



4th Interreg Europe Monitoring Committee Meeting 4 - 5 October 2016

**Hotel Banana City
Schaffhauserstrasse 8
8400 Winterthur, Switzerland**

Chaired by: Patrick Liska (SK)
Participants: See Participants' List (Annex 01).
Decision notes: Interreg Europe JS

1. Welcome, opening and approval of the agenda

CH welcomes the participants to Winterthur

The **Chair** presented the agenda. **DE** proposed to postpone item 7 of the agenda to the next MC Meeting in Bratislava in December. **JS** clarified that the implementation report had to be ready for mid-November and proposes **DE** to abstain. The agenda was approved by the monitoring committee.

2. Presentation of the new MC members

The participants of the monitoring committee from **SE, ES, MT, IT, IR, EL, FI** (as substitute), **EE, LT** (as observer) and **NO** introduced themselves.

3. Update on general programme developments

- The **JS** provided the MC an overview on the different written procedures implemented after the last MC meeting: Policy Learning platforms, Eligibility Report, Programme Manual and Strategic Assessment. All written procedures were agreed upon.
- The **JS** updated the MC regarding human resources within the JS (see annex 02).
- The **JS** informed the MC that the ex-post evaluation of ETC programmes was finalised. The final version drawn overall positive conclusions for the INTERREG IVC programme even if the question raised for interregional cooperation was of limited interest (i.e. to which extent results were achieved beyond the approved projects).
- The **JS** gave an overview of the meetings attended: bi-annual meeting with the Committee of the Regions, coordination meetings with DG Regio and S3 Platform, meeting with Interact and Pan-European programmes, meeting DG COMP on state aids and antifraud regulation. JS also organised end of September a finance and communication seminar for the first call projects. 59 out of 64 projects attended.
- The **JS** also presented the first programme leaflet.



- The **JS** reminded the importance of paying the national contribution on time and asked the PSs which had not paid yet of the importance to make the payment. The related PS confirmed their efforts to make the payment in the course of November/December 2016. The follow-up on the payment of the national contributions and possible measures in case of non-payment will be on the agenda of the next MC in December 2016 (see annex 03).
- UK gave an update on the situation of their country (see annex 04)

4. INTERREG IVC overview on closure process

- The **JS** presented the status of the closure process and the closure calendar (see annex 05) and the content of the closure package to be submitted to the AA by 15 November 2016.
- The **JS** also informed the MC that it is checking the question of whether the closure documents need to be approved by the MC as several elements would have already been agreed on: the final implementation report has to be adopted by the MC, the final control report will have to be approved by the GoA and it is currently assumed that the AA will be able to give an unqualified audit opinion. The JS proposed to send the closure package to the MC for information by February 2017 before the official submission of the final documents to the Commission. The JS will get back to the MC on this question during the next MC meeting in December 2016.

5. INTERREG IVC second level audit results of 2016 and the whole programming period

- The **JS** presented the 2016 audit sample and results (see annex 05). The preliminary results before the contradictory phases showed a very low sample error rate (0.87%) but a projected error rate above 2% (see presentation). Thanks to the close follow-up of the JS, the cooperation of the audited partners and the help of the PS when needed, the sample (0.54%) and projected error rates (1.39%) were reduced and are now both below 2%.
- The **JS** then presented the overall coverage of the second level audits over the programming period and the results and the provisional programme error rate in percentage and amounts (0.48% - 97 323.08 EUR, random sample). When the figures are final, a final note will be sent to the MC. The JS also stressed that the results of the audits show an error rate which is similar for decentralized and centralized first level control systems and therefore that both systems worked and the programme rules were overall understood and applied correctly by the partners.
- For the new period, the **JS** explained that it is expected that an increased number of audits will be necessary, due to new audit requirements fixed either in the regulations or in EGESIF guidance. In that respect, the JS expressed some concerns about how this may be financed and informed the MC that the financial needs would be further assessed following the results of the audit tender to be launched in 2017.
- Finally, the **JS** presented an example of calculation of the projected error rate to raise awareness about how the projection is done and the consequences of this projection. The MA/JS will continue to address this issue in its contacts with the EC (DG Regio audit unit). The MA invited PS to also try to address this issue with the EC.

