the partners' ability to coordinate such a complex program.

Members of the CCP are experienced and have proper capacities to provide communication support for the Beneficiaries

Orientating questions

Do the members have experience in field of communication? Does the project ensure the necessary human resources? Does the CCP guarantee the appropriate level of communication and capitalization of the TAPE?

Explanation

The TAPE and the projects must constantly communicate throughout the project life-cycle by using appropriate communication tools depending on the size and needs of the project. All communication activities regarding the overall communication of the TAPE and the individual project communication activities have to be integrated into the CCP.

Beneficiaries shall clarify the communication tasks regarding each project proposal. Beneficiaries of the CCP shall create the first draft of the communication plan for the whole TAPE including communication activities of each project proposals.

Scores

Score	Justification
2	The first draft of the communication plan is well prepared, the organization profile and the dedicated human resources ensure the smooth communication of the TAPE. Beneficiaries have the necessary communication experience.
1	The communication plan has good structure but the measures to be taken are too general. Beneficiaries have limited communication experiences.
0	The communication plan is too rough; it does not convince the evaluator of the partners' ability to accomplish communication tasks of such a complex program.

TAPE assesses the potential risks and impediments to the TAPE implementation and management gives proposal to their mitigation or elimination

Orientating questions

Is the CCP prepared for risk management? Are the potential risk factors analysed properly and the management are prepared for the mitigation of the risk's effect?

Explanation

It is highly recommended for the LB-CCP to have relevant project management experience possibly with Interreg projects. During the implementation and follow-up period Beneficiaries of the CCP are responsible for providing risk and crisis management in case of TAPE implementation delay, project or partner withdrawal or indicator failure. Applicants shall describe steps to be taken in case of implementation delay, project or partner withdrawal or indicator failure.

Scoring

Score	Justification
2	The Consortium assessed the potential risks carefully. Beneficiaries are fully aware of their duties and the Consortium is prepared for unexpected cases like partner change or project withdrawal. The fulfilment of the minimum value of key indicators is multiply ensured. Project durations and TAPE schedule is set properly giving enough space for risk management.
1	The risk management is not deliberate; the assessment of the potential risks is rough. Beneficiaries are not aware of their duties; project partnerships are weak. Consortium is not prepared for unexpected causes neither on the level of risk management neither on a level of human resources.
0	There is no real assessment of the potential risks, risk management is artificial.

Timing of the TAPE implementation is deliberate but agile considering the available financial and human resources

Orientating questions

Is the TAPE's timing safe? Does the TAPE contain measures guaranteeing the tackling of the delays?

Explanation

The Consortium has to plan the duration of the TAPE carefully as the possibility for the prolongation of the TAPE is very limited. The maximum duration of the TAPE is 48 months. Applicants shall estimate the necessary amount of time, the allocation needs of human resources to implement each project then plan their starting and end date (in a synergic way) to ensure the smooth implementation of the whole TAPE. Project implementations can start parallel or sequentially. Implementations of the approved projects have to finish until 31/12/2022 at the latest.

The timing bears potential risks because of the complexity of the TAPE' structure. The partners have to carefully design the time schedule and guarantee that in case of delays in implementation, the TAPE's completion is not endangered.

Scores

Score	Justification
2	The timing is easy to overview and it contains measures guaranteeing the safe realisation and respect of deadlines.
1	The timing contains uncertainties which can be tackled.
0	The timing is not safely designed, it contains serious risks.

Implementation of the TAPE can be started in 2018

Orientating questions

Can the implementation of the TAPE start in 2018?

Explanation

In line with the implementation framework of the CP, indicators of the PA3 should partly be achieved. Therefore, the TAPes prepared for early start should be awarded with additional scores. In line with the implementation framework of the Cooperation Programme, TAPes prepared to start the project implementation in 2018 will be awarded with additional scores. Applicants in this case have to undertake to start the implementation right after the approval of the Monitoring Committee regardless the contracting status of the implemented project.

Scores

Score	Justification
2	The TAPE is ready to start in 2018.
0	The implementation of the TAPE can start in 2019 only.

TAPE creates working places for people living in deep poverty and Roma or for long term unemployed people or for tertiary educated people

Orientating questions

Does the TAPE contribute to the better access to work for Roma and poor people or educated people in the tertiary sector?

Explanation

According to the Cooperation Programme: "In case of the employment initiatives the involvement of people living in deep poverty and Roma shall get preference." The PA3 aims at improving the employment conditions of the border area which necessitates the focusing on less developed regions and most disadvantaged people. In case the TAPE facilitates the access to work for Roma people and those living in deep poverty should be awarded.

Scores

Score	Justification
2	The TAPE contains clearly defined interventions facilitating the access to work for Roma people, for long-term unemployed people, those living in deep poverty or tertiary educated unemployed people.
0	There are no measures regarding Roma people, those living in deep poverty, long-term and tertiary educated unemployed people.

