

Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme

Application Manual

Part A: What is Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE

Part A

What is Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE

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Table of abbreviations

AF	Application form
BL	Budget line
eMS	Electronic monitoring system
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ETC	European Territorial Cooperation
LA	Lead applicant
LP	Lead partner
MA/JS	Managing authority/joint secretariat
MC	Monitoring committee
NCP	National contact point
PP	Project partner
SO	Specific objective
WP	Work package

I. Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme: An overview

The Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme is funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) under the European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) objective, which supports regional cooperation among central European countries during the programming period 2014-2020.

Key variables of the programme were agreed by the participating Member States following thorough consultations with relevant partners and stakeholders. They are described in detail in the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE cooperation programme document, which was adopted by the European Commission on 16 December 2014. It can be downloaded from www.interreg-central.eu.

In the following sections a brief overview is provided on the programme area, the strategic programme orientation, the programme budget and its management structure. However, the main source of information on several key aspects to be considered when preparing a project proposal remains the cooperation programme document.

II. Programme area

Compared to the 2007-2013 period, the programme area now covers also Croatia while western regions of Ukraine are not included any more.

Covering an area of over 1 million square kilometres the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme is home to about 146 million people. The CENTRAL EUROPE programme area comprises the territory or parts of the territory of nine EU Member States.

In total, the programme area is made up of 76 statistical NUTS 2 regions. The participating countries and regions are listed in the following table.

Table 1 - Countries and regions participating in the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme

Countries and regions	
Austria	Whole country
Croatia	Whole country
Czech Republic	Whole country
Germany	Baden-Württemberg, Bayern, Berlin, Brandenburg, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Sachsen, Sachsen-Anhalt, Thüringen
Hungary	Whole country
Italy	Emilia-Romagna, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Liguria, Lombardia, Piemonte, Provincia Autonoma Bolzano, Provincia Autonoma Trento, Valle d'Aosta, and Veneto
Poland	Whole country
Slovak Republic	Whole country
Slovenia	Whole country

Central Europe is highly heterogeneous in geographical terms (marked by coastal areas, mountain ranges, rural areas, large urban agglomerations etc.) as well as in economic and social terms (exposing the lingering east-west divide). The programme area has a large number of assets but also faces numerous challenges in various fields affecting regional development, which have all been thoroughly analysed before concentrating the programme on four strategic priorities.

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Results expected from the programme will directly contribute to reaching goals of the Europe 2020 strategy.

An in depth analysis of the programme territory as well of its strengths and weaknesses is available in the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE cooperation programme document (cf. sections 1.1.1.2 and 1.1.1.3), which can be downloaded from www.interreg-central.eu.

Figure 1 - Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE programme area



III. Strategic priorities and specific objectives

Projects to be funded will have to address one of the specific objectives of the programme as formulated under each priority axis.

In direct response to the EU 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme has formulated its overall programme objective as:

