

## 2014-2020 19th Interreg Europe Monitoring Committee meeting

**13 December 2022**

**Chaired by:** The Czech Republic (CZ)  
**Participants:** See participants' List (Annex 01).  
**Decision notes:** Interreg Europe JS

### 01 Welcome, opening and approval of the agenda

The **CZ Chair** welcomed the participants and introduced the agenda (Annex 02).

**Decision:**

The agenda was approved unanimously.

### 02 Update on programme developments

**JS** gave an update on the JS' HR situation (Annex 03) and JS participation in meetings.

### 03 Projects experience from City of Prague

**Ms. Eva Lepšová and Mr. Michal Pospisil** from the City of Prague (**CZ**), partner of **STEPHANIE, FINERPOL, INNOTRANS and InnovaSUMP** projects, presented the main achievements (Annex 04).

**Discussion:**

**JS** asked how they became involved, their role in the Operational Programme (OP) and their participation in the Policy Learning Platform activities. Ms Lepšová explained that the former Head of EU Funds department prepared the applications. The City of Prague is also the Managing Authority of the OP. Cooperation allowed to bring different stakeholders to the table and exchange good practices on energy efficiency, SME competitiveness and sustainable transport. The peer review on green bonds provided new ideas on how to finance infrastructure projects included in the Climate Plan. **CZ Chair** asked if anything could be improved and Ms Lepšová suggested a simplification of the programme rules.

### 04 Update on Policy Learning Platform

**JS** presented the updates on the Policy Learning Platform (Annex 05).

**Discussion:**

**IT** asked for a clarification concerning the budget of the **PLP** for 2023, since from the presentation it seemed it has doubled in the last year of the programme. However, **JS** confirmed that the budget

is still the same amount, the discrepancy visible in the table can be explained by a different accountability. It was also indicated that the question concerning the use of the remaining expected budget (EUR 819,028) would be tackled later in the presentation on the TA budget.

**LU** wondered why it was challenging to raise interest in the peer learning activities offered by the **PLP**. **JS** underlined that the **PLP** services introduced a new logic in Interreg programmes. These programmes are normally considered as funding programmes and not as service providers. With the **PLP**, Interreg Europe developed a new approach where beneficiaries do not come for funding but to find a solution to a specific challenge they face. This starts to be successful when looking at the recent trend which shows an increase of peer review requests. In terms of promotion, some new ideas will be tested such as, the reference to **PLP** services in the notification letter sent to non-approved projects. Promotion of the programme in general, and **PLP** services, will also be discussed during the National Point of Contact meeting.

Following a question from **PL**, **JS** confirmed that it is possible that **PLP** experts come on the spot to promote the **PLP** services.

## 05 Summary of evaluation findings

**JS** presented a summary of the evaluation findings (Annex 06).

### Discussion:

In reply to a question from **FI**, **JS** clarified that the objective of this document was just to provide a summary of the evaluations findings as this is a regulatory requirement. The evaluation results and recommendations were presented and discussed in previous MC meetings.

## 06 Risk matrix update

**JS** presented the update of the programme risk matrix (Annex 07).

### Discussion:

**DE** wondered if the risk of “MC decision blocked” should really be identified as a risk. **JS** clarified that for a programme involving 30 countries, the initial risk is that the MC cannot take decisions due to the high number of Partner States, but that thanks to the mitigating measures, such as the MC rules of procedures (voting by majority, possibility to delegate votes in case of absence), the risk is dealt with appropriately. As a result, the risk is in the end scored as a low risk.

## 07 Technical Assistance (TA)

**JS** presented the TA expected expenditure for 2022 and the TA budget for 2023. **JS** also presented the proposal for the financing of the TA 2023 budget (Annex 08).

### Discussion:

In order to reply to a question from **RO**, **JS** explained that the additional TA budget for 2023 was needed to deliver all the activities related to 2014-2020 and 2021-2027 programmes, ie. to continue the monitoring and to close the 2014-2020 programme, to contract and monitor the first call projects and to launch the 2<sup>nd</sup> call and assess the 2<sup>nd</sup> call applications. In addition, the financing proposal objective is to maximize the use of the remaining ERDF funding from the 2014-2020 periods.

Following a comment from **LV** and **EL**, the **JS** modified the presentation to include the correct reference to article 130 (3) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 (consolidated text) which allows for a 15% flexibility at programme closure for any priority, including Technical Assistance.

**JS** explained that the Interreg IVC surplus comes from the difference between the average financing plan co-financing rate of 80% and the actual co-financing rates of 75 and 85% used for the payment of the ERDF to project partners depending on the PS. The average rate resulting from the actual co-financing paid to project partners remained below the 80% rate fixed in the programme. This resulted in the generation of a surplus. After the use of part of this surplus to finance the TA 2023 budget, an amount of EUR 7,2 Million surplus remains available.

To reply to a question from **IT**, **JS** also clarified that the underspending of the Policy Learning Platform budget is spread over the thematic priorities and could therefore be used as well through the shift of funds from thematic priorities to the TA priority at programme closure.

**PL** informed the MC that Interreg Central Europe had proposed a similar financing mechanism and that the EC confirmed that the 6% limit for TA at programme approval can be exceeded during implementation and that the 15% flexibility also applies to the TA priority.

**Decision:**

- The MC approved the TA budget for 2023 and confirmed that all necessary activities related to the 2014-2020 period are sufficiently covered by this budget.
- The MC also agreed that this budget is financed according to the JS proposal (notably through a shift of up to 15% from thematic priorities to the TA priority at the closure of the programme and by using a small part of the Interreg IVC surplus).