3 Territorial assessment (Territorial experts)

The second part of the assessment is performed by territorial experts delegated by counties and higher territorial units forming the programme area based on pre-defined criteria and declaration of impartiality and confidentiality. Assessors are examining territorial relevance, coherence with the local development plans and integration of the TAPE with local sectorial initiatives. Applications are assessed by those territorial experts who are relevant according to the TAPE's target area. The maximum points given by the territorial experts are 14 points. The final score is made up from the average of the individually accomplished assessments.

3.1 Strategic evaluation

Territorial needs are described well and relevant for the target area

Orientating questions

Are the challenges relevant and territorially based? Does the analysis give a solid base for the answers given by the TAPE's projects? Are the challenges drafted in a plausible, understandable way, without ambiguity?

Explanation

The TAPE should respond to the challenges of a particular border region in the field of labour market. In general, the evaluator has to assess whether the answer formulated by the TAPE's partners through the projects is relevant. In this respect, the proper identification of the main challenges of the region in question has a crucial role. The analysis should unfold real territorial needs with an emphasis on the cross-border characteristics of these needs. ('Cross-border' means here either *complementary* or *common* features which can lay the basis for an integrated cross-border development.) It is very important to identify the needs properly, e.g. in a rural area with low level of education ICT based industry developments can hardly be supported. The TAPE itself is well-based and well-structured if the interventions are built upon the real cross-border territorial (not superficial) needs and the endogenous potentials presented in the previous chapter. These two factors can guarantee the embeddedness, relevance and social support of the planned interventions.

Scoring

Score	Justification
4	The description of the development needs (orientations) is relevant from a geographic point of view, it reflects correctly to the identified territorial challenges and builds upon the parallel or complementary endowments detected ensuring integrated cross-border interventions.
3	The identified needs have territorial relevance in the region but the description lacks self-evidence (the identification is relevant but the text of the explanation is not logical or the conclusions cannot be derived directly thereof).
2	The territorial analysis is correct but the answer is not relevant or not justified in a satisfactory way: other answers would be more relevant.
1	The needs have not cross-border character: they are concentrated on one side of the border only.
0	The identified needs are irrelevant in the region in question or they are presented in a too general way (the needs are drafted in a non-specific way: the assumptions can be relevant anywhere in Europe).

The specific objectives of the TAPE reflect on territorial needs of the target area

Orientating questions

Are the specific objectives relevant (from the point of view of the territorial analysis, the identified endogenous potentials and territorial needs)?

Explanation

The intervention logic of the TAPE should be clear and coherent. It means that the interventions have to be derived from the specific objectives which should reflect on the territorial analysis and the identified territorial needs.

Scoring

Score	Justification
2	The specific objectives are correctly included in the overall intervention logic of the TAPE, reflect on the territorial analysis and the identified territorial needs and lead further to the interventions.
1	The specific objectives are partly relevant from the point of view of the results of the territorial analysis and the identified territorial needs or the specific objectives are based on the territorial analysis but they are not well structured; or the specific objectives are not in a logical relationship with each other.
0	The specific objectives are not relevant from the point of view of the results of the territorial analysis and the identified territorial needs: their scope has nothing common with the latter ones.

Specific objectives of the TAPE are in line with the territorial development strategies of the relevant country

Orientating questions

Does the TAPE meet the objectives of the relevant sectorial and regional strategies and programmes at national, regional and local level? Are the planned interventions in harmony with EU, national, regional and local policies of employment? How does the TAPE contribute to the achievement of the EU2020 targets on employment and education?

Explanation

The territorial and policy relevance of the cross-border TAPE initiative can be detected through its compliance to the existing sectorial and territorial strategies with a special emphasis on the action plans of the regions lagging behind the most, and strategies addressing Roma people.

Since the Slovakia-Hungary INTERREG V-A programme itself deserves the achievement of the EU2020 targets, there is a clear need to comply the objectives of the TAPE to those of the EU2020 Strategy by identifying the targets which the TAPE is planned to contribute to.

Scoring

Score	Justification
6	The TAPE properly reflects on relevant territorial and sectorial strategies.
3	Some elements of the TAPE have relevance regarding the territorial and sectorial strategies of the region in question.
0	The TAPE has no relevance regarding the current territorial and sectorial strategies of the region in question.

Other employment initiatives are integrated into the TAPE on intervention level

Orientating questions

Does the TAPE build on existing or realised projects, initiatives and their outputs / results? Have the partners previously realised projects with similar objectives the achievements of which can be exploited for the sake of successful implementation of the TAPE? Can the TAPE built into a long-term regional development perspective which has a history (antecedents) – made even by other stakeholders than the partners of the TAPE?

Explanation

In case the TAPE is a territorially relevant initiative, it might have a history with projects implemented, results achieved, partnerships built, etc. This phenomenon means a kind of territorial, economic and social relevance, embeddedness what increase the chance for sound implementation and follow-up of the results of the TAPE. These previous achievements have been reached not necessarily by the actual partnership. Nevertheless, the TAPE's partners should also reflect on these results.