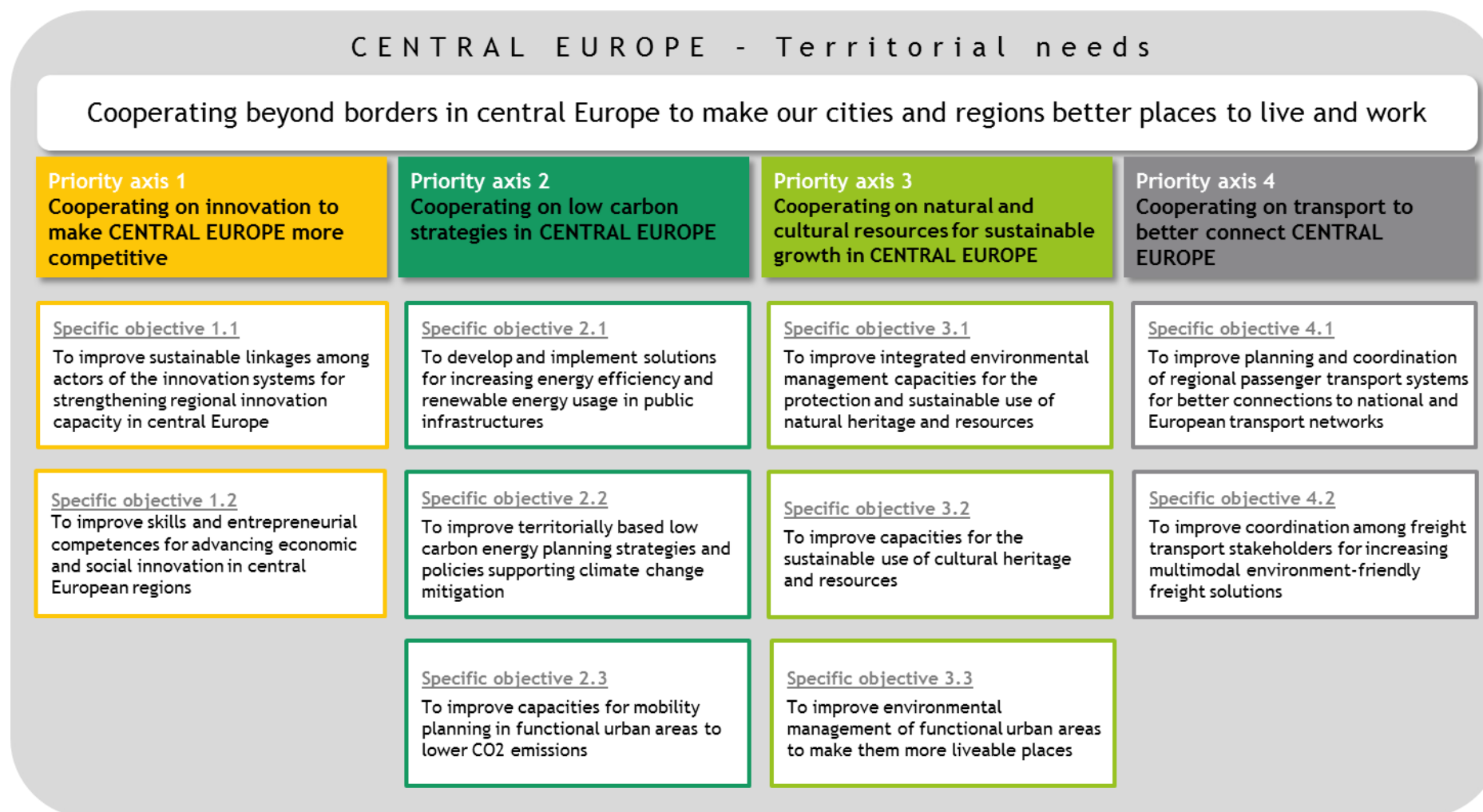
”Cooperating beyond borders in central Europe to make our cities and regions better places to live and work.”

More precisely, transnational cooperation in central Europe is the catalyst for implementing smart solutions answering to regional challenges in the fields of innovation, low-carbon economy, environment, culture and transport. It builds regional capacities following an integrated bottom-up approach involving and coordinating relevant actors from all governance levels.

In doing so, the programme will coordinate with other efforts in the regions including national and regional programmes supported by the European structural and investment funds (ESIF), macro-regional strategies, thematic EU programmes or the European Investment Bank (EIB).

The programme builds on four priorities of particular relevance to central Europe. These are further broken down to specific objectives and respond to the programme area’s challenges and needs or build on opportunities identified in the analysis included in the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE cooperation programme document.

Figure 2 - Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE programme strategy, priority axes and specific objectives



More detailed information on the priority axes and specific objectives of the programme as well as examples of actions to be supported can be found in the cooperation programme document (section 2), available on www.interreg-central.eu and in annex I of this application manual.

Priority axis 1 – “Cooperating on innovation to make CENTRAL EUROPE more competitive”

Under this priority axis, the programme addresses key socio-economic challenges and needs within central Europe in relation to smart growth as defined in the Europe 2020 strategy. The priority aims at more effective investment in research, innovation and education. It will help strengthening potentials of technology-oriented areas that are destinations of foreign investments and capital flows, notably through better linking actors of innovation systems. This will enhance the transfer of research and development (R&D) results and the set-up of cooperative initiatives and clusters. It will also address regional disparities in knowledge and education such as brain drain, and strengthen capacities and competences for entrepreneurship and social innovation, also responding to challenges related to demographic change. The two specific objectives of this priority axis are:

- SO 1.1 To improve sustainable linkages among actors of the innovation systems for strengthening regional innovation capacity in central Europe**
- SO 1.2 To improve skills and entrepreneurial competences for advancing economic and social innovation in central European regions**

Priority axis 2 – “Cooperating on low-carbon strategies in CENTRAL EUROPE”

This priority axis aims at increasing the use of renewable energies and improving energy efficiency while exploiting the economic growth potential of the low-carbon sector. The programme will also contribute to enhancing knowledge and skills with regard to efficient energy management of public infrastructures. The development and implementation of territorially based low-carbon strategies and mobility in functional urban areas will be supported to tackle the challenges central Europe is facing in energy production and consumption. This will also contribute to mitigating climate change. The three specific objectives of this priority axis are:

