

Annex 1: Conceptual Framework of the Swiss-Polish Cooperation Programme

The Conceptual Framework is an integral part of the Framework Agreement between the Swiss Federal Council and the Government of the Republic of Poland concerning the implementation of the Swiss-Polish Cooperation Programme. The Conceptual Framework defines objectives, principles, strategies, geographic and thematic focus as well as indicative financial allocations.

1. Objectives

The Swiss-Polish Cooperation Programme pursues two objectives:

- To contribute to the reduction of economic and social disparities between the Republic of Poland and the more advanced countries of the enlarged European Union (EU); and
- To contribute within the Republic of Poland to the reduction of economic and social disparities between the dynamic urban centres and the structurally weak peripheral regions.

The Swiss-Polish Cooperation Programme includes national and international Projects that support a sustainable, economically and socially balanced development.

Towards the end of the implementation period of the Swiss Contribution, both Parties shall jointly decide on a global evaluation of the results achieved by the Swiss-Polish Cooperation Programme.

2. Principles

The Swiss-Polish cooperation is guided by the following principles:

Transparency. Transparency and openness are key to all cooperation activities and are binding at all levels. Special emphasis shall be given to transparency in project selection, contract awarding and financial management.

Social inclusion. Cooperation activities aim at including socially and economically disadvantaged individuals and groups in the opportunities and benefits of development.

Equal opportunities and rights. Cooperation activities aim at increasing women's and men's opportunities to exercise their rights equally through a gender-based approach.

Environmental sustainability. Cooperation activities aim at incorporating requirements of environmental sustainability.

Commitment by all stakeholders. All institutions and decision-makers involved in the Swiss-Polish Cooperation Programme are committed to an efficient and effective implementation of the agreed Projects.

Subsidiarity and decentralisation. Cooperation activities aim at including considerations of subsidiarity and decentralisation primarily in Projects at the municipal and regional levels.

3. Strategies

Main Strategic Considerations

The Swiss-Polish Cooperation Programme is part of a comprehensive national development planning that includes the structural and cohesion programmes of the EU as well as the programmes of the EEA and the Norwegian Financial Mechanisms. The Swiss Contribution shall be complementary to these programmes and mainly focus on Projects that are not or only partially covered by other financial sources.

Main strategic considerations include:

a. Focusing. The Memorandum of Understanding between the Swiss Federal Council and the Council of the European Union defines four funding guidelines for the Contribution:

- Security, stability and support for reforms;
- Environment and infrastructure;
- Private sector; and
- Human and social development.

These funding guidelines and the related focus areas provide a broad base for cooperation. Efficiency and effectiveness considerations as well as concern for the optimal allocation and use of available resources are important. Therefore, the Swiss-Polish Cooperation Programme shall have a clear strategic focus, guided by the following considerations:

- Concentration on a maximum of eight focus areas in which at least 70% of the Contribution shall be spent (thematic concentration). The selection of the focus areas shall be need-based and take into account specific Swiss know-how.
- Concentration on four peripheral and less-developed regions (NUTS II) in which at least 40% of the Contribution shall be spent (geographic concentration).
- Concentration on a relatively small number of Projects.

b. Programme approach. A programme consists of component projects linked by a common theme or shared objectives. A programme approach shall be applied in focus areas which display several of the following characteristics: large financial Commitments; linking of different levels (national, regional, local); variety of actors; contribution to policy development; significant contributions to capacity building; and application of a common set of rules and procedures. A programme approach implies a delegated authority for decision-making on individual projects. A programme approach includes: an initial assessment of the focus area; the definition of objectives, guidelines and budgets; a programme implementation plan; and a sector monitoring and evaluation concept. To assure efficiency and effectiveness, the contribution to a specific programme shall represent a minimum amount of CHF 4 million.

c. Individual project approach. An individual project approach shall be applied in a focus area in which stand-alone projects shall be implemented. To assure efficiency and effectiveness, the contribution for each project under the individual project approach shall represent in general a minimum amount of CHF 1 million. Higher minimal financial volumes may be agreed upon (see Chapter 5 of this Annex). Block Grant financing may provide a means to accommodate smaller projects (see Annex 3).