The PA3 of the CP aims at improving the employment situation and the cross-border labour mobility. Consequently, the TAPES have relevance in relationship with other initiatives, programmes and projects with a similar thematic scope. Strength of the territorial action plans if they can produce synergies with other similar programs and initiatives. This relevance is the strongest when the CP and another sectorial or territorial OP finance different components of an integrated territorial program (e.g. ESF support for trainings, ERDF support for investments can come from different funds).

Scoring

Score	Justification
2	The TAPE can be considered as a follow-up of previous projects partly with the same partners who participated in the implementation of these previous ones and / or it integrates territorial initiatives, projects implemented in parallel. The connection is clearly demonstrated and reflected in the indicators as well.
1	The relevance with previous or parallel project results is superficial, too general and not specific enough.
0	The TAPE itself does not exploit the results of previous or complementary projects with similar geographic scope and subject (they are not mentioned in the action plan); even more, by its objectives, it is controversial with the former ones.

4 Sectorial assessment (External assessors)

Third part of the assessment is performed by external expert selected by Call for Assessors. Each application is evaluated by two sectorial experts. The maximum points given by sectorial experts are 66 points. The final score is made up from the average of two individually accomplished assessments.

4.1 Strategic evaluation

Target area is cross-border

Orientating questions

Is the target area well defined and really cross-border? Do the planned interventions cover a cross-border area or are they one-sided?

Explanation

In harmony with the characteristics of the CP, the selected area must be relevant from a cross-border perspective. There are no exact methods to define the correct share of the territory of a borderland between the two sides; the definition should rather be based on functional relevance. Nevertheless, unilateral TAPes are not supportable.

Scoring

Score	Justification
2	The description of the target region is exact, without ambiguity. The planned activities and investments as well as the population to be reached are well balanced.
1	The region is more or less identifiable. The planned activities and investments as well as the population to be reached are at least 60% one-sided but with a strong cross-border labour mobility aspect.
0	The region is hardly identifiable or the identification is completely impossible. The planned activities and investments as well as the population to be reached are at least 80% one-sided and it lacks the aspects of cross-border mobility.

Target area is functionally relevant

Orientating questions

Is the target area relevant in scope of the functionality?

Explanation

The selected area should form a geographic unity based on geomorphological characteristics (e.g. water catchment area) or it should be identical with either a cross-border landscape or an urban functional zone (e.g. it is identical with the cross-border influence zone of a city or agglomeration); it should have shared complementary economic and employment features (the functional relevance should also be underpinned by the thematic scope and activities planned to be realized within the TAPE). In some economic sectors (e.g. automotive industry), functionality does not result in direct geographic continuity across the border, in other cases (e.g. agrarian cooperation) the complementary or parallel endowments can define a continuous cross-border area. The evaluators are invited to measure the functional relevance of the target area.

Scoring

Score	Justification
2	The selected region is identical with a real cross-border functional zone or with a cross-border landscape.
1	The selected region has a functional character but other options would be much more functionally relevant.
0	The justification of the selection is obscure or professionally irrelevant or the selected region has no clear functional background.

The analysis is understandable and relevant in the scope of the target area

Orientating questions

Does the analysis give a coherent picture on the main strengths of the regional economy and on the societal challenges? Is the description relevant in terms of the real characteristics of the area?

Explanation

The description of the social situation has to include analysis of the number, age structure and migration activity of the population, the settlement structure focusing on underdeveloped and disadvantaged settlements, the urban-rural relations focusing on the availability of the urban functions, the income status of the population with a special focus on poverty and the disadvantaged groups and minorities.

The brief analysis should give an overall picture of the societal challenges the region in question. The employment development of a region is defined by societal and economic conditions in parallel. The economic analysis should present the main employers, the business climate, the business infrastructure and its services, the typical (endogenous) sectors of the region, the traditional professionals and the economic potential. A short overview on the status quo of employment and other conditions influencing the employment situation is necessary and the analysis should be clear enough to understand the justification of the selection of objectives and interventions.

Scoring

Score	Justification
2	The analysis is relevant and innovative, unfolds untapped potentials of the region in question and contributes to the identification of new development orientations in the border area.
1	The description contains relevant assessments but it does not meet the real challenges the region is facing.
0	From a territorial point of view, the analysis is completely irrelevant or it has no regional significance.

The analysis is focusing on essential factors of the employment and the cross-border labour mobility of the target area

Orientating questions

Does the analysis give a clear picture of the societal challenges the region is facing? Does the development of employment conditions contribute to the amelioration of the situation (is the description relevant from the point of view of the priority area objectives)? How the employment conditions are described: are the planned interventions well underpinned in the analysis?

Explanation

The analysis should give an overview on the current employment situation of the border area with special emphasis on existing cross-border labour mobility (if any) and the parallel or complementary characteristics of the labour market each side of the border, the unemployment rate, its sectorial relevance and the main reasons of the challenges in the field of labour market. It is important, that the analysis have to deserve the identification of the objectives and planned interventions of the TAPE.

