Baltic Sea Region INTERREG III B Joint Secretariat, Managing Authority

Evaluation Study on Use of Outcomes Produced in the Baltic Sea Region INTERREG III B Neighbourhood Programme

Final Report

October 2008

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List of Abbreviations

BSR	Baltic Sea Region
CBC	Cross-Border Co-operation
CD	Commission Delegation
CIP	Community Initiative Programme
EC	European Commission
ECD	European Commission Delegation
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ENPI	European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
EU	European Union
IA	Impact Assessment
IPR	Intellectual Property Rights
JS	Joint Secretariat
MA	Managing Authority
MC	Monitoring Committee
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NP	Neighbourhood Programme
NSC	National Sub-committee
PM	Project Manager
SC	Steering Committee
SME	Small and medium enterprises
Tacis	Technical Aid to the Commonwealth of Independent States

1 Executive summary

The present evaluation concerns the analysis of the outcomes of the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) INTERREG III B Neighbourhood Programme 2000-2006. The programme consists of four transnational III B priorities and two cross-border IIIA priorities part-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) as well as funding is made available for participation of Russian and Belarusian partners through Tacis co-financing.

The aim of the evaluation study was to provide the management of the BSR programme with knowledge on how and to what extent the outcomes produced by the project under the BSR INTERREG III B Neighbouring Programme (NP) have been used after the respective projects ended their activities. In addition, the evaluation Study should identify the reasons why the outputs are not utilised and suggest ways in which to overcome the obstacles so that the results of the evaluation study can be used for the benefit of the implementation of BSR INTERREG III B NP successor, the Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007 – 2013.

In order to assess the use of outcomes, the evaluation study carried out desk research of programme and project documentation as well as other evaluations, interviews with key project stakeholders and an electronic survey of a number of projects funded under the programme. A sample of projects were included in the evaluation which had all been finalised minimum 6 months before the evaluation started except for projects with co-funding from the Tacis programme which have started later.

The evaluation study was spilt into to three analysis parts and the conclusion and recommendation part: the first part concerned the III B project, the second the IIIA projects and the final part analysed the projects with Tacis co-financing. The lessons learned and recommendations addressed all three analysis parts and drew lessons learned for the full programme.

The evaluation concluded that for III B and IIIA with some differences the outcomes of the projects are delivered and used, and in general they meet the needs and expectation of the users and project stakeholders. The key issues were identified in the sustainability of the outcomes and thereby the possibilities to continue using the outcomes after project end. Planning and financing of the use after project end are key issues which a number of projects are facing because this has not been addressed in the identification and planning phase.

Projects with Tacis financing are likely to have similar problems, when they are finalised, with regard to the financing of future use of outcomes. Here, however, the problems may be even more pronounced as the needs assessments have often been superficial and not necessarily included the Tacis partner. The latter often had neither the experience nor the financing to participate in the needs assessment and project planning.

The key lesson learned in the evaluation study was that financing the use of the outcomes has to be better planned and already included in the project application or at an early state in the project implementation. Good examples already exist of involving private sector and other public financing sources in funding and using the outcomes, but it is paramount that these stakeholders are involved already at the beginning or during the project in order for these to be able to commit to continue the financing.

The use of project outcomes often has the prerequisites for having both organisation impacts on the direct users and partners as well as larger policy impact. Again, securing these impacts is something which has to be included already in the project planning otherwise there is a risk that this will not happen.

Project outcomes are not communicated and disseminated to any significant extent. The lack of communication results in reduced use of outcomes both within the project and by external users who might have been interested in using the outcomes.

Project management and planning can be greatly improved to the benefit of all project stakeholders. This includes real stakeholder involvement (outside the project partnership) which is often not implemented to any great extent.

The lessons learned and collected in this study, as well as the wealth of other institutional learning produced by the projects in the BSR programme are not collected and disseminated in a systematic manner. There is very little knowledge about what happened to the project outcomes and results after the projects were finalised. Collection of these by national government and pan-Baltic institutions will provide valuable learning and knowledge sharing in the entire region.

There are concrete steps which can be taken in order to improve the use of project outcomes and thereby the programme and the policy impact this can have. It is recommended in particular to strengthen the use of the outcomes in the new projects and thereby the results and impacts of the BSR programme. The following key issues should be addressed:

- project planning, needs assessment, including stakeholder analysis and involvement of stakeholders should be included already at the application stage;
- project management and communication should be in focus during implementation, and a communication strategy should be developed;

- considerations on securing organisational impacts and securing the financing for sustaining these impacts should be part of the initial project planning;

- financing strategies for use of outcomes after project end from both private and public sources should be emphasised in project planning, and support should be provided for project applications and to implementers in this respect.

2 Introduction and Background

The Evaluation Study on Use of Outcomes Produced in the Baltic Sea Region INTERREG III B Neighbourhood Programme was commissioned to COWI A/S (Denmark) in April 2008, following a tendering process in March 2008. The evaluation study was undertaken in the period April to September 2008 and it was commissioned by the Joint Secretariat /Managing Authority and will be presented to the Monitoring Committee in October 2008.

This report is structured to reflect the findings of the different parts of the study. The present Chapter 2 outlines the scope of the study and introduces the methodology. Chapters 3-5 include the findings of the evaluation study of the III B and IIIA projects, and the findings of projects with Tacis co-financing. Each part of the analysis is finalised by a section concluding on the key evaluation criteria. Key issues and findings have been included and highlighted in thematic boxes.

Chapter 6 includes the overall findings and lessons learned in the study for all three parts as well as a list of recommendations for future actions. The last chapter of the report is a detailed account of the methodology and data collection.

The appendices include: a list of projects subject to the evaluation study, a list of interviewees and a questionnaire used for the data collection.

2.1 Scope of the Evaluation

This Evaluation Study on Use of Outcomes Produced in the Baltic Sea Region INTERREG III B Neighbourhood Programme (hereafter the Evaluation Study) covers the Baltic Sea Region INTERREG III B Neighbourhood Programme (hereafter the BSR programme) in the period from 2000 to 2006. The Terms of Reference for the Evaluation Study stated that all projects which ended their activities a minimum of six months before the commencement of the evaluation study should be subject to the evaluation[1].

[1] Some of the projects financed under priorities 5-6 will not be finalised until 2008-2009.

In the evaluation study, two different groups of projects have been addressed:

1. Transnational projects (1-4) III B and Cross-Border Co-operation (CBC) projects (5-6) IIIA. Projects finalised by October 2007 (a minimum of 6 months before evaluation start).

2. Projects which included Russian and Belarusian partners with Tacis co-financing, most of which are not finalised.

The main focus of the evaluation study has been the transnational priorities 1-4. For the projects still under implementation (projects with Tacis co-funding), the evaluation study concentrated on assessing how the partners see the use of the outputs after project end.

The overall approach has been:

- all 101[2] finalised projects were the basis of data collection, and a sample has been subjected to a web-based questionnaire covering self-assessments on the evaluation criteria;

- 15 projects have been subjected to case studies which in addition to a detailed desk study also comprises project site visits and interviews with key informants;

- interviews have been conducted for 10 projects (finalised and non-finalised) with Russian and Belarusian partners.

2.2 Data Collection

Based on the approach described above, we collected data using the following methods: e-survey, desk study and interviews.

Electronic survey (e-survey)
An internet-based questionnaire was sent to a number of selected project partners and users. All 102[3] finalised projects were contacted via the project manager in order to collect names and contact details for 3-4 project partners per project.

In the table below, the response rates for the different parts of the e-survey process for III B and IIIA are illustrated. Tacis partners were not included in the e-survey due to language considerations and lack of internet access.

As can be seen from the table, we initially had a 52 % contact rate for III B and 38 % for IIIA. In this respect, it should also be mentioned that contacting projects, both ongoing and projects which had ended several years ago, was generally difficult (contact information not updated (e-mails no longer active), pro-

[2] This number was provided in the Terms of reference for the study.

[3] 102 projects were on the list provided at project start-up.

ject manager no longer in the company, or the organisation had no recollection of the project).

Table 1 - Overview of e-survey Process

Step	III B	IIIA	Total
1. Number of projects contacted	65	37	102
2. Number of responses (contact rate)	34 (52 %)	14 (38 %)	47 (46 %)
3. Number of contact persons obtained	186	69	255
4. Number of questionnaires sent out	183[4]	69	252
5. Number of responses (response rate)	108 (59 %)	36 (52 %)	144 (57 %)

From the 34 projects which responded with contact persons for the e-survey, 186 persons were forwarded the e-questionnaire. 108 persons or 59 % responded for III B and 36 persons or 52% for IIIA. 2 reminders were sent in order to obtain this response rate.

Interviews
The second selection of projects was carried out in order to identify 15 projects (10 for III B and 5 for IIIA) for the interviews. The basis for this selection was contact responses from the e-survey. Project managers from these projects were requested to provide contact persons for the interviews. A separate list of projects was provided by the Joint Secretariat (JS) with project sample of 10 Tacis projects. The lists of interviewees included project managers, project partners and outcome users. All contact persons were contacted in order to carry out an interview either as a meeting or as a telephone interview. The interviews were carried out in the period from June to September. The summer break, which fell within this period, resulted in some delays of interviews and 15 persons were not available[5]. All interviews were recorded in electronic questionnaires.

Table 2 - Interviews

	III B	IIIA	Tacis	Total
Number of projects	10	5	10	25
Number of contact persons	47	18	23	88
Number of interviews	40	16	17	73
Number of persons not available	7	2	6	15

[4] Eleven questionnaires were returned with mail delivery failures or alternative e-mail addresses. With help from the project managers, we were able to resend the questionnaire to eight.

[5] This number contains persons who have not answered (some contact person have been contacted four times) or who were not available.

In addition to these interviews, interviews were conducted with relevant staff of the JS in Rostock and in Riga, as well as with staff of the European Commission Delegation (ECD) in Moscow and Kiev for Tacis co-financed projects.

Desk study
We undertook a desk study of the programme and project documentation in order to gain information for the development of the e-survey and the interview guide. We furthermore undertook a desk review of the 25 projects for which interviews were also carried out. The documents and other sources of information consulted during this work are mentioned in 7.3 Desk Study.

The methodology is further detailed in Chapter 7.

2.3 The INTERREG III B Programme

The European Commission adopted the Community Initiative Programme (CIP) "Baltic Sea Region INTERREG III B - Trans-national Co-operation on Spatial Planning and Regional Development" on 14 September 2001. Eleven countries (Estonia, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Sweden as well as Norway, North-West Russia and Belarus) participated in the programme.

With the 2004 enlargement of the EU, two new (cross-border) programmes for co-operation across Estonian – Latvian – Russian borders and Latvian – Lithuanian – Belarusian borders were also included in the implementation framework of the BSR INTERREG III B Programme. These new programmes were integrated into the BSR Programme as Priorities 5 and 6 or so-called IIIA priorities.

Box 1 - Programme Priorities

The programme priorities

Priority 1:	Promotion of spatial development approaches and actions for specific territories and sectors
Priority 2:	Promotion of territorial structures supporting sustainable BSR development
Priority 3:	Trans-national and bilateral institution and capacity building in the Baltic Sea Region
Priority 4:	Special support for regions bordering candidate countries
Priority 5:	IIIA cross-border co-operation Estonia – Latvia – Russia (North)
Priority 6:	IIIA cross-border co-operation Latvia – Lithuania – Belarus (South)

The total programme budget is listed in the table below. The programme will come to an end in December 2008 with final ERDF commitments made in December 2006. The last projects will finalise their implementation in 2009. A total of 129 projects were approved for IIIB (1-4) and 99 for IIIA (5-6) and of these 29 projects in IIIB and 27 in IIIA were with Tacis co-funding.

Table 3 - Programme Funding 2000 - 2006

Funding in MEUR	Priorities 1-4	Priorities 5-6	Total
Total programme funding	196	25.7	221.7
Total European Regional Development Funds (ERDF)	121	18.2 (North: 7.8 South: 10.4)	139.2
Total Norwegian national funds	5.6	-	5.6
External Fund (former **Tacis**)	7.1	7.5	14.6

2.4 Stakeholder Analysis

A stakeholder analysis was carried out early in the process in order to identify institutions and groups of persons who should be included in the analysis. Since the scope of the evaluation concerns the use of outcomes, only those stakeholders who were/are involved either in the management/preparation, implementation or the use of outcomes have been selected for participation in the evaluation.

The stakeholders identified were divided into two groups: those who are responsible or have a role in the overall management of the BSR INTERREG III B Neighbourhood Programme, and those who are directly involved in the projects or end up as users of the outcomes.

The JS is in charge of the management of the programme and acts as secretariat for the Monitoring Committee (MC) and the three Steering Committees (SCs).

Table 4 - Stakeholders at Programme Level

Stakeholder	Definition	Role/responsibilities
Monitoring Committee (MC)	The Member States have set up a Monitoring Committee.	The MC is responsible for approving the Programme Complement and monitoring the progress of the Programme.
Steering Committees (SCs)	Three committees: one for the III B, one for Priority 5 and one for Priority 6.	The SCs approve individual project applications and propose to the Monitoring Committee the project selection criteria.
National Sub-Committees (NSCs)[6]	Each of the participating countries in the programme has established a NSC.	The main purpose of the NSCs is to involve regional and local authorities, economic and social partners, and NGOs in the implementation of the Programme.
Commission Delegations (CDs)	EC Delegation to Russia and Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus in Kiev.	The CDs act as Contracting Authority for the external component (**Tacis**).

[6] Estonia and Belarus do not have national sub-committees.

At project level, four types of stakeholders were identified who had a role in either the preparation or the use of the outcomes.