d. International Projects. The Contribution may be used to finance international Projects.

e. Partners and beneficiaries. The Swiss-Polish Cooperation Programme shall include partners and beneficiaries from the public and private sectors, non-governmental organisations and other civil society organisations.

f. Partnerships. Partnerships between Swiss and Polish partners are an enriching element of the Swiss-Polish Cooperation Programme. Cooperation and partnerships are strongly encouraged, especially in focus areas in which Switzerland may contribute particular experience, know-how and technologies.

g. Flexibility. Flexibility and the possibility to react to opportunities require that initially only about 80% of the Contribution shall be allocated to particular focus areas and special items. Two years after the beginning of the Swiss-Polish Cooperation Programme, a review shall assess thematic and geographic priorities, redirect the initial financial allocations as agreed, and determine the priorities for the not yet allocated part of the Contribution.

h. Visibility. Visibility of the Swiss-Polish Cooperation Programme for Polish and Swiss citizens is an important aspect that may be taken into account when selecting and implementing Projects. Both Parties undertake to inform proactively on their cooperation.

Implementation Strategies

a. Identifying Projects. Project identification significantly impacts the quality of the Swiss-Polish Cooperation Programme. The Republic of Poland is responsible for the identification of Projects to be financed by the Contribution. Switzerland can offer the Republic of Poland Project proposals.

b. Setting Project selection criteria. Project selection shall be based on a clear set of criteria. General selection criteria shall include:

- Responsiveness to the objectives of the Swiss-Polish Cooperation Programme;
- Adherence to the principles of the Swiss-Polish Cooperation Programme described in Chapter 2 of this Annex;
- Responsiveness to the strategic considerations outlined in Chapter 3.1 of this Annex;
- Anchoring in the national development planning and, if possible, the National Strategic Reference Framework and the respective Operational Programme(s);
- Innovation and/or the potential to offer new solutions that can be applied subsequently on a larger scale (pilot Projects);
- Capacity of the Executing Agency;
- Leverage potential (mobilisation of additional resources);
- Feasibility in the given time-span; and
- Sustainability of results.

Specific selection criteria for each focus area may be formulated prior to starting the implementation of the Swiss-Polish Cooperation Programme.

c. Supporting Project planning. Project preparation and detailed Project planning are of paramount importance for efficiency and effectiveness in Project implementation. Preparation support may be requested by the Republic of Poland or recommended by Switzerland and shall be financed through the Project Preparation Facility (see Annex 3).

d. Enhancing implementation capacities. Successful Project implementation depends on the capacities of the implementing and monitoring organisations. If need be, capacity enhancement may be requested by the Republic of Poland or recommended by Switzerland and may be financed by the Contribution as an integral part of Project financing.

4. Geographic Focus

At least 40% of the Swiss-Polish Cooperation Programme shall be spent in the Lubelskie Region, the Podkarpackie Region, the Świętokrzyskie Region and the Małopolskie Region.

5. Thematic Focus and Indicative Financial Allocations

The following thematic focus and indicative financial allocations shall apply to the Swiss-Polish Cooperation Programme:

1. Security, Stability and Support for Reforms			
N°	Focus areas	Approach, objectives and eligible Pr ojects	Indicative financial allocation
1	Regional development initiatives in peripheral or disadvantaged regions	<p><u>Programme approach with one objective:</u></p> <p><u>Objective in the geographic focus area:</u></p> <p>One specific objective related to the increase of employment and income is fully achieved in a sub-region through the implementation of an integrated strategy (covering different sectors) by selected partnerships.</p> <p>The sub-region groups several rural municipalities around 1-2 urban municipalities. These urban municipalities will function as sub-regional centres.</p> <p>A partnership of the sub-region develops an integrated strategy and implements the related multi-thematic, local development programme. The programme is composed by a set of measures (projects), some of them to be co-financed by the Swiss Contribution. A programme in a sub-region would amount to 5 to 10 million CHF.</p> <p>The integrated strategy addresses economic development objectives, like for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of local agricultural processing and entrepreneurship; - Development of human resources in particular as regards rural youth, taking into account modern forms of vocational training and life-long education; - Development of networks, partnerships, social capital – support for non-governmental institutions and organisations involved in rural development; - Creation of a mechanism for financing and supporting local investments. 	Up to 50 million CHF