- SO 2.1 To develop and implement solutions for increasing energy efficiency and renewable energy usage in public infrastructures**
- SO 2.2 To improve territorially based low-carbon energy planning strategies and policies supporting climate change mitigation**
- SO 2.3 To improve capacities for mobility planning in functional urban areas to lower CO2 emissions**

Priority axis 3 – “Cooperating on natural and cultural resources for sustainable growth in CENTRAL EUROPE”

This priority axis responds to the need for protecting and sustainably using natural and cultural heritage and resources, which are subject to increasing environmental and economic pressures as well as usage conflicts. Heritage and resources also constitute valuable assets of central European regions and represent important location factors benefitting regional development. Furthermore, the programme will focus on improving the quality of the environment in functional urban areas. To this aim, key challenges like land use conflicts, air, soil and water pollution or waste management will be addressed. Improvements will directly benefit the quality of life of urban residents. The three specific objectives of this priority axis are:

- SO 3.1 To improve integrated environmental management capacities for the protection and sustainable use of natural heritage and resources**
- SO 3.2 To improve capacities for the sustainable use of cultural heritage and resources**
- SO 3.3 To improve environmental management of functional urban areas to make them more liveable places**

Priority axis 4 – “Cooperating on transport to better connect CENTRAL EUROPE”

Under this priority axis, answers are provided to the core-periphery dichotomy in the programme area. The programme will do so by reducing the gap between peripheral and less accessible regions and the area’s well-connected centres. It will improve connections of regions and cities to the European transport networks and strengthen multi-modal environmentally friendly passenger and freight transport. The two specific objectives of this priority axis are:

- SO 4.1 To improve planning and coordination of regional passenger transport systems for better connections to national and European transport networks**
- SO 4.2 To improve coordination among freight transport stakeholders for increasing multimodal environmentally-friendly freight solutions**

In all specific objectives, specific actions focusing on policy-learning and implementation-oriented approaches at the transnational level will be supported. More concretely, these will include the development and implementation of strategies and action plans, the development, testing and implementation of tools, the preparation of larger investment, the implementation of pilot actions - including pilot investments - as well as capacity building measures including training.

IV. Programme budget

The Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme is financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) supplemented by match funding from projects (national counterpart). The ERDF contribution to the programme amounts to around EUR 246,6 million ERDF.

The overall programme budget including also the national counterpart amounts to around EUR 299 million.

The budget allocation according to priority axes is provided in the table below.

Table 2 - Funds per priority axis

	ERDF budget (EUR)	National (public and private) counterpart (EUR)	Total budget (EUR)	%
Priority axis 1: Cooperating on innovation to make CENTRAL EUROPE more competitive	69.042.711	14.141.278	83.183.989	28%
Priority axis 2: Cooperating on low-carbon strategies in CENTRAL EUROPE	44.384.600	9.090.822	53.475.422	18%
Priority axis 3: Cooperating on natural and cultural resources for sustainable growth in CENTRAL EUROPE	88.769.200	18.181.643	106.950.843	36%
Priority axis 4: Cooperating on transport to better connect CENTRAL EU- ROPE	29.589.733	6.060.548	35.650.281	12%
Priority axis 5¹: Technical assistance	14.794.868	4.931.623	19.726.491	6%
TOTAL	246.581.112	52.405.914	298.987.026	100%

¹ Priority axis 5 (technical assistance) is devoted to the functioning and management of the programme. Funds under this priority axis are not available to projects.

The ERDF co-financing rate varies according to the Members States from which project partners are coming, as presented in the following table.

Table 3 - ERDF Co-financing rates

Member State	Maximum ERDF co-financing rate
Austria Germany Italy	80%
Croatia Czech Republic Hungary Poland Slovakia Slovenia	85%
Others ²	80%

V. Legal framework and programme related documents

The relevant documents listed below or web links to these (non-exhaustive list) are provided on the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE website www.interreg-central.eu.

Relevant programme documents

- ◆ Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Cooperation Programme document (adopted by the European Commission on 16 December 2014)

European Structural and Investment Funds 2014-2020: Key regulations

- ◆ Common provisions regulation (CPR)
Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006

² For further information on the participation of partners from other countries outside the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE cooperation area, please refer to Part B, chapter II.1.2 Partnership requirements and location of partners.

