PROGRAMME MANUAL

Versions	Content	Date
V1		22/06/2022
V1.1	Inclusion of the notion of investment among project activities (section I. C ii.e)) and related complementary information in Pre-contracting phase (section II.A.) and Eligibility of expenditures (section III A.)	29/07/2022
V1.2	Integration of the chapter dedicated to complaints and disputes	27/09/2022
V1.3	Improved phrasing of section I. C ii.e) related to investment activities + Annex C	17/10/2022
V1.4	Update of sections "I. B. ii". and "II. A I" related to the participation of PPs from Eu but outside the programme area.	19/12/2022
V1.5	Integration of sections "II, G related to the Web platform and tools, III, E related to Controls, Audit and Verifications and IV, A and D related to Key mechanisms, GDPR and Intellectual Property.	17/03/2023
V1.6	Integration of the concepts of "key productions" and "reporting package" in the Manual. Integration of a Beware in section I.D iii.b) and as footnote under section II.A . Integration of sections II.E Project reporting and JS monitoring and III.D Financial flow and project financial performance	20/04/2023

Table of contents

Introduction

This Manual aims to describe and explain the rules applicable to proposals and projects selected within the framework of the Interreg Euro-MED Programme, hereafter referred to as "Programme". This document is divided into parts, chapters, sections and annexes, all of them complementary and organised according to the "life cycle" of a project also referred to as “operation”.

In the table of contents, you will see all the parts of the complete Programme Manual. The parts indicated with the mention “drafting ongoing” in red are still being drafted by the Joint Secretariat.

The elements established in the Programme Manual are binding and constitute the rules of the Programme. These elements are based on the applicable European regulations and approved by the Monitoring Committee of Interreg Euro-MED Programme.

The Manual is addressed to the stakeholders involved in the different phases of a project: potential applicants, applicants, lead partners, partners, associated partners of a project, but also national controllers.

As those responsible for all phases of project implementation, from development to closure, Lead Partners are expected to be familiar with the contents of this Manual and to keep themselves informed of any changes. In addition, Lead Partners are expected to use the Manual for information purposes and to disseminate it to project partners in order to ensure the proper implementation of project activities and the knowledge and understanding of the Programme rules by the whole partnership.

The Sections: *Implementing my project*; *Financial issues* and *Key legal mechanisms* should be known and fully understood by the national controllers (First Level Controllers - FLC) in charge of the validation of the declared expenditures.

I. Building my project and submitting my application

A. Getting informed about the calls for proposals

i. Different types of calls for proposals

Open calls for proposals: This is a "wide audience" type of call for proposals and is open to any type of application and partnership respecting the expectations of the Programme as defined by the Terms of Reference of the Call. Access to the Application Form is done via the creation of a free account, directly on the monitoring tool "Jems" (Joint Electronic Monitoring System).

Restricted calls for proposals: This type of call is open to partnerships composed of "pre-identified" categories of partners or partners "invited" to apply by the Programme Authorities on the basis of criteria approved by the Monitoring Committee of the Programme. Access to the Application Form for restricted calls is usually provided by the Joint Secretariat (JS) but this may vary according to the procedure defined in the Terms of Reference of the call.

At the launch of each call (open or restricted), a series of tools, developed by the JS in cooperation with the National Contact Points[1] is made available to applicants to support and inform them on the contents of the call and the steps to be taken to submit their proposal. All the elements related to the opening of a new call will appear on the dedicated web page of the Programme[2].

ii. Background documents

Before starting the drafting of a proposal, it is essential to refer to the following documents:

- The Terms of Reference of each call and its technical data sheet including the eligibility and assessment criteria
- The Word Application Form template (courtesy version, provided for information with specific indications to facilitate the writing of the proposal)
- The Jems guide for entering the proposal on the Programme's IT tool
- The Programme Manual
- The Interreg Euro-MED 21-27 Cooperation Programme and its annexes
- The Interreg Euro-MED 21-27 Communication Strategy
- The Interreg Euro-MED 21-27 Results Amplification Strategy

[1] See the list of NCPs on our website, "contact us" section => NCP
[2] https://interreg-euro-med.eu/en/get-involved/, "open calls" section

- The Presentation document of the Interreg Euro-MED ACADEMY[3]

For further information, the network of National Contact Points (NCPs) representatives and the Joint Secretariat team (programme@interreg-euro-med.eu) are available to applicants.

iii. Events to support project applicants

Different types of events are organised by the Programme for each call for proposals in order to inform and support potential applicants. The content and timing of the following events may vary according to each call for proposals.

Information session

An information session is systematically organised by the Programme on the occasion of each call opening **to inform potential applicants about the Programme, the content of the Terms of Reference (topics addressed, objectives and specific expectations of the Programme towards the call).** Depending on the type of call concerned, this informative session can be attended with free registration or upon invitation (from the Programme or the national authorities).

During this day, participants *receive information on the key steps and tools of the call, and the elements relating to the application and assessment phases*. Time is scheduled for discussion with the JS team.

The participation to this session is **strongly recommended** for any (lead) partner potentially interested in the Call, in order to limit as much as possible the submission of proposals that would not be adapted to the Programme's expectations.

Technical meetings

Technical meetings are regularly organised by the JS throughout the application phase of a call and aim **to support applicants in the construction of their proposal**. These meetings are generally organised online and consist of a half-day session *focusing on one of the key points in the preparation of a proposal* (partnership, work plan, eligibility of expenditure, etc.). Public question and answer sessions are also organised as part of these meetings.

The frequency and content of technical meetings may vary depending on the complexity of the Terms of Reference and the type of call.

[3] Interreg Euro-MED Academy

Thematic seminars

Thematic seminars may be organised to *facilitate the understanding of the Programme's architecture, to encourage the sharing of experience and the transfer of results*. Speakers from outside the JS may also contribute to this type of seminars.

Depending on the type of call concerned, the thematic seminars may be accessible with open registration or upon invitation (from the Programme or the national authorities).

Bilateral meetings with the JS

Where appropriate and if foreseen by the Programme Authorities for the relevant Call for Proposals, **bilateral meetings** are organised on specific time slots. A **project idea**[4] is submitted to the JS by the applicants when applying for this type of meeting.

Bilateral meetings bring together a limited number of potential partners of the same proposal and members of the JS for approximately 30 minutes and enable applicants to better understand the Programme's expectations with regards to a given theme.

No pre-assessment of the proposal or technical recommendations on the precise drafting of the proposal can be made during these meetings.

The JS undertakes to receive the first applicants within the limit established by the Programme at the time of the publication of the call and of **one meeting** per project idea.

Before the meeting, and to maximise the time dedicated to the exchanges, it is expected that the applicants have read the Terms of Reference and the Call's key documents in full.

iv. Tools available to project applicants

Online Forums[5]

On the dedicated platform[6] made available to applicants by the Programme, applicants can post their project ideas, discuss them, and compose or consolidate their partnership.

Frequently Asked Questions

As soon as the call is launched, the JS and the National Contact Points are available to provide answers to the various requests submitted to the Programme. To limit the burden of individual answers, **questions relating to an ongoing call must be**

[4] Template for project idea provided by the Programme
[5] The forums are not organisedby the Programme
[6] [Get involved - Programme Interreg Euro-MED (interreg-euro-med.eu)](interreg-euro-med.eu), “Find project partners” section

addressed only via an online form[7] made available to applicants on the Programme webpage. Questions are processed by the JS and published on the FAQ where the Programme's answer will appear as soon as possible. Applicants are invited to consult the FAQ regularly for updates.

Technical requests for access to the IT system will be addressed to the JS in the same way.

B. Building my consortium

i. Partnership architecture

a) Project coordination and Lead Partner role

Each partnership appoints one organisation to act as Lead Partner, which takes full responsibility for the implementation of the entire project (Article 26 of Reg 1059/2021). In addition to this responsibility, the LP also assumes a role of project partner.[8]

Who can be Lead Partner?
The Lead Partner is a public body or a body governed by public law (according to the definition of the Directive 2014/24/EU). The Lead Partner must be legally based in one of the eligible regions of the Interreg Euro-MED Programme cooperation area[9].

Private institutions or international organisations acting under national or international law cannot act as Lead Partners.

Role and obligations of the Lead Partner
The Lead Partner:

- prepares the proposal in collaboration with all the applicants involved in the project;
- submits the Application Form and is responsible for related contents and commitments;
- signs a Subsidy Contract with the Programme Managing Authority;
- signs a Partnership Agreement with all partners involved in the project;

[7] Documents & tools - Programme Interreg Euro-MED (interreg-euro-med.eu), below the FAQ section.
[8] Project partner-Definition: any institution financially contributing to the project and contributing to its implementation, as identified in the approved Application Form. It corresponds to the term “beneficiary” used in the European Structural and Investment Funds Regulations
[9] Interreg Euro-MED Programme cooperation area is composed of 69 regions of 14 countries: 10 EU Member States and 4 EU candidate or potential candidate countries. See the cooperation area map here.

- ensures **the coordination of the partnership** and of the project in line with **sound financial**[10] **and project management principle**;
- **maintains** a functional and permanent **communication flow** among the partnership and ensures an **efficient exchange of information** that enables the successful delivery of the project outputs;
- is responsible for **communication with the Programme bodies**, namely the Managing Authority and the Joint Secretariat;
- **gathers from the partnership** all partners inputs related to financial and activity reporting and **consolidates** the different elements to prepare the project reports.
- ensures the timely submission of the necessary information for the progress and financial reporting to the JS.

Expected requirement about the Lead Partner

The Lead Partner should have the following profile:

- Experienced in the **management of EU funded projects;**
- Prepared to take on a **leading and driving role** within the partnership;
- Having **sufficient capacity** (**institutional, financial and human resources**) to prepare the project application and to manage the implementation of the project;
- Having the relevant **thematic knowledge** and **expertise** for the project;
- Being **committed** throughout the project proposal application process as well as during the implementation phase;
- **Must speak and read fluently English and/or French (at least the LP coordinator)** depending on the project's working language chosen in order to ensure efficient communication within the partnership and with the Programme authorities.

Expected staff profiles and related functions

To manage the project efficiently, the Lead Partner must develop an **efficient and reliable management and coordination system**. The coordination concerns the implementation of the various components of the project, including its **administrative and financial management**.

The Lead Partner must appoint a **project coordinator** and a **financial manager**.

The **project coordinator**:

[10] The principles of sound financial management are defined in Financial Regulation 2018/1046 art 2 and detailed in the present Manual, chapter "Drawing up my budget".

- is experienced so as to ensure the thematic coordination of the project activities and work packages;
- is able to act as a driving force of the project and to mobilise the partnership in order to achieve the objectives set in the application;
- is experienced in management of EU funded projects;
- speaks and reads fluently English and/or French depending on the project's working language chosen to ensure communication within the partnership and with the Programme authorities.

The financial manager:

- is experienced so as to ensure the management of the project budget, including budget modifications, financial reporting and submission of payment claims to the Programme. He must ensure that project partners have received the Interreg funds from the Accounting Authority and verification of the correct transfer of Interreg funds to the partners;
- is responsible to closely and regularly monitor the financial performance of the project partners;
- works in close contact with the project coordinator and the partners in order to enable the efficient overall financial management of the project;
- ensures that the project does not contribute to the Programme de-commitment risk;
- is familiar with accounting/bookkeeping, as well as with handling international transactions;
- is aware of the EU and national legislation regarding financial management and controls, public procurement and, where appropriate, State aid.

The legal representative:

- has the power to act and sign, on behalf of the Lead Partner, and is responsible for the signature of contractual documents with the Managing Authority.

b) Project partners

Who can be partner?

Partners can be:

- Public bodies or bodies governed by public law (according to the definition of the Directive 2014/24/EU).
- Private institutions

- **International organisations** acting under national or international law

Project partners other than the LP are **legally based** in one of the eligible regions of the Interreg Euro-MED Programme **cooperation area or** in a region outside the cooperation area belonging to an **EU Member State**.

/!\ Beware

- **Private companies whose main activity, including their role in the project, is solely limited to supporting actions** (project coordination, management, communication, etc) cannot be involved as project partners. Indeed, their participation could fall within the **scope of public procurement**, and usually do not contribute to the overall project activities.

  Compliance with this requirement will be checked during the quality assessment of each project proposal and through the **partnership relevance and transnationality** analysis.

  If such a situation happens, the result of the JS analysis held during the assessment phase would be presented to the Programme Committee and could lead to the exclusion of the concerned partner.

- Only a legal person with legal capacity can participate in a project as beneficiary of the Interreg funds, **physical persons cannot take part in a project as project partner.**

Role and obligations of the project partners

- **sign** a **Partnership Agreement** with the LP and all partners involved in the project;
- **comply with all the rules and obligations** stated in the Programme contractual documents;
- have the financial and administrative capacities to implement project activities and anticipate the payment of project costs;
- are responsible for **communication with their national representative within the Programme**, namely the National Authority (NA), the National Contact Points (NCP), the Authority in charge of the designation of the national controller;
- **contribute to project activities** under the direction of the LP and in cooperation with the rest of the project partnership in line with **sound financial**[11] **and project management principles**;

[11] The principles of sound financial management are defined in Financial Regulation 2018/1046 art 2 and detailed in the present Manual, chapter "Drawing up my budget"

- **contribute to** a **functional and permanent communication flow** within the partnership to ensure an **efficient exchange of information** that enables the successful delivery of the project results;
- ensure the **timely submission** via Jems (deadlines agreed with LP) of the elements related to the reporting on finances and activities to the Lead Partner.

Expected staff profiles of the project partners

Partners should have the following profiles within their team:

- **the legal representative** who has the power to act and sign is responsible for the signature of the project partnership agreement with LP and the other project partners,
- Dedicated team to the project that **must speak** and read **fluently English and/or French depending on the project working language chosen** (in order to comply with the assigned project obligations and to ensure efficient communication within the partnership and possibly with the Programme authorities) and **able to manage all project-related tasks (about content but also administrative and financial parts).**

Additional staff profiles are required in the project and can be either part of the Lead Partner or partner team

NB: a same person can also cover different profiles in the same project

The **communication officer**:

- is responsible for the whole project communication activities;
- must have experience in communication;
- must work in close collaboration with the thematic community of projects they belong to and with the Programme;
- attends external events, when justified and useful for the project, other than the events and seminars of the thematic community of projects they belong to.

The coordinator for **result amplification:**

- is assigned to actively participate in the activities of the thematic community of projects they belong to;
- has a good grasp of the Results Amplification Strategy of the Programme;
- ensures that project outputs are designed in a transferable way;

- mobilises within the partnership the relevant partners to perform joint activities related to the implementation of the Results Amplification Strategy (at project and Programme level).

The coordinator for **carbon footprint**:

- defines the strategy for the reduction and potential offsetting of the project's carbon footprint.
- ensures that all partners implement the methodology;
- ensures that project activities are designed to minimise emissions;
- supports the full project partnership in using the carbon footprint monitoring tool ;
- validates the eventual offsetting activities of the project.

The **Data Controller and Data Protection Officer for the project:**[12]

c) Associated Partners

Public, private or international institutions willing to be involved in the project **without financially contributing** to it are to be considered as "**associated partners**" (AP).

Associated partners can be partners located in any EU Member state or in a third country.

Associated partners do not receive any Interreg funding from the Programme and must participate with their **own funds.** In justified cases, expenditures related to associated partners participation to project activities, can be borne by a financing partner (generally the one they are linked to, in the approved Application Form) and in compliance with the applicable eligibility rules (reimbursement of expenditure incurred by these bodies should in principle be limited to travel and accommodation costs related to their participation in the project activities).

Associated partners are not considered for the fulfilment of the minimum partnership requirements.

Projects shall develop a strategy for the selection and involvement of associated partners, considering their nature and their roles in the project. Three main roles for associated partners are identified:

- Advisory (provide expertise in the theme tackled),

[12] Please refer to section "Legal Mechanisms" chapter "Data protection".

- End-users/takers/final beneficiaries (use the outputs delivered)
- Observers/supporters (for endorsement)

Role and obligations of the associated partners

- Must appear in the approved Application Form and be attached to a financed project partner;
- Must sign an associated partner declaration (template provided by the Programme);
- Should agree in advance, with the project partner it is attached to, on any costs that may incur during project implementation;
- The involvement of associated institutions must not be in conflict with public procurement rules. Sub-contracting between associated partners and any partner of the project they are participating to is prohibited.

ii. Eligibility and legal status

The project partners located in the Interreg Euro-MED Programme cooperation area (69 regions)[13] or in the European Union can be co-financed by the Interreg Funds.

Eligible partners shall be the following:

1. National, regional and local public bodies (including EGTCs as defined in Article 2(16) of Regulation (EU) No 1302/2013)
2. Public equivalent bodies[14] :
    - are established for the specific purpose of meeting needs in the general interest, not having an industrial or commercial character;
    - have a legal personality;
    - are financed, for the most part, by the State, regional or local authorities, or by other bodies governed by public law; or are subject to management supervision by those authorities or bodies; or have an administrative, managerial or supervisory board, more than half of whose members are appointed by the State, regional or local authorities, or by other bodies governed by public law.
3. Private institutions, including private companies:
    - have a legal personality;
    - are not financed, for the most part, by the state, regional or local authorities, or other bodies governed by public law; or are not subject to management supervision by those bodies; or not having an administrative, managerial or

[13] See the cooperation area map here
[14] i.e. bodies governed by public law as defined in Article 2(1) of Directive 2014/24/EU on public procurement

supervisory board, more than half of whose members are appointed by the State, regional or local authorities, or by other bodies governed by public law.

In Interreg Euro-MED projects, private structures cannot take on the role of a Lead Partner.

NB: Private institutions located in the IPA countries belonging to the cooperation area must be non-profit private entities founded according to the applicable legal framework/law in the respective IPA country and can be eligible under the following conditions[15] :

1) they do not have a commercial or industrial character or activities;
2) they are non-profit and have a legal personality;

4. International organisations acting under the national law of any EU Member State or under international law (see restriction below).

International organisations, acting under national law of an EU Member State or under international law cannot act as LP; they can participate in projects only upon their explicit acceptance of all requirements deriving from the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and the regulations applicable in the framework of the Interreg Euro-MED Programme.

As for any other activities supported by the Programme, activities implemented by international organisations are subject to management verifications and audits. During the assessment phase, a formal confirmation of acceptance of the partner's participation will be requested to the competent National Authorities where the participating office/branch of the organisation is located. Failure to do so will result in the exclusion of the partner from the project.

The explicit acceptance of all above requirements shall be mentioned in an ad-hoc document which must be signed by the international organisation and the hosting country and forwarded to the Joint Secretariat afterwards.

Focus: Partner (public or private) legally based in a region out of the Interreg Euro-MED Programme cooperation area[16].

Partner legally based in a Region outside the Interreg Euro-MED Programme cooperation area but belonging to one of the 14 Interreg Euro-MED Programme States: (e.g: partner located in Lille, Paris, Oporto, Santander, etc):

1. They can be project partner (co-financed by the Interreg funds) and participate in a project under all missions and irrespective of the legal status of the partner but they cannot act as LP.

[15] Mentioned conditions shall be checked with respective National Authority

[16] Interreg Euro-MED Programme area is composed of 69 regions of 14 countries: 10 EU Member States and 4 EU candidate or potential candidate countries. See the cooperation area map here.

2. Concerning management tasks (certification of expenditures, audits, etc), no difference is made between an "Interreg Euro-MED region" and "the rest of the National territory of a State participating in the Programme". Control, management verifications and audit responsibilities are already covered by the Agreement signed between the Programme and the State.
3. Their participation in the project brings **added value** and expertise to its implementation and **benefits the Programme cooperation area**.

Partner legally based in a **Region outside the Programme cooperation area and belonging to an EU Member State other than the 14 Interreg Euro-MED Programme States** (e.g: partner located in Brussels, Berlin, etc.):

1. They can be project partner (co-financed by the Interreg funds) and participate in a project under all missions and irrespective of the legal status of the partner but cannot act as LP.
2. **During the assessment phase**, a **confirmation of the eligibility** and of the legal status of the partners located within the EU but outside the Programme cooperation area will be **requested to the competent national authorities.** The responsible authority of the respective EU Member State shall provide a written communication to the MA/JS[17] confirming aforementioned information and, in accordance with **Art 22** of the ETC Regulation, its **formal acceptance to reimburse any amounts unduly paid for each one of those partners, in accordance with Article 52(2) of ETC regulation.** Failure to do so may result in the exclusion of the partner from the project, in all events this situation will be **tackled in a case-by-case basis by the MA/JS**.
3. Their participation in the project brings **added value** and expertise to its implementation and **benefits the Programme cooperation area**.

NB: as of the date of this document ONLY Austria sent a communication to the MA/JS prohibiting the participation Austrian entities. Those partners are invited to participate to Interreg Euro-MED projects as associated partners.

For each call, and in case of potential restrictions related to the partnership, the Terms of Reference (ToR) provide a list of types of partners admitted for the call as well as information on suitable expected partnership.

[17] Compulsory template provided by the Programme and to be completed and signed by the concerned Authority during the assessment phase of project proposals and at the latest before signature of the sublsidy contract

List of types of partners

Main categories	Examples[18]
Local public authority	municipality, etc.
Regional public authority	regional council, etc.
National public authority	ministry, etc.
Sectoral agency	local or regional development agency, environmental agency, energy agency, employment agency, etc.
Infrastructure and (public) service provider	public transport, utility company (water supply, electricity supply, sewage, gas, waste collection, etc.), airport, port, railway, etc.
Interest groups including NGOs	international organisation, trade union, foundation, charity, voluntary association, club, etc.
Higher education and research	university faculty, college, research institution, RTD facility, research cluster, etc.
Education / training centre and school	primary, secondary, pre-school, vocational training, etc.
Enterprise, except SME	
SME[19]	micro, small, medium enterprise
Business support organisation	chamber of commerce, chamber of trade and crafts, business incubator or innovation centre, business clusters, etc.
EGTC[20]	
International organisation, EEIG[21]	under national law, under international law

[18] More examples can be found in the relevant Terms of Reference.
[19] According to Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC of 6 May 2003 concerning the definition of micro, small and medium size enterprise.
[20] European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation.
[21] European Economic Interest Grouping.

In brief

	LOCATED IN EU MEMBER STATE	LOCATED IN A EURO-MED IPA STATE	CAN BE LEAD PARTNER
National, regional and local public bodies	✓	✓	✓ *Only located in the Programme cooperation area*
Public equivalent bodies (bodies governed by public law as defined in Article 2(1) of Directive 2014/24/EU)	✓	✓	✓ *Only located in the Programme cooperation area*
Private institutions	✓	✓ *Only non-profit private institutions*	✗
International organisations	✓	✓	✗

iii. Partnership relevance

Transnational aspects

Projects co-funded by the Programme must have a transnational dimension.

As a minimum requirement, the partnership of any Interreg Euro-MED project must involve:

- at least **4 financing partners**;
- from at least **4 different countries** from the Programme cooperation area[22] and
- among which, at least **two partners are based in an EU region of the Programme cooperation area.**

The size of any project partnership should reflect the scope of the project and remain manageable. **The Terms of Reference of each call for proposals may set different limit for the size for the partnership and specific additional requirements regarding the partnership**.

Relevance

The quality of a project depends largely on an adequate composition of its partnership. The setting up of a relevant partnership is essential. A good partnership should pool all skills and competences of relevant institutions necessary to address the issues tackled by the project in order to achieve the set objectives, namely those set for the chosen category of project.

When building a partnership, the following general aspects should be considered:

- Focus your partnership on **relevant** institutions to reach the project results (e.g. thematically, geographically, level of governance);
- Involve as project partners only institutions whose **interests are closely linked** to the project objectives and planned interventions. They should also have the capacity to create strong links with target groups addressed by the project;
- Apply a **result-oriented approach** by involving institutions who are supposed to develop and subsequently implement the project outputs and results;
- Ensure that involved institutions have the **required competences** (e.g. involve environmental authorities if you work on the development of environmental policies);
- Ensure a **balanced partnership** in terms of number of institutions involved per country. Distribution of project activities and responsibilities as well as related budgets should also be balanced with regards to the project objective;

[22] Interreg Euro-MED Programme cooperation area is composed of 69 regions of 14 countries: 10 EU Member States and 4 EU candidate or potential candidate countries. See the cooperation area map here

- Ensure that **decision makers** (e.g. ministries, regional governments) are either directly **included** in the partnership or can be effectively reached by the project partners, even indirectly;
- Where necessary, involve **expert organisations** (e.g. universities, research institutions) as a source of knowledge;
- Keep the partnership **size manageable** (for further information regarding specific partnership requirements per type of project, please refer to the Terms of Reference of each call for proposals);
- Ensure the **commitment** of all partners from the very beginning. Once the project is approved, partner changes should remain exceptional cases, creating a strain on the entire project;

EU institutions legally based outside the Programme cooperation area should be involved in justified cases. Their involvement should bring a clear benefit to the Programme cooperation area adding a clear, tangible value to the partnership.

C. Designing the project activities

This section aims to present the context in which each applicant must position themselves when choosing to participate in the Interreg Euro-MED Programme.

In its structure and objectives, each project must indeed consider, beyond its own activities, the ambitions of the Commission for the 21-27 Cohesion Policy, the choices made by the Programme Participating States for the implementation of these ambitions within the Programme cooperation area and finally, the architecture of the Interreg Euro-MED Programme.

All those components must be reflected through project activities and partnership. Interconnection between these different aspects is hereafter detailed.

i. Intervention logic

The Programme aims to "*Contribute to the transition towards a climate-neutral and resilient society*".

To reach this ambition, 4 missions have been identified:

- Strengthening an innovative sustainable economy
- Protecting, restoring and valorising the natural environment and heritage
- Promoting green living areas
- Enhancing sustainable tourism

Each project shall meet one of the missions, pursuing one of the specific objectives (SO) selected by the Programme[23].

Each mission addresses several SOs according to the targeted themes, and therefore groups together projects targeting different SOs.

These groupings aim to facilitate the exchange and sharing of solutions within the project community sharing the same mission. Moreover, the missions push the results of single projects beyond their initial ambitions to address issues of greater importance.

[23]SO 1.1 Developing and enhancing **research and innovation** capacities and the uptake of advanced technologies
SO 2.7 Promoting the transition to a **circular** and resource efficient **economy**
SO 2.4 Promoting **climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention**, resilience, taking into account eco system-based approaches
SO 2.6 Enhancing protection and conservation of **nature, biodiversity** and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution
SO 6.6 other actions to support better cooperation **governance**

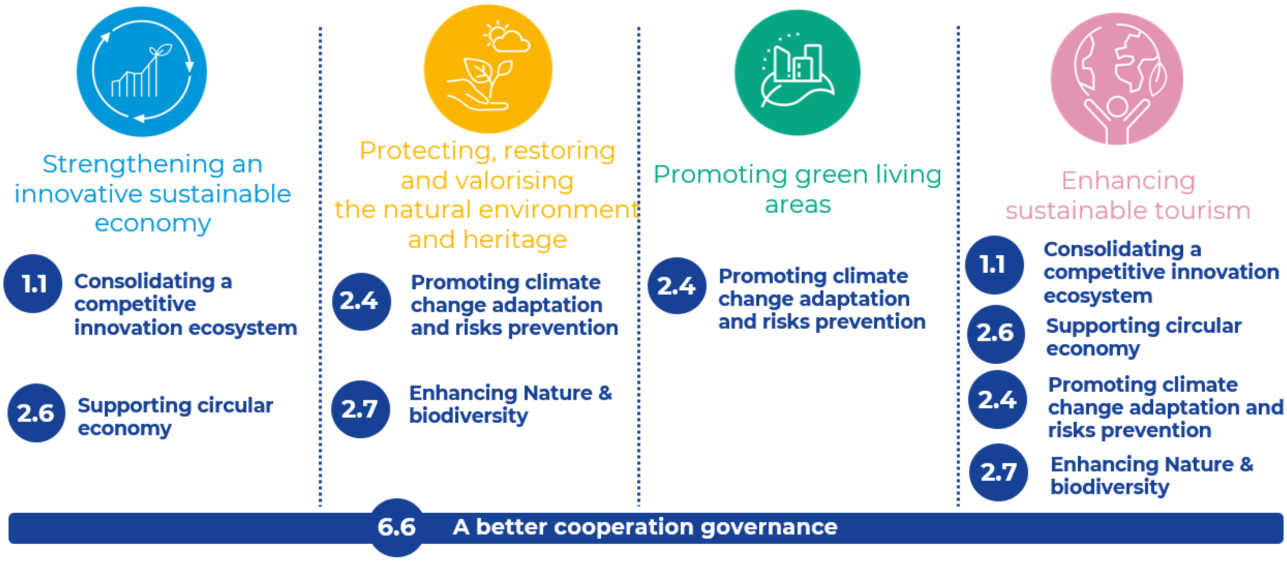

FIGURE 1: CORRESPONDENCE PROGRAMME MISSIONS / PROGRAMME SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

Link between Programme and project intervention logic

With the mission objective in mind, when elaborating the project content, applicants shall strictly adopt a **result-oriented approach**.

Applicants must clearly define the **results** and the **changes** the project is striving for, **linking them with the territorial challenges and common needs identified**.

The coherence of the project intervention logic with the targeted specific objective of the Programme is a **pre-condition for a project to be approved and funded.**

Project intervention logic shall facilitate the assessment of its contribution to the "achievement of the specific objectives and results of the relevant priority", in line with Article 22(4) (a) (EU) 2021/1059 of the Common Provisions Regulation (CPR).

To do so, the project needs to establish its intervention logic mirroring the Programme intervention logic.

A project should demonstrate through its intervention logic that it:

- Is in line with one of the **Programme's mission**;
- Targets one single Programme priority **specific objective**;
- Contributes to the respective **Programme results** and **results indicators**;
- Links in a logic sequence the project activities and **outputs** to the specific objective target.
- Will achieve an envisaged change.

The **specific objectives** of the project ought to be as precise as possible and relevant for the Programme and the involved regions. They must be ambitious but also realistic with regard to the duration of the project (way of implementation to be demonstrated).

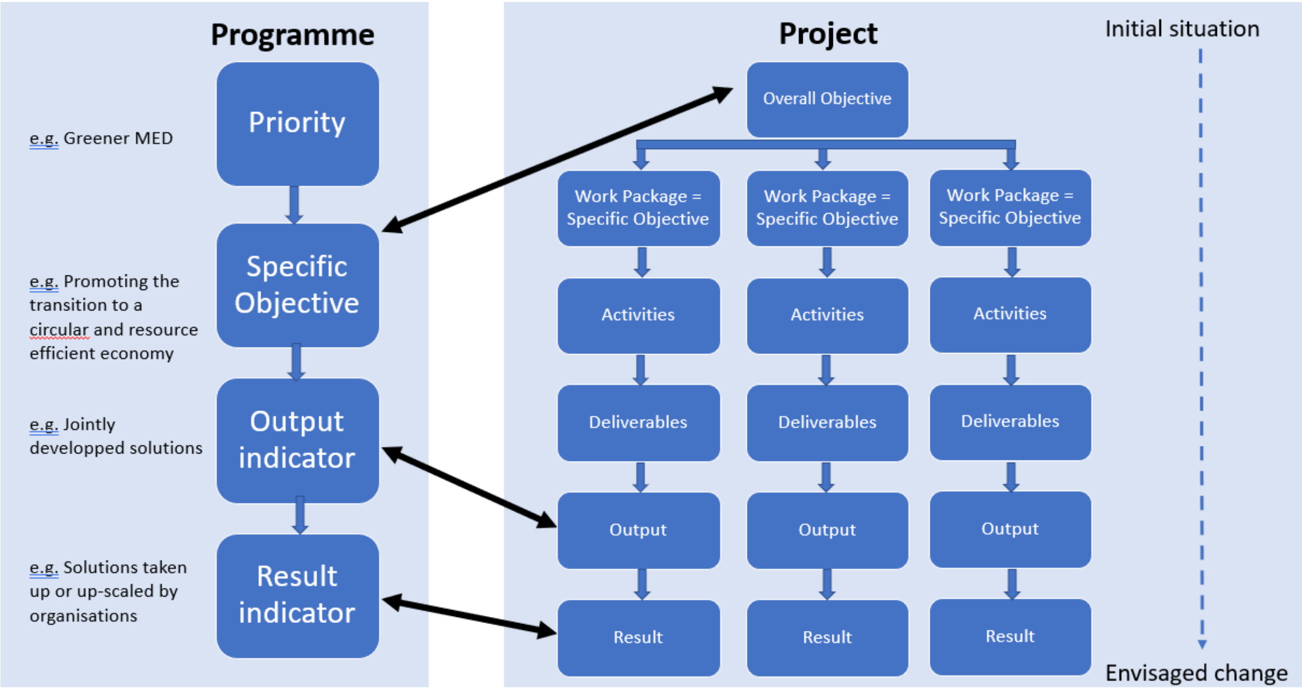

FIGURE 2: MIRRORING INTERREG EURO-MED PROGRAMME-PROJECT INTERVENTION LOGIC

In the above scheme, the keywords should be understood as follows:

- Programme priority -> thematic area which reflects the most relevant needs and potentials of the Programme cooperation area
- Programme specific objective -> what the Programme wants to change for its inhabitants in this thematic area
- Programme outputs -> the direct products of the activities, which will contribute to the change
- Programme results -> the measurements which will capture the effect of the actions financed

The theory of change

The project intervention logic has to show the change brought by the project and the contribution to the Programme cooperation area.

This attempted change must be result-oriented. It should thus reflect the current situation (e.g. a problem), its underlying causes and the change which the project seeks to achieve through its activities.

Project development should start from describing the initial situation, i.e. the problem and/or issue to be addressed. Project partners should then think about what they want to achieve and define expected outputs and results. These results have to reflect the desired change and need to be translated into project specific objectives.

Link between Programme Results Amplification Strategy and project intervention logic

Additionally, the project intervention logic shall be closely linked to the **Results Amplification Strategy** of the Programme. This link allows the improvement of its capitalisation and governance approaches, thus ensuring a stronger impact of project results.

The Strategy is based on three general objectives (and a related action plan):

- Facilitate the exploitation, sharing and reuse of knowledge, experiences and project results by other Interreg Euro-MED projects or other programmes and foster the production of relevant work;
- Encourage the transfer of practices and results to other actors and territories and their integration in the development of local, regional, national and European (mainstream) policies and strategies;
- Increase coordination between stakeholders acting on the Mediterranean (multi-level, transnational) on the basis of this acquired knowledge, experience and results.

In this context, a difference of involvement is made between the two types of Interreg Euro-MED projects:

- The Governance Projects (Thematic Community and Institutional Dialogue Projects) will implement and support the main actions described in the Strategy;
- The Thematic Projects (Study, Test, Transfer projects and Strategic Territorial projects) will facilitate and benefit from this support to maximise the weight of their results.

After setting the intervention logic (starting from the initial situation and ending with the envisaged change), the project must draft a work plan, including activities and outputs necessary to reach its objectives and results.

ii. Composition of a project

A project is structured into **Work Packages** (WP) and **activities.** It produces deliverables and **outputs** to achieve concrete **results** that reach the **objectives** set.

This section aims to:

- clarify the concepts,
- explain the Work Packages structure,
- define the outputs and their related indicators
- specify the mandatory activities that projects must implement

a) Concepts

Work Package" (WP)	Group of related project activities required to produce project main outputs.
Activity	A process, done for a particular purpose. Each Work package is divided into activities. Each activity can lead to none, one or several deliverable(s).
Output	"Product" of an activity or a set of activities carried out. Project outputs are the outcomes obtained following the implementation of project activities.
Deliverable	Physical evidence of what has been produced through an activity or as the physical evidence/support of the output that was produced through an activity.

b) Types of work packages

For 2021-2027 programming period, the Work Packages are not predefined by the Programme. Therefore, projects are free to structure their work packages according to their specific objectives.

Project management and communication activities are directly integrated in the work packages.

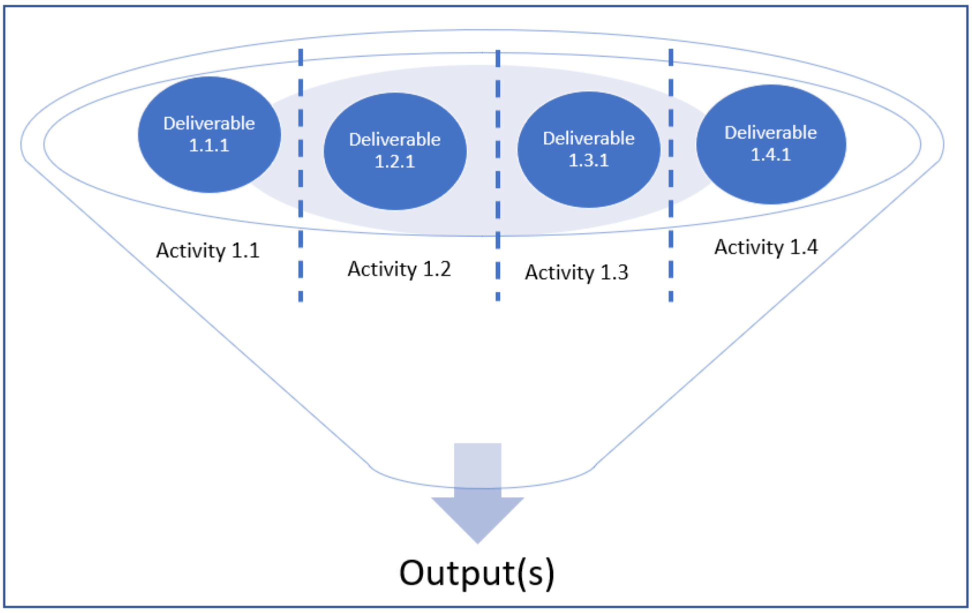

FIGURE 3: COMPOSITION OF A WORK PACKAGE

To keep consistency with the delivery of limited outputs, **projects must limit the number of activities per WP.**

Depending on the project typology, each activity can have none, one or more deliverables contributing to the development of (a) project output(s).

For an indicative (non-exhaustive) list of possible activities and deliverables, please refer to Annex A of this Manual.

c) Types of Outputs and related Indicators

Outputs are defined by each project, bearing in mind that every project works in a transfer and mainstream perspective. Thus, any output developed must be in a "mainstreaming format": **reusable and ready to be transferred**.

NB: A **project main output** is one that **can be captured by a Programme output indicator** and that directly contributes to the achievement of the project result. **Not** every work package must have one or several main outputs (in fact, a project may have only one main output

Following the Programme and project intervention logics, project outputs and activities should also contribute to the Programme output and result indicators:

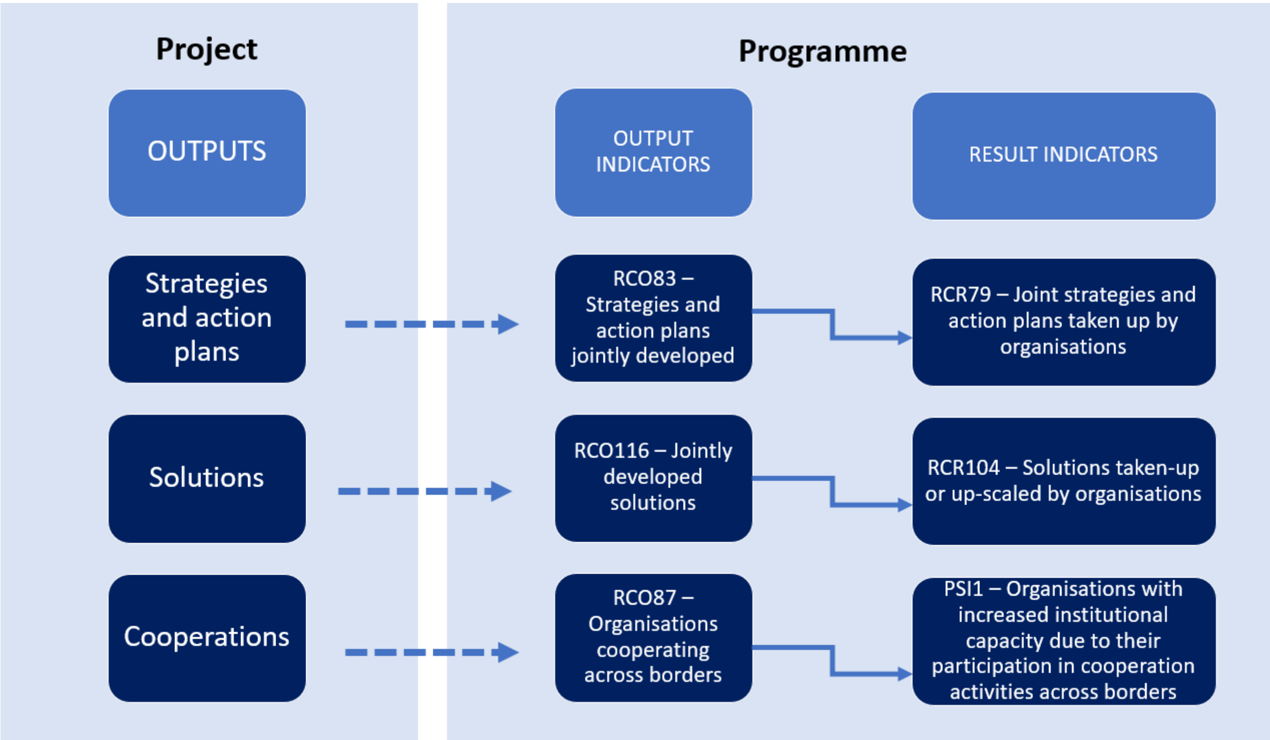

FIGURE 4: CONTRIBUTION OF OUTPUTS TO PROGRAMME INDICATORS

For a better understanding, you will find below the definition of the Programme output indicators, as well as some examples:

Programme output indicators	Examples
Strategies and action plans jointly developed: A strategy describes a specific course of action designed to achieve a long-term goal, aiming at establishing a targeted way to achieve a goal-oriented process in a specific domain. An action plan translates an existing jointly developed strategy into actions, outlining in detail actions needed to reach the defined long-term goal.	Climate Change Adaptation Strategies/action plans, Clean Energy Transition Agendas, Strategies/action plans to implement a sustainable tourism model…
Jointly developed solutions: Methodologies, tools, technologies, services, processes, partnership/cooperation agreements. Acceptable solutions should be jointly developed, tested in real life conditions, easily transferable to further territories of the Programme (include a list of actions needed for it to be taken up or upscaled by further organisations).	Observatories, Early warning systems, Climate Change Adaptation modelling, Low carbon mobility services, Tools to leverage funds for energy transition, Methodology for value chain development…
Organisations cooperating across borders: Project partners or associated partners participating in approved projects (whether receiving funds or not).	Project partners or associated partners such as Regional/local/national authorities, Environmental agencies, tourism agencies, Energy agencies, Universities/research centres, SMEs & Economic operators…

For the complete details of each Programme Indicator per Specific Objective (Outputs and Results), please refer to Annex B.

d) Concepts of Legacy and Capitalisation

The capitalisation of all Interreg and Neighbourhood Mediterranean Programmes legacy is a priority as well as a challenge knowing that a lot of work has already been produced in this area.

When building a project, and implementing activities, partners should therefore consider the results and outputs already achieved so far by the Programme, as well as in other Mediterranean Programmes or European schemes. The aim is to benefit from past experiences and to give continuity to the cooperation efforts in the targeted territories, which address common issues.

The results and outputs from the Interreg MED Programme to consider can be found in the Library of the 2014-2020 Programme website[24].

Applicants might also consider the KEEP database[25], and more broadly the EU-funded regional policy projects[26] .

Specific references to relevant projects and Programmes are available in the Terms of Reference of each Call for proposals.

e) Communication, management and investments activities

In parallel with the freedom in the choice of WPs, linked to the specific objectives of the project, some activities are still to be considered by applicants when elaborating their project[27]:

- Activities related to Communication

Communication is of strategic importance for Interreg projects. Communication activities are to support the achievement of the project objectives and therefore help transfer and capitalise the project results.

Project partners are therefore responsible for delivering information, transferring knowledge and expertise to a defined target audience (through digital or written communication, press conference, trainings, etc.) but also participate in the Programme communication activities (such as feeding the web platform or participate in ad hoc meetings)[28].

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[24] https://interreg-med.eu/projects-results/project-deliverables/
[25] https://keep.eu/about-keep-eu/
[26] https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/projects/
[27] The way in which these mandatory activities should be integrated into the project budget is set out in section D iii f) below: Drawing up my budget - From activities to budget
[28] For more details, please refer to the Annex A on activities and deliverables

Given the importance of communication, project partners are required to describe their communication approach at application stage (Section C.7 of the Application Form). In this part, they must demonstrate how the communication objectives and activities as described in the work packages will help achieve the project results. They should also explain which channels they will use and why.

Please note that there is no specific communication work package in the Application Form. Communication activities and objectives must therefore be directly integrated in the work packages precisely to allow the communication strategy to be fully embedded in the project overall strategy.

- Management and coordination of project tasks

Administrative and financial management obligations[29] are not listed as mandatory activities as such, since they do not need to be listed in the Work plan of the Application Form, but they must nevertheless be considered in the implementation time and budget of each partner.

In addition, it is highly recommended to put in place certain procedures allowing to coordinate partners activities.

Hereafter some indicative examples of guidelines to be agreed and followed on partner level:

- Procedures for administrative and financial management
- Procedures for internal communication
- Procedures for monitoring project activities
- Internal training material

- Activities related to investments:

For the correct implementation of the project activities, the partners may require the use of various equipment, materials and services. Within the meaning of the Programme, only the elements (technical or IT equipment, materials for the deployment of the pilot action, and related services etc.) necessary within the framework of the pilot project activities, and dedicated to the realisation of such activity, are considered as "investments"[30].

“Investments" as referred to in the Programme must appear under the section "investment" of the Application Form[31] and be associated with the relevant expenditure in the budget part (cost categories external expertise and services, equipment and/or infrastructure and works).

[29] For more details, please refer to the Reporting section of the Programme Manual

[30] “Fixed investments in equipment” and “investments in infrastructure “that refer to outputs of the project, which remain in use by the partners and/or target groups after completion of the project.

[31] Each lead partner must define in the application form the investment implemented in the framework of the pilot activities of the projects. **Each investment is expressly validated by the JS and this validation is formalised by the inclusion of this investment in the consolidated application form.**

NB: Equipment used by a partner to support the realisation and implementation of other project activities (other than pilot activities) is not considered as "fixed investment in equipment" and does not fall within the scope of investments as referred to in the Programme.

- For each investment, the partners must specify in the Application form whether it is a productive investment[32] or not and present the location of the investment. The impacts deriving from an investment must be transnational by nature, contribute to the development of the Programme area and present a clear added value to achieve the project objectives.

- In the framework of the Interreg Euro-MED ETC Programme, the expected investments are related to pilot activities with a limited budget and scale.

- When planning investment activities, partners should insist on the feasibility of the activities within the timeframe of the project and consider possible delays related to permitting, feasibility studies, environmental impact assessment, sustainability requirements, assessment of expected impacts of climate change[33], possible permit applications, ownership issues and horizontal principles…

- Each partner in charge of the implementation of an investment must confirm[34] that it has the necessary financial resources and mechanisms to cover operation and maintenance costs[35] of operations comprising investments in infrastructure or productive investments, so as to ensure their financial viability and compliance with the above principles.

- A signed "*statement of capacity and compliance with the principles for investment to be applied in the context of the projects' pilot activities*" must be submitted to the JS by each partner in charge of the implementation of an investment for it to be accepted as a project activity[36].

- During the pre-contracting phase, an assessment of the climate and environmental objectives (DNSH.[37]) is carried out by the lead partner and the partner(s) in charge of investment activities, in cooperation with the JS.

/!\ Beware

Depending on the nature of the activities implemented and the investments made, the latter can sometimes be qualified as productive investments[38]. Within

[32] Productive investment: investment in fixed capital or immaterial assets of enterprises, with a view to producing goods and services. In this way the investment contributes to gross capital formation and employment. (ERDF Regulation 2021/1058 – recital 38)

[33] Interreg Regulation 2021/1059 (art 22(4) j); in the framework of the Programme the partners are responsible for this assessment.

[34] Template " Statement of capacity and compliance with the principles for investment " provided by the Programme.

[35] Interreg Regulation EU 2021/1059 (art 22(4) d)

[36] The statement must be provided during the pre-contracting phase and, in the event of a change in project activities, prior to express acceptance of the investment by the JS.

[37] EU Regulation UE 2020/852

[38] Definition :ERDF Regulation 2021/1058 – recital 38.

the framework of the Programme, only SMEs are entitled to make **productive investments** and Programme rules on state aid must be respected

After the closure of the project, certain requirements regarding ownership and durability of investments must be fulfilled, **and specific rules**[39] **apply** for partners declaring costs related to **productive investments** and **investments** in **infrastructure**. Thus, within five years of the final payment to the project partner; it must not

make:

(a) a **cessation or transfer** of a productive activity outside the NUTS level 2 region in which it received support;

(b) a **change in ownership** of an item of infrastructure which gives to a firm or a public body an undue advantage;

(c) a **substantial change affecting the investment's nature, objectives or implementation conditions** which would result in undermining its original objectives.