Scoring

Score	Justification
2	The analysis gives a comprehensive overview on the employment situation of the border area, it reflects on the complementary or common characteristics of the two neighbouring regions' employment conditions and properly underpins the objectives and the planned interventions of the TAPE.
1	The analysis of the labour market situation is superficial, too broad; it does not go in details and does not give clear justification to the selected interventions and objectives.
0	The analysis is too general (it could represent other regions, too) and / or not relevant in the current case of the region.

Endogenous potentials of target area are clearly identified

Orientating questions

Are the potentials well specified (do they refer to the real endowments, are they identified correctly and clearly)? Are the selected characteristics relevant from the point of view of selected interventions, projects? Can this relevance be identified clearly?

Explanation

Beside the territorial challenges and in harmony with the relevant investment priority, the TAPE should be based on the endogenous potentials of the region in question: on the one hand, the interventions should be justified on the grounds of the real territorial needs; on the other hand, they have to have a realistic background provided by the potentials (real territorial endowments) embedded in the region. Endogenous potentials may include the following resources:

- location (geostrategic position, functionality, connectivity, situation energies, etc.);
- natural resources (landscape, soil, water, climate, flora and fauna, clean environment, raw materials);
- human resources (creativity, motivation, education, special skills, knowledge);

- social resources (cooperation culture, identity, confidence, public relations);
- institutional resources (organization structure of the local economy, effectiveness of local authorities, trade within the target area, institutional cooperation);
- resources related to special goods (special, traditional or innovative local goods).

Obviously, not necessarily all factors can be identified in a particular region. The applicant should focus on territorial relevance rather than thematic coverage of the point.

Scoring

Score	Justification
4	The endogenous potentials are well presented, the description has an internal logic and is in harmony with the social and economic analysis; it clearly justifies the answers (interventions) given to the challenges.
3	The presented potentials have obvious relation to the interventions of the TAPE but the description lacks innovativeness.
2	The potentials are well defined but they are not in harmony with the state-of-play analysis of the societal and economic situation and / or they do not underpin the selection of interventions.
1	It is hard to identify the endogenous potentials; the analysis is rather a superficial description on the endowments and factors available in the region.
0	No real endogenous potentials are defined.

Territorial needs reflect on the result of the analyses and the identified endogenous potentials

Orientating questions

Do the identified challenges reflect on the (previously described) socio-economic situation of the region? Is the presentation of the challenges in harmony with the identified endogenous potentials of the border area?

Explanation

Here the internal coherence of the TAPE should be evaluated. The description of territorial needs summarises the results of the analysis and the presentation of the endogenous potentials and prepares the conclusions (i.e. the planned interventions) as an intermediary.

Scoring

Score	Justification
2	The presentation of the territorial needs is evident and coherent; the needs are obviously derived from the socio-economic analysis.
1	Some of the detected needs are built on the socio-economic situation and endogenous potentials of the region, others are not (the analysis is not coherent).
0	The development needs have nothing in common with the unfolded endogenous potentials.

The specific objectives of the TAPE reflect on territorial needs of the target area

Orientating questions

Are the specific objectives relevant (from the point of view of the territorial analysis, the identified endogenous potentials and territorial needs)?

Explanation

The intervention logic of the TAPE should be clear and coherent. It means that the interventions have to be derived from the specific objectives which should reflect on the territorial analysis and the identified territorial needs.

Scoring

Score	Justification
3	The specific objectives are correctly included in the overall intervention logic of the TAPE, reflect on the territorial analysis and the identified territorial needs and lead further to the interventions.
2	The specific objectives are relevant from the point of view of the territorial needs but their contribution to the achievement of the PA3 specific objective is not well-elaborated.
1	The specific objectives are based on the territorial analysis but they are not well structured (connections: PA3 specific objective – overall objective of the TAPE on the one hand; and interventions on the other); or the specific objectives are not in a logical relationship with each other.
0	The specific objectives are not relevant from the point of view of the results of the territorial analysis and the identified territorial needs: their scope has nothing common with the latter ones.

Specific objectives are well designed and measurable

Orientating questions

Are the objectives of the TAPE real objectives? (In some proposals, objectives and activities are not separated from each other.) Are the specific objectives relevant (from the point of view of the overall objective; of the planned activities; of the indicators)? Are the specific objectives really specific and measurable?

Explanation

The specific objectives should be in close relationship with the activities planned to carry out during the implementation of the TAPE, be more focused and result-oriented: e.g. increasing the share of employment of a particular sector; decreasing the territorial share of brown-field zones; improving the accessibility of urban functions, etc.

The intervention logic of the project should be planned carefully where the specific objectives have an orientating role when defining the relationship between concrete interventions (projects) and the measurable overall objective of the project. The wording of the specific objective should reflect on both the overall objective and the planned interventions.