- Project partners who were also users of some of the outcomes.
- Project partners who were not users, but involved in the preparation and implementation of the Project.
- Users: user organisations which were foreseen in the project application.
- Non-planned users: users who were included as users either during the project or after project end.

Table 5 - Stakeholders at Project Level

Stakeholder	**Description**	**Role/responsibilities**
Project partners (users)	Partners who are listed under "VII. Lead partner and partnership" of the project application *and* who will also be users of the outcomes.	Active both in the preparation *and* the implementation of the outcomes.
Project partners (not users)	Partners who are listed under "VII. Lead partner and partnership" of the project application, *but* who will not be users of the outcomes.	Active only in the preparation of the outcomes.
Intended users	Intended users of outcomes who are not listed under "VII. Lead partner and partnership" of the project application.	Mainly active in the implementation of the outcomes, though they can have a role in the preparation as well.
Non-intended users	Users of the outcomes who were not included in the project application.	Active only in the implementation of the outcomes.

The identified stakeholders were the persons included in the e-survey and the interviews.

2.5 Evaluation Questions and Criteria

This evaluation study focuses on the durability of the programme and the sustainability of the results by assessing the usage of the outcomes of the programme.

The main evaluation criterion is ***durability.*** In this evaluation study durability is used as equivalent to sustainability due to the fact that the BSR programme uses durability in its monitoring and evaluation guidelines**.** Sustainability is seen as part of the overall impact criterion. Following EC Evaluation Guidelines, sustainability is defined as the continuation of the longevity of benefits from project outcomes after cessation of the project.

We have also assessed the ***utility*** of the outcomes, i.e. the extent to which the outcomes conform to the needs and priorities of the target groups and the policies of the beneficiaries.

In particular, this evaluation study assesses the outcomes and should not be understood as an evaluation of the projects as such which is assumed to be carried out at programme end. Assessment of the impact is therefore only assessed against the sustainability of outcomes and not in relation to the overall impact of the results of the projects or the programme.

An indicator system was developed to help aggregate the data and process the evidence collected. It consists of qualitative indicators and is based on the data gathered through the on-line survey, the desk study (documentary analysis) and the interviews. The indicator system is included in Appendix 1.

Box 2 - Evaluation Questions

Evaluation questions for III B and IIIA

1) To what extent are the outputs, such as plans and strategies, of the projects financed under the BSR INTERREG III B NP used as intended by the end beneficiaries of the projects?
2) Are there differences in use by different user groups?
3) Does the use of the outcomes change over time - i.e. a substantial use of outputs directly after project end and very little after two to three years?
4) What are the reasons/causes for the project-end-beneficiaries using or not using the outcomes?
5) Which features do successful projects have in relation to delivering outcomes?
6) Are there other outputs of the projects instead of the intended/planned?
7) How can the use of outcomes be increased and further developed in future programmes?

The second part of the evaluation concerns whether specific considerations with regard to design and planning of outcomes exist which should be taken into consideration for projects financed by the ERDF/Tacis (ENPI) and Tacis (ENPI).

Box 3 - Evaluation Questions

Evaluation questions for partners in Tacis co-financed projects

8) Are the outcomes used, and how will the expected outcomes be utilised for the projects financed by the ERDF/Tacis and Tacis?
9) What are the reasons/causes for the project end beneficiaries not using the outcomes in ERDF/Tacis and Tacis financed projects - experiences already learned and/or foreseen?

The evaluation study followed up on the findings of the Mid-Term Evaluation Update 2005 of the BSR INTERREG III B NP, as regards the likelihood of achieving expected results and impacts as well as their durability.

The mid-term evaluation was carried out in 2003 and updated in a 2005 evaluation. This evaluation looked at the issues of effectiveness and efficiency and concluded that there were serious issues regarding delays in implementation and that many projects might not reach their goals. Furthermore, the evaluation pointed to the low level of the indicators which was addressed in the programme update. Overall, the evaluation concluded that the programme impact would probably be higher than the impact of individual projects. And that most of the projects would most probably deliver their outputs.

3 Evaluation Findings for III B Projects

In this chapter, the results of the e-survey and findings of the interviews and desk research for the evaluation study will be presented for the projects under the III B part of the programme. The presentation has been structured according to the evaluation questions and criteria presented in the section above. The quantitative data from the e-survey will primarily be presented in the tables.

3.1.1 Delivery of Expected Outcomes

As introduction to the analysis of the use of outcomes, we first looked at the extent to which the stakeholders assess that the projects actually deliver the outcomes. Overall, the analysis found that most of the respondents from both interviews and survey confirm (as well as in the desk research) that the outcomes of the BSR projects are being delivered by the projects. Very few projects have stated that no outcomes were delivered and a limited number have stated that some but not all outcomes had been produced. The e-survey showed that a majority, i.e. 92 % of the respondents, stated that the planned outcomes were delivered, less than 3 % gave a negative answer, and 4 % did not know. In the interviews, the number of projects stating that not all was delivered seemed to be higher than in the survey.

Table 6 - Delivery of Project Outcomes for III B

Figures in %	N=108
Projects deliver outcomes as planned or expected	92
Projects deliver more than planned	27

Source: e-survey

A few projects confirmed that some of the outcomes were not delivered. Some of the reasons for non-delivery of outcomes were:

- costs of preparing outcomes had been wrongly assessed or prices had increased;
- changes in project structure or partners;
- external factors (climate);
- outcomes turned out not to be relevant to partners (usually then replaced with something else);

– different cultural backgrounds and expectations to joint transnational work by some partners (e.g., organisations from the rural territories in the new Member States vs. equivalent organisations from the western part of the BSR).

Table 7 - Importance of Outcome Categories III B (N=108)

Which of the following outcomes are very important for your organisation?	Very important (1)	Not important (2)
Common spatial development visions	67	41
Concrete development concepts and strategies	98	10
Land-use and building plans based on transnational strategies	36	72
Technical concepts and feasibility studies	62	46
Economic expertise/assessments and business plans	60	48
Environmental impact assessment (IA) documents/territorial IA documents	54	54
Promotion and marketing strategies	70	38
New sustainable tourism products with transnational context	45	63
Guidelines, manuals	74	34
Learning programmes	55	53
Training courses	58	50
Small-scale infrastructure investments	46	62

Source: e-survey

Types/categories of outcomes delivered by the projects
In both the survey and the interviews, we asked the respondent to list which kind (category)[7] of outcome of the project was the most important to them or their organisation. Table 7 illustrates that the concepts and strategies, promotion strategies, and guideline and manual were the most important. The interviews reflected the same opinions, providing more details about each outcome in the particular project (for further analysis, see under 3.1.2).

Additional outcomes of the projects
A number of projects stated that the projects had actually delivered more outcomes than planned or expected by the project partner or user. The survey found that 27 % of the projects delivered more outcomes than expected. Especially the extent, the depth and commitment for further work of the partnership networks were mentioned by many as real value-adding and, to some extent, an unexpected outcome of the project. The following types of additional output were mentioned by respondents in the e-survey and interviews:

[7] The categories are the official categories of outcomes from the programme documentation.

- co-operation and initial networks development;
- additional investment (non EU funded);
- new project applications;
- studies and plans (business and development).

Table 8 - Outcomes of Selected III B Projects

Name of project	Outcomes (planned)	Outcomes (additional)
Bio-energy Technology Transfer Network (BTN 12)	– a strategy for bio-energy – bio-energy centres developed and supported – training programmes for universities – small-scale investments in local and regional companies – promotion campaigns for bio-energy	N/A
Medium-Sized Cities in Dialogue around the Baltic Sea (MCBIS 19)	– studies (urban planning) – best practices and knowledge – co-operation with other cities and universities – international studies (comparative) – networks between participants – training materials - book on medium-sized cities	– methods for co-operation with international partners – internationalisation of partners and cities – co-operation with Russian partners
South-east Baltic Transport Link (SEBTransLink 20)	– vision for transport corridor with polish participation – tourism development studies – feasibility and construction plans for the port and municipality of Karlskrona – small scale infrastructure investment (rail) for port and municipality of Karlskrona	– inputs to the Applications for Motor ways of the sea
Baltic Virtual Campus - Supplying the Baltic Sea regions with academic online education for balanced regional development (BSVC 26)	– concepts and strategies for running a consortium for service providers – feasibility study for Learning Management System – (business plans) Promotion and marketing strategy for e-learning courses – master programme courses for the target groups – e-learning in the context of trans-regional management and regional plans and strategies	– Initial co-operation models between universities in the field of master programmes
BERNET Integration Management of Catchments (BERNET-CATCH 38)	– classification and assessment of regional water management bodies – water district planning – public participation in water district planning (focus on public participation methodologies and processes). Guidelines and manuals – cost estimation report on restoration of wetlands in the pilot catchment area	N/A

The table above shows examples of concrete outcomes of some of the projects analysed for this evaluation study. The outcomes listed are those which were highlighted in the interviews.

3.1.2 Use of Outcomes and Changes in Use of Outcomes

Having established that the outcomes were delivered by the projects, this section will look at the extent to which the outcomes are used as intended during the project implementation as well as after the projects ended. In order to uncover how and how much the users used the outcomes, the respondents were asked to distinguish between occasional use[8], and outcomes which had been incorporated in the work processes of the organisation.[9]

The e-survey showed that in a very large percentage of the projects the outcomes had been integrated in the tools/work processes of the organisations. In one third of the cases, were/are the outcomes only used occasionally. A small group stated that the outcomes were not used at all.

Table 9 - The Extent to which Organisations Use Outcomes after Project End

Figures in %	N=108)
Integrated in the organisation's tools/work processes	63
For specific purposes	31
Not at all, limited use or do not know	7

Source: e-survey

The picture painted in the e-survey is largely confirmed in the interviews. In general, it seems that the outcomes developed under the projects were maintained and used after project end.

We will also look at the changes over time in use of outcomes, i.e. before and after project end, and whether the stakeholder groups (project manager, project partners (users and non-users), and users of project outcomes) differ in their use of outcomes.

The assumption was that use of outcomes change over time, for example, the outcomes could be used more while the project was ongoing and immediately after project end while the effect of the project is still felt, but then after a while, the outcomes are no longer used.

[8] "Occasional use" indicates that the user uses the outcome for particular purposes on an irregular basis.

[9] Outcomes which have been incorporated into the organisation's work processes indicate that the outcomes are used regularly as part of the tools of the organisation.

Table 10 - Change over time in outcomes use

Figures in %	**N=108**	
	Project partner	Project user
After the project was finalised	90	93
During project implementation	76	83

Source: e-survey

As many of the projects had several outcomes, survey respondents and interviewees were asked to focus on those that were most important to them. This implies that behind these figures lie also outcomes which were/are used less.

In the table below, the figures from the survey have been divided by type of user. Project partners or partners are those who are involved in the project, but do not use the outcomes. Project users or users are typically project partners, but can also be non-partners, who use the project outcomes.

The table above (from the e-survey) shows that the use of the outcomes increases after the project has ended. The statements made by the project partners refer to their assessment of the user organisation's use of outcomes. For the partners and users this is their assessment of their own use. There is general agreement on the situation after finalisation, but less so before project end. This may reflect the fact that in many projects, the outcomes are not ready for use during implementation.

Table 11 - Changes in Use of Outcomes (N-108)

Figures in %	Integrated in the organisation's tools/work processes		For specific purposes		Not at all, limited use or do not know	
	Partners	*Users*	*Partners*	*Users*	*Partners*	*Users*
Before project end	39	46	37	37	24	17
After project end	62	63	29	31	10	7

Source: e-survey

There is a clear increase in respondents stating that the outcomes get integrated into the organisation after project end which would be the desired effect. The interviews furthermore pointed out that the use of the outcomes depends on when these were ready for use. In some projects, the outcomes were ready for use already during project implementation, but for a number of the projects they (or some of them) were not ready until at the end of the project. This may also explain the increase.

Many interviewees indicated that the outcomes would currently be integrated in the work processes of the organisations (after project end). Some stated the same occurred before project end, although a number of interviewees stated that before the project ended, the outcomes would "only" be used for specific purposes or occasional use, which is the same tendency we observed in the e-survey. A number of interviewees also recognised that the use of outcomes before and after project end varies between partners in the same project.

This being said, a number of interviewees recognised that this depends on the type of outcomes, and for projects with several types of outcomes, the picture will differ between these outcomes. As many projects have different types of outcomes, it is difficult to get a clear picture.

How are outcomes used
In addition to asking the interviewees about the use, we also asked them to identify how the outcomes were used either occasionally or for specific use, or when these were integrated into the work processes. The following descriptions have been taken from the interviews.

Outcomes used for limited or for specific purposes consist of the following:

- ***International training course*** - was used only once because of lack of demand;
- ***Feasibility Studies*** - have been used for inspiration, but are as such not integrated into the organisation's strategies as knowledge is too general to transfer;
- ***Concepts and Strategies*** - have been used by some user groups as input to a new plan;
- ***Economic expertise/assessment and Business Plan*** - were used to implement other (e.g., small-scale investment or strategy) outcomes in the organisations after project end.

Outcomes integrated into the organisation consist of the following:

- ***Training and curriculum -*** now integrated into the university's teaching programmes;
- ***Small scale investment*** - integrated into the organisation as this is used daily by the organisation both for practical and demonstration purposes;
- ***Concepts and Strategies*** - have become part of the organisation's work tools, maybe not 1:1, but parts of the outcome have been incorporated in the organisation plan and strategies.
- ***Feasibility Studies -*** are used as input for planning processes, lobbying and public consultations;
- ***Environmental impact assessment (EIA) documentation*** - model is used by relevant authorities for EIAs.