In the event of non-compliance with this rule, the Programme will request reimbursement of the grant in proportion to the period of non-compliance[40].

Partners are required to inform the JS of any noncompliance with the above rule.

f) Mandatory activities to be integrated in each proposal:

Monitoring the project carbon footprint

The fact that the Interreg Euro-MED Programme focus is on the environment and mitigation of climate change on the Mediterranean, determines the inclusion and implementation of a targeted carbon footprint monitoring activity in all projects work plans. It is fully in line with the Programme strategy ensuring projects environmental sustainability.
As a general rule, projects must first think of **reducing carbon footprint from the design phase** of the project (e.g. choosing activities that emit the least).
In addition, projects must include **one activity to calculate their carbon footprint**. Finally, they are invited to **offset it,** when feasible.

To this end, projects shall use the methodology and tool proposed by the Programme.

[39] EU Regulation 2021/1060 - Article 65 Durability of operations; NB: the 5-year period may vary if the project has been approved under certain exemption rules relating to State aid.
[40] This rule does not apply to a project partner which undergoes cessation of a productive activity due to a non-fraudulent bankruptcy.

The carbon footprint monitoring methodology and tool have been designed and tested within the Interreg MED 2014-2020 Programme[41]. It provides calculation method for all types of activities.

Concerning the offset method, projects can choose to support offset activities for part or all activities based on the methodology proposed by the Programme. , considering that the related offset compensation activities have to be carried out within the timeframe of the project and within the Mediterranean area or EU territories. without prejudice to the eligibility rules related to the location of activities

Further information will be provided to potential applicants during the events organised by the JS for each Call for proposals.

Contribution to the Results Amplification Strategy

All projects **must foresee activities that will contribute to the Results Amplification Strategy** of the Programme.

The activities of the different types of projects are interconnected and reinforce each other.

Thus, all materials produced by the **Thematic Projects** shall be reusable, combinable and valorised thanks to the synergies with other projects.

These synergies are facilitated by the **Thematic Community Projects** which foster the exchanges between the projects gathered under the same mission of the Programme and which allow the integration of their results in the practices and the public policies of the Interreg Euro-MED territories.

And these processes of result integration are able to rely on the **Institutional Dialogue Projects**. They support coordination and dialogue between stakeholders from all concerned sectors at national, transnational and international levels in the Programme cooperation area but also beyond.

The different interactions between Interreg Euro-MED projects therefore allow to amplify the impact of the Programme on the Mediterranean territories.

Namely, **thematic projects** (Study, Test, Transfer projects and Strategic Territorial projects) must foresee activities that:

- Produce, reuse, integrate and consolidate knowledge with the support of Thematic Community Projects and feed into governance projects;
- Bring together multi-level and multi-sectoral stakeholders to study, test and transfer practices and results, and benefit from the networks of Communities, including outside the Programme cooperation area.

[41] Please refer to the two Interreg MED projects : http://wecaremed.interreg-med.eu ; http://zeroco2med.interreg-med.eu

Thematic Community projects must foresee activities that:

- Optimise the conditions for knowledge sharing of Thematic Projects, enhance the value of the results and amplify collectively, including outside the cooperation area;
- Mobilise regional, national and transregional actors to support the transfer and mainstreaming of the results of Thematic Projects, including those outside the cooperation area, supported by Institutional Dialogue Projects.

Institutional Dialogue Projects must foresee activities that:

- Amplify the dialogue with national and supranational authorities to integrate the results of the communities and improve multi-level, multi-sector and transnational coordination, in particular outside the cooperation area.

As a minimum, each project must foresee the participation in two events per year and regular exchange of information between projects and between project and Programme.

The activities listed above are therefore **mandatory in the drafting of any Interreg Euro-MED project**. Then the Terms of Reference of each call may establish specific additional compulsory activities to be considered by applicants when drafting their proposal.

iii. Principles governing activities and productions

The principles to follow for the planning and implementation of activities undertaken by the projects are:

- Coordination
- Transnationality
- Transferability
- Sustainability and durability
- Synergies between projects

a) Coordination

Coordination is fundamental in transnational projects and must be supported by strong organisational skills. It takes a lead partner to build common understanding, provide guidelines and monitor the process to ensure its effectiveness. The modalities of work must be planned, agreed with and communicated to the whole partnership on time.

From the beginning of the project, all partners in charge of activities must:

- Have a complete overview of the development of the activity (partners individual and common responsibilities and workload, timetable, expected results, deliverables, etc.)
- Provide other partners with precise instructions on the implementation

Therefore, it is recommended to elaborate a methodology or practical instructions for the implementation of the main activities that will ensure their proper coordination.

Hereafter some indicative examples of guidelines to be agreed and followed on partner level:

- Procedures for monitoring project activities
- Practical instructions for conducting a study
- Practical instructions for conducting a pilot activity
- Protocol for testing a tool, a service
- Communication, dissemination and transferring plans
- Evaluation of project outputs and results

b) Transnationality

All actions of a cooperation project should have a transnational scope. This implies that the project approach, the actions and the results overcome the limits of partners' boundaries. Shared approach and complementarity of the actions are essential for the benefit of the results. Interreg Euro-MED project partners are expected to work in a collective and coordinated manner with a transnational perspective, that should prevent projects from being limited to a patchwork of local or individual initiatives.

Therefore, the actions must meet the following criteria:

- Sharing **common methodology** for performing actions of the same type between partner territories
- Ensuring **complementarity** of work
- Ensuring **comparability** of data and information to allow a transnational synthesis and use of results

c) Transferability

All protocols and results must be transferable within the Programme cooperation area and therefore, the deliverables, including outputs and results, should be replicable and / or adaptable.

The partnership must ensure that the following criteria are met:

- Comparability of data and information
- Reliability and traceability of data and information
- Strength of methodology and protocols used
- Replicable format
- Clear definition of target

It is recommended that the projects come up with a **methodology for the achievement of key deliverables, outputs and results and transfer it to the Programme**. This process will ensure the quality of activities, outputs and deliverables, but as well will facilitate the evaluation by the Programme.

The availability of **raw data** is therefore fundamental. The format of all productions should ensure the maximisation of their potential for **reuse**. Open data approach must be considered when compiling or delivering information.

d) Sustainability and durability

Sustainability and durability of the project results is another key element. A transnational cooperation project might have a "start-up" function: be the first step of further developments (e.g. a larger investment) and improvements (e.g. an improved policy). The uptake of results, the deployment at a larger scale and/or the mainstreaming is a crucial success factor to be considered during the whole project lifecycle, from the conception until the closure phase. Communication is an important factor to achieve further life of the results, as well as strategic liaising and mainstreaming activities. This principle is part of the qualitative assessment criteria of project applications.

e) Synergies among projects

Synergies between the activities and the results of the different projects of the Interreg Euro-MED Programme and/or of other ETC/thematic EU/national/ regional Programmes are to be sought during the project conception, implementation and beyond closure. They should be supported with the goal of achieving complementarity and greater impact on the territory or on the tackled topic. They should be prioritised as they increase the quality of the results. This principle is taken into consideration in the qualitative assessment of project applications.

f) Principles behind productions

In transnational cooperation projects, any type of output, result and deliverable requires the development of a common understanding of the different types of productions. It is recommended, for the common understanding of the deliverables, that they are based, on guidelines/methodology for implementation and delivery, agreed within the partnership. Regarding the principles for the output and result indicators, the Programme provides a comprehensive methodology explaining in detail the process of accounting for the achievement of indicators (see Annex B).

Criteria for outputs and results contributing to the Programme output and result indicators

The achievement of project OUTPUTS and RESULTS is directly contributing to the fulfilment of Programme objectives and indicators. It is crucial that the project indicators match the Programme expectations in terms of standards and quality. For this reason, during the project reporting procedure, the quality and the reporting of outputs and results will be closely checked and supervised.

The quality criteria for the output and result indicators are included in the indicators methodology and factsheets provided by the Programme (please refer to Annex B). The project partners should report contribution to an output and/or result indicator in the project final report. They should as well provide proof of the achievement by attaching the completed templates on output and/or result indicators for each achieved output and result indicator. If the information is not sufficient, the quality of the outputs and results will be discussed between the project partners and the JS during the verification procedure of the final report and payment claim.

Only output and result indicators that will fulfill the quality criteria will be validated and computed for the values of the output and result indicators at Programme level.

The projects are requested to complete the indicator templates on each reported and achieved output and result indicator contributing to the achievement of the Programme output and result indicators. As such, the information provided on the indicators will follow a standard methodology, be complete and comparable. The consolidated information on the execution of the output and result indicators by the Programme will be reported to the European Commission on a regular basis.

iv. Horizontal principles and Greening

For Interreg Euro-MED, it is crucial that **horizontal principles** are integrated in the planning, implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation of the project activities.

During the whole life cycle of the projects, partners are requested to consider actions cross-cutting project activities, taking into account the horizontal principles of the EU.[42]

More precisely, actions should be planned, implemented and reported considering the following horizontal principles:

1. respecting fundamental rights and complying with the **EU Charter of Fundamental Rights**[43]
2. ensuring the promotion of **gender equality**
3. preventing all kind of **discrimination** and particularly promoting accessibility for persons with disabilities
4. promoting **sustainable development**, in line with UN Sustainable Development Goals[44], the Paris Agreement[45] and the "do no significant harm" principle (DNSH)[46].

Full respect of the **Union environmental *acquis*** should be ensured by the projects.

Applicants shall describe in their applications how they particularly consider and promote the above-mentioned horizontal principles in their activities and which specific actions are implemented in reference to them. During the assessment of applications, consideration is given to the project adherence to the horizontal principles and the quality of the planned specific actions. Approved projects will report regularly to the Programme on their achievements. The measures planned in the beginning of the project and consequently developed by the end of the project considering the horizontal principles will be further monitored by the Programme.

In order to assess the progress made in reference to horizontal principles considered in the project activities, the JS provides an online self-assessment questionnaire to be completed by the project partners at the beginning and at the end of their project.

[42] Horizontal Principles as per Article 9 of the REGULATION (EU) 2021/1060 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 24 June 2021 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund Plus, the Cohesion Fund, the Just Transition Fund and the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund and financial rules for those and for the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, the Internal Security Fund and the Instrument for Financial Support for Border Management and Visa Policy,
[43] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A12012P%2FTXT
[44] https://sdgs.un.org/goals
[45] https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement/the-paris-agreement
[46] EU Taxonomy Regulation, https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/sustainable-finance-taxonomy-regulation-eu-2020-852_en

Finally, the contribution and consideration of horizontal principles in projects will be examined in the framework of the Programme evaluation.

All project partners cooperating under any Programme mission should comply with the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development[47], as well as the respective national sustainable development strategies.

The environmental and social dimension of sustainability should be an integral part of each project activity since its conception and until its closure. Partners are requested to assess potential harmful effects of their actions and prevent from planning actions leading to significantly impact the environment and climate, or actions impacting on the well-being of the citizens. Contribution to nature-based solutions, climate mitigation and neutrality as well as social solidarity are to be promoted.

The Programme strives to reduce the environmental impact of activities in all funded projects. To this end, carbon footprint reduction, monitoring (and offsetting) actions will be applied by all approved projects (please refer above to Mandatory activities paragraph and section: Drawing up my budget here below).

With regards to greening, some of the Thematic Community projects of the Interreg MED 2014-2020 Programme developed a list of indicative preventive actions that are recommended to be followed by all Interreg Euro-MED projects so as to reduce their environmental impact. These actions refer to communication activities – dissemination of products and the organisation of project events (please refer to Annex C of this Manual)

v. Designing your communication strategy (drafting ongoing)

vi. Project website and Programme platform (drafting ongoing)

[47] https://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1&Lang=E

D. Drawing up my budget

i. Co-financing of operations

European Territorial Cooperation projects are projects co-financed by the European Structural and Investment Funds. In the framework of the Interreg Euro-MED Programme, the Interreg grant (ERDF and IPA) represents **80% of the total eligible budget of the project; the remaining 20% of the budget is therefore borne by the partners** who must ensure the co-financing of their activities by other sources of funding (own funds, private funds or national public funds).

The co-financing rate is **the same for all partners (80%)** regardless of their status and regardless of the possible State-aid scheme in which they choose to participate.

The part of the expenses not reimbursed by the Interreg grant **(20%)** must be financed by each Lead Partner and project partner through a co-financing, which can take the following forms:

Public co-financing source:

- **Own public contribution**: national, regional or local public funding provided directly from the public partners own funds or public equivalent;
- **Automatic public contribution**: national, regional or local public funding, obtained through co-financing mechanisms specifically established by specific Member States (Italy and Greece[48]);
- **Other public contribution**: national, regional or local public funding provided by public or public equivalent institutions

Private co-financing source:

- **Private own contribution**: private financing based on the private partners own funds;
- **Other private contribution**: private funding provided by private institutionsnot involved in the partnership;

The nature and amount of the contribution of each Lead Partner and project partner, whether public/public equivalent or private, must be **specified in the Application Form**. All co-financing partners of the project (including the LP) must fill in and sign their own declaration (to be annexed to the Application Form, see application procedure).

[48] Concerned partners should contact their National Authority for more information on these co-financing mechanisms

ii. Costs to be paid in advance by project partners

The Interreg Euro-MED Programme does not provide any advance of funds and operates according to **a principle of reimbursement of costs which must first be committed and paid**[49] **by the partners and finally certified (controlled) by independent controllers**. When an organisation decides to participate in an Interreg Euro-MED project, it must first ensure that it has sufficient cash flow to **advance the funds to be received later. It must also ensure the implementation of the initial activities, using its own funds, so that the project can start effectively**.

Once the funds have been paid out, the partners will have to consider **unavoidable delays related to the expenditure reporting process** (entry into the system, validation of the costs by the LP, certification by the various competent authorities and declaration to the Programme accounting authority) before receiving the effective reimbursement of expenditures on the bank account[50] indicated in Jems.

iii. Guiding principles

a) Project budget developed in close cooperation with partners

Before writing the proposal, the Lead Partner must consult its partners in order to agree with them on the different aspects related to the budget. The budget distribution must reflect the **transnationality** of the project and allow each partner to have **enough budget** to implement their activities according to the distribution of tasks as foreseen in the Application Form.

Before filling in the form on the system, **each partner must agree individually, and at least with the LP (in charge of data entry in the monitoring tool), on:**

- the **origin** and **amount of co-financing** provided by their institution,
- their **share of the preparation costs,**
- the **method for reporting travel costs** chosen for their staff and which will apply for any participation in subsequent Interreg Euro-MED projects. In accordance with the eligibility rules of the Programme presented in the dedicated chapter, each partner must choose a method for the reporting of travel and accommodation costs which will not be possible to change after the start of their first project and will remain effective for all Interreg Euro-MED projects in which they will participate. No change of method will be

[49] The amounts reimbursed by the Programme correspond to 80% of the costs declared by the partners, which, except for lump sums and flat-rates amounts, must all have been previously **incurred AND paid** by the partners.
[50] In order to reduce payment times as much as possible, the Interreg MED Programme has opted since 2014 for a payment of funds directly to project partners. The Lead Partner receives only the amounts corresponding to its own expenditure, the rest is paid directly to the partners by the Accounting Authority, on the bank account indicated in Jems.

accepted after the start of the first project. The JS will check this point during the assessment of applications.

- the results **of State-aid analysis. i.e. a self-assessment** on State-aid is foreseen in Jems and must be compiled by the LP in close cooperation with the partner. Where appropriate, the State-aid scheme applicable to the organisation is agreed with the partner.

The JS strongly recommends that Lead Partner applicants agree on these 4 points with each of their partners. The content of the Application Form should be re-checked by them as soon as the budget is entered on Jems and before validation of the proposal. Indeed, all data related to the above-mentioned elements will be locked once the application is submitted, and part of those elements are included in the Partner Declaration signed by each applicant.

If the project is approved, any changes in these elements after the decision of the Programme Committee would have a significant impact on the project start-up phase.

b) Economy, Efficiency, Effectiveness

As set out in the Financial Regulation 2018/1046, certain key principles govern the use of EU funds and must be considered when preparing proposals and implementing projects:

- The principle of economy which requires that the resources used by the organisation to deliver their activities shall be made available in due time, in appropriate quantity and quality, and at the best price.
- The principle of efficiency which concerns the optimal balance between the resources used, the activities undertaken and the achievement of objectives.
- The principle of effectiveness which concerns the extent to which the objectives pursued are achieved through the activities undertaken.

Keeping these three principles of sound financial management in mind when drawing up the project budget (and incurring expenditure) is essential to build a reasonable and realistic budget.

Indeed, the total project budget must be in line with the work plan: the planned activities, deliverables, outputs and results, as well as the duration of the project and the number of partners.

Beware: the budget breakdown between the reporting periods in the Application Form (spending forecast included in the project spending plan in Jems in section D.3 of the application Form), must be elaborated by considering the actual spending capacity of the project as well as **the time needed for paying out and certifying costs** incurred.[51]

[51] See section III Financial issues < chapter Financial flow and project financial performance

c) Budget in Euros

The project budget must be **drawn up in euros**, as well as any declarations of expenditure that are sent to the MA/JS if the project is approved[52].

d) Cost categories to be considered

The project budget must be structured around the **6 cost categories eligible for the Programme**, the contents of which are detailed in the "Eligibility of expenditure" chapter of this Manual.

/!\ Beware: not too many external expertise and services costs

The Programme does not set a formal limit for "external expertise and services" costs . It is however recommended **not to exceed 50% of the partner total eligible budget** for this line, as the project is supposed to be implemented directly by the partners.

Project partners should also bear in mind that costs related to invited speakers, experts, etc; costs related to the travel and accommodation costs of associated partners) also fall under this budget category.

e) Location of activities

It is expected that the activities implemented by the project are mainly targeted on the Interreg Euro-MED territory for a better impact on the cooperation area. Nonetheless:

- Activities carried out and travel made outside the Programme cooperation area but in an EU Member State are possible as long as they are in line with the project objectives.
- Activities and travel **outside the Programme cooperation area and outside the EU** are eligible only if they are **expressly accepted** by the JS.
- Infrastructures located outside the Programme cooperation area are not allowed.

f) From activities to budget

Communication component: no dedicated work package (WP) for communication is foreseen in the Application Form. However, communication activities must be budgeted for. Please note that you should not foresee any budget for the creation

[52] Details of how to convert expenditure in currencies other than euros are provided in the "Financial Issues" section of this Manual.

of a project logo; a subscription to a collaborative project management tool; the development, hosting and maintenance of your project website[53]. Indeed, the Programme provides the following services for free to all selected projects: logo, collaborative project management tool (Basecamp), website (WordPress). Nonetheless, the human resources needed to manage the website, the social networks and the Basecamp account management should be budgeted. Be careful not to underestimate them.

Management component: no WP dedicated to project management is foreseen in the Application Form, however, management activities must be budgeted for. The human resources needed for the implementation and coordination of project activities must be considered, as well as the reporting activities (content/progress and finances) or the implementation/development of any tools needed to monitor these elements.

Please note: *When working on your project proposal, please keep in mind that when applicable, the following activities should be included in the category "external expertise and services": audits to be carried out by partners (National Controller), project evaluation, subcontracting of management and communication activities, translation, organisation of project events and meetings, travel and accommodation of speakers, institutional representatives, and associated partners.*

In addition, two mandatory activities to be carried out by projects are mentioned in the dedicated section of the Manual[54]. These activities must be known by the partners and LP to be properly budgeted and foreseen in the work plan. It should be noted that additional elements may also appear in the Terms of Reference of each call.

Carbon footprint monitoring: a tool for calculating the carbon emissions of activities will be made available to projects to calculate the carbon footprint of their activities. Costs dedicated to carbon footprint monitoring (and potential offsetting) activities shall be budgeted.

Contribution to the Results Amplification Strategy and to the Programme activities: each project must foresee the resources necessary for their contribution to the Results Amplification Strategy and to the Programme activities, according to the type of project to which they belong. As a minimum, each project must foresee the participation in two events per year and regular exchange of information between projects and between project and Programme.

g) VAT

According to Article 64 of Regulation (EU) No 2021/1060, Value Added Tax (VAT) is not eligible, except:

[53] See Chapter "Eligibility of expenditure" of this Manual - ineligible expenditure
[54] See Chapter "Designing project activities" of this Manual

- for operations the total cost of which is below EUR 5 000 000 (including VAT);
- for operations the total cost of which is at least EUR 5 000 000 (including VAT) where it is non-recoverable under national VAT legislation;

*In the framework of **Interreg Euro-MED projects with a total cost of less than EUR 5 000 000 (including VAT), VAT is therefore eligible as part of project expenditure** and all partners can foresee their expenditure with VAT.*

E. Submitting my application

This chapter outlines the main principles to be followed when submitting an application to the Interreg Euro-MED 21-27 Programme.

Please be aware that the specific elements of each call relating to the expected partnership, the available budget, the priorities covered as well as the modalities for the selection of proposals are detailed in the Terms of Reference of each call.

i. Jems: the Programme online monitoring tool

Applications to the Programme calls for projects are **100% dematerialized** and must be submitted via the Programme online monitoring tool, Jems[55] (Joint Electronic Monitoring System), accessible at the following address: https://jems.interreg-euro-med.eu/.

The Application Form is completed and submitted on Jems. Similarly, **the supporting documents required for the application must be completed (and scanned, when an original version manually signed exist) and uploaded** as separate files to the monitoring tool. The submitted documents must be named clearly in English or French and cannot exceed 50Mb in size.

The content of the templates provided by the Programme and, where applicable, generated via Jems may not be modified or amended in any way. All templates requiring a signature must be dated and signed (handwritten or electronic signature) to be considered valid.

The electronic signature is considered valid by the Programme as long as it is recognised at national and European level; in case of doubt regarding the format, it is recommended to **contact your National Authority** (or the one of the partner concerned) to ensure the validity of the documents before submitting them to the Programme.

NB: in case of delegation of signature (proxy) and for any document, a proof of delegation must be uploaded with the signed document.

[55] In particular, Jems will be used for project administrative follow-up, for entering expenditure and reporting activities (at partner and project level), checking expenditure and certifying it. Each chapter of the Manual involving the use of Jems contains the necessary indications on the relevant functionalities of the tool. In addition, a general presentation of Jems and its functionalities can be found in Annex E and guides will be provided for each of the above-mentioned steps.

If applicable, the original paper version of the documents (signed and stamped where required) must be kept by the signatory in the project archive file.

ii. Submission of proposals

The Lead Partner is responsible for the application procedure on behalf of the whole project partnership. In order to access the Application Form, he/she must have access to the monitoring tool, Jems. This access is created by the Lead Partner[56] or provided by the Joint Secretariat depending on the type of call concerned (open or restricted).

Beware! **It is important to ensure that the email address used for the creation of the account is easily accessible by the applicant(s) since this address will automatically be used by the system to receive any notification, confirmation, etc.**

The application procedure generally consists of **two main steps**: the submission of an Application Form, to be filled in and validated in the Jems monitoring system, and, in a second step, the production of several compulsory annexes, which will be uploaded in the system. Therefore, please note that for each call **two different deadlines must be respected.**

a) Application Form

The Application Form must be filled in on the Jems monitoring tool in one of the two languages of the Programme, i.e. English or French.

For each call, a courtesy version (Word format) of the Application Form is made available to the public **for information**. This document specifies the content expected in the different sections of the form and **can in no way be considered as a valid document for the submission of an application** by the Lead Partner. In addition, a Jems guide containing indications and recommendations for completing and submitting the Application Form can be downloaded from the Programme website[57].

A "pre-submission check"[58] is provided by the system. This check is activated by the Lead Partner and provides an overview of any missing or inconsistent data.

- A green tick indicates that the chapter has no anomalies;
- A red exclamation mark indicates chapters that need to be corrected by Lead Applicants before submission.

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56 Once you have entered your first and last name, email address and password, a confirmation link will be sent to the email address you have entered to activate your account. You will then be able to access the call for proposals for which you wish to apply. It is strongly recommended to use only one email address for all Interreg Euro-MED projects.

57 Documents & tools - Programme Interreg Euro-MED (interreg-euro-med.eu)

58 The pre-submission check is a feature set up on Jems, to flag, before validation, any missing information or information requiring significant revision or correction. This feature should be activated by the LP when drafting the proposal.

The Lead Partner should **ensure that the check is run after validation of each key chapter of the form**: if anomalies are identified, the relevant sections of the form should be modified, and the check should be re-run; major blocking points affecting the application may be flagged and would require significant revision and correction work in case of erroneous or missing elements.

It is important to bear in mind that an application cannot be submitted on Jems until the pre-submission check is valid.

When all sections of the Application Form have been corrected and completed, the Lead Partner can launch a last pre-submission check.

Once the pre-submission check is validated, the Lead Partner must submit the application on Jems **before the deadline set for the call. The submission will only be effective after pressing the "Submit project application" button.**

When the submission is made, a confirmation e-mail is automatically sent by Jems to the contact person entered in the Application Form (it is therefore imperative to ensure that the e-mail address is correct **before final validation** of the Application Form).

If the Lead Partner encounters any problem in filling in or validating the Application Form on Jems, they should contact the Joint Secretariat (programme@interreg-euro-med.eu) before the deadline for the submission of applications (**Brussels time CET/CEST**).

After submission, it is no longer possible to modify the Application Form.

Lead Partners are invited to keep the e-mail sent by the system confirming the time of submission of the Application Form (**Brussels time CET/CEST**).

b) Annexes

The submission confirmation page of the Application Form must be signed and uploaded in PDF format in the online monitoring tool of the Euro-MED Interreg Programme, Jems.[59] (**NB:** only the page from the submitted form is a valid document).

Each LP and project partner must upload from Jems[60], and sign a **declaration**[61] generated via the online tool and which must be annexed to the submitted Application Form. Before completing/signing the partner declarations, partners must check the information contained in the document.

The Lead Partner must ensure that the signed documents are provided by all project partners and comply with the Programme templates and signature standards.

[59] This information needs to be confirmed by the team working on Jems.
[60] Depending on Jems evolutions, some documents should be generated directly from Jems
[61] Courtesy version of the declarations (provided for information ONLY) are available on the Programme website

Associated partners must sign an "associated partner declaration" generated via Jems confirming their willingness to take part in project activities according to the conditions of their status.

F. Assessment of proposals and results

This section presents a summary of the main stages for processing your proposal once it has been presented to the Joint Secretariat.

The elements that are more specific to each call and that relate to the eligibility criteria as well as to the modalities of selection of the proposals are detailed in the technical datasheet integrated in the Terms of Reference of each call for proposals.

i. Appraisal of proposals

After submission, each Interreg Euro-MED proposal is subject to an appraisal procedure consisting of at least two stages, guaranteeing the principles of transparency and equal treatment, described below:

- Administrative and eligibility check of the Application (Annex I of the Terms of Reference of the different calls)
- Quality assessment phase (in one or two phases depending on the elements provided in Annex III of the Terms of Reference of the different calls)

Each of these stages may lead to the final elimination of the proposal. The Programme Committee is responsible for the decision concerning each stage.

ii. Project selection and communication of results

Decisions on project selection are taken by the Interreg Euro-MED Programme Committee on the basis of the results of the appraisal phase described above and the availability of the budget for each call.

After validation of the Programme Committee decision, the Lead Partner receives a communication from the Managing Authority[62] indicating whether the proposal is *approved*, *approved with conditions* or *rejected*.

In case of disagreement with the decision of the Programme Committee and for information on the appeal procedure available to applicants, please refer to the Section "Key Legal Mechanisms", Chapter "Appeal and Complaints Resolution" of this Manual.

[62] The communication from the Managing Authority is sent through email by the JS,

II. Implementing my project

A. Pre-contracting phase

After receiving the Managing Authority notification concerning their "approval", selected projects enter a pre-contracting phase, aiming to correct administrative issues and consolidate the project before the signature of the Subsidy Contract by the Lead Partner.

During this phase, the Lead Partner, in cooperation with the Joint Secretariat, makes the necessary adjustments to the Application Form to fulfil the potential conditions established by the Programme Committee and to correct any technical inconsistencies detected in the assessment phase.

The pre-contracting phase is based on Annex II "List of pre-contracting criteria" of the Terms of Reference of each call for proposals. "–This phase focuses as a minimum on the following points:

- Provide or update the name and contact details of project partners:
    - For each partner: legal representative and project coordinator
    - For the project as a whole: communication officer, finance officer, contact persons for transfer and for carbon footprint and if applicable a Data Controller and Data Protection Officer for the project.
- Enter or update the bank account details of all partners
- Provide or update compulsory documentation (upload the updated version of the declarations submitted during the application phase, if needed)
- Provide missing documentation
- For the lead partner and the partner(s) in charge of investment activities, carry out in cooperation with the JS the Climate and Environmental Objectives Assessment (DNSH)[63]
- Modify the Application Form to solve any minor technical issues and/or to integrate the adjustments[64] resulting from the assessment phase or from the Programme Committee recommendations/conditions.

The fulfilment of the pre-contracting criteria is a condition for the signature of the Subsidy Contract. On completion of the pre-contracting phase, the "consolidated"

[63] EU Regulation 2020/852

[64] This step includes the identification of the project's key productions (i.e. key deliverables and outputs) in cooperation with the JS, as well as the possible adjustment of the budget breakdown between the reporting periods in the Application Form (spending forecast included in the project spending plan in Jems in section D.3 of the application Form) considering the actual spending capacity of the project as well as the time needed for paying out and certifying costs incurred.

application form becomes the new "**approved version**" of the Application form. If two months[65] after the selection of the project, the issues highlighted during the pre-contracting phase and conditions are not fulfilled, the Programme Committee may decide to cancel the project or to withdraw the partner concerned.

i. Additional documentation

a) State Aid

All approved projects with partners applying under the "de minimis" State Aid exemption regime must provide an updated de minimis declaration, if the declared amounts have changed since the submission of the proposal.

b) International organisations acting under international law

Ad-hoc declaration accepting the requirements deriving from the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and the regulations applicable in the framework of the Interreg Euro-MED Programme mentioned in section "Building your Consortium" of the Programme Manual. No template is provided by the Programme.

c) Partner located in a Region outside the Programme area and belonging to an EU Member State

In the case of partners located in a Region outside the Interreg Euro-MED Programme area and belonging to an EU Member State other than the 14 Interreg Euro-MED Programme States (e.g. partner located in Brussels, Berlin, etc.) additional documents may be requested by the Programme and must be provided in any case before signature of the Subsidy Contract between the LP and the MA.

d) Investments activities foreseen by the partners:

In the case of projects including investments[66], a **Statement of Capacity and Compliance with the Principles for Investment**[67] must be signed by each project partner in charge of the implementation of the so-called investment(s) and will be annexed to the consolidated Application Form

[65] The date to be taken into account for the calculation of the two months is the one of the **sending of the Joint Secretariat email** notifying the Programme Committee decision.
[66] "Investment" as referred to in the Programme: section Designing my project and submitting my application, chapter Designing project activities, composition of a project of this Manual
[67] PDF template available in the Programme website XXX (under elaboration)

B. Contracting phase

i. Contractual documents

a) Subsidy Contract

Once the information of the Application Form is consolidated in Jems, a Subsidy Contract is signed between the Conseil Régional Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur acting as the Managing Authority of the Programme and the Lead Partner of the approved project. The Subsidy Contract sets out the rights and responsibilities of the Lead Partner and the Managing Authority, as well as the main activities to be carried out and general conditions of the financing.
The Subsidy Contract is issued via the online monitoring tool Jems. A courtesy version of the template is available on the website of the Programme (www.interreg-euro-med.eu) and provided for information purposes only.

The Lead Partner must keep an original version of the Subsidy Contract signed by both parties as part of the audit trail of the project. The document is uploaded to Jems and made available to all project partners, along with any amendments if applicable.

b) Partnership Agreement

The Partnership Agreement formalises the organisation of the partnership and establishes the responsibilities of the partners between each other and towards the Lead Partner for the implementation of the project, in accordance with the approved Application Form. The Partnership Agreement is concluded between the Lead Partner and each partner involved in the project.

The Partnership Agreement is issued via the online monitoring tool Jems. A courtesy version of the template is available on the website of the Interreg Euro-MED Programme (www.interreg-euro-med.eu) and provided for information purposes only.

If the project Steering Committee decides in the internal rules to specify clauses in addition to the Partnership Agreement, it must be done without prejudice of the Partnership Agreement content.

The Partnership Agreement clearly states the so-called "Lead Partner Principle" for the operational management and coordination of the project and allows the Lead Partner to extend the liabilities of the Subsidy Contract to the level of each partner.

One copy of the Partnership Agreement is signed by the legal representative of each partner and the Lead Partner.

In order to speed up the signature of the Partnership Agreement, it is highly recommended that the Lead Partner sends by e-mail to each partner the page to be signed by the legal representatives. Once the document is signed, the partner should send it (by post or digitally depending on the national regulation in force regarding electronic signature) to the Lead Partner who will countersign it. Ultimately the compilation of all pages signed by each partner and countersigned by the Lead Partner will compose the validated Partnership Agreement.

The Lead Partner must keep the full original version of the Partnership Agreement as part of the audit trail of the project. The document must be uploaded to Jems and made available to all project partners, along with any amendments if applicable.

ii. Preparation costs

When preparation costs for partners are foreseen in the Application Form, the corresponding amount is paid directly to the partners indicated in the Application Form, as soon as the Subsidy Contract is signed by both the Lead Partner institution and the Managing Authority.

In practice: after notification of the contract signed by both parties, the JS will formalise the request for reimbursement of project preparation costs, according to the subdivision established in the approved Application Form, and submit the document directly to the Accounting Authority.

The payment corresponding to the amount of the preparation costs (€ 37,000 of total eligible budget) will be paid by the Accounting Authority to partners as indicated in the Application Form and according to the approved co-financing rate for each partner.

In case a project is not implemented or started, the Programme Monitoring Committee reserves the right to recovering the Interreg funds already paid based on this lump sum.

C. Starting the project

i. Setting up the Project Steering Committee

Each project must set the necessary procedures for decision-making and coordination between the partners. For this reason, projects are requested to set up a Project Steering Committee, an internal body of the project, composed of representatives of all project partners.

The tasks of the Project Steering Committee include as a minimum:

- Monitoring and validating the project contents: verifying that the project implementation is in line with activities and outputs defined in the approved Application Form, and validating the quality of main project outputs and the progress towards achieving set objectives;
- Monitoring of project finances: monitoring the project budget and project spending;
- Review of the management performance and of the quality of progress reports towards the Programme bodies;
  - If applicable, decisions on required project modifications (e.g. content, partnership, budget, duration) to be requested for approval to the Programme bodies. If a partner jeopardises the implementation of the project, the Steering Committee can decide to exclude the partner in question from the project. In this case, it will be necessary to address a request for partnership change to the Programme Authorities;
  - Working groups, task forces and advisory groups may be established to coordinate the day-to-day running of activities, to fulfil specific tasks, etc. Adequate representation of involved partners must be observed in establishing decision-making and coordination mechanisms.

The setup of the project Steering Committee and the organisation of the first meeting must be ensured as early as possible, in order to be able to send the minutes to the JS, within three months after the project start date at the latest. The following points should be addressed:

- Approval of the rules of procedure of the Steering Committee, including the possibility to make decisions through written procedure;
- Establishment of management and coordination structures in charge of ensuring a sound management and coordination of the project; and confirmation of the contact persons for each partner (project coordinator for each partner, and communication officer, finance officer, contact persons for transfer and carbon footprint, for the whole project);
- Clarifying obligations mentioned in the contractual documents to all the partners;
- Presenting the main elements related to the qualitative aspects of the implementation of the project as well as of the sound administrative and

financial management, eligibility of expenditure, control procedures, calendar of submission of payment claims and progress reports, and use of Jems;

- Appointment, if applicable, of a contact person responsible for the transfer activities to be carried out with the Programme Governance projects (Thematic Community Projects and Institutional Dialogue Projects), communication officer for the project, contact persons for carbon footprint, and a Data Controller and Data Protection Officer for the project.

The minutes of the first Steering Committee of the project establish the Steering Committee rules of procedures whilst describing in detail the management structure that guarantee the proper implementation of the project and mark the launch of project activities.

The approved minutes must be submitted within three months by the Lead Partner to the Joint Secretariat. The Programme also suggests that partners send the document to their National Contact Points.

ii. Creating partners account on Jems

This step may have already been completed during the application phase.

Each partner must access the Jems portal and create a profile on the platform. Once the contact has been created, they will automatically receive an email from Jems to activate their profile. It is then up to each partner to confirm their contact email to the Lead Partner in order to be attached to the project by the latter.

During the pre-contracting phase, the emails and bank details of each partner must be confirmed and, if necessary, updated or added in the system.

iii. Setting up the control process

In accordance with the terms and functions mentioned in Articles 74 (1a) of Regulation (EU) 1060/2021 and 45 (3) of Regulation (EU) 1059/2021, the "controller" (hereinafter national controller) verifies the existence of the co-financed products and services, that the project complies with applicable law, and ensures the control of expenditures declared by the project partners. Each participating state (Member State or partner country) is responsible for the appointment of the national controllers and the controls on their territory and may have chosen either a centralised or a decentralised national control system.

At this stage, each partner should get in touch with their National Authority as soon as possible, to get informed about the procedures to be followed, i.e. the designation of a national controller for centralised systems, or the selection, appointment and approval of the national controller for decentralised systems.

Delays in this first contact can lead to delays in the reporting procedures which might have a negative impact on the financial flow of the project.

D. Internal communication and community building (drafting ongoing)

E. Project reporting and Joint Secretariat monitoring

The implementation of an Interreg Euro-Med project is structured around project activities, key deliverables, and outputs delivery according to a workplan agreed within the partnership and with the Joint Secretariat (JS) following **reporting periods of 6 months.** All main steps of projects implementation are integrated on the online monitoring tool Jems in agreement with the JS during the pre-contracting phase[68]. Through the signature of the project contractual documents, project partners commit themselves to implementing the activities on a timely and accurate way.

The payment of the Interreg fund is conditioned by the monitoring held by the JS and will be based on project's day to day progress and formalised through periodic reports submitted to the JS via the electronic monitoring system (Jems).

i. Project reporting

The reporting procedure is an obligation settled in the project's contractual documents and a key element for monitoring the implementation of projects and comparison of the project's progress and achievements in coherence with the approved application form. A timely and complete reporting is mandatory for the partnership and the first step in order to get the project's expenditure reimbursed in time.

a) General framework

Project partners are responsible for implementing their activities and for contributing to Project Report (PR) completion by informing the Lead Partner (LP) on their achievements (through, among other means, Partner Reports)[69]. This chapter details the different reporting procedures for expenditures and activities, as well as the procedure foreseen by the Programme to review the project performance.

The **Lead partner** is responsible for the sound implementation of activities and to gather the partners' reports and productions in order to guarantee timely and complete submission of the Project Reports (and related material) to the JS. The LP has a 3-month timeframe,[70] following the end of the implementation period (NB: the three months' timeframe foreseen for the preparation of the Reporting package (RP) does not apply to the last implementing period) , to:

[68] Reporting periods may be viewed on Jems under section "contracting> project reporting schedule"
[69] Ref to P Agreement articles
[70] The three months' timeframe foreseen for the preparation of PR does not apply to the last implementing period see figure 1 here below) + Chapter project closure of the present manual (drafting ongoing)

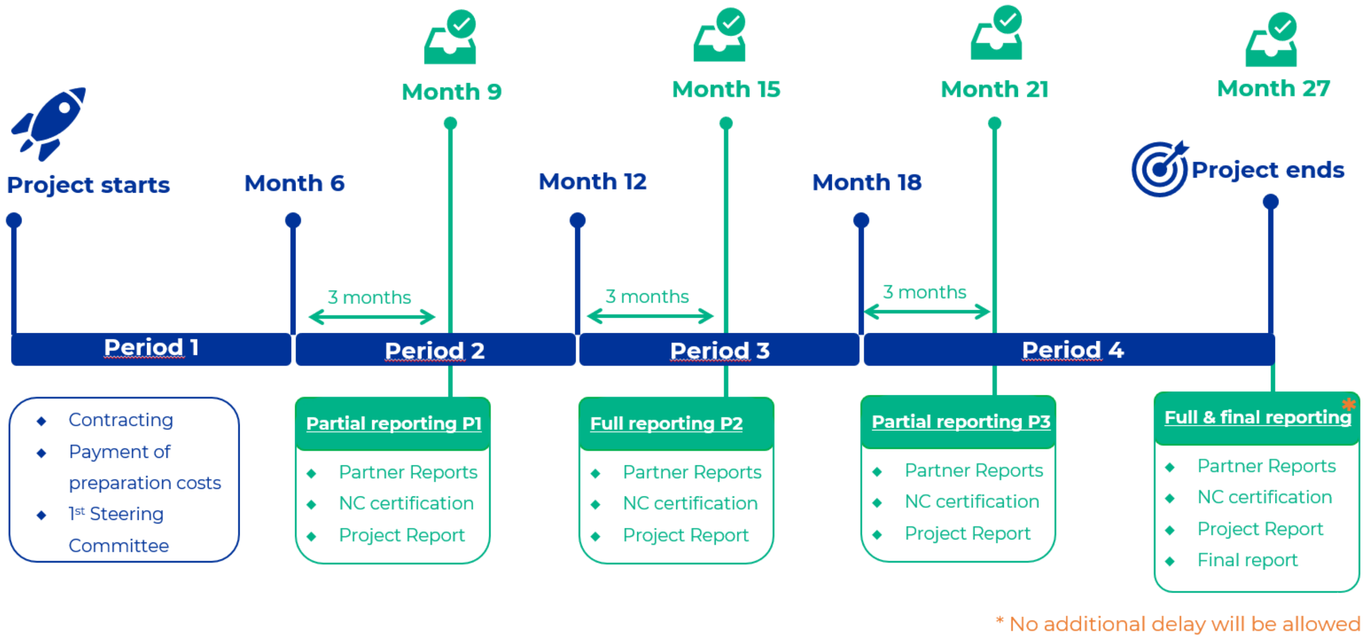
- Collect information regarding activities implemented and deliverables produced at partners and project level,
- Verify that partners' expenditures are certified in time (incl. LP own expenditures),
- Accept (or reject) the partner's Control certificate and Report through Jems ,
- Ensure the availability of signed national Control Certificates and Reports of the partners (with national validations if required[71]) in Jems,
- Fill in the Project Report through Jems,
- Fill in the Payment claim through Jems,
- Submit the "Reporting Package" (Project Report and corresponding Payment Claim) to the JS.
- Make sure that all the outputs and deliverables corresponding to the implementing period in the project data, are available on Basecamp for the JS validation and further upload in Jems[72].

In that context each LP must establish in advance and in agreement with the whole partnership the intermediary deadlines for the reception of partners contribution[73]. All reporting templates are embedded in Jems and courtesy versions of the documents are available on the programme website[74] for information purposes only. Technical information on the use of Jems concerning the declaration of expenditure, certification and completion of the Reports is provided in the dedicated guidelines[75].

[71] National validation is a compulsory requirement foreseen by the National Control system in Spain and Portugal
[72] This information needs to be confirmed by the team working on Jems.
[73] As a good practice, PPs should try to provide their contribution (partner report and signed certificate and report) to the LP within one month before the deadline in order to allow LP time to synthesize the data and prepare the reporting package.
[74] https://interreg-euro-med.eu/en/documents-tools/
[75] Link to Jems guideline

Figure 1: Project reporting timeline

Project implementation (example of a 27 months project)



ii. Partner report

Project partners are provided with the access to the reporting section on Jems after approval of the project by the Monitoring Committee and upon signature of the Subsidy Contract between the LP and the Managing Authority (MA).
The first step in the reporting procedure is the information inserted at partner level about both the progress made concerning the delivery of activities and the related expenditures. This information entry is formalised through a "partner report" (hereafter PR) completed in Jems.

The Partner report is a single document redacted in the partnership working language: English or French and composed of two parts, a first one dedicated to activity reporting and a second one related to partners expenditures. This document would provide the National Controller (here after as NC) and then the LP with relevant information on partner activities during the reporting period and related list of expenditures.

a) Activity reporting

Project partners (including the LP) reports on-line on the progress made in the relevant reporting period compared to what was agreed in the project consolidated application form and within the partnership. The Partner Report is compulsory for any partner reporting costs in a related reporting period. In such a case, project partners must at least complete the "Report identification" section in Jems to highlight eventual problems or deviations and complete the information related to respective target groups. LPs may request additional information if agreed at project level.

b) Financial Reporting

- External Contracts and public procurements[76]

Before reporting any expenditure, related to an external contract each project partner must create the corresponding external contract in a dedicated tab in Jems on the partner report. When introducing costs in the list of expenditures, each cost related to an external contract must be assigned to its corresponding procurement.

- List of expenditures

As part of the partner report, each single partner must fill-in in Jems a list of expenditures coherent with the developed activities and submit them to the N C through Jems. Any supporting document is forwarded to the controller out of Jems and the original version[77] is kept at the partner premises. Therefore, none of the supporting documents are expected to be uploaded in Jems.

Partner's NC verifies the eligibility of declared expenditures[78] and includes them in a Control certificate and Report.

Throughout the implementation period, each project partner is recommended to regularly enter expenditures in the system. This allows an easy tracking of the progress made while reducing bottlenecks before the deadline for submission of the reports to the NC.

IMPORTANT: Reporting according to Programme deadlines and adhering to spending targets are contractual obligations that concern all project partners. Projects and partners lagging behind their spending plan risk losing their funds if there is insufficient spending on Programme level (see information on chapter III.D.iii "Decommitment ").

Should a partner not be able to produce a National Control certificate and Report in time, expenditures can be submitted in the following Reporting Package.

[76] Section external Contract on Jems must be filled-in as soon as a formal contract is signed between a PP and an external provider. (not needed for limited amount only justified by a bill/ticket)
[77] The concepts of electronic signature and original version of a document are detailed in the present manual under section I chapter E of this Manual
[78] See chapter III.E "Controls, audits and verifications" of this Manual.

iii. National Control certificate and report

After the partner has submitted the PR in Jems containing the activities and related expenses, the N C assigned can start the verification work. This process is formalised in Jems though the completion of the Controller checklist and the signature of the Controller certificate and control report.

The control must be finalised in Jems and related Control certificate and report must be generated by the controller, signed[79]and made available to PP (and national authority in charge of the validation if required through section Control Report of the corresponding Partner Report of Jems.

In the case of Spanish and Portuguese partners an additional step is to be considered when issuing the finalised certificate. The national control system requires a national validation issued by the relevant ministry, which must be attached to the certificate for it to be considered valid (see chapter controls, audits and verifications of the present Manual).

iv. Project reporting package: Project Report and payment claim

Project Report (PR) is filled in by the LP based on the information gathered from the aforementioned single partner reports.

The LP is responsible for the project report and the content of the document should not be a "partner per partner" approach. Indeed, the LP should report the completed activities, key deliverables and outputs produced during the concerned period through a summary approach, reporting the situation of the project progress as a whole.

The reporting package (Project report, including also the financial report of all project partners, and related payment claim dully signed) must be submitted by the LP through Jems within **3 months after the end of the reporting period**[80].

Jems contains one single model of Project Report but depending on the reporting phase ("full reporting" or "partial reporting" phase) the quantity of sections to be completed by the LP concerning project activities varies.

For each reporting period, the Lead partner must complete the "Report identification" section of the Project Report in Jems.

The entire Project Report (i.e all sections of the document) shall be completed only in the framework of the full reporting phase and for the last implementing period of the project(final semester) The main information requested during the "partial reporting" concerning project's implementation is the Project report Identification tab:

[79] Electronic signature is accepted by the Programme, please refer to section I chapter E of this Manual
[80] The three months' timeframe foreseen for the preparation of Reporting package does not apply to the last implementing period see figure 1 here above + Chapter project closure of the present manual (drafting ongoing)

- Highlights of main achievements
- Justification of possible deviations from original plan (where relevant) and eventual problems that occurred during the reporting period
- Target groups reached

On the other hand, during the "**full reporting**" additional information is expected:

- Level of achievement of the project specific objectives
- Level of achievement of the project communication objectives
- Progress towards the project outputs and results
- Description of activities and partners involvement per work package
- Number of key deliverables and outputs achieved[81]
- Level of achievement of Horizontal Principles

Information provided should be clear and concise but exhaustive and in line with the Application form. **A report of good quality allows a more efficient and smoother assessment by the JS and speeds up the reimbursement process.**

Any deviation from the initial work plan should be explained. Deviations from the AF may be possible if they comply with the Programme rules[82] and provided they are duly justified in the relevant sections of the report. The LP fill-in through Jems the PR that gathers the information from each single partner's Control certificate and report and allows a summary information to be delivered to the JS. Any incoherence compared to the project financial objectives as set out in the Subsidy Contract should be explained and justified by the LP in the activity report.