- ◆ ERDF Regulation
Regulation (EU) No 1301/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on the European Regional Development Fund and on specific provisions concerning the Investment for growth and jobs goal and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006
- ◆ ETC Regulation
Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on specific provisions for the support from the European Regional Development Fund to the European territorial cooperation goal
- ◆ EGTC Regulation
Regulation (EU) No 1302/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 amending Regulation (EC) No 1082/2006 on a European grouping of territorial cooperation (EGTC) as regards the clarification, simplification and improvement of the establishment and functioning of such groupings

Strategic framework

- ◆ EUROPE 2020: A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, Communication from the Commission, COM(2010)2020 final
- ◆ Territorial Agenda of the European Union 2020: Towards an Inclusive, Smart and Sustainable Europe of Diverse Regions, Gödöllő, May 2011
- ◆ Sixth Report on Economic, Social and Territorial Cohesion: Investment for jobs and growth. Promoting development and good governance in EU regions and cities, European Commission, July 2014

Macro-regional strategies

- ◆ European Union Strategy for the Danube Region, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - COM(2010) 715 final
- ◆ European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, COM(2009) 248 final
- ◆ European Union Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, COM(2014) 357 final
- ◆ European Council conclusions to elaborate an EU Strategy for the Alpine Region, EU-CO 217/13
- ◆ Report from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions concerning the governance of macro-regional strategies, COM(2014) 284 final

Other programme documents and relevant information

- ◆ CENTRAL EUROPE Programme: Results of the regional analysis (document analysis, online survey, interviews, SWOT), ÖIR/ IGSO PAS, September 2012

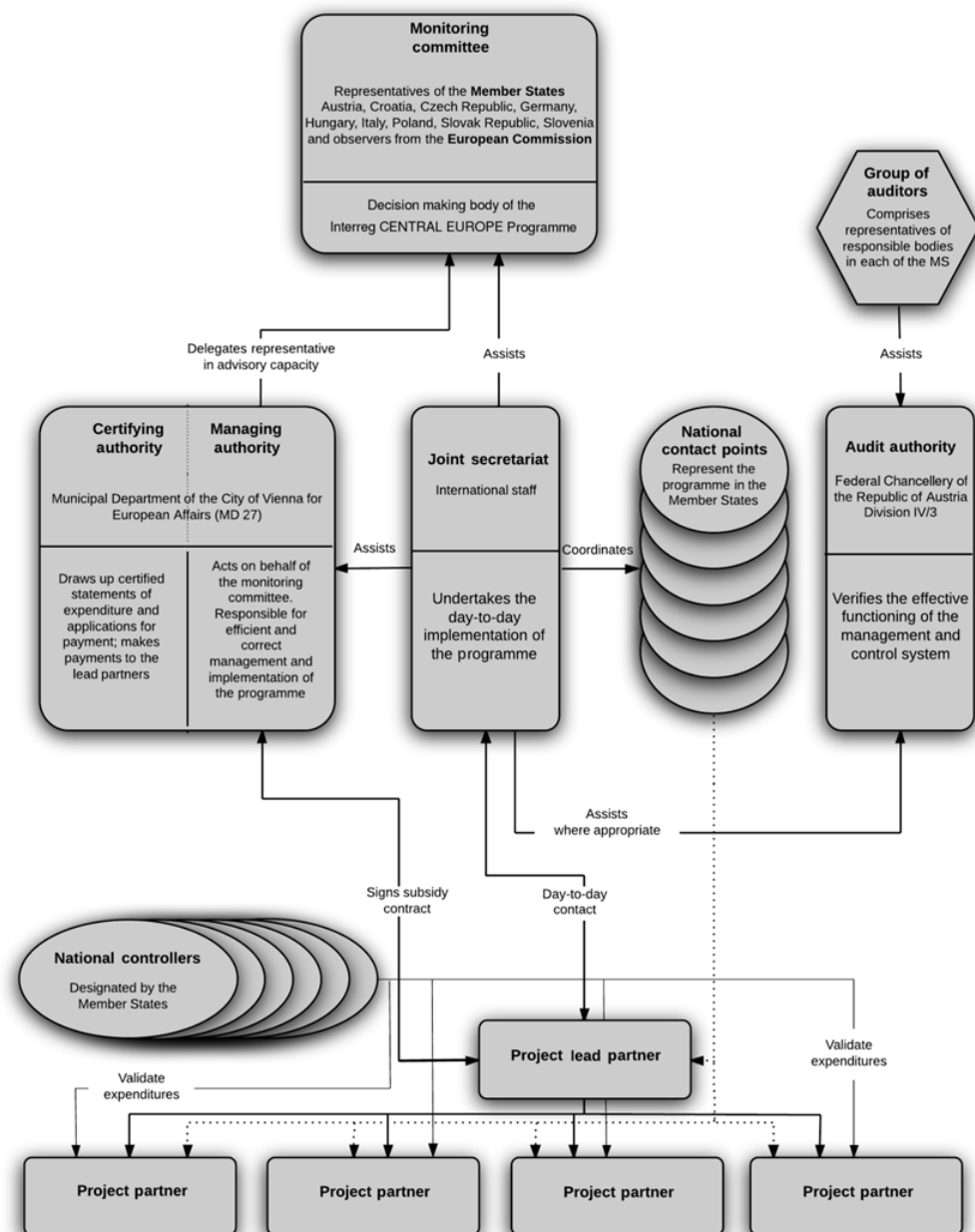
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- ◆ Thematic studies analysing results of CENTRAL EUROPE projects 2007-2013
 - ⇒ Thematic study: Technology transfer and business innovation in the CENTRAL EUROPE Programme, INOVA, July 2013
 - ⇒ Thematic study: Sustainable public transport and logistics in the CENTRAL EUROPE Programme, komobile, April 2013
 - ⇒ Thematic study: Environmental risk management and climate change, REC Hungary, June 2014
 - ⇒ Thematic study: Energy efficiency and renewable energies, greenovate! Europe, April 2014
 - ⇒ Thematic study: Cultural heritage and creative resources in the CENTRAL EUROPE Programme, ERICarts, March 2014
 - ⇒ Thematic study: Demographic change and knowledge development in the CENTRAL EUROPE Programme, Bureau PAU, May 2014
 - ⇒ CENTRAL EUROPE Portraits (Innovation, transport, environment, energy, demographic change, cultural heritage), June 2014
 - ⇒ CENTRAL EUROPE 2007-2013 output library, available at
<http://www.central2013.eu/documents-2007-2013/output-library>
 - ⇒ CENTRAL EUROPE 2007-2013 approved projects, available at
<http://www.central2013.eu/nc/projects-2007-2013/approved-projects/>