- ***Tourism products (transnational)*** - networks and common systems are used daily and fully integrated into the organisation:

- ***Guidelines and manuals*** - used in the organisation to further develop as well as support other organisations (not in the project) and are updated regularly.

A tendency detected in some projects was that when outcomes were produced early on in the project, and the project (and the financing) subsequently supported the implementation of the outcomes, this may have lead to a dependency on project financed outcomes and may have contributed to the project not finding its own funds for implementation of the outcomes after project end. Evidence of such observations is brought up by projects which aimed to create new structures to deal with identified social or educational problems. Irrespective of the absorption of the outcomes in the communities of the project partners, the project may seek further EU resources for sustaining and extending the structure, if not even for re-creating it.

3.1.3 User groups

In both the interviews and the e-survey, we asked respondents to identify who the users of their outcomes were in order to find out whether there was a difference between types of users in terms of use of the outcomes. The assumption was that user groups use the outcomes differently or use different outcomes. The user groups identified were:

Table 12 - User Groups

User Group	N=108
Regional Authorities	85
Municipalities	85
Public Service	39
NGOs	46
Associations (business)	62
SMEs	50
Other: Central Government Agencies, Universities	28

Source: e-survey

Based on the interviews, it was found that:

- central, regional and local authorities are mostly users of strategic and conceptual outcomes;

- NGOs, associations, and public services are users of more practically-oriented outcomes such as training, manuals, guidelines, and small-scale investments;

- universities were often mentioned as users of a number of outcomes for research purposes (and often not as intended users).

Some projects experienced that central or maybe regional level government use of outcomes was limited and therefore the impact of outcomes at this level has in some projects been limited (it is noted that not all projects have had this ambition). Two reasons were observed in the interviews:

- local actors find it difficult to get regional or central government authorities interested in their outcomes or results;

- late involvement of central government in the project can result in missing an opportunity for the possible policy implication, the outcomes and results could have.

Dissemination to other users
We also asked the respondents whether, to their knowledge, the use of the outcomes had expanded to organisations not foreseen in the planning of the project. 20 % of the e-survey respondents were aware of other organisations using the outcomes, which had not been foreseen in the planning. The kind of organisations listed were:

- universities and research institutions who use the outcomes for research;
- local, regional and central authorities and ministries used strategies, manual and plan;
- SMEs and NGOs.

The additional or other user groups seem to be groups, which had not been, but should have been, included in the projects from the beginning. In most cases, they use the outcomes in line with the original purpose. These groups might have been identified in a stakeholder analysis or a needs analysis, some projects informants agreed.

Whether outcomes had reached beyond the originally planned groups of project partners and beneficiaries was not an issue that most interviewees were aware of. Amongst partners and project managers in general, there was limited knowledge of the developments after project end, both with the partners in the project and with other user groups. In projects which had a "natural network" (association, professional network, continuation project) extending beyond the project period, there seems to be more knowledge about the outcomes in use and who uses these. There were concrete examples of project networks, who had managed to extend their outcomes beyond their own group and where actors, not involved in the project, had approached the network in order to gain access to both the outcomes and the network.

Box 4 - Organisational Impacts from Use of Outcomes

Theme: Organisational impacts from use of outcomes

An important issue addressed in the interviews was the impact or effect that the use of the outcomes had had or would have on the organisation using/implementing the outcomes. This was a difficult question for many interviewees, maybe because it was early in the process, but also because this had not been a focus point of the project, neither in the application nor in the implementation process. Although this would ideally be one of the results of the project.

Although many responded that the outcomes were fully integrated in their work processes, only few of the interviewees could directly confirm the impact of this on their own or other organisations' work processes.

Some interviewees only had an overview of their own organisation, a few project managers had an overview of the entire project, but it was then often limited to the country of the project manager. The following types of answers regarding impacts were gathered in the interviews:

- the use of outcomes has improved and modernised working practices and methods in the user organisation by offering possibility of benchmarking them with similar organisations in other countries;
- the project implementation had an impact on the organisation (more than the outcome);
- the outcomes helped gain a transnational dimension of the investment-orientated actions of the organisation (e.g., for conducting specific actions, joint lobbying and raising awareness);
- the outcomes have supported setting up new positions and structures to deal with questions reaching beyond the direct responsibilities of the organisation.
- the outcomes of the project created new durable processes for the target recipients in the involved organisations.

From the desk research of the project documentation, the publication and distribution strategies of the projects do not seem to go beyond the project life. The websites are difficult (costly) to keep active (unless they are part of an active network). In addition to this comes the fact that the project partnership is only committed to keep the website active for one year after project end. Brochures and other publications tend to go out of date. The German evaluation[10] of the III B project reaches a similar conclusion, namely that this type of promotion is not sufficient and often far too general and untargeted. The dissemination is perceived as something the projects are obliged to do, rather than a

[10] Analyse der Auswirkungen, des Nutzens und der Umsetzung von INTERREG III B-projecten, FORUM GmbH, Oldenburg (http://www.forum-oldenburg.de)

wish to publically disseminate the outcome and convey the results as part of a planned communication strategy.

3.1.4 Reasons for No or Limited Use of Outcomes

Although in general few stated, both in the e-survey and the interviews, that outcomes were not used at all, some indicated that some outcomes were used less than others. The e-survey and the interviews identified the following groups of reasons for non-use or limited use:

- lack of financing or high cost of use;
- limited involvement in project preparation and needs assessment;
- political and administrative barriers (e.g., lack of sufficient political commitment);
- internationalisation and language issues.

One of the key reasons stated for non-use was the ***financial resources*** that the organisations would need for implementing the outcome(s). Both the e-survey and the interviews point in this direction. Some user organisations (both partner and non-partner) do not manage to secure the budget for continuing the project or they use the project outcomes after end of the project. This was an issue in relation to:

- smaller organisations (e.g., NGOs, smaller municipalities) who stated that they mostly depended on further funding after project end, if they were to continue using the outcomes;
- private sector users who had not been involved in the project (nor had a stake in the process);
- funding from national and regional authorities who had not been involved in the project (nor the preparation of the project).

Although some projects confirmed that they themselves did not have the funds to implement the outcomes after project end, several stated that with the project outcomes in hand they would be able to raise the funds for the implementation.

The issue of a ***needs assessment*** came up in a number of interviews as a key reason for not using an outcome. It could be the lack of a needs assessment or a wrong (inadequate) needs assessment. A common feature of these is often that the group, who is to implement the outcomes, has not been consulted early enough in the process to be able to influence the needs assessment.

A number of interviewees mention as a key problem the lack of involvement of stakeholders in the project preparation phase, and probably also in the implementation phase. These stakeholders would be government organisations which were to secure the financing, or the user organisations which were to use or implement the outcomes. Some projects reflected that they had not considered it important to involve these stakeholders at an early stage of the process in order to secure the commitment as well as ensure that the outcomes reflected the needs.

Reasons listed by interviewees are:

- outcomes are not used because they do not fulfil the needs of the beneficiaries;
- outcomes are too technically advanced and the user does not have the human resources to implement a certain technology;
- difference in stages of development of users - often the needs assessment is based on the most advanced users, not taking into consideration that with a large international partnership many different levels exist. Projects involving new and old EU member states did recognise the difference;
- partners/users that joined the project at a late stage and therefore had little stake in the project preparation and needs assessment.

The third group of reasons identified was the ***political and administrative*** barriers which may hamper the use of the outcomes.

The lack of interaction with political/administrative stakeholders was mentioned in another case as reasons for the outcomes not being used by all the intended beneficiaries. They were:

- administrative and political commitment to implementation;
- regulatory and intellectual property rights (IPR) issues (not addressed by BSR programme);
- reporting requirements and the slow process of receiving payment, especially acute for NGOs (many projects borrow money in the bank to participate in the projects).

The table below from the e-survey shows that both users and project partners that are not users see the resources available, both financial and human, as the main problems to continuing the implementation after project end. The project partners which are not users assess the problems as more significant than the users themselves. This may be explained by two factors: the users may not wish to admit that they have not budgeted with the implementation, secondly that the project partners who do not use output (often project managers) are more ambitious than the partners.

Table 13 - Reasons for Limited Use of Outcomes (Partners (Non-users) and Users)

Figures in %	Agree		Neutral		Disagree or do not know	
	Part-ners	*Users*	*Part-ners*	*Users*	*Part-ners*	*Users*
The project outcome(s) corresponds to the priorities of my organisation	98	93	2	5	0	2
My organisation was sufficiently involved in the preparation of the project outcome(s)	88	92	6	5	6	3
The project outcome(s) is useful to my organisation(s)	96	93	2	5	2	2
My organisation has the financial resources to utilise the project outcome(s)	63	75	10	17	27	8
My organisation has the human resources to implement the project outcome(s)	63	78	10	14	20	8
My organisation has a proper management system to integrate the project outcome(s)	65	75	20	14	14	12

Source: e-survey (see appendix)

Another limitation to the use of outcomes, which came up in some of the interviews, seemed to be caused by a lack of ***internationalisation of the organisations***, especially with regard to language capabilities. In most of these cases, according to the interviewees, this was a matter of not having appropriate human resources involved in the project. Some outcomes planned in the project demand a certain degree of internationalisation of the user and partner organisations in order for them to be interested in or ready to take part in the development and implementation of certain types of outcomes.

In particular, the development and maintenance of international portals or websites seem to have been a type of outcome for which it has been difficult to get the interest and commitment of other partners. One factor could be that the general international project websites seem to suffice, when a network uses this straight after project end. If this is not the case, and the partners continue to work individually or nationally with the outcome produced, the website has little interest.

Box 5 - The Quality of the Partnership

Theme: The Quality of the Partnership

One of the questions asked in the interviews was if the respondents could describe the project partnerships' influence on the outcomes. Many respondents had very clear opinions on the partnership and its significance for a good project and thereby the delivery and possible use of the outcomes.

- In general, partners, who wanted smaller projects, were often partners, who had been involved in projects with 20+ partners. Projects with many partners faced an enormous burden regarding co-ordination, and it was difficult to find dates where all could meet.

- Prior knowledge of the other partners was important for the successful process. Easier start-up and communication as well as mutual trust (an effect of prior knowledge or co-operation). In particular the latter was mentioned by a number of interviewees as an important factor.

- The competence in transnational co-operation, which should preferably exist in the partnership. This referred especially to the quality of the project management staff that was expected to stimulate the co-operation and solve administrative problems in the implementation stage.

- The quality of the partnership (common commitment) was also identified as an important factor for a successful implementation in other evaluations of the programme[11].

3.1.5 Increased Use of Outcomes in the Future Programmes

The last issue addressed in the survey and in the interviews was how to improve use of outcomes in the future. Many of the issues have already been addressed in other questions; nevertheless it was important also to get the respondents to reflect on the most important factors to improving the rate of use.

The respondents were asked to rank a number of issues and were given the possibility of adding other issues, which they found important. The two most important ones turned out to be the involvement of the user organisations in project implementation and identification, and securing the financial and human resources for the implementation of the outcomes. Hereafter was mentioned the

[11] Analyse der Auswirkungen, des Nutzens und der Umsetzung von INTERREG III B-projecten, FORUM GmbH, Oldenburg (http://www.forum-oldenburg.de)

involvement of the users in the planning and needs assessment. The interviews confirmed this picture, although there seemed to be more focus on the involvement of the users in the planning.

Table 14 - How to Enhance Use of Outcomes

Figures in %	Agree	Neutral	Disagree or do not know
More inclusive project planning[12]	53	35	12
Enhanced role of user organisations in project preparation and application	56	31	13
Enhanced role of user organisations in project implementation	69	25	6
Increased support for implementing outcomes (financial/human resources)	78	17	6
Better needs assessment of user organisation's needs	52	33	15
Project structure should be changed (number of partners)	28	36	39
The project period should be longer	39	32	30

Source: e-survey

The e-survey participants also had the option of listing additional issues. The issue mentioned very often was: simpler project administrative rules and reporting. From the interviews, the additional comments and suggestions were, amongst others:

- more workshops within the project partnership (partners and users) at the planning stage, for needs assessment and project preparation;
- more human resources (also financial resources) for project preparation;
- partners have to take planning serious;
- more time for implementation;
- more focus on purpose, results and outcomes;
- focus on preparation of strategy for implementation;
- fewer partners (too much administration and coordination);
- increase in support for inexperienced partners (new and old member state partners);
- more involvement of private sector in planning and implementation (programme constraints);

[12] More inclusive project planning refers to that more stakeholders should be involved in the project planning.

- more all round stakeholder involvement in preparation and possible implementation.

Good project planning and ensuring that partners take the planning part seriously were mentioned by many projects partners as a very important issue for increasing project quality and use of outcomes.

The box below is a list of the features that interviewees listed when asked what factors contribute to a successful project.

Box 6 - Features of Successful Projects

Theme: Features of successful projects

In the interviews, the respondents were asked about the features of successful projects. In the table below, their answers are grouped according to categories established based on their answers.

- Interest in the topic or theme - important for the success of projects is that the outcome hits a general trend or great timing[13].
- Political and local (grassroots, local community) commitment.
- Commitment in the partnership and good co-operation - good cooperation between partners from different countries/regions helped make the outcomes usable. Prior knowledge was an important feature for many.
- Network - The majority of the interviewees pointed to the network as an important feature behind successful projects. Many of the respondents mentioned that the exchange of ideas and experiences within the network had been very useful.
- Experienced project management - experienced project manager capable of managing the administrative tasks of the lead partner, in particular if the project included a large number of partners. Thus it is very important for the smaller organisations to have a strong lead partner.
- Limited number of partners - makes the co-operation and communication easier.
- Business participation - is important for some projects and can also contribute to sustainability of outcomes.