Scoring

Score	Justification
3	The specific objectives meet properly the overall objective of the TAPE and the planned interventions, they are easy to measure and they are in harmony with the output indicators of the TAPE
2	The specific objectives are objectives by their nature but they do not meet, do not contribute to the overall objective of the TAPE and they have no clear relevance in terms of the planned interventions of the TAPE
1	The specific objectives are not measurable at all (because they are ambiguous or obscure or they do not achieve the objective)
0	The specific objectives are not objectives at all (instead, they should be considered as results or activities in reality)

Other employment initiatives are integrated into the TAPE on strategic level

Orientating questions

Is the TAPE coherent with other territorial initiatives of employment (like the employment pacts in Hungary or the governmental program supporting the less developed regions in Slovakia)? Is the TAPE in harmony with the relevant territorial strategies?

Explanation

Cross-border initiatives should not be in conflict with initiatives on a national or regional level, programmes and strategic documents. When presenting the integration, these documents should be taken into account and presented in a satisfactory way. (It is not enough to make an indirect reference, or list the relevant documents but to refer as concretely as possible to the relevant part of the document in question.)

Scoring

Score	Justification
4	The planned interventions and the objectives are clearly connected to relevant strategic, policy and legal documents with references to concrete measures, interventions or indicators thereof on both sides of the border.
2	The planned interventions and the objectives are clearly connected to relevant strategic, policy and legal documents with references to concrete measures, interventions or indicators thereof, but only on one side of the border only.
0	The relevant strategic documents are not taken into account or they are listed only.

Results of the TAPE has real cross-border impact

Orientating questions

Is the TAPE really cross-border? Do the planned activities, the composition of the partnership, the objectives, and the expected impacts have a real cross-border character? Do the indicators of the TAPE reflect on this cross-border character?

Explanation

Unlike the main stream programmes, the CP must meet the criteria of cross-border activities. It is not enough to improve the situation of the labour market on one side of the border. The TAPE has to have a real cross-border character: both the challenges and the answers have to be drafted with a clear cross-border territorial scope. Moreover, each project also has to bear this cross-border character. At the same time, taking into account that the TAPE has its own philosophy and logic, the balanced cross-border character is to be guaranteed at the level of the action plan. The projects can be realised in a territorially unbalanced way: one project can have a higher impact in Slovakia, another in Hungary. The important thing is that the TAPE has to have a more or less equally balanced perspective.

The partners are not required to guarantee the cross-border movement of the workers. The TAPE can respond to the challenges of the labour market by improving the employment conditions on both sides of the border in an integrated or complementary way. Cross-border character should be identifiable in

- the planned activities
- the selected objectives
- the impacts and results
- the indicators
- the partnership.

Scoring

Score	Justification
4	The cross-border character of the action plan is obvious: the activities to implement on one side are impossible without the realisation of those on the other side and similarly, the impacts are shared on both sides in a positive way.
3	The TAPE has impacts on both sides of the border but these impacts could be reached separately or the cross-border impacts are weak compared to the efforts to be made.
2	The TAPE is not well-balanced regardless of that the objectives would justify that; or the activities have more impact on one side which threatens the interest of the other side.
1	The cross-border factors are present in the TAPE but in a superficial way: the partners and activities to be carried out on one side are ornamental motifs in an action plan of national nature.
0	The TAPE has no cross-border character because its activities are one-sided and / or the impacts and results will be identifiable on one side only and / or the partnership and financing obviously pre-dominate one side of the border.

Implementation of the TAPE increases the level of cross-border integration of the target area

Orientating questions

Does the TAPE demonstrably contribute to a higher level of integration of the border area?

Explanation

One of the main missions of cross-border programmes is to enhance the integration of the border area in order to diminish the separating effects of the administrative border. TAPE can be considered as one of the few integrated territorial tools applied in cross-border programmes all over Europe. (ITI is applied in two programmes, similar models like TAPE are applied in two more programmes.) The common feature of these tools is that they aim at contributing at a higher level of territorial integration (territorial, economic and social cohesion) of the borderland by providing frames for longer-term strategic partnerships and developments. From this perspective, the TAPes should not only improve the employment conditions in a particular region but they should create the conditions for a long-term co-operation involving the representatives of different sectors, or even to become the engine of cross-border integration.

The level of integration can be measured through diverse factors, e.g. the pre-history and institutionalisation of the cooperation (e.g. in the field of employment but not necessarily only there); the representation of different sectors from both sides of the border in the TAPE and its long-term perspective; the level of bi-lingualism; etc. Under this point the assessors are invited to measure the impacts of the TAPE on long-term, strategic, institutionalised cooperation.

Scoring

Score	Justification
4	The TAPE does not only contribute to a stronger integration of the border area but it integrates several initiatives from both countries and plays the role of the engine of integration.
3	The TAPE can be considered as a tool of integration of the targeted border area among other initiatives presented.
2	While the interventions of the TAPE cover both sides, they do not contribute to a stronger cross-border integration of the economy and society (labour market) of the border region.
1	The TAPE has clear short-term integrating perspective but the results do not ensure the long-term sustainability of the integration or the interventions are too one-sided to guarantee a real integration.
0	The TAPE is an ad-hoc action without long-term integrated perspective.