A payment claim document must be filled in through the system and attached to each project report in order to formalise the request for reimbursement from the LP, on behalf of the partnership. The document should be signed[83] and uploaded in Jems.

After the project's closure, the reporting process is completed through the submission of a Final Report on Jems by the Lead Partner [84].

v. Reporting on outputs, results and deliverables

In addition to the reporting procedure in Jems, where the Lead Partner fills in the relevant Project Report for each corresponding implementation period, the project must provide evidence of implemented activities.

[81] During project's implementation, a description of the progress toward outputs achievement is expected but the number corresponding to the reached outputs should be filled in only ONCE and during the final implementing period.

[82] Cf Section project modification of this Manual (drafting ongoing)
[83] Electronic signature is accepted by the Programme, please refer to section I chapter E of this Manual
[84] Template under development

The reporting process is completed by the deposit on Basecamp of finalised key productions[85] delivered during the lifetime of the project. Evidence of **finalised project outputs, results and key deliverables are assessed by the JS in the framework of the "reporting package" assessment and validated (or sent back) to the partnership depending on the quality and coherence of the material with the consolidated application form. Once validated, projects key productions are uploaded in Jems**[86].

Project's productions should be self-sufficient, include some metadata information and follow visibility requirements[87] in line with the Programme rules (Euro-MED programme logo, EU logo/flag, EU funding indication, etc.)

For each production, projects are invited to follow reporting requirements and criteria set by the Programme[88].

As a reminder, the chosen indicators to reflect the actions of this programming period are:

Outputs indicators:	RCO83: **Strategies and action plans** jointly developed
	RCO116: Jointly developed **solutions**
	RCO87: **Organisations** cooperating across borders
Results indicators:	RCR79: **Joint strategies and action plans** taken up by organisations
	RCR104: **Solutions** taken up or up scaled by organisations
	PSI1: **Organisations** with increased institutional capacity due to their participation in cooperation activities across borders

At project completion, Lead partners will have to fill-in, in Jems, the number corresponding to the reached outputs and achieved results.

In this framework, PPs shall fill-in the Programme compulsory template for RCO116 solutions, RCO83 strategies and action plans, RCR 104 solutions uptaken/upscaled, RCR79 joint strategies and action plan uptaken

vi. Reporting on communication activities

The Interreg Euro-MED Programme considers that projects are part of a greater whole and participate in the promotion of the Interreg funds and EU benefits. In order to measure the Programme's communication impact, the project performance in terms of communication is included in the Programme

[85] Programme "key productions" are identified and agreed with the JS during the precontracting phase. The consolidated version of the application form only includes project "key productions".
[86] This information needs to be confirmed by the team working on Jems.
[87] See Section III Financial Issues, chapter A eligibility of expenditures, point viii Project branding and information and publicity rules of this Manual
[88] The reporting requirements and criteria set by the Programme are detailed in Annex G of the present Manual

communication strategy. Project partners are requested to draft a communication strategy (see related Chapter[89]) and to implement the compulsory communication activities foreseen by the programme in order to promote their project.

In this context, project partners are requested to provide the Programme with a series of data[90] that will help the Programme evaluate its global impact.

These data must be **provided in the frame of the full reporting** by means of an **online form to be completed**[91]. The respect of the rules of branding and communication established by the European regulations and the Programme must always be ensured by the partners in order to avoid any risk of ineligibility[92].

vii. Reporting on carbon footprint:

The EU aims to be climate-neutral by 2050 (European Council endorsement dated Dec. 2019) – an economy with net-zero greenhouse gas emissions. This objective, at the heart of the European Green Deal and the 2030 climate and energy framework, is regularly revised upwards, setting new emission reduction targets by 2030.

In this perspective the Programme intends to promote a systematic approach to measure carbon emissions, and provides a tool for the calculation and monitoring of emissions.

To provide a continuous carbon footprint assessment of the project activities, all partners that have participated in project activities must contribute to the carbon footprint calculation, even if they are not claiming expenditure for the referring period. Thus, under the responsibility of the coordinator for carbon footprint appointed for each project, the project partners are asked to assess for each reporting period the carbon footprint balance of their project activities by using the tool provided by the Programme.[93] For each reporting period from 2024 onwards, the CO2 report generated online by the tool for each project should be uploaded on Basecamp under the responsibility of the carbon footprint coordinator.

Futhermore, **during the full reporting the carbon footprint coordinator provides the JS with an analysis** of the compiled partners data stating the evolution of the project carbon footprint emissions since the begin of the project and providing an outlook on follow-up measures foreseen, which should be in line with the recommendations provided by the carbon footprint tool. (https://carbonfootprint.interreg-euro-med.eu/).

[89] Drafting ongoing
[90] The list of data that project partners shall collect and send is available in Annex G of the present Manual
[91] The online form for data collection will be made available by the Programme once a year and a notification will be sent to Lead partners, with a link toward the form
[92] See Section III Financial Issues, chapter A eligibility of expenditures, point viii Project branding and information and publicity rules of this Manual
[93] https://carbonfootprint.interreg-euro-med.eu/

viii. Joint Secretariat monitoring

a) Assessment and acceptance of the reporting package

Assessment made in a two-step process

After receiving the reporting package (PR and signed PC[94],) the JS carries out a first **administrative check** on submitted documents, to ensure that the procedure for costs reporting by project partners has been done in conformity with the Programme rules and respective the national control system of each participating State and that compulsory sections of the activity report are completed. The administrative check of the control documentation by the JS is performed on a 100% of the submitted reporting packages. A payment claim is receivable only if the NC certificates (and eventual national validation in the case of Spain and Portugal) have been submitted, filled-in and signed[95], and uploaded on Jems when preparing the financial part of the Project Report. Should a Certificate not be available at the time of closing a PR, it can always be included in the following RP, except in the case of the final PR.

Then the JS proceeds with a **coherence check**, held on a risk-based approach and based on the available list of expenditure of each project partner and including a focus on reported activities (based on full or partial reports and including eventual outputs and key deliverables). In this step, the control certificates and report are checked together with the checklist issued by controllers and the list of expenditure.

In case of incomplete information or eventual incongruency with the agreed Work Plan, the JS informs the LP of any necessary revision or need of further information and respective documents. Lead partners are notified by the JS and must provide missing information or material within 10 working days after notification. In principle only 2 submissions (first and completed) are foreseen in this phase. In case of persisting incompleteness, the report, partner certificate or cost can be rejected and postponed until the next reporting deadline. They shall be submitted together with the following PR considering the revisions requested by the JS. Reporting deadlines cannot be postponed.

After this check confirming the respect of programmes rules and circuits, the coherence of all supporting documents and the respect of the reporting procedure timeframe, the JS closes the checking procedure.

Assessment of key deliverables and outputs:

The project's key productions are reviewed by the JS on a continuous basis in order to allow the smooth development of projects activities. To this aim, each time a project key deliverable or output is finalised, the LP must make it available on Basecamp and inform the JS about its availability[96]. In principle, the JS validates the production presented by the project along the way, but in any case the key

[94] Electronic signature is accepted by the Programme , please refer to section I chapter E of this Manual
[95] Electronic signature is accepted by the Programme , please refer to section I chapter E of this Manual
[96] LP are recommended to activate automatic notification on Basecamp ~~is recommended~~

deliverable/output is officially "validated" and uploaded in Jems[97] at the latest during the nearest PR assessment.

Validation and payment procedure

The Managing Authority validates the JS verifications, prepares the payment order, and addresses it to the Accounting Authority that carries out the payments **directly to each project partner.**

b) Project daily monitoring

To guarantee an optimal execution of the project, the JS is regularly in contact with the project LP team and monitors project performance and partnership cohesion during the implementation phase on **a continuous basis.** This daily monitoring is part of the risk-based approach adopted by the JS and relies on:

- JS interaction with the LP and within the project partnership
- Material provided through the Project's website and Basecamp
- Key deliverables and outputs made available on Jems
- Interaction between thematic and Governance projects

In that sense, a smooth flow of information between LPs and project officers within the JS is essential for a successful project implementation. This contact is developed through day-to-day exchanges regarding all aspects of the project life. This flow of information requires a good level of responsiveness to the eventual JS requests and close cooperation on the resolution of any pending issue.

In project daily management, the interaction must be fluent and takes form at different levels: bilateral contacts LP-JS, ad-hoc meetings with the whole partnership, or specific LP-JS meetings with the participation of any other project partner concerned by the subject. Information flow between all persons involved in the project must be efficient, quick and transparent, so that problems can be tackled in a timely manner.

The NCPs have an important role when dealing with any national issue. In case the LP faces a problem concerning a specific partner, the JS and concerned NCP is included in the exchanges.

c) Online tools for day-to-day follow-up of project progress

The JS access on a regular basis the **Basecamp** platform, to check project material, progress and general financial consumption.

[97] This information needs to be confirmed by the team working on Jems.

Basecamp is provided by the Programme as a free platform to be used for deliverables storage, project management and it also constitutes an essential tool for monitoring and control purposes and to consider possible adjustments to the project's work plan. Thus, it's a responsibility of the LP to ensure the regular upload of relevant material and the consistent use of Basecamp by the full consortium, for internal communication and collaborative work.
Basecamp aims to be a key tool for the implementation of the project since it allows internal communication and exchange of working documents in the project. Accurately recorded information contributes to speed up the PR check and payment process.

The "day-to-day" work of the project (working documents, draft and finalized versions of productions…) must be legible on Basecamp, as this space is regularly checked by the Joint Secretariat for monitoring purposes. The Basecamp should include not only the key deliverables, but all documents produced during the project lifetime including the Steering Committee meetings minutes.

In parallel, it's a LP task to ensure the regular upload of relevant material and public deliverables on the project **website** that is regularly consulted by the JS.

d) Interaction between thematic and Governance projects

The interaction of **a project within the Interreg Euro-MED mission it belongs to** is another key indicator of good project management; in that sense thematic projects and governance projects must keep each other regularly updated about their respective implementation and collaborate closely. Thematic projects must be responsive to eventual requests from the respective Governance projects and try to contribute to their activities. In this framework, the JS must be informed of any problem or blocking issue.

Within the JS, a close collaboration is settled between project officers in charge of Governance projects and the ones in charge of thematic project in order to ease as much as possible the day-to-day implementation of Programme strategy. In that framework, the JS monitors closely all these flows of information, and the lack of effective interaction could be considered a serious risk for the success of the project.

e) Project performance and monitoring of project risks

During the implementation phase of the project, the JS evaluates once per year the **level of risk in the project's performance**, based on some pre-defined risk factors:

- Project composition (partnership dimension and total awarded budget)
- Difficulties on the project day to day management or in partnership functionning
- Absence of Payment Claims, (if expenses were foreseen in the AF)
- Persistent under-consumption [98] respect to the financial plan of the Application form
- Lack of expenses from a Partner in a recurrent way and without justification in view of the work plan
- Lack of participation or contribution to the activities of the Governance projects when such participation or contribution has been required
- Absence of interim version of key deliverables on Basecamp, if applicable
- Lack of activity on Basecamp
- Website not regularly updated
- Underperformance in the communication indicators with respect to the pre-defined objectives
- Existence of investment in the consolidated AF

In case one or more of those factors are noticed, the JS may organize an ad-hoc interview with the Project. In this meeting, the main achievements and problems of the project, as well as eventual modifications, may be discussed.

For the Governance projects, this interview takes place once per year, independently of the presence or not of any of the factors listed above.

In presence of high level of risk, these interviews can take place more than once a year.

Should it become evident that a project will not spend the maximum amount of subsidy granted by the Programme within the conditions and timeframe initially foreseen and according to the communication obligations stated in the Regulation[99], the JS may propose to the Monitoring Committee to reduce the amount granted accordingly. In such a case, the LP, in cooperation with the JS would propose a project modification and once validated by the MC, an official communication would be sent to the LP and, when applicable, a formal addendum is prepared and signed.

[98] Project financial performance will be based on section D.3 of the consolidated AF, in Jems and measured exclusively based on accepted payment claim and certified costs (not yet included in a payment claim) minus the amount of irregularities and recoveries (if applicable). In case the LP requests fewer funds on behalf of the project, than the commitment indicated in the AF, the difference is to be considered under risk and in cases where the difference would be observed on more than one payment claim, the under consumption would be qualified as "persistent".

[99] Art 36.6 of ETC regulation

NB: to ensure a good budget performance and limit the risk of facing a budget reduction during project lifetime the following are to be kept in mind:

- The project partners shall be in permanent contact with their national controllers and National authority so as to ensure that the expenditures can be certified in time;
- The financial performance of the project partners is strictly linked to project activities and both shall be monitored closely and regularly by the LP and presented to the full partnership in the framework of the project steering committee.
- Any adjustments (or when necessary, update of the AF) should be done in time and in cooperation with the JS in order to avoid last minute procedures.

ix. Additional aspects related to the monitoring of Governance Projects

In addition to the procedures applying to all projects, the monitoring of governance projects is based on some specific milestones and management steps stated in the ToRs and hearafter detailed. Those specific aspects, shared by all Governance projects are different from the usual reporting tasks and timeframes and a specific follow-up is setup by the JS. The basis for this specific monitoring stands in good cooperation expected between projects and project officers, as well as a good flow of information between projects within the same mission:

- Provided their transversal aspects, the total budget committed, their wide partnership dimension and the global structure of governance projects, these are considered as "risky operations" and will be systematically subject to the JS interview once a year as mentioned above.

- All Governance Projects must perform a co-assessment with the JS on the progress of implemented activities and update the work plans taking into account the work plans of the paired project and the workplan of the Euro-MED4Governance group. This co-assessment is held within the timeframe established by the JS and take the form of an interview and co-review with the Euro-MED4Governance group and will lead to a project update that may result in a formal modification and could lead to the signature of an addendum. The work plan update may be an occasion for a change within the partnership and/or a budget adjustment.

- All Governance projects must consider contributing to the UfM (Union for the Mediterranean) semestrial report. Following the obligation drawn from the labelling of the governance projects and following the instructions agreed within the Euro-MED4Governance Group, this report is drafted and submitted by the JS. **Governance projects contribution must be gathered on Basecamp through a specific template** provided by the JS.

- Governance projects are expected to **report on the Contribution of the Thematic Projects to the Sustainable Development Goals according to the UN** methodology for the selected goals. To this aim a specific template provided by the JS shall be submitted through Basecamp within the timeframe established by the JS, as part of the project key deliverables.

- All Governance Projects must participate in the **data collection** needed to perform the assessment of the Results Amplification Strategy **(RAS)** of the Programme (perform surveys, provide statistical data, etc.) Among the data the JS intend to collect and process in the framework of the RAS, the Governance Projects should assist in the collection of the data[100] through **a questionnaire submitted at the appropriate time by the JS or through the analysis of data collected via the Euro-MED Academy** that will be co-managed between the JS and the governance projects.

[100] the list of data that Governance projects shall collect and analyse is available in Annex G of the present Manual

F. Project websites and tools

i. The Interreg Euro-MED web platform

The communication approach focuses on (expected) results rather than on processes or simple outputs. Each project is part of a Mission to which they contribute. The Programme developed a single web platform where all project websites including Missions and Programme websites are hosted. Once their project approved, project partners will receive a ready-to-use website they will be able to customise and edit as they wish. For this reason, no website development nor hosting costs should be foreseen by project partners.

a) Architecture

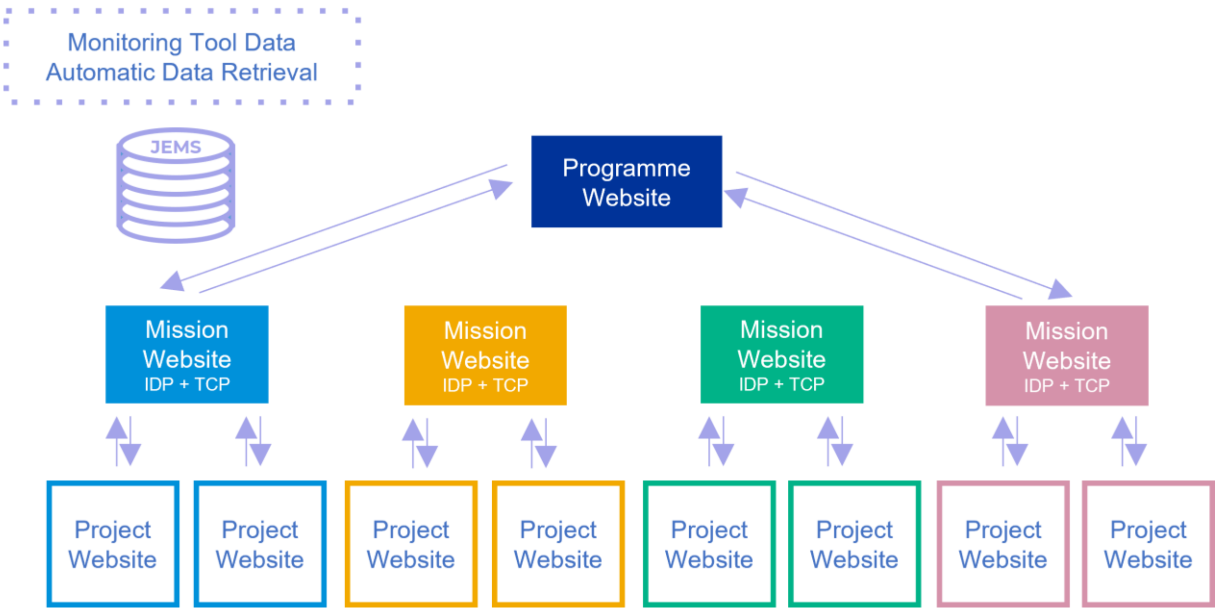
What does the web platform consist of?

The web platform is the main communication hub and promotional tool for the Programme, in that sense, a special attention should be paid to its frequent updating and layout.

The web platform is structured in order to reflect the Programme architecture and integrate the following elements:

- The Interreg Euro-MED Programme website;
- 4 websites, one dedicated to each of the four Programme Mission: Sustainable economy, Natural resources, Green living areas and Sustainable tourism.
  Important : Governance Projects (Institutional Dialogue and Thematic Community projects) from a same mission will share a single website in order to gather in a single place the comprehensive information regarding a mission, be it technical or policy related.
- Project websites (each one being linked to a related "mission" website);

FIGURE 1: Architecture of the Web Platform



All websites are hosted on a single web platform in order to guarantee a homogeneous approach. They all share the same features as well as a similar design.

Projects websites will be provided with a menu template and some contents and features that can be modified by project partners.

b) Main objectives:

With this common approach on design and implementation of the project's website and the "ready to use" websites delivered to project partners, the Interreg Euro-Med Programme intends to:

- Harmonise all websites of the Programme (organisation, layout, content, user interfaces and navigation experience);
- Facilitate the navigation from one website of the web platform to another for all Programme and external stakeholders;
- Help partners ensure compliance of their website with the European Commission and Programme publicity rules (main features appearing on all websites; publication of specific compulsory information according to the regulation, etc);
- Reduce website development and hosting costs by providing project partners with a standard website integrating the functionalities

necessary for the project life and adaptable to project evolution and to each project type;
- Offer project technical tools to facilitate the transfer and analysis of data through common formats and technologies (calendar, directory, documents, etc.).

For the Programme the main objectives are to:

- Ensure the durability and transferability of projects' productions in their context and in time, even after the programming period;
- Facilitate and automatize the collection of data present in the project websites, spread information at Mission and Programme level and the production of statistics (directories, calendars, documents (maps, databases … etc.), news and events;
- Improve pedagogical materials and Programme support to project partners by providing them with similar tools as well as customised resources and technical support;
- Develop internal dashboards to the attention of JS and Programme key stakeholders (National Authorities, Controllers, National Contact Points, etc.) summarising data from the project websites and from the monitoring tool.

c) Technical specificities

All websites run on Wordpress, a user-friendly support known by the majority of Project partners, and are based on the Divi template. A specific Divi template was designed for each type of websites: Programme, Mission and project, allowing for customisation.

The following features can be found on all websites:

- News
- Event calendar
- Event management tool
- Form Tool
- Page
- Multiple profile accounts (Administrator, contributor and subscriber)
- Deliverable library
- Open street map feature
- Forum
- FAQ and Glossary
- Directory of individuals and institutions
- Search
- Multimedia galleries
- Dashboards and monitoring tools

- Analytics
- Bug tracker

d) User manual and tutorials

Project partners are provided with guidelines, a user manual and video tutorials to help them manage their project website. All training materials are available for download on the Programme website[101].

ii. Basecamp

a) Objective

In order to ease the projects' day to day work and ensure a good communication and transfer of information between all Programme stakeholders and levels (programme authorities and projects under their missions), the Programme opted for the **Basecamp online tool** which shall be used as the main **project management and communication tool**.

Once approved, each project gets its own Basecamp workspace. To do so, the Communication Unit of the Programme ensures the creation of the Basecamp users and "Basecamp workspace", based on the contact information provided in Jems.

NB: The "Partner account" does not allow adding new users to a workspace nor creating new "Basecamp projects". During project implementation and in case of change among the staff appointed to a project, Jems must be updated and Project partners shall inform the JS by using a dedicated form LINK to add new users to their workspace.

Through Basecamp, project partners can exchange information, documents and draft deliverables. Basecamp is mostly provided as a working tool between project partners, the Joint Secretariat does not intervene in the tool but can use it to access to project material and assess intermediate deliverables that need to be validated.

b) Features

Once a partner is granted with a "Partner account", they have access to a workspace containing the following features:

- Message board,
- Shared agenda,
- To-do's,
- Group and private chats,

[101] Documents & tools - Programme Interreg Euro-MED (interreg-euro-med.eu)

- Documents and file storage.

Other workspaces

For collaboration purposes, project partners may be invited by the JS to join more Basecamp workspaces other than the one of their projects (Programme communication workspace or the Result Amplification Strategy workspace). In that case, an invitation is sent by the responsible person directly to the user identified as referent to the matter on Jems.

c) User manual

Project partners are provided with guidelines to manage their Basecamp workspace available on Documents & tools - Programme Interreg Euro-MED (interreg-euro-med.eu).

G. Monitoring the Governance projects (drafting ongoing)

H. Amending my project (drafting ongoing)

I. Closing my project (drafting ongoing)

III. Financial issues

A. Eligibility of expenditures

This chapter aims to define the main financial requirements of the Programme regarding the expenditure of project Lead partners and partners. These elements must be taken into account in the preparation of project proposals[102], the implementation of projects and the expenditure declaration process.

i. Hierarchy of rules on eligibility of expenditure

The general framework for the management of European funds applicable to projects financed by the Interreg Euro-MED Programme is set by the **Financial Regulation** (EU, Euratom) No 2018/1046 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, amending Regulations (EU) No 1296/2013, (EU) No 1301/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1304/2013, (EU) No 1309/2013, (EU) No 1316/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) No 283/2014 and Decision No 541/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012;

In the framework of Interreg Programmes, three additional levels of rules must be considered by project partners and their controllers concerning the eligibility of expenditure:

a) The EU rules

- Regulation (EU) n° 2021/1060 laying down **common provisions** on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund Plus, the Cohesion Fund, the Just Transition Fund and the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund and financial rules for those, and for the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, the Internal Security Fund and the Instrument for Financial Support for Border Management and Visa Policy (**Common Provisions Regulation - CPR**);
- Regulation (EU) n° 2021/1058 on the European Regional Development Fund and on the Cohesion Fund (**ERDF Regulation**);
- Regulation (EU) n° 2021/1059 on specific provisions for the European territorial cooperation goal (Interreg) supported by the European Regional Development Fund and external financing instruments (**Interreg Regulation**);
- Regulation (EU) n° 2021/1529 establishing the Instrument for Pre-Accession assistance (**regulation IPA III**) ;

[102]Information on how to prepare the budget for your project proposal can be found in the chapter on "Drawing up my budget" in this Manual

- The **financing agreements** signed between the European Commission and the government of each IPA Participating State.

In case of amendment of the above-mentioned legal norms and documents, **the latest version applies**.

b) The Programme rules

The Programme rules constitute additional rules on the eligibility of expenditure for the Programme as a whole and **are set out in this document**. Unless otherwise specified, the Programme rules apply equally to public and private partners from EU and IPA territories.

c) National eligibility rules

National eligibility rules apply to **issues that would not be covered by the above mentioned EU or Programme eligibility rules** and must be **checked, prior to the execution of the expenditure, with the relevant National Authority**.

ii. Forms of reimbursement

a) Real costs

The project partners commit and pay the expenditures. They evidence expenditure by means of invoices or any other equivalent accounting document. They ensure that expenditure is referenced in an accounting system, and is based on the delivery of works, services or supplies.

b) Simplified cost options (SCOs)

Predefined unit costs, lump sums or flat rates are used as the basis for calculating a partner's expenditure. Under the Programme the following SCOs apply:

- **Lump sum for project preparation costs,** TOTAL amount 37.000€: This lump sum is compulsory for all projects. This simplified cost option exempts project partners from presenting any evidence of the existence or payment of expenditure related to the preparation of the proposal.
- **Flat rate for the calculation of office and administrative expenditure,** 15% of eligible staff costs: This flat rate is mandatory for all partners. This simplified cost option exempts project partners from presenting any evidence of the existence or payment of expenditure covered by the category.

- Flat rate for the calculation of travel and accommodation expenditure, 15% or 22%[103] of eligible staff costs: The applicable flat rate varies according to the location of the partners. This simplified cost option exempts project partners from presenting any evidence of the existence or payment of expenditure covered by the category.

iii. General eligibility criteria

Expenditure on approved projects (with the exception of flat rates or lump sums) may be eligible for reimbursement provided that they meet all of the following general eligibility criteria, which must be checked and guaranteed by the authorised national controllers[104]:

- They are related to the implementation of the project according to the latest approved version of the Application Form;
- They are essential for the implementation of the project and would not have been incurred if the project was not implemented;
- They respect the principle of real costs;
- They respect the principle of sound financial management;
- They are incurred and paid directly by a co-financed partner of the project, with the exception of flat rates or lump sums;
- They are justified by proof of payment;
- They are incurred and paid during the eligibility period of the project;
- They are recorded in the accounts of the project partner through a separate accounting system, or an appropriate accounting code set up specifically for the project;
- They respect the eligibility rules of the EU, the Programme and the country in which the partner is located;
- They respect the applicable rules on public procurement;
- They are related to costs that are not financed by other European funds, as this would constitute double financing;
- They respect the rules of branding and communication established by the European regulations and the Programme.

[103] The flat rate for the calculation of travel expenditure varies according to the country in which the project partner is based (15% Partner from an EU Member State territory; 22% Partner from an IPA State)
[104] The National Controller (formerly called "First Level Controller") is the body or person responsible for verifying at national level that the co-financed products and services have been delivered, that the related expenditure has been paid and that it complies with the applicable EU, Programme and national rules. For more information on the national control system to be applied in each participating state please refer to “Chapter D: Controls, audits and verifications”

Please be aware that expenditure which do not comply with the applicable eligibility rules cannot be claimed, even if they are included in the approved Application form.

iv. Non-eligible costs

The list of non-eligible expenditure for the Programme is as follows:

Non-eligible expenditure according to the CPR Regulation Article 64 (1)

- Interest on debt;
- The purchase of land for an amount exceeding 10 % of the total eligible expenditure for the operation concerned; for derelict sites and for those formerly in industrial use which comprise buildings, the limit shall be increased to 15 %.
- Value added tax ('VAT'), except:
    - for operations the total cost of which is below EUR 5 000 000 (including VAT);
    - for operations the total cost of which is at least EUR 5 000 000 (including VAT) where it is non-recoverable under national VAT legislation.

Non-eligible expenditure according to ERDF Regulation:

- the actions mentioned in article 7 of the ERDF Regulation cannot be financed by the Programme (exhaustive list);

Non-eligible expenditure according to Interreg Regulation Article 38 (3):

- Fines, financial penalties and expenditure on legal disputes and litigation;
- Costs of gifts;
- Costs related to fluctuation of foreign exchange rate[105].

Non-eligible expenditure according to Programme rules:

- In-kind contributions[106] (including unpaid voluntary work);
- Fees for national financial transactions;
- Purchase of land;

[105] See chapter « Drawing up my budget » of this Manual, "conversion in Euro"
[106] Definition: Contributions in the form of the provision of works, goods, services, land and buildings for which no cash payment, supported by invoices or documents of equivalent probative value, has been made. Personnel costs for staff working in one of the partner institutions on the basis of an employment contract and receiving a regular salary do not count as a contribution in kind, but as a cash contribution, as the staff costs are indeed paid by the partner institution.

- Specialised interventions (e.g. soil remediation, mine-clearing)
- Shared costs[107];
- Costs of gifts;
- Ad-hoc bonuses on salary related to project's approval;
- Activity-related investments, as described by Directive 2011/92/EU (Annex I);
- Activity-related investments, as described by Directive 2011/92/EU (Annex II), except those implemented in the framework of pilot activities;
- Where the "real costs" method is used and for invited persons and associated partners: Travel and accommodation costs exceeding the national threshold for daily allowances where this threshold is applicable to the partner under the national eligibility rules [108];
- When using the "real costs" method and for invited persons and associated partners: Unused transport tickets, regardless of the reason for cancellation;
- When using the "real costs" method and for invited persons and associated partners: travel costs for travel from/to airports and ports not internationally recognized;
- Expenditure related to travel or activities outside the Programme cooperation area and outside the EU[109] which have not been expressly accepted by the Joint Secretariat (JS);
- Subcontracting between partners and/or associated partners of the same project for services, expertise, equipment and works carried out within the project;
- Monetary awards for competition winners;
- Non-monetary awards not expressly accepted by the JS, for competition winners

[107] Cost sharing is defined as a pro rata allocation of certain project expenditure incurred by one project partner and shared among various other project partners
[108] Regardless of the legal status of the partners, it is the responsibility of each partner and National Controller to check with their NA whether the obligation to respect a national threshold applies to the partner organisation or not (applicable for travel costs of project staff, or guests, external experts, declared as real costs).
[109] Activities also include "equipment located and operated outside the cooperation area and outside the EU".

- Contractual advance payments[110]
- Costs in the category of infrastructure and works relating to a structure located outside the Programme cooperation area.
- Costs (all categories) relating to an investment[111] that does not appear in the consolidated application form
- Costs related to promotional items not expressly accepted by the JS[112]
- The creation of logos other than those expressly accepted by the JS, as being intended to become a label or a brand.
- A subscription to a communication and project management tool limited to the same functionalities as those offered by the Basecamp tool already provided by the Programme.
- The development, hosting and maintenance of a project website providing similar functionalities to those of the website provided by the Programme.

v. Eligibility period

From a timing perspective, expenditure is eligible according to the following periods of time:

a) Preparation

The costs for the preparation and contracting phase of an approved project are covered by a lump sum of 37 000€ (Total amount) established by the Programme and indicated in the approved Application Form. This lump sum is fixed and compulsory for all projects and must be shared between all project partners in proportion to their participation in the preparation of the proposal.

[110] Contractual advances established in accordance with the law and normal commercial practice, stipulated in a contract between the partner and the expert/service provider, proven by receipted invoices can be carried forward but can only be declared as eligible expenditure for reimbursement by the Programme, after confirmation that the service has been delivered correctly and on time.

[111] "Investment" as referred to in the Programme: section Designing my project and submitting my application, chapter Designing project activities, composition of a project of this Manual

[112] To be eligible, the costs of promotional items must comply with the Programme rules available in section 8 below, and be expressly accepted by the JS.

b) Implementation

Expenditure related to **the implementation** of an approved project is **eligible from the date of approval of the project by the Programme Committee[113] until its official ending date, as established in the most recent version of the approved Application Form.**

All operational expenditure must be **related to the implementation of an activity carried out before the official ending date of the project** as established in the most recent version of the approved Application Form.

Expenditure related to the implementation of the project and to closure activities, **must be paid[114] by the ending date of the project. Any expenditure paid after this date, whatever the nature of the activity concerned, is ineligible. It is up to each partner to organise, in cooperation with the LP, the reporting of the expenses related to the closure considering the deadline for the payment of the invoices, the certification and reporting deadlines.**

In order to facilitate the closure process, the Programme recommends to complete the activities related to the implementation of the activities 3 months before the end date of the project

The starting date of eligibility of expenses is the same for all partners participating in the Programme (from EU or IPA territories), but for partners from IPA countries, no claim for reimbursement can be presented before the signature of a Financing Agreement between the European Commission and the government of each IPA country[115].

vi. Conversion into euro[116]

All expenditure made in a currency other than the euro must be converted into euro, according to the monthly accounting exchange rate of the European Commission in force in the month in which the expenditure was submitted by the partner to the National Controller for verification.[117]

[113] The date of approval of a project refers to the Programme Committee decision and is mentioned in the Managing Authority notification sent by the JS and available on Jems
[114] i.e debited from the bank account of the project partner
[115] The signature of the Financing Agreement for each participating IPA State concerned took place on the following dates: Albania on XX; Bosnia and Herzegovina on XX; North Macedonia on XX; and Montenegro on XX.
[116] Art 38.5 of the Interreg Regulation (EU) 2021/1059, and by derogation of Article 76(1)(c) of the Regulation (EU) 2021/1060
[117] The European Commission publishes monthly exchange rates on the first day of each month at: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/procedures-guidelines-tenders/information-contractors-and-beneficiaries/exchange-rate-inforeuro_en

Please note that the Programme online monitoring tool, Jems, will perform this calculation automatically and in accordance with the regulations. However, in the case of "pending" expenditure, the National Controller is responsible for verifying that the conversion has been carried out correctly when the expenditure is certified.

vii. Categories of costs[118]

The project budget must be structured according to the following cost categories (CC) provided for in the Regulation:

a) Staff Costs (CC1)

Staff costs expenditure consist of the **gross employment costs of staff employed by the project partner** (Lead partner or partner) for implementing the project (already employed staff by the project partner or contracted specifically for the project). Eligible costs in this category are limited to the following[119] :

A. **Payment of gross salaries** fixed in an employment document[120](or in an appointment decision/employment contract) or by law relating to responsibilities specified in the job description of the staff member concerned. Staff costs claimed under the project must relate to activities which the project partner would not carry out if the concerned project was not undertaken.

B. **Other costs directly linked to salary payments** incurred and paid by the employer (such as employment taxes and social security including pensions as provided for in Regulation (EC) N°883/2004), considering that they are:

- Provided for in an employment document or by law;
- In accordance with the legislation referred to in the employment document and with standard practices in the country or the organisation where the individual staff member is currently working;
- Not recoverable by the employer.

Method for reporting costs

Staff costs are reimbursed according to a **real cost approach** based on the monthly working time dedicated by a staff member to the project (full time or part time on

[118] Depending on the type of call and project selected, one or more cost categories may be prohibited by the Programme, the information is then included in the Budget section of the Courtesy version of the Application Form.
[119] Article 39 of Regulation (EU) No 1059/2021
[120] The term "employment document" refers to an employment contract or other equivalent legal agreement that defines the employment relationship with the partner organisation.

the project[121]) without the obligation to establish a separate working time registration system (e.g. timesheets). The proportion of the monthly salary dedicated to the project is fixed in the task assignment template made available to the partners on Jems/by the Programme. The assignment template is a **compulsory** document which must be completed, signed and kept up to date for each employee declaring staff costs in the framework of an Interreg Euro-MED project.

- full-time assignment to the project **(100%)**
- part-time assignment with a fixed percentage of time worked on the project per month **(<100%)**

The staff costs claimed must be **calculated individually** for each staff member working on the project and **for each month of project implementation** by **applying a fixed monthly percentage of the time spent on the project to the actual gross monthly salary costs paid by the partner organisation.**

Even in the case of occasional and limited staff participation, a fixed percentage can be applied.

The monthly percentage of participation should be determined on the basis of a realistic estimate considering the amount and frequency of participation of each staff member in the project activities per month.

This method aims to simplify the declaration of expenditure but the adequacy of staff costs must always be ensured. **The principle of proportionality** must always be respected and checked in the process of reporting and certifying expenditure. **If the staff costs claimed are not adequate in quality and/or quantity in relation to the production of the deliverables and outputs for the project, a correction must be applied on the basis of this proportionality principle.**

The Task Assignment template

The task assignment template is the basis to prove the plausibility of the time allocation:

- It is issued individually for each staff member (not a group) per project.
- It is usually issued at the beginning of the (reporting) period to which it applies.
- It is signed by the employee and the employer/ a line manager/ supervisor.
- It must contain the percentage of time dedicated to the project per month and a description of the project-related role, responsibilities and

[121] It should be noted that the notions of full-time and part-time refer to **the relationship of the employee to the project** and not to the employer.

tasks. The level of detail for the tasks should be proportionate to the involvement. It is expected that for higher percentages of involvement, task descriptions are correspondingly detailed, whilst for little involvement a more general description will be sufficient.

The time allocation (fixed percentage) and description of tasks could be reviewed on a regular basis (e.g. annual staff appraisal) and adjusted if needed (e.g. due to changes in tasks and responsibilities in the project). Should the percentage change, the respective amendments should be introduced in the task assignment template and the new percentage will apply to all staff costs not yet validated by the controller.

Applying the fixed percentage method for staff does not require to have a dedicated time recording system (i.e. timesheets) at the level of the individual staff member or the organisation. No additional periodic staff reports to verify staff costs should be asked and provided.

/!\ Beware

In principle, the fixed percentage could cover the whole duration of the project, and it should AT LEAST cover a full implementation period. However, for each implementation period, the percentage of working time dedicated to the project may change, especially in the cases described below:

- Changes in the team working on the project (adding or removing staff members);
- Changes in the tasks and responsibilities of the staff member, e.g. changes in the employment contract and/or assignment decision;
- Changes in the level of participation of the partner in the project activities, based on the approved Application Form/a project modification approved by the Programme;

In the event of a change, the employer must update the task assignment template: any update of this percentage must be made in the Jems monitoring tool and will apply to all staff costs not yet validated by the controller.

EXAMPLE 1

Staff contracted for the implementation of an Interreg Euro-MED project or devoting 100% of their working time to the project

Staff member whose task assignment template indicates that 100% of his/her working time is spent on an Interreg Euro-MED project.

Calculation of staff costs:

Total monthly salary (gross salary[122]): EUR 3.000

Staff costs claimed : 3.000 EUR

EXAMPLE 2

One member of staff works part-time on the project, **with a fixed proportion of the time worked** on the project per month

Staff member whose task assignment template indicates that 60% of his/her working time is spent on an Interreg Euro-MED project.

Calculation of staff costs:

Total monthly salary (gross salary [123]): EUR 3.000

% of time worked on the Interreg Euro-MED project established: 60%

*Staff costs claimed: 3.000 EUR * 60% = 1.800 €*

[122] monthly salary cost (gross salary, including employer's charges and other costs directly related to the payment of salaries)
[123] monthly salary cost (gross salary, including employer's charges and other costs directly related to the payment of salaries)

Natural persons[124] working for the partner institution:

Payments to **natural persons** working for the Interreg partner under a contract other than an employment or work contract may be treated as salaries[125] and such costs are eligible if:

- The person works under the instructions of the project partner and, unless otherwise agreed with the project partner, on the premises of the project partner;
- The result of the work performed belongs to the project partner;
- The costs are not significantly different from those for personnel performing similar tasks under an employment contract with the project partner.

If all the above conditions are not met, this expenditure must be allocated to the Cost category External expertise and services costs.

Audit trail

The following key documents should be available for control purposes:

- **Employment document** (Employment/Working Contract and/or Assignment Decision), including the name of the project or any other equivalent legal agreement that defines the employment relationship of concerned staff member with the partner organisation. Where standard practice in the partner organisation does not require the use of specific assignment decisions, the Programme document will be sufficient to demonstrate participation.
- **Task assignment document signed, MANDATORY template** provided in Jems, describing the involvement of the employee in the Interreg Euro-MED project,) signed by the employer and the employee. The task assignment document must be available for the implementation of the partner's expenditure control work and must be submitted to the JS via Jems as part of the submission of the first certificate of the national controller including staff costs. The documents can be updated in the cases described above for each new reporting period prior to the submission of the expenditure for verification by the national controller.
- **Payslips or other documents of equivalent probative value** related to the staff expenses declared for the current year and where the gross salary, employer's social contributions and other compulsory payments are clearly identifiable.

[124] As national regulations on this issue differ from country to country, the Programme does not provide a definition of natural person. Partners and national controllers are required to clarify this notion at the very beginning of the project in cooperation with their National Authority and in accordance with their institutional regulations, and it is advisable to keep track of the conclusions reached on the subject as part of the project audit trail.

[125] 125 Only employment contracts (and such ones comparable to employment contracts) fall under the **labour law** and are therefore to be considered as staff costs, which have to be reported under this cost category. All other contracts like contracts for services are subject to procurement law and consequently they have to be reported under the cost category "external expertise and services"

- **Proof of payment** of salaries and employer's contributions and other costs related to the staff costs declared for the current financial year.
- **No recording of working time (e.g. timesheets or similar documents) is required.**

b) Office and administrative costs[126] (CC2)

Office and administrative costs cover operating and administrative expenses of the project partner that are necessary for the implementation of the project.

The eligible expenditure items under this cost category are (exhaustive list):

a) Office rent;
b) Insurance and taxes related to the buildings where the staff is located and to the equipment of the office (such as fire or theft insurance);
c) Utilities (such as electricity, heating, water);
d) Office supplies;
e) Accounting ;
f) Archives ;
g) Maintenance, cleaning and repairs;
h) Security;
i) IT systems;
j) Communication (such as telephone, fax, internet, postal services, business cards);
k) Bank charges for opening and administering the account or accounts where the implementation of an operation requires a separate account to be opened;
l) Charges for transnational financial transactions.

None of the expenditure items included in the above list can be declared as real cost under any other cost category and **direct costs under this cost category are not eligible for the Programme.**

Method for reporting costs

No detailed budget is required for this cost category. **The amounts for Office and administrative costs corresponding to each partner are calculated by the online monitoring tool** according to a flat rate of **15% of the eligible staff costs. The flat rate**

[126] Article 40 of Regulation (EU) No 1059/2021 and Article 54 (b) of Regulation (EU) No 1060/2021

mechanism applicable to this cost category is mandatory for all project partners and the 15% rate is fixed.

The calculation is done automatically by the online monitoring tool:

- when creating the category "staff costs" in the Application Form (estimation)
- when declaring expenditure under the staff costs category (eligible expenditure)

Administrative and office costs are thus automatically reimbursed by the Programme on the basis of eligible staff costs. The controller does not need to check anything regarding office and administrative expenditure, their control focuses on the correct reporting of staff costs and should ensure that no expenditure related to office and administration is included in any other cost category.

/!\ Beware

If among the direct staff costs (used as a basis for calculating administrative and office costs) all or part is deemed ineligible, the determined amount of administrative and office costs will automatically be recalculated and reduced accordingly.

Audit trail

The flat rate of 15% of staff costs for the determination of the amounts related to office and administrative costs is a simplified cost option foreseen by Art. 54(b) CPR (EU) 2021/1060. Thus, partners do not have to document or prove that the expenditure has been incurred and paid, and no documents confirming that the flat rate corresponds to the reality of the costs can be requested by the different levels of control.

c) Travel and accommodation costs[127] (CC3)

The costs under this category refer to travel and accommodation expenses of the **staff of the project partner institution** for missions essential to the effective implementation of the project.

The eligible expenditure items under this budget line are (exhaustive list):

a) Travel costs (e.g. tickets, travel and car insurance, car mileage, toll and parking fees) ;
b) Costs of meals ;

[127] Article 41 of Regulation (EU) No 1059/2021 and Article 54 (b) of Regulation (EU) No 1060/2021

c) Accommodation costs ;
d) Visa costs ;

d) Per diem (daily allowances).

Any item of expenditure listed under a) to d) already covered by a **daily allowance** should not be reimbursed in addition to the daily allowance.

Method for reporting costs

The Programme provides for two methods of declaring travel and accommodation costs.

1. as a fixed **flat rate of 15% or 22%**[128] **of eligible staff costs**
2. as real costs only in case the flat rate is not an appropriate method for the partner for **justified reasons**

/!\ Beware

It is up to each partner to decide which **declaration method for travel and accommodation costs** they wish to use - please bear in mind that from the first participation in a Euro-MED application, partners should choose one declaration method and it will not be possible to modify it after the starting of the first project, i.e. it will apply for the implementation of all the Interreg Euro-MED projects in which the partner organisation will participate.

The chosen calculation method will be checked by the JS during the assessment of the applications and corrected if necessary, during the pre-contracting phase.

No deviation from this rule will be accepted and no change of method will be accepted after the start of the partner's first project.

Travel and accommodation costs are reimbursed at a fixed flat rate of eligible staff costs (method 1):

- **15%** for partners based in EU territories,
- **22%** for partners based in territories of IPA countries.

By choosing this method, it is not necessary to set a detailed budget for travel and accommodation as the calculation is done automatically by the online monitoring tool Jems:

1. when creating the category "staff costs" in the Application Form **(estimate)**

[128] Percentages are fixed and partners using the flat rate method must stick with 15% or 22% rates ; no other percentage will be accepted

2. in the process of declaring expenditure under the category staff costs **(eligible expenditure)**.

Travel and accommodation expenses are automatically reimbursed by the Programme on the basis of the eligible staff costs declared to the project. The controller does not have to check anything regarding travel expenditure, their control focuses on the correct reporting of staff costs and should ensure that no expenditure related to travel and accommodation is included in any other cost category.

The flat rate mechanism for this cost category must be foreseen in the Application Form and is an option open to any project partner. The indicated rate of 15% or 22% is fixed and depends on the location of the project partner.

/!\ Beware

If all or part of the direct staff costs (used as a basis for calculating travel and accommodation costs) are found to be ineligible, the determined amount of travel and accommodation costs will automatically be recalculated and reduced accordingly.

Audit trail

The flat rate of 15% or 22% of staff costs for the determination of amounts related to travel and accommodation costs is a simplified cost option provided in the Interreg Regulation Article 41 (5). Partners do not have to document or prove that the expenses have been incurred and paid, and no documents confirming that the flat rate corresponds to the reality of the costs can be requested by the different levels of control.

Real costs

In exceptional and duly justified cases, it is also possible to opt for the declaration of travel and accommodation costs as **real costs (method 2)**[129].

/!\ Beware

- Travel and accommodation costs must be clearly linked to the project and be essential for the implementation of the project activities.

[129] A note indicating the reasons justifying the use of the real costs method should be provided at the time of application and attached to the Application Form for formal approval by the Programme.

- Travel and accommodation costs **must be covered by the partner organisation**. Direct payment by a staff member of the partner organisation must be supported by proof of reimbursement by the employer to the staff member.
- Cost-effectiveness should be ensured, taking into account the full cost of the mission (travel costs, travel-related staff costs, etc.).
- The maximum daily rate for hotel and daily allowances must be respected, in accordance with national eligibility rules[130]. **NB: the applicability of these thresholds is not linked to the legal status (public or private) of the project partners. In case of doubt the partner/controller must refer to the relevant National Authority.**

Audit trail (real costs)

When using the real cost method, the following key documents must be available for control purposes:

- Signed mission request/authorisation indicating the name of the employee, date/duration, location and scope of the mission (according to the internal policy of the partner organisation, e.g. mission assignment)
- Agenda (or similar) of the meeting / seminar / conference
- In case of travel outside the cooperation area and outside the EU, the express approval of the JS
- Invoices paid directly by the project partner institution, original tickets and any other evidence confirming the reality and the amount of the declared costs
    - Proof of payment
    - Daily allowance claims (if applicable)
    - Employee's claim for reimbursement, either based on the per diem or on the real cost (in the case of costs incurred by a staff member of the partner organisation)
- Travel invoices paid by a staff member claiming reimbursement on the basis of real costs, tickets and any other evidence documents (e.g. metro/bus tickets, meal invoices, personal car claim with mileage sheet, according to national procedures and agreed values)
- Proof of actual reimbursement to the staff member (if applicable)
- Any other documents that the National Controller may request in order to verify compliance with national legislation.

Specific cases:

Travel and accommodation costs of an employee not declaring staff costs

[130] Please note that for the same partner the threshold to be respected may vary according to the country where the travel occurs. For specific information on the threshold to be respected for each partner, please contact your National Authority, your National Contact Point or visit the national information page on the Interreg Euro-MED Programme website.

Travel and accommodation costs of a staff member belonging to the partner organisation, (e.g. decision-makers, administrators, management etc.) invited to participate in events connected with or organised by the project fall under the present category of costs.

Travel and accommodation costs of External Experts

Travel and accommodation costs for external experts (including speakers and invited experts) and service providers, as well as those related to associated partners[131] and/or in-house bodies, can only be claimed under the cost category **External expertise and services.**

Travel outside the Interreg Euro-MED area[132] :

Travel and accommodation costs related to activities taking place **outside the Programme cooperation area but in an EU Member State** (e.g. Brussels, etc.), are possible as long as they are in line with the project objectives and will be simply communicated to the JS on a regular basis for information.