3.1.6 Conclusion on Durability and Utility of Project Outcomes

Although the findings in this evaluation study have concentrated on a number of constraints to using the outcomes as well as issues which should be ad-

[13] Also highlighted in German evaluation.

dressed in the current BSR programme, the overall assessment of this evaluation of the main evaluation criteria - utility and durability - is positive.

For the utility criterion, the conclusion is that the outcomes are overall both delivered and utilised by the planned users. Very few interviewees stated that they have had no use of the outcomes, and many felt that they had gotten more out of the projects than expected. It was also confirmed by most that the project design and output corresponded to their priorities and needs. Nevertheless, this is not a clear indication of how useful the outcomes were and if other outcomes could have been more useful for the users.

With regard to this criterion, we therefore wish to highlight three findings:

- the wish for early involvement of the target users of the planned project outcomes by means of, e.g., workshops for potential project users arranged in the planning stage of the project;
- more focus on accurate needs assessment of user organisations;
- limiting projects ambitions to areas which the partnership is able to influence (several respondents identified that partial failure was caused by too high aims).

For the reasons listed under utility, durability is probably a more complex issue of which our assessment is probably less positive. However, the overall impression is positive as many outcomes are clearly used by user organisations after the projects have ended.

When we look at reasons for not using the outcomes, the financial issues are the predominant reason listed by interviewees and in the survey. We see a number of reasons why the financing is missing for implementation or continuation after project end. Most of these relate to securing the commitment and financing upfront for the implementation or continuation after project end.

Also important and linked to the planning of financing is the planning or strategy for how to use the outcomes after project end. A plan for use of outcomes does not seem to be an integral part of many of the projects. There is therefore a need to address this issue in future programmes.

None of the projects in the sample has been finalised for more than 3 years (and very few in the sample for the interviews, most projects concerned here ended in 2006 or 2007). This evaluation therefore only gives a picture of the first few years after project end. The real test to the durability would probably show itself after five years or more.

4 Evaluation Findings for IIIA Projects

In this chapter, the results of the survey, findings of the interviews and desk research for the evaluation of IIIA projects are presented. The presentation has been structured according to the evaluation questions and criteria presented in the section above.

4.1.1 Delivery of Expected Outcomes

As introduction to the analysis of the use of outcome, we first looked at the extent to which the stakeholders assess that the projects actually delivered the outcomes. Overall, the analysis found that most of the respondents in interviews and survey (as well as the desk research) assess that the outcomes of the projects are delivered by the projects.

The e-survey showed that a majority, i.e. 97 % of the respondents, stated that the planned outcomes were delivered, no projects gave a negative answer, and 3 % did not know. In the interviews, the number of projects stating that not all was delivered seemed to be higher than in the e-survey.

Table 15 - Delivery of Project Outcomes

Figures in %	N=36
Projects deliver outcomes as planned or expected	97
Projects deliver more than planned	28

Source: e-survey

A few projects confirmed that some outcomes were not delivered. Some of the reasons for outcomes not being delivered were:

- Costs of preparing outcomes had been wrongly assessed or prices had increased;
- changes in project structure or partners;
- financially weak partners which were not capable of delivering financing as planned (NGOs, smaller organisations);
- outcomes turned out not to be relevant to partners (usually then replaced with something else).

Types/categories of outcomes delivered by the projects
In both the survey and the interviews, we asked the respondent to identify which kind (category)[14] of outcomes of the project was the most important for them or their organisation. For IIIA projects, which have limited categories of outcomes, tools/material/information and marketing as CBC networks are the two most important categories, this was also clearly underlined in the interviews.

Table 16 - Importance of Outcome Categories IIIA (N=36)

Which of the following outcomes are very important to your organisation?	Very important (1)	Not important (2)
Tools/materials/information and marketing	32	4
Physical improvement of tourism/municipal infrastructure	21	15
Joint cross-border tourism products developed	17	19
Cross-border networks established	34	2
Cross border services	14	22

Source: e-survey

Additional outputs of the projects
A number of projects stated that they had actually delivered more outcomes than were planned or expected by the project partner or user. The survey found that 28 % of the projects delivered more outcomes than expected. Especially the extent and the depth of the networks were mentioned by many as a real value-adding and, to some extent, unexpected outcome of the project. The following types of additional outputs were mentioned by respondents in the e-survey and interviews:

- networks and contacts;
- spin-off projects and new project applications;
- tourism and cultural events.

The box below shows examples of concrete outcomes of some of the IIIA projects analysed for this study. The outcomes listed are those which were highlighted in the interviews.

[14] The categories are the official categories of outcomes from the programme documentation.

Box 7 - Examples of Outcomes Delivered under the IIIA Projects

(NIII-084) Cultural Neighbourhood - Cultural Integration on the new Frontiers of the EU

- investments in cultural facilities and musical instruments;
- network of theatres and culture groups;
- experience exchange (seminars, study tours);
- promotion materials for cultural facilities (culture houses, theatre etc.);
- common cultural events and festivals;
- twinning with Russian partner.

(SI-008) Discover the Country of Lakes - Development of culinary heritage as a network and method for regional tourism development in the context of the Euroregion " Country of Lakes"

- marketing plan and marketing materials (DVD, brochures);
- training (bookkeeping, sanitary norms and standards);
- tourism product development;
- study tours;
- fair of folk dance;
- press conference and test tours;
- networking and meetings for coordinators at district level.

(NIII-70) Mire habitat restoration - Mire habitat restoration planning

- a restoration plan including technical plan (being used by applying funding from LIFE and Estonian Investment Centre);
- capacity building and exchange of experience between partners;
- equipment and software for monitoring and measurements;
- technical design for wildlife rehabilitation centre;
- additional outcomes: event for agreeing common visions between different stakeholders.

(SII -046) Conservation cooperation, bio-diversity - Conservation and sustainable management of biodiversity in Lake Druksial: trans-boundary wetland complex of international importance

- integrated management plan based on research and collected data;
- research on bio-diversity;
- impact analysis of nuclear power station;
- assessment of hydrological changes;
- database;
- mobilisation of NGO (additional).

(SII-064) Cooperation LT and LV - Co-operation between Lithuanian and Latvian regions school children and school teachers for developing sports tourism

- sports tourism events (students and teachers) (8 festivals, four sports events) and seminars (teachers);
- information materials (flyers, leaflets);
- information campaign on Internet and newspapers;
- co-operation networks with partners.

4.1.2 Use of Outcomes and Changes in Use of Outcomes

Having established that the outcomes were delivered by the projects, this section will look at the extent to which the outcomes were used as intended during the project implementation as well as after the projects ended. In order to uncover how and how much the users used the outcomes, the respondents were asked to distinguish between occasional use[15], and outcomes which had been incorporated in the work processes of the organisation.[16]

The e-survey showed that for a very large percentage of the projects, the outcomes had been integrated in the tools/work processes of the organisations. In a third of the cases are/were the outcomes only used occasionally. And a small group stated that the outcomes were not used at all.

Table 17 - The Extent to which Organisations Use Outcomes after Project End

Figures in %	N=36
Integrated in the organisation's tools/work processes	65
For specific purposes	27
Not at all, limited use or do not know	8

Source: e-survey

The picture presented in the e-survey is largely confirmed in the interviews. In general, it seems that the outcomes developed during the projects were maintained and used after project end.

In the above, under use of outcomes, we established the use of outcomes after project end. In this section, we will look at the changes over time in use of outcomes, i.e. before and after project end, and examine if stakeholder groups (project managers, project partners (users and non-users) and users of project outcomes) differ in their use of outcomes.

The assumption was that use of outcomes change over time, for example that outcomes would be used more while the project is ongoing and immediately after project end while the effect of the project is still felt, whereas after a while the outcomes are no longer used.

[15] "Occasional use" indicates that the user uses the outcome for particular purposes on an irregular basis.

[16] Outcomes, which have been incorporated into the organisation's work processes, indicate that the outcomes are used regularly as part of the tools of the organisation.

Table 18 - Change over Time in Outcomes Use

Figures in %	**N=36**	
	Project partner	Project partner and user
After the project was finalised	90	92
During project implementation	90	69

Source: e-survey

As most of the projects had several outcomes, survey respondents and interviewees were asked to focus on the ones which were most important to them. This implies that behind these figures lie also outcomes which were/are used less.

The table above (from the e-survey) shows that the use of the outcomes increases after the project has ended. In the table above, the statement made by the project partners refer to their assessment of the user organisation's use of outcome - for the partners and users, this is their assessment of their own use. There is general agreement on the situation after finalisation, but less so before project end. This may reflect the fact that in many projects, the outcomes are not ready for use during implementation.

In the table below, the figures from the survey have been divided by stakeholder group and type of user. Project partner or partner are those who are involved in the project, but do not use the outcomes. Project users or users are typically project partners, but can also be non-partners, who use the project outcomes.

Table 19 - Changes in Use of Outcomes (N=36)

Figures in %	Integrated in the organisation's tools/work processes		For specific purposes		Not at all, limited use or do not know	
	Partners	*Users*	*Partners*	*Users*	*Partners*	*Users*
Before project end	50	42	37	27	10	22
After project end	70	47	40	27	10	6

Source: e-survey

There is an interesting difference in the assessment of the two groups. Partners, who do not use the outcomes, assess that users increase the integration into the organisation. Users, however, do not conclude the same increase in integration into the organisation after project end. The interviewees furthermore pointed to the fact that the use of the outcomes depended on when these were ready for use. This could, however, also point to that users might have a more realistic assessment of the way in which the outcomes are used, whereas project partners (not using the outcomes) have less access to this knowledge.

A tendency detected in some projects was that in cases, when outcomes were produced early on in the project, and the project (and the project financing) thereafter supported the implementation of the outcomes, may have led to the users being dependent on financing of the use of outcomes. This may have contributed to projects not finding their own funds for implementation of the outcomes after project end.

How are outcomes used?
In addition to asking the interviewees about the use, we also asked them to identify how the outcomes were used either occasionally or for specific use, and when these were integrated into the work processes. The following descriptions have been taken from the interviews.

Outcomes are used for limited or for specific purposes:

- ***tools/materials/information and marketing*** - materials are used as planned for cultural or tourism promotion (but funding is missing for reprint);

- ***physical improvement of tourism/municipal infrastructure*** - infrastructure investment plan developed, but no funding available for investments (tourism);

- ***cross border networks established*** - network is functioning, but limited as there is no funding for travelling to common events.

Outcomes are integrated into the organisation:

- ***tools/materials/information and marketing*** - integrated into organisation and used as planned for cultural events;

- ***cross-border networks established -*** network is used by different user group;

- ***cross-border services -*** are used as input for planning processes, lobbying and public consultations;

- ***joint cross-border tourism products developed*** - network and website are proving very useful and have been taken over by private entrepreneurs, who continue funding and development with own funds (tourism);

- ***physical improvement of tourism/municipal infrastructure*** - infrastructure investment is used, but no further funding for development is available (culture).

4.1.3 Reasons for No or Limited Use of Outcomes

The interviewees were asked about the reasons why they thought outcomes were not used or maybe used less than anticipated. The main reasons for not using outcomes have been divided into the following groups which will be described below:

- lack of financing;
- limited involvement in project preparation and needs assessment;
- political and administrative barriers;
- technical and reporting.

The main reason stated for not using some or all of the outcomes after project end is the ***lack of financing***. Local government and organisations have not set aside the funds (and/or underestimated the costs) needed in order to, for example, implement a plan or continue the reproduction of brochures. There seems to be a difference between types of outcomes.

- Methodologies and work processes (low-cost - low-tech) learned or transferred during the projects are more sustainable after project end. These often seem to have low replication costs (often not requiring advanced technology), e.g., a training course.

- Physical infrastructure is often used and the financing is found to maintain it, but not always. If additional investment is needed, this seems to be as difficult to find as investment for other kinds of outputs.

- Although networks are important and often underlined as one of the most important aspect, the financing for travelling to maintain contact in the network is difficult to find.

- Events (cultural and tourism) are often difficult to continue after project end due to lack of financing, or they are continued on a smaller scale and only locally (without the cross-border network).

The second reason for non-use or less use is the problem of lack of a proper ***needs assessment*** of the users. Although many actually confirm that the projects designed met their priorities, many also answer positively when asked if they think there should be increased involvement of stakeholders in the preparation phase. In many projects, previous experience was limited and the learning substantial and issues that should have been dealt with in the preparation phase were therefore often only discovered during project implementation. Reasons given for insufficient needs assessment:

- outcomes not relevant for user;

- involvement in preparation phase limited;
- outcomes are not long lasting (durable).

Most respondents pointed to higher involvement of stakeholders in project planning and better needs assessment of user organisation as key to better project design and thereby better use of outcomes. An improved needs assessment may uncover the lack of financing for post-project implementation and continuation of activities.

Other barriers may be less ***political/administrative commitment*** to implement something before the activities of the project can continue.

- Lack of commitment (partners, political etc.).

It has been observed that in some project applications, a number of stakeholders have been involved in the project preparation, at least at a certain level. However, when it comes to the implementation and financing of the outcomes, this commitment seems to be lacking. Whether this is because the involved stakeholders have not been aware of the real commitment that they were making or whether their commitment has been taken for more than it was is not clear.

This lack of political commitment identified in a few project cases seems to have more to do with systemic problems (e.g., local conditions can only be improved by legislative changes at federal level, which is a very long and difficult process and therefore not initiated).

Of ***technical and reporting*** issues were mentioned:

- project length too short;
- reporting requirements too complicated;
- accounting and repayment from programme create problems for project partners;
- languages (lack of English) of local partners.