Expected results reflect on overall and specific objectives and are clearly described and measurable

Orientating questions

Are the expected results well defined (i.e. relevant) from the point of view of the planned projects / interventions as well as the objectives of the TAPE; are they measurable, easy to control? Are the expected results in harmony with the result indicator of the programme?

Explanation

Based on the TAPE's overall objectives the description of the expected results should focus on the desired situation after the completion of all the TAPE projects. Expected results of the TAPE shall be fully in line with expected result of the Priority axis set in the Cooperation Programme: "... the employment level of the less developed regions of the programming area is expected to grow. The conditions of cross-border commuting and the accessibility to employment will be improved".

The CP can contribute to the realisation of the result indicator in two ways: it either focuses on the improvement of the cross-border commuting; or creates the basis for integrated cross-border economic developments. In both cases, the projects have to improve the employment level within the region.

The applicant should clarify what the expected results of the TAPE will be and how the action plan will contribute to the fulfilment of the result indicator of the programme.

Scoring

Score	Justification
4	The results of the action plan are clearly defined and are in obvious harmony with both the programme's result indicator (they contribute to the achievements of the latter) and the planned activities
3	The results are relevant regarding the identified challenges but their coherence with the TAPE's objectives are not clear or vice versa
2	The results are clearly defined and are in harmony with the planned activities but it is unclear how they will contribute to the achievement of the programme result indicator
1	The results are clearly defined but they are not in harmony either with the expected results of the programme or with the (scope of the) planned activities
0	The partners cannot clearly identify what kind of results they expect from the TAPE or the results cannot be stemmed from the regional socio-economic challenges and the objectives of the TAPE

New working places reflect on key factors of the employment described in analyses and are sustainable

Orientating questions

Is the number of the planned new workplaces designed carefully? Is the TAPE ambitious and realistic at the same time? Are the planned jobs in harmony with the results of the socio-economic analysis?

Explanation

The PA3 aims at contributing to a higher level of employment and enhanced cross-border labour mobility within the programme area. Therefore, all the TAPes have to create new workplaces. The assessment should concentrate on the feasibility of the planned job developments and their relevance from the point of view of the socio-economic analysis. The number of the planned workplaces should be at the same time ambitious and realistic. Ambitious: the TAPE should not be a façade of activities / investments not targeting employment development but they have to have a real impact on the employment level. Realistic: the planned number of new workplaces should be in harmony with the capacities of the partners and the efforts to make. Too ambitious plans endanger the sustainability of the jobs created. The realism of the TAPE should be identified also in the real connection between the status quo analysis and the sectorial characteristics of the new workplaces.

Scoring

Score	Justification
4	The TAPE designs the new jobs carefully.
3	The quantity and the sectorial relevance of the planned jobs are correctly designed but the long-term sustainability thereof cannot be guaranteed.
2	The number of the planned jobs is both ambitious and realistic but the quantity or the sectorial composition thereof is not in harmony with the results of the analysis.
1	The number of the planned workplaces is too ambitious compared to the financial and human capacities of the partners, or not sustainable; or, on the contrary, the number of the workplaces is too low which indicates that the partners use the TAPE for their own development aims.
0	It is not clear, how the TAPE will create new jobs or the quantity of these workplaces cannot be identified without ambiguity.

Members of the consortium are experienced and their professional profile is in line with the role and activities described in the TAPE

Orientating questions

Does the composition of the partnership guarantee the sound implementation of the TAPE? Are the partners experienced enough compared to the activities undertaken by them?

Explanation

The composition of the partnership has a definitive influence on the successful implementation of the TAPE. The planned activities, the designed indicators and even the objectives should determine the creation of the partnership. It means that the partnership has to include partners with proper human, professional and financial capacities guaranteeing the realisation of the planned activities (a music research institute is not a relevant partner to start food processing; an agricultural farm is not a proper beneficiary of creative industry, etc. – see: professional profile); which can ensure the fulfilment of the indicators (the main indicator can be achieved by SMEs only!); and the composition of which can meet the requirements incorporating in the objectives (the achievement of the selected specific objectives presupposes that all partners undertake the responsibility to achieve them).

Taking into account that the TAPE has a complex structure which makes the realisation and the sustainability really risky, the partners' previous experiences and the capacities provided with are very significant. In addition, previous experiences among the partners have also a strong impact on the feasibility of the TAPE. All these factors should be assessed.