VI. Management structure

The Member States participating in the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme have established a shared management system to manage, coordinate and supervise the implementation of the programme (as illustrated in figure 3).

Figure 3 - Programme management structure



Monitoring committee

The monitoring committee steers the programme and ensures the quality and effectiveness of its implementation and approves projects for funding. It is composed of representatives of the Member States of the programme. The list of the monitoring committee members is available on the programme website.

Managing authority (with additional functions of certifying authority)

The managing authority is responsible for the management and implementation of the programme in accordance with the principle of sound financial management and in line with EU regulations ruling the ERDF funds. The managing authority will also carry out the functions of the certifying authority, i.e. certifying statement of expenditure and applications for payment before they are sent to the Commission. It is also responsible for ERDF payments to project lead partners.

Audit authority and group of auditors

The main task of the audit authority is to ensure that audits are carried out on the management and control systems of appropriate sample of projects and on the annual accounts according to internationally accepted audit standards in order to verify the expenditures declared. Audits on projects will be spread during the entire programme lifetime. In line with Article 25(2) of the ETC regulation, the audit authority will be assisted by a group of auditors comprising of representatives of responsible bodies of each Member State participating in the programme.

Joint secretariat

The joint secretariat assists the managing authority and the monitoring committee in carrying out their respective functions and undertakes the day-to-day implementation of the programme. It also provides guidance to project applicants and partners.

Network of national contact points

Member States participating in the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme have established national contact points representing the programme on national, regional and local level. In cooperation with the joint secretariat, the network of contact points provides information to potential applicants, advises and assists project partners, informs stakeholders on achievements of the programme and supports the national and transnational programme management. Contact details of the national contact points are provided at www.interreg-central.eu.

National controllers

In line with Article 125(4) and 125(5) of the CPR as well as Article 23(4) of the ETC Regulation, each Member State has set up a control system making it possible to verify the delivery of the products and services co-financed, the soundness of the expenditure declared and the compliance of such expenditure with EU rules, programme rules and national rules.

For this purpose, each Member State has designated controllers that are responsible for verifying the legality and regularity of the expenditure declared by each lead and project partner participating in a project located on its territory. For detailed information on the control requirements in your country, please visit www.interreg-central.eu.

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I. Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE key principles

I.1 Result-orientation

The result-oriented approach which was already successfully applied in the 2007-2013 period will be continued and further strengthened by the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme. This is reflected in the new programme and project intervention logic.

The Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme fosters changes within the wider programme area, going beyond the regions involved in a project.

Programme intervention logic

The European Union requires programmes of the 2014-2020 funding period to set in place a **result-oriented** intervention logic demonstrating their clear contribution to the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy and to the achievement of economic, social and territorial cohesion.

Programmes are to fund projects which demonstrate the translation of outputs arising from “soft” actions (surveys, studies, etc.) into concrete, visible and sustainable results. Those have to lead to a change (improvement) of the initial situation.

The intervention logic of the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme consists of four priority axes which are broken down into 10 programme specific objectives. For each **specific objective** main **expected results** are defined, which reflect changes that the programme seeks to achieve for the entire programme area through the implementation of projects. Results and related changes are measured through result indicators linked to each programme specific objective.

Outputs are the direct products of supported projects (measured by output indicators), which in turn contribute to results (see part D of this manual: chapters IV.2.3.2 on project focus and IV.2.4.2 on work package description as well as annex III).

An outline of the priority axes and the specific objectives is provided in part A, chapter III on strategic priorities and specific objectives as well as in annex I.

A visualisation of the full programme intervention logic including examples of actions and the linked result and output indicators as well as target groups per priority axis is provided as annex II of this manual.

Project intervention logic

Projects have to strictly apply a result-oriented approach, clearly defining the results (i.e. changes) the project is striving for and linking them with the territorial challenges and needs (see also part C, chapter III on developing the project intervention logic and part D, chapter IV.2.3.2 on project focus).

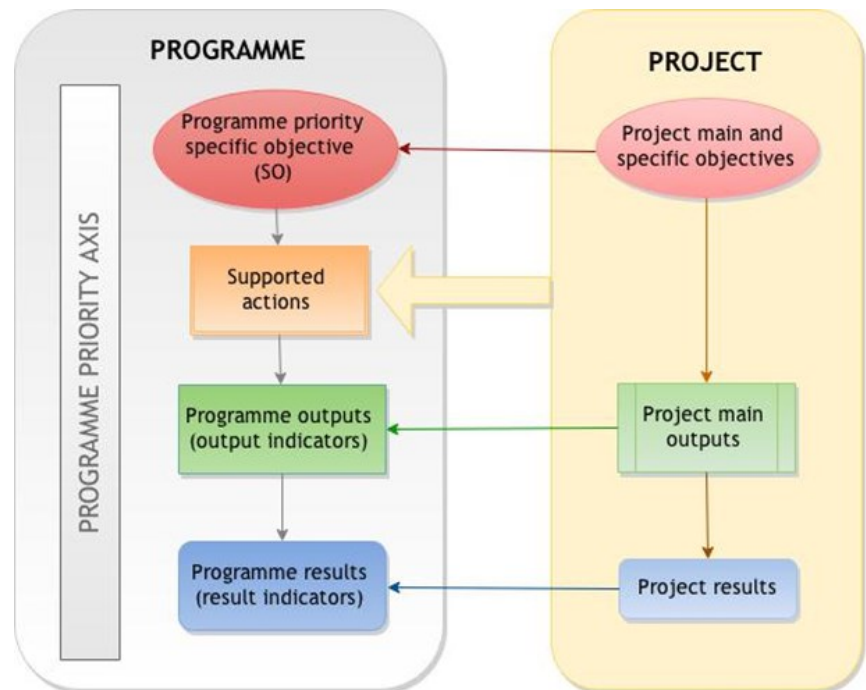
The coherence of the project intervention logic (i.e. the project specific objectives, activities, outputs and expected results) with the targeted specific objective of the programme is a pre-condition for a project to be funded (see also the links between the programme and project intervention logic as presented in figure 1 below).

Projects not showing a clear link to a programme specific objective and/or not contributing to the respective expected programme result will not be supported by the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme.

¹ Including information on “Investment priorities” chosen by the programme from the list defined at EU level. For more information please refer to section 2 of the “Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE cooperation programme”.

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Figure 1- Links between the programme and project intervention logic



Projects require a clear result-oriented approach contributing the attainment of a specific objective of the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme:

- ◆ Project objectives have to clearly target one single programme specific objective within the chosen priority axis.
- ◆ The contribution of the project to the respective programme result (and the related indicator) has to be clearly demonstrated.
- ◆ Project activities and outputs have to be logically linked to the targeted specific objective.