The table below, from the e-survey, shows a significant difference between users and partners (non-users). The partners have a much more negative assessment of the financial capacity of the users than the users themselves (it should, however, be noted that most of the users agreed only partly). This may be explained by the fact that the users may not wish to admit that they have not budgeted with the implementation. However, in the interviews, the users often report that they have problems with the financing.

Table 20 - Reasons for Limited Use of Outcomes (Partners and Users) (N=36)

Figures in %	Agree		Neutral		Disagree or do not know	
	Partners	*Users*	*Partners*	*Users*	*Partners*	*Users*
The project outcome(s) corresponds to the priorities of my/the organisation	90	92	10	8	0	2
The/my organisation was sufficiently involved in the preparation of the project outcome(s)	90	88	10	4	0	8
The project outcome(s) is/are useful for the/my organisation(s)	80	100	10	0	0	0
The/my organisation has the financial resources to utilise the project outcome(s)	50	85	20	8	10	7
The/my organisation has the human resources to implement the project outcome(s)	80	88	10	4	10	8
The/my organisation has a proper management system to integrate the project outcome(s)	70	88	10	8	20	4

Source: e-survey

4.1.4 User Groups

In both the interviews and the e-survey, we asked respondents to identify who the users of their outcomes were in order to find out whether the types of users differ in their use of the outcomes. The assumption was that stakeholder groups use the outcomes differently or use different outcomes. The user groups identified were:

Table 21 - User Groups

User Group	N=36
Regional Authorities	15
Municipalities	29
Public Service	8
NGOs	16
Associations (business)	7
SMEs	9
Other: Central Government Agencies, Universities	10

Source: e-survey

From the interviews, it was found that:

- municipalities, NGOs and local organisation are the predominant users of the outcomes of the IIIA projects for all type of outcomes;
- central and regional level government are seldom involved;
- universities and businesses are involved to a lesser degree.

The few projects, which had experienced central and regional level government use of outcomes, said use had been limited. Three reasons were observed in the interviews:

- the CBC projects are very locally oriented and seldom have policy impact at central government level;
- local actors find it difficult to get regional or central government authorities interested in their outcomes or results;
- limited involvement of central government and thereby limited policy implication of the outcomes and results.

Dissemination to other users
We also asked the respondents whether, to their knowledge, the use of the outcomes had been expanded to organisations not foreseen in the planning of the project. Only 10 % of the respondents in the e-survey were aware of other organisations using the outcomes in cases which were not foreseen in the planning. The kinds of organisations listed in the e-survey and mentioned in interviews were:

- schools and universities;
- central government authorities;
- local rural authorities;
- SMEs;
- NGOs (in particular in the environment sector).

The additional or other user groups seem to be groups which had not been, but could have been (several projects mentioned issues regarding geographical eligibility), included in the projects from the beginning and in most cases use the outcomes in line with the original purpose. They might have been identified in a stakeholder analysis or a needs analysis, some projects informants agreed. Most interviewees had a clear notion of whether the outcomes had reached further afield and most stated that they had not.

4.1.5 Increased Use of Outcomes in Future Programmes

The last issue addressed in the survey and in the interviews was what project stakeholders thought would be necessary to improve the use of outcomes in the future. Many of the issues have already been addressed in other questions, nevertheless it was important also to get the respondents to reflect on the most important factors for improving the rate of use.

The respondents were asked to rank a number of issues and were given the possibility of adding other issues which they found important. The two most important ones turned out to be involvement of the user organisations in project implementation and identification, and securing the financial and human resources for the implementation of the outcomes. Hereafter comes the involvement of the users in the planning and needs assessment. The interviews confirmed this picture, although the involvement of the users in planning seems to be stressed more.

The e-survey participants also had the option of listing additional issues, and an issue mentioned very often was simpler project administrative rules and reporting. From the interviews, additional comments and suggestions were:

- partners have to take planning serious;
- more inclusive project planning;
- limit the number of partners (too much coordination and difficult to meet);
- less (simpler) reporting;
- more time for implementation (3-5 years);
- quicker repayment of investment from programme;
- workshops for needs assessment and project preparation partners and users;
- increase in support to inexperienced partners.

Table 22 - How to Enhance Use of Outcomes (N=36)

Figures in %	Agree	Neutral	Disagree or do not know
More inclusive project planning[17]	81	17	3
Enhanced role of user organisations in project preparation and application	69	22	8
Enhanced role of user organisations in project implementation	81	14	6
Increased support for implementing outcomes (financial/human resources)	81	14	6
Better needs assessment of user organisation's needs	47	36	17
Project structure should be changed (number of partners)	22	42	36
The project period should be longer	42	44	14

Source: e-survey

[17] More inclusive project planning refers to that more stakeholders should be involved in the project planning.

Good project planning and making sure that partners took the planning part (also the financial part) serious was mentioned in interviews as a very important issue for increasing project quality and use of outcomes.

4.1.6 Conclusion on Durability and Utility of Project Outcomes

Although the findings in this evaluation study have concentrated on a number of constraints for using the outcomes, as well as on issues which should be addressed in the current BSR programme IIIA, the overall assessment of the main evaluation criteria - utility and durability - is positive.

A very positive finding was the ***learning and experience*** which has taken place with new project partners. Especially partners which had not participated in this kind of project before felt that they had gained much more than expected and that they had learned so much from this first experience that they would almost all like to continue with new projects. For many the project had been an opportunity to learn and to create contacts which they had not had the opportunity to do before. A new generation of project participants have been created which will be active in the new project period. Many of the IIIA partners were now ready for larger and more transnational projects.

For the utility criterion, the conclusion is that the outcomes are in general delivered as well as utilised by the planned users. Very few interviewees stated that they have had no use of the outcomes and many felt that they had got more out of the projects than expected. It was also confirmed by most that the project design and output corresponded to their priorities and needs. Nevertheless, this is not a clear indication of how useful the outcomes are and whether other outcomes could have been more useful to the users. We do here note that the learning process mentioned above will improve needs assessment in the future as the IIIA partners now have the experience to support needs assessment.

Box 8 - Features of Successful IIIA Projects

Theme: Features of successful IIIA projects

Interviewees were also asked about the factors they consider important for a successful project. The following statements were recorded in the interviews:

- good project planning;
- possibility for creating networks and contacts;
- local grass root commitment;
- political commitment;
- prior knowledge and experience with partners;
- good partners, experts and project management.

As for the III B project, the key issue regarding durability are securing financing as well as planning of the use of outcomes after project end. Our assessment is still positive as many outcomes are clearly used by user organisations after the projects have ended.

None of the projects in the sample has been finalised for more than a few years. This evaluation therefore only provides a picture of the first few years after project end. The real test to the durability would probably show itself after 5 years or more.

5 Evaluation Findings for Projects with Russian and Belarusian Partners

The third part of the evaluation concerns projects which are partly financed by the Tacis budget and thereby include a Russian or Belarusian partner[18].

It is important to notice that this part of the evaluation is mainly based on projects which have not yet been finalised. The findings should be seen as "likely use" and it has to be taken into consideration that both partners and managers have very little experience with this kind of programme. So, assessing the likely use of outcome has been difficult. Furthermore, for Belarus the type of projects which have been included in the sample is primarily IIIA projects as there is limited participation in III B.

This part of the evaluation was only indirectly covered by the e-survey, as the e-survey only covered finalised projects and most of the projects with Tacis funding are not finalised yet. Therefore, only a few questions concerned the Russian and Belarusian partners.

Table 23 - Does the Project Have Users in Russia or Belarus (N=144)[19]

Figures in %	III B	IIIA	Total
Yes	43	42	42
No	49	47	49
Did not know	8	11	9

Source: e-survey

In the e-survey, a total of 42 % respondents confirmed that their projects included Russian or Belarusian partners. Out of these, two thirds confirmed that they believed that the Tacis partners utilised the outcomes either as integrated work processes or for specific purposes. The figure was slightly lower for use before project end.

[18] A few of the interviewees were from projects without Tacis funding in order to include some projects which had already been finalised.
[19] As described in the methodology in Chapters 2 and 7, the survey was sent to 183 persons representing 47 projects, of which 144 persons responded.

Table 24 - Use of Outcomes by Users in Russia or Belarus (N=144)

Figures in %	Integrated in the organisation's tools/work processes	For specific purposes	Not at all, limited use or do not know
Before project end	28	28	44
After project end	34	33	33

Source: e-survey

5.1.1 Use of Outcomes

The key question in the evaluation was to find out whether the outcomes are used by the Russian and Belarusian partners and users in the projects financed by the ERDF/Tacis and Tacis.

In general, the projects/interviewees confirmed that the projects delivered the outcomes more or less as planned. Minor deviations were recorded, usually due to changes in circumstances or unrealistic needs or situation assessment. In general, the interviews for the entire project sample confirmed that outputs were delivered and many stressed that more was delivered than planned and definitely more than anticipated. This latter point could probably be explained by low expectations from the Russian and Belarusian partners.

As key outcomes the following were listed by the interviewees:

- contacts and networking;
- working and organisational methods;
- learning and training materials;
- new technology;
- physical infrastructure.

Physical infrastructure was seldom mentioned by interviewees, but this may change as the newer projects, not covered by this evaluation, have more emphasis on infrastructure.

The interviewees were also asked if they experienced a ***difference in the use*** while the project was still ongoing, and what they expected after the project ended. As many of the projects with Tacis financing are still under implementation, the distinction between before and after project end was not explored to the same extent as under the main analysis.

When asked whether, before the start of the project, they thought that the outcomes would be used, most found this difficult to assess as they had not been involved in this type of project before and therefore had little to compare with.

From the few finalised projects[20] with Russian or Belarusian partners, there is confirmed use after project end.

Many interviewees said that the project had been a learning process and that in the beginning they had few expectations to what could be achieved from the project. Some had no plans for using the outcomes at all and only later realised that this would be necessary in order to be able to use the activities after project end. This may explain why using the outcomes for some started later and maybe too late in order to secure financing of the continuation of activities after project end. This may also be explained by the rather late availability and approval of Tacis co-financing.

The Russian and Belarusian partners (most of whom came with Tacis co-financing) were very positive about the ***project experience***. For almost all the interviewees, this was the first time that they had been involved in a project like this. They stressed that it had been very important for them to:

- learn to work internationally;
- learn to work with European methods and management principles;
- see and learn how European counterparts work;
- get access to new methods and methodologies;
- create large international networks.

5.1.2 Specific Considerations with Regard to Future Design and Planning of Outcomes

The main issue of the analysis of the Tacis partners was the specific considerations with regard to future design and planning of outcomes for projects financed by the ENPI.

The interviews demonstrated that there is still a need for clear and easily understandable information concerning the implication of participation in the projects and what can be achieved by doing this. The programme website could be supplemented with examples of practical experience from project partners demonstrating particular aspects of participation in projects.

It is important that such information is available in Russian both the project application as such, but also what it means to be part of a project. To many this was not clear when they entered the project partnership.

Training of potential project partners and implementers in project development in order to be better prepared to take part in new projects seems to be a key factor in increasing the participation in both the preparation and the implementation of the projects. Knowledge of EU type project design and preparation is in general low in Russia and Belarus. Furthermore, some interviewees suggested

[20] A few project ended after the evaluation had begun.

training in fundraising for the project in order to secure both co-funding for the participation and in order to be able to use the outcomes of the project[21].

Tacis funding is important for the Russian and Belarusian partners in order to be able to participate on equal footing as well as really benefitting from the projects. The lack of funding for project preparation was a key obstacle for the Tacis partner to participate in the preparation phase and needs assessment, and it may lead to their having less influence on the design of the project. There seemed also to have been a tendency that the Tacis project partners accepted what was proposed uncritically due to lack of experience. This was also reflected on by some EU partners.

The issue of funding and fundraising came up in most interviews - funding was required in particular for:

- preparation of projects in order to cover travel and preparation time;

- sustaining the implementation of outcomes.

Although networks are important and often underlined as one of the most important aspects, financing for travelling in order to maintain contacts in the network was difficult to find. This was repeated by a number of respondents, but other observers were of the opinion that funding for travelling could always be identified. It was commented that the lack of financing is a result of the bad project design and lack of experience.

Tacis financing came late which prevented partners from taking active part in the beginning of the project and thereby also often in the planning of the use of outcomes as mentioned above. Many partners found that the project duration could have been longer. Some found that the project was very short in relation to the very long reporting and finalisation after project end.

The ***language issue*** came up in many interviews as a key problem for both participation in the project preparation and implementation as well as in relation to using certain parts of the outcomes not available in Russian (usually in III B projects, but also mentioned in IIIA projects). The lack of project management on the Tacis side and a special project manager for the Tacis part was also mentioned by several respondents. They felt that it would have been useful to have a special project manager who would be responsible for the Russian and Belarusian partners and part of the project. This might also assist in the technical and language issues which are apparently key issues for many projects.

Several respondents underlined that they had benefitted from being part of a large ***partnership*** and that this contributed to the outcomes of the project. They were therefore keen to participate in projects with many partners which gave access to large networks. This is interesting seen in relation to the main part of

[21] Both the delegation in Kiev and Moscow confirmed that a lot of training was provided to potential project applicants and partners.

the evaluation, where many reflected that they found the partnerships too large and the benefits of these large partnership limited in relation to the heavy administrative burden and complications.

The second reason for non-use or less use was the problem of lack of a proper ***needs assessment*** of the users. Although many actually confirm that the projects designed met their priorities, many also answer positively when asked if they think there should be increased involvement of stakeholders in the preparation phase. In a many projects, the experience was limited and the learning substantial and issues which should have been dealt with in the preparation phase were therefore often not discovered until the actual project implementation. Reasons given for not optimal needs assessment were:

- involvement in preparation phase limited;
- preparation phase too short for the Russian and Belarusian stakeholders (between call and submission);
- limited experience and capacity to be involved in preparation phase.