Scoring

Score	Justification
2	The composition of the partnership guarantee that the activities will be carried out, the indicators will be met and the sustainability will be achieved. The partnership ensures the fulfilment of the objectives of the TAPE.
1	The role and the responsibilities of the partners are not well-defined which endangers the safe implementation and / or the professional, human and financial capacities of the partners are not sufficient for successful realisation of the TAPE
0	The partnership cannot guarantee the sound implementation of the TAPE because of the lack of experiences or the composition and the roles of the partners

Project partnerships are balanced and the members of the projects have professional profile in line with the role and activities described in the project

Orientating questions

Is the partnership balanced (both territorially – Slovakia-Hungary – and sectorial)? Are the relevant and necessary organizations involved in project development, implementation and sustainability period? Are the rights and responsibilities of the project partners well defined and presented?

Are all project partners fully committed to the implementation of the project and have competence in achievement of the objectives?

Explanation

All beneficiaries have to take direct responsibility for the preparation and management of the proposed project activities both from a professional and financial point of view and may not act as intermediaries. Beneficiaries shall be experienced and their professional profile shall be in line with the role and activities described in the TAPE. Since the implementation and the maintenance of the projects results require reliable capacities Beneficiaries will be measured against a set of criteria related to their professional background.

Beneficiaries must be linked professionally to the TAPE and must have major contribution and impact within the partnership. Since the main indicator of the PA3 is in line with the representation of the SME sector, the TAPE must involve at least one SME.

Scoring

Score	Justification
2	The partnership correctly represents the TAPE's objectives and the planned activities are in harmony with the responsibilities and competences of the partners.
1	The partnership includes the representatives of different sectors but the partnership is not well-balanced in terms of the objectives and the activities of the TAPE and / or the responsibilities of the partners are not well-defined or they are not in harmony with the planned activities.
0	The partnership includes beneficiaries from different sectors but the composition of the partnership is not balanced and / or it includes partners who are not relevant from the perspective of the implementation of the TAPE (quasi-partners or needless partners); consequently, the description of the responsibilities is not clear or not relevant

Target groups of each project proposal are defined well and are relevant from the point of view of sustainability

Orientating questions

Are the relevant target groups well-identified? Is the selection relevant from the point of view of sustainability and follow-up of the TAPE? Can the target group guarantee that the TAPE's results will be maintained?

Explanation

The involvement of affected target groups has a crucial role in terms of sustainability. The target groups can guarantee that the TAPE's results are maintained after the completion of the last project. Taking into account that the results must be sustained for a five year period, the target groups (as interested parties) have a crucial role in maintaining these results.

Scoring

Score	Justification
3	The target groups are relevant both geographically and sectorial.
2	One (not specified) part of the identified target groups is relevant, other is not.
1	The target groups are identified well (easy to identify) but they are less relevant than other groups would be.
0	The target groups of the TAPE are not identified or they are not relevant from the perspective of the topic of the action plan.

Professional sustainability of each key action and supplementary project is ensured

Orientating questions

How do the partners ensure the sustainability of the TAPE's results? Are the measures defined clearly? Are these measures feasible?

Explanation

The cooperation programme aims at creating the conditions for long-term strategic partnerships. When fostering the development of the endogenous potentials of a cross-border region, the activities should not terminate after the closing conference of the TAPE. Besides, sustainability is also a requirement against the projects implemented with EU support. Consequently, the partners should plan how they ensure the sustainability of the new jobs (for a five-year period) and further project results (established institutions, built facilities, launched services, etc.). Description of the relevant measures has to be convincing.

Scoring

Score	Justification
3	The sustainability of all the results is guaranteed.
2	The sustainability of the complementary projects' results is guaranteed but those of the key actions not.
1	The measures guaranteeing sustainability are well-defined but they are superficial, too general, and conventional.
0	The planned measures facilitating the sustainability are neither understandable, nor feasible, nor relevant; the sustainability cannot be guaranteed.

Financial sustainability of each key action and supplementary project is ensured

Orientating questions

How do the partners guarantee the solid financial background and the further financial sustainability of the TAPE?

Explanation

The partners should have financial stability or the interventions should result on solid financial background which can guarantee the financial sustainability of the TAPE.

Scoring

Score	Justification
3	The composition of the partnership and the experiences of the partners can guarantee the long-term financial sustainability of the TAPE.
2	The financial burdens are shared in an unbalanced way, the sustainability is guaranteed in the case of certain interventions and certain partners only.
1	The TAPE does not give a clear response how the financial sustainability will be guaranteed.
0	The partners cannot guarantee the smooth financial management of the TAPE nor the long-term sustainability because the lack of financial stability and / or the lack of experience

4.2 Operational evaluation

The proposed projects are indispensable parts of the TAPE and are absolutely necessary for the overall success of the TAPE

Orientating questions

Are the proposed projects indispensable parts of the TAPE and absolutely necessary for the overall success of the TAPE?

Explanation

As a result of the TAPE the employment level of the less developed regions of the programming area is expected to grow. The complexity of the SO3.1 determines comprehensive development plans which induce integrated projects including infrastructural elements and soft activities. Each project proposal within the TAPE has to be designed in line with the list of eligible actions serving as guidelines for defining objectives and activities of the submitted project proposals. Each TAPE has to include minimum 3 up to 8 project proposals but each project have to be in synergic or complementary relation and must be absolutely necessary for the overall success of the TAPE.