Travel and accommodation costs related to activities taking place **outside the Programme cooperation area** and **outside the EU** are only eligible if they are foreseen in the approved Application Form or expressly accepted by the JS.

It is recommended that travel outside the Programme cooperation area and the EU be limited as it is expected that project activities will be mainly focused on the Interreg Euro-MED territory for a better impact on the cooperation area.

e) External expertise and service costs [133] (CC4)

The costs in this category correspond to external expertise and services provided by a public or private entity, or by a natural person not declared as staff of the partner organisation. External experts and service providers are contracted to carry out certain tasks and activities essential to the implementation of the project. The costs of external expertise and services shall be paid on the basis of contracts or written agreements of equivalent value, supported by tangible and documented invoices or claims issued by the providers of goods/services (or the persons mentioned in point o) of Article 42 of ETC Regulation 1059/2021).

[131] Definition of associated partner: Public, private or international institutions wishing to participate in the project without contributing financially See Part I.B of the Manual
[132] The Euro-MED Interreg Programme area is composed of 69 regions from 14 countries, see Cooperation area (https://interreg-euro-med.eu/en/where-we-work/)
[133] Article 42 of Regulation (EU) No 1059/2021

Eligible expenditure under this cost category is as follows (exhaustive list):

a. Studies or surveys (e.g. evaluations, strategies, concept notes, design plans, handbooks);
b. Training;
c. Translations;
d. Development, modifications and updates to IT systems and website[134];
e. Promotion, communication, publicity, promotional activities and objects or information related to an operation or programme as such;
f. Financial management;
g. Services related to the organisation and implementation of events or meetings (including rent, catering and interpretation);
h. Participation in events (e.g. registration fees);
i. Legal consultancy and notarial services, technical and financial expertise, other consultancy and accountancy services;
j. Intellectual property rights;
k. Verification and validation of expenditure carried out by authorized national controllers;
l. Provisions of guarantees by a bank or other financial institution where required by EU or national law or in a programming document adopted by the Monitoring Committee;
m. Travel and accommodation for external experts, speakers, chairpersons of meetings and service providers;
n. Other specific expertise and services needed for the project.

Method for reporting costs

Costs related to the use of expertise and services are reimbursed by the Programme on the basis of **real costs.**

/!\ Beware

External expertise and services should be necessary specifically for the effective implementation of project activities.

- The eligibility of external expertise and service costs is subject to full compliance with EU, Programme and national procurement rules (including institutional

[134] With reference to points d) and e) and in the framework of the Interreg Euro-MED Programme the project website is provided free of charge by the Programme and is therefore not eligible as such, however the costs related to the management of the project website provided by the Programme as well as the development or purchase of specific functionalities for the website provided are eligible under CC4 under point d) as well as the development of tools or platforms constituting the very core of the project or serving to achieve an objective of the project.

regulations if stricter) or principles of competitive tendering, and must comply with the principles of transparency, non-discrimination and equal treatment[135].

- External expertise and services must be duly indicated in the Application Form describing at least the selection procedure, the nature of the expertise/service, and the corresponding budget.
- Costs corresponding to project activities subcontracted to "in-house" bodies, related travel and accommodation costs, as well as costs corresponding to cooperation between public entities, must be included in this cost category. They must be declared as real costs (without any margin) and respect the applicable provisions on public procurement (depending on the legal status of the subcontracted body). [136]
- Non-monetary awards for competition winners are eligible provided that the connection to the project is well justified and that the award is necessary for the successful implementation of the project. The JS should expressly accept such costs in order to assess their relevance and provide guidance to partners on this point.
- Activities complementary to events (e.g. site visits) are eligible under this category as long as they are directly connected to the project.
- Travel and accommodation costs related to associated partners must be claimed under this category[137] and should preferably be borne by the project partner. Otherwise, the project partner should be able to prove in a tangible and documented way the reimbursement of these expenses to external persons and keep all supporting documents related to the costs (invoices, tickets, proof of payment of expenses generated by the associated partner, guests, etc).
- Concerning the location of activities related to CC4, project partners and controllers should refer to Chapter I.D point iii.e of this Manual. i.e costs related to external expertise or services concerning activities located outside the Programme cooperation area but in an EU Member State are possible as long as they are in line with the project objectives. Costs related to external expertise and services concerning activities located outside the Programme cooperation area <u>and</u> outside the EU are eligible only if they are expressly accepted by the JS considering the related activity and the impact on the Interreg Euro-MED area.

[135] For more information, please refer to the section of this Manual related to Public Procurement, and outsourcing contracts.
[136] For further information on national requirements and the definition of an in-house organisation, partners are invited to contact their National authority.
[137] Travel and accommodation costs for external experts, speakers etc. must comply with **ALL the general principles and the audit trail** of expenses mentioned in the **travel and accommodation cost category (real costs) and applicable to the partner bearing the expenses.**

Audit trail

The following key documents should be available for audit purposes:

- **Evidence of the selection process** of the provider, goods or services in accordance with the principles of competitive tendering and, when applicable, the procurement rules and legal status of the partner
- **A written contract or agreement detailing the goods or services** that have to be provided and **their pricing** and including a **clear reference to the project.** Any changes to the contract must comply with the rules related to public procurement and must be documented.
- **Invoice or claim** providing all relevant information in accordance with the applicable accounting rules.
- In case of costs related to external expertise and services concerning activities outside the cooperation area and outside the EU, the **express approval of the JS**
- In the case of costs for expertise and external services, related to investments138, the mention of the investment in the consolidated application form.
- In the case of expertise and external services costs, related to investments139, the Template " Statement of capacity and compliance with the principles for the investment " signed by the Partner
- **Proof of completion** of external experts' work or service deliverables
- **Proof of payment**
- Regardless of the amount of the goods, services or supplies contracted and the legal status of the project partner purchaser, it is recommended that a document be formalised to trace **compliance with the basic principles on which the procurement standards are based** and that it be made available in the event of an audit.
- Any other document that the National controller may request in order to verify compliance with EU and/or national legislation.

[138] Investment" as referred to in the Programme: section Designing my project and submitting my application, chapter Designing project activities, composition of a project of this Manual

[139] Investment" as referred to in the Programme: section Designing my project and submitting my application, chapter Designing project activities, composition of a project of this Manual

f) Equipment costs[140] (CC5)

Costs in this category relate to equipment purchased, rented or leased by the project partner that is not already covered by the cost category "office and administrative costs", and **necessary for the delivery of project activities**. This includes the costs of equipment purchased (new or second-hand[141]), rented or leased[142] by the project partner or already owned by the partner institution and used to carry out the project activities.

This category also covers the costs of “fixed investments in equipment” and the costs of equipment that is part of an “infrastructure investment”[143].

Eligible expenditure under this cost category is as follows (exhaustive list):

a) Office equipment;
b) IT hardware and software;
c) Furniture and fittings;
d) Laboratory equipment;
e) Machines and instruments;
f) Tools or devices;
g) Vehicles[144];
h) Other specific equipment needed for the project

/!\ Beware

An investment related to a pilot activity may include elements that belong to cost categories 5 "Equipment" and 6 "Infrastructure and works".

➔ **The equipment must be strictly necessary for the effective implementation of the project activities.**

➔ **Any equipment must be included in the consolidated application form.**

➔ **Any expenditure on equipment related to an investment[145] must be identified as such in the consolidated form.**

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[140] Article 43 of Regulation (EU) No 1059/2021

[141] For second-hand equipment and in accordance with Article 43.2 of the Interreg Regulation (EU) No 1059/2021: costs related to second hand equipment may be eligible under the following conditions :
(a) no assistance has been received for the original purchase of that equipment from the Interreg funds or the Funds listed in the CPR25;
(b) the price does not exceed the generally accepted price on the market in question;
(c) it has the technical characteristics necessary for the operation and complies with all applicable norms and standards.

[142] For rented or leased equipment, no transactions between project partners (or associated partners) are possible

[143] See Programme: section Designing my project and submitting my application, chapter Designing project activities, composition of a project of this Manual

[144] Without prejudice to the provisions laid down in art. 7.1.h) iii of ERDF Regulation (EU) No 1058/2021

[145] Investment” as referred to in the Programme: section Designing my project and submitting my application, chapter Designing project activities, composition of a project of this Manual

Method for reporting costs

Costs related to the use of equipment are reimbursed by the Programme on the basis of **real costs**.

/!\ Beware

- The eligibility of equipment costs is subject to full compliance with EU, Programme and national procurement rules (including institutional regulations if stricter) or principles of competitive tendering ,and must comply with the principles of transparency, non-discrimination and equal treatment[146]
- Partners should declare the costs on a pro-rata based on their use or according to a clear and transparent depreciation plan, considering the timeframe of the equipment use on the project and the applicable national regulations.
- If the depreciation period of the equipment is longer than the duration of the project, only the amounts depreciated during implementation can be reported under the project
- It is advisable that any potential equipment used for project management is (i.e not related to an investment[147]) purchased at the beginning of the project. The use of such equipment and related costs declared should be in line with the staff declared as working on the project.
- The equipment declared to the project (total cost, pro rata, rental, leasing or depreciation) cannot be financed (partially or totally) by other funds
- Project partners must ensure that all regulatory requirements relating to "fixed investments in equipment" and "investments in infrastructure and works" (European, national and local) are met

- **When the equipment is related to an investment**[148], full purchase costs could be regarded as eligible and any change of property by the partner (transfer or sale) or change affecting the nature or the objective of the equipment is prohibited within 5 years of the final payment to the beneficiary[149].
- Concerning the location of activities related to CC5, project partners and controllers should refer to Chapter **I.D point iii.e** of this Manual i.e: costs related to equipment **located and operating** outside the Programme cooperation area but in an EU Member State are possible as long as they are in line with the

[146] For more information, please refer to the section of this Manual on Public Procurement and outsourcing contracts
[147] Investment" as referred to in the Programme: section Designing my project and submitting my application, chapter Designing project activities, composition of a project of this Manual
[148] Investment" as referred to in the Programme: section Designing my project and submitting my application, chapter Designing project activities, composition of a project of this Manual
[149] The date of the final payment to the beneficiary is indicated in JEMs and included in the closure letter sent by the MA to the LP

project objectives. Costs related to ANY equipment located and operating outside the Programme cooperation area and outside the EU can be deemed eligible but must be expressly accepted by the JS considering the related activity and the impact on the Interreg Euro-MED area.

Audit trail

The following key documents should be available for audit purposes:

- Evidence of the selection process of the provider, goods or services in accordance with the principles of competitive tendering and, where applicable, the procurement rules and the legal status of the partner
- A written contract or agreement detailing the goods or services to be provided and their pricing and including a clear reference to the project. Any changes to the contract must comply with the rules related to public procurement and must be documented.
- Invoice, claim or equivalent accounting document providing all relevant information in accordance with the applicable accounting rules.
- For any equipment located and operating outside the cooperation area and outside the EU, the express approval of the JS
- In the case of costs of equipment related to investments, the mention of the investment[150] in the consolidated application form
- In the case of equipment costs related to investments[151], the template " Statement of capacity and compliance with the principles for investment " signed by the Partner
- Proof of existence of the equipment item respecting the branding and information and publicity rules of the Programme.
- Proof of payment
- Regardless of the amount of the goods, services or supplies contracted and the legal status of the project partner purchaser, it is recommended that a document be formalised to trace compliance with the basic principles on which the procurement standards are based and that it be made available in the event of an audit.
- Any other document that the National controller may request in order to verify compliance with EU and/or national legislation.

[150] Investment" as referred to in the Programme: section Designing my project and submitting my application, chapter Designing project activities, composition of a project of this Manual

[151] Investment" as referred to in the Programme: section Designing my project and submitting my application, chapter Designing project activities, composition of a project of this Manual

g) Costs for infrastructure and works[152] (CC6)

The costs in this category relate to the investment in infrastructure and works, necessary to achieve the objectives of the project. Within the Programme, costs for infrastructure and works are eligible only in the framework of pilot activities. This category includes the costs of "fixed investments in infrastructure"[153].

The eligible expenses for the Programme under this heading are the following (exhaustive list):

b) building permits

c) building material;

d) labour;

-

/!\ Beware

➔ Any investment in infrastructure must be included in the consolidated Application form.

➔ All expenditure on infrastructure and works must be included in the consolidated Application form.

➔ Costs related to infrastructure located outside the Programme cooperation area are ineligible

Method for reporting costs

Costs related to the use of infrastructure and works are reimbursed by the Programme on the basis of **real costs.**

/!\ Beware

- All costs related to meeting standards and obligations related to the nature of the investment (e.g. feasibility studies, environmental impact assessments and assessment of expected impacts of climate change, building permits,

[152] Article 44 of Regulation (EU) No 1059/2021

[153] See Programme: section Designing my project and submitting my application, chapter Designing project activities, composition of a project of this Manual.

etc.) must be included in the category of external expertise and service costs, unless they are already integrated in an infrastructure procurement contract.

- The full eligible costs of infrastructure and works can be claimed as project expenditure.
- The project partner must own the land on which the financed infrastructure activities and works are carried out or the project partner must, at a minimum, have established a legal agreement enabling it to meet the durability obligations[154] associated with the respective investment
- Within five years of the final payment to the project partner,[155] specific rules apply to partners declaring costs related to productive investments and investments in infrastructure[156]
- The eligibility of costs of Infrastructure and works is subject to full compliance with EU, Programme and national procurement rules (including institutional regulations if stricter) or principles of competitive tendering, and must comply with the principles of transparency, non-discrimination and equal treatment
- Project partners must ensure that all regulatory requirements relating to "fixed investments in equipment" and "investments in infrastructure and works" (European, national and local) are met

Audit trail

Following key documents should be available for auditing purposes:

- Evidence of the selection process of the provider, goods or services in accordance with the principles of competitive tendering and, where applicable, the procurement rules and the legal status of the partner
- A written contract or agreement detailing the goods or services to be provided and their pricing and including a clear reference to the project. Any changes to the contract must comply with the rules related to public procurement and must be documented.
- Invoice or claim providing all relevant information in accordance with the applicable accounting rules.
- In the case of costs of infrastructure and works, the mention in the consolidated form of the investment[157] to which they relate
- The template " Statement of capacity and compliance with the principles for investment"[158] signed by the Partner

[154] According to Regulation (EU) 2021/1060, Art. 65 "Durability of Operations
[155] The date of the final payment to the beneficiary is indicated in JEMs and included in the closure letter sent by the MA to the LP.
[156] See Programme: section Designing my project and submitting my application, chapter Designing project activities, composition of a project of this Manual
[157] Investment" as referred to in the Programme: section Designing my project and submitting my application, chapter Designing project activities, composition of a project of this Manual
[158] Investment" as referred to in the Programme: section Designing my project and submitting my application, chapter Designing project activities, composition of a project of this Manual

- **Express approval**
- **Proof of existence** of the actual infrastructure and/or works carried-out respecting the branding and information and publicity rules of the Programme.
- **Proof of payment**
- Regardless of the amount of the goods, services or supplies contracted and the legal status of the project partner purchaser, it is recommended that a document be formalised to trace **compliance with the basic principles on which the procurement standards are based** and that it be made available in the event of an audit.
- Any other document that the National controller may request in order to verify compliance with EU and/or national legislation.

viii. Project branding and information and publicity rules

All projects need to respect a series of mandatory publicity and communication rules laid down:

- in Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 of the European Union and of the Council of 24 June 2021, articles 47 and 50,
- in Regulation (EU) 2021/1059 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021, Article 36 and
  - in this Manual.
  - specific national rules may apply but they must not, under any circumstances, be in contradiction with the above provisions.

The fundamental principle is that project partners must inform the general public and all those involved in the operation about the support received from the European Union.

EU and Programme branding illustrative elements have to be clearly and visibly displayed "on documents and communication material relating to the implementation of the Interreg operation attended for the general public and participants".

Obligations stand for (non-exhaustive list):

- printed publications: reports, promotional handouts;
- audio-visual: videos, audio podcasts, channels;
- digital or electronic materials (websites, web tools, videos, podcast, etc.);
- events (e.g. on PPT presentations, agendas, bags and other conference material);
- Stationery and office materials;
- Equipment (computers, cameras, etc).

EU illustrative elements

According to the Article 47 of the Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 and of the Article 36 of the Regulation (EU) 2021/1059, Interreg projects must use the following illustrative elements on all documents and materials described here above:

- The European Union emblem in accordance with Annex IX of the Regulation (EU) 2021/1060
- The statement 'Funded by the European Union' or 'Co-funded by the European Union' written in full and placed next to the emblem.
- The term "Interreg" used next to the emblem of the Union

Project logo

Interact together with the European Commission designed a logo template for all Interreg Programmes and projects in strict compliance with the EU regulations aforementioned.

The project logo therefore includes the following elements:

- The European Union emblem;
- The statement “Co-funded by the European Union”;
- The Interreg logo;
- The Programme name (“ Interreg Euro-MED”);
- The project acronym.

To guarantee that project partners comply with the EU communication and visibility rules, and to prevent risk of ineligibility of costs[159], a branding package is delivered to each approved project; this package contains a ready-to-use and compliant project logo in JPG and EPS files as well as a brand book explaining the rules of usage.

All Interreg Euro-MED projects must use the logo provided by the Programme and use it in accordance with the brand book. Failure to do so may result in ineligibility of expenses.

Only project logos aiming to become a label or brand can be developed in very specific and exceptional cases and shall be expressly accepted by the JS.

Project acronym

To identify the project on the Monitoring System Jems an ACRONYM is required. It is strongly recommended that this acronym does not exceed 12 characters. Indeed, due to the very structure of the logo enforced by the EC, an excessively lengthy acronym would make the use of the project logo complex. The choice of project acronym should respect a few guidelines:

- Be short and memorable;
- Do not repeat acronyms of previous projects, to avoid any confusion or mistakes with them;
- Be intuitive, meaning that it must correctly identify the project purpose or mission;
- Be easy to pronounce and “catchy”. For this reason, technical information should be avoided;
- Preferably be in lowercase.

[159] The observance of these rules is critical for the eligibility of expenditure. As stated in the Regulation (EU) 2021/1060, where the project partner does not comply with these obligations and where remedial actions have not been put into place, “the Managing Authority shall apply measures, by cancelling up to 3 % of the support from the Funds to the operation concerned”

Poster

According to the Regulation (EU) 2021/1059, "each partner of an Interreg operation" must place a poster of a minimum A3 size or equivalent electronic display with information about the project including the financial support from the Union and the project logo at a location clearly visible to the public, such as an entrance area of a building. Therefore, ALL project partners must place this poster.

The Programme provides a Poster template available for download on the Programme website.

All projects should send a photographic evidence of this poster display together with the first activity report.

Billboards and plaques

In the case of an Interreg operation exceeding 100 000 euros and involving physical investment or the purchase of equipment, the display of durable plaques or billboards clearly visible to the public, presenting the project logo is mandatory for each partner claiming investment/equipment costs. The plaque or billboard must be placed as soon as the physical implementation of the operation starts, is purchased, or the equipment installed (Article 36 of the Regulation (EU) 2021/1059).

In this case, please contact the JS Communication Unit to adopt relevant solutions.

Project website

The Programme provides and hosts a complete ready-to-use website to each approved project (please see the related chapter).

Project websites must be updated on a regular basis and provide a short description of the project in English including its aim and results and highlighting the financial support from the Union as stated in the Regulation (EU) 2021/1060.

Concerning project website, only costs related to staff (for regular content updates) should be budgeted.

In case the project develops a specific web tool, a link to the project website must be placed in a clearly visible place and the update of the latter must not be overlooked.

Partner institutional website

All project partners must publish on their official institutional websites or social media sites ("where such website exists") a short description of the operation, as set forth in the Regulation (EU) 2021/1059.

This description should be proportionate to the level of support, including its aims and results, and highlighting the financial support from the Union. Partners should also include the project logo displayed in a visible place and complying with the rules of usage described in the brand-book. A link to the project website must also be displayed.

Events

The project logo shall be used on agendas, list of participants, related publications, promotional materials and presentations[160]. During the events, projects are encouraged to place the project poster or a project banner in a readily visible place (e.g. the front of the meeting room).

According to the Regulation (EU) 2021/1060, "operations of strategic importance and operations the total cost of which exceeds EUR 10 000 000" must organise a communication event or activity involving the Commission and the responsible Managing Authority in a timely manner.

The projects co-financed under the Interreg Specific Objective 1 (Interreg Euro-MED 1st call – Governance, Priority 3 – S.O.6.6) are considered of strategic importance, therefore they must comply with this obligation.

Publications

All project publications, including brochures, newsletters, studies, articles and others must include the project logo. When this is not possible, for example, in scientific articles, conference proceedings or other publications, projects should explicitly mention the "contribution from the EU co-financing and the Interreg Euro-MED Programme".

In addition, projects are strongly recommended to publish most essential results (or a summary of them) in the two official languages of the Programme: English and French in addition to the other languages.

Promotional items

[160] (Regulation (EU) No 2021/2060).

All promotional items must be expressly accepted[161] by the JS and branded with the project logo.

Only promotional items meeting the following criteria may be produced:

- They are necessary to reach one of the defined target groups and objectives. Project partners must explain how and why.
- They are eco-friendly.

The JS will assess the compliance with those criteria on a case-by-case basis.

TIPS

➲ To avoid ineligibility of any activity or product, a countercheck with the Programme Communication Unit is recommended before printing any material.

➲ Please read very carefully the logo brand book explaining how partners should use the project logo.

[161] See above chapter “eligibility of costs, section “non eligible expenditure”: promotional items.

B. State aid

i. What is State Aid?

According to Article 107 (ex. Article 87) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, State aid is defined as any aid granted by a Member State or through State resources in any form whatsoever which distorts or threatens to distort competition by favouring certain undertakings or the production of certain goods[162].

Based on this definition, it can be concluded that there is State aid only if **ALL** the following 5 points **(cumulative criteria)** are fulfilled:

1) The recipient of the aid is an "**undertaking**", which is carrying out an **economic activity** in the context of the project;

2) The measure must confer a **benefit or economic advantage** on the recipient which it would not otherwise have received;

3) It must be **granted by a Member State** or through State resources (always the case of Interreg projects);

4) It must **selectively favour** certain undertakings or production of certain goods[163];

5) It must **distort or threaten to distort** competition and trade between Member States.

Comprehensive information on State aid can be found on the DG Competition website of the European Commission, where also a guideline on the notion of State aid is available[164].

The co-financing of activities falling under State aid rules is prohibited in the European Union, but some exemptions relevant for project partners participating in Interreg projects has been put in place by the regulation[165].

In the case of the Interreg Euro-MED Programme, State aid relevant activities can be co-financed as project activities only if they are in strict compliance with Articles

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[162] According to Article 107 of the Treaty on the functioning of the European Union, State aid is defined as "*any aid granted by a Member State or through State resources in any form whatsoever which distorts or threatens to distort competition by favouring certain undertakings or the production of certain goods*"
[163] With the meaning of the Article 87(1) EC in comparison with other undertakings in a comparable legal and factual situation in the light of the objective pursued by the measure concerned
[164] https://ec.europa.eu/competition-policy/state-aid/legislation/notion-aid_en
[165] Notifications of aid or aid schemes to the European Commission should only be considered in cases where it is not possible to use an existing exempted or notified aid scheme, or in cases cannot be used, or where EU rules require individual notification, in particular because of the size of the project or the amount of aid envisaged.

20 and 20 bis of the General Block Exemption Regulation (GBER)[166] or in compliance with the *De Minimis*[167] Regulation.

Relevant national or regional authorities may be consulted to obtain more specific information on rules and limitations concerning State aid (further information might be available on the web pages of the National Contact Points, on the Programme website).

ii. Who is concerned?

The State Aid scheme only applies to partners located in EU Member States, thus partners located in IPA countries must not carry out any economic activity in the framework of an Interreg Euro-MED project.

Any project partner, located in EU Member States, offering goods and services in the market in the context of the proposed project is potentially considered an undertaking, regardless of its legal status, the way it is financed and whether its aim is to make profit or not.

Activities carried out within the framework of statutory tasks normally performed by public authorities do not fall within the concept of an undertaking, in view of their non-business purposes and procedures, but in some cases, however, local public or administrative bodies may be considered as undertakings.

Public institutions may perform economic activities (e.g. a regional council can implement a support scheme for SMEs) and such activities are State Aid relevant while, the participation of an SME in a project does not necessarily mean that its activities will be State aid relevant. In parallel, even if an entity provides the goods or services free of charge or is financed entirely by the State, it can be subject to State aid rules.

The concept of "undertaking" is very wide and may include public bodies, SMEs, large companies, NGOs, associations, universities, etc. The classification as an undertaking is specific to an activity and it is not linked to the status of an entity public or private.

Undertaking - is any entity engaged in an economic activity, regardless of its legal status (it can be a public body, a charity, an NGO, an association or university, as well as a private firm) and regardless of whether it aims to make a profit or not.

166 Commission Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 as amended by Regulation (EU) No 2021/1237

167 Commission Regulation (EU) 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.

In the evaluation of the existence of a potential State aid issue, the nature of the project partner is therefore not relevant; the main criterion to be considered here is the **nature of the activity** the partner and the project intend to carry out through the public funding, and the main question remains: is it, or not an **economic activity?**

Economic activity - is broadly defined as offering goods or services on a given market and therefore a comprehensive list of economic (and non-economic) activities does not exist. Please note that State aid applies only if a partner carries out activities in the project that can reasonably be assumed to be of economic nature. If the partner carries out non-economic activities in the project, there is no State aid even if this organisation normally (i.e. outside the Interreg project) carries out activities of an economic nature. The contrary (i.e. economic activities are performed in the project by an organisation that normally does not carry out economic activities) can also occur, thus resulting in State aid relevance.

If the State aid assessment determines that activities to be carried out by IPA partners and partners located in EU Member States not participating to the Programme are State aid relevant, the participation of these partners will finally not be allowed.

iii. How to deal with State Aid?

Submitted Application Forms include a specific "**State aid criteria self-check**" focusing on the five criteria listed above, with particular attention to the assessment of the status as "undertaking" (Criterion 1) of the partners (i.e. the Lead Partner or any project partner) and of the existence of an economic advantage for the undertaking (Criterion 2).

After the project work plan is completed by the LP on Jems; each partner must carefully answer the self-check questions in Jems in cooperation with the Lead Partner in charge of submitting the proposal. The result of the check may lead to one or more of the following scenarios:

- **NO: No State aid relevance**. In this case no contractual conditions/changes are set concerning State aid.
- **YES: Risk of State aid relevancy, each partner should identify the perimeter of the risk:**
    - **Risk can be removed**. In this case, specific points should be included in the Application Form concerning the partner's activities, in order to eliminate the State aid cause (e.g. wide dissemination, also to competitors, of certain project outputs); if not done before submission

and in case of project approval, contractual conditions or budget reduction could be proposed to the Committee.
   - Direct State aid confirmed for one or more partners. In this case the entire budget allocated to the concerned partner is regarded as State aid granted under the General Block Exemptions Regulation (GBER) or, in exceptional cases, under *de minimis*. In such a situation, contractual conditions and eventual budget reduction would be proposed to the Committee.

Based on the result obtained by project partners from their self-assessment, different measures might apply.

- Risk of State aid relevance that can be removed

Here below some examples of possible solutions that could be included in the Application Form in agreement with the LP, in order to mitigate the State Aid relevancy risk

- Respect of Community and National public procurement rules for all activities co-financed in the framework of an Interreg Euro-Med project (even in case of public authority or if specific rules allow the organisation not to use public procurement rules).
- Wide dissemination of project outputs, results and deliverables to avoid selective advantages.
- Open source software, open training.

a) Direct State aid granted to one or more partners (GBER/De minimis)

The decision on whether to apply the GBER or the *de minimis* Regulation is to be made by the applicant partners themselves, considering the information included in this factsheet and in all relevant legislation.

Both instruments specify certain limits on the maximum amount of aid. Project partners should carefully consider the implications before opting for one of the two instruments and check the conditions and compulsory documentation related to each option.

Direct aid granted under GBER

As part of an administrative simplification, the European Commission adopted the General Block Exemption Regulation (GBER) and allows any Member State not to notify a certain number of State aid measures to the Commission as long as all criteria given in the regulation are fulfilled. It includes a block exemption for aid granted in the context of Interreg projects (GBER Article 20)[168].

The aid granted by the Programme amounts to the whole Interreg funds budget of the concerned partner(s), up to a ceiling of **2 million EUR** of total public contribution **per partner and per project**.

Please note that **partners receiving Interreg funds from the Programme under the GBER regime** **cannot receive any external public co-financing to their budget**

Partners wishing to apply for any external public co-financing scheme for their project budget will receive Interreg funds from the Programme under the *de minimis* regime.

Such partners shall include information on applications for additional external public co-financing in **section B.1.8 of the Application Form** (Co-financing -> Origin of partner contribution).

The Interreg Euro-MED Programme strongly recommend adopting the Article 20 to all partners declared as undertakings. During the application phase, each partner has to fill in the "State aid criteria self-check" (Section B "Project partners") where stating that it applies for Interreg funds under the GBER.

Direct aid granted under De Minimis

For partners receiving external public co-financing to their budget (including SMEs), the Programme may grant Interreg funds under the ***de minimis*** regime. The aid amounts to the whole Interreg funds budget of the concerned partner, as indicated in the application form.

Granting aid under *de minimis* implies that a partner can receive funds from the Programme only if it did not receive funds by **France** public aid under the *de minimis* rule totalling more than **200.000 EUR within the previous three fiscal years** from the date of granting the aid[169].

The *de minimis* thresholds counts per "single undertaking"[170] in case a project partner is part of a group, the entire group is therefore considered as one single undertaking and the *de minimis* threshold applies to the group.

This could be for example the case of a company owning (or controlling) one or more companies, or the different departments of a university.

[168] Article 20 of Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 as amended by Regulation (EU) No 2021/1237.

[169] Date of project approval by the Programme Committee

[170] Article 3(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1407/2013 on *de minimis* aid precisely defines the principle of single undertaking

Public aid considered by the Programme for the applicable *de minimis* threshold comprises all aid granted by French national, regional or local authorities.

Partners carrying out State aid relevant activities in the project might have a reduction of the Interreg funds granted by the Programme in order to ensure the respect of the applicable *de minimis* thresholds.

During the application phase and additionally to their Partner declaration, organisations applying the *de minimis* rule must sign a *de minimis* self-declaration[171] indicating any contribution received during the previous three fiscal years falling under the *de minimis* Regulation, to be submitted along with the Application Form.

The maximum Interreg funds grant rate will be calculated on the basis of this declaration. In case of approval of the project, aforesaid document must be updated before signature of the Subsidy Contract.

In case of state aid relevance confirmed, the following amounts of the partner's budget will be taken into consideration for the calculation of the state aid intensity:

- The totality of the Interreg funding (i.e 80% of the eligible cost)

- If applicable: any additional external public funding (e.g. through national or regional co-financing schemes i.e 20% of the eligible cost)[172]

Those amounts will be considered according to the maximum aid rates or thresholds set out in the GBER regulation 1237/2021 (for a maximum Interreg Funding of 2 Millions €) or De minimis Regulation 1407/2013 (for a maximum Public aid of 200 000 €)

When granting state aid under article 20 of the GBER or De-Minimis, the Programme Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat will:

· notify the project partner in writing of the maximum aid granted

· deal with the reporting obligations established in the concerned regulation and in the French relevant GBER[173] or De-Minimis scheme[174]

· keep records of all aid granted under article 20 of the GBER for 10 years

[94] Template provided by the Programme

[172] NB: In the framework of Interreg Euro-Med, when applying to external public funding only De-minimis scheme can be applied (see dedicated section b) above)

[173] GBER French scheme SA.64779 notified to the EC on 17.09.2021, modifying the SA.59105

[174] Art. 6 of Regulation (EU) n° 1407/2013 on the application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union to de minimis aid (De Minimis Regulation)

b) Indirect State aid granted to third parties

Project activities might result in advantages granted to undertakings (final beneficiaries) that would not have received under normal market conditions.

This might be the case, for example, of free of charge services, training, or consultancy to companies. In such cases, the aid is granted to third parties who are the final beneficiaries of project activities.

This aid is granted under GBER Article 20bis[175], referring to exemption for aid of limited amount in the context of Interreg.

The aid granted under Article 20bis of the GBER to an undertaking which is the final beneficiary of the project activities **may not exceed EUR 20 000 per undertaking per project.**

This form of State aid can be identified during application phase but may also appear during project implementation.

In this case, the partners must identify the activity concerned by the risk. Additional conditions setting a threshold to the aid granted to third parties must be set (see guidelines "indirect State aid to third parties"). If the threshold is not respected, the project partner providing the support has to eliminate any State aid element.[176].

When such advantage is provided, project partners as well as third parties bear the responsibility to comply with State aid rules and this shall be checked by the relevant institutions (i.e., controllers and national authorities). [177]

Points to note:

• If partners receive additional public funding for their project activities (e.g., through national or regional co-financing schemes) other than their own funding to cover part or all their partner contribution, this will also be regarded as state aid or de minimis aid and thus taken into consideration in the calculation of the maximum aid rates or thresholds set out in the GBER or De minimis Regulations.

[175] Article 20 bis of Regulation (EU) n° 651/2014, introduced by amended Reg (EU) n° 2021/1237

[176] Indicative methodology to identify **Indirect State aid granted to third parties** is provided in Annex XX (*drafting ongoing*)

[177] Partners are advised to check national legislation and procedures related to aid to third parties, as these might apply even if the Programme applies Article 20bis GBER.

iv. State aid follow-up

- Before the signature of the project Subsidy Contract:

  On the basis of the State Aid self-assessment presented by project partners, the JS will perform a State Aid check.
  During the pre-contracting phase, the JS may ask partners to amend the selected exemption scheme or the Application Form content.
  If a State aid risk is confirmed, contractual conditions for project approval may be raised to the Programme Committee.

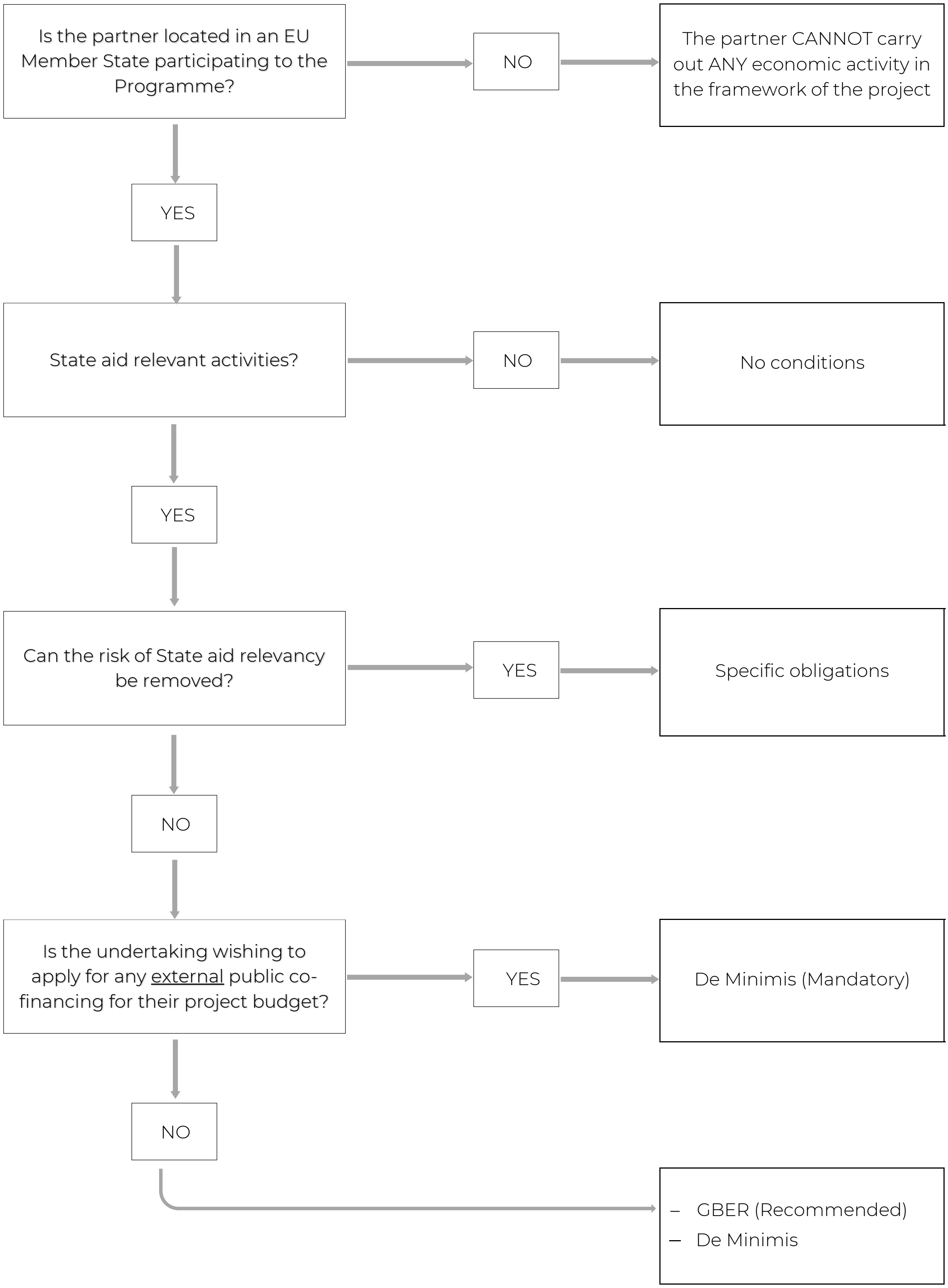
- During project implementation:
  The Lead Partner ensures that all partners respect the above-mentioned measures to avoid falling under the concept of State aid relevancy.
  In the same way, Controllers will verify if rules on State aid have been respected by the controlled partner.

  Additional contractual conditions on State aid may be imposed to projects in case of project modifications assessed as State aid relevant.

  During the project lifetime, if any activities are assessed as State aid relevant the information must be raised to the JS. In this sense, Lead Partners, National Controllers and project partners must keep specific attention to this issue as far as infringement to State aid rules can lead to major financial errors and irregularities.

v. State aid criteria self-check flow

(Section B.1.9 of the application form)



C. Public procurement and external contracting

During project implementation, any partner is likely to have recourse to an outsourcing contract to meet its needs for **goods**, **services** or **works**. These contracts concluded between one or more economic operators and one or more contracting authorities[178], are generally subject to public procurement rules.

In order to ensure transparent and fair conditions of competition in the common market, each contract must be awarded on the basis of objective criteria which ensure compliance with the **principles of transparency, non-discrimination and equal treatment** and which guarantee that tenders are assessed under conditions of effective competition.

Furthermore, when acquiring goods or services, the partners will activate levers that promote **environmentally responsible purchasing** and will integrate **social components** whenever possible

Whatever the type of outsourcing (contracting with external auditors for control, external technical expert, catering and technical equipment for an event, etc.), **compliance with public procurement rules (or "principles" if the partner does not fall under the scope of public procurement laws) is imperative to guarantee the eligibility of the expenses incurred**.

To avoid any loss of funds, and in case of control, project partners must therefore be able to prove that the award of contracts complies with aforementioned principles and, when applicable, public procurement rules.

i. Three levels of rules for public procurement procedures

The rules vary according to the qualification of the need, as well as the value of the purchase and the legal status of the entity performing the service. Three levels of rules have to be taken into consideration when preparing contracts:

- EU rules (i.e. public procurement directives[179] for ERDF partners)
- National rules[180]
- Internal rules of the organisation

The strictest rules must always be applied and this principle may apply to all partners falling under the scope of public procurement procedures (public or private partners, ERDF or IPA).

[178] "Contracting authorities" means the State, regional or local authorities, bodies governed by public law or associations formed by one or more such authorities or one or more such bodies governed by public law (Directive 2014/24/EU).
[179] More information on EU procurement rules can be found here: https://ec.europa.eu/growth/single-market/public-procurement/rules-implementation_en
[180] National rules include public procurement laws, corresponding delegated and implementing acts or any other generally applicable rules or legally binding decisions.

For example, when the partner is subject to internal rules that are stricter than national and European rules, the internal rules are applied.

Specificity for IPA partners

IPA partners participating in the Programme shall comply with the provisions of the financing agreement to be concluded between relevant IPA country, European Commission and the Managing Authority. They may contact their National Authority or National Contact Point to get informed on the regulation to be followed when awarding a contract to an external provider.

Due to the complexity of this matter, it is strongly recommended to get familiar with the rules applicable to public procurement and, if necessary, to obtain expert advice sufficiently in advance to launch a procurement procedure

/!\ Beware

Errors in public procurement procedures are among the most common in Interreg projects[181]. For this reason, special attention must be given to public procurement by project partners and controllers.

Partners must keep all documentation related to the project procurement procedures. This file is essential to ensure compliance with public procurement rules and usually include the following elements:

- Initial cost estimate made by the project partner to identify the applicable procurement procedure
- A copy of the procurement publication/advertisement
- A copy of the specifications
- Bids/quotes received from bidders
- Evaluation report of the offers received
- Information on acceptance or rejection of bidders
- Bidders' complaints submitted to the project partner, if any
- Contract signed with the selected provider, including amendments
- Invoices issued by the external provider and proof of payment
- Proof of delivery of the service
- Other information, if applicable

[181] For more information on preventing the most common errors in European Structural and Investment Fund projects, and financial correction for non-compliance with applicable rules please consult the Guidelines on Public Procurement for Practitioners (available at http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/information/publications/guidelines/2015/public-procurement-guidance-for-practitioners).and https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/fr/information/publications/decisions/2019/commission-decision-of-14-5-2019-laying-down-the-guidelines-for-determining-financial-corrections-to-be-made-to-expenditure-financed-by-the-union-for-non-compliance-with-the-applicable-rules-on-public-procurement

When checking the public procurement procedures the National Controller will verify the partner's files during the expenditure audit and may request any additional information needed to confirm that:

- there has been no artificial splitting of the contract purpose or value in order to avoid a heavier public procurement procedure;
- in case of modification or extension of the original contract: there has been no significant change in the overall purpose, content or economy of the bid that would invalidate the original bidding process;
- in case no competitive bidding was carried out, there is a documented justification for this decision;
- in case an in-house was contracted or in the case of inter-municipal cooperation or similar, there is sufficient documented evidence to justify this choice, only the actual costs are charged to the project and correctly attached to the budget lines.

It is imperative that communication and publicity requirements are respected.

National controllers, second level auditors and further level of control will verify that the contracts are in line with the selected offers.

ii. Entities not subject to public procurement obligations

Entities not falling under the scope of public procurement laws (e.g., private companies for most of their procurement under EU regulations) are not required to follow public procurement procedures.

However, these organisations (e.g private organisations, non-governmental organisations, multinationals, etc.) must respect the basic principles on which procurement standards are based (principles of transparency, non-discrimination and equal treatment) . As such, they must give preference to the best value or, where appropriate, the lowest price and, in any case, should prove the reasonable cost of their expenditure.

It is highly recommended that a document be formalised to track the respect of these principles and that it be made available for control purposes.

Please contact your national authority to refer to the relevant national rules and guidelines.

iii. Fraud Prevention when awarding external contracts

Particular attention must be paid to the risks of fraud in the field of public procurement or contract awarding.

In order to prevent and detect potential frauds, the Programme recommends Programme actors and especially the partners to:

- Ensure the proper application of their internal policy on conflicts of interest
- Ensure, through checks, that candidate companies do not present conflicts of interest with its own organisation
- Implement measures to detect abnormally low or high bids (e.g. comparison with a similar service on a public procurement platform)

It is recommended that an internal control system be established for public procurement/contract awarding, in order to avoid, in particular:

- Irregular splitting of purchases
- Unjustified direct awards
- Irregular extensions of contracts
- Improper amendments to existing contracts
- Overly restrictive specifications of requirements

It is recommended that contract awards or amendments to existing contracts be reviewed and approved by members of the organisation who did not contribute to the selection of the provider (e.g. management staff).

Similarly, if the partner organisation has an internal audit function, it is recommended that the relevant department/person regularly review compliance with public procurement rules or principles.

Furthermore, in addition to the minimum requirements defined by the applicable European and national legislation on public procurement, the Programme recommends that partners ensure:

- Full transparency in the awarding of contracts
- A transparent bid opening procedure (paper or dematerialised) to avoid manipulation of bid data.

D. Financial flow and project financial performance

i. Financial flow

Payments to projects partners are made on a **reimbursement basis**. The amounts reimbursed by the Programme correspond to **80% of the total certified eligible costs declared by the partners,** which, except for lump sums and flat rates amounts, must all have been previously incurred and paid by the partners and certified by a national controller in conformity with the applicable Programme and national rules.

Every six months[182], and on behalf of whole partnership the LP presents to the JS a **reporting package** (hereinafter RP). The Reporting Package is composed of a project report and related payment claim available in Jems.

The RP is assessed and validated by the JS and once accepted, the JS (on behalf of the Managing Authority) prepares a payment order corresponding to the validated amount and sends it to the Accounting Authority[183].

The Accounting Authority is a key player in the payment workflow as it's entitled to:

- receive the Interreg funds from the European Commission on behalf of the Programme
- establish the applications for payment before they are sent to the European Commission.
- pay the Interreg funds to the project partners[184]

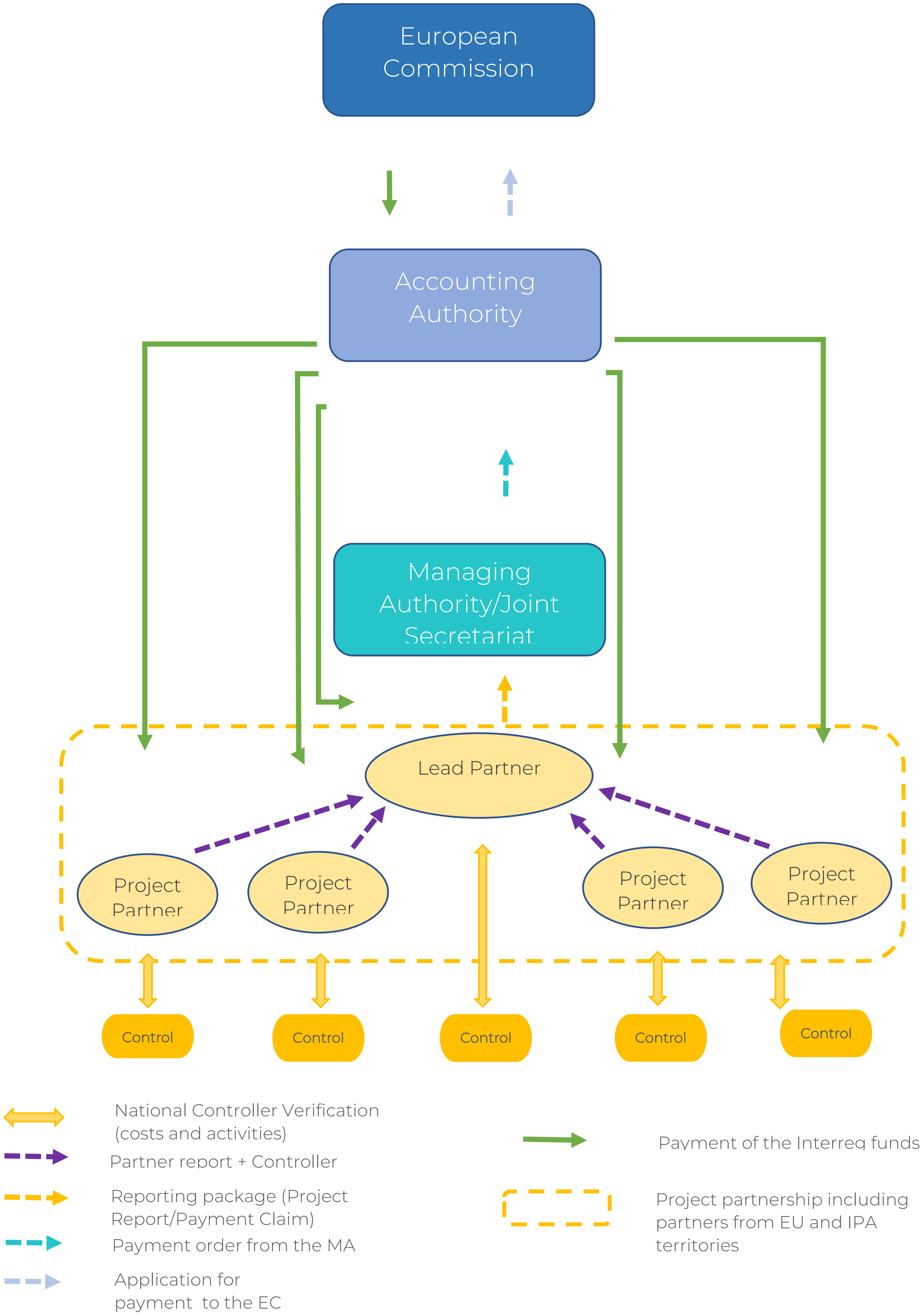
Point of attention: Unavoidable delays[185] should be considered by the partners before receiving the Interreg fund corresponding to the certified amounts. Upon receipt of the reporting package by the JS, the effective payment should take about 2 months as far as the information and material provided by the Lead Partner are complete.