Several respondents stated that as there was no or little knowledge by Tacis partners of what it means to participate in a project, it was also difficult for them to participate in the planning of the project. Many assess that this will be different in a new round where they can use the knowledge that they have now gained.

Most respondents pointed to higher involvement of stakeholders in the project planning and better needs assessment of user organisation as key to better project design and thereby better use of outcomes. An enhanced needs assessment may uncover the lack of financing for post-project implementation and continuation of activities.

The answers from respondents demonstrated that with involvement of stakeholders and better needs assessment, they often understood the need for personal meetings and discussions with project partners. This is related to the limited experience of electronic communication, for which reason Russian and Belarusian partners prefer personal contacts.

Other barriers may be less ***political/administrative commitment*** to implement something before the activities of the project can continue. They are:

- lack of commitment (partners, political etc.):
- visa issues;
- Tacis project financing late to be implemented;
- project length too short (may have to do with approval time);
- project approval time;

- reporting requirements too complicated.

It has been observed that in some project applications, a number of stakeholders have been involved in the project preparation, at least at a certain level. However, when it comes to the implementation and financing of the outcomes, this commitment seems to be lacking. Whether this is because the involved stakeholders have not been aware of the real commitment that they were making or whether their commitment was taken for more than it was is not clear.

This lack of political commitment identified in a few project cases seems to have more to do with systemic problems (e.g., local conditions can only be improved by legislative changes at federal level, which is a very long and difficult process and therefore not initiated).

Administrative barriers such as visas prevent the use of cross-border outcomes such as bicycle routes and cultural festivals. The use of these outcomes depends on easy border crossing and access to visas.

Box 9 - Features of Successful Projects with Tacis Co-financing

Theme: Features of successful projects with Tacis co-financing

Interviewees were also asked about the factors they consider important for a successful project. The following statements were recorded in the interviews:

- genuine common interest and interest in co-operation;
- good partners, experts and project management;
- existing partners (organisations and users) who can benefit from the outcomes;
- projects are successful because they are needed - good needs assessment;
- investment is a key factor because it makes the outcomes more visible;
- good communication and open-mindedness;
- network continues after project end.

5.1.3 Durability and Utility of Project Outcomes

As the main question to be answered in this evaluation study concerning projects with Tacis partners was whether there were specific considerations to be made, the analysis has concentred on this. However, in general, our assessment of the sustainability and utility of the project outcomes is positive for Tacis projects.

Concerning the utility of the outcome, we have noted that the projects deliver the outcomes and that these are used, at least to some extent, during the project implementation phase. None of the interviewees stated that they have had no use of the outcomes and many felt that they had got more out of the projects than expected. It was also confirmed by most that the project design and output corresponded to their priorities and needs. The latter aspect we assess as being a somewhat too optimistic assessment by the respondents, and it was partly contradicted by other statements on increase of participation in needs assessment.

The sustainability criterion was difficult to assess in this part of the evaluation as many of the projects had not ended or had been finalised very recently. This made it difficult for the respondents to rate the sustainability of the outcomes, and adding to this was the lack of experience of many project partners in this kind of project participation. However, our assessment is that there are considerable sustainability issues which need to be addressed in future projects. They are:

- lack of financing for both preparation and the after project end continuation;
- lack of participation in the project preparation phase - either because of missing financing or because of lack of experience[22].

[22] Or because of local preference of personal contacts instead of documents and electronic contract.

6 Lessons Learned and Recommendations

The purpose of this chapter is to look at the lessons learned and provide recommendations for the current programme period 2007-2013. In the following, we will therefore elaborate on a number of themes which have been identified in the evaluation, and which we believe should be addressed in the new programme period.

As we concluded in the previous chapters, the utility of the outcomes is good for both the main part of the programme and the projects with Tacis financing. However, the durability of outcomes (usually some and not all) is limited in some projects. It is difficult to prove exactly which types of outcomes are more or less durable as this differs from project to project. The overall key issue is commitment to the project, its outcomes and results from all stakeholders - both those who are project partners and the project's external stakeholders.

I) Financing of outcomes

a) In the analysis, there is a general trend that outcomes which demand substantial financing to be maintained often have problems (unless the financing has been secured upfront), whereas outcomes which are easily duplicated and reproduced (low-cost - low-tech) have a better chance of continuing. As identified in the analysis, projects often do not include key stakeholders who may be involved in the financing of the outcomes after project end. I.e. relevant authorities are not involved in time for these to secure the financing. When the project is over and the authorities are approached for further funding, the funding is not in the budget, nor has the authority been involved in the project and therefore does not feel any responsibility.

b) One of the methods observed in the analysis to secure maintenance and reproduction of outcomes is to involve ***private sector*** users. In a number of projects where private sector users have taken over the "continuation" of the outcomes, commitment and financing, the private sector ensures that the use of outcomes continues. These types of examples are found in tourism and transport projects. Involvement of the private sector in the current programme was limited and ensuring that the private sector can/will use the outcomes requires that they are involved at some point in the project cycle. The private sector will only get involved in the projects/outcomes when they see a direct (economic) benefit.

c) Some interviewees felt that outcomes of investment projects were more used because they were more visible. There is no real evidence of this in this project sample - the reason that some ***infrastructure investment project***s may be more used is more likely to be that the co-financing which will have to be secured up-front for an investment project is higher than for many softer projects (projects are also larger).

II) Organisational and policy impact

d) Many interviewees found it difficult to state precisely what ***impact on the organisation*** using the outcomes of the project had had. There is, however, little doubt that in many projects considerable learning takes place as part of project implementation and use of outcomes. It is nevertheless the impression that there are ***missed innovation opportunities*** for public authorities and other potential users. The fact that an intended user does not implement a plan or strategy developed during the project is a loss for that particular organisation. The main outcomes of the project are in these cases often anchored with a few persons, which have benefitted professionally from the project, but there will not really be the opportunity for using the plan/strategy for capacity building of the organisations.

e) The latter point was mentioned by interviewees as an important reason why some outcomes did not have the ***policy impact*** that they should or could have had. Some partnerships do not involve the stakeholders at the political level soon enough in order to ensure that the outcomes can also have a policy impact. The projects produce and deliver outcomes, and only then present these to the relevant political level, but this may be too late. It was observed in one project that one country had managed to get the policy level involved and another country had not.

f) It is also an impact issue whether the project outcomes and results are coordinated with other projects in the same or similar area and ***integrated into overall strategies*** of the project partner organisation. Although many partners stated that the outcomes were part of their work processes, it is not always the impression that the project as such has been part of the overall priority setting and strategy of the organisation. That the outcomes get integrated into the organisation therefore seems to be more luck than plan.

III) Communication and dissemination

g) One of the reasons why some outcomes may not be used is that stakeholders outside the projects - and in few projects also within the project - are not aware of the outcomes. The knowledge and use of the outcomes remain with a limited group of partners which took part in the project. Even those project partners are only aware of outcomes that they were directly involved in ("I only know my work package"). This indicates that the ***communication strategies*** are not in focus and, in some projects, of poor quality. In spite of efforts already made in order to publish outcomes on websites and in brochures, the question is, whether these methods reaches the right audience and sufficient budget is allocated within the projects. It is also recognised in the German evaluation of the

III B Project that the communication strategy needs to become a key instrument of the project management[23].

IV) Project management and planning
h) One of the key findings in the analysis is that more effort and resources have to go into the ***project management and planning process***. With better planning and a more comprehensive needs assessment and analysis, including a plan for implementation after project completion, many of the problems that the project and project partners run into could be reduced.

j) This also links to the issue of ***stakeholder involvement***. We have observed many projects where there was little appreciation of the world outside the project and the project partnership. Even in cases where the users of the outcomes were actually outside the project partnership. In many projects the notion of the stakeholders as a larger group outside the project is missing. And that this group has to be involved, not necessarily in the project because then it becomes too large (as was seen in some of the III B projects), but in the planning stage as well as during implementation. Otherwise it cannot be expected that they will use or implement the outcomes.

V) Institutional Learning and experience gathering
i) A very positive finding was the ***learning and experience*** which have taken place with new project partners. Especially partners which had not participated in this kind of project before felt that they had gained much more than expected. A new generation of project participants has been created which will be active in the new project period. Many of the IIIA partners were now ready for larger and more transnational projects.

k) Many project managers do not know what has happened to the project partners and their outcomes ***after the project has ended***. There is in general limited knowledge about what happens to most projects after they end both with project partners and project managers (this is not the case for networks which continue). In this respect, it should also be mentioned that contacting projects, both ongoing and projects which have ended several years ago, was often difficult (contact information not updated, project manager no longer working there or organisation had no recollection of the project). It was not more difficult to get hold of older projects than younger. It primarily depended on whether the project manager/partner was still involved in the organisation or topic.

l) ***Ex post monitoring*** of BSR projects is an issue which has not yet had a lot of focus in the BSR projects. Follow-up and compilation of lessons learned therefore does not take place for the projects after project end - except in evaluations. Follow-up by national subcommittees and pan-Baltic organisations may be a way to collect the knowledge of not only outcomes, but also the institutional learning which takes place in the projects.

[23] Analyse der Auswirkungen, des Nutzens und der Umsetzung von INTERREG III B-Projekten, FORUM GmbH, Oldenburg (http://www.forum-oldenburg.de)

6.2 Recommendations

Based on this analysis and the list of lessons learned above, we would suggest that programme management, the project partners as well as stakeholders, address the following issues when preparing and implementing projects within the new programme.

- Focus on developing an ***implementation strategy*** or plan for the use of outcomes - after project end - as part of project development, including a clear plan for integration with other projects and strategies in the same fields. This should ideally be a part of the project application or the first project report.

- A strategy for ***including stakeholders*** at different stages of the project as a component of the project communication strategy. This should be done amongst others things to ensure the policy impact of the projects. This should be done as part of the project application together with a thorough needs assessment which shows that the users (partners or not) have be consulted and their needs reflected.

- More focus on ensuring the ***organisational impact*** of the project and the use of outcomes on the relevant organisations (both partners and stakeholders). Ideally, this should be part of the project application, where the partners should consider how the participation, as well as the use of the outcomes, will affect their own or other organisations. This should be part of the implementation strategy for the use of outcomes.

- Focus on ***fundraising and financing strategies*** in order to ensure that projects have the financing for continuing implementation of outcomes after project end.

- More focus on ***communication and dissemination*** of outcomes and results in order to make an impact on policy with publishing outputs and proving their values - and making sure that the project sets aside the budget for this.

- Guidance from the programme management in ***attracting private sector*** partners (as potential users of project outcomes) in the project preparation and implementation stages is highly recommended.

- Consider how to ***compile lessons learned*** from the project implementation (ex post monitoring) in the use of outcomes as well as other issues so this can be used systematically to improve programme performance.

7 Methodology & Data Collection

7.1 Methodology

Our methodology for this evaluation was based on the following methods for data collection:

- desk research;
- electronic survey addressing all finalised projects;
- interviews with selected projects.

7.2 Basis for Data Collection

The main basis for the data collection was a list provided by the JS which contained information on 102 projects that had ended by 30 September 2007 (see appendix 2). Besides project number, title and acronym, the list also provided information on priority/measure, Tacis funding and the lead partner organisation (e-mail and telephone number of the project manager). This list was used for the e-survey.

Information on project size (amount), the type of partners and the type of outcomes of the individual projects was added to the JS list from the project fiches found in the project database on the BSR homepage. This was the basis for selection of projects for interviews.

7.3 Desk Study

During the desk study, we consulted the following sources of information, which were provided by the JS:

- Baltic Sea Region INTERREG III B Neighbourhood Programme;
- BSR INTERREG III B NP Programme Complement;
- BSR INTERREG III B NP Mid-Term Evaluation Update 2005;
- BSR INTERREG III B NP Annual Report 2006;

- Summary of finalised projects and their main results as well as the project websites which were found on the BSR INTERREG III B NP website;
- Application forms and final reports of completed projects (for ongoing projects the most recent progress report was used);
- National assessments of the programme and the projects (Sweden and Germany).

7.4 Organisation of E-survey

In this section, the following tasks regarding the e-survey will be described: establishing the mailing list, developing the questionnaire, distributing of questionnaires and collecting data and data processing.

Establishing the mailing list
The target of the e-survey was to include 2-3 contact persons in the mailing list for each of the finalised projects subject to the evaluation.

Based on the above-mentioned lists from the JS with contact details on project managers from 102 projects, a request was sent out to all project managers asking them to provide names and contact information of contact persons to take part in the survey. The project managers were asked to select the contact persons from 3-4 partner organisations/institutions (of the project in question) and furthermore, in order to reflect the geography of the project, to select the contact persons from different countries, if possible. Attached to the e-mail sent out was an introduction letter from the JS.[24]

It should be noted that in several cases it was very difficult and time-consuming to track the project managers, many of whom had changed their e-mail addresses or left the organisation they worked for at the time of project implementation.

Developing the questionnaire
The questionnaire was formulated including all evaluation questions, criteria and indicators. With the help of the separate mailing lists for IIIA and III B projects, it was at first unproblematic to generate two data sets, one for IIIA and one for III B projects.

Some of the questions in the questionnaire were linked to answers to preceding questions so that the questionnaire was generated by the answers of the respondent as well. It was likewise possible to target relevant questions to either partners or users. In the questionnaire these stakeholders were requested to identify themselves as:

- project partner involved in developing and implementing the project (not final user of the outcomes);

[24] Up to two reminder mails were later sent out to project managers/institutions who still had not responded. This had a noticeable effect.