Scores

Score	Justification
3	Each project is in synergic or complementary relation and is absolutely necessary for the overall success of the TAPE.
0	The TAPE includes project which has no true relevance for the overall success of the TAPE.

Assessors shall recommend to withdraw project proposals from the TAPE in case the proposed project has no remarkable synergic or complementary relationship with other projects or does not have any added value to employment or mobility objectives of the TAPE.

Project activities and the expected results are well-defined, feasible and ensure the achievement of the project objectives

Orientating questions

Are the proposed projects well defined? Is the logical frame of the objectives, expected results, activities and outputs clear in case of each project proposal?

Explanation

Applicants have to describe the main parameters of each project proposal including the necessary financial, human and time resources and introduce responsible stakeholders for the implementation. First, the Applicant shall describe the main challenges that the project is responding to, specify the project objectives, target groups, expected results and plan the sustainability of these results.

Scores

Score	Justification
3	Each project is well designed and each parameter is clear and understandable. The logical frame of the structure of objectives – expected results – activities – outcomes – sustainability is identifiable at each project proposal.
2	Most of the projects are well designed and each parameter is clear and understandable. The logical frame of the objectives – expected results – activities – outcomes – sustainability is identifiable in case most of the project proposals.
1	Most of the projects have well designed parts like e.g. objectives and expected results, but others like e.g. the target groups but other are confused like target groups or sustainability.
0	Most of the projects are confused; they have no well-defined parts and clear logical frame.

Project proposals are in synergic or complementary relation with other projects implemented within the TAPE.

Orientating questions

Are the defined synergic and complementary and relations real?

Explanation

Project proposals have to be in synergic or complementary relation with other projects implemented within the TAPE. In case of synergic relation the results or the added value of several projects shall be greater than the sum of the individual projects. In other words, synergy is the interaction or cooperation of two or more projects to produce combined effects that are greater than the sum of their separate effects.

In case of complementarity reaching the expected results of a specific project is not possible without the implementation of other project within the TAPE. Each Key action or supplementary project has to be in synergic or complementarity relationship with minimum one other project.

Scoring

Score	Justification
3	All the described synergic and complementary relations are true and realistic. In case of complementary projects the outputs highly depend on each other. In case of synergic project the effects of the results are much greater.
2	The most important synergic and complementary relations are strong and realistic; the rest is weak or artificial. (Key action – Supplementary)
1	In case of some project the described synergic and complementary relations are realistic. (Supplementary – Supplementary)
0	Most of the described synergic and complementary relations are weak or artificial.

The overall budget of the TAPE is realistic and is in line with sound financial management principles

Orientating questions

Are the planned financial resources sufficient for the sound implementation of the TAPE? Can the TAPE's budget ensure the long-term sustainability of the results?

Explanation

Applicants are obliged to plan their expenditures according to the principle of sound financial management. The sound financial management builds on the following principles:

- The principle of economy requires that the resources used by the Beneficiary in the pursuit of its activities shall be made available in due time, in appropriate quantity and quality and at the best price;
- The principle of efficiency concerns the best relationship between the resources used and results achieved;
- The principle of effectiveness concerns the attainment of the Specific objectives set and the achievement of the intended results.

In the case of TAPes, the budget planning procedure should be determined by the objective of the PA3, i.e. the creation of new jobs. In this respect, the budget should be in harmony with the number of the newly established jobs. It means that exaggerating costs related to this number should be avoided. There is no exact way how to define the proper value of money when creating new jobs. Nevertheless, no more investment than 200 000 EUR (in average) should be dedicated to the creation of one new job.

Scoring

Score	Justification
2	The overall budget of the TAPE ensures the sound implementation of the TAPE and the sustainability of the results.
1	The TAPE's budget is not well balanced: the costs are not proportionate with the results and indicators; some interventions are too costly compared to the number of new jobs.
0	The TAPE's budget plan is unrealistic or unrealisable.

Budgets of the project proposals are realistic and are in line with the sound financial management principles

Orientating questions

Is the estimated budget of the projects in harmony with the planned activities? Are not the costs exaggerating? Are the costs proportionate to the number of new jobs created?

Explanation

Applicants are obliged to plan their expenditures according to the principle of sound financial management. The sound financial management builds on the following principles:

- The principle of economy requires that the resources used by the Beneficiary in the pursuit of its activities shall be made available in due time, in appropriate quantity and quality and at the best price;
- The principle of efficiency concerns the best relationship between the resources used and results achieved;
- The principle of effectiveness concerns the attainment of the Specific objectives set and the achievement of the intended results.

Scoring

Score	Justification
2	The project budgets are planned smoothly and the costs to be incurred are relevant and well-designed
1	The project budgets contain irrelevant costs or relevant costs (irrelevant: because the activity is need-less or because the cost is exaggerating)
0	The TAPE's projects have no clear and well-based budget