Request for pilot action in phase 1

**IMPORTANT:** Before completing the template, the lead partner should first check the idea of a pilot action with their Policy Officer in the Joint Secretariat.

In the context of the COVID-19 crisis, the opportunities for ‘learning by doing / testing’ were reinforced. Therefore, projects which are still at an early stage of implementation of their Phase 1 (mainly 4th call projects) have the possibility to request pilot actions at any moment during phase 1 under the following conditions:

* The pilot action clearly contributes to the learning process not only in the region but also within the partnership. The implementation and lessons learnt from the pilot action should therefore be shared among the partnership to enrich the interregional exchange of experience,
* All conditions for pilot actions as described in section 4.2.2 Phase 2 – monitoring of the action plan implementation apply (Relevance and durability, interregionality and additionality). This means that the subject of the pilot should be clearly relevant to the issue addressed by the project. It should also be linked to a policy framework. Such pilot action has to be included later on in the Action Plan of the region as an action already implemented. However, the interregional character may be less dominant as long as the link to the project activities is still clearly demonstrated (e.g. ideas generated through the stakeholder groups).

**A request for a pilot action must be submitted to the programme as soon as it is ready**. Since regions may need urgent solutions to face their policy challenges, the pilot action can be related to the COVID-19 crisis as long as it remains within the issue addressed by the project (new methodology to provide business support services; development of a new online tourism product; development of a tool for monitoring the impact of COVID-19 on certain policy fields).

It will then be assessed by the Joint Secretariat which may require further clarifications. In case the pilot action meets the programme’s requirements, the Joint Secretariat will recommend it for approval to the Monitoring Committee. If approved, the application form will be updated through a ‘request for change’ procedure.

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| --- | --- |
| Project Acronym: |  |
| Project Index (PGI): |  |
| Title of the pilot action |  |
| Policy instrument(s) addressed: |  |
| Partner(s) concerned: |  |
| Country (countries): |  |
| Date of request: |  |

**Pilot action summary (information to be published in case of approval):**

Please summarise in one sentence the pilot action requested.

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| *The pilot action is dedicated to testing….*  |

#### Relevance of the request

**A.1 Nature of the pilot action**

Please describe what will be tested in the region? What is the precise nature of the activities envisaged?

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Who will be the main beneficiaries of the pilot action?

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**A.2 Compliance with the programme requirements**

Please explain further how the pilot action complies with the programme’s requirements in terms of:

**A.2.1 Policy relevance and durability**

How will the pilot action contribute to improving the policy instrument addressed in the concerned region(s)? What are the measures envisaged to ensure its durability and/or generalisation in case of success? These actions should also be reflected in the work plan (section B).

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**A.2.2 Interregionality and link to the learning process**

How does this pilot relate to knowledge/practices learnt from other project partners and/or local stakeholder group?

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How will the implementation and lessons learnt from the pilot action be shared among the partnership to enrich the interregional exchange of experience?

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**A.2.4 Additionality**

Why can the pilot action not be financed by the policy instrument addressed or by other local / regional / national funds?

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#### Planned activities

Please describe precisely the different activities to be implemented for the pilot action during the corresponding semester of phase 1.

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| **PHASE 1** |
| **Semester 4** |
|  |
| **Main outputs** |
|  |
| **Semester 5** |
|  |
| **Main outputs** |
|  |
| ***Semester 6*** |
| *To ensure proper closing of Phase 1, all pilot related activities should be finalised at the latest 6 months before the end of phase 1.* |

#### State Aid

Funds used to implement pilot actions have to comply with state aid rules, in line with article 107 of the TFEU. Therefore, the JS has to assess whether the pilot activities described below could be considered as state aid relevant. The activity carried out within the pilot could be state aid relevant if it has a commercial nature, is market related, it grants an economic benefit to the beneficiary that the beneficiary would not have received without the pilot and is thus able to distort the competition within the EU. If the proposed pilot action falls under state aid rules, the aid will be granted under the de minimis regulation[[1]](#footnote-1). According to this regulation, an organisation cannot receive more than EUR 200,000 of de minimis aid in the last 3 fiscal years. This means that, if the pilot action is state aid relevant and the project partner receive de minimis aid, there will be specific procedures to follow. If the pilot benefits directly the project partner, a self-declaration will have to be provided by the project partner. In case third parties receive benefits from the pilot, they will be considered as recipient of indirect state aid/de minimis and project partners bear the responsibility to ensure that state aid /de minimis rules are respected by those undertakings, by collecting such self-declarations from them. Further information on state aid can also be found in section “2.7.5 State aid” in the programme manual. In order to allow the JS to assess whether the proposed pilot is state aid relevant, we kindly ask you to reply to the questions below.