[182] Please note that depending on the project duration, the last period of implementation can be shorter or longer than 6 months. See section E.Project reporting and Joint Secretariat monitoring;
[183] The Accounting Authority is the body in charge of the accounting function: Ministry of Finance of Spain
[184] The time between the reception of the reporting package by the JS and actual payments by the Accounting Authority can vary significantly from one project to another (or even from one package to another) and can take up from three months to a year, depending on the quality of the information provided by the lead partners and the responsiveness of all parties involved.
[185] Article 74.1 (b) of the CPR Regulation establish a "deadline of 80 days to receive the amount due "from the date of submission of the payment claim, by the beneficiary [...]that may be interrupted" if information submitted is not complete.

To reduce payment delays as much as possible, the Programme has opted for **paying the Interreg funds directly to project partners**. The Lead Partner receives only the amounts corresponding to its own expenditure, the rest is paid directly to the partners by the Accounting Authority, in the respective bank account indicated in Jems[186]. Payments are made in Euro only.

The financial flows between the different Programme authorities, Lead Partners, partners and the Commission are presented schematically here below.

[186] **Specificities for Spanish partners**: In the case of Spanish partners, the bank account to which the reimbursement should be made has to be necessarily registered in a specific database of the Spanish Public Treasury. Spanish partners must verify that the bank information included in Jems complies with this requirement.
If this is not the case, concerned partners should register the account according to the registration procedure detailed on the Treasury website via the following link: http://www.tesoro.es/pagos-del-tesoro/como-dar-de-alta-o-de-baja-cuentas-bancarias-en-el-fichero-central-de-terceros


European Commission
Accounting Authority
Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat
Lead Partner
Project Partner
Project Partner
Project Partner
Project Partner
Control
Control
Control
Control
Control
National Controller Verification (costs and activities)
Partner report + Controller
Reporting package (Project Report/Payment Claim)
Payment order from the MA
Application for payment to the EC
Payment of the Interreg funds
Project partnership including partners from EU and IPA territories

a) Recovery of unduly paid amount

If during the project lifetime an overpaid amount or irregularity[187] is identified, the MA/JS must be immediately informed, and this amount must be reimbursed by the concerned partner to the Accounting Authority. This amount can bereduced from the total amount of the Interreg fund granted.

An irregularity can be identified in the following cases:

- as a result of any level of controls (National controller, programme bodies, National auditing bodies, Second level auditors, European Commission, OLAF, European Court of accounts, …)
- the circumstances stated in art 12.1 of the project subsidy contract

Any unduly paid amount must be notified to the Programme by email via a dedicated template[188] and is corrected in Jems by the JS through a specific workflow.

NB: in case of irregularity affecting the staff cost category, related flat rate (CC2 and CC3) will be automatically and proportionally corrected.

The repayment can be done through the withdraw of the irregular amount from a pending payment (compensation) or, in case of closed projects, a formal recovery procedure.

In case of a formal recovery procedure[189], the MA sends by email a recovery order to the LP[190]. Within 5 days of receipt of the notification, the LP must transmit to the PP concerned the recovery order received. The JS is informed of this notification. The repayment is made directly by the concerned partner(s) to the Programme bank account (Accounting Authority); the repayment is due within two months of the notification to the Lead Partner.
In the case where the repayment from the concerned PP is not done in the established timeframe, the National Authority on whose territory the concerned partner is located will be officially informed to implement the adequate procedure and guarantee the full recovery of any amount unduly paid.

[187] an irregularity is an ineligible amount certified by the controller (except for lump sums and flat rates amounts) and the MA and detected after having been declared to the EC.
[188] Template under development
[189] Art 8 of the subsidy contract and 7 of the partnership agreement
[190] The email is addressed to the LP copying the concerned project partner and its national authority

Point of attention: According to article 103 (3) of Regulation (EU) 1060/2021, the part of the operation budget cancelled based on financial corrections according to individual or systemic irregularities may not be reused for the operation that was the subject of the correction and the Subsidy contract will be amended accordingly.

b) Project performance and budget absorption[191]:

If the project financial absorption is not on track with the **defined schedule**[192] or a partner fails to respect the contractual arrangements on timeliness budget absorption, visibility requirements and achievement of the deliverables, outputs and results as indicated in the project data, corrective measures may be put in place to ensure the project performance as well as minimise the impact at Programme level. As a result, the JS may propose to the Monitoring Committee to reduce the amount granted accordingly following the procedure indicated below.

The project performance and financial absorption will be assessed in the framework of the project report assessment[193], but also during the interview organised by the JS in case of detected project risk[194].

In case of activity not respecting the expected work plan or persistent underconsumption[195], the JS would request a project modification to reduce the corresponding activities and budget or to make a transfer of tasks and budget between two or more partners. The LP, in agreement with the project steering committee, agrees on the modification and the application form is modified on Jems, and validated in agreement with the Programme MC decision

When applicable, a formal addendum is prepared and signed.

ii. Decommitment[196]:

The European Commission shall automatically decommit any part of a budget commitment of a Programme that has not been used by 31 December of the third year following the year of budget commitment (s.c. N+3 rule[197]). This decommitment risk on Programme level is highly linked to projects financial absorption.

[191] See Art 2.8 and 2.9 of the Subsidy Contract
[192] spending forecast is included in the project spending plan in Jems section D.3 of the application Form
[193] See chapter project reporting and monitoring, point ii Joint Secretariat Monitoring/ Assessment and acceptation of the reporting package
[194] See chapter project reporting and Joint Secretariat monitoring, point ii Joint Secretariat Monitoring/ Project performance and monitoring of project risks
195 See definition of “persistent underconsumption “in section reporting: “Project performance and monitoring of project risks.
196 See Art 2.10 of the Subsidy Contract According to Article 105 of Regulation (EU) No 1060/2021
197 First year of potential decommitment is 2025 for Interreg Euro-MED Programme

If the allocations set in the financial tables of the Interreg Euro-MED Programme are not translated into effective application for payment to the European Commission within the set timeframe, the part of the Programmes annuity not claimed (Interreg fund) is lost. Should this loss of Interreg funds result from projects lagging behind their payment targets (based on the spending forecast included in the project data), the decommitment would become replicable at projects level and the Programme might have to reduce contribution to these projects.

In that sense, according to the Subsidy Contract[198] where an annuity (Interreg fund) of the Interreg Euro-MED Programme is decommitted automatically by the European Commission [...] the Monitoring Committee may decide to reduce the subsidy of projects for expenditure not incurred in line with the timetable provided for in the project data.

E. Controls, audits and verifications

Within the framework of the Interreg Euro-MED Programme, project partners are subject to different types of regulatory controls during the implementation of projects and, possibly, after their closure. Three types of control conducted by the Programme Authorities can be distinguished, and vary in scope, frequency and objectives:

- Management verifications :

"Controls" or "national controls": this is the first level of control for the project partners and refers to the verifications carried out by the National Controller in accordance with Article 46 (3) of Regulation (EU) 2021/1059. The National Controllers (hereafter "NC") designated or approved by the Participating States, must validate the expenditure declared by each of the beneficiaries participating in an operation before it is accepted by the LP for inclusion in a claim for reimbursement to the Programme.

- "Quality controls": these are controls carried out by the Managing Authority, the Joint Secretariat and the Participating States in accordance with article 74 (2) of Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 and article 46(5) of Regulation (EU) 2021/1059. These controls may take the form of administrative and/or on-the-spot verifications and aim to ensure that expenditure has been verified by a designated controller, that partners are complying with the Programme obligations and circuits set out in the contractual documents and the Programme Manual, and that operations are correctly implemented and in line with the planned activities.

-" Audits of operations": this refers to the work carried out annually by the Audit Authority in accordance with Articles 48 and 49 of Regulation (EU) 2021/1059 and

198 Article 2.10 of the Subsidy Contract

Articles 77 and 79 of Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 on a sample of operations selected by the European Commission based on a single population established between all Interreg Programmes. In France (where the Managing Authority is located), the Interministerial Commission for the Coordination of Controls (CICC) carries out this function. In this capacity, the CICC is responsible for the implementation of the Programme's audit work in cooperation with a Group of Auditors (GoA) composed of representatives from each of the Participating States.

Other types of controls can be added to these three categories and can be conducted by regional, national or European bodies such as the European Commission, the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) or the European Court of Auditors (ECA).

i. National control[199]

According to the terms and functions mentioned in articles 74 (1a) of Regulation (EU) 1060/2021 and 45 (3) of Regulation (EU) 1059/2021, the "controller" (hereinafter national controller or NC) verifies the existence of the co-financed products and services, that the project complies with the applicable law, and ensures the certification of the expenditure declared by the project partners[200] . According to article 46 (7) of Regulation (EU) 2021/1059, it is the **responsibility of each Participating State** (Member State or partner country) **to set up a national control system and to designate controllers**[201] in charge of verifying and certifying that the expenditure declared by the beneficiaries[202] on their territory complies with the EU, Programme and national eligibility rules.

National controls include *administrative verifications* on expenditure submitted by beneficiaries and on-the-spot *verifications of operations*.

The scope of controls is based on the risks identified by the Programme.

Before the submission of each Payment Claim, the national controller carries out this regulatory and mandatory verification[203], **which covers the expenditure of partners declared during the implementation of the project.** Expenditure incurred and paid by partners can only be included in a Payment Claim after it has been verified by a national controller and then validated by the LP of each project.

[199] Formerly referred to as "first level control".

[200] Expenditure reporting flowchart section Implementing my project, chapter Reporting on project expenditure and activities (redaction ongoing)

[201] According to Article 46 (9) of Regulation (EU) 2021/1059

[202] Section Implementing my project, chapter Reporting on project expenditure and activities(redaction ongoing)

[203] According to Article 74 (1a) and (2) of Regulation (EU) 2021/1060

For each new project in which it is involved a project partner must get a controller assigned.

The verification is carried out by the NC on the basis of supporting documents and evidence provided by the partners and the data entered in the Jems Monitoring System

The objectives of the control are multiple:

- To provide the Managing Authority and the project itself with the guarantee that the costs for which reimbursement is requested are justified;
- Ensure that the reimbursement requested by the Lead Partners is in line with the legal and financial provisions set out in the Subsidy Contract, the EU, the Interreg Euro-MED Programme and the national rules;
- Guarantee the conformity of the project accounts with the legal and financial obligations of each organisation contributing to the co-financing of the operation, its legal status and the legislation in force in the State concerned.

Independence and qualification[204] of controllers

The controller must be independent of the controlled entity.

To be **considered independent**, controllers must meet certain criteria:

- An internal controller, where national rules allow it, must belong to a unit that is functionally separate from the units responsible for implementing the activities and the financial aspects of the project.
- An external controller is considered to be independent if no other contractual or personal relationship exists that could lead to a conflict of interest with the controlled organisation.

Regarding the qualification of the controller, the controller can be: a national or regional authority, a private law body or a natural person meeting the requirements of the Regulation[205] .

Partners must comply with the regulatory requirements[206] and bear in mind that the control of expenditure of a project co-financed under the Interreg Euro-MED Programme goes beyond the classical controls of accounts as it also involves

[204] : According to Article 46 (9) of Regulation (EU) 2021/1059

[205] According to Article 46 (8) and (9) of Regulation (EU) 2021/1059

[206] According to Article 46 (9) of Regulation (EU) 2021/1059

professional judgement regarding the implementation of project activities by the partner and compliance with EU, national and Programme rules.

Controllers must therefore have a thorough knowledge in the field of Structural Funds project controls. They must also have a good command of one of the two languages of the Programme[207] .

More information on the required qualifications of the NC can be found in the "National Information" section[208] of the Interreg Euro-MED Programme website.

a) Two types of control systems

Each participating State (Member State or partner country) is responsible for the appointment of national controllers and the quality of controls held on its territory and may have chosen a centralised or decentralised national control system[209]. The control systems can thus be organised as follows:

Centralised systems: National authorities are responsible for establishing a national control system, linking each project partner to a centralised control unit and informing beneficiaries of the procedure to be followed for the certification of their expenditure. Participating States designate a single entity to carry out national controls. In these States, beneficiaries submit their expenditure to this entity for certification.

In practice :

- Partners of approved projects established in a participating State where the control system is centralised must **contact the organisation in charge of controls** on their territory, or their National Contact Point, which will inform them about the control procedure to be followed for the certification of expenditure (name and contact details of the controller(s), timetable and deadlines, compulsory documents, etc.);
- **The controllers** designated by the competent authority **create their user account in Jems**, the Programme's online monitoring tool;
- **After creating the account, the controller must contact the programme (support@interreg-euro-med.eu) and transmit his/her contact information (name, first name, email address used to create the account) to activate the profile;**

[207] All Programme documents as well as tools or templates provided by the Programme (Reports, Website, Jems, Programme Manual, contractual documents etc) are available in French and English language.
[208] LINK.
[209] The system description for each of the states participating in the programme is available on the programme's webpage,

- The national entity in charge of the controls then proceeds to **assign the controller on Jems** and attaches the designated controller to the beneficiaries whose expenditures he/she has to verify;
- Partners submit their expenditure to the national control entity via Jems[210] before the validation by the LP and inclusion in a project payment claim;

Decentralised systems: National authorities are responsible for establishing a national control system and for informing beneficiaries of the procedure to be followed for the selection of their controller. Depending on the national rules, these can be internal (functionally independent department within the beneficiary structure) or external (auditors from independent institutions selected from the market[211]). In some countries, beneficiaries have to select the controller from a pre-selected pool at national/regional level.

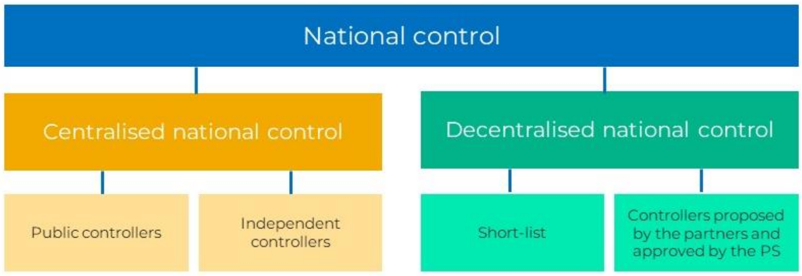
In all cases, in order to be entitled to carry out their verifications, **the controllers selected by the beneficiaries must be "designated" by the responsible body at national/regional level which will issue a document approving the controller identified to certify the partner's expenditure on the project.**

[210] In the framework of the Programme, supporting documents for expenditure (invoices, tickets, payslips, etc.) are not uploaded to the system and must be retained by the partners. A copy must be sent to the controllers, as well as any other additional documents that may be required to enable control work to be carried out.
[211] In the case of an external controller, the partner shall make a selection in accordance with the public procurement rules (if applicable).

In practice :

- Immediately after project approval, partners from a Participating State with a decentralised system should **contact the body in charge of approving the national controller** on their territory, or their National Contact Point, who will inform them of the procedure to be followed for the selection and approval of their controller (specific Terms of Reference for the selection of controllers, compliance with regulatory requirements[212], documents to be provided, ...)
- After **selection of the controller**, the partners **submit a request for approval** to the competent body - the application procedure is regulated by each national/regional body - detailing the choice of the controller and its competences.
- Upon receipt, the national/regional control **body** assesses the information provided and **makes a decision on** the choice of controller (NB: a new approval must be issued if a new controller is identified during the implementation of the project);
- After approval by the competent body, **the controller creates his/her user account on Jems**, the Programme's monitoring tool**, and informs** the PP and the competent body;
- **After the account has been created, the controller must contact the programme (support@interreg-euro-med.eu) and provide his or her contact information (last name, first names, email address used to create the account, requested profile type) to activate the profile ;**
- The body in charge of approving the controllers then proceeds **to assign the controller on Jems** and attaches him/her to the project partner/s whose expenditures he/she has to verify;
- Partners submit their expenditure to the controller in charge of the certification via Jems[213] prior to the validation by the LP and inclusion in a project Payment Claim;

Figure 1. The two types of national control systems



[212] According to Article 46 (9) of Regulation (EU) 2021/1059
[213] In the framework of the Programme, supporting documents for expenditure (invoices, tickets, payslips, etc.) are not uploaded to the system and must be retained by the partners. A copy must be sent to the controllers, as well as any other additional documents that may be required to enable control work to be carried out.

b) National control systems in the Participating States

Table 1. National control system of each Participating State in the Interreg Euro-MED Programme[214] :

Centralised systems	Decentralised systems
Albania	Cyprus
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Spain
Bulgaria	France[215]
Croatia	Italy
Greece	Malta
Republic of North Macedonia	Portugal
Montenegro	
Slovenia	

Partners are invited to consult carefully and as soon as possible the provisions and procedures of their national framework.

Please note: In Spain and Portugal (decentralised national system)(), expenditure certified by controllers must also be validated at national level in order to be included in a project Payment Claim. A document called "national validation" is issued by the entity in charge of this validation and must be attached to the control certificate. In this case, the timetable for the certification process must be adjusted in cooperation with the concerned NA and the project Lead Partner in charge of submitting the payment claim to the Joint Secretariat. The national validation accompanying each certificate will be uploaded on Jems;

[214] Further information on the NCs systems is available on the Programme website LINK (i.e. contacts of the national authorities and contact persons for the national control as well as descriptions of the control system in force in each participating State) ; and on the website of each of the States participating in the Programme.
[215] In the case of French beneficiaries, a specific ad-hoc procedure foresees the signature of an agreement between each project PP and the NA in order to frame, for each project in which a partner participates, the selection and assignment procedure of the controller.

Partners based in a Region outside the Programme cooperation area and belonging to an EU Member State other than the 14 Interreg Euro-MED Programme States should contact the national/regional authority responsible for national controls in their country to obtain information on the selection and approval process of their controller. Project partners must inform the Joint Secretariat of this contact as soon as possible.

c) Scope of national control

In the framework of the Interreg Euro-MED Programme, and based on the risks identified by the MA, the partners must present all projects expenditures to the **national control which should be implemented on a 100% basis.** However, **in the case where the participating State has an official national sampling method** in place, this method is approved by the MA and **the controller must conform to it**. .

In order to certify the expenditure, national controllers must check, as a minimum, the following points listed in the control certificate:

a) The expenditure complies with the EU, Programme and national eligibility rules and with the conditions for support and payment of the project[216], as described in the Subsidy contract;
b) The expenditure is incurred and paid during the project's eligibility period;
c) The supporting documents are sufficient and an adequate audit trail exists;
d) The expenditure is correctly recorded in a specific accounting system or identifiable with an accounting code dedicated to the project with the exception of cost calculated as flat rate and lump sum;
e) The expenditure in a currency other than the Euro has been converted using the correct exchange rate[217];
f) EU, national and institutional procurement rules were observed[218];
g) The products, services and works co-financed were actually delivered;
h) The expenditure has a clear/direct link to the project activities and cost categories of the budget, which are in line with the consolidated application form and the Subsidy contract;
i) Where applicable, the beneficiary has indicated the source and amounts of external national co-financing received;
j) The risk of double financing is excluded;

Chapter A. Eligibility of expenditure and Section B. State aid of this Manual
[217] See Chapter A. Eligibility of expenditure of this Manual
Chapter C. Public procurement and external contracting of this Manual

k) The SCOs are correctly used: respect of the method chosen in the AF, correct calculation of eligible costs.

d) How to implement the control work

The national authority in charge of approving NCs is responsible for the methods used to implement the controls.

The Programme sets out below a series of key principles to be followed and provides a control checklist via Jems on which NCs should base their work. However, controllers are required to refer the description of the national control system of their State, available on the Programme's website, for more details on how the control should be implemented.

The control of expenditure by the national controller can be carried out through **administrative verifications (i.e. desk based checks)** and **on-the-spot verifications.** In addition to the Programme and EU rules, the NC must comply with the applicable national rules and procedures in carrying out its work.

Point of attention:

It is essential **that before starting work, each controller ensures that he/she has the most up-to-date information concerning the implementation of the project (latest consolidated Application form) as well as the eligibility of expenditure and the reporting process**. Indeed, the Programme Manual is regularly updated (in particular to integrate the evolutions of the monitoring system or, in a more isolated way, to clarify the rules on eligibility of expenditure). **A versioning of the Manual** is integrated in the document to understand the scope of the modifications as well as the effective date of entry into force of these modifications.

Administrative control:

This is the most frequent method of implementing controls, the desk-based control or "administrative verification" is implemented by the NC from its headquarters and is based on documents and material provided by the project partners whose expenditure is being controlled. To carry out its work, the NC must have all the information necessary for the proper verification of expenditure and is based on:

- The elements entered by the partners in the Jems monitoring system for each of the cost presented to the verification,

- The regulatory supporting documents transmitted[219] (invoices, receipts, tickets, pay slips, bank statements, transport tickets, etc),
- Any additional material requested by the controller (deliverables, minutes, reports etc),
- A telephone or video conference interview.

On-the-spot control:

The Interreg Euro-MED Programme strongly recommends that **an on-the-spot verification** be carried out **at least once** during the lifetime of the project and <u>one on-the-spot visit is mandatory in the case of projects involving investments</u>[220].

It is recommended that controllers do not wait until the end of the project to schedule and carry out this visit.

The objective of an on-the-spot control is the same as that of an administrative control. However, it has a real added value, as it allows to focus on three additional aspects that contribute to ensuring the proper implementation of the project, i.e:

1. The proper functioning of internal processes and the reliability of the accounting system regarding the separation and identification of the expenditure claimed by the controlled beneficiary.
2. The existence of a complete audit trail (consistent with the information declared and the documents received) and kept in commonly established supports (supporting documents such as staff contracts, bank statements as proof of payment and procurement documents can be more easily examined and consulted and the interviews conducted during the on-the-spot controls allow these internal aspects of the organisation to be accurately addressed).
3. The existence and delivery of goods and services and the operation of investments whose costs are declared by the beneficiary.

Finally, an on-the-spot control makes the verification process smoother, as it avoids the need to send multiple documents and helps to reduce response times.

Certification of expenses in Jems:

At the end of the control work and for each reporting period, the controller must:

- Validate partner expenditure in the Jems monitoring system

219 the supporting documents constituting the financial audit trail of the project must be provided to the controller but retained by the project partners and made available in the event of a subsequent audit. Each controller agrees with the controlled partner on the modalities of transferring the information and, where appropriate, in accordance with the applicable IT security rules (secure platform, email transmission, video conference)

220 "Investment" as defined in the Programme: section Building my project and submitting my application, chapter Designing the project activities, Composition of a project of this Manual

- Complete the compulsory control checklist provided by the Programme in the Jems monitoring system (specifying the modality of implementation of the documentary or on-the-spot control);
- Complete and validate the Control certificate and report on Jems, including the amounts presented, validated and rejected (the complete document includes a formal statement from the controller to validate the expenditure, the control checklist and a list of controlled expenditure[221]).
- Sign (stamp, and scan if necessary) the control report and send it to the PP (and to the NA in the case of Spain and Portugal) for inclusion in the partner's audit trail.

By signing the Control certificate and report which contains the validation of expenditure, the controller confirms all the elements mentioned in the document and the correct use of the funds.

e) Timeframe for the implementation of controls

Within 3 months after the end of the reporting period, the project Lead Partner must submit the complete project Reporting package (i.e: Project report and related payment claim signed) to the Joint Secretariat. In this sense, **the controller must finalise his verifications on the expenditure presented** by the beneficiary **within a sufficient time**[222] to allow the project Lead partner to accept the certified expenditure and to submit the project reporting package in accordance with the timetable that appears in the consolidated Application form[223].

In order to guarantee a timely submission, the work of the project partner's controls (of the national body in charge of validation for Spain and Portugal, if applicable) and the lead partner's verification must be carefully scheduled. **It is recommended that partners enter their expenditure into Jems as early and as regularly as possible without waiting for the end of the reporting period in order to facilitate the work of the different stakeholders.**

The Interreg Euro-MED Programme also recommends that projects **establish a clear and precise timetable for the submission of the reporting packages in accordance with the information provided in the consolidated form.**

[221] A courtesy version of the NC model certificate is available (for information ONLY) on the Programme website. This document specifies the details of the verifications expected from the controllers and can in no way be considered as a valid document for the submission of a claim for reimbursement by a Lead Partner applicant

[222] According to Article 46 (6) of Regulation (EU) 2021/1059

[223] Information available in Jems part contracting chapter reporting period.

In practice :

- The NC is in contact with the partners and is available at the end of the reporting period to start the control work;
- Before the end of the 3-month deadline[224] established in the consolidated form, the complete documentation of each partner (NC certificate + possible national validation) duly filled in and signed is transmitted to the lead partner;
- The lead partner collects documentation from all partners and accepts expenditure into the system in order to prepare the project report (finances and activities) for submission to the JS via Jems, within the deadlines.

NB: The controllers' certificates and the payment claim integrating these certificates must be submitted to the JS not later than 3 months after the end of the reporting period. After this deadline, the payment claim may be refused by the JS.

Beware: The three months' timeframe foreseen for the preparation of Reporting package PR does not apply to the last implementing period (see chapter Project reporting and Joint Secretariat monitoring+)

f) Control costs

The possible costs of the control which are covered by the partners constitute eligible expenses for the Interreg Euro-MED Programme. The partners concerned must therefore foresee a budget dedicated for carrying out these controls.

These costs should be included in the "external expertise and services" cost category on "Jems".

For the control costs of the last payment claim to be eligible, the activity (certification of expenditure) and the payment must be carried out before the official end date of the project (see chapters iii. General eligibility criteria - section v. Eligibility period - sub-section b) Implementation).

ii. Quality controls carried out by the MA/JS or Participating State

[224] The deadline of three month runs from the end of the reporting period and does not apply to the last implementation period.

a) JS administrative verifications[225]

Under article 74.1 of the CPR, the JS assess on behalf of the MA the projects "reporting packages" (activity reports and projects payment claims) and before transmission of the expenditure to the Accounting Authority, carries out management verifications on all payment claims submitted on Jems. The role of the JS is to ensure that the national control is properly implemented according to the modalities established by each State and that the rules of the Programme are respected by both beneficiaries and controllers.

This verification is formalised through a document drafted by the JS and transmitted to the lead partner. The administrative verifications carried out by the JS may lead to the formulation of recommendations or the identification of financial corrections and give rise to a follow-up process for the recommendations made

b) On-the-spot visits of the MA/JS

Under Article 74.2, the JS carries out on-the-spot visits the frequency and scope of which may vary during the programming period. The Monitoring Committee is informed of the list of structures and projects subject to the annual on-the-spot visits campaign.

On the spot visits aim to ensure the correct implementation of the financed projects, the reality of the investments, the respect of the Programme's rules and processes, the guarantee of the audit trail and the correct execution of the work of the national controllers. In some cases, these visits may also be more focused on the positioning of the project/partner in relation to the Programme's strategy/community of projects.

At the end of each on-the-spot visit, a report is drafted by the JS and submitted to the beneficiary concerned in the framework of a contradictory process. An on-the-spot visit may lead to the formulation of recommendations or the identification of financial corrections. On-the-spot visits may also lead to a follow-up process of the recommendations made.

c) Management Quality Control eventually implemented by the participating States

The Management Quality Controls (hereafter MQC) may be implemented by the participating States, under Article 74 (2) of Regulation (EU) 2021/1060.

The MQCs carried out by the Participating States may take the form of administrative and/or on-the-spot verifications. They are implemented according to a methodology and a specific annual work plan established by each participating State and according to different type of risks, identified by each of the

[225] For more detailed information, on the project monitoring held by the Joint Secretariat, please refer to section section II.E Project reporting and JS monitoring

14 States. The MQCs may thus focus on the quality of a partner's participation in the Programme, on project activities or payment claims of the projects, or the quality of the national control system.

The results of these controls are transmitted to the JS to enable a follow-up of the implementation of recommendations or financial corrections.

iii. Audit of operations

The audits of operations, also called "second level" audits, constitute an additional control of the expenditure presented by the partners and intervene on expenditure already declared to the Commission. Audits can be totally or partially outsourced and are carried out under the responsibility of the Audit Authority (AA) of the Interreg Euro-MED Programme. The AA is assisted by the Group of Auditors (GoA) which is composed of representatives from each participating State of the Programme, in accordance with Article 48 (1) of Regulation (EU) 2021/1059.

The AA and GoA are independent from the other bodies of the Programme (MC, MA, JS, NC), as well as from the co-financed projects.

The AA, in accordance with Articles 48(2) and 49 of Regulation (EU) 2021/1059 and Article 77 of Regulation (EU) 2021/1060, is responsible for carrying out audits of operations in order to provide the Commission an independent insurance as to the effective functioning of the management and control systems and the legality and regularity of expenditure integrated in the accounts forwarded to the Commission.

To meet this objective, the European Commission selects on an annual basis a sample of operations among several Interreg programmes. In the framework of the Interreg MED Programme, the CICC and the GoA entrust the implementation of the audit work to an external provider(s). These auditors carry out their work in accordance with the audit strategy established by the AA and the GoA and under their responsibility.

Audits of operations are carried out once a year throughout the lifetime of the Programme.

The same partner may be audited several times if it is involved in different Interreg Euro-MED projects or in several Interreg programmes. The same beneficiary may also be audited several times for the same project.

For each audit of operation, a report is drafted by the auditor and submitted to the concerned beneficiary in the context of a contradictory process. An audit may lead to the formulation of recommendations or the identification of financial corrections. Audits may also lead to a follow-up process of the recommendations made.

The follow-up of audit results differs according to the type of identified finding:

- In case of findings with *financial consequences* (e.g. detection of irregular amounts), the amounts considered ineligible will be withdrawn from the next payment claim or will be recovered from the partner concerned if the project is closed or if the amount to be reimbursed is lower than the irregular amount;
- If the findings have *no financial consequence*, the concerned partner (and/or its controller where applicable) will have to prove that the recommendations made by the auditors have been followed.

As a precautionary measure, and in accordance with the provisions of the subsidy contract, the MA is entitled to suspend payment of the Interreg Fund for projects/partners subject to an audit until its conclusion.

The MA/JS are not directly involved in the implementation of the audits but facilitate the communication flows between all parties involved in the process, i.e. the AA, the GoA members, the audit firm(s) in charge of conducting the audits, the lead partners and partners of the audited projects.

The MA/JS also provide additional guidance to beneficiaries on the preparation of the audit and its follow-ups.

iv. Other levels of controls

In addition to the Programme bodies, the European Commission, the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF), the European Court of Auditors (ECA) and, in the areas under their responsibility, the audit organizations of the participating States or other national public audit bodies may implement controls to confirm the proper use of funds by the beneficiaries.

The concerned partners are informed in good time of any audit conducted by one of these bodies. They will then provide the information and documentation on the implementation of the project required by the body carrying out the audit. Access to the audited partner's premises will also be granted to the auditors.

This type of control may be carried out during the implementation of the project and until the end of the regulatory retention period for all supporting documents related to the implementation of the project and included in the subsidy contract[226] .

[226] Article 82 Regulation (EU) 2021/1060: all supporting documents related to an operation supported by the Funds are kept at the appropriate level for a 5-year period from 31 December of the year in which the last payment by the managing authority to the beneficiary is made

IV. Legal mechanisms

A. General Data Protection Regulation

The European Union General Data Protection Regulation (EU-GDPR) enforced on 25th May 2018, produces rules for Interreg Programmes and the projects regarding the management of private data collected for various purposes and in different stages of their implementation.

As a general principle, the regulation gives citizens the rights to access and control their private data obliging data keepers to implement a certain number of measures to meet such requirements. The Interreg Euro-MED Programme and the Project Partners are data controllers and processors[227], and therefore are required to abide by the GDPR.

This chapter briefly presents the GDPR regulation and its consequences for the Programme[228] and projects. It aims to answer the questions raised by projects about this topic during their implementation.

However, the Interreg Euro-MED Programme holds no responsibility or liability whatsoever regarding the personal data collected and processed by the Project Partners.

i. What is considered as personal data?

Personal data relates to any information about a natural person or 'Data Subject', which can be used to directly or indirectly identify the person. It can be anything from a name, a photo, an email address, bank details, and posts on social networks, medical information, or a computer IP address.[229]

ii. Who is concerned by the GDPR implementation?

The GDPR applies to organisations based in the EU and outside, if these organisations collect data from EU citizens. Therefore, the Interreg Euro-MED projects collecting data from IPA countries are also concerned by this regulation.

iii. What rights do data subjects have?

Data subject, e.g. someone registering for a project event or newsletter has the right to access the information defined as personal data, receive it "in a structured,

[227] See definition of « data controller » and « data processor » as stated in the GDPR Regulation (CE) n° 2016/679, Chapter 1, article 4(7)(8).
[228] For mor detailed information, please refer to Privacy policy of the Interreg Euro MED Programme

[229] See definition in the GDPR Regulation (CE) n° 2016/679, Chapter 1, article 4 (1).

commonly used and machine-readable format" rectify it, erase it, asks the restriction of its processing, etc.[230]

iv. What is data controller and processor(s)?

'Controller' means the natural or legal person, public authority, agency or other body which, alone or jointly with others, determines the purposes and means of the processing of personal data [...]".

"A 'processor' means a natural or legal person, public authority, agency or other body which processes personal data on behalf of the controller."[231]

In the case of an Interreg Euro-MED project, the data control and process are compulsory requirements[232] and should be taken on by the same partner who will be then the "Data controller"; any partner falling under the definition of "data controller" and "data processor" established by the regulation can be considered as such.

v. What are the responsibilities of the data controller?

A "Data Controller") must be appointed for each project and "shall implement appropriate technical and organisational measures to ensure and to be able to demonstrate that processing is performed in accordance with this Regulation."[233]

Therefore, the Data Controller must ensure that institutions managing personal data implement systems that enable the inventory of databases, allow interested people to access their personal data, change it or deleted it.

These databases must be kept safe of any data breach. In the event such incident occurs, institutions have the obligation to communicate it within 72 hours to the respective national data protection authority.

The project must appoint where necessary[234] a data protection officer (DPO) that will "inform and advise the [Data Controller] and the employees who carry out processing of their obligations pursuant to this Regulation [...]; monitor compliance with this Regulation [...]; provide advice where requested [...]; cooperate with the supervisory authority; act as the contact point for the supervisory authority on issues relating to processing [of personal data]"[235], etc.

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[230] For a full description of the « data subject » rights, please check Chapter 3 of the GDPR Regulation (CE) n° 2016/679.
[231] Definition of a "data controller" and "data processor" according to the GDPR Regulation (CE) n° 2016/679, Chapter 1, article 4(7)(8).
[232] Please refer to section Building my consortium chapter Partnership architecture
[233] Regulation (CE) n° 2016/679, Chapter 4, article 24(1).
[234] Please check the GDPR Regulation (CE) n° 2016/679, Chapter 4, article 37 to see in which cases a DPO must be appointed.
[235] For the detailed list of the DPO tasks, please see the GDPR Regulation (CE) n° 2016/679, Chapter 4, article 39.

"Data subjects may contact the Data Protection Officer with regard to all issues related to processing of their personal data and to the exercise of their rights under this Regulation."[236]

Please note that according to the regulation, **Public Bodies must appoint a DPO.**

vi. What penalties in the case of infringement?

Organisations failing to comply with the GDPR can be fined up to 4% of annual global turnover or €20 Million (whichever is greater). This is the maximum fine that can be imposed for the most serious infringements e.g. not having sufficient consent to process data or violating the core of Privacy by Design concepts.[237]

vii. Who is responsible for the data collected in projects websites and by other means?

The Programme Managing Authority (Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur Region) is only responsible **(Data controller)** for the data collected by the Joint Secretariat and stored in the Programme website and other IT or non IT systems, for the legal obligations to be fulfilled by the Programme (accounts data, project partner's contacts, webmasters lists, etc.).

The Interreg Euro-MED Programme cannot be held responsible for the information contained on a project's website and Privacy Policy page.

All data collected and stored by the projects, collected either through the Interreg Euro-MED web platform via the registration forms or surveys, or through any other softwares and applications, are solely the responsibility of the project data controller.

viii. Subject consent

Please note that **not all data is subject to consent. Absolute consent is needed in case of sensitive and risky data**. If the data is collected under the framework of a legal contract or in compliance with legal regulations, the consent might not be necessary. However, in this regard, project partners have a duty of transparency and for that matter; they must explain for what purposes they use the information. In addition, they must grant consultation rights for a claimant requesting access to their own data.
As far as Newsletter contacts/mailings are concerned, the GDPR requires the express consent of the recipients. To do this, **project partners must ask for the express agreement of their targets and grant them the right to access**, change or delete their personal data.

[236] See GDPR Regulation (CE) n° 2016/679, Chapter 4, article 38(4).
[237] For detailed information, please refer to the GDPR Regulation (CE) n° 2016/679, Chapter 8, article 83.

Data subjects should always have the possibility to exercise their rights. An opt-out option should therefore always be available for newsletters and similar communication tools.

ix. What do project partners need to do: Check list

Several actions must be undertaken, in order to comply with the GDPR:

- First and foremost, project partners must agree on and appoint the partner institution that will act as the project Data Controller. This appointment will have to be made during the precontracting phase[238], and at the very latest, and in agreement with the JS, during the first Steering Committee meeting.
- The project partnership must then appoint a DPO for the project. The Joint Secretariat strongly recommends appointing a DPO within the data controller institution. As a consequence, the institution elected as data controller must have the capacity to take such responsibility and preferably already count with a DPO within its structure.
- The data controller must review regularly all the protection measures of the project partner databases and make an inventory to prevent data breaches;
- Have a personal data management system ready, to be able to quickly respond to any demands of access, deletion, modification or even complaints.
- Have a privacy policy page on the project website, in full compliance with the GDPR. The Programme prepared a "Privacy Policy" template[239] available on the Websites provided to all Interreg Euro-MED projects. This template is not intended to address the specific circumstances of any particular project or entity Adapt the template provided by the Programme to your project specificities or where necessary, draft a new one.
- Add the contact of your DPO and your website manager;
- As for the registration forms and surveys, project partners need to add:
  - A paragraph informing about the purpose of the data collection and guaranteeing that the data is collected and processed in compliance with the GDPR;
  - A paragraph stating that anyone registering for an event or filling in a survey / form confirm having read the excerpt on GPDR and that by clicking on the "SUBMIT" button they give [ACRONYM'S] project partners their explicit consent for collecting and using your personal data.

Registration and survey form templates are provided together with the project website. The Programme strongly advises you to use it.

[238] Please refer to section II. Implementing my project / Pre-contracting phase
[239] Template for privacy policy page available on each project website.

B. Fraud (drafting ongoing)

C. Conflict of interest (drafting ongoing)

D. Intellectual property

Intellectual property refers to all exclusive rights granted on intellectual creations. It is divided into two branches: industrial property, which includes inventions (patents), trademarks, industrial designs and geographical indications; and literary and artistic property, which includes copyright and related rights. Since the entry into force of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) in 2009, the Union has had explicit competence in intellectual property rights (Article 118).[240]

In the spirit of cooperation and exchange, the LP and the PPs should ensure that all project outputs and results are of public interest and available free of charge. They should be made available to all in an easily usable format.

However, project partners own their work and may consider the possibility to protect it. It is up to them to determine the most suitable protection as long as it complies with the principles described herein. The Joint Secretariat recommends using the Creative Commons licences CC BY 4.0 and CC BY-SA 4.0 as they grant a protection to intellectual creations but also a free access to anyone with no commercial use. For more information about the Creative Commons licences, please refer to their website: https://creativecommons.org/.

1. Upon request, the LP and PPs must provide the MA/JS, European Union institutions, bodies, offices or agencies with all the outputs, communication and promotional materials produced by the projects. For this purpose, the LP enquires about pre-existing rights attached to the materials and ensure that a royalty-free, non-exclusive and irrevocable licence without significant additional costs or administrative burden to use such materials is granted to the aforementioned Programme and European Union bodies in accordance with Annex IX of Regulation 2021/1060.

2. The MA/JS is entitled to use any outputs as well as the communication and promotional materials produced by the project so as to showcase how the subsidy is used and guarantee a wide spread of the project deliverables and outputs in accordance with Article 49 of Regulation (EU) No 2021/1060 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021.

[240] Website of the National Institute for Intellectual Property: https://www.inpi.fr/en/comprendre-la-propriete-intellectuelle/les-enjeux-de-la-propriete-intellectuelle/quest-ce-que-la-propriete-industrielle

3. The LP and the PPs agree that the outputs as well as any communication and promotional materials are forwarded by the MA to other Programme authorities, as well as the countries participating in the Programme or to authorities of other Interreg programmes and the EC, to use this material to showcase how the subsidy is used, in accordance with Article 49 of Regulation (EU) No 2021/1060 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021.

4. The LP ensures that they have all rights to use any pre-existing intellectual property rights, if necessary, for the implementation of the project.

5. The LP must inform the MA if there is any sensitive or confidential information, or any pre-existing intellectual property rights related to the project that must be respected.

E. Handling of complaints and disputes

The procedures in place for handling complaints and disputes differ according to the object of the conflict.

i. Complaints related to appraisal of proposals

Following the finalisation of the proposals' appraisal and the decision of the Monitoring Committee of the Interreg Euro-MED Programme in charge of the selection of the projects, the MA informs the Lead Partners in writing of the final decision of the Monitoring Committee[241]. For project proposals that have been rejected (during the administrative and eligibility phase or the quality assessment phase), the reasons for the rejection are detailed in the notification or in the assessment grid sent with the decision.

The right to present a complaint applies to **Lead Partners** whose **proposal has not been retained** during the appraisal of the projects. This right may also apply to **projects that are approved with conditions**, if the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat and the Lead Partner fail to agree on the conditions during the pre-contracting process.

A complaint may be presented only on the following grounds:

- The lead partner and its partnership consider that the appraisal of their proposal, according to the criteria approved by the Monitoring Committee, is not based on the information they have provided in the application form presented; and/or

[241] The MA notification is sent by email by the JS

- The Lead Partner and its partnership consider that the assessment and selection process of the proposal does not comply with the specific procedures established by the Programme, the Manual and the Terms of Reference of the call, and that this non-compliance had (or may have had) an impact on the decision.

a) Admissibility of the complaint:

To be admissible, any complaint regarding the appraisal of proposals must be submitted in French or English by the Lead Partner, as representative of the consortium concerned by the funding decision. It is therefore the responsibility of the Lead Partner to collect the grounds for the complaint from all the project partners and to present them.

The complaint is sent by **e-mail with acknowledgement of receipt** and addressed to the Interreg Euro-MED Programme (programme@interreg-euro-med.eu). The Lead Partner has two months to present its complaint starting from the date of receipt of the email from the Joint Secretariat notifying the Monitoring Committee's decision subject to the complaint.

Any complaint presented after this deadline is excluded and will be classified as not acceptable.

The complaint must indicate
- the name and address of the Lead Partner
- the reference of the proposal which is subject to complaint
- the grounds for the complaint clearly stated, including a list of all the elements of the appraisal that are contested and/or not in conformity with the procedures;
- the date, signature and (if applicable) stamp of the legal representative of the Lead Partner;
- any additional supporting documents.
- On receipt of the complaint, the Lead Partner concerned is notified by the Secretariat whether the complaint is or not admissible.

b) Processing of the complaint:

If the complaint is admissible, the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat examines it, based on the information presented by the Lead Partner and the supporting documents received.
The Monitoring Committee of the Programme is informed and may, if necessary, take part in the examination of the complaint.

NB : If an applicant from an EU territory outside the Interreg Euro-MED Programme area presents a complaint, the applicant's national/regional authority will be kept informed by the MA of all the stages of the process.

After the complaint has been examined, the MA notifies the relevant LP of the outcome of the examination.

Two possibilities are then possible:

- Rejection of the complaint
- Acceptance of the complaint

The decision concerning this stage is communicated to the Programme Monitoring Committee for information.

In case of rejection, the decision subject to the complaint is maintained and the process related to the concerned complaint ends.
The conclusion of steps a) and b) will be communicated by email with acknowledgement of receipt to the Lead Partner within two months from the date of the acknowledgement of receipt of the complaint by the Programme.

c) Reassessment of the decision:

In case of acceptance of the complaint, the decision subject to the complaint is reassessed based on the elements provided by the LP.

The project proposal and the amended assessment proposal (if any) will be sent back to the Monitoring Committee to validate the outcome of the review.

The MA notifies the concerned LP of the outcome of the re-assessment.

ii. Protests and disputes about decisions taken during project implementation

- Dispute regarding a decision of the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat:
  In accordance with the provisions of the Subsidy Contract (art. 11.3[242]), in case of dispute concerning the decisions of the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat on the basis of the Subsidy Contract or on the basis of the decisions of the Monitoring Committee of the Programme, the dispute must be notified **in French or English to the Joint Secretariat by e-mail to the Programme** (programme@interreg-euro-med.eu) **with acknowledgement of receipt.**

  The request must be submitted **by the Lead Partner**, as representative of the consortium; if the protest is raised by one single partner, the complaining partner should provide all necessary information to the Lead Partner who will initiate the process with the Programme.

[242] Art 11.3 of the Subsidy Contract: In case of dispute between the MA and the LP, amicable solutions or mediation procedures must be implemented before any legal proceedings. The procedure to be followed must be defined in the Programme Manual.

Upon receipt of the email, the JS will examine the request and respond within a reasonable time (in collaboration with the MC or National Controller if necessary). An amicable solution will always be sought by the parties.

Where the courts, the Public Prosecutor or other national institutions are competent with regard to the object of the claim, the Lead Partner is entitled to address also these authorities in France (i.e. the country where the MA is based).

- Disputes relating to the tasks of National ("First") and Second Level Controls:
  Protests or disputes in relation to National ("First") and Second Level Controls and audits should be addressed to the Authority responsible for these matters in accordance with the relevant national regulations[243].

  In this context, protests or disputes must be **addressed by the concerned Partner** and copied **to the Lead Partner and to the Programme** (programme@interreg-euro-med.eu).

iii. Complaints to the Administrative Tribunal

Any decision of the MA or any dispute relating to the implementation of the Contract may be appealed to the Administrative Tribunal of Marseille, within two months from its notification. The Administrative Tribunal may also be approached via the "Télérecours citoyens" application accessible via the website www.telerecours.fr (Available only in French)).

[243] For more details on national procedures for handling disputes and complaints, please contact the relevant National Contact Point and check the information provided for individual countries at https://interreg-euro-med.eu/en/

V. Annexes (drafting ongoing)

A. Deliverables list

In the Application Form, for each work package, applicants have to describe the activities that will lead to the achievement of the targeted specific objective.

For each activity, applicants are likely to produce deliverables which they will need to plan and budget for. However, for the purposes of assessing the relevance of the project and monitoring its progress, it is not necessary to list them all in the Application Form.

It is highly recommended to keep all records of the project development, including methodologies, databases, reports, etc., necessary to fully understand the approach and to develop them in such a way that they can be shared in line with the Results Amplification Strategy. However, only those deliverables directly related and meaningful to the results of the project and the ultimate goal and output of the activity or project shall be listed.

Depending on the type of project, an activity can have none, one or more deliverables that contribute to the development of a project output. Indeed, deliverables are optional.

This section defines some possible types of activities and respective examples of final deliverables that the project could produce:

- Mandatory activities that are common to all types of projects:
    - ✓ Communication *(Chart 1)*
    - ✓ Monitoring of carbon footprint *(Chart 2)*
    - ✓ Contribution to the Results Amplification Strategy *(Chart 3)*
- Activities specific to each type of project:
    - ✓ Study projects *(Chart 4)*
    - ✓ Test projects *(Chart 5)*
    - ✓ Transfer projects *(Chart 6)*
    - ✓ Thematic community projects *(Chart 7)*
    - ✓ Institutional dialogue projects *(Chart 8)*

Please note that the **Strategic territorial projects** can include all the suggested activities and deliverables listed for Study /Test /Transfer projects, as they will include all three study-test-transfer phases.

CHART 1: POSSIBLE COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES AND DELIVERABLES

As a reminder, the communication activities will be included into the different work packages, there is no work package dedicated to communication.

<table>
<tr><th>TYPES OF ACTIVITIES</th><th>EXAMPLES OF DELIVERABLES</th></tr>
<tr><td>Networking</td><td rowspan="5">Agreement
Memorandum of Understanding
Charter
Protocol
Booklet / Brochure
Newsletter
Proceedings
Conference report
E-learning platform
Training course material
Training report
Training methodology
Atypical / tailored event report
Satisfaction survey (report)
Website and social media analytics</td></tr>
<tr><td>Delivering information</td></tr>
<tr><td>Exchanging information</td></tr>
<tr><td>Transferring knowledge / know-how / expertise</td></tr>
<tr><td>Participating in external events</td></tr>
</table>

CHART 2: POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES AND DELIVERABLES TO MONITOR PROJECT CARBON FOOTPRINT

<table>
<tr><th>TYPE OF ACTIVITY</th><th>EXAMPLES OF DELIVERABLES</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Monitoring Carbon footprint</td><td>Calculation of project carbon footprint</td></tr>
<tr><td>Proof of carbon offsetting</td></tr>
</table>

CHART 3: POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES AND DELIVERABLES TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE RESULTS AMPLIFICATION STRATEGY FOR THEMATIC PROJECTS

INDICATIVE LIST OF ACTIVITIES TO BE CHOSEN DEPENDING ON THE TYPE OF PROJECT, BASED ON THE RESULTS AMPLIFICATION STRATEGY.

