

## 2021-2027 – 3rd Interreg Europe Monitoring Committee meeting

14 and 15 June 2023

**Chaired by:** Sweden (SE)

**Participants:** See participants' List (Annex 01)

**Decision notes:** Interreg Europe JS

### 01. Welcome, opening and approval of the agenda

The **Chair** welcomed the participants and introduced the agenda (Annex 02). One change was introduced to the agenda. At the request of the **JS**, the **Chair** proposed to move point 4 of the agenda ahead of point 3 due to presenting staff having to leave the meeting earlier.

Following the Chair's invitation, the new MC members Rafał Modrzewski (**PL**) and Adam Flanagan (**IE**) introduced themselves.

**Decision:**

The agenda was approved unanimously.

### 02. Amendment of programme documents to prepare the extension of the programme to 7 new countries.

The **MA** and **JS** presented the note on the amendments of the programme documents to prepare the extension of the programme area to 7 new countries (Annex 03). The **JS** also informed about recent updates in the proposal - the possibility and advantages of pooling the ERDF, IPA and NDICI funding into one "Interreg" fund, and the offer to allow first and second call projects to increase their original budget by up to 3%. **EC** informed that it currently does not have a formal approval of the available IPA and NDICI funding as the discussion about budget reallocations are still ongoing. The related Implementing acts will need to be amended and adopted by the end of the year 2023. The submission of the amended CP can be done in parallel to the approval of the Implementing acts but will be approved only after the final decision.

**Decision:**

The MC agrees in principle on the extension of the programme area to 7 additional countries – Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Moldova and Ukraine.

The MC agrees to approve the amended Cooperation Programme (Annex 04) which includes:

- 2.1. Addition of the list of the new countries in the text
- 2.2. Amendment of the financing plan:
  - addition of 5 MEUR NDICI funding and 10 MEUR IPA funding (subject to EC approval of the amounts)
  - pooling of the ERDF, NDICI and IPA funding into a single Interreg fund.

The MC approves the proposed procedure for extending the partnership to the approved first and second call projects.

### 03. Second Call – First statistics

**JS** presented an overview of the statistics of the second call for proposals comparing the figures to the first call (Annex 05).

#### **Discussion:**

**IT** suggested that the results from the 2<sup>nd</sup> call should be more visible for beneficiaries in the programme website. **JS** replied that communication team is working on a better visualisation of the content. The project websites will also be available soon and the second call statistics are available in the PS SharePoint folder.

**DE** mentioned that an applicant experienced technical problem when saving some changes in the application form. **JS** explained that no technical difficulties were reported except for one applicant that could not submit the application. This case is currently under investigation.

### 04. Presentation of latest developments in the Portal

**JS** explained that due to the delay in the agenda, it was not possible to present this point (annex 06). However, a webinar for project partners, controllers and approbation bodies will be organised on 27 June about the Portal's functionalities. PS will receive an invitation to attend this event.

#### **Discussion:**

**CY** asked if the individual accounts for MC and NPC contact persons were ready. **JS** answered that a note explaining the individual access to the Portal will be sent, and a briefing organised in addition to the webinar.

### 05. Update on finances

**JS** provided an update on the national contributions (annex 07) and invited PS to complete their national contribution payments for 2021-2022 and 2023, if not already done. **JS** informed the MC that the Management and Control System Description (MCSD) will be submitted by the end of June to the Audit Authority. Any outstanding issue will be tackled in the first system audit which will take place in spring 2024. **JS** clarified that the next step for the audit calendar is to externalise the audit and presented to the MC the proposal regarding the TA budget to be allocated to this externalisation (annex 08).

#### **Decision:**

The MC approved the proposal to dedicate a budget of EUR 858,826 from TA 2021-2027 to the externalisation of the audit tasks.

### 06. Risk matrix

**JS** explained that due to the delay in the agenda it was not possible to present this point (annex 09).

#### **Discussion:**

Replying to a question from **RO**, **JS** confirmed that the checks regarding project implementation performed by the JS/MA are reflected in proper checklists. Following a comment from **RO**, **JS** will include the organisation of hybrid meetings as one of the measures to mitigate risk "2.2 MC decision-making capacity on projects".

## 07. 2014-2020 Ex-post evaluation & updated evaluation plan

**JS** presented the Ex-post evaluation terms of reference and the updated evaluation plan (Annex 10).

**Discussion:** Regarding the ex-post evaluation, **JS** confirmed to **FI** that study visits to include stories about projects achievements would not be feasible. However, it is planned that about 30 project stories to describe what happened on the ground should be included, based on interviews and surveys.

**Decision:** The MC approved the terms of reference for the 2014-2020 Ex-post evaluation and the updated evaluation plan.

## 08. Update on Policy Learning Platform

**JS** presented the updates on the Policy Learning Platform (Annex 11).

### **Discussion:**

**CY** asked whether a policy helpdesk service as a follow-up step can be applied to applicants who already benefited from a peer review. **JS** confirmed that this is possible. **RO** suggested that the **JS** prepares a short document with visuals to assist with further promoting the peer review service. **JS** confirmed that a document is in preparation that outlines all PLP services. Further to **LU** remark, **DE** confirmed the importance of the PLP being active in the new partner countries. It was also suggested to ensure better promotion for thematic webinars. **JS** confirms the ongoing efforts to further promote the activities.

## 09. Communication plan 2023 update

**JS** presented some highlights from the past communication activities in 2023 and the update in the communication plan for the rest of 2023 (Annex 12).

## 10. Timeline

The timeline was presented (Annex 13). In addition, it has been announced that **BE** is ready to organise the MC meeting during their presidency in one of the new partner states. The possible time and place will be announced when decided after consultation with the new PS.

## 11. Any other business

**Thomas Wobben** from the **CoR** presented the Future of Cohesion Policy post 2027 (Annex 14).

The **EC** completed the information regarding the meetings of the high-level group of experts whose next meeting is on 4 July. Almost all documents for the meeting have been published, and the morning session will be open in web streaming.

**CY** added that Interact decided to send a letter before the 4 July meeting to the high level expert group explaining the role of Interreg programmes.

**ES** intervened at the end as the new Chair to invite the MC members to the next MC meeting in Alcalá de Henares in December.

The Chair thanked the participants and closed the meeting.

NOTE: To ensure transparency of the Programming 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](mailto:info@interregeurope.eu)