



6th Interreg Europe Monitoring Committee Meeting 21 March 2017

Mediterranean Conference Center, Valletta, Malta

Chaired by: Raphael Scerri (MT)
Participants: See Participants' List (Annex 01).
Decision notes: Interreg Europe JS

Final decision notes

1. **Welcome, opening and approval of the agenda**

The Chair welcomed the members to Malta with a short video and a few words about Malta's commitment to interregional cooperation.

There was no objection and the agenda was approved.

2. **Presentation of the new MC members**

The participants of the monitoring committee from **MT**, **EE** and **PL** introduced themselves.

3. **Update on general programme developments**

- The **JS** presented an overview of the HR developments in the JS and the resulting ongoing recruitment (see annex 02).
- The **JS** presented an overview of the meetings and events in which the JS participated since the last MC meeting (see annex 03).
- The **JS** delivered a short presentation (see annex 04) on the recent and ongoing developments linked to the programme's database, the most important being the partner report, FLC certification and the FLC designation module. As for the FLC designation module, online/virtual trainings are planned for all approbation bodies and centralised FLCs. Also project partners and FLCs of 1st call projects would be trained through a webinar. A training for 2nd call projects was foreseen during the finance seminar at the end of May/beginning of June.
- The JS confirmed that trainings of project partners would be organised by the **JS**. Following a question, the JS confirmed that country-specific requirements like the Spanish validation of the FLC certification would be taken into account in the FLC certification module. The **JS** also clarified that documents supporting the list of expenditure such as invoices, payment proofs and procurement documentation cannot be uploaded in the system, considering the storage capacity it would require in a programme with 2000 partners and the overlaps it would create with already existing country specific systems and requirements.

4. **Strategic Cooperation with the Committee of the Regions**

The **JS** reminded the purpose of the document 'Strategic cooperation between the Committee of the Regions (CoR) and the Interreg Europe programme', The document was initially presented



during the Monitoring committee meeting in Bratislava, in December 2016. Since then, no further remarks were received on the document which was proposed for decision to the MC to the Monitoring committee.

Decision

After a discussion during the coffee break, the **Chair, DE, NL, LU** made a proposal submitted to the MC (see annex 05) to change the title and clarify the section “implementation”. The Monitoring committee approved the updated version of the document.

The monitoring committee also agreed that mission reports related to activities with the CoR will be sent to MC members so that they can follow better the activities with the CoR.

5. Policy Learning Platforms

The **JS** presented the update on the policy learning platform (PLP) state of play, following the presentation made in Bratislava in December 2016 (see annex 06). The JS reminded the difficulties met and the remedy measures taken. An update was also made on the events foreseen by the platforms and on the cooperation with the CoR (see previous point) and with the S3 platform based in Seville.

6. Cooperation with the S3 thematic platforms of the EC

EC presented an overview of the Thematic Smart Specialisation Platforms, the Smart Specialisation Communication that will be published end of May, the organisation of the Smart Regions in Helsinki beginning of June and the cooperation established with the **JS** to explore synergies (see annex 07).

7. Programme performance

The **JS** presented the programme approach to measure performances (annex 08). The question on how to measure the programme impact had been raised in December 2015 during the MC meeting in Bratislava. The presentation provided some information on the current plans of the **MA / JS** in order to initiate a discussion among MC members. The **JS** stressed that the specific character of the programme, focusing on policy improvement, makes it more difficult to evaluate the programme performances as the programme impact is indirect. Monitoring performance programme also requires taking into account projects and policy learning platforms (PLPs). As regards the PLPs, payment is related to the fulfilment of certain criteria. It is possible, under conditions, not to pay the full amount reserved to the platforms.

As regard the projects impact, surveys will be carried out in 2018, 2020 and 2023 to fill in the programme indicators, following a first survey carried out in 2015 to define the indicators baseline values. A mid-term evaluation will also be carried out in 2018 through external service.

8. Presentation of Destination SMEs (MT PP)

Anthony Zammit from the Ministry for Gozo involved as partner in the first call project Destination SMEs gave a presentation of the project and in particular the economic context in Gozo and on the project rationale (see annex 10).



9. Programme finance matters

a+b) Technical Assistance (TA) – 2016 actual expenditures & 2017 budget

The JS presented the actual expenditures for 2016 and also provided a copy of the 2016 expenditure table (see annex 11) certified by the Hauts-de-France Region (the latter acting as the first level controller of the TA expenditure). The JS then proposed the 2017 TA budget for 2017. The JS also outlined the request for a general budget shift from the budget line External expertise/IT maintenance to the budget line “External expertise/programme monitoring system (presentation on TA - see annex 12).

Decision:

The MC approved the following:

- the 2016 actual expenditure (€3,129,685.86)
- the 2017 budget (€3,875,318)
- the general budget shift of €95,000 from IT maintenance to programme monitoring system

c) National contributions to TA budget

The JS handed out an updated overview table showing the national contributions due and paid so far (see annex 13). It was reminded that 4 countries had not paid their national contribution for 2017, initially due by 31 January 2017. They were kindly invited to do so at their earliest convenience.

d) Contact point budget consumption

The JS handed out an updated overview of the consumption of the national point of contact budget (see annex 14).

e) Decommitment / payment forecast

The JS presented the payment forecast for 2017 and 2018 and indicated that based on these forecasts, it should be possible to avoid decommitment in 2018 and also 2019 (see annex 15).

f) Update on MA/CA designation process

The JS gave an update on the designation process (see annex 16).

g) First level control and audits (incl. IVC closure)

The latest developments regarding the closure of the IVC programme as well as the recent Interreg Europe group of auditors meeting were presented by the JS (see annex 17).

10. State aid procedures for projects (2nd phase)

The JS presented the state aid procedures for projects applicable in Interreg Europe programme (see annex 18). After the presentation, the JS asked the feedback of PS about the different options presented to grant state aid through the de minimis scheme.

11. Communication

The JS presented the state of play of the communication plan 2017 at programme and national level highlighting the impact and results of the implemented activities (see presentation in annex 19).



The JS also informed the MC that the INTERREG IVC project 1243R4 TRES will submit an application to the RegioStars Awards.

12. AOB – Timeline

JS presented the timeline / deadlines (see annex 20).

NOTE : To ensure transparency of the Monitoring Committee meetings, the decision notes are published on the Interreg Europe's website. Annexes as mentioned in the notes can be requested by email : info@interregeurope.eu