- Can any of the pilot activities be considered as an economic activity, i.e. market relevant, profit oriented or likely to improve the financial situation of the partner? Please justify as much as possible your answer, and if applicable, please explain how the pilot action could improve the financial situation of the project partner.

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- Will there be a specific third party organisation or a selected group of third party organisations (other than the external experts sub-contracted in compliance with public procurement rules) involved in the pilot that could benefit from market related, or profit oriented activities, likely to improve their financial situation? If yes, please define the activities they will participate in and explain why you consider that they are market related and how they could bring an economic benefit to the third party.

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#### Partnership

Which partner(s) of the project will be in charge of the implementation of the pilot action?

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| **Partner name:** | **Country:** | **Role in the pilot:** |
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If the pilot action requires the introduction of new partners in the partnership, please specify (\*)

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| **Partner name:** | **Country:** | **Role in the pilot:** |
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(\*) *In order to confirm the eligibility of the new partner(s) please fill in Annex 1 – Part B Partnership for each of the new partners joining the existing partnership.*

Please explain whether other stakeholders will be involved in the implementation of the pilot action

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#### Budget (\*)

 (\*) *In addition to section E, please fill in the Excel file “Pilot Actions request template – section E budget”*

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| **Partner** | **Staff costs** | **Office and administration** | **Travel****and accommodation** | **External expertise and services** | **Equipment** | **Total partner budget** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Total** |  |  |  |  |  |  |

#### Questions for the Joint Secretariat

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***Part to be completed by the Interreg Europe Joint Secretariat***

1. **JS clarifications**

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1. **JS final recommendations**

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| **State aid relevance** | **Yes** | **No** |
| 1/ Does the pilot action represent a service which allows to make profit and for which a market exists (i.e. is it considered as an economic activity in the meaning of the Commission notice on the notion of State Aid (n° 2016/C 262/01)? |  |  |
| 2/ Could the financial situation of the concerned partner(s) improve as a result of the pilot (i.e. could the pilot action potentially distort the competition)? |  |  |
| 3/ Will there be any economic benefit to third parties? (indirect state aid relevance) |  |  |
| **Conclusion** |  |

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|  | **Yes** | **No** |
| Additional funding requested? |  |  |

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| **Fulfilment of criteria?** | **Yes** | **No** |
| 1/ Relevance |  |  |
| 2/ Additionality |  |  |
| 3/ Interregionality |  |  |
| 4/ Feasibility (including finance) |  |  |
| **Final recommendation** |  |

## Annex 1: PART B – Partnership

**ATTENTION:** Only fill in this annex if a NEW partner is joining the partnership to implement the pilot action. This will allow the programme to check its eligibility with the relevant National Point of Contact.

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| B.1 Partner’s details  |
| Name of organisation in original language |  |
| Name of organisation in English |  |
| Department/unit/division (if applicable) |  |
| Legal status | [ ]  *Public body or body governed by public law*[ ]  *Body governed by private law (only non-profit!)* |
| Type of partner  | [ ]  *local public authority*[ ]  *regional public authority*[ ]  *national public authority*[ ]  *EGTC*[ ]  *Business support organisation*[ ]  *Education and research institution*[ ]  *Agency (different from business support organisation)*[ ]  *Infrastructure and public service provider*[ ]  *Interest group*[ ]  *Other* |
| Address |  |
| Town |  | Postal code |  |
| Country |  |
| NUTS 1 level  |  |
| NUTS 2 level |  |
| NUTS 3 level |  |
| Legal representative |  |
| Contact person 1 |  |
| Phone (office) |  | Mobile |  |
| E-mail |  | Website |  |
| *Contact person 2 (optional)* |  |
| *Phone* |  | *E-mail* |  |
| Partner financed through regional operational programmes | [ ]  *Yes*[ ]  *No*Please tick yes only if the participation of the partner is financed directly by their regional operational programme and not through Interreg Europe (see programme manual for further information) |

1. ‘Commission Regulation (EC) No 1407/2013 of 18 December 2013 on the application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union to de minimis aid’ [↑](#footnote-ref-1)