2	Measures to secure borders	<p><u>Individual Project approach with the following objective:</u></p> <p>To contribute to the protection of eastern EU Borders.</p> <p>Types of eligible Projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strengthening the efficiency and effectiveness of the border check points - Strengthening of customs services units tasked with the crime-fighting - Improve IT infrastructure, equipment and management of border check points, including the elaboration and implementation of digital system of radio communication 	<p>Up to 20 million CHF</p>
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2. Environment and Infrastructure			
N°	Focus areas	Approach, objectives and eligible Projects	Indicative financial allocation
3	<p>Rehabilitation and modernisation of basic infrastructure</p> <p>and</p> <p>Improvement of the environment</p>	<p><u>Individual Project approach with 3 objectives:</u></p> <p>A minimum of 30% of the amount allocated to this thematic focus area shall be used for Projects in the geographical focus areas.</p> <p><u>Objective 1</u></p> <p>To enhance municipal infrastructure services in order to increase living standards and promote economic development.</p> <p>Types of eligible Projects: Projects of a minimum value of CHF 15 million each in the fields of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Solid waste management: Collection, separation and treatment of waste and of hazardous waste, including hospital waste <p><u>Objective 2</u></p> <p>To increase energy efficiency and to reduce emissions, in particular greenhouse gases and hazardous substances.</p> <p>Types of eligible Projects: Projects of a minimum value of CHF 10 million each in the fields of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction of renewable energy systems (e.g. solar, wind, small hydropower, geothermal, biomass, etc.) - Improvement of energy efficiency: e.g. reduction of energy losses 	<p>Up to 117.5 million CHF</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduction of emissions from thermal power plants and district heating systems <p><u>Objective 3</u></p> <p>To improve the management, the safety, the efficiency and the reliability of communal/regional public transportation systems.</p> <p>Types of eligible Projects: Projects of a minimum value of CHF 3 million each, for hardware CHF 10 million each in the fields of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project preparation (feasibility studies) for major traffic investment Projects - Small and well targeted railway infrastructure and rolling stock projects - Modernization of monitoring and steering systems - Passenger services and ticketing 	
4	<p>Biodiversity and nature protection</p> <p>and</p> <p>Cross-border environmental initiatives</p>	<p><u>Individual Project approach with the following objective:</u></p> <p>To protect nature and the functioning of ecosystems in a sustainable manner in the geographic focus areas.</p> <p>Types of eligible Projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development and implementation of integrated natural resources management concepts including nature protection, economic and social use - Promotion of eco-tourism, including recreational and informational infrastructure - Awareness building and environmental protection requirements - Capacity building in stakeholder organizations - Carpathian convention: Networking and implementation 	<p>Up to 10 million CHF</p>

3. Private Sector			
N°	Focus areas	Approach, objectives and eligible Pr ojects	Indicative financial allocation
5	Improving the business environment and the access to financing for SMEs	<p><u>Individual Project approach with the following objective:</u></p> <p>To promote employment creation.</p> <p>Types of eligible Projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Equity and debt participation in local financial intermediaries - Financial services provided by local financial intermediaries to small and medium enterprises (credit, leasing, guarantees), e.g. in the framework of specific instruments of multilateral institutions <p>A minimum of 30% of the amount allocated to this thematic focus area shall be used for the types of eligible Projects mentioned above in the geographical focus areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Institutional and regulatory capacity building for corporate sector financial reporting and auditing at the national level (10 million CHF) 	Up to 63 million CHF
6	Development of the private sector and promotion of exports of SMEs	<p><u>Individual Project approach with the following objective:</u></p> <p>To increase the market shares of Polish exports of goods and services where possible taking regional disparities into account.</p> <p>Types of eligible Projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strengthening of local service providers in the area of eco-efficiency and corporate social responsibility - Tourism hospitality education programmes and tourism destination planning 	Up to 10 million CHF