6. INTERREG IVC overview on spending situation

The JS presented the INTERREG IVC overview on spending situation (see annex 06), which finished with the information about the letter of the Commission concerning reimbursement of the



difference between the ERDF paid to beneficiaries and the ERDF received from the Commission (surplus of EUR 7,684,630.14).

7. INTERREG IVC Final implementation report

The **JS** presented the Final Implementation Report, giving an overview of the results achieved by the programme and the projects (see annex 07).

The **JS** clarified that:

- The final report provided the consolidated picture of the programme achievements and that the analytical text with indicators was the consolidated one. For country specific information PS could refer to Annex 6 (achievements per country). In addition, it was clarified that the 27 projects who did not improve any policy, reached other results as for instance GPs transfer or spin-off activities.

JS proposed to agree on the Final Report under the following 5 conditions:

- 2015 part of the report would be separated from final (overall) part of the report;
- An attractive executive summary would be added;
- the description of underperforming projects would be improved
- PSs would check projects' final results per country (annex 6 to the final implementation report)
- other editorial comments from PSs would be submitted by 28th October

Decision

- All PSs agreed with the JS proposal.

8. The management and control system description (including risk management and anti-fraud strategy)

MA/JS delivered a presentation on the management and control system description (see annex 08).

9. Presentation of the iOLF and iDB

The **JS** presented the ongoing developments for the monitoring and reporting systems as well as the basic principles of the progress report template. Some key functions for MS were also shown. (see annexes 09 and 10)

-

10. Overview of second call results

This item was treated after item 11. The **JS** delivered an overview of the results of the eligibility check and the quality assessment related to the second call, and the consequences on the programme budget (see annexes 11 and 12). The **JS** also provided some background information on the written procedure launched on 23 September 2016 with regard to DOOLIA and BrandTour projects.

Decision:

The written procedure on the projects DOOLIA and BrandTour was cancelled and the MC agreed on including the two projects in the approval of second call projects during the meeting (point 12 of the agenda).

The **chair** closed day 1 of the meeting.



11. Reminder on quality assessment methodology

The **JS** presented the quality assessment methodology (see annex 13). Concerning the request of IT related to multiple involvement, the **JS** clarified that the programme manual would be further updated and discussed at the next MC meeting in Bratislava.

Decision

- Discussions on improvements of the decision-making processes concerning the approval of projects would take place at the next MC meeting in Bratislava.

12. Approval of projects

The **Chair** reminded the rules of procedure for approving projects – consensus, or 2/3 majority voting if consensus could not be found - and asked if any PS representative was in a position of conflict of interest, which was not the case for any of the MC representatives.

Decision

- The 2 projects BRANTour and DOOLIA were integrated in the final decision on the 2nd call for proposals. The related written procedure was cancelled.
- The 66 projects recommended under conditions were approved under conditions by consensus.
- All non-recommended projects were not approved by consensus.

The **JS** reminded PSs about the deadline to perform partners' eligibility check which is two weeks after the decision is taken, i.e. 20 October 2016.

13. Project presentation

FiBL (CH) presented the objectives of the SME ORGANICS project and the first steps of its implementation (see annex 14).

14. Outlook third call for proposal

The **JS** presented the overall framework of the 3rd call for proposals (see annex 15). The **JS** underlined the higher demand of projects under TO1. In the context of the 3rd call for proposals this may result in a lack of funding available for good quality projects under this priority axis. The **JS** asked if the **MC** would be ready to consider shifting funds between priority axes.

Decision

- The 3rd call for proposals would be open from 1 March until 30 June 2017.
- All investment priorities would be open (thematic orientation of the call would still be possible).
- All remaining funds would be available within the thematic objectives.



15. AOB

JS presented the timeline / deadlines agreed during the meeting for each point (annex 16).

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