



2nd Interreg Europe Programming Committee Meeting 5 March 2020

**Crown Plaza Hotel
Brussels, Belgium**

Decision notes

Chaired by: Mislav Kovač (HR)
Participants: See Participants' List (**Annex 01**).
Decision notes: Interreg Europe JS

1.	Welcome, Opening and approval of the agenda
	The Chair welcomed the participants. PC approved the proposed agenda.
2.	Update on post 2020
	<p>- BREXIT</p> <p>The MA informed the PC that, in line with the 'principle of non-participation' included in the Withdrawal Agreement (Article 7(1)), the UK should no longer participate in meetings where the post-2020 period is discussed. Therefore, the UK can no longer participate in the programming process of the future programme.</p> <p>- State of play of post 2020 negotiations</p> <p>The Chair could not share any important update on the state of play of the 2020 negotiations. The discussions on the budget are currently with the Council and the timing of the final regulations is still uncertain.</p> <p>The JS reminded the PC that there are some technical issues in the draft regulations and rumours from the MFF discussions of the "negotiating box" that raise some concerns:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Technical assistance: it is unclear how the technical assistance budget of the future programme should be calculated, namely on which expenditure the percentage - 6% or 7% depending on the strand - has to be applied (total expenditure? ERDF?). A request of clarification was sent to the European Commission but no clear answer was received yet.2. On the hand, it seems that pre-financing for ETC programmes may be increased but on the other hand a clearance mechanism might have been reintroduced (deduction of pre-financing at the moment of the annual accounts), which like in this programming period, would again force programmes to increase certifications to the EC and cause cash-flow issues for programmes.



3.	Managing Authority selection procedure:
	<p>- Expression of interest's call: results</p> <p>- Next step</p> <p>The PC was informed that no expression of interest was received by the Finnish chair by the deadline fixed during the last PC meeting (29 February 2020).</p> <p>The Hauts-de-France Region presented their candidature for the next programming period, reminding the PC about the strengths and long experience of the region in European matters (Annex 02).</p> <p>Decision: The Hauts-de-France Region was approved as Managing Authority of the future Interreg Europe programme.</p>
4.a	PLP Update
	<p>The JS informed the PC about the financial situation of the PLP lead contractor, INNO TSD. The company was placed into receivership procedure on 26 February 2020. The JS explained the 3 scenarios that the programme envisage for the continuation of the PLP services (Annex 03 Presentation).</p> <p>The JS explained that the MA will launch soon a written procedure to request a mandate from the Monitoring Committee to implement the most appropriate scenario depending on how the situation evolves in the coming weeks.</p>



4b.	Further simplification of financial rules – first ideas from Interact HIT group + centralized FLC discussions
	<p>JS presented ideas from the work group on harmonised implementation tools (HIT), moderated by Interact, and the meeting with centralised FLC in January 2020 (Annex 04).</p> <p>The JS feedback can be summarized as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The JS will check if statistics on FLC costs can be drawn. The JS reminded the PS liability in case of errors and questioned the feasibility of FLC at programme level for a programme that involves 27 EU-Member States. The JS will provide the pros/cons of the two main options of the organisation of the future FLC system (organisation at PS level vs. organisation at programme level).- To gather feedback from decentralised FLC, the JS will have to rely on the approbation bodies/programming committee members as well as the consultation of projects considering the high number of actors involved in such systems (eg. in many countries with decentralized FLC, like Italy, each project partner has its own controller).- The JS reminded that the proposals regarding the future eligibility rules were intended for the standard projects. More out-of-the box solutions (eg. lump sums for specific types of projects or activities/outputs) can be considered when the programming is more advanced and the actual nature of project activities known.- For the staff and travel costs, the JS is in the process to further analyse data from the projects to see if different options could work for IR-E projects. Regarding the option of a travel flat rate based on reported staff costs, the JS will in particular verify if there are important differences by Partner State and for remote territories. They will also check how to deal with cases where no staff costs are reported (due to national rules). The option of daily allowances will also be further examined. <p>Conclusion:</p> <p>JS will keep analysing different simplification options following the principle: keep it fair to projects and simplify to maximum.</p>
5.	Synergies with other Strand C programmes (update)
	<p>JS presented an update on the synergies among the four pan-European programmes (Annex 06).</p> <p>JS confirmed that synergies between the programmes will be for the PC/MC decision. This is the reason why this update is regularly presented to the Partner States. JS also clarified that the table is related to the next programming period which explains why information on PLP remains limited at this stage. This can be further developed in the coming months when progress is made on the programming.</p>



6.	Drafting the Cooperation Programme
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Experts introduction- Presentation of the methodology- Exchange on version 1 of the Programme <p>The experts presented their team and methodology (see Annex 07).</p> <p>JS also explained that, in the annual event, a session will also be dedicated to gather the beneficiaries' feedback on the future programme.</p> <p>JS confirmed that the Troika is invited to all important meetings.</p> <p>It was requested more details on whom from DG Regio would be interviewed, and deemed appropriate to interview representatives from other relevant DGs. The experts indicated that it would first of all depend on the orientation taken in the survey in terms of scenarios but that it would be probably necessary to interview other DGs in case for instance PO 1 is selected considering the new instrument for supporting Interregional Innovation Investments.</p> <p>The conclusions of the round table discussions are available in Annex 09.</p>
7.	Programming process
	<p>It was requested to reserve more time for discussions in the upcoming PS and have less presentations on items that are already explained in the supporting documents.</p>
8.	Timeline
	<p>The JS presented the updated programme timeline (Annex 10)</p>
9.	AOB
	<p>The participants thanked HR for their role as Chair as well as for the organisation of the meeting. Finally, on behalf of the Croatian Presidency, the Ministry of Regional Development and EU Funds of Croatia thanked all participants for the interesting and active discussions.</p>
	<p>End of Meeting</p> <p>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</p>