



3rd Interreg Europe Monitoring Committee Meeting 9 - 10 February 2016

Jaarbeurs
Croeselaan 6, 3521 CA Utrecht, The Netherlands

Chaired by: Frank Everaarts (NL)
Participants: See Participants' List (Annex 01).
Decision notes: Interreg Europe JS

1. Welcome, opening and approval of the agenda

The Monitoring Committee was welcomed to Utrecht by Mr. Henk Meeldijk of the Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment, who wished the Committee a fruitful meeting.

The **Chair** presented the agenda (including the newly added point on the presentation of the EC, see annex 02 and 03). The agenda was approved by the monitoring committee.

2. Presentation of the new MC members

The participants of the monitoring committee from **SK**, **SE** and **DE** introduced themselves, as well as the new colleague from the certifying authority (Province of East Flanders, BE).

3. Update on general programme developments

- The **EC** introduced their strategy for smart specialisation and clusters. After that the Vanguard Initiative was presented (see annex 03). The **JS** asked if it would be considered helpful to add information on the initiatives in relevant programme documents (e.g. programme manual, terms of reference for call for proposals). The **EC** welcomed this proposal and will provide the programme with a corresponding paragraph. The **JS** added that further meetings will be planned with the **EC** to make sure that the activities of the initiative and the programme are complementary and not overlapping.
- The **Chair** asked the MC to indicate whether it was possible for the Interreg Europe partner states to also take decision on INTERREG IVC matters. The MC agreed to this.
- The **JS** updated the MC on a letter received from the EC with regard to one of the lead applicants objecting the eligibility result.
- The **JS** briefly reflected on the overview of meetings with partners of the programme the JS participated in. **LU** expressed their appreciation for this update, as it helps to keep the overview.
- The **JS** updated the MC on human resources within the JS.



- The **JS** provided the MC an overview on the different written procedures implemented after the last MC meeting. All written procedure were agreed upon, except for the subsidy contract and project partnership agreement.

4. Subsidy contract and recovery procedure

The **JS** summarised the developments and the state of play for the subsidy contract and highlighted the latest changes (see annex 04).

Decision

The monitoring committee will decide in a shortened written procedure (10 working days) on the updated documents.

5. Finances – TA budget 2016 + national contributions –Second Level Audit

The **JS** presented the TA actual expenditure for INTERREG IVC (see annex 08) and highlighted that the decision on this will be taken in a written procedure as the documents had not been provided before the MC meeting and as the MA's final confirmation was required.

Afterwards, the JS presented the proposal for the Interreg Europe budget for 2016 (see also annex 08). A TA spending plan for the whole period 2016 – 2023 had also been provided with the supporting documents for the meeting.

The **JS** also informed the monitoring committee about the national contributions received so far for the years 2014-2016 (deadline was 31/01/2016) and handed out an updated table (see annex 09). The JS also added that since the table was updated, new instalments were received from LT and DE and the full contributions for 2014-2016 were received from CZ, ES and HR. The Partner States whose contributions had not yet been fully paid were asked to check this with their financial department.

As a final point the **JS** updated the monitoring committee on second level audit matters (see also annex 08).

Decision

The TA budget proposal for 2016 was approved by the monitoring committee.

6. Policy Learning Platform tender - update

The **JS** presented the state of the art of the tender procedure for the Policy Learning Platforms (annex 10). Four offers have been received and all of them are eligible.

The JS is currently assessing the offers and has scheduled the interviews with the 3 best ranking candidates on the 25 and 29 February. The evaluation report will be then sent to the MC for comments through a written procedure at the beginning of March, before the notification of the candidates. Accordingly the contract will be awarded at the end of March (11 days legal delay between the notification of the refused and the successful candidates).

7. Quality assessment methodology

The **JS** presented the quality assessment methodology along with a number of points of attention, reacting on several comments already raised by the different Partner States preceding the meeting such as multiple involvement, policy relevance, geographical characteristics, and equal treatment (annex 11). The detailed quality assessment harmonisation document used by the JS is included as annex 11.1.

8. Overview of first call results

The **JS** presented the overview of the first call results (annex 13).



9. Approval of projects

The **Chair** reminded of the rules of procedure for approving projects – consensus, or 2/3 majority voting if consensus could not be found.

Decision:

- The 64 applications recommended for approval were approved with consensus.
- The applications scored 2.67 and below were rejected (abstention: **IT**)
- The applications scored 2.83 were rejected (for rejection: 19 votes; against rejection: 9 votes; abstention: 1). See annex 14.

10. Second call for proposals – Eligibility assessment

The **JS** presented the main results of the eligibility assessment, the main reasons for ineligibility and proposed improvements for the 2nd call (soft measures, flexibility measures) (annex 15). The newly introduced automatic messages in the iOLF system are included as annex 15.1 and 15.2.

Decision

Soft measures were approved by consensus.
Flexibility measures were rejected (against rejection: 16 votes).

10.a Decision making process

Further to the request of several Partner States, this point was added by the Chair. It was an opportunity for Partner States to reflect on the decision making process and discuss ideas for improving the rules of procedure.

Decision

1. To fully assess applications scored 2.67 at the strategic assessment – *Rejected*
2. To reduce the threshold of requests for further assessment – *Rejected*
3. To decide on strategic assessment in a meeting
AND
to decide on full assessment in written procedure – *Rejected*

(details of the voting are provided in annex 16)

11. Second call for proposals – Application Pack

The **JS** presented the Application Pack. Following the lessons learnt from the first call and the feedback received from the partner states, some improvements have been introduced in these documents. The main changes were presented (annex 17).

Decision

The application pack is to be revised by the JS according to the proposals made by the partner states. A very brief written procedure will follow the meeting (ending on 19 February).



12. Communication Strategy implementation update and 2016 work plan

The **JS** presented the updated communication strategy and the communication work plan for 2016 (see annex 19).

Decision

The monitoring committee approved the updated communication strategy.

13. Programme Evaluation – Evaluation plan

The **JS** presented the evaluation plan for Interreg Europe, its legal basis, the rationale behind it and the timing of the process (see annex 20).

Decision

The decision is postponed, to be made in written procedure. The written procedure starts on Friday 19 February till 11 March 2016.

14. AOB - Timeline

No AOB.

Timeline:

JS presented the timeline / deadlines agreed during the meeting for each point (annex 21).

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