<table>
<tr><th>TYPES OF ACTIVITIES</th><th>EXAMPLES OF DELIVERABLES</th></tr>
<tr><td>✓ Exploring data published by projects and made available by the Programme (notably ToR and library)
✓ Implementing JS instructions to ensure data reuse
✓ Carrying out transfer feasibility studies
✓ Implementing pilot transfer activities
✓ Designing plans for transfer of results</td><td rowspan="3">Thematic data collection
Stakeholders and beneficiaries database
Good Practices
e-learning platform
Training course material
Training report
Seminar/Workshop/Meeting report
Action Plan
Strategy
Model
Policy paper
Political recommendations
Living Lab
Forum/Blog
Legal Act
Protocol
Labelling
Agreement
Memorandum of Understanding</td></tr>
<tr><td>✓ Consolidating the results of relevant projects
✓ Participating in the identification and mobilisation of potential targets for transfer and mainstreaming
✓ Consolidating or creating networks for dissemination and participation of stakeholders beyond the partnership
✓ Disseminating knowledge to stakeholders through dissemination activities including training
✓ Participating in the actions of their thematic community, benefiting from the experience and support of governance projects
✓ Implementing mainstreaming plans in collaboration with IDPs and with the support of TCPs
✓ Contributing to the Euro-MED Academy
✓ Coordinating with TCP, IDP and JS</td></tr>
<tr><td>✓ Mobilising relevant multi-sectoral and multi-level decision-making actors
✓ Promoting interfaces with other initiatives and projects of other programmes</td></tr>
</table>

CHART 4: POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES AND DELIVERABLES FOR STUDYING PROJECTS

<table>
<tr><th>TYPES OF ACTIVITIES</th><th>EXAMPLES OF DELIVERABLES</th></tr>
<tr><td>Studying field</td><td rowspan="4">State of the art
SWOT Analysis
Needs analysis
Diagnosis
Case study
Comparative analysis
Feasibility study
Prospective study
Benchmarking study
Consultation report
Technical workshop report
Thematic data collection
Good practices
Stakeholders and beneficiaries database
Maps
GIS
Itinerary / routes
Observatory
Indicators list
Methodology / toolkit
Road map
Guidelines
Model
Training material
Decision tool
Monitoring tool
Strategy
Action plan
Tool</td></tr>
<tr><td>Compiling and organising information and data</td></tr>
<tr><td>Providing tools, methods and services</td></tr>
<tr><td>Developing common approaches and strategies</td></tr>
</table>

CHART 5: POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES AND DELIVERABLES FOR TESTING PROJECTS

<table>
<tr><th>TYPES OF ACTIVITIES</th><th>EXAMPLES OF DELIVERABLES</th></tr>
<tr><td>Preparing pilot activities</td><td rowspan="5">Preliminary or fine-tuning study for launching pilot activities
Testing report
Software
Support / service Facilities
Methodology
Model
Simulation report
Evaluation report
Evaluation tool
Evaluation methodology
e-learning platform
Training course material
Training report
Training methodology</td></tr>
<tr><td>Testing (processes, techniques, models, tools, methods and services)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Simulating (processes, techniques, models, tools, methods and services)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Evaluating processes, techniques, models, tools, methods and services</td></tr>
<tr><td>Transferring knowledge / know-how / expertise</td></tr>
</table>

CHART 6: POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES AND DELIVERABLES FOR TRANSFERRING PROJECTS

<table>
<tr><th>TYPES OF ACTIVITIES</th><th>EXAMPLES OF DELIVERABLES</th></tr>
<tr><td>Transferring tested processes, techniques, models, tools, methods and services</td><td rowspan="2">Plan
Model
Protocol
Tool
e-learning platform
Training course material
Training report
Training methodology
Atypical / tailored event report</td></tr>
<tr><td>Transferring knowledge / know-how / expertise</td></tr>
</table>

CHART 7: POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES AND DELIVERABLES FOR THEMATIC COMMUNITY PROJECTS

INDICATIVE LIST OF ACTIVITIES TO BE CHOSEN FROM THE RESULTS AMPLIFICATION STRATEGY.

TYPES OF ACTIVITIES	EXAMPLES OF DELIVERABLES
✓ Organising thematic data from past, current and shared projects ✓ Establishing a system of continuous and systematic peer review (sharing of results and peer review) ✓ Carrying out analyses according to criteria of reusability and adaptability ✓ Organising knowledge produced by modular and strategic territorial projects ✓ Inspiring linkages between thematic projects ✓ Organising exchanges between thematic projects by exploiting the administrative and technical data made available by the Programme ✓ Creating and maintaining partner networks in collaboration with the Institutional Dialogue Projects ✓ Organising the sharing of information on the implementation of projects ✓ Establishing a mechanism for constructive exchange between project partners addressing similar and complementary issues ✓ Producing analysis matrices to identify potential synergies ✓ Integrating/aggregating results for collective dissemination to support communication and valorisation of results (collective or individual valorisation) ✓ Developing a joint map/database of targets at Programme level in collaboration with the Institutional Dialogue Projects	Survey/ questionnaire/ collecting information tool e-learning platform Training course material Training report Training methodology Atypical / tailored event report Thematic data collection Good practices Stakeholders and beneficiaries database Tool Maps GIS Methodology Observatory Plan Model Protocol Political recommendation Thematic recommendation Agreement Memorandum of Understanding Charter Living Lab
✓ Carrying out analyses according to criteria of replicability, adaptability, transferability and integration ✓ Setting up activities to assemble, integrate and amplify the evaluated and proven results ✓ Consolidating or creating networks for dissemination and participation of actors beyond the partnership in collaboration with the Institutional Dialogue Projects ✓ Disseminating aggregated or consolidated knowledge to targeted actors in collaboration with Institutional Dialogue Projects ✓ Establishing national institutional networks to identify local and regional target actors to facilitate transfer and mainstreaming ✓ Developing and facilitating networks beyond the partners networks, bringing together multi-level and multi-sectoral potential donors and recipients in collaboration with the Institutional Dialogue Projects ✓ Contributing to the establishment of working relationships and a roadmap with relevant decision makers in collaboration with the Institutional Dialogue Projects – Liaising strategy ✓ Organising seminars to share previous experiences and transfer and mainstream methodologies in collaboration with the Institutional Dialogue Projects ✓ Organising complementary transfer activities to reinforce the projects' approaches in collaboration with the Institutional Dialogue Projects ✓ Contributing to the Euro-MED Academy ✓ Coordinating with TCP, IDP and JS	

✓ Implementing actions to actively engage target actors in networks (created, enriched, maintained) in collaboration with Institutional Dialogue Projects (MoU, Charter, etc) ✓ Promoting interfaces with other initiatives and projects of other programmes to increase the coordination of actors to address a common problem targeted on a type of geographical area through Thematic Projects or Institutional Dialogue Projects	

CHART 8: POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES AND DELIVERABLES FOR INSTITUTIONAL DIALOGUE PROJECTS

INDICATIVE LIST OF ACTIVITIES TO BE CHOSEN FROM THE RESULTS AMPLIFICATION STRATEGY.

TYPES OF ACTIVITIES	EXAMPLES OF DELIVERABLES
✓ Creating and maintaining partner networks in collaboration with Thematic Community Projects ✓ Developing a joint map/database of targets at Programme level in collaboration with Thematic Community Projects	Agreement Memorandum of Understanding Charter Protocol Roadmap Living Lab Action plan Strategy Plan Model Legal acts Political recommendations Policy paper Training material Training sessions report Cross-cutting Working Groups Recommendations
✓ Actively promoting the replication of successful activities to local, regional and national authorities ✓ Consolidating or creating networks for dissemination and participation of actors beyond the partnership in collaboration with **Thematic Community Projects** ✓ Disseminating aggregated or consolidated knowledge to targeted actors in collaboration with **Thematic Community Projects** ✓ Developing and facilitating networks bringing together multi-level and multi-sectoral potential donors and recipients in the project in partnership in collaboration with **Thematic Community Projects** ✓ Establishing working relationships and a roadmap with relevant decision makers in collaboration with **Thematic Community Projects**– Liaising strategy ✓ Deploying collective advocacy activities (including networking) with decision-makers for amplification and integration of results ✓ Pre-identifying tailor-made capitalisation actions for each level of governance ✓ Establishing coordinated capitalisation mechanisms/bodies at micro, meso and macro levels ✓ Identifying and promoting complementarity with ongoing activities in mentoring cities (donors or recipients) ✓ Favouring legislative agenda that affects the thematic communities ✓ Organising seminars to share previous experiences and transfer and mainstream methodologies in collaboration with **Thematic Community Projects** ✓ Organising complementary transfer activities to reinforce the projects' approaches in collaboration with **Thematic Community Projects** ✓ Supporting capacity building of public institutions in the regions to design, implement and evaluate transformative policies necessary to achieve the objectives of the thematic missions	

✓ Contributing to the Euro-MED Academy ✓ Coordinating with TCP,IDP and JS	
✓ Implementing actions to actively engage target actors in networks (created, enriched, maintained) - MoU, Charter, etc - in collaboration with **Thematic Community Projects** ✓ Identifying links between legislative processes at regional and local/ and regional and national levels ✓ Facilitating cooperation and complementarity between regions and local authorities ✓ Analysing and drawing up the state of the art of cooperation and capitalisation processes linked to the Programme's missions in the MED area beyond the Programme ✓ Exchanging regularly on opportunities with the network of National Contact Points, National Hubs (WestMED), Thematic Steering Groups (EUSAIR) ✓ To setting up a mechanism for the analysis (national policies, conditions of evolution, etc.) of opportunities, favouring the matching between needs and projects orientation ✓ Creating / participating in cross-cutting working groups of Mediterranean actors ✓ Facilitating thematic exchanges with EU DGs ✓ Facilitating exchanges with EU Parliament committees and MEPs ✓ Establishing a communication and mainstreaming strategy according to the international and European agendas related to the Programme's mission and thematic priorities ✓ Promoting interfaces with other initiatives and projects of other programmes to increase the coordination of actors to address a common problem targeted on a type of geographical area through **Thematic Projects or Institutional Dialogue Projects** ✓ Offering common methodologies to approach ERDF managing authorities at national and sub-national level ✓ Coordinating events to take larger benefit from them ✓ Establishing a mechanism for the development of joint transnational action plans ✓ Consolidating or creating networks in order to strengthen the presence of the MED space at transnational and European level as well as cooperation within the participating States and beyond the Programme, for example with non-EU countries of the Eastern and Southern shores ✓ Liaising with administrative/political structures outside the Programme and with other Territorial Programmes to contribute to the shared objectives (with thematic and territorial programmes in the MED space and with strategies, notably the macro-regional strategies EUSAIR and EUSALP and the WESTMED initiative, and other initiatives in the Mediterranean) ✓ Including and capitalising on activities with Eastern and Southern neighbours	

B. Tables (indicators/deliverables/SO/activities) + methodology and indicators template

This annex describes the Programme's output and results indicators, the means of collection and calculation, and provides concrete examples[244].

The chosen indicators to reflect the actions of this programming period are:

Outputs indicators:

RCO83: Strategies and action plans jointly developed
RCO116: Jointly developed solutions
RCO87: Organisations cooperating across borders

Results indicators:

RCR79: Joint strategies and action plans taken up by organisations
RCR104: Solutions taken up or up scaled by organisations
PSI1: Organisations with increased institutional capacity due to their participation in cooperation activities across borders

The descriptions below are organized by Programme Specific Objectives.
Each Specific Objective, according to its theme, addresses different output and result indicators.
The outputs and results responding to the same indicator may vary according to the targeted SO.

[244] For more detailed information on the methodology for selecting Programme indicators, please refer to the "Euro-MED 21-27 Indicators framework".

i. Indicators for SO 1 (i): RCO87, RCO116, PSI1, RCR104

Indicator fiches - SO 1 i Developing and enhancing research and innovation capacities and the uptake of advanced technologies	
GENERAL INFORMATION	
Title (EU)	**RCO87 - Organisation cooperating across border**
Definition (EU)	The indicator counts the organisations cooperating formally in supported projects. The organisations counted in this indicator are the legal entities including project partners and associated organizations, as mentionned in the financing agreement of the application. Organisations cooperating formally in small projects (for instance under Small project Fund) are also counted.
Measurement unit	Organisation
Type of indicator	Output
Milestone 2024	0
Target 2029	372
RELEVANCE	
Euro-MED 21-27 definition	RCO87 is selected for all Euro-MED 21-27 specific objectives. The indicator counts the organisations cooperating formally in supported projects. At programme level, organisations can be defined as project partners or associated participating in approved projects (whether receiving funds or not). Under this specific objective, main target groups are represented by: Local, regional and national authorities, in particular their sectoral agencies, SMEs and economic operators, clusters, Business support organisations, Universities and research centres, Civil society / NGOs / Local communities and associations, working in different thematic fields related to the innovation ecosystem, including business development, technology transfer, regional innovation strategies and policies.
Justification of selection	Cooperation between organisations across borders is essential to implement Euro-MED programme and achieve its main objective. Furthermore, cooperation is crucial to provide a common response to current challenges identified for the selected specific objectives. During 14-20, cooperation was not limited to organisations within projects, it was extended to cooperation within and across thematic communities of projects, leading to relevant results and demonstrating the added value of this kind of transnational cooperation. Within this specific objective a particular attention is paid to SMEs. The involvement and support provided to enterprises through project implementation is key for the achievement of programme objectives in terms of enhancing research and innovation capacities and the uptake of advanced technologies and know-how. The enterprises are the drivers to ensure the elaboration, the testing and adopting of innovative processes and tools that could lead to green transformation of the economy sectors. As project partners and as targeted beneficiaries the enterprises will collaborate closely with research stakeholders, civil society and public institutions for the joint development of transnational solutions. They will benefit from the cooperation and further use and upgrade the piloted tools. It is important to reinforce and enlarge cooperation between stakeholders of the 4helix mainly at local and regional level, so as to break silos and integrate knowledge from different perspectives (government, society, university and industry), ensuring harmonious and sustainable development practices for the territory. The 4 helix stakeholders' co-working and cooperation will contribute to the establishment of the open innovation micro-dynamics, contributing to knowledge creation, product and services' development, green transition, trusting culture and sharing economy. Output indicator RCO87 will show the concrete joint commitment of the participating organisations in the innovation canvas.

Policy objective	PO1
Specific objective	(i) Developing and enhancing research and innovation capacities and the uptake of advanced technologies
Type of projects concerned	Thematic projects
Associated result indicator	PSI1 - Organisation with increased institutional capacity due to their participation in cooperation activities across borders
Indicator level	Project
COLLECTION AND CALCULATION METHOD	
Calculation method for obtaining the value of the indicator	The value of the indicator is the total sum of projects' full and associated partners.
Means of data collection	Data collection will be done through the MA monitoring system. Partners participating in funded projects will be automatically exported for the monitoring system and reported by specific objective.
Time measurement	At project completion
Aggregation issues	N/A
Reporting	Rule 1: Reporting by specific objectives. Forecast for selected projects and achieved values, both cumulative to date (CPR Annex XII, Table 6). Frequence of reporting : twice per year (art.32.1 and 32.2.b Interreg Regulation)
Methods of traceability and reliability	Data are collected by the monitoring system
Proof of realisation	N/A
Focus points from 14-20	An efficient and accurate management of the partners database in the information system is required. In the communication of programme beneficiaries there is the need to insist on the added value of Associated partners and their real engagement in project activities.
Data management contact	Managing authority
EXAMPLES	N/A

Indicator fiches - SO 1 i Developing and enhancing research and innovation capacities and the uptake of advanced technologies

GENERAL INFORMATION	
Title (EU)	**RCO116 - Joint developed solutions**
Definition (EU)	The indicator counts the number of jointly developed solutions from joint pilot actions implemented by supported projects. In order to be counted in the indicator, an identified solution should include indications of the actions needed for it to be taken up or to be upscaled. A jointly developed solution implies the involvement of organizations from at least two participating countries (for programmes falling under strands A, B, C as defined in the Interreg Regulation) in the drafting and design process of the solution or is developed in the scope of programmes within strands D or E as defined in the Interreg Regulation.
Measurement unit	Solution
Type of indicator	Output
Milestone 2024	0
Target 2029	27
RELEVANCE	
Euro-MED 21-27 definition	At programme level solutions can be defined as methodologies, tools, technologies, services, processes, partnership/cooperation agreements. To be counted for this indicator the solutions should be: - jointly developed: through the involvement of organizations from at least 2 programme countries - tested in real life conditions - easily transferable to further territories of the programme - the solution should include a list of actions needed for it to be uptaken or upscaled by further organisations. Solutions are developed at project level, therefore 1 to 2 transnational solutions are expected as direct output of a single project. Jointly developed solutions refer to solutions newly developed by the project partnership or solutions already developed, e.g. in territorial contexts other than the programme area, that are adapted to the Euro-MED 21-27 context and geographic area by the project partnership. Under SO i, targeted outputs should refer to innovative tools, methodologies and practices, resulting from cooperation and pilot activities within funded projects, that will benefit targeted end users in selected economy sectors. Types of targeted solutions include: - Solutions for the development of value chains and setting up transnational cooperation patterns within clusters - Solutions enhancing transnational cooperation among 4 helix stakeholders - Solutions for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of RIS3 strategies - Solutions for skills development and capacity building of public institutions for the implementation of RIS 3 - Solutions assisting SMEs in extroversion and transnational and/or international cooperation - Solutions and tools establishing sustainable business development practices for SMEs - Solutions for the acceleration of technology transfer to be applied in economy sectors - Solutions promoting climate friendly innovations - Solutions enabling SMEs to turn environmental challenges to opportunities - Solutions promoting social entrepreneurship and cultural and creative industries in sectors in transition - Solutions for the effective change in tourism practices promoting destinations' sustainability and 'responsible tourism' practices - Solutions for the management of tourism flows during high season
Justification of selection	Concrete solutions, resulting from transnational cooperation and pilot activities within funded projects, are needed to support sustainable innovation ecosystems and to foster the innovation capacities and cooperation among stakeholders of the quadruple helix. Most projects funded during the 2014-2020 programming period have produced solutions relevant to these challenges, mainly under priority axis 'Innovation', proving that joint developed solutions are a realistic and achievable project output. Jointly developed solutions are direct outputs of the following types of actions: - Elaboration and adoption of tools, methodologies and practices to support sustainable economy sectors and reinforce business competitiveness - Establishment of networks, coordination processes and agreements between stakeholders of the quadruple helix that includes the civil society engagement. These actions will lead to the achievement of the objectives of SO i: on the one hand to boost the innovation potential and accelerate the transition to green economy and society, and on the other hand to enhance the transnational cooperation of 4helix stakeholders and improve their skills. Expected results of undertaken actions refer to the reinforcement of the sustainability pillar in business practices and the increased capacity of public authorities and private stakeholders to implement a greener economy in the Mediterranean. The engagement of civil society in these processes is deemed crucial.
Policy objective	PO1
Specific objective	(i) Developing and enhancing research and innovation capacities and the uptake of advanced technologies
Type of projects concerned	Thematic projects
Associated result indicator	RCR104
Indicator level	Project

COLLECTION AND CALCULATION METHOD	
Calculation method for obtaining the value of the indicator	The value of the indicator is the total sum of the number of solutions developed jointly by the funded projects
Means of data collection	Data collection will be done through the MA monitoring system. The information of the achievement of the project output, including proof of realisation, are compiled by the beneficiaries in the monitoring system and validated by the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat.
Time measurement	At project completion
Aggregation issues	N/A
Reporting	Rule 1: Reporting by specific objectives. Forecast for selected projects and achieved values, both cumulative to date (CPR Annex XII, Table 6). Frequence of reporting: twice per year (art.32.1 and 32.2.b Interreg Regulation)
Methods of traceability and reliability	Data are verified by the Managing Authority upon submission of the final progress report and payment claim by the project beneficiary on the basis of provided supporting documents.
Proof of realisation	The documents provided for demonstrating the achievement of the output, i.e. the completed development of a joint solution should include: - Clear description of the challenge that the solution is adressing and how the solution developed contributes to tackle the mentioned challenge - Clear description of the solution and concrete project output: methodology, tool, technology, service or process, partnership agreement, including target groups involved, type of territory concerned - Description of the testing phase and its results - List of actions needed for the solution to be uptaken or upscaled in further territories, including financial resources to be mobilized Criteria for validation of the output: - The addressed challenge is relevant to the selected specific objective - The solution has been developed with the contribution of partners from at least 2 programme countries - The solution has been tested in real life conditions - results of the test are available - The solution demonstrates to be effective in tackling the mentioned challenge - Actions needed for the solution to be taken up or upscaled are clear and complete
Focus points from 14-20	Developed outputs and provided proofs of realisation are quite different among projects, therefore a need for increased standardisation has been identified: - Criteria for validation are clearly set in terms of defining the solution and what is expected as final product - A template for proof of realisation documents should be provided to the beneficiary, in order to get a homogeneus set of documents and ensure that all necessary information is provided for each of the outputs so to enable further analysis at programme level.
Data management contact	Managing authority
EXAMPLES	Type of solutions/examples - Tools for the development of innovation potential of SMEs - Methodology for value chain development, - Eco-innovation/ climate friendly innovation - Platforms for stakeholders 'engagement with ensured sustainability upon project's end, including civil -society representatives/ Toolkits for thematic cooperation - Thematic indexes and schemes for SMEs development and internationalization - Methodology for implementation and coordination of Regional Innovation Strategies - Processes for effective evaluation of Regional Innovation Strategies - Methodology for building up, developing and sustaining transnational clusters - Technology transfer processes - Processes to embed innovation in public procurement procedures

Indicator fiches - SO 1 i Developing and enhancing research and innovation capacities and the uptake of advanced technologies

GENERAL INFORMATION	
Title Euro-MED 21-27	**PSI1 - Organisations with increased institutional capacity due to their participation in cooperation activities across borders**
Definition Euro-MED 21-27	This indicator measures the number of organisations that actively participated in cooperation activities of a project across borders and consequently increased their institutional capacity in the thematic field of the project. Institutional capacity is defined as an organisation's ability to set and achieve goals through knowledge, skills, systems and institutions. An organisation increases its institutional capacity by securing the resources (human or technical) and structures (organisational or governance) it needs to successfully perform its mandated tasks better. A cooperation activity across borders is defined as a process of exchanging knowledge and experience between participants from multiple countries. This process can lead to creating joint objectives and commitments and actions fulfilling these commitments. At programme level, organisations can be defined as project partners or final beneficiaries participating in cooperation activities (whether receiving funds or not) An organisation is to be counted if it has undergone this kind of learning process through project activities. This is defined as more than one instance of exchange in which the organisation played an active role. An organisation is to be counted only if its increased institutional capacity is in the thematic field of the project. Organisations targeted refer in particular to: - Organisations actively participating in the development of joint solutions and strategies and action plans - Organisations taking up joint developed solutions and strategies and action plans Types of organisations include, but are not limited to, International organisation, EEIG; National public authority; Regional public authority; Local public authority; Higher education and research; Interest groups including NGOs; SMEs; Enterprises; Business support organisation; Sectoral agency. Organisations specifically targeted under this specific objective are detailed in the relevant indicator fiche - RCO87 - Organisation cooperating across border
Measurement unit	Organisation
Type of indicator	Result
Baseline	0
Target 2029	260
RELEVANCE	
Justification of selection	This indicator was proposed by Interact following consultation and joint work among different transnational programmes. Increasing institutional capacity is one of the main objectives of the Interreg Euro-MED programme and at the core of transnational cooperation. This programme specific indicator is relevant to measure and showcase the achievement and impact of the programme for all selected specific objectives. Projects funded during the 2014-2020 programming period largely contributed to increase capacity of organisations within project partnerships and beyond, e.g. through joint development and adoption of strategies and solution. This result indicator will concretely reflect the change sought and achieved for final beneficiaries of the Euro-MED programme.
Policy objective	PO1
Specific objective	(i) Developing and enhancing research and innovation capacities and the uptake of advanced technologies
Type of projects concerned	Thematic projects
Associated output indicator	RCO87
Indicator level	Project
COLLECTION AND CALCULATION METHOD	
Calculation method for obtaining the value of the indicator	The value of the indicator is the total sum of organisations that demonstrate to have increased their institutional capacity following their participation in cooperation activities of project across borders. Following the common methodology developed among several Interreg programmes, the indicator value will be calculated through a common survey.
Means of data collection	Data collection will be done through the programme Platform. The information of the achievement of the result at project level is compiled by the lead partnerin the monitoring system and validated by the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat, verifying information provided in the programme Platform
Time measurement	At project completion/At project closure
Aggregation issues	N/A
Reporting	Rule 1: Reporting by specific objectives. Forecast for selected projects and achieved values, both cumulative to date (CPR Annex XII, Table 6). Frequence of reporting: twice per year (art.32.1 and 32.2.b Interreg Regulation)
Methods of traceability and reliability	Data collection will be done through the MA monitoring system. The information of the achievement of the result at project level is compiled by the beneficiaries in the monitoring system and validated by the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat.
Proof of realisation	Common survey
Focus points from 14-20	N/A
Data management contact	Managing Authority
EXAMPLES	General examples of increased capacity : - the organisation used knowledge or skills - the organisation adopted new tools - the organisation adopted new procedures or workflows - the organisation changed its organisational structure

Indicator fiches - SO 1 i Developing and enhancing research and innovation capacities and the uptake of advanced technologies	
GENERAL INFORMATION	
Title (EU)	**RCR104 - Solutions taken up or up-scaled by organisations**
Definition (EU)	The indicator counts the number of solutions, other than legal or administrative solutions, that are developed by supported projects and are taken up or upscaled during the implementation of the project or within one year after project completion. The organisation adopting the solutions developed by the project may or may not be a participant in the project. The uptake / up-scaling should be documented by the adopting organisations in, for instance, strategies, action plans etc.
Measurement unit	Solution
Type of indicator	Result
Baseline	0
Target 2029	24
RELEVANCE	
Euro-MED 21-27 definition	At programme level solutions can be defined as methodologies, tools, technologies, services, processes and partnership/cooperation agreements - jointly developed: through the involvement of organizations from at least XX programme countries - tested in real life conditions - easily transferable to further territories/organisations of the programme. Uptake refers to adoption or implementation of the solution. Upscale refers to: upgrade or improvement of the solution, or to extend the scope of the solution, e.g. from local to regional level or from the technical to the policy level. To be counted for this indicator the solution should have been effectively taken up or upscaled, or be at the initial stage of uptake/upscale, by a given organization. The take up/upscale should occur during the implementation of the project or at project closure. Initial stage of uptake/upscale is demonstrated by an official statement signed by the organisation proving the willingness to officially adopt the solution or to implement it in the organisation's usual practices and day-to-day activities, including time line for effective uptake. Effective uptake/upscale is demonstrated by e.g. signature of cooperation and partnership agreements, integration of the solution in regional or local strategies/action plans, implementation of pilots, launch of public procurements procedures/tenders To check the details about type of solutions expected under this specific objective, refer to the fiche for the indicator RCO116 - Joint developed solutions.
Justification of selection	Concrete solutions, resulting from transnational cooperation and pilot activities within funded projects, are key to support innovation practices leading to more sustainable economy. However, concrete uptake or upscale of developed solutions by relevant organisations is needed to have an impact on the territory. Indeed, in order to capitalize on the tested solutions, not to duplicate the efforts, and not to lose what proved to work for the Mediterranean territories, the logical continuation is to ensure effective implementation of these existing solutions. Therefore, the programme has decided to consider the uptake or upscale of developed solutions as expected results of supported projects. Several projects funded during the 2014-2020 programming period aimed at supporting SMEs and clusters which arrived at the stage of adoption of jointly developed solutions and application in their usual practices and day-to-day activities. For example, several SMEs were supported in the testing and adoption of thematic indicators and methodologies that included the social dimension (e.g. the agri-food PEF tool, the 3-pillar business model, the LCC tool). On the other hand, regional authorities, business and research organisations and civil society representatives actively participated in Living Labs that aimed at definition of community projects e.g. for marine energy exploitation, innovative procurement etc. All these examples prove that solutions taken up or upscaled by organisations are a realistic and achievable project output, that can contribute to achieve programme goals and realise the sought territorial impact.

Policy objective	PO1
Specific objective	(i) Developing and enhancing research and innovation capacities and the uptake of advanced technologies
Type of projects concerned	Thematic projects
Associated output indicator	RCO116
Indicator level	Project
COLLECTION AND CALCULATION METHOD	
Calculation method for obtaining the value of the indicator	The value of the indicator is the total sum of the number of solutions taken up or up-scaled by organisations
Means of data collection	Data collection will be done through the MA monitoring system. The information of the achievement of the project output, including proof of realisation, are compiled by the beneficiaries in the monitoring system and validated by the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat.
Time measurement	At project completion/At project closure
Aggregation issues	N/A
Reporting	Rule 1: Reporting by specific objectives. Forecast for selected projects and achieved values, both cumulative to date (CPR Annex XII, Table 6). Frequence of reporting: twice per year (art.32.1 and 32.2.b Interreg Regulation)
Methods of traceability and reliability	Data are verified by the Managing Authority upon submission of the final progress report and payment claim by the project beneficiary on the basis of provided supporting documents.
Proof of realisation	The documents provided for demonstrating the achievement of the output, i.e. the uptake or upscale of solutions by organisations should include: - Identification of the solution - Proof of uptake or upscale of the solution by the organization, e.g: Memorandum of Unsterstanding, or Letter of Intent/ Agreement, Framework document demonstrating the adoption/implementation of the solution by the relevant organization Report on implemented pilot activities Cooperation and partnership agreements Criteria for validation of the output: - The solution is at initial stage of uptake/upscale or has been effectively taken up or upscaled by the organisation
Focus points from 14-20	Provided proofs of realisation are quite different among projects, therefore a need for increased standardisation has been identified: - A template for proof of realisation documents should be provided to the beneficiary, in order to get a homogeneous set of documents and ensure that all necessary information is provided for each of the outputs so to enable further analysis at programme level
Data management contact	Managing authority
EXAMPLES	NA

ii. Indicators for SO 2 (iv): RCO87, RCO116, RCO83, PSI1, RCR104, RCR79

Indicator fiches - SO 2 (iv) Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention, resilience, taking into account eco system-based approaches	
GENERAL INFORMATION	
Title (EU)	**RCO87 - Organisation cooperating across border**
Definition (EU)	The indicator counts the organisations cooperating formally in supported projects. The organisations counted in this indicator are the legal entities including project partners and associated organizations, as mentionned in the financing agreement of the application. Organisations cooperating formally in small projects (for instance under Small project Fund) are also counted.
Measurement unit	Organisation
Type of indicator	Output
Milestone 2024	0
Target 2029	466
RELEVANCE	
Euro-MED 21-27 definition	RCO87 is selected for all Euro-MED 21-27 specific objectives. The indicator counts the organisations cooperating formally in supported projects. At programme level, organisations can be defined as project partners or associated participating in approved projects (whether receiving funds or not). Under this specific objective, main target groups are represented by: Regional and local and national authorities, Environmental agencies, tourism agencies, Energy agencies, Universities/research centres, SMEs & Economic operators, NGOs/ local communities and associations.
Justification of selection	Cooperation between organisations across borders is essential to implement EURO-MED programme and achieve its main objective. Furthermore, cooperation is crucial to provide a common response to current challenges identified for the selected specific objectives. During 14-20, cooperation was not limited to organisations within projects, it was extended to cooperation within and across thematic communities of projects, leading to relevant results and demonstrating the added value of this kind of transnational cooperation. Cooperation and coordination between organisations across borders is essential to support the achievements of climate goals by 2030 in the Mediterranean. Public-private collaboration constitutes another milestone for achieving resilience and adaptation to climate change. Output indicator RCO87 will show the concrete joint commitment of organisations in promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention and resilience.
Policy objective	PO2
Specific objective	(iv) Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention, resilience, taking into account eco system-based approaches
Type of projects concerned	Thematic projects
Associated result indicator	PSI1 - Organisation with increased institutional capacity due to their participation in cooperation activities across borders
Indicator level	Project
COLLECTION AND CALCULATION METHOD	
Calculation method for obtaining the value of the indicator	The value of the indicator is the total sum of projects' full and associated partners.
Means of data collection	Data collection will be done through the MA monitoring system. Partners participating in funded projects will be automatically exported for the monitoring system and reported by specific objective.
Time measurement	At project completion
Aggregation issues	N/A
Reporting	Rule 1: Reporting by specific objectives. Forecast for selected projects and achieved values, both cumulative to date (CPR Annex XII, Table 6). Frequence of reporting : twice per year (art.32.1 and 32.2.b Interreg Regulation)
Methods of traceability and reliability	Data are collected by the monitoring system
Proof of realisation	N/A
Focus points from 14-20	An efficient and accurate management of the partners database in the information system is required. In the communication of programme beneficiaries there is the need to insist on the added value of Associated partners and their real engagement in project activities.
Data management contact	Managing authority
EXAMPLES	N/A

Indicator fiches - SO 2 (iv) Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention, resilience, taking into account eco system-based approaches

GENERAL INFORMATION	
Title (EU)	**RCO116 - Joint developed solutions**
Definition (EU)	The indicator counts the number of jointly developed solutions from joint pilot actions implemented by supported projects. In order to be counted in the indicator, an identified solution should include indications of the actions needed for it to be taken up or to be upscaled. A jointly developed solution implies the involvement of organizations from at least two participating countries (for programmes falling under strands A, B, C as defined in the Interreg Regulation) in the drafting and design process of the solution or is developed in the scope of programmes within strands D or E as defined in the Interreg Regulation.
Measurement unit	Solution
Type of indicator	Output
Milestone 2024	0
Target 2029	24
RELEVANCE	
Euro-MED 21-27 definition	At programme level solutions can be defined as methodologies, tools, technologies, services, processes, partnership/cooperation agreements. To be counted for this indicator the solutions should be: - jointly developed: through the involvement of organizations from at least 2 programme countries - tested in real life conditions - easily transferable to further territories of the programme - the solution should include a list of actions needed for it to be uptaken or upscaled by further organisations. Solutions are developed at project level, therefore 1 to 2 transnational solutions are expected as direct output of a single project. Jointly developed solutions refer to solutions newly developed by the project partnership or solutions already developed, e.g. in territorial contexts other than the programme area, that are adapted to the Euro-MED 21-27 context and geographic area by the project partnership. Under SO iv, targeted outputs should refer to tools and practices for preventing and managing natural risks and risks linked to human activities, increasing climate protection and safeguarding the availability of fresh water. Types of targeted solutions: - Solutions to increase capacity in the monitoring and management of natural risks - Natured-based solutions to tackle risks caused by climate change, including floods, water scarcity, heat waves, extreme events, public health - Solutions for supporting climate-resilient, sustainable use and management of water - Solutions to increase resilience of urban areas and improve life quality - Solutions to reduce the impact of human activities on the environment, including reduction of CO2 emissions, increasing energy efficiency, deployment of renewable energy, promoting sustainable mobility - Solutions to trigger financing for energy transition and for rolling out nature-based solutions in urban areas - Solutions to implement a sustainable tourism model, with a more respectful use of environment and natural resources - Solutions to mitigate the negative impacts of mass tourism on the environment Solutions relevant for this indicator should not refer to strategies and action plans, which are relevant to RCO 83. Solutions developed for climate change adaptation should embed the form of a concrete tool, methodology or process and in this sense may be part of local Strategies/Action plan and therefore complementary to the Strategy/Action Plan indicator. For example, developed solutions bringing “increased resilience of urban areas” or “increased energy efficiency” can be included in climate change adaptation action plans at regional or local level. Delivered solutions should also contribute to the objectives of relevant European strategies (detailed in the Euro-MED Operational Programme).
Justification of selection	Most projects funded during the 2014-2020 programming period have delivered solutions relevant to these challenges, mainly under priority axis Low Carbon Economy and Environment protection, proving that joint developed solutions are a realistic and achievable project output. Delivered solutions refer for instance to tools to boost energy renovation/energy efficiency of the building stock, models for integrated planning and participatory processes in urban areas, low-carbon mobility planning. Concrete solutions, resulting from transnational cooperation and pilot activities within funded projects, are needed to promote climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention and resilience, taking into account eco system-based approaches. As stated in the New EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change, the “rolling out of physical solutions, such as creating more green spaces to reduce the impacts of heatwaves … is lagging behind”. Furthermore, as a consequence of climate change the number of extreme weather events is expected to significantly increase in the coming decades. Therefore, jointly developed solutions are crucial to effectively tackle mentioned challenges and represent expected outputs of supported projects. The development and adoption of tested and effective solutions will increase capacity of stakeholders, in particular public authorities, to prevent and manage disaster risks and to effective plan and finance climate change adaptation and energy transition, resulting in more resilient living areas and higher life quality for citizens.

Policy objective	PO2
Specific objective	(iv) Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention, resilience, taking into account eco system-based approaches
Type of projects concerned	Thematic projects
Associated result indicator	RCR104
Indicator level	Project
COLLECTION AND CALCULATION METHOD	
Calculation method for obtaining the value of the indicator	The value of the indicator is the total sum of the number of solutions developed jointly by the funded projects
Means of data collection	Data collection will be done through the MA monitoring system. The information of the achievement of the project output, including proof of realisation, are compiled by the beneficiaries in the monitoring system and validated by the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat.
Time measurement	At project completion
Aggregation issues	In order to avoid double counting, the solutions relevant for this indicator should not refer to strategies/action plans, which are counted under RCO83
Reporting	Rule 1: Reporting by specific objectives. Forecast for selected projects and achieved values, both cumulative to date (CPR Annex XII, Table 6). Frequence of reporting: twice per year (art.32.1 and 32.2.b Interreg Regulation)
Methods of traceability and reliability	Data are verified by the Managing Authority upon submission of the final progress report and payment claim by the project beneficiary on the basis of provided supporting documents.
Proof of realisation	The documents provided for demonstrating the achievement of the output, i.e. the completed development of a joint solution should include: - Clear description of the challenge that the solution is adressing and how the solution developed contributes to tackle the mentioned challenge - Clear description of the solution and concrete project output: methodology, tool, technology, service or process, partnership agreement, including target groups involved, type of territory concerned - Description of the testing phase and its results - List of actions needed for the solution to be uptaken or upscaled in further territories, including financial resources to be mobilized Criteria for validation of the output: - The addressed challenge is relevant to the selected specific objective - The solution has been developed with the contribution of partners from at least 2 programme countries - The solution has been tested in real life conditions - results of the test are available - The solution demonstrates to be effective in tackling the mentioned challenge - Actions needed for the solution to be taken up or upscaled are clear and complete
Focus points from 14-20	Developed outputs and provided proofs of realisation are quite different among projects, therefore a need for increased standardisation has been identified: - Criteria for validation are clearly set in terms of defining the solution and what is expected as final product - A template for proof of realisation documents should be provided to the beneficiary, in order to get a homogeneus set of documents and ensure that all necessary information is provided for each of the outputs so to enable further analysis at programme level.
Data management contact	Managing authority
EXAMPLES	Type of solutions/Examples - Risk assessment, monitoring and management systems: observatories, early warning systems, information and communications technology (ICT) solutions for data/information sharing - Climate Change Adaptation modelling, increasing knowledge on adaptation, its costs, benefits and distributional effects - Climate-resilience decision support tools, based on the latest digital technologies and climate services to underpin decision-making - Tools/services for increasing water efficiency and for ensuring climate-resilient, sustainable use and management of water - Nature-based solutions for climate resilient living areas: e.g. green spaces, roofs and walls to reduce the impacts of heatwaves/ adapting sewerage systems to better cope with storm overflows, reduce climate risk and safeguard freshwater access/ adapting the built environment to increase energy and resources efficiency, resilience and comfort and life quality of citizens - Tools to leverage funds for energy transition, energy efficiency of the building stock and for rolling out nature-based solutions in urban areas - Low carbon mobility services to reduce congestion and air pollution and improve the connection of urban and inland/remote areas - Public-private partnerships for increasing resilience of living areas - Participatory models/processes, awareness raising for changing citizens behavior towards a sustainable and efficient use of natural resources, fostering the creation of a water-saving culture among the population - Tools/services to improve management of forests, reducing the incidence and extent of forest fires, increase the absorption of CO2 and enhance the capacity of the forest to restore ecosystem services - Tools/services to reduce the impact of tourism and implementing a sustainable tourism model

Indicator fiches - SO 2 (iv) Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention, resilience, taking into account eco system-based approaches	
GENERAL INFORMATION	
Title (EU)	**RCO83 - Strategies and action plans jointly developed**
Definition (EU)	The indicator counts the number of joint strategies or action plans developed by supported projects. A jointly developed strategy aims at establishing a targeted way to achieve a goal oriented process in a specific domain. An action plan translates an existing jointly developed strategy into actions. Jointly developed strategy or action plan implies the involvement of organizations from at least two participating countries (for programmes falling under strands A, B, C as defined in the Interreg Regulation) in the drafting process of the strategy or action plan or is developed in the scope of programmes falling under strands D or E as defined in the Interreg Regulation.
Measurement unit	Strategy/action plan
Type of indicator	Output
Milestone 2024	0
Target 2029	40
RELEVANCE	
Euro-MED 21-27 definition	At programme level strategies and action plans can be defined as follows: A strategy describes a specific course of action designed to achieve a long-term goal, aiming at establishing a targeted way to achieve a goal-oriented process in a specific domain. An action plan translates an existing jointly developed strategy into actions, outlining in detail actions needed to reach the defined long-term goal. Strategies/action plans are developed at territorial level (e.g. local or regional), therefore an average of 4 strategies are expected as direct output of a single project. In order to be counted for the indicator the methodology/approaches used to develop strategies/action plans should be easily transferable to further territories of the programme. Under SO iv, targeted strategies/action plans should be in line with and contribute to following EU strategies/directives and should be easily transferable to further territories of the programme. - EU Green Deal - - New EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change - - European Climate Law (achieving climate neutrality by 2050) - - European Climate Pact (citizen-oriented actions towards green living areas, transport, buildings and skills), as well as the New European Bauhaus - - Urban Agenda for the EU - - EU 'Renovation Wave' Strategy for the building sector - - EU recast Renewable Energy Directive - - EU Strategy on Energy System Integration - - Clean Energy for EU Islands Initiative - - EU Sustainable & Smart Mobility Strategy - - Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC - - New EU Forest Strategy Types of targeted strategies/action plans - Climate Change Adaptation Strategies/action plans - regional and local level - with three cross-cutting priorities: integrating adaptation into macro-fiscal policy, nature-based solutions for adaptation, local adaptation action - Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan - regional and local level - Long-Term Renovation Strategies for the building stock - regional and local level - Clean Energy Transition Agendas (for islands) - regional and local level - Urban Agendas - local level - Strategies contributing to a more effective implementation of existing policies and instruments, and improving access to funding/investment, for more climate-resilient urban/living areas - Strategies/action plans to implement a sustainable tourism model, with a more respectful use of environment and natural resources - Integrating climate change adaptation and resilience into further local/regional plans Overall the adopted strategy should support the EU's comprehensive plan to increase the EU 2030 climate target to at least 50% and towards 55% in a responsible way. Strategies/action plans relevant for this indicator should not refer to solutions, which are relevant to RCO 116. Although, complementarities between strategies and solutions can be highlighted and will be encouraged where possible.
Justification of selection	Strategies and action plans at regional and local level are needed to ensure the achievement of the long-term vision that in 2050, the EU will be a climate-resilient society, fully adapted to the unavoidable impacts of climate change. The development and adoption of effective strategies and action plans at regional and local level is key for improving climate change adaptation and resilience of Mediterranean living areas, while securing and improving environmental and living quality. Direct outputs of supported projects will contribute to realise the 2050 vision of a climate-resilient Union by making adaptation in the Mediterranean smarter, more systemic and swifter. During the 2014-2020 period, strategies and action plans developed for e.g. large-scale energy renovation of public buildings and the transition towards a sustainable tourism model, proved to be effective in tackling challenges related to climate change adaptation and resilience. Together with solutions, effective strategies/action plans defined by key consortium and decision-makers are essential to face this type of joint challenge. These type of instruments are needed in order to ensure long term impacts in the territory and the involvement of all relevant stakeholders. The action of supporting public authorities will result in climate change adaptation strategies/action plans developed and adopted as well as in the integration of adaptation and resilience principles/measures in existing strategies.