I.2. Transnational and territorial relevance

Transnational and territorial relevance is one of the key quality requirements for a project to be funded. Each project has to clearly contribute to the chosen programme specific objective, addressing development needs and territorial challenges that are shared across the regions participating in the project. This means:

- ◆ The problems identified cannot be solved efficiently by individual regions or countries acting alone. This could be either:
 - ⇒ An issue affecting a clearly defined transnational geographical area across national and regional borders (e.g., river basins, transport corridors etc.), or
 - ⇒ A common issue of interest for which transnational cooperation leads to more innovative and efficient solutions.

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The transnational co-operation character and territorial relevance has to be clearly demonstrated throughout the entire project (including the project approach and work plan).

- ◆ Solutions are jointly developed by organisations in different Member States working together in a project, thereby showing a clear transnational added value going beyond the mere addition of results independently achievable in the involved regions.
- ◆ Projects have to demonstrate an integrated approach to regional development by combining thematic and territorial dimensions.
- ◆ Project outputs should be embedded in a transnational working approach.
- ◆ All partners have to actively participate in the project according to their functions and competences, in order to achieve the collective project results.

Projects are not considered transnational if they just consist of a series of local actions which are linked only through a vague thematic relationship and/or an ex-post exchange of experience among partners without any joint implementation.

Projects that do not address an issue of transnational relevance or covering only issues fundable by regional/national or cross-border programmes will not be supported by the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme. Additionally, project proposals fundable under other European Structural and Investment Funds or other Union instruments (e.g. Horizon 2020, COSME, LIFE, Connecting Europe Facility) will not be supported by the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme.

1.3. Partnership relevance

Partners with relevant competences (thematic expertise, territorial relevance, institutional capacity etc.) for reaching project objectives and results should be included in the partnership.

In order to achieve tangible project results it is essential to involve partners who are most relevant and competent for the development, implementation, communication as well as capitalisation of the planned outputs and results. In this respect, for designing a relevant partnership the thematic competence and expertise, geographical and institutional relevance have to be considered. Depending on the goals of the project this can imply the involvement of different governance levels (national, regional and local authorities) as well as other players such as research institutions, intermediate bodies, agencies, enterprises and many others.

The partnership should reflect the integrated territorial approach to regional development to be set in place by the project, which requires multi-disciplinary and cross-sectoral partnerships.

All partners have to be involved in a way that demonstrates the joint implementation and transnational added value of the project.

The sustainability of project outputs and results (financial, institutional and political) has to be ensured. Sustainability has to be considered already when designing the project and to be integrated in the work plan (e.g. involvement of decision makers, preparation of political decisions, financing models etc.)

Projects supported with in all programme priority axes need to demonstrate that they adopt an innovative approach to tackle the territorial challenges of central Europe.

I.4. Sustainability

Sustainability of project outputs and results is crucial for ensuring territorial impact and long-term benefits which continue after the project end in order to reach the project's overall objectives.

Therefore projects have to ensure that outputs obtained and results achieved are durable and suitable to be continued after project closure. This may include follow-up activities, uptake to the policy level, ownership, financing through other initiatives or funds, leverage of investments, etc.

In order to achieve sustainability, projects need to adopt from the beginning a longer-term, strategic perspective that leads to desired results for the target groups over an extended time frame. In order to achieve such long-term benefits, it is essential to consider needs of key stakeholders as well as the institutional context already when designing the project. In particular, key stakeholders should be actively involved from the early stages of the project development.

A distinction between the following three dimensions of sustainability should be made:

- ◆ Financial sustainability (financing of follow-up activities and investments, leverage of funds, resources for covering future operating and maintenance costs, etc.)
- ◆ Institutional sustainability ("ownership" of project outputs - which structures will allow the results of the project to continue to be in place after the project end? And how?)
- ◆ Political sustainability (what structural impact will the project have? - e.g. will it lead to improved policies, legislation, plans, codes of conduct, methods, etc.?)

I.5. Innovation

Innovation is considered as one of the most important driving forces for regional development and economic wealth. It can be described as a process through which knowledge is created and translated into new products, services or processes of the private and the public sector. Innovation is conceived in a variety of contexts, such as technology, economy, social systems, policy development etc. and can be process-oriented, goal-oriented or context-oriented.

Innovative approaches may result from e.g. the testing and demonstration of novel solutions within different (regional) contexts, experimental piloting of new methods or tools with a view to their future mainstreaming and/or their policy integration as well as from capitalising on previously acquired knowledge etc. An important aspect in this regards is the involvement of relevant actors in the partnership and during project implementation in order to ensure availability of the relevant knowledge and expertise.