- project beneficiary and user of the project outcomes (not project partner);
- Both project partner and user of project outcomes.

The questions of the e-questionnaire are listed in the interview guide (Appendix 5).

Distribution of questionnaires
The questionnaire was distributed according to the mailing lists described above. Based on these lists, two different versions of the questionnaire were sent out to IIIA and III B stakeholders respectively. The recipients were given 10 days to answer. A reminder mail was sent out 2 days after deadline, followed by a second reminder two weeks after to those from whom we had still not registered a reply. As can be seen in Table 25 below, it had a significant influence on the response rate.

Table 25 - Response Rate before and after Final Reminder

Figures in %	III B	IIIA	Average
After initial deadline	48	42	46
After final reminder	59	52	57

Thus, the initial target of a response rate above 50 % was reached. Table 26 below provides the full overview of the e-survey process:

Table 26 - Overview of E-survey Process

Step	III B	IIIA	Total
1. Number of projects contacted	65	37	102
2. Number of responses (contact rate)	34 (52%)	14 (38%)	47 (46%)
3. Number of contact persons received	186	69	255
4. Number of questionnaires sent out	183[25]	69	252
5. Number of responses (response rate)	108 (59%)	36 (52%)	144 (57%)

Collection of Data and Data processing
COWI uses a system from TricTrac© which can be tailor-made for all kinds of online surveys. The web based questionnaire ensures a fast and efficient work process in distribution of questionnaires and collection of data. It allows for fast data processing based on the settings chosen by the user, e.g., the possibility of isolating answers according to a key question.

[25] Eleven questionnaires were returned with mail delivery failures or alternative e-mail addresses. With help from the project managers, we were able to resend the questionnaire to eight.

7.5 Organisation of Interviews

In this section, the organisation of the interviews will be described, including: the selection of BSR projects (III B and IIIA) and Tacis projects, how the interview guides were developed, the organisation of interviews and the data processing.

Selection of projects:
1) Selection of BSR projects
According to the proposal, interviews were to be done for 15 BSR projects. After agreement with the JS, the selection of the 15 projects was based on the communication we had had with the project managers with regard to the e-survey. Thus, to begin with, only those projects for which the project managers had provided a contact lists for the e-survey were selected, the rest were left out.

For this pre-selection of projects, we then gathered and compiled data, as it is described above under 7.2, so that we were able to ensure a representative selection of:

- the priorities;
- end year;
- size;
- type of partners[26];
- type of outcomes[27];
- lead partners.

The selection furthermore reflected the number of finalised projects under each priority as seen in Table 22 above. In the end, 5 IIIA and 10 III B projects were selected. The selection was accepted by the JS after some minor changes.

Table 27 below provides an overview of the process with regard to the selection of the projects.

Table 27 - Selection of BSR Projects

BSR	III B	IIIA	Total
Number of projects	65	37	102
Hereof number of projects for which contact had already been established with the project Manager (PM)[28]	34	14	58
Number of selected projects	10	5	15

[26] We operated with 5 types of partners: public authorities, universities, associations, NGOs and others.
[27] We operated with the same types of outcomes as the JS.
[28] With regard to providing contact lists for the e-survey.

2) Selection of Tacis projects
For Tacis, ten projects for interviews were foreseen. The selection was based on the information established in connection with the e-survey list from which we had four projects that included Tacis financing. The JS provided a list of Tacis projects to be included in the selection. This second list provided by the JS included Tacis projects which had just ended or were still ongoing at the time of selection.

For the Tacis projects, a selection was made according to the same criteria as for the BSR projects. Furthermore, a representative share of Russian and Belarusian partners was also considered. Five IIIA and seven III B projects were selected based on the criteria. Twelve instead of ten projects were included in order to have a reserve. The selection was accepted by the JS after some minor changes.

Table 28 below provides an overview of the process with regard to selection of the projects.

Table 28 - Selection of Tacis Projects

Tacis	III B	IIIA	Total
Number of projects	5	5	10
Hereof number of projects for which contact had already been established with the PM[29]	2	2	4
Number of new projects provided by the JS	19	22	41
Number of projects selected from the new list	5	3	8
Number of selected projects	7[30]	5[31]	12

In Appendix 1, a list of the projects selected for interviews for both BSR and Tacis projects can be found.

Developing the interview guides
The interview guides were based on the same evaluation questions, criteria and indicators as the questionnaire for the e-survey (see **Error! Reference source not found.** and Appendix 1). One main interview guide was first developed, and then one was adapted to Tacis projects.

The structure of the interview guides followed that of the questionnaire as the first part concerned the identification of basic information about the respondent, other users and the project outcomes, and the second part included questions for a qualitative assessment of the use of outcomes. The weight was generally laid on open-ended, qualitative questions for the purpose of getting the interviewee to reflect over and go into details with his/her answers. The interview guides

[29] With regard to providing contact lists for the e-survey.
[30] Two of these were also included as BSR projects.
[31] Two of these were also included as BSR projects.

were designed so that the interviews could be conducted in approximately one hour. The Interview Guide is included in Appendix 6.

Establishing the list of interviews
The project managers of the projects selected for interviews were contacted a second time (these had already been contacted with regard to the e-survey) and requested to suggest 3-4 contact persons for interviews. In the selection of these persons, they were asked to take the following two criteria into consideration:

- contact persons representing institutions who were/are outcome users, also persons who were not partners in the project, but who use the outcome (if relevant)[32];
- if possible, the contact persons should be different from those who took part in the electronic survey.

Via the criteria above, we tried to ensure a geographical representation of contact persons. In several cases, due to the time elapsed since project end, the project managers also found it difficult to identify and track contact persons and many only had contact to persons in their own country. It is important to underline that the project managers were asked to identify the users of the outcomes and this may also have impacted the choice and selection.

It furthermore turned out that some persons identified could not be contacted (e-mails or telephone did not work), they were not willing to participate, did not answer[33], or answered after the end of the study. Table 29 below provides an overview of the number of contact persons that were contacted for an interview.

Table 29 - Interviews

	III B	IIIA	Tacis	Total
Number of projects	10	5	10	25
Number of persons contacted	47	18	23	88
Number of interviews	31	16	20	73
Number of persons not available	15	2	6	15

Carrying out the interviews
The interviews took place in June, July, August and September 2008.

- Face-to-face interviews were conducted in Latvia, Denmark, and Russia.

[32] In general, it turned out that it was difficult for project managers to identify end users not involved in the project, although a number of projects had stated that they had end users which were not project partners. The two key groups which were interviewed were therefore project partners, who were not users, and project partners who were users.
[33] Contact persons were contacted up to 4 times by mail or telephone.

- Telephone interviews were conducted with interviewees in Estonia, Finland, Germany, Sweden, Poland and Lithuania.

More face-to-face interviews had been planned, but the difficulty in locating the contact persons, the widespread geography, and the summer break in the middle of the evaluation study limited on-site visits. A list of all interviews is included Appendices 2 and 3.

Tables 30 and 31 below provide an overview of the number of contact persons received, the number contacted, and the number of interviews we were able to carry out sorted according to country in the programme.

Table 30 - Overview of Geographical Split of Contact Persons III B

Country	Contact Persons received	Contacted	Interview
Denmark	9	6	5
Estonia	2	2	2
Finland	8	8	6
Germany	6	6	2
Latvia	6	6	5
Lithuania	1	1	1
Poland	1	1	1
Sweden	13	12	10
Norway	2	2	2
Russia	21	21	11[34]
Belarus	2	2	1

Table 31 - Overview of Geographical Split of Contact Persons IIIA

Country	Contact Persons received	Contacted	Interview
Estonia	5	5	3
Latvia	8	8	8
Lithuania	5	5	3
Russia	6	6	5
Belarus	5	5	3

[34] 16 persons from Russia were interviewed, but in two cases two persons were interviewed together therefore in total 14 Interview reports were submitted.

Interviews with the JS and the Delegations in Moscow and Kiev
The Joint Secretariat is in charge of the day-to-day management of the BSR INTERREG III B Neighbourhood Programme and acts as secretariat for the Steering Committee and the Monitoring Committee.

The interview with key persons of the Joint Secretariat in Latvia took place on 10 June 2008 on the premises of the secretariat in Riga.

The interview with key staff of the Joint Secretariat in Germany took place on 7 July 2008 on the premises of the secretariat in Rostock.

A Validation Workshop took pace with the JS in Rostock on 4 September in order to discuss the findings of the Evaluation Study. The first draft of the present report was presented at this meeting.

The interviews with the EC Delegations in Kiev and Moscow took place as telephone interviews in September 2008.

Data processing
All conducted interviews were recorded in the interview reports with name of the interviewee, project and interviewer and the date of the interview. The answers were structured according to the evaluation questions.

Appendix 1 Indicators

Table 32 - Evaluation criteria and indicators for IIIA/B projects excluding Tacis

Question	Criteria and indicator
1) To what extent are the outcomes, such as plans and strategies used as intended by the end beneficiaries of the projects 2) Are there differences in use by different user-groups? 3) Does the use of the outcomes change with time - i.e. a lot of use directly after project end and very little after two to three years?	**Sustainability** – The results are used (or not used) as intended and planned in the project documentation – The outcomes are used by others and for other purposes as intended – The outcomes are used immediately after but not after one year of project closure. – The outcomes are use by some of the intended users but not by others
4) What are the reasons/causes for the project end beneficiaries not to use the outcomes? 5) Which features does project outputs have which are successful? 6) Are there other outputs of the projects instead of the intended/planned?	**Utility** – The outputs (plan/study) forms part of the overall priority of the organisation/beneficiary or is it external to the organisation? (Priorities) – The end-beneficiaries have been sufficiently involved in preparation of the strategy? (Ownership) – The intervention integrate well in to the beneficiary organisation/institution (Institutional) – The plan/strategy is useable to for the beneficiaries and not too advance or comprehensive (technological) – The right technology or tools has been developed? – The beneficiaries have the financial and human resource to use the intervention? (financial and capacity) – The organisation have the proper manage system to integrate the intervention in the organisation (Management and organisation)
7) How can the use of outcomes be increased and further develop in future programmes?	**Sustainability** – The projects and their outputs are designed according to needs (Design issues) – Participation in project design reflect the relevant stakeholder interest (large participants dominate smaller participants) – Due to the trans-national nature of the programme project are conceived at transnational level but many may be for national/regional use - is this an issue? – The programme level influences the design of project outcomes which should be addressed in order to improve the usability of the outcomes

Table 33 - Evaluation criteria and indicators for IIIA/B Projects including Tacis

Question	Criteria and indicator
8) Are the outcome used and how will the coming outcomes be utilised for the project financed by the ERDF /Tacis and Tacis?	**Sustainability** – The results are used (or not used) as intended and planned in the project documentation – The outcomes are used by others and for other purposes as intended – The outcomes are used immediately after but not after one year of project closure.
9) What are the reasons/cause for the project end beneficiaries not to use the outcomes - already experience and/or foreseen?	**Utility** – The outputs (plan/study) forms part of the overall priority of the organisation/beneficiary or is it external to the organisation? (Priorities/relevance) – The end-beneficiaries have been sufficiently involved in preparation of the strategy? (Ownership) – The outputs integrate well in to the beneficiary organisation/institution

	(Institutional) – The plan/strategy is useable to for the beneficiaries and not too advance or comprehensive (technological) – The right technology or tools has been developed? – The beneficiaries have the financial and human resource to use the intervention? (financial and capacity) – The organisation have the proper manage system to integrate the intervention in the organisation (Management and organisation)
10) Are there specific considerations which should be made with regard to design and planning of outcomes which should be taken into consideration for projects financed by the ERDF/Tacis (ENPI) and Tacis (ENPI)	**Sustainability** – The different funding sources have an influence on the deign of the project and outputs – The different implementation systems used for the different programme have an influence on the outcomes – Additional attention should be made to design and planning of project - increased assessment of risk and assumptions – Increase flexibility in output delivery and secure that outputs are not too complex

Appendix 2 Overview of Financed and Finalised Projects

Priority and measure	Number of projects financed	Number of projects finalised by 2006	Number of projects finalised by 30 Sep 2007
Priority 1: Promotion of spatial development approaches and actions for specific territories and sectors	**31**	**14**	**17**
Measure 1.1: Supporting joint strategies and implementation actions for macro-regions	11	8	8
Measure 1.2: Promoting sustainable spatial development of specific sectors	12	4	6
Measure 1.3: Strengthening integrated development of coastal zones, islands and other specific areas	8	2	3
Priority 2: Promotion of territorial structures supporting sustainable BSR development	**65**	**25**	**38**
Measure 2.1: Promoting balanced polycentric settlement structures	24	8	14
Measure 2.2: Creating sustainable communication links for improved spatial integration	24	9	13
Measure 2.3: Enhancing good management of cultural and natural heritage and of natural resources	17	8	11
Priority 3: Transnational and bilateral institution and capacity building in the Baltic Sea Region	**33**	**2**	**6**
Measure 3.1: Promotion of transnational institution and capacity building	26	2	6
Measure 3.2: Bilateral maritime cooperation across the Baltic Sea	7	0	0
Priority 4: Special support for regions bordering candidate countries (figure)[35]	**7**	**7**	**7**
Total 1-4[36]	**136**	**48**	**68**[37]
Priority 5: IIIA cross-border co-operation priority Estonia–Latvia-Russia (North)	**46**	**7**	**18**
Measure 5.1: Development of the Estonian-Latvian border regions	NA	5	12
Measure 5.2: Development of the EU external border regions	NA	2	6
Priority 6: IIIA cross-border co-operation priority Latvia–Lithuania-Belarus (South)	**53**	**10**	**18**
Topic 1: Utilising the cross-border cooperation to enhance the competitiveness and access to markets	NA	5	8
Topic 2: Supporting the development and strengthening of co-operation at people-to-people and institution level	NA	5	10
Total 5-6	**99**	**17**	**36**[38]
Total	**235**	**65**	**104**[39]

[35] The figures are not included in the general statistic but found on the BSR homepage under "projects", priority 4.
[36] The figures in brackets include priority 4.
[37] In the terms of references the figure mentioned is 60.
[38] In the terms of reference the figure mentioned is 41.
[39] This figure is based on the database available on the website.