4. Human and Social Development			
N°	Focus areas	Approach, objectives and eligible Pr ojects	Indicative financial allocation
7	Health	<p>Programme approach with the following objectives:</p> <p><u>Objective 1</u></p> <p>To promote healthy lifestyles and to prevent communicable diseases on national level and in geographical focus areas.</p> <p>Types of eligible Projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of health promotion and prevention strategies and structures (both governmental as well as non-governmental) - Primarily large scale and long-term (3 to 5 years) health promotion and disease prevention campaigns (e.g. alcohol, tobacco, HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, narcotics, obesity) at national level - Smaller scale health promotion and disease prevention campaigns at regional and local level - Health education programmes (e.g. for children and young adolescents) <p><u>Objective 2</u></p> <p>To strengthen primary health care and social services in the peripheral and disadvantaged region of the geographic focus areas in favouring a multi-sectorial programmatic approach.</p> <p>Types of eligible Projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capacity enhancement in policy and strategy development on regional (and national) level concerning the elderly and handicapped persons - Enhancing service delivery for the elderly and the handicapped persons - Equipment and training for nursing at the primary level and social services - Equipment for and training of staff for ambulatory and nursing home care - Strengthening access and quality of ambulatory and nursing home care for the elderly - Training for professionals working in ambulatory and nursing home care 	<p>Up to 35 million CHF</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishment / renovation of hospices facilities as part of a larger programme - Capacity enhancement of governmental and non governmental institutions for a better integration of handicapped persons (training, job) - Supporting counselling and care facilities and foster families - Supporting community homes (incl. equipment and renovation) 	
8	Research and Development	<p><u>Programme approach with three objectives:</u></p> <p><u>Objective 1</u> To strengthen the scientific potential through scholarship programmes in Switzerland.</p> <p><u>Types of eligible Projects:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scholarship Fund¹ for advanced degree and post-graduate programmes in Switzerland (CHF 12 million) <p><u>Objective 2</u> To enhance access to higher education.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scholarship programmes between the Republic of Poland and EU's neighbouring countries for advanced degree and post-graduate studies in the Republic of Poland <p><u>Objective 3</u> To contribute to the knowledge based economy through the enhancement of the knowledge base and in particular through applied research as well as know-how and technology transfer.</p> <p><u>Types of eligible Projects:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Joint research Projects and institutional partnerships in applied research - Equipment for applied research Projects - Incubators to facilitate spin-offs - Capacity building in innovation management 	<p>Up to 30 million CHF</p>

¹ Rules and procedures for the Scholarship Fund will be different from those defined in Annex 2.

5. Special Allocations		
Item	Content	Indicative financial allocation
Block Grant	<p><u>Programme approach with two objectives:</u></p> <p><u>Objective 1</u> To promote civil society's contribution to economic and social cohesion as important actors of development and participation.</p> <p>Types of eligible Projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Block Grant(s) to the civil society/NGOs contributing primarily to social service provision as well as environmental concerns, allowing to strengthen organisational capacities. <p><u>Objective 2</u> To promote and/or enhance partnerships between municipalities and regions of the Republic of Poland and Switzerland.</p> <p>Types of eligible Projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Block Grant for the financing of small joint projects in the frame of partnerships 	Up to 20.5 million CHF
Project Preparation Facility	<p><u>Priority objective:</u> To support the preparation of Final Project Proposals.</p>	Up to 3 million CHF
Swiss Programme Management	Swiss administration of the Swiss-Polish Cooperation Programme.	24.45 million CHF
Polish Technical Assistance	Polish administration of the Swiss-Polish Cooperation Programme including preparation, implementation, monitoring, evaluation.	Up to 7.5 million CHF

Overview on the Indicative Allocations	
Funding guidelines	Indicative financial allocation (million CHF)
1. Security, Stability and support for Reforms	70
2. Environment and Infrastructure	127.5
3. Private Sector	73
4. Human and Social Development	65
5. Special Allocations	55.45
6. Not yet allocated	98.07
Total indicative allocations	489.02