1st Interreg Europe Programming Committee Meeting
11 December 2019

Radisson Blu Royal Hotel
Runeberginkatu 2, Helsinki, Finland

Chaired by: Annukka Mäkinen, Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities

Participants: See Participants' List (Annex 02)

Decision notes: Interreg Europe JS

1.	**Welcome, opening and approval of the agenda**
	Chair welcomed all participants and presented the agenda (Annex 01). **Decision: Agenda is approved.**
2.	**Update on post 2020**
	UK explained that their predominant focus is currently on Brexit and for the time being, there has been little discussion on post-2020. Nevertheless, due to mutual interest, UK is happy to be informed about the discussion about the future. **FI** gave a brief update on the post-2020 negotiations from the Presidency's perspective. Trilogues on Interreg and CPR had taken place the day before the PC meeting, as well as many technical negotiations. Good progress is being made, with close to 70% of the Interreg-regulation covered. Agreement has been reached on the Interreg architecture, including Interreg Europe re-introduced in the plan. On technical level, articles related to geographic coverage, thematic concentration, technical assistance, management and such have already been covered. However, the thematic concentration is still open. The Green Deal could influence policy objectives as well. Moreover, budget still remains open and the overall MFF decision is not likely to be taken during the Finnish Presidency. Questions related to the Component 5 remain open too. Open issues remain also in the context of CPR. **EC** complemented the updates by stressing that the first trilogue confirmed the ETC architecture with Interreg Europe and Urbact back in the picture. The EC is working with the co-legislators to ensure references to the two programmes are included in the regulation.
3.	**Rules of procedure**
	Several exchanges among the Partner States took place on the point 4 about the decision making process and in particular provisions 1, 3 and 6. **Decision:** The final text of the Rules of Procedures was agreed with consensus and annexed to this decision notes (see Annex 03).

4.	**Managing Authority selection procedure**
	The **MA** expressed its interest to continue its role as Managing Authority of the future Interreg Europe programme.
	Discussion: **DE** suggested to extend the deadline for the submission of potential expressions of interest until the end of February as this would provide enough time for other potential candidates. **DE** also asked how potential candidates should express their interests. **The chair** clarified that this should be done by a simple email to **the chair** Annukka Mäkinen (Annukka.Makinen@kuntaliitto.fi).
	No member state expressed any particular interest.
	Decision: DE proposal to postpone the deadline was approved. The new deadline to submit an expression of interest is 29 February 2020.
5.	**Selection of the experts for drafting the Interreg Europe Cooperation Programme 2021-2027**
	The JS shared the first results of the assessment of the two offers received (see Annex 05). The initial idea was to launch a written procedure to approve the assessment of these offers. Since the results of the tender is quite straightforward (only 2 offers received, significant difference in the price, clearer methodology and internal organisation in the offer 2 – CPC), the JS proposed to receive mandate from the PC to approve offer 2 in order to speed up the contracting process.
	Decision: As there was no consensus to give mandate to the JS to approve offer 2 at this stage, the **Chair** proposed to approve the evaluation of the offers as initially envisaged through a written procedure. This proposal was approved.
6.	**Synergies with other programmes from the Strand C / component 4 (ESPON, URBACT, INTERACT, Interreg Europe)**
	JS presented an overview of the synergies and potential cooperation with other pan-European programmes (PEPs). See Annex 06.
	Regarding the keep.eu and good practice database, **JS** explained that there was a difference not only in the beneficiaries (cooperation community on one side and regional development policy makers on the other side) but also in the content: keep.eu is about projects while the PLP database is about (regional development) practices. In the future, an internet portal could indeed be envisaged as a single access to strand C programmes and knowledge databases. Regarding URBACT, the difference is less clear in terms of beneficiaries (in Interreg Europe, there are many cities among the beneficiaries) but remains important when it comes to the approach. Historically, the methodology in the two programmes is different: in Interreg Europe, the interregional element is the starting point of any project (I am involved since I am looking for practices developed in other regions) while in URBACT, the local level and co-creation of solutions with stakeholders is at the heart of projects.
7.	**Core features of the programme (overall objective, scope, operations supported, activities financed)**
	The first part of point 7 was dedicated to discussing 3 core statements for the future programme. The JS started presenting these core features and the framework of the world café group discussion taking place afterwards. See Annex 07.1.

The main conclusions of the group discussion were presented after the coffee break and are also available as Annex 07.2.

Statement 1 - Interreg Europe *(primarily)* **supports exchange of experience activities**
Summary of the world café discussions: there was a unanimity among all groups for this statement. Some Partner States even proposed that the term "primarily" is removed. Other Partner States wanted to be more open to pilot actions already from the start of projects.

Statement 2 - Interreg Europe primarily targets regional development policy makers and public authorities
Summary of the world café discussions: Even if the statement raised more discussion, there was still an overall agreement on the proposed wording. Due to some concerns on the reference to 'public authorities', another possible formulation was also mentioned: **Interreg Europe primarily targets bodies responsible for regional development policies**.

Statement 3 - Improvement of Goal 1 programmes to be encouraged
Summary of the world café discussion: although there was very clear unanimity among all groups for not having strict rules when it comes to Structural Funds, there was still an overall agreement for keeping a kind of link to goal 1 programmes. Proposal to guide less developed regions towards Goal 1 programme.

Following a clarification request, the **Chair** confirmed that no decision were made on any of the three statements. These preliminary discussions are however useful to build the strategy of the future programme.

Component 5 and link with the future programme.
The second part of point 7 was dedicated to the possible complementarities between Component 5 and Interreg Europe.

JS started by presenting the proposal for ensuring synergies between the two programmes. See part 2 of the presentation in Annex 07.1.

JS agreed that an analysis can be provided by next PC.
As a conclusion, the PC will be able to progress on this question of synergies and complementarities only when further details will be known about Component 5.

8.	**Timeline**
	JS presented the updated programming timeline (see Annex 08).
9.	**AOB**
	HR congratulated **FI** for their role as Chair during the Committee as well as for the organisation of the meeting. **HR** is looking forward to the following months and to organise both upcoming events in Brussels and Dubrovnik.
	The **Chair** thanked **HR**. On behalf of the Finnish Presidency, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment of Finland and the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities thanked all participants for the interesting and active discussions.

End of Meeting

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