Policy objective	PO2
Specific objective	(iv) Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention, resilience, taking into account eco system-based approaches
Type of projects concerned	Thematic projects
Associated result indicator	RCR79
Indicator level	Project
COLLECTION AND CALCULATION METHOD	
Calculation method for obtaining the value of the indicator	The value of the indicator is the total sum of the number of strategies/action plans developed jointly by the funded projects
Means of data collection	Data collection will be done through the MA monitoring system. The information of the achievement of the project output, including proof of realisation, are compiled by the beneficiaries in the monitoring system and validated by the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat.
Time measurement	At project completion
Aggregation issues	In order to avoid double counting, the strategies/action plans relevant for this indicator should not refer to solutions, which are counted under RCO116
Reporting	Rule 1: Reporting by specific objectives. Forecast for selected projects and achieved values, both cumulative to date (CPR Annex XII, Table 6). Frequence of reporting: twice per year (art.32.1 and 32.2.b Interreg Regulation)
Methods of traceability and reliability	Data collection will be done through the MA monitoring system. The information of the achievement of the project output, including proof of realisation, are compiled by the beneficiaries in the monitoring system and validated by the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat.
Proof of realisation	The documents provided for demonstrating the achievement of the output, i.e. the completed development of a strategy/action plan should include: - Identification of the relevant EU strategy to which the developed strategy/action plans contributes to and in which way - Methodology for drafting the strategy action plan - Developed strategy/action plan, including mid-term and long-term objectives, target setting, actions needed to achieve the objective, including timeframe and financial resources needed - List of stakeholders actively involved in the drafting of the strategy/action plan, including description and results of the engagement process - Actions needed for the strategy/action plan to be effectively taken up by the relevant organisation Criteria for validation of the output: - Strategy/action plan contributes to the identified EU strategy - The strategy/action plan has been developed on the basis of a common transnational methodology - Content of the strategy/action plan is clear and complete (includes objectives, targets, actions needed to achieve the objective, involvement of stakeholders) - Actions needed for the strategy/action plan to be effectively uptaken are clear and complete
Focus points from 14-20	Developed outputs and provided proofs of realisation are quite different among projects, therefore a need for increased standardisation has been identified: - Criteria for validation are clearly set - A template for proof of realisation documents should be provided to the beneficiary, in order to get a homogeneous set of documents and ensure that all necessary information is provided for each of the outputs so to enable further analysis at programme level.
Data management contact	Managing authority
EXAMPLES	Type of strategies/examples - Climate Change Adaptation Strategies/action plans - regional and local level - Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan - regional and local level - Long-Term Renovation Strategies for the building stock - regional and local level - Clean Energy Transition Agendas (for islands) - regional and local level - Urban Agendas - local level - Strategies for improving access to funding/investment for more climate-resilient urban/living areas - Strategies/action plans to implement a sustainable tourism model, with a more respectful use of environment and natural resources - Planning tools: Maritime Spatial Planning, Integrated Coastal Zone Management, Drought Management Plans, Integrated urban and regional planning - Water management plans - river basin management plan, drought management plans, to ensure climate-resilient, sustainable use and management of water across sectors and borders by improving coordination of thematic plans and other mechanisms - Plans for sustainable soil management and land-use - Sustainable mobility plans, with focus on mitigating the impact of urban mobility on the environment and including adaptation measures

Indicator fiches - SO 2 (iv) Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention, resilience, taking into account eco system-based approaches	
GENERAL INFORMATION	
Title Euro-MED 21-27	**PSI1 - Organisations with increased institutional capacity due to their participation in cooperation activities across borders**
Definition Euro-MED 21-27	This indicator measures the number of organisations that actively participated in cooperation activities of a project across borders and consequently increased their institutional capacity in the thematic field of the project. Institutional capacity is defined as an organisation's ability to set and achieve goals through knowledge, skills, systems and institutions. An organisation increases its institutional capacity by securing the resources (human or technical) and structures (organisational or governance) it needs to successfully perform its mandated tasks better. A cooperation activity across borders is defined as a process of exchanging knowledge and experience between participants from multiple countries. This process can lead to creating joint objectives and commitments and actions fulfilling these commitments. At programme level, organisations can be defined as project partners or final beneficiaries participating in cooperation activities (whether receiving funds or not) An organisation is to be counted if it has undergone this kind of learning process through project activities. This is defined as more than one instance of exchange in which the organisation played an active role. An organisation is to be counted only if its increased institutional capacity is in the thematic field of the project. Organisations targeted refer in particular to: - Organisations actively participating in the development of joint solutions and strategies and action plans - Organisations taking up joint developed solutions and strategies and action plans Types of organisations include, but are not limited to, International organisation, EEIG; National public authority; Regional public authority; Local public authority; Higher education and research; Interest groups including NGOs; SMEs; Enterprises; Business support organisation; Sectoral agency. Organisations specifically targeted under this specific objective are detailed in the relevant indicator fiche - RCO87 - Organisation cooperating across border
Measurement unit	Organisation
Type of indicator	Result
Baseline	0
Target 2029	326
RELEVANCE	
Justification of selection	This indicator was proposed by Interact following consultation and joint work among different transnational programmes. Increasing institutional capacity is one of the main objectives of the Interreg Euro-MED programme and at the core of transnational cooperation. This programme specific indicator is relevant to measure and showcase the achievement and impact of the programme for all selected specific objectives. Projects funded during the 2014-2020 programming period largely contributed to increase capacity of organisations within project partnerships and beyond, e.g. through joint development and adoption of strategies and solution. This result indicator will concretely reflect the change sought and achieved for final beneficiaries of the Euro-MED programme.
Policy objective	PO2
Specific objective	(iv) Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention, resilience, taking into account eco system-based approaches
Type of projects concerned	Thematic projects
Associated output indicator	RCO87
Indicator level	Project
COLLECTION AND CALCULATION METHOD	
Calculation method for obtaining the value of the indicator	The value of the indicator is the total sum of organisations that demonstrate to have increased their institutional capacity following their participation in cooperation activities of project across borders. Following the common methodology developed among several Interreg programmes, the indicator value will be calculated through a common survey.
Means of data collection	Data collection will be done through the programme Platform. The information of the achievement of the result at project level is compiled by the lead partnerin the monitoring system and validated by the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat, verifying information provided in the programme Platform
Time measurement	At project completion/At project closure
Aggregation issues	N/A
Reporting	Rule 1: Reporting by specific objectives. Forecast for selected projects and achieved values, both cumulative to date (CPR Annex XII, Table 6). Frequence of reporting: twice per year (art.32.1 and 32.2.b Interreg Regulation)
Methods of traceability and reliability	Data collection will be done through the MA monitoring system. The information of the achievement of the result at project level is compiled by the beneficiaries in the monitoring system and validated by the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat.
Proof of realisation	Common survey
Focus points from 14-20	N/A
Data management contact	Managing Authority
EXAMPLES	General examples of increased capacity : - the organisation used knowledge or skills - the organisation adopted new tools - the organisation adopted new procedures or workflows - the organisation changed its organisational structure

Indicator fiches - SO 2 (iv) Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention, resilience, taking into account eco system-based approaches	
GENERAL INFORMATION	
Title (EU)	**RCR104 - Solutions taken up or up-scaled by organisations**
Definition (EU)	The indicator counts the number of solutions, other than legal or administrative solutions, that are developed by supported projects and are taken up or upscaled during the implementation of the project or within one year after project completion. The organisation adopting the solutions developed by the project may or may not be a participant in the project. The uptake / up-scaling should be documented by the adopting organisations in, for instance, strategies, action plans etc.
Measurement unit	Solution
Type of indicator	Result
Baseline	0
Target 2029	22
RELEVANCE	
Euro-MED 21-27 definition	At programme level solutions can be defined as methodologies, tools, technologies, services, processes and partnership/cooperation agreements - jointly developed: through the involvement of organizations from at least XX programme countries - tested in real life conditions - easily transferable to further territories/organisations of the programme. Uptake refers to adoption or implementation of the solution. Upscale refers to: upgrade or improvement of the solution, or to extend the scope of the solution, e.g. from local to regional level or from the technical to the policy level. To be counted for this indicator the solution should have been effectively taken up or upscaled, or be at the initial stage of uptake/upscale, by a given organization. The take up/upscale should occur during the implementation of the project or at project closure. Initial stage of uptake/upscale is demonstrated by an official statement signed by the organisation proving the willingness to officially adopt the solution or to implement it in the organisation's usual practices and day-to-day activities, including time line for effective uptake. Effective uptake/upscale is demonstrated by e.g. signature of cooperation and partnership agreements, integration of the solution in regional or local strategies/action plans, implementation of pilots, launch of public procurements procedures/tenders To check the details about type of solutions expected under this specific objective, refer to the fiche for the indicator RCO116 - Joint developed solutions.
Justification of selection	Concrete solutions, resulting from transnational cooperation and pilot activities within funded projects, are needed to promote climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention and resilience, taking into account eco system-based approaches. However, concrete uptake or upscale of developed solutions by relevant organisations is needed to have an impact on the territory. Indeed, in order to capitalize on the tested solutions, not to duplicate the efforts, and not to lose what proved to work for the Mediterranean territories, the logical continuation is to ensure effective implementation of these existing solutions. Therefore, the programme has decided to consider the uptake or upscale of developed solutions as expected result of supported projects, which will contribute to prevent and manage disaster risks and to effective plan and finance climate change adaptation and energy transition, resulting in more resilient living areas and higher life quality for citizens. Several projects funded during the 2014-2020 programming period aimed at engaging local and regional authorities through a written commitment for the adoption of developed methodologies/tools/services. For example, under SO Efficient buildings more than 200 local and regional authorities have committed in developing energy efficiency plans or strategies, proving that solutions taken up or upscaled by organisations are a realistic project output, that can contribute to achieve programme goals.

Policy objective	PO2
Specific objective	(iv) Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention, resilience, taking into account eco system-based approaches
Type of projects concerned	Thematic projects
Associated output indicator	RCO116
Indicator level	Project
COLLECTION AND CALCULATION METHOD	
Calculation method for obtaining the value of the indicator	The value of the indicator is the total sum of the number of solutions taken up or up-scaled by organisations
Means of data collection	Data collection will be done through the MA monitoring system. The information of the achievement of the project output, including proof of realisation, are compiled by the beneficiaries in the monitoring system and validated by the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat.
Time measurement	At project completion/At project closure
Aggregation issues	In order to avoid double counting, the solutions relevant for this indicator should not refer to strategies/action plans, which are counted under RCR79
Reporting	Rule 1: Reporting by specific objectives. Forecast for selected projects and achieved values, both cumulative to date (CPR Annex XII, Table 6). Frequence of reporting: twice per year (art.32.1 and 32.2.b Interreg Regulation)
Methods of traceability and reliability	Data are verified by the Managing Authority upon submission of the final progress report and payment claim by the project beneficiary on the basis of provided supporting documents.
Proof of realisation	The documents provided for demonstrating the achievement of the output, i.e. the uptake or upscale of solutions by organisations should include: - Identification of the solution - Proof of uptake or upscale of the solution by the organization, e.g: Memorandum of Unsterstanding, or Letter of Intent/ Agreement, Framework document demonstrating the adoption/implementation of the solution by the relevant organization Report on implemented pilot activities Cooperation and partnership agreements Criteria for validation of the output: - The solution is at initial stage of uptake/upscale or has been effectively taken up or upscaled by the organisation
Focus points from 14-20	Provided proofs of realisation are quite different among projects, therefore a need for increased standardisation has been identified: - A template for proof of realisation documents should be provided to the beneficiary, in order to get a homogeneous set of documents and ensure that all necessary information is provided for each of the outputs so to enable further analysis at programme level
Data management contact	Managing authority
EXAMPLES	NA

Indicator fiches - SO 2 (iv) Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention, resilience, taking into account eco system-based approaches

GENERAL INFORMATION	
Title (EU)	**RCR79 - Joint strategies and action plans taken up by organisations**
Definition (EU)	The indicator counts the number of joint strategies and action plans (not individual actions) adopted and implemented by organisations during or after the project completion. At the time of reporting this indicator, the implementation of the joint strategy or action plan need not to be completed but effectively started. The organisations involved in take-up may or may not be direct participants in the supported project. It is not necessary that all actions identified are taken-up for a strategy/action plan to be counted in this context. The value report should be equal to or less than the value for "RCO83 Strategies and action plans jointly developed".
Measurement unit	Joint strategy / action plan
Type of indicator	Result
Baseline	0
Target 2029	32
RELEVANCE	
Euro-MED 21-27 definition	At programme level strategies and action plans can be defined as follows: A strategy describes a specific course of action designed to achieve a long-term goal, aiming at establishing a targeted way to achieve a goal-oriented process in a specific domain. An action plan translates an existing jointly developed strategy into actions, outlining in detail actions needed to reach the defined long-term goal. To be counted for this indicator the strategies/action plans should have been effectively taken up, or be at the initial stage of uptake, by a given organization. The uptake should occur during the implementation of the project or at project closure. Initial stage of uptake is demonstrated by an official statement signed by the organisation proving the willingness to officially adopt the strategy/action plan including time line for effective uptake. The initial stage of uptake can be demonstrated by e.g. signature of Memoranda of Understanding/letter of intent/agreements. Effective uptake is demonstrated e.g. official approval of the strategy/action plan, launch of public procurement/tenders or signature of contracts for the implementation of measures indicated in the strategy/action plan,... To check the details about type of strategy/action plan expected under this specific objective, refer to the fiche for the output indicator RCO83 - Strategies and action plans jointly developed.
Justification of selection	Strategies and action plans at regional and local level are needed to increase climate change adaptation and resilience of Mediterranean living areas. However, concrete uptake of developed strategies/action plans by relevant organisations is key to ensure territorial impact and contribute to the achievement of the long-term vision that in 2050, the EU will be a climate-resilient society. Therefore, the programme has decided to consider the take up of developed strategies/action plans as expected results of supported projects, which will contribute to Increase capacity of public authorities in effective planning and financing for climate change adaptation and energy transition and to reinforce citizens engagement for more sustainable living areas in the Mediterranean During the 2014-2020 period, a high number of stakeholders (mainly public authorities) adopted strategies and action plans developed for e.g. large-scale energy renovation of public buildings and the transition towards a sustainable tourism model. This proved to be effective in tackling challenges related to climate change adaptation and energy transition. Cooperation between key consortium and decision-makers are essential to face this type of joint challenge and provide expected results.
Policy objective	PO2
Specific objective	(iv) Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention, resilience, taking into account eco system-based approaches
Type of projects concerned	Thematic projects
Associated output indicator	RCO83
Indicator level	Project
COLLECTION AND CALCULATION METHOD	
Calculation method for obtaining the value of the indicator	The value of the indicator is the total sum of the number of strategies/action plans taken up by organisations
Means of data collection	Data collection will be done through the MA monitoring system. The information of the achievement of the project output, including proof of realisation, are compiled by the beneficiaries in the monitoring system and validated by the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat.
Time measurement	At project completion/At project closure
Aggregation issues	In order to avoid double counting, the strategies relevant for this indicator should not refer to solutions, which are counted under RCR104
Reporting	Rule 1: Reporting by specific objectives. Forecast for selected projects and achieved values, both cumulative to date (CPR Annex XII, Table 6). Frequence of reporting: twice per year (art.32.1 and 32.2.b Interreg Regulation)
Methods of traceability and reliability	Data are verified by the Managing Authority upon submission of the final progress report and payment claim by the project beneficiary on the basis of provided supporting documents.
Proof of realisation	The documents provided for demonstrating the achievement of the output, i.e. the taken up of the strategy/action plan by organisations should include: - Identification of the strategy/action plan - Proof of uptake of the strategy/action plan by the organisation, e.g. Memorandum of Unsterstanding, or Letter of Intent Criteria for validation of the output: - The strategy/action plan has been taken up by the organisation.
Focus points from 14-20	Provided proofs of realisation are quite different among projects, therefore a need for increased standardisation has been identified: - A template for proof of realisation documents should be provided to the beneficiary, in order to get a homogeneous set of documents and ensure that all necessary information is provided for each of the outputs so to enable further analysis at programme level
Data management contact	Managing authority
EXAMPLES	NA

iii. Indicators for SO 2 (vi): RCO87, RCO116, RCO83, PSI1, RCR104, RCR79

Indicator fiches - SO 2 (vi) Promoting the transition to a circular and resource efficient economy	
GENERAL INFORMATION	
Title (EU)	**RCO87 - Organisation cooperating across border**
Definition (EU)	The indicator counts the organisations cooperating formally in supported projects. The organisations counted in this indicator are the legal entities including project partners and associated organizations, as mentionned in the financing agreement of the application. Organisations cooperating formally in small projects (for instance under Small project Fund) are also counted.
Measurement unit	Organisation
Type of indicator	Output
Milestone 2024	0
Target 2029	359
RELEVANCE	
Euro-MED 21-27 definition	RCO87 is selected for all Euro-MED 21-27 specific objectives. The indicator counts the organisations cooperating formally in supported projects. At programme level, organisations can be defined as project partners or associated participating in approved projects (whether receiving funds or not). Under this specific objective, main target groups are represented by: Local, regional and national authorities, in particular their sectoral agencies, SMEs and economic operators, Business support organisations, Universities and research centres, Civil society / NGOs / Local communities and associations, working on the transition towards a circular and resource efficient economy.
Justification of selection	Cooperation between organisations across borders is essential to implement EURO-MED programme and achieve its main objective. Furthermore, cooperation is crucial to provide a common response to current challenges identified for the selected specific objectives. During 14-20, cooperation was not limited to organisations within projects, it was extended to cooperation within and across thematic communities of projects, leading to relevant results and demonstrating the added value of this kind of transnational cooperation. Within this specific objective a particular attention is paid to SMEs. The involvement and support provided to enterprises through project implementation is key for the promoting a transition to a circular and resource efficient economy. Enterprises, being responsible for resource consuming processes and activities, will be supported to implement solutions to reduce the environmental impact of the current production system, while applying waste prevention and reduction measures. As project partners and as targeted beneficiaries the enterprises will collaborate closely with research stakeholders, civil society and public institutions for closing the loops and support the transition to more sustainable and circular models. Entreprises are directly concerned and key stakeholders of the circular economy scheme and will contribute to the elaboration and adoption of tools and practices for reinforcing the circularity and resource efficiency of key economy sectors. Cooperation and coordination between organisations is essential to close the loops and shift to circular production systems and waste value chain, as well as for developing effective strategies/action plans, therefore this indicator has been selected. Output indicator RCO87 will show the concrete joint commitment of organisations in the transition to a circular and resource efficient economy in the Mediterranean.
Policy objective	PO2
Specific objective	(vi) Promoting the transition to a circular and resource efficient economy
Type of projects concerned	Thematic projects
Associated result indicator	PSI1 - Organisation with increased institutional capacity due to their participation in cooperation activities across borders
Indicator level	Project
COLLECTION AND CALCULATION METHOD	
Calculation method for obtaining the value of the indicator	The value of the indicator is the total sum of projects' full and associated partners.
Means of data collection	Data collection will be done through the MA monitoring system. Partners participating in funded projects will be automatically exported for the monitoring system and reported by specific objective.
Time measurement	At project completion
Aggregation issues	N/A
Reporting	Rule 1: Reporting by specific objectives. Forecast for selected projects and achieved values, both cumulative to date (CPR Annex XII, Table 6). Frequence of reporting : twice per year (art.32.1 and 32.2.b Interreg Regulation)
Methods of traceability and reliability	Data are collected by the monitoring system
Proof of realisation	N/A
Focus points from 14-20	An efficient and accurate management of the partners database in the information system is required. In the communication of programme beneficiaries there is the need to insist on the added value of Associated partners and their real engagement in project activities.
Data management contact	Managing authority
EXAMPLES	N/A

Indicator fiches - SO 2 (vi) Promoting the transition to a circular and resource efficient economy

GENERAL INFORMATION	
Title (EU)	**RCO116 - Joint developed solutions**
Definition (EU)	The indicator counts the number of jointly developed solutions from joint pilot actions implemented by supported projects. In order to be counted in the indicator, an identified solution should include indications of the actions needed for it to be taken up or to be upscaled. A jointly developed solution implies the involvement of organizations from at least two participating countries (for programmes falling under strands A, B, C as defined in the Interreg Regulation) in the drafting and design process of the solution or is developed in the scope of programmes within strands D or E as defined in the Interreg Regulation.
Measurement unit	Solution
Type of indicator	Output
Milestone 2024	0
Target 2029	18
RELEVANCE	
Euro-MED 21-27 definition	At programme level solutions can be defined as methodologies, tools, technologies, services, processes, partnership/cooperation agreements. To be counted for this indicator the solutions should be: - jointly developed: through the involvement of organizations from at least 2 programme countries - tested in real life conditions - easily transferable to further territories of the programme - the solution should include a list of actions needed for it to be uptaken or upscaled by further organisations. Solutions are developed at project level, therefore 1 to 2 transnational solutions are expected as direct output of a single project. Jointly developed solutions refer to solutions newly developed by the project partnership or solutions already developed, e.g. in territorial contexts other than the programme area, that are adapted to the Euro-MED 21-27 context and geographic area by the project partnership. Under SO vi targeted outputs should refer to: Tools and practices for reinforcing circularity and resource efficiency of key economy sectors and cooperation and coordination practices/agreements between stakeholders. Types of targeted solutions include: - Solutions for the development of circular value chains and setting up cooperation patterns among 4 helix stakeholders - Solutions for supporting SMEs in accessing innovative technologies and adopting circular practices - Solutions for improved product design - focus on plastic packaging - Solutions for reinforcing Green Public Procurement: enhanced integration of circular economy requirements, support public authorities to higher uptake including through training schemes - Solutions fostering water-efficiency measures, reuse of treated wastewater, water reuse in agriculture, raising water-saving requirements for products - Solutions fostering implementation of circular practices in the tourism sector - Solutions to prevent and reduce waste generation, to improve waste management and resource efficiency, and to promote economic recovery of waste - Solutions for triggering public and private sources of financing to scale up green and/or improved technologies and processes - Solutions for promoting shift in consumers and citizens behavior (including as tourists): awareness raising for the adoption of circular economy products and practices - Solutions for tourism facilities to include circular economy in their business model Solutions relevant for this indicator should not refer to strategies and action plans, which are relevant to RCO 83. Solutions developed for circular economy purposes should embed the form of a concrete tool, methodology or process and in this sense may be part of local Strategies/Action plan and therefore complementary to the Strategy/Action Plan indicator. For example, solutions involving a 4-helix approach, e.g. "development of circular value chains and cooperation patterns" rely on the adoption of local or regional circular economy action plans in order to be effective. In addition, such plans would also include waste management or water-efficiency measures, developed as solutions. Delivered solutions should also contribute to the objectives of relevant European strategies (detailed in the Euro-MED Operational Programme).
Justification of selection	Concrete solutions, resulting from transnational cooperation and pilot activities within funded projects, are needed to tackle the challenges of the transition towards a circular and resource-efficient economy, closing the loops through reinforced cooperation and capacities of stakeholders. Most projects funded during the 2014-2020 programming period have produced solutions relevant to these challenges, mainly under priority axis 'Innovation and Environment'. Delivered solutions refer to: instruments to favour innovation of SMEs and instruments to enhance the development of sustainable and responsible tourism. These results prove that joint developed solutions are a realistic and achievable project output. Jointly developed solutions are direct outputs of the following types of actions: - Elaboration and adoption of tools and practices for reinforcing the circularity and resource efficiency of key economy sectors - Establishment of transnational networks, coordination processes and agreements between stakeholders These actions will lead to the achievement of the objectives of SO vi: to reduce the environmental impact of the current linear production system and of generated waste, and in parallel to strengthen cooperation of stakeholders, which is crucial for closing the loop and shift towards circular economic sectors. Expected results of undertaken actions refer to the improved sustainability of products and production systems, supported resilience of economic sectors and increased capacities of public and private stakeholders in transition towards circular economy. Engagement of civil society and awareness raising among citizens/consumers in these processes is deemed crucial.

Policy objective	PO2
Specific objective	(vi) Promoting the transition to a circular and resource efficient economy
Type of projects concerned	Thematic projects
Associated result indicator	RCR104
Indicator level	Project
COLLECTION AND CALCULATION METHOD	
Calculation method for obtaining the value of the indicator	The value of the indicator is the total sum of the number of solutions developed jointly by the funded projects
Means of data collection	Data collection will be done through the MA monitoring system. The information of the achievement of the project output, including proof of realisation, are compiled by the beneficiaries in the monitoring system and validated by the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat.
Time measurement	At project completion
Aggregation issues	In order to avoid double counting, the solutions relevant for this indicator should not refer to strategies/action plans, which are counted under RCO83
Reporting	Rule 1: Reporting by specific objectives. Forecast for selected projects and achieved values, both cumulative to date (CPR Annex XII, Table 6). Frequence of reporting: twice per year (art.32.1 and 32.2.b Interreg Regulation)
Methods of traceability and reliability	Data are verified by the Managing Authority upon submission of the final progress report and payment claim by the project beneficiary on the basis of provided supporting documents.
Proof of realisation	The documents provided for demonstrating the achievement of the output, i.e. the completed development of a joint solution should include: - Clear description of the challenge that the solution is adressing and how the solution developed contributes to tackle the mentioned challenge - Clear description of the solution and concrete project output: methodology, tool, technology, service or process, partnership agreement, including target groups involved, type of territory concerned - Description of the testing phase and its results - List of actions needed for the solution to be uptaken or upscaled in further territories, including financial resources to be mobilized Criteria for validation of the output: - The addressed challenge is relevant to the selected specific objective - The solution has been developed with the contribution of partners from at least 2 programme countries - The solution has been tested in real life conditions - results of the test are available - The solution demonstrates to be effective in tackling the mentioned challenge - Actions needed for the solution to be taken up or upscaled are clear and complete
Focus points from 14-20	Developed outputs and provided proofs of realisation are quite different among projects, therefore a need for increased standardisation has been identified: - Criteria for validation are clearly set in terms of defining the solution and what is expected as final product - A template for proof of realisation documents should be provided to the beneficiary, in order to get a homogeneus set of documents and ensure that all necessary information is provided for each of the outputs so to enable further analysis at programme level.
Data management contact	Managing authority
EXAMPLES	Type of solutions/examples - Tools/practices for effective reuse and recovery of materials/ Industrial symbiosis (to allow waste or by-products of one industry to become inputs for another)/ partnerships between producers and plastics recyclers - Public-private partnerships for green and circular transition - Academic-government collaboration patterns/ Multi-level governance - Innovative and circular business models for SMEs - Innovative forms of consumption: e.g. sharing products or infrastructure (collaborative economy), consuming services rather than products - New technologies, services and business models to rethink our ways of producing and consuming and to transform waste into new products - Solutions for generating shift in consumers and citizens behavior, awareness raising for the adoption of circular economy products and practices - Technology transfer processes for closing loops - Methodology for transnational value chain development - Methodology for building up, developing and sustaining transnational clusters -Platforms for stakeholders ‘engagement with ensured sustainability upon project’s end, including civil society representatives/ Toolkits for thematic cooperation - Services/tools for triggering public and private sources of financing for circular transition - Models and protocols for integrating circular economy principles in public procurement - Eco-innovation/ Climate friendly innovation/ Reverse logistics for packaging, alternatives to disposable plastics - Processes to embed sustainability and circularity in public procurement procedures - Circular practices for the tourism sector - Information and communications technology (ICT) solutions - Sustainable consumption and production schemes (packaging, tourist infrastructure, etc.) - Tools/practices for waste prevention and reduction/ Zero waste protocols in economic sectors - e.g. agri-food and tourism - Tools/practices for increasing water efficiency, including wastewater treatment and reuse

Indicator fiches - SO 2 (vi) Promoting the transition to a circular and resource efficient economy

GENERAL INFORMATION	
Title (EU)	**RCO83 - Strategies and action plans jointly developed**
Definition (EU)	The indicator counts the number of joint strategies or action plans developed by supported projects. A jointly developed strategy aims at establishing a targeted way to achieve a goal oriented process in a specific domain. An action plan translates an existing jointly developed strategy into actions. Jointly developed strategy or action plan implies the involvement of organizations from at least two participating countries (for programmes falling under strands A, B, C as defined in the Interreg Regulation) in the drafting process of the strategy or action plan or is developed in the scope of programmes falling under strands D or E as defined in the Interreg Regulation.
Measurement unit	Strategy/action plan
Type of indicator	Output
Milestone 2024	0
Target 2029	29
RELEVANCE	
Euro-MED 21-27 definition	At programme level strategies and action plans can be defined as follows: A strategy describes a specific course of action designed to achieve a long-term goal, aiming at establishing a targeted way to achieve a goal-oriented process in a specific domain. An action plan translates an existing jointly developed strategy into actions, outlining in detail actions needed to reach the defined long-term goal. Strategies/action plans are developed at territorial level (e.g. local or regional), therefore an average of 4 strategies are expected as direct output of a single project. In order to be counted for the indicator the methodology/approaches used to develop strategies/action plans should be easily transferable to further territories of the programme. Under SO vi, targeted strategies/action plans should be in line and contribute to following EU strategies/directives and should be easily transferable to further territories of the programme. - EU Green Deal - - Circular Economy action plan - - Directive 94/62/EC on packaging and packaging waste - - A European Strategy for Plastics in a Circular Economy - - Waste Framework Directive - Directive 2008/98/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 November 2008 on waste and repealing certain Directives (Text with EEA relevance) - - Roadmap to a Resource Efficient Europe (COM(2011) 571) - - Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC - - EU's growth strategy for a sustainable future Types of targeted strategies/action plans - Local and regional Circular Economy Action Plans / Local and regional action plans to improve circularity in different economic sectors, value chains and services - Local and regional waste management strategies/action plans for increasing prevention and recycling and reducing the landfilling of waste, encouraging use of economic instruments to ensure coherence with the EU waste hierarchy - Resource Management strategies/action plans to increase resource efficiency and productivity and decouple economic growth from resource use and its environmental impact. Strategies/action plans relevant for this indicator should not refer to solutions, which are relevant to RCO 116. Although, complementarities between strategies and solutions can be highlighted and will be encouraged where possible.
Justification of selection	Strategies and action plans at regional and local level are needed to effectively implement the EU Circular Economy action plan and the Roadmap to a Resource Efficient Europe. The development and adoption of effective strategies and action plans at regional and local level is key for improving circularity in different economic sectors, value chains and services, enforcing prevention, reduction and economic recovery of waste and increasing resource efficiency with special focus on water. During the 2014-2020 period, strategies and action plans developed for e.g. large-scale energy renovation of public buildings and the transition towards a sustainable tourism model, proved to be effective in tackling challenges related to circular economy and resources efficiency. Together with solutions, effective strategies/action plans defined by key consortium and decision-makers are essential to face this type of joint challenge. These type of instruments are needed in order to ensure long term impacts in the territory and the involvement of all relevant stakeholders. The action of supporting public authorities will result in strategies and action plans developed and adopted on circular economy, waste and resources management and efficiency, as well as in the integration of circularity and resources efficiency principles/measures in existing strategies.

Policy objective	PO2
Specific objective	(vi) Promoting the transition to a circular and resource efficient economy
Type of projects concerned	Thematic projects
Associated result indicator	RCR79
Indicator level	Project
COLLECTION AND CALCULATION METHOD	
Calculation method for obtaining the value of the indicator	The value of the indicator is the total sum of the number of strategies/action plans developed jointly by the funded projects
Means of data collection	Data collection will be done through the MA monitoring system. The information of the achievement of the project output, including proof of realisation, are compiled by the beneficiaries in the monitoring system and validated by the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat.
Time measurement	At project completion
Aggregation issues	In order to avoid double counting, the strategies/action plans relevant for this indicator should not refer to solutions, which are counted under RCO116
Reporting	Rule 1: Reporting by specific objectives. Forecast for selected projects and achieved values, both cumulative to date (CPR Annex XII, Table 6). Frequence of reporting: twice per year (art.32.1 and 32.2.b Interreg Regulation)
Methods of traceability and reliability	Data collection will be done through the MA monitoring system. The information of the achievement of the project output, including proof of realisation, are compiled by the beneficiaries in the monitoring system and validated by the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat.
Proof of realisation	The documents provided for demonstrating the achievement of the output, i.e. the completed development of a strategy/action plan should include: - Identification of the relevant EU strategy to which the developed strategy/action plans contributes to and in which way - Methodology for drafting the strategy action plan - Developed strategy/action plan, including mid-term and long-term objectives, target setting, actions needed to achieve the objective, including timeframe and financial resources needed - List of stakeholders actively involved in the drafting of the strategy/action plan, including description and results of the engagement process - Actions needed for the strategy/action plan to be effectively taken up by the relevant organisation Criteria for validation of the output: - Strategy/action plan contributes to the identified EU strategy - The strategy/action plan has been developed on the basis of a common transnational methodology - Content of the strategy/action plan is clear and complete (includes objectives, targets, actions needed to achieve the objective, involvement of stakeholders) - Actions needed for the strategy/action plan to be effectively uptaken are clear and complete
Focus points from 14-20	Developed outputs and provided proofs of realisation are quite different among projects, therefore a need for increased standardisation has been identified: - Criteria for validation are clearly set - A template for proof of realisation documents should be provided to the beneficiary, in order to get a homogeneous set of documents and ensure that all necessary information is provided for each of the outputs so to enable further analysis at programme level.
Data management contact	Managing authority
EXAMPLES	Type of strategies/action plans/Examples - Local and regional Circular Economy Action Plans - Local and regional action plans to improve circularity in different economic sectors, value chains and services - Local and regional Zero Waste Plans - Inclusion of circular principles in further local and regional strategies/action plans - Local regional strategies/programmes for public financing of waste management, consistent with the goal of shifting upwards in the implementation of the EU waste hierarchy - Local and regional Resources' management strategies/action plans to ensure resources' efficiency and productivity and decouple economic growth from resource use and its environmental impact. - Local regional strategies/programmes on incentives and economic instruments to ensure that product prices better reflect environmental costs

Indicator fiches - SO 2 (vi) Promoting the transition to a circular and resource efficient economy	
GENERAL INFORMATION	
Title Euro-MED 21-27	**PSI1 - Organisations with increased institutional capacity due to their participation in cooperation activities across borders**
Definition Euro-MED 21-27	This indicator measures the number of organisations that actively participated in cooperation activities of a project across borders and consequently increased their institutional capacity in the thematic field of the project. Institutional capacity is defined as an organisation's ability to set and achieve goals through knowledge, skills, systems and institutions. An organisation increases its institutional capacity by securing the resources (human or technical) and structures (organisational or governance) it needs to successfully perform its mandated tasks better. A cooperation activity across borders is defined as a process of exchanging knowledge and experience between participants from multiple countries. This process can lead to creating joint objectives and commitments and actions fulfilling these commitments. At programme level, organisations can be defined as project partners or final beneficiaries participating in cooperation activities (whether receiving funds or not) An organisation is to be counted if it has undergone this kind of learning process through project activities. This is defined as more than one instance of exchange in which the organisation played an active role. An organisation is to be counted only if its increased institutional capacity is in the thematic field of the project. Organisations targeted refer in particular to: - Organisations actively participating in the development of joint solutions and strategies and action plans - Organisations taking up joint developed solutions and strategies and action plans Types of organisations include, but are not limited to, International organisation, EEIG; National public authority; Regional public authority; Local public authority; Higher education and research; Interest groups including NGOs; SMEs; Enterprises; Business support organisation; Sectoral agency. Organisations specifically targeted under this specific objective are detailed in the relevant indicator fiche - RCO87 - Organisation cooperating across border
Measurement unit	Organisation
Type of indicator	Result
Baseline	0
Target 2029	251
RELEVANCE	
Justification of selection	This indicator was proposed by Interact following consultation and joint work among different transnational programmes. Increasing institutional capacity is one of the main objectives of the Interreg Euro-MED programme and at the core of transnational cooperation. This programme specific indicator is relevant to measure and showcase the achievement and impact of the programme for all selected specific objectives. Projects funded during the 2014-2020 programming period largely contributed to increase capacity of organisations within project partnerships and beyond, e.g. through joint development and adoption of strategies and solution. This result indicator will concretely reflect the change sought and achieved for final beneficiaries of the Euro-MED programme.
Policy objective	PO2
Specific objective	(vi) Promoting the transition to a circular and resource efficient economy
Type of projects concerned	Thematic projects
Associated output indicator	RCO87
Indicator level	Project
COLLECTION AND CALCULATION METHOD	
Calculation method for obtaining the value of the indicator	The value of the indicator is the total sum of organisations that demonstrate to have increased their institutional capacity following their participation in cooperation activities of project across borders. Following the common methodology developed among several Interreg programmes, the indicator value will be calculated through a common survey.
Means of data collection	Data collection will be done through the programme Platform. The information of the achievement of the result at project level is compiled by the lead partnerin the monitoring system and validated by the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat, verifying information provided in the programme Platform
Time measurement	At project completion/At project closure
Aggregation issues	N/A
Reporting	Rule 1: Reporting by specific objectives. Forecast for selected projects and achieved values, both cumulative to date (CPR Annex XII, Table 6). Frequence of reporting: twice per year (art.32.1 and 32.2.b Interreg Regulation)
Methods of traceability and reliability	Data collection will be done through the MA monitoring system. The information of the achievement of the result at project level is compiled by the beneficiaries in the monitoring system and validated by the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat.
Proof of realisation	Common survey
Focus points from 14-20	N/A
Data management contact	Managing Authority
EXAMPLES	General examples of increased capacity : - the organisation used knowledge or skills - the organisation adopted new tools - the organisation adopted new procedures or workflows - the organisation changed its organisational structure

Indicator fiches - SO 2 (vi) Promoting the transition to a circular and resource efficient economy

GENERAL INFORMATION	
Title (EU)	**RCR104 - Solutions taken up or up-scaled by organisations**
Definition (EU)	The indicator counts the number of solutions, other than legal or administrative solutions, that are developed by supported projects and are taken up or upscaled during the implementation of the project or within one year after project completion. The organisation adopting the solutions developed by the project may or may not be a participant in the project. The uptake / up-scaling should be documented by the adopting organisations in, for instance, strategies, action plans etc.
Measurement unit	Solution
Type of indicator	Result
Baseline	0
Target 2029	16
RELEVANCE	
Euro-MED 21-27 definition	At programme level solutions can be defined as methodologies, tools, technologies, services, processes and partnership/cooperation agreements - jointly developed: through the involvement of organizations from at least XX programme countries - tested in real life conditions - easily transferable to further territories/organisations of the programme. Uptake refers to adoption or implementation of the solution. Upscale refers to: upgrade or improvement of the solution, or to extend the scope of the solution, e.g. from local to regional level or from the technical to the policy level. To be counted for this indicator the solution should have been effectively taken up or upscaled, or be at the initial stage of uptake/upscale, by a given organization. The take up/upscale should occur during the implementation of the project or at project closure. Initial stage of uptake/upscale is demonstrated by an official statement signed by the organisation proving the willingness to officially adopt the solution or to implement it in the organisation's usual practices and day-to-day activities, including time line for effective uptake. Effective uptake/upscale is demonstrated by e.g. signature of cooperation and partnership agreements, integration of the solution in regional or local strategies/action plans, implementation of pilots, launch of public procurements procedures/tenders To check the details about type of solutions expected under this specific objective, refer to the fiche for the indicator RCO116 - Joint developed solutions.
Justification of selection	Several projects funded under the Innovation Axis during 14-20 aimed at supporting stakeholders and in particular SMEs in the adoption of developed methodologies/tools/services, resulting in increased capacity and cooperation in the fields of green, blue and social and creative innovation. The involvement and support provided to enterprises through project financing and implementation proved to be key for the achievement of programme goals. The uptake or upscale of solutions by organisations as projects' direct output will contribute to achieve programme goals. Concrete solutions, resulting from transnational cooperation and pilot activities within funded projects, are key to support the transition to circular and resource efficient economy. However, concrete uptake or upscale of developed solution by relevant organisations is needed to have an impact on the territory. Indeed, in order to capitalize on the tested solutions, not to duplicate the efforts, and not to lose what proved to work for the Mediterranean territories, the logical continuation is to ensure effective implementation of these existing solutions. Therefore, the programme has decided to consider the uptake or upscale of developed solutions as expected results of supported projects, which will contribute to reduce the environmental impact and increase circularity of key economic sectors ant to effectively promote prevention, reduction and economic recovery of waste.
Policy objective	PO2
Specific objective	(vi) Promoting the transition to a circular and resource efficient economy
Type of projects concerned	Thematic projects
Associated output indicator	RCO116
Indicator level	Project
COLLECTION AND CALCULATION METHOD	
Calculation method for obtaining the value of the indicator	The value of the indicator is the total sum of the number of solutions taken up or up-scaled by organisations
Means of data collection	Data collection will be done through the MA monitoring system. The information of the achievement of the project output, including proof of realisation, are compiled by the beneficiaries in the monitoring system and validated by the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat.
Time measurement	At project completion/At project closure
Aggregation issues	In order to avoid double counting, the solutions relevant for this indicator should not refer to strategies/action plans, which are counted under RCR79
Reporting	Rule 1: Reporting by specific objectives. Forecast for selected projects and achieved values, both cumulative to date (CPR Annex XII, Table 6). Frequence of reporting: twice per year (art.32.1 and 32.2.b Interreg Regulation)
Methods of traceability and reliability	Data are verified by the Managing Authority upon submission of the final progress report and payment claim by the project beneficiary on the basis of provided supporting documents.
Proof of realisation	The documents provided for demonstrating the achievement of the output, i.e. the uptake or upscale of solutions by organisations should include: - Identification of the solution - Proof of uptake or upscale of the solution by the organization, e.g: Memorandum of Unsterstanding, or Letter of Intent/ Agreement, Framework document demonstrating the adoption/implementation of the solution by the relevant organization Report on implemented pilot activities Cooperation and partnership agreements Criteria for validation of the output: - The solution is at initial stage of uptake/upscale or has been effectively taken up or upscaled by the organisation
Focus points from 14-20	Provided proofs of realisation are quite different among projects, therefore a need for increased standardisation has been identified: - A template for proof of realisation documents should be provided to the beneficiary, in order to get a homogeneous set of documents and ensure that all necessary information is provided for each of the outputs so to enable further analysis at programme level
Data management contact	Managing authority
EXAMPLES	

Indicator fiches - SO 2 (vi) Promoting the transition to a circular and resource efficient economy

GENERAL INFORMATION	
Title (EU)	**RCR79 - Joint strategies and action plans taken up by organisations**
Definition (EU)	The indicator counts the number of joint strategies and action plans (not individual actions) adopted and implemented by organisations during or after the project completion. At the time of reporting this indicator, the implementation of the joint strategy or action plan need not to be completed but effectively started. The organisations involved in take-up may or may not be direct participants in the supported project. It is not necessary that all actions identified are taken-up for a strategy/action plan to be counted in this context. The value report should be equal to or less than the value for "RCO83 Strategies and action plans jointly developed".
Measurement unit	Joint strategy / action plan
Type of indicator	Result
Baseline	0
Target 2029	23
RELEVANCE	
Euro-MED 21-27 definition	At programme level strategies and action plans can be defined as follows: A strategy describes a specific course of action designed to achieve a long-term goal, aiming at establishing a targeted way to achieve a goal-oriented process in a specific domain. An action plan translates an existing jointly developed strategy into actions, outlining in detail actions needed to reach the defined long-term goal. To be counted for this indicator the strategies/action plans should have been effectively taken up, or be at the initial stage of uptake, by a given organization. The uptake should occur during the implementation of the project or at project closure. Initial stage of uptake is demonstrated by an official statement signed by the organisation proving the willingness to officially adopt the strategy/action plan including time line for effective uptake. The initial stage of uptake can be demonstrated by e.g. signature of Memoranda of Understanding/letter of intent/agreements. Effective uptake is demonstrated e.g. official approval of the strategy/action plan, launch of public procurement/tenders or signature of contracts for the implementation of measures indicated in the strategy/action plan,... To check the details about type of strategy/action plan expected under this specific objective, refer to the fiche for the output indicator RCO83 - Strategies and action plans jointly developed.
Justification of selection	Strategies and action plans at regional and local level are needed to support the transition to circular and resource efficient economy. However, concrete uptake of developed strategies/action plans by relevant organisations is key to ensure territorial impact and contribute to implementing the EU Circular Economy action plan and the Roadmap to a Resource Efficient Europe. Therefore, the programme has decided to consider the take up of strategies/action plans as expected results of supported projects, which will contribute to increase capacity of public authorities/stakeholders in the management of cooperation between stakeholders throughout production systems and the waste management value chain, and the effective adoption of circular economy strategies, including integration of circularity principles/practices into existing policies. During the 2014-2020 period, a high number of stakeholders (mainly public authorities) adopted strategies and action plans developed for e.g. large-scale energy renovation of public buildings and the transition towards a sustainable tourism model. This proved to be effective in tackling challenges related to circular economy and resources efficiency. Cooperation between key consortium and decision-makers are essential to face this type of joint challenge and provide expected results.
Policy objective	PO2
Specific objective	(vi) Promoting the transition to a circular and resource efficient economy
Type of projects concerned	Thematic projects
Associated output indicator	RCO83
Indicator level	Project
COLLECTION AND CALCULATION METHOD	
Calculation method for obtaining the value of the indicator	The value of the indicator is the total sum of the number of strategies/action plans taken up by organisations
Means of data collection	Data collection will be done through the MA monitoring system. The information of the achievement of the project output, including proof of realisation, are compiled by the beneficiaries in the monitoring system and validated by the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat.
Time measurement	At project completion/At project closure
Aggregation issues	In order to avoid double counting, the strategies relevant for this indicator should not refer to solutions, which are counted under RCR104
Reporting	Rule 1: Reporting by specific objectives. Forecast for selected projects and achieved values, both cumulative to date (CPR Annex XII, Table 6). Frequence of reporting: twice per year (art.32.1 and 32.2.b Interreg Regulation)
Methods of traceability and reliability	Data are verified by the Managing Authority upon submission of the final progress report and payment claim by the project beneficiary on the basis of provided supporting documents.
Proof of realisation	The documents provided for demonstrating the achievement of the output, i.e. the taken up of the strategy/action plan by organisations should include: - Identification of the strategy/action plan - Proof of uptake of the strategy/action plan by the organisation, e.g. Memorandum of Unsterstanding, or Letter of Intent Criteria for validation of the output: - The strategy/action plan has been taken up by the organisation.
Focus points from 14-20	Provided proofs of realisation are quite different among projects, therefore a need for increased standardisation has been identified: - A template for proof of realisation documents should be provided to the beneficiary, in order to get a homogeneous set of documents and ensure that all necessary information is provided for each of the outputs so to enable further analysis at programme level
Data management contact	Managing authority
EXAMPLES	

iv. Indicators for OS 2 (vii): RCO87, RCO116, RCO83, PSI1, RCR104, RCR79

Indicator fiches - SO 2 (vii) Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution	
GENERAL INFORMATION	
Title (EU)	**RCO87 - Organisation cooperating across border**
Definition (EU)	The indicator counts the organisations cooperating formally in supported projects. The organisations counted in this indicator are the legal entities including project partners and associated organizations, as mentionned in the financing agreement of the application. Organisations cooperating formally in small projects (for instance under Small project Fund) are also counted.
Measurement unit	Organisation
Type of indicator	Output
Milestone 2024	0
Target 2029	359
RELEVANCE	
Euro-MED 21-27 definition	RCO87 is selected for all Euro-MED 21-27 specific objectives. The indicator counts the organisations cooperating formally in supported projects. At programme level, organisations can be defined as project partners or associated participating in approved projects (whether receiving funds or not). Under this specific objective, main target groups are represented by: regional and local and national authorities, environmental organization/agencies, protected areas management organisations/bodies, universities/research centres, SMEs & Economic operators, NGOs/ local communities and associations, authorities, managers of protected areas or experts from the southern shore of the Mediterranean.
Justification of selection	Cooperation between organisations across borders is essential to implement Euro-MED programme and achieve its main objective. Furthermore, cooperation is crucial to provide a common response to current challenges identified for the selected specific objectives. During 14-20, cooperation was not limited to organisations within projects, it was extended to cooperation within and across thematic communities of projects, leading to relevant results and demonstrating the added value of this kind of transnational cooperation. Cooperation and coordination between organisations across borders is essential to support the achievements of regional environmental targets by 2030 in the Mediterranean. Public-private collaboration constitutes another milestone for improving biodiversity management. Output indicator RCO87 will show the concrete joint commitment of organisations in the enhancement of the protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, as well as in the reduction of all forms of pollution
Policy objective	PO2
Specific objective	(vii) Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution
Type of projects concerned	Thematic projects
Associated result indicator	PSI1 - Organisation with increased institutional capacity due to their participation in cooperation activities across borders
Indicator level	Project
COLLECTION AND CALCULATION METHOD	
Calculation method for obtaining the value of the indicator	The value of the indicator is the total sum of projects' full and associated partners.
Means of data collection	Data collection will be done through the MA monitoring system. Partners participating in funded projects will be automatically exported for the monitoring system and reported by specific objective.
Time measurement	At project completion
Aggregation issues	N/A
Reporting	Rule 1: Reporting by specific objectives. Forecast for selected projects and achieved values, both cumulative to date (CPR Annex XII, Table 6). Frequence of reporting : twice per year (art.32.1 and 32.2.b Interreg Regulation)
Methods of traceability and reliability	Data are collected by the monitoring system
Proof of realisation	N/A
Focus points from 14-20	An efficient and accurate management of the partners database in the information system is required. In the communication of programme beneficiaries there is the need to insist on the added value of Associated partners and their real engagement in project activities.
Data management contact	Managing authority
EXAMPLES	N/A

Indicator fiches - SO 2 (vii) Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution

GENERAL INFORMATION	
Title (EU)	**RCO116 - Joint developed solutions**
Definition (EU)	The indicator counts the number of jointly developed solutions from joint pilot actions implemented by supported projects. In order to be counted in the indicator, an identified solution should include indications of the actions needed for it to be taken up or to be upscaled. A jointly developed solution implies the involvement of organizations from at least two participating countries (for programmes falling under strands A, B, C as defined in the Interreg Regulation) in the drafting and design process of the solution or is developed in the scope of programmes within strands D or E as defined in the Interreg Regulation.
Measurement unit	Solution
Type of indicator	Output
Milestone 2024	0
Target 2029	18
RELEVANCE	
Euro-MED 21-27 definition	At programme level solutions can be defined as methodologies, tools, technologies, services, processes, partnership/cooperation agreements. To be counted for this indicator the solutions should be: - jointly developed: through the involvement of organizations from at least 2 programme countries - tested in real life conditions - easily transferable to further territories of the programme - the solution should include a list of actions needed for it to be uptaken or upscaled by further organisations. Solutions are developed at project level, therefore 1 to 2 transnational solutions are expected as direct output of a single project. Jointly developed solutions refer to solutions newly developed by the project partnership or solutions already developed, e.g. in territorial contexts other than the programme area, that are adapted to the Euro-MED 21-27 context and geographic area by the project partnership. Under SO vii targeted outputs should refer to: - Tools and practices for improving the sustainable management of natural resources and restoring overused and polluted natural environments at land and sea, including wetlands and marshy areas. - Solutions able to enhance the management, monitoring and connection of natural environments, taking into account all the stakeholders involved. Types of targeted solutions includes: - Solutions to increase connectivity between natural ecosystems through effective management plans - Solutions to support the sustainable use of natural resources and consider the ecosystem services as an asset to promote - Solutions to restore degraded natural habitats, including in urban areas, allowing them to be more resilient - Solutions to protect and preserve biodiversity thanks to the coordination and cooperation between key-networks and initiatives in the Mediterranean on this topic - Solutions to manage protected areas, providing a framework for economic operators Solutions relevant for this indicator should not refer to strategies and action plans, which are relevant to RCO 83. Solutions developed for biodiversity protection purposes should embed the form of a concrete tool, methodology or process and in this sense may be part of local Strategies/Action plan and therefore complementary to the Strategy/Action Plan indicator. For example, the solution “shared management of tourism data and automation of data exploitation” can be included in the sustainable tourism development strategy of a Region. Delivered solutions should also be in line with the objectives of relevant European strategies (detailed in the Euro-MED Operational Programme).
Justification of selection	Concrete solutions, resulting from cooperation and pilot activities within funded projects, are needed to tackle the challenges of: - improving management of natural resources; - ensuring the connection of natural ecosystems; - enhancing resilience of natural habitats and restoration of degraded ecosystems. As shown during the 2014-2020 programming period, the development and adoption of joint solutions are the most effective instruments to tackle environmental protection challenges in the MED basin. The use of joint management tools, the adoption of common practices, the participation in transnational networks, allow the managers of protected areas to strengthen their skills while contributing to the preservation and resilience of marine and terrestrial habitats. Solutions delivered by 14-20 projects refer to: joint monitoring protocols for Floating and Ingested Marine Litter, Water Quality Monitoring Systems to be used for monitoring of rivers, Small-Scale Fisheries Governance toolkit to be used for reduction of overfishing impact, Climate change monitoring protocols to be used by managers of marine protected areas, Governance tool as wetland contracts for effective wetlands management. Jointly developed solutions are direct outputs of the following type of action: Elaboration, implementation and adoption of tools and practices for protection, preservation and restoration of natural ecosystems

Policy objective	PO2
Specific objective	(vii) Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution
Type of projects concerned	Thematic projects
Associated result indicator	RCR104
Indicator level	Project
COLLECTION AND CALCULATION METHOD	
Calculation method for obtaining the value of the indicator	The value of the indicator is the total sum of the number of solutions developed jointly by the funded projects
Means of data collection	Data collection will be done through the MA monitoring system. The information of the achievement of the project output, including proof of realisation, are compiled by the beneficiaries in the monitoring system and validated by the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat.
Time measurement	At project completion
Aggregation issues	In order to avoid double counting, the solutions relevant for this indicator should not refer to strategies/action plans, which are counted under RCO83
Reporting	Rule 1: Reporting by specific objectives. Forecast for selected projects and achieved values, both cumulative to date (CPR Annex XII, Table 6). Frequence of reporting: twice per year (art.32.1 and 32.2.b Interreg Regulation)
Methods of traceability and reliability	Data are verified by the Managing Authority upon submission of the final progress report and payment claim by the project beneficiary on the basis of provided supporting documents.
Proof of realisation	The documents provided for demonstrating the achievement of the output, i.e. the completed development of a joint solution should include: - Clear description of the challenge that the solution is adressing and how the solution developed contributes to tackle the mentioned challenge - Clear description of the solution and concrete project output: methodology, tool, technology, service or process, partnership agreement, including target groups involved, type of territory concerned - Description of the testing phase and its results - List of actions needed for the solution to be uptaken or upscaled in further territories, including financial resources to be mobilized Criteria for validation of the output: - The addressed challenge is relevant to the selected specific objective - The solution has been developed with the contribution of partners from at least 2 programme countries - The solution has been tested in real life conditions - results of the test are available - The solution demonstrates to be effective in tackling the mentioned challenge - Actions needed for the solution to be taken up or upscaled are clear and complete
Focus points from 14-20	Developed outputs and provided proofs of realisation are quite different among projects, therefore a need for increased standardisation has been identified: - Criteria for validation are clearly set in terms of defining the solution and what is expected as final product - A template for proof of realisation documents should be provided to the beneficiary, in order to get a homogeneus set of documents and ensure that all necessary information is provided for each of the outputs so to enable further analysis at programme level.
Data management contact	Managing authority
EXAMPLES	Type of solutions/examples - Nature-based solutions for sustainable management of natural resources - Co-management approaches/model for effective management of natural resources - Green and blue infrastructures solutions for integrated management of natural ecosystems - Decision-support tools to protect and preserve natural habitats - Protocols for monitoring of polluted areas - Services/tools to ensure ecological corridors - Services/tools/technology to restore polluted/degraded areas - Sustainable Tourism services - Participatory models/processes targeting conservation and biodiversity protection - Public-private partnerships to leverage and stimulate biodiversity related purposes - Multi-stakeholders governance mechanisms/models to protect biodiversity, also at local level - Science-based, robust ecosystem restoration and management that helps minimise risks, improves resilience, and ensures the continued delivery of vital ecosystem services and features (food provision, air and water purification, flood protection, biodiversity, and climate mitigation) - Standard for Mediterranean Ecotourism products

Indicator fiches - SO 2 (vii) Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution

GENERAL INFORMATION	
Title (EU)	**RCO83 - Strategies and action plans jointly developed**
Definition (EU)	The indicator counts the number of joint strategies or action plans developed by supported projects. A jointly developed strategy aims at establishing a targeted way to achieve a goal oriented process in a specific domain. An action plan translates an existing jointly developed strategy into actions. Jointly developed strategy or action plan implies the involvement of organizations from at least two participating countries (for programmes falling under strands A, B, C as defined in the Interreg Regulation) in the drafting process of the strategy or action plan or is developed in the scope of programmes falling under strands D or E as defined in the Interreg Regulation.
Measurement unit	Strategy/action plan
Type of indicator	Output
Milestone 2024	0
Target 2029	29
RELEVANCE	
Euro-MED 21-27 definition	At programme level strategies and action plans can be defined as follows: A strategy describes a specific course of action designed to achieve a long-term goal, aiming at establishing a targeted way to achieve a goal-oriented process in a specific domain. An action plan translates an existing jointly developed strategy into actions, outlining in detail actions needed to reach the defined long-term goal. Strategies/action plans are developed at territorial level (e.g. local or regional), therefore an average of 4 strategies are expected as direct output of a single project. In order to be counted for the indicator the methodology/approaches used to develop strategies/action plans should be easily transferable to further territories of the programme. Under SO vii, targeted strategies/action plans should be in line and contribute to following EU strategies/directives/conventions and should be easily transferable to further territories of the programme. - EU Green Deal - - EU Biodiversity Strategy - - EU Maritime Spatial Planning Strategy - - EU Marine Strategy Framework directive - - Zero Pollution Action Plan - - New EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change - - Urban Agenda for the EU - - Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC - - European Habitats Directive - - Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development - - Barcelona Convention - -Convention on Biological Diversity - - Ramsar Convention Targeted strategies and action plans should address the improvement, implementation and enforcement of environmental policies/legislations, ensuring the links between environmental protection, sustainable development and citizens health. Protection, conservation and restoration of natural resources have to be integrated into territorial strategies as pillar towards a long term and sustainable growth. Strategies/action plans relevant for this indicator should not refer to solutions, which are relevant to RCO 116. Complementarities however, between strategies and solutions can be highlighted and will be encouraged where possible.
Justification of selection	The protection and preservation of biodiversity requires effective enforcement of environmental strategies at regional and local level. Integration of biodiversity into territorial strategies requires activities of capacity building towards the public authorities and coordination /cooperation among different stakeholders, both public and private. During the 2014-2020 period, recommendations on how to reduce human footprint of economic activities in maritime environment (as fisheries, maritime traffic and ports…) have demonstrated the importance to identify at territorial level integrated strategies/action plans for the management of natural habitats. Notably, a common Mediterranean Declaration for an Ecosystem based approach to biodiversity protection and management has been promoted by the Biodiversity protection thematic community. Together with solutions, effective strategies/action plans defined by key consortium and decision-makers are essential to face this type of joint challenge. These type of instruments are needed in order to ensure long term impacts in the territory and the involvement of all relevant stakeholders.

