17th Interreg Europe
Monitoring Committee meeting

Bled, SI – hybrid meeting

15 December 2021

Chaired by: Slovenia (SI)

Participants :   See Participants' List (annex 01).

Decision notes: Interreg Europe JS

1	**Welcome, opening and approval of the agenda, and presentation of new members**
	SI chair opened the meeting, welcomed all participants and introduced the agenda. **SK** suggested to add under point 7 an update on the ERDF commitment rate.
	The new participant of the monitoring committee from **HU** (Csilla Szaloky-Hoffmann) introduced herself.
	Decision: The updated agenda (annex 02) was approved.
2	**Presentation of <u>INTRA</u>, project from Slovenia**
	Ms Amna Potočnik from the Regional Development Agency Podravje-Maribor (SI), lead partner of INTRA project, presented the project's main achievements (annex 03).
	JS asked how the policy responsible organisations were involved in the different regions since they were not direct partners in the project. The lead partner answered that the Managing Authorities were actively involved as members of the stakeholder groups from the start and participated in several exchange of experience meetings. **JS** also asked if the project had suggestions for the future programme. The lead partner replied that Interreg Europe was one of the best programmes they were involved in. Partners appreciated the clear focus on results and qualitative information more than on deliverables. **LU** asked how the partnership had coped with the challenges of the COVID-19 crisis. The lead partner explained that digitalisation was a key element to face the crisis and that many discussions had been organised with the partners during the project.
3	**Update on programme developments**
	JS gave an update on the JS' HR situation (annex 04) and meeting's participation (annex 05).
4	**Update on Communication**
	JS presented the update in communication activities from July to November 2021 and an overview of the plans for communication activities in 2022 (annex 06).
	Discussion:
	RO asked how the future programme events would be linked to the current projects. **JS** clarified that the programme events were always built on existing projects' results. Moreover, the Policy Learning Platform will continue their work and capitalise on the existing knowledge.
	DE asked for clarification about on-demand webinars for project partners and suggested expanding the target group addressed in the campaign PLP on the road.

Some countries (**EL, DE**) wished to have the latest version of the two-page flyer on the new programme as they wish to translate it into their local languages.

JS explained that precise topics for webinars were defined together with the project partners after asking about their needs and wishes, therefore it is on demand. The two-page summary about the new programme will be shared with the NPCs. A note was taken for the campaign PLP on the road.

5	**Update on Policy Learning Platform**

JS and **PLP project manager** gave an overview on the PLP state of play (annexes 7a and 7b), confirming its smooth implementation despite the circumstances. A short promotional video clip presenting the PLP was also shown (annex 7c).

It was also mentioned that the budget overview table shared with the supported documents had to be updated due to small readjustments of the Norwegian and Swiss contributions following the savings shift to the 5th Call. The adjustments were allocated in 2023 and are marked in **Bold**. The updated table is as follows:

	2016 (actual)	2017 (actual)	2018 actual	2019 (actual)	2020 (actual)	2021 (expected)	2022	2023	Total
JS	148,704	142,833	162,398	116,853	117,887	140,000	175,000	190,474	1,194,149
PLP experts	394,046	261,484	894,465	1,389,035	945,560	1,922,508	2,900,000	**1,655,560**	**10,362,658**
Total	542,750	404,317	1,056,863	1,505,888	1,063,447	2,062,508	3,075,000	**1,846,034**	**11,556,807**

Discussion:

PL asked whether partner states are informed on the rejected peer review requests since this information could be useful to help the applicants to rework on a new application. **JS** confirmed that it was the case since, according to the procedure, the MC&NPC representatives of the 'applicant' region are in copy of the 'evaluation' email. All peer review requests as well as the evaluation reports are also available in iDB.

JS also explained that the PLP objective is always to help users to find the answers to their challenges. Therefore, the PLP experts work closely with the applicants before they submit officially their request and, in case the application is weak or unclear, they can request a clarification meeting. If the request cannot meet the minimum requirements, alternative services (e.g., matchmaking session, online discussion) are proposed.

RO asked if there is any calendar/roadmap regarding the 'PLP on the road' campaign. **JS** clarified that there is no specific calendar as this is an upon-demand service. The PLP tries to be present when requested (e.g., contribution to existing meetings, ad-hoc meetings with regional authorities). The **JS** reminded also about the key role of **NPCs** in promoting the PLP services.

Both **RO** and **PL** requested if it would be possible to get an overview on the peer review requests received / carried out / services provided per Country. **JS** confirmed that it is indeed possible to provide statistics per country.

6	**Update on projects**

JS updated the **MC** on the following points related to projects' implementation: changes in running projects, upcoming mid-term review meetings, pilot actions state of play and projects achievements (annex 08).

Discussion:
PL asked whether further information and statistics per country could be provided on the 5th call and approved pilot actions such as number of partners and ERDF committed. **JS** confirmed that further statistics on pilot actions could be prepared for the next MC committee.

7	**Update on finances**
	JS provided an update to **MC** on the annual review on risk management (annex 09)
	Discussion:
	There were no comments on this point.
	JS gave an update on audit matters, closure of accounts and Arachne results to the **MC** (see annex 10a). **JS and MA** informed the **MC** about the mandatory use of the Arachne tool for the 2021-2027 programming period following a request from the EP. The MA summarized its experience with the use of Arachne during the 2014-2020 period from being managing authority of 3 Interreg programmes in a note. It advocates for the ad-hoc use of the tool in Interreg programmes. The note will be shared to the MC (see annex 10b).
	Discussion: There were no comments on this point.
	JS provided an update on the ERDF commitment rate of the programme (see annex 11).
	Discussion: There were no comments on this point.
8	**AOB**
	No point was raised under AOB