Appendix 3 List of Selected Projects (Interviews and Desk Studies)

Project ID	**Project acronym**	**BSR**	**Tacis**
INTERREG III B			
12	BTN	√	
19	MECIBS	√	
20	SEBTrans-Link	√	√
26	BSVC	√	
38	BERNET-CATCH	√	√
44	Four Corners	√	
48	NECL	√	
56	Baltic eHealth	√	
68	FEM	√	
77	Castle Tomorrow	√	
81	B-SME		√
88	BEEN		√
106	LogOn Baltic		√
112	BALTIC FOREST		√
117	InWater		√
INTERREG IIIA			
SI-008	Discover the Country of lakes	√	
SII-037	Exciting Cycling Net		√
SII-046	Conservation, coopera-tion, biodiversity	√	√
SIII-064	Cooperation LT and LV	√	
NIII-043	NDP		√
NIII-048	Three fortresses		√
NIII-070	Mire habitat restoration	√	
NIII-084	Cultural Neighbourhood	√	√

Appendix 4 List of Interviews (BSR)

Project ID	Name	Organisation	Role in project	Country
INTERREG IIIB				
12	Pekka Äänismaa	Jyväskyla Politechnic	PM	Finland
12	Erik Hohle	Energigården	Partner	Norway
12	Georg Wagener-Lohse	Cebra GmbH	Partner	Germany
19	Niels Boje Groth	Danish Forest and Land-scape Research Institute	PM	Denmark
19	Hanne Tonsgaard	Municipality of Randers	Partner	Denmark
19	Kauko Lindholm	Municipality of Salo	Partner	Finland
19	Markku Heinonen	Municipality of Lappeen-ranta	Partner	Finland
20	Per-Olof Löfberg	Municipality of Växjo	PM	Sweden
20	Ingegerd Andersson	Municipality of Alvesta	Partner	Sweden
20	Arne Willhammer	Municipality of Tranemo	Partner	Sweden
26	Lennart Badersten	University of Lund	Partner	Sweden
26	Tomas Petersson	Region of Skåne	Partner	Sweden
38	Ole Tyrsted Jørgensen	Ministry of Environment	PM	Denmark
38	Vincent Westberg	West Finland Regional En-vironment Centre	Partner	Finland
38	Kristian Wennberg	County of Malmö	Partner	Sweden
44	Monika Sienkiewicz	Municipality of Swinoujscie	Partner	Poland
44	Sven Lindahl	Region of Bornholm	Partner	Denmark
44	Eva Bergstrand	Region of Ystad-Österlen	Partner	Sweden
44	Monika Krahl	District Council of Ruegen	Partner	Germany
48	Christer Troselius	County of Vasternorrland	PM	Sweden
48	Jon L. Gjemble	Norske Skog ASA	Partner	Norway
56	Claus Duedal Peder-sen	Region Syddanmark	PM	Denmark
56	Peeter Roos	East Tallinn Central Hospi-tal	Partner	Estonia
68	Annamari Asikainen	Region of Uusimaa	Partner	Finland
68	Rasma Freimane	Association of Rural women in Latvia	Partner	Latvia
68	Kairi Talves	ETNA Eestimaal	Partner	Estonia
68	Lisbeth Holmqvist-Arbrandt	Baltic-Russian-Swedish Resource Centre, Östergöt-land	Partner	Sweden
77	Marika Rudzite	Livanu Novada Dome	PM	Latvia
77	Ilze Griezane	Latgale Art and Craft Centre	User	Latvia

77	Inguna Grinsteine	Latvia Culture, History and Nature Heritage Development Foundation	User	Latvia
77	Laima Lupike	Association of Latvian Castles, Palaces and Manors	Partner	Latvia
INTERREG IIIA				
NIII-084	Inese Zimele	Alūksne Town Council	PM	Latvia
NIII-084	Santa Supe	Alūksne Town Council	PM	Latvia
NIII-084	Astrida Betere	Alūksne Town Council	Partner	Latvia
NIII-084	Juri Gotmans	Haanja Municipality	Partner	Estonia
NIII-070	Jüri Ott-Salm	Estonian Fund for Nature	PM	Estonia
NIII-070	Agu Leivits	State Nature Conservation Centre	User	Estonia
SII-046	S. Svazas	OMPO Vilnius	Partner	Lithuania
SII-046	J. Stankeviciute	Institute of Botany	Partner	Lithuania
SIII-064	Normunds Hofmanis	Student Tourism Club "Remoss"	Partner	Latvia
SIII-064	Normunds Hofmanis	Student Tourism Club "Remoss"	Partner	Latvia
SIII-064	Ruta Masiulyte	Lithuanian Youth Club	PM	Lithuania
SIII-064	Eva Jakobsone	Latvian Youth Sports Tourism Federation	Partner	Latvia
SIII-008	Inara Dzalbe	Euroregion "Country of lakes"	PM	Latvia
SIII-008	Ilze Stabulniece	Euroregion "Country of lakes"	PM	Latvia
SIII-008	Tatjana Kozachuka	Tourism Information Centre in Kraslava	User	Latvia

Appendix 5 List of Interviews (Tacis)

Project ID	Name	Organisation	Role in project	Country
INTERREG IIIB				
20	Igor Krasniansky	Administration of Kaliningrad Transport Department	Partner	Russia/ Kaliningrad
81	Tatjana Klyshevich	Belarusian Chamber of Commerce	Partner	Belarus/ Minsk
81	Alexander Popov	Kaliningrad Chambers of Crafts	Partner	Russia/ Kaliningrad
81	Irina Kocherga	Handicraft Chamber Leningrad Region	Partner	Russia/ Leningrad
81	Nikolai B. Kobelev	Russian Chambers of Crafts	User	Russia
88	Nikita Borisov	Administration of Kaliningrad, Dep. Energy and Housing	Partner	Russia/ Kaliningrad
106	Natalia Ivanova	PROTEUS	Partner	Russia
106	Mihail Pimonenko	ILOT North-Western Russia Logistics Centre	Partner	Russia
112	Elvira Valueva	Model Forest Kovdozerskij	Partner	Russia
117	Sergey Kuchma	Kaliningrad City Hall, Dpt. Foreign Relations	Coordinator	Russia/ Kaliningrad
117	Tatyana Levchenko	Kaliningrad City Hall, Dpt. Foreign Relations	Coordinator	Russia/ Kaliningrad
117	Vladimir Kuzin	Kaliningrad Oblast, Dpt. for Economics and Trade	Partner	Russia/ Kaliningrad
INTERREG IIIA				
NIII-043	Dimitry Zinovyev	Association on cross border cooperation Euroregio Pskov-Livonia	Partner	Russia/ Pskov
NIII-048	Vadim Laptev	Non-commercial partnership "Pskov Tourism Development Center"	Partner	Russia
NIII-048	Elena Zaharova	Non-commercial partnership "Pskov Tourism Development Center"	Partner	Russia
NIII-084	Lidia Tchechelnickaja	Folk creativity centre of Pskov province		Russia
NIII-084	Nina Kruglova	Pechory District Administration	Partner	Russia
SII-037	Vjacheslav Bogushevich	Verhnevdinsk District Countil	Partner	Belarus
SII-037	Mihail Orehov	Glubokoje District Council	Partner	Belarus
SII-046	L. Nagorskaya	Institute of Zoology NAS Belarus	Partner	Belarus

Appendix 6 Questionnaire for Interviews (and e-survey)

Name of Interviewer	
Date of interview	
Number of projects (interview)	
Interviewee	
Organisation	

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Evaluation Study on Use of Outcomes Produced in the Baltic Sea Region INTERREG IIIB Neighbourhood Programme

This interview guide should be used in the in-depth interviews with **BSR partners and users** for the evaluation. The projects concerned are all finalised.

The interview guide includes the following questions which can be presented to the interviewee at the start of the interview.

Please use this interview guide for reporting on each interview. Please type you answers so that the guide can be transferred electronically.

A. Identification of Project stage and group

1. When was the project finalised?

2. Was it a IIIA ___________or a III B project ____________ (tick)

and which priority (insert number) ______________________________

B. Identification of user group

1. Who were/are the users in your project?

In general

Type of user	Tick one or more
A: Regional authorities	
B: Municipalities	
C: Public services (hospitals, schools, etc)	
D: NGOs	
E: Associations (business, other)	
E: SMEs	
F: Other	

2. Please specify user(s) (if possible):

3. Were/are you yourself a user (if not please state role in project i.e. project manager, project partner, other)?

4. Are you aware of any organisation, using the outcomes, which were not foreseen in the project planning?

C. What are the outcomes of the project

1. What were the outcomes of your project (please show list to interviewee)?

III B Outcomes (only III B projects)	**Tick & rank**
Common spatial development visions	
Concrete development concepts and strategies	
Land-use and building plans based on transnational strategies	
Technical concepts and feasibility studies	
Economic expertise/assessments and business plans	

Environmental impact assessment documents/territorial impact assessment documents	
Promotion and marketing strategies	
New sustainable tourism products with transnational context	
Guidelines, manuals	
Learning programmes	
Training Courses	
Small-scale infrastructure investments	

IIIA Outcomes (only IIIA projects)	**Tick and rank**
Tools/materials/information and marketing	
Physical improvement of tourism/municipal infrastructure (e.g. investments into a yacht harbour or building hiking trails around a lake)	
Joint cross-border tourism products developed	
Cross-border networks established	
Cross-border services	

(If there was more than one outcome, please ask the interviewee to rank the outcomes in order of importance (1 highest - 5 lowest))

2. Describe the main outcome(s) in detail (there may be more than one major/important outcome):

3. Were there other outcomes of the project in addition to/or instead of the intended/planned?

4. Did the project deliver all the outcomes as planned? If no, which ones were not achieved?

D. Use of outcomes

1. Were/are the outcomes used as planned (please ask the interviewee to describe what was planned or how it was planned)?

2. How are the outcomes used ? Ask open ended and ask the interviewee to reflect over how the outcome is used). For example in the case of a strategic plan or strategy: is this used for the yearly planning and budget process or in the daily work in the management or similar ?)

3. Different use of outcomes over time, i.e. was the outcome used more while the project was still running or just after the project was finalised? What happened one year after?

	Not at all or limited use	**For specific purposes (occasional use)**	**Integrated in the organisations tools/work process**	**I do not know**
a. At present				
b. Before the project was finalised				

Please detail the difference in use in the different phases of the project - during project implementation, after project end and eventually more than one year after project end (for projects which ended more than one or two years ago you can ask if there is a difference in use when more time has elapsed since project end):

4. Were/are there different use by user groups (if there were different user groups) - please describe:

5. Did outcomes or the use of outcomes have any organisational impacts e.g. did this lead to improved processes or working methods in you organisation or in other organisations that you are aware of ?

E. Reasons for non-use

1. Why were some or all of the outcomes not used?

Reasons for non use can be:

- Not relevant for users - needs not accessed
- Too complicated or technological advanced (IT products or the like)
- No financial or human resources to use outcomes
- Cost of use
- No commitment (political) with user groups to implement

F. Successful projects where the outcomes are used

1. What were the features of projects which were successful (please ask the interviewee to reflect over what S/he sees as key factors in successful INTERREG projects)?

G. Appropriateness of outcomes to the user organisation

1. How did/do the outcomes fit to the user/your organisation (please ask non-users to reflect over users - and users in particular over their own use and, if possible, other user organisations they are aware of)?

	My organisation		Other organisations	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
a. The project outcome(s) corresponded to the priorities of my organisation				
b. My organisation was sufficiently involved in the preparation of the project outcome(s)				
c. The project outcome(s) were useful for my organisation (s)				
d. My organisation had the financial resources to utilise the project outcome(s)				
e. My organisation had the human resources to implement the project outcome(s)				
f. My organisation had a proper management system to integrate the project outcome(s)				

Furthermore, ask the interviewee to reflect over the above and specify answers for the most important issues (in particular the negative ones (indicate with letter which one)):

H. Partnership

Did the partnership and its structure have any influence on the development of the outcomes? Please state strength, weaknesses and lessons learned regarding the partnerships?

I. Suggestions on how the use of the outcomes could be enhanced

Identify the most important factors which could be addressed in order to improve use of outcomes and ask them to rank (only for finalised projects):

Reason	**Tick and rank**
A: The project planning can be more inclusive/more stakeholders	
B: Enhanced role of user organisations in project preparation and application	
C. Enhanced role of user organisations in project implementation	
D: Increased support for implementing outcomes (financial/human resources)	
E. Better needs assessment of user organisations needs	
F. Project structure should be changed (number of partners)	
G. The project period should be longer	
H. Other	

Please ask the interviewee to reflect and detail the most important of the above factors - i.e. how can the factor be improved, who should do it etc?

J. Desk assessment and other observations by the interviewer

1. Please insert here other observations that you make during the interview which do not belong under any of the questions:

2. Please add your assessment of <u>use of outcomes</u> based on the project documentation and the questions above (brief):