Policy objective	PO2
Specific objective	(vii) Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution
Type of projects concerned	Thematic projects
Associated result indicator	RCR79
Indicator level	Project
COLLECTION AND CALCULATION METHOD	
Calculation method for obtaining the value of the indicator	The value of the indicator is the total sum of the number of strategies/action plans developed jointly by the funded projects
Means of data collection	Data collection will be done through the MA monitoring system. The information of the achievement of the project output, including proof of realisation, are compiled by the beneficiaries in the monitoring system and validated by the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat.
Time measurement	At project completion
Aggregation issues	In order to avoid double counting, the strategies/action plans relevant for this indicator should not refer to solutions, which are counted under RCO116
Reporting	Rule 1: Reporting by specific objectives. Forecast for selected projects and achieved values, both cumulative to date (CPR Annex XII, Table 6). Frequence of reporting: twice per year (art.32.1 and 32.2.b Interreg Regulation)
Methods of traceability and reliability	Data collection will be done through the MA monitoring system. The information of the achievement of the project output, including proof of realisation, are compiled by the beneficiaries in the monitoring system and validated by the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat.
Proof of realisation	The documents provided for demonstrating the achievement of the output, i.e. the completed development of a strategy/action plan should include: - Identification of the relevant EU strategy to which the developed strategy/action plans contributes to and in which way - Methodology for drafting the strategy action plan - Developed strategy/action plan, including mid-term and long-term objectives, target setting, actions needed to achieve the objective, including timeframe and financial resources needed - List of stakeholders actively involved in the drafting of the strategy/action plan, including description and results of the engagement process - Actions needed for the strategy/action plan to be effectively taken up by the relevant organisation Criteria for validation of the output: - Strategy/action plan contributes to the identified EU strategy - The strategy/action plan has been developed on the basis of a common transnational methodology - Content of the strategy/action plan is clear and complete (includes objectives, targets, actions needed to achieve the objective, involvement of stakeholders) - Actions needed for the strategy/action plan to be effectively uptaken are clear and complete
Focus points from 14-20	Developed outputs and provided proofs of realisation are quite different among projects, therefore a need for increased standardisation has been identified: - Criteria for validation are clearly set - A template for proof of realisation documents should be provided to the beneficiary, in order to get a homogeneous set of documents and ensure that all necessary information is provided for each of the outputs so to enable further analysis at programme level.
Data management contact	Managing authority
EXAMPLES	Type of strategies/action plans/Examples - Strategies/action plans for the process of designation of new protected areas; - Strategies/action plans with the aim to integrate ecosystem services into territorial strategies; - Strategies/action plans supporting the capacity building and coordination of different stakeholders (public/private) - Strategies/action plans for the management of natural resources in which public/private interests interfere; - Strategies/action plans intending to decline at territorial level EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030, Marine Strategy Framework directive... - Strategies/action plans for restoration of degraded and polluted areas at land and sea

Indicator fiches - SO 2 (vii) Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution	
GENERAL INFORMATION	
Title Euro-MED 21-27	**PSI1 - Organisations with increased institutional capacity due to their participation in cooperation activities across borders**
Definition Euro-MED 21-27	This indicator measures the number of organisations that actively participated in cooperation activities of a project across borders and consequently increased their institutional capacity in the thematic field of the project. Institutional capacity is defined as an organisation's ability to set and achieve goals through knowledge, skills, systems and institutions. An organisation increases its institutional capacity by securing the resources (human or technical) and structures (organisational or governance) it needs to successfully perform its mandated tasks better. A cooperation activity across borders is defined as a process of exchanging knowledge and experience between participants from multiple countries. This process can lead to creating joint objectives and commitments and actions fulfilling these commitments. At programme level, organisations can be defined as project partners or final beneficiaries participating in cooperation activities (whether receiving funds or not) An organisation is to be counted if it has undergone this kind of learning process through project activities. This is defined as more than one instance of exchange in which the organisation played an active role. An organisation is to be counted only if its increased institutional capacity is in the thematic field of the project. Organisations targeted refer in particular to: - Organisations actively participating in the development of joint solutions and strategies and action plans - Organisations taking up joint developed solutions and strategies and action plans Types of organisations include, but are not limited to, International organisation, EEIG; National public authority; Regional public authority; Local public authority; Higher education and research; Interest groups including NGOs; SMEs; Enterprises; Business support organisation; Sectoral agency. Organisations specifically targeted under this specific objective are detailed in the relevant indicator fiche - RCO87 - Organisation cooperating across border
Measurement unit	Organisation
Type of indicator	Result
Baseline	0
Target 2029	251
RELEVANCE	
Justification of selection	This indicator was proposed by Interact following consultation and joint work among different transnational programmes. Increasing institutional capacity is one of the main objectives of the Interreg Euro-MED programme and at the core of transnational cooperation. This programme specific indicator is relevant to measure and showcase the achievement and impact of the programme for all selected specific objectives. Projects funded during the 2014-2020 programming period largely contributed to increase capacity of organisations within project partnerships and beyond, e.g. through joint development and adoption of strategies and solution. This result indicator will concretely reflect the change sought and achieved for final beneficiaries of the EURO-MED programme.
Policy objective	PO2
Specific objective	(vii) Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution
Type of projects concerned	Thematic projects
Associated output indicator	RCO87
Indicator level	Project
COLLECTION AND CALCULATION METHOD	
Calculation method for obtaining the value of the indicator	The value of the indicator is the total sum of organisations that demonstrate to have increased their institutional capacity following their participation in cooperation activities of project across borders. Following the common methodology developed among several Interreg programmes, the indicator value will be calculated through a common survey.
Means of data collection	Data collection will be done through the programme Platform. The information of the achievement of the result at project level is compiled by the lead partnerin the monitoring system and validated by the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat, verifying information provided in the programme Platform
Time measurement	At project completion/At project closure
Aggregation issues	N/A
Reporting	Rule 1: Reporting by specific objectives. Forecast for selected projects and achieved values, both cumulative to date (CPR Annex XII, Table 6). Frequence of reporting: twice per year (art.32.1 and 32.2.b Interreg Regulation)
Methods of traceability and reliability	Data collection will be done through the MA monitoring system. The information of the achievement of the result at project level is compiled by the beneficiaries in the monitoring system and validated by the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat.
Proof of realisation	Common survey
Focus points from 14-20	N/A
Data management contact	Managing Authority
EXAMPLES	General examples of increased capacity : - the organisation used knowledge or skills - the organisation adopted new tools - the organisation adopted new procedures or workflows - the organisation changed its organisational structure

Indicator fiches - SO 2 (vii) Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution

GENERAL INFORMATION	
Title (EU)	**RCR104 - Solutions taken up or up-scaled by organisations**
Definition (EU)	The indicator counts the number of solutions, other than legal or administrative solutions, that are developed by supported projects and are taken up or upscaled during the implementation of the project or within one year after project completion. The organisation adopting the solutions developed by the project may or may not be a participant in the project. The uptake / up-scaling should be documented by the adopting organisations in, for instance, strategies, action plans etc.
Measurement unit	Solution
Type of indicator	Result
Baseline	0
Target 2029	16
RELEVANCE	
Euro-MED 21-27 definition	At programme level solutions can be defined as methodologies, tools, technologies, services, processes and partnership/cooperation agreements - jointly developed: through the involvement of organizations from at least XX programme countries - tested in real life conditions - easily transferable to further territories/organisations of the programme. Uptake refers to adoption or implementation of the solution. Upscale refers to: upgrade or improvement of the solution, or to extend the scope of the solution, e.g. from local to regional level or from the technical to the policy level. To be counted for this indicator the solution should have been effectively taken up or upscaled, or be at the initial stage of uptake/upscale, by a given organization. The take up/upscale should occur during the implementation of the project or at project closure. Initial stage of uptake/upscale is demonstrated by an official statement signed by the organisation proving the willingness to officially adopt the solution or to implement it in the organisation's usual practices and day-to-day activities, including time line for effective uptake. Effective uptake/upscale is demonstrated by e.g. signature of cooperation and partnership agreements, integration of the solution in regional or local strategies/action plans, implementation of pilots, launch of public procurements procedures/tenders To check the details about type of solutions expected under this specific objective, refer to the fiche for the indicator RCO116 - Joint developed solutions.
Justification of selection	Concrete solutions, resulting from transnational cooperation and pilot activities within funded projects, are key to support the protection, preservation and restoration of natural resources. However, concrete uptake or upscale of developed solution by relevant organisations is needed to have an impact on the territory. Indeed, in order to capitalize on the tested solutions, not to duplicate the efforts, and not to lose what proved to work for the Mediterranean territories, the logical continuation is to ensure effective use of these existing solutions. Therefore, the programme has decided to consider the uptake or upscale of developed solutions as expected results of supported projects. Several projects funded during the 2014-2020 programming period aimed at engaging local and regional authorities through a written commitment for the adoption of developed methodologies/tools/services. For example, under SO Biodiversity Protection, managers of protected areas committed to use toolkit/standard protocols/practices to improve their management and networking skills, proving that Solutions taken up or upscaled by organisations are a realistic and achievable project output, that can contribute to achieve programme goals. Solutions proposed by the projects have demonstrated to be of concrete support for environmental protection.
Policy objective	PO2
Specific objective	(vii) Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution
Type of projects concerned	Thematic projects
Associated output indicator	RCO116
Indicator level	Project
COLLECTION AND CALCULATION METHOD	
Calculation method for obtaining the value of the indicator	The value of the indicator is the total sum of the number of solutions taken up or up-scaled by organisations
Means of data collection	Data collection will be done through the MA monitoring system. The information of the achievement of the project output, including proof of realisation, are compiled by the beneficiaries in the monitoring system and validated by the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat.
Time measurement	At project completion/At project closure
Aggregation issues	In order to avoid double counting, the solutions relevant for this indicator should not refer to strategies/action plans, which are counted under RCR79
Reporting	Rule 1: Reporting by specific objectives. Forecast for selected projects and achieved values, both cumulative to date (CPR Annex XII, Table 6). Frequence of reporting: twice per year (art.32.1 and 32.2.b Interreg Regulation)
Methods of traceability and reliability	Data are verified by the Managing Authority upon submission of the final progress report and payment claim by the project beneficiary on the basis of provided supporting documents.
Proof of realisation	The documents provided for demonstrating the achievement of the output, i.e. the uptake or upscale of solutions by organisations should include: - Identification of the solution - Proof of uptake or upscale of the solution by the organization, e.g: Memorandum of Unserstanding, or Letter of Intent/ Agreement, Framework document demonstrating the adoption/implementation of the solution by the relevant organization Report on implemented pilot activities Cooperation and partnership agreements Criteria for validation of the output: - The solution is at initial stage of uptake/upscale or has been effectively taken up or upscaled by the organisation
Focus points from 14-20	Provided proofs of realisation are quite different among projects, therefore a need for increased standardisation has been identified: - A template for proof of realisation documents should be provided to the beneficiary, in order to get a homogeneous set of documents and ensure that all necessary information is provided for each of the outputs so to enable further analysis at programme level
Data management contact	Managing authority
EXAMPLES	

Indicator fiches - SO 2 (vii) Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution

GENERAL INFORMATION	
Title (EU)	**RCR79 - Joint strategies and action plans taken up by organisations**
Definition (EU)	The indicator counts the number of joint strategies and action plans (not individual actions) adopted and implemented by organisations during or after the project completion. At the time of reporting this indicator, the implementation of the joint strategy or action plan need not to be completed but effectively started. The organisations involved in take-up may or may not be direct participants in the supported project. It is not necessary that all actions identified are taken-up for a strategy/action plan to be counted in this context. The value report should be equal to or less than the value for "RCO83 Strategies and action plans jointly developed".
Measurement unit	Joint strategy / action plan
Type of indicator	Result
Baseline	0
Target 2029	23
RELEVANCE	
Euro-MED 21-27 definition	At programme level strategies and action plans can be defined as follows: A strategy describes a specific course of action designed to achieve a long-term goal, aiming at establishing a targeted way to achieve a goal-oriented process in a specific domain. An action plan translates an existing jointly developed strategy into actions, outlining in detail actions needed to reach the defined long-term goal. To be counted for this indicator the strategies/action plans should have been effectively taken up, or be at the initial stage of uptake, by a given organization. The uptake should occur during the implementation of the project or at project closure. Initial stage of uptake is demonstrated by an official statement signed by the organisation proving the willingness to officially adopt the strategy/action plan including time line for effective uptake. The initial stage of uptake can be demonstrated by e.g. signature of Memoranda of Understanding/letter of intent/agreements. Effective uptake is demonstrated e.g. official approval of the strategy/action plan, launch of public procurement/tenders or signature of contracts for the implementation of measures indicated in the strategy/action plan,… To check the details about type of strategy/action plan expected under this specific objective, refer to the fiche for the output indicator RCO83 - Strategies and action plans jointly developed.
Justification of selection	Strategies and action plans at regional and local level are needed to increase protection, conservation and restoration of natural resources. However, concrete uptake of developed strategies/action plans by relevant organisations is key to ensure territorial impact and contribute to the achievement of long-term challenges such as achieving Biodiversity targets by 2030 and a climate-resilient society by 2050. Therefore, the programme has decided to consider the take up of strategies/action plans as expected results of supported projects, <u>which will contribute to Increase capacity of public authorities in effective improvement and adoption of environmental strategies as a driver for a sustainable economic development in the Mediterranean</u> During the 2014-2020 period, a high number of stakeholders (mainly managers of protected areas) adopted strategies and action plans developed for e.g the sustainable management of posidonia oceanica in beaches or adoption of ecosystem-based approaches. This proved to be effective in tackling challenges related to biodiversity protection and preservation. Cooperation between key consortium and decision-makers are essential to face this type of joint challenge and provide expected results.
Policy objective	PO2
Specific objective	(vii) Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution
Type of projects concerned	Thematic projects
Associated output indicator	RCO83
Indicator level	Project
COLLECTION AND CALCULATION METHOD	
Calculation method for obtaining the value of the indicator	The value of the indicator is the total sum of the number of strategies/action plans taken up by organisations
Means of data collection	Data collection will be done through the MA monitoring system. The information of the achievement of the project output, including proof of realisation, are compiled by the beneficiaries in the monitoring system and validated by the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat.
Time measurement	At project completion/At project closure
Aggregation issues	In order to avoid double counting, the strategies relevant for this indicator should not refer to solutions, which are counted under RCR104
Reporting	Rule 1: Reporting by specific objectives. Forecast for selected projects and achieved values, both cumulative to date (CPR Annex XII, Table 6). Frequence of reporting: twice per year (art.32.1 and 32.2.b Interreg Regulation)
Methods of traceability and reliability	Data are verified by the Managing Authority upon submission of the final progress report and payment claim by the project beneficiary on the basis of provided supporting documents.
Proof of realisation	The documents provided for demonstrating the achievement of the output, i.e. the taken up of the strategy/action plan by organisations should include: - Identification of the strategy/action plan - Proof of uptake of the strategy/action plan by the organisation, e.g. Memorandum of Unsterstanding, or Letter of Intent Criteria for validation of the output: - The strategy/action plan has been taken up by the organisation.
Focus points from 14-20	Provided proofs of realisation are quite different among projects, therefore a need for increased standardisation has been identified: - A template for proof of realisation documents should be provided to the beneficiary, in order to get a homogeneous set of documents and ensure that all necessary information is provided for each of the outputs so to enable further analysis at programme level
Data management contact	Managing authority
EXAMPLES	

v. Indicators for ISO 1 (vi): *RCO87, RCO116, PSI1, RCR104*

Indicator fiches - ISO 1 vi Other actions to support better cooperation governance	
GENERAL INFORMATION	
Title (EU)	**RCO87 - Organisation cooperating across border**
Definition (EU)	The indicator counts the organisations cooperating formally in supported projects. The organisations counted in this indicator are the legal entities including project partners and associated organizations, as mentionned in the financing agreement of the application. Organisations cooperating formally in small projects (for instance under Small project Fund) are also counted.
Measurement unit	Organisation
Type of indicator	Output
Milestone 2024	0
Target 2029	91
RELEVANCE	
Euro-MED 21-27 definition	RCO87 is selected for all Euro-MED 21-27 specific objectives. The indicator counts the organisations cooperating formally in supported projects. At programme level, organisations can be defined as project partners or associated participating in approved projects (whether receiving funds or not). Under this specific objective, main target groups are represented by: regional and national authorities, networks of decision makers, protected areas, energy and environmental agencies, business management organisations/agencies, Universities/research centres, NGOs/ local communities and associations, which work on enhancing synergies and coordination between thematic projects and supporting institutional coordination towards the Programme missions.
Justification of selection	Cooperation between organisations across borders is essential to implement Euro-MED programme and achieve its main objective. Furthermore, cooperation is crucial to provide a common response to current challenges identified for the selected specific objectives. During 14-20, cooperation was not limited to organisations within projects, it was extended to cooperation within and across thematic communities of projects, leading to relevant results and demonstrating the added value of this kind of transnational cooperation. Cooperation between organisations across borders is essential to ensure the optimisation of resources for greater positive impact on territories, the harmonisation of policies for a better territorial cohesion. Output indicator RCO87, computing both project partners and associate partners, will allow the measurement of cooperation between organisations not only within the Programme area but also in the wider Mediterranean area, mainly with Eastern and Southern Mediterranean countries.
Policy objective	ISO1
Specific objective	(vi) Other actions to support better cooperation governance
Type of projects concerned	Governance projects
Associated result indicator	PSI1 - Organisation with increased institutional capacity due to their participation in cooperation activities across borders
Indicator level	Project
COLLECTION AND CALCULATION METHOD	
Calculation method for obtaining the value of the indicator	The value of the indicator is the total sum of projects' full and associated partners.
Means of data collection	Data collection will be done through the MA monitoring system. Partners participating in funded projects will be automatically exported from the monitoring system and reported by specific objective.
Time measurement	At project completion
Aggregation issues	N/A
Reporting	Rule 1: Reporting by specific objectives. Forecast for selected projects and achieved values, both cumulative to date (CPR Annex XII, Table 6). Frequence of reporting : twice per year (art.32.1 and 32.2.b Interreg Regulation)
Methods of traceability and reliability	Data are collected by the monitoring system
Proof of realisation	N/A
Focus points from 14-20	An efficient and accurate management of the partners database in the information system is required. In the communication of programme beneficiaries there is the need to insist on the added value of Associated partners and their real engagement in project activities.
Data management contact	Managing authority
EXAMPLES	N/A

Indicator fiches - ISO 1 vi Other actions to support better cooperation governance

GENERAL INFORMATION	
Title (EU)	**RCO116 - Joint developed solutions**
Definition (EU)	The indicator counts the number of jointly developed solutions from joint pilot actions implemented by supported projects. In order to be counted in the indicator, an identified solution should include indications of the actions needed for it to be taken up or to be upscaled. A jointly developed solution implies the involvement of organizations from at least two participating countries (for programmes falling under strands A, B, C as defined in the Interreg Regulation) in the drafting and design process of the solution or is developed in the scope of programmes within strands D or E as defined in the Interreg Regulation.
Measurement unit	Solution
Type of indicator	Output
Milestone 2024	0
Target 2029	53
RELEVANCE	
Euro-MED 21-27 definition	Under ISO1, jointly developed solutions refer to outputs that are distinctive of projects funded under the governance priority. The indicator computes the number of jointly developed solutions between the governance projects themselves or with external stakeholders that contribute to improve cooperation governance for the area. In order to be accounted for the indicator, an identified solution will have to include indications on the type of cooperation and engaged projects or stakeholders. A jointly developed solution implies the involvement of organizations from at least two projects or one project and one external organisation in the drafting and design process of the solution. Solutions are developed at project level. The ambition for the average number of jointly developed solution per governance project is set at 7. Under ISO 1, solutions can be defined as initiatives, approaches, methodologies, tools, services, processes, partnership/cooperation agreements. Jointly developed solutions are needed to support better cooperation governance and to: - optimise the conditions for synergy and coordination between thematic projects - support mainstreaming strategies in local, regional, national and European policies in partnership with relevant institutions - support institutional coordination between regional, national and European authorities/networks and between ETC managing authorities, initiatives and strategies in the Mediterranean - set up long-lasting conditions for a permanent institutional dialogue.
Justification of selection	Improving cooperation governance requires the joint development of effective solutions, such as initiatives, approaches, methodologies, tools, services, processes, partnership/cooperation agreements. Activities of coordination /cooperation among different stakeholders are crucial to achieve the objective of better cooperation governance. In this sense, concrete solutions represent outputs that are distinctive of projects funded under ISO1, as result of the Programme architecture, the capitalisation strategy of the programme and its governance focus. During 14-20, cooperation activities implemented within and across thematic communities of projects led to relevant results, demonstrating the added value of this kind of transnational cooperation. Furthermore, horizontal and Axis 4 projects during 14-20 have implemented such joint actions to a great extent resulting in increased cooperation and better governance. This demonstrated that that Joint developed solutions are a realistic and achievable project output, that can largely contribute to ISO1 specific objective and to programme goals.

Policy objective	ISO1
Specific objective	(vi) Other actions to support better cooperation governance
Type of projects concerned	Governance projects
Associated result indicator	RCR104
Indicator level	Project
COLLECTION AND CALCULATION METHOD	
Calculation method for obtaining the value of the indicator	The value of the indicator is the total sum of the number of solutions developed jointly by the funded projects
Means of data collection	Data collection will be done through the MA monitoring system. The information of the achievement of the project output, including proof of realisation, are compiled by the beneficiaries in the monitoring system and validated by the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat.
Time measurement	At project completion
Aggregation issues	N/A
Reporting	Rule 1: Reporting by specific objectives. Forecast for selected projects and achieved values, both cumulative to date (CPR Annex XII, Table 6). Frequence of reporting: twice per year (art.32.1 and 32.2.b Interreg Regulation)
Methods of traceability and reliability	Data are verified by the Managing Authority upon submission of the final progress report and payment claim by the project beneficiary on the basis of provided supporting documents.
Proof of realisation	The documents provided for demonstrating the achievement of the output, i.e. the completed development of a joint solution should include: - Description of participating projects/actors and roles. Identification of one coordinating project. - Clear description of the challenge that the solution is adressing and how the solution developed contributes to tackle the mentioned challenge - Clear description of the solution and concrete project output: initiatives, approaches, methodologies, tools, services, processes, partnership/cooperation agreements. - Follow-up actions foreseen or description of expected long-term effects Criteria for validation of the output: - The addressed objective is relevant to improved cooperation governance - The solution has been developed with the contribution of partners from at least 2 Interreg Euro-MED projects/ or 1 Interreg Euro-MED project and one project from another programme/ or 1 Interreg Euro-MED project and an external organisation / intiative - The solution demonstrate to be effective in tackling the mentioned challenge
Focus points from 14-20	Developed outputs and provided proofs of realisation are quite different among projects, therefore a need for increased standardisation has been identified: - Criteria for validation are clearly set in terms of defining the solutions and what is expected as final product - A template for proof of realisation documents should be provided to the beneficiary, in order to get a homogeneous set of documents and ensure that all necessary information is provided for each of the outputs so to enable further analysis at programme level.
Data management contact	Managing authority
EXAMPLES	Type of solutions/examples - Solutions related to the drafting of common solution-oriented documents contributing to achieve the Programme missions (e.g. Common Key Policy Paper, Positioning paper, etc.) - Solutions related to upscaling results (e.g. merging of tools, networks, etc.) - Solutions related to joint outreach/advocacy/lobbying processes (e.g. shared dissemination, advocacy campaign, strategies) - Solutions related to the implementation of transferring and mainstreaming processes of projects (e.g. share of methodological approach, practices, networks) - Solutions related to support institutional coordination between programmes / initiatives / strategies (e.g. MoU, organisation of specific meetings, etc.) - Solutions related to the design of coordinated approaches (e.g. coordination of calls, etc.) - Solutions related to the enhancement of liaising activities (e.g. joint analysis, workshops, etc.)

Indicator fiches - ISO 1 vi Other actions to support better cooperation governance

GENERAL INFORMATION	
Title Euro-MED 21-27	**PSI1 - Organisations with increased institutional capacity due to their participation in cooperation activities across borders**
Definition Euro-MED 21-27	This indicator measures the number of organisations that actively participated in cooperation activities of a project across borders and consequently increased their institutional capacity in the thematic field of the project. Institutional capacity is defined as an organisation's ability to set and achieve goals through knowledge, skills, systems and institutions. An organisation increases its institutional capacity by securing the resources (human or technical) and structures (organisational or governance) it needs to successfully perform its mandated tasks better. A cooperation activity across borders is defined as a process of exchanging knowledge and experience between participants from multiple countries. This process can lead to creating joint objectives and commitments and actions fulfilling these commitments. At programme level, organisations can be defined as project partners or final beneficiaries participating in cooperation activities (whether receiving funds or not) An organisation is to be counted if it has undergone this kind of learning process through project activities. This is defined as more than one instance of exchange in which the organisation played an active role. An organisation is to be counted only if its increased institutional capacity is in the thematic field of the project. Organisations targeted refer in particular to: - Organisations actively participating in the development of joint solutions and strategies and action plans - Organisations taking up joint developed solutions and strategies and action plans Types of organisations include, but are not limited to, International organisation, EEIG; National public authority; Regional public authority; Local public authority; Higher education and research; Interest groups including NGOs; SMEs; Enterprises; Business support organisation; Sectoral agency. Organisations specifically targeted under this specific objective are detailed in the relevant indicator fiche - RCO87 - Organisation cooperating across border
Measurement unit	Organisation
Type of indicator	Result
Baseline	0
Target 2029	64
RELEVANCE	
Justification of selection	This indicator was proposed by Interact following consultation and joint work among different transnational programmes. Increasing institutional capacity is one of the main objectives of the Interreg Euro-MED programme and at the core of transnational cooperation. This programme specific indicator is relevant to measure and showcase the achievement and impact of the programme for all selected specific objectives. Projects funded during the 2014-2020 programming period largely contributed to increase capacity of organisations within project partnerships and beyond, e.g. through joint development and adoption of strategies and solutions. This result indicator will concretely reflect the change sought and achieved for final beneficiaries of the Euro-MED programme.
Policy objective	ISO1
Specific objective	(vi) Other actions to support better cooperation governance
Type of projects concerned	Governance projects
Associated output indicator	RCO87
Indicator level	Project
COLLECTION AND CALCULATION METHOD	
Calculation method for obtaining the value of the indicator	The value of the indicator is the total sum of organisations that demonstrate to have increased their institutional capacity following their participation in cooperation activities of project across borders. Following the common methodology developed among several Interreg programmes, the indicator value will be calculated through a common survey.
Means of data collection	Data collection will be done through the programme Platform. The information of the achievement of the result at project level is compiled by the lead partner in the monitoring system and validated by the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat, verifying information provided in the programme Platform
Time measurement	At project completion/At project closure
Aggregation issues	N/A
Reporting	Rule 1: Reporting by specific objectives. Forecast for selected projects and achieved values, both cumulative to date (CPR Annex XII, Table 6). Frequence of reporting: twice per year (art.32.1 and 32.2.b Interreg Regulation)
Methods of traceability and reliability	Data collection will be done through the MA monitoring system. The information of the achievement of the result at project level is compiled by the beneficiaries in the monitoring system and validated by the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat.
Proof of realisation	Common survey
Focus points from 14-20	N/A
Data management contact	Managing Authority
EXAMPLES	General examples of increased capacity : - the organisation used knowledge or skills - the organisation adopted new tools - the organisation adopted new procedures or workflows - the organisation changed its organisational structure

Indicator fiches - ISO 1 vi Other actions to support better cooperation governance

GENERAL INFORMATION	
Title (EU)	**RCR104 - Solutions taken up or up-scaled by organisations**
Definition (EU)	The indicator counts the number of solutions, other than legal or administrative solutions, that are developed by supported projects and are taken up or upscaled during the implementation of the project or within one year after project completion. The organisation adopting the solutions developed by the project may or may not be a participant in the project. The uptake / up-scaling should be documented by the adopting organisations in, for instance, strategies, action plans etc.
Measurement unit	Solution
Type of indicator	Result
Baseline	0
Target 2029	27
RELEVANCE	
Euro-MED 21-27 definition	Under ISO1, Jointly developed solutions can be defined as initiatives, approaches, methodologies, tools, services, processes, partnership/cooperation agreements jointly developed by the governance projects themselves or with external stakeholders, which contribute to improve cooperation governance for the area. Uptake refers to adoption or implementation of the solution. Upscale refers to: upgrade or improvement of the solution, or to extend the scope of the solution, e.g. from local to regional level or from the technical to the policy level. To be counted for this indicator the solution should have been effectively taken up or upscaled, or be at the initial stage of uptake/upscale, by a given organization. The take up/upscale should occur during the implementation of the project or at project closure. To check the details about type of solutions expected under this specific objective, refer to the fiche for the indicator RCO116 - Joint developed solutions.
Justification of selection	Concrete solutions, resulting from transnational cooperation among governance projects and with external stakeholders, are key to increase cooperation and better governance in the Mediterranean. However, concrete uptake or upscale of developed solutions by relevant organisations is needed to have an impact on governance processes in different territories. Indeed, in order to capitalize on the tested solutions, not to duplicate the efforts, and not to lose what proved to work for the Mediterranean territories, the logical continuation is to ensure effective implementation of these existing solutions. Several projects funded during the 2014-2020 programming period aimed at engaging authorities through a written commitment for the adoption of developed methodologies/tools/services. For example, the greener events guidelines developed by the Green Growth thematic community together with other horizontal projects have been adopted by several institutions. Therefore, the programme has decided to consider the take up or upscale of developed solutions as expected result of supported projects, which will reflect the impact of the programme on the territories' governance.
Policy objective	ISO1
Specific objective	(vi) Other actions to support better cooperation governance
Type of projects concerned	Governance projects
Associated output indicator	RCO116
Indicator level	Project
COLLECTION AND CALCULATION METHOD	
Calculation method for obtaining the value of the indicator	The value of the indicator is the total sum of the number of solutions taken up or up-scaled by organisations
Means of data collection	Data collection will be done through the MA monitoring system. The information of the achievement of the project output, including proof of realisation, are compiled by the beneficiaries in the monitoring system and validated by the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat.
Time measurement	At project completion/At project closure
Aggregation issues	N/A
Reporting	Rule 1: Reporting by specific objectives. Forecast for selected projects and achieved values, both cumulative to date (CPR Annex XII, Table 6). Frequence of reporting: twice per year (art.32.1 and 32.2.b Interreg Regulation)
Methods of traceability and reliability	Data are verified by the Managing Authority upon submission of the final progress report and payment claim by the project beneficiary on the basis of provided supporting documents.
Proof of realisation	The documents provided for demonstrating the achievement of the output, i.e. the uptake or upscale of solutions by organisations should include: - Identification of the solution - Proof of uptake or upscale of the solution by the organization, e.g: Memorandum of Unsterstanding, or Letter of Intent/ Agreement, Framework document demonstrating the adoption/implementation of the solution by the relevant organization, Cooperation and partnership agreements Criteria for validation of the output: - The solution is at initial stage of uptake/upscale or has been effectively taken up or upscaled by the organisation
Focus points from 14-20	Provided proofs of realisation are quite different among projects, therefore a need for increased standardisation has been identified: - A template for proof of realisation documents should be provided to the beneficiary, in order to get a homogeneous set of documents and ensure that all necessary information is provided for each of the outputs so to enable further analysis at programme level
Data management contact	Managing authority
EXAMPLES	

C. Recommendations for Green events

i. Project publications and dissemination products - greening

- Publications can be disseminated electronically. Printing of publications should be envisaged only if strictly necessary and only if following a specific dissemination plan.
- Publications should be printed for external communication purposes (if needed only) on both sides and on recycled paper. For electronic publications, an “eco-friendly” version (less colours, more compact text, less pages) should be made available.
- Publications should be printed where they are going to be distributed or close enough in order to minimize transport distances.

ii. Checklist for organising green and inclusive events

Before the event

- Consider if a phone or a video conference could be organised instead of a meeting
- in case of a smaller meeting, prefer the World Café procedure
- green public procurement procedures are applied

Setting up and running the event

- Electronic means (e.g. e-mail, website) are used rather than printed materials for pre-meeting and follow-up communications.
- Participants are encouraged to use sustainable ways of travelling for example
    - For short trips favour train to bus/plane and if train is not an option, favour car/bus to plane.
    - Participants are encouraged to share the transport means with other participants: the organisers of the event can provide a platform for them to communicate and organise ride-sharing. Otherwise the participants are encouraged to use the existing car-sharing and car-pooling platforms
    - Walking and cycling are promoted as well

- .
- Information on the greening efforts made at the event is provided electronically before and after the meeting.

- Participants' bags/packs are avoided or produced locally using recycled material and are reusable.
- Pens are provided only upon request, are made of a high content of recycled material, and are refillable.
- In case participant's packs cannot be avoided, only strictly necessary material is included. Copying/printing is available upon request at the location of the event.
- All material produced for the event is designed and produced in a generic way (no date or location mentioned) to allow them to be reused for other events.
- The start and end of the meeting are adjusted to the schedules of public transport.
- The caterer is informed on the exact number of participants and is able to re-evaluate the quantities needed to avoid waste.
- A dedicated area is provided for participants to return material that can be re-used (such as badges).

In the sense of "full accessibility for all", accessibility for all participants is ensured, guidelines for accessibility are met and the venue is adapted for people with reduced mobility (e.g. access to buildings and stages with low ramps, acoustics appropriate for hearing aid users and working loop systems in theatres and reception desks).

- A variety of seating space allocation is provided (e.g. space for deaf people to sit next to sign language interpreter, hearing-aid users to benefit from the use of an induction-loop).
- A system that allows all guests to access the catering service is put in place: long queues for food are avoided, enough chairs for people to sit down are available, people with disabilities or special needs are provided with the necessary facilities

Other socially inclusive considerations

The organisers of the event may:

- Consider the representation of diversity in event literature and among hosts/speakers to reflect that of the target audience
- Provide personal assistants if a large number of persons with disability are attending
- Promote local attractions and amenities to the participants to benefit the local economy and give the necessary information to participants

Food and drinks, catering

The organisers of the event take into account the following[245]:

- Locally grown and produced food and drinks are used and menus reflect the seasonal products of the region.
- The quantity of meat products offered is minimized and at least one vegetarian option is offered (as the production of meat involves considerably more CO2 than non-meat products).
- Tap water is used and served in jugs instead of in single-use bottles.
- In case fish or other marine or aquaculture products are served, it is certified that they have been caught or produced using sustainable measures. More info can be sought on the WWF website or on www.seafoodchoices.com
- The use of reusable dishes, cutlery, glassware and linens is ensured and aluminium foil avoided.
- The use of single-use bottles for beverages is avoided. The use of any plastic decoration is avoided as well.
- The surplus of edible food should not be wasted but rather donated.

Local transport

Clear instructions are provided to participants on appropriate public transport and/or walking arrangements from point of arrival or departure (railway station, airport) to the venue, accommodation, town centre, etc. This is provided by e-mail shortly before the event and can be additionally displayed at the venue.

Location and accommodation

Priority is given to locations available in the premises of one of the project participants in order to reduce the need for staff to travel. The hotels are located near public transportation and as close as possible to the conference facilities (preferably within walking distance or reachable by public transport).

[245] always considering health and hygiene regulations in force

Links

UNEP publications and website

https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/7834/-Green%20Meeting%20Guide%202009_%20Roll%20out%20the%20Green%20Carpet%20for%20your%20Participants-20094067.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y

The EU Eco-Management and Audit Scheme – EMAS

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/emas/index_en.htm

ICLEI publications and website

https://iclei-europe.org/publications-tools/?c=search&uid=OrjABsOy

https://iclei-europe.org/publications-tools/?c=search&uid=bYzvvh0R

European green office website

https://www.eugreenoffice.eu/

Alternatives to Skype

http://www.pocket-lint.com/news/131512-5-best-alternatives-to-skype-apps-with-im-video-calls-and-file-sharing

Ecolabels by product

http://ec.europa.eu/ecat/

D. Mapping Jems (drafting ongoing)

E. Mapping Platform (drafting ongoing)

F. Graphic identity (drafting ongoing)

G. Requirements for data collection, productions delivery and activity reporting

i. Format requirements and criteria for projects key project productions

All productions identified as a key deliverable or output can either be reported in the format in which they were produced (document), or as a report (pilot activity or event).

1. Productions that can be reported in original format

Some of your productions can be directly uploaded in original format, as the production equals the deliverable (e.g. a SWOT analysis produced is reported as a SWOT Analysis document).

In this case, different formats are possible, depending on the type of production:

- Upload of production in original or digital format (ex.: Word document, PPT, PDF, a printed poster, a printed book, a brochure …)
- Upload of link to online format production AND backup (ex.: online device like a decision support tool, specific website)
- Evidence of production in digital format (ex.: widgets, goodies…)
- Upload of link to production in original format (ex.: video, podcast…)

When productions in original or digital format are documents that constitute a key deliverable of the project

For each deliverable, the document should have:

- A page including at least:
    - Title of document
    - Project logo
    - URL to project website
- Another page including the following information:
    - Project full title, mission, priority, and specific objective
    - Deliverable number and title (as identified in Jems)
    - Work package number, name of Work Package
    - Activity number, name of activity

- Partner in charge (author)
  - Partners involved
  - Status (draft, final, N version, etc.)
  - Distribution (confidential, public, etc.)
  - Date(s) of production
- Minimal presentation requirements
  - Table of contents if applicable
  - List of abbreviations and terms if applicable
  - Executive summary and abstract if applicable
- Valuable additional elements of presentation
  - Number of pages
  - Footer or header including number and title of deliverable – distribution – name of project
  - Revision chart and history log, if applicable
  - Inclusion of an illustration showing previous steps/deliverables, synchronised deliverables/activities, and further steps/deliverables such as (please note that this is just an example, you are free to choose your own way of illustrating):

Previous steps/deliverables	Reported deliverable	Further steps/deliverables
Diagnostics per territory	Territorial action plan for C	Pilot actions
	Parallel deliverables/activities	
	Action plans of 4 other territories	

When productions in original or digital format are promotional material

The deliverables should be edited following the communication and publicity rules of the Programme and uploaded on the Basecamp in their digital format. If required, a copy should be sent to the JS too.

When productions in original format are online tools

The link to the online tool should be uploaded on the Basecamp, together with the backup of the production. The deliverable should be accompanied by any material or information needed for its transferability and reuse. All online productions should be developed in a format freely accessible for use and reuse, ideally in an open-source format. Only the final production that constitutes the deliverable itself must be uploaded on Jems[246] and is published on the website after the approval of the related deliverable.

2. Reporting productions that cannot be reported in original format since they are activities, complex productions (such as pilots) or events

When the productions are identified as a key deliverable or output, the project must upload a specific report on the activity that occurred or the complex production. This report has to meet the format requirements for documents specified above.

What reports on organised events should contain

In order to facilitate the understanding of the events that took place and of their outcomes, and in addition to the information necessary to easily identify the deliverable, when reporting an event, it is appreciated that all description, explanation and supporting documents are listed in one single comprehensive document.

- The report should include an introductory list with the following information:
    - Objectives of the event and expected results
    - Target audience for the event
    - Location of the event and justification
    - Time of the event
    - Methodology to reach objectives
    - Short report on outcomes
    - Results of the critical evaluation of the event (strengths, weaknesses, ideas to improve)

- The partners are requested to provide supporting documents such as:
    - invitations
    - agenda
    - lists of participants (with the minimum required information requested by the Programme[247])
    - minutes
    - pictures
    - supporting material
    - promotional material developed for the event (and pictures in case of promotional gifts)
    - etc...

[246] This information needs to be confirmed by the team working on Jems.
[247] A registration form template is provided together with the project website, it includes all requirements needed from the Programme.

In order to complete the activity report, it is appreciated that the supporting documents are scanned and included in the reporting document. This way, the full picture of the event is made available to any interested beneficiary and its promotion is facilitated.

What reports on participation in external events should contain

To have the same approach, when reporting on participation in an external event, the partners are requested to apply the same approach as for the events organised by them and hence provide the supporting list and all elements listed above for the reporting on events.

ii. Requirements for the reporting on communication activities (Project analytics)

Project analytics	
Activities	**Data**
Events	Number of EU events the project participated in as a speaker or as an organiser
	If any, number of participants in EU events organised by the project[248]
	Number of events organised by the project or in which the project participated aiming to raise citizen awareness
	Number of participants in this type of events organised by the project[249]
	Number of events targeted to the Youth organised by the project or in which the project participated as a speaker
	Number of participants in this event organised by the project[250]
	Level of satisfaction per event (only for the most important events)
Social media	Social media platforms used
	Number of followers for each social media platform per year
	Number of social media posts about EU benefits per year (for each social media platform)
	Number of social media posts per year (for each social media platform)
	Average engagement rate for each platform per year*

[248] these data will be collected via the registration forms available on the platform
[249] See footnote 26
[250] See footnote 26

*For Facebook, please calculate the average engagement rate as follow:
Engagement Rate by Reach (ERR) = total number of engagements per post / reach per post * 100

To determine the average, add up the all the ERRs from all your posts for the year and divide by number of posts:

Average ERR = Total ERR / Total posts

For the other Social Media channels, namely Twitter and LinkedIn, the engagement rate per post is already given. For YouTube, no average engagement rate is required.

iii. Requirements for the specific reporting expected from governance projects: data collection needed to perform the assessment of the Results Amplification strategy (RAS)

Analyse on-going project results	Number of tools produced to analyse results
	Number of projects which results are analysed
	Number of results analysed
	Number of results analysed per type
	Number of results with High Potential for Replicability and Transfer (HPRT)
	Number of results with HPRT per type
	Report on analysis of results
	Number of meetings for community building
	Number of participants in meetings for community building
	Report on outputs from meetings for community building
Implement TRANSFER activities	Number of teaser videos on Academy
	Number of trainings in Academy
	Number of registered stakeholders in Academy
	Number of participants in Academy
	Number of participants per type of stakeholders in Academy
	Number of visits, etc. in Academy
	Number and type of formalised network by Governance Projects

	Number and type of federating actions between potential recipients and donors
	Number and type of advocacy activities
	Degree of satisfaction for trainings
Implement COORDINATE activities	Number and quality of liaising activities developed/performed in collaboration with other programmes/projects
	Number and quality of activities developed/performed in collaboration with Mediterranean networks, initiatives and strategies

This list is not exhaustive. Some data will be defined according to the joint activities that will be determined after each one of the 3-annual coordination meetings between the JS and the governance project group. In any case, the projects will be informed in due course of the data to be collected.