All projects supported by the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme have to apply new or innovative approaches going beyond the state of art in the concerned regions and which also can be transferred beyond the partnership.

In addition, the programme supports projects that specifically address the topic of innovation in the framework of regional innovation systems (priority axis 1), thus enhancing the transfer of research and development (R&D) results and improving skills and entrepreneurial competences for economic and social innovation (see part A, chapter III and annex 1 on the description of priority axes and programme specific objectives).

The programme will not support basic research projects or purely academic networking.

I.6. Horizontal principles

A horizontal principle is a principle that must be integrated throughout the programme and in all projects.

Therefore every project approved by the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme is required to contribute to the following horizontal principles.

Environment protection and sustainable development

Sustainable development and environment protection are integrated as horizontal principles in the cooperation programme. Therefore all projects supported by the programme will have to respect the relevant policies and rules.

Project applicants have to describe the contribution to sustainable development, explaining how the sustainability principle is anchored within the project design and planned activities.

Further, applicants have to specify which possible environmental effects (positive, neutral or negative) the project will likely have considering the following aspects: water, soil, air and climate, population and human health, fauna, flora and biodiversity, cultural heritage and landscape. This is of particular relevance in case of pilot investments.

Projects submitted under any priority axis are strongly encouraged to incorporate activities for tackling environmental concerns and reducing their environmental and carbon footprint, for example by:

- ◆ Including environmental criteria in procurement procedures
- ◆ Giving preference to environmentally-friendly mobility options (in particular for short travel distances)
- ◆ Considering online meetings instead of face-to-face meetings where possible
- ◆ Organising conferences and events in a sustainable way (e.g. by combining different meetings in one place, reducing printing and using recyclable materials, using video conference facilities, etc.)
- ◆ Considering resource efficiency and the use of renewable energy at all levels
- ◆ Making use of regional supply chains (reducing supply chain length and CO₂ emissions)

Equal opportunities and non-discrimination

Projects have to ensure that the activities implemented are in line with the principle of equal opportunities and do not generate discrimination of any kind (sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation).

Applicants have to describe the contribution to equal opportunities and non-discrimination, explaining how the equal opportunity principle is anchored within the project design and planned activities.

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Besides actions of projects which explicitly address the reduction of disparities, all projects submitted under any priority axis are encouraged to incorporate measures for promoting equal opportunities and preventing any discrimination, for example by actively tackling concerns of demographic change and inequality. Projects are also encouraged to integrate the principle of barrier-free accessibility at all levels, with a special focus on physical investments.

Equality between men and women

Projects have to ensure that the activities implemented are in line with the principle of equality between men and women and do not generate discrimination of any kind.

Applicants have to describe the contribution to this principle, explaining how the equality principle is anchored in the project design and planned activities.

Projects submitted under any priority axis are encouraged to incorporate measures for integrating the gender perspective, for example by integrating equal participation of women and men and/or actively promoting gender mainstreaming.

II. Basic project requirements

II.1 Partnership

II.1.1 Definition of partners

Partners participating in projects and receiving funding from the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme shall be the following:

- A. National, regional and local public bodies (including EGTCs in the meaning of Article 2(16) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013);
- B. Private institutions, including private companies, having legal personality;
- C. International organisations acting under the national law of any CENTRAL EUROPE Member State or, with restrictions, under international law (see below for details).

In the framework of the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme, the so-called “public equivalent bodies”, i.e. bodies governed by public law as defined in Article 2(1) of Directive 2014/24/EU on public procurement are eligible partners under category A. “national, regional and local public bodies”. Please note that such bodies have to fulfil all the following characteristics in order to be considered as eligible partners:

1. They are established for the specific purpose of meeting needs in the general interest, not having an industrial or commercial character;
2. They have legal personality; and
3. They are financed, for the most part, by the State, regional or local authorities, or by other bodies governed by public law; or are subject to management supervision by those authorities or bodies; or have an administrative, managerial or supervisory board, more than half of whose members are appointed by the State, regional or local authorities, or by other bodies governed by public law.

Partners should bear in mind that the absence of advance payments and the time gap between incurring the expenditure and having it reimbursed may lead to cash-flow problems. This might be particularly relevant for private institutions.

Private institutions acting as lead partners must comply with minimum criteria of financial capacity, as described in part D, chapter V.2.b.

ATTENTION

Please note that bodies whose main scope of activities within their business profile, as well as their project role, consists of project coordination, management, communication, knowledge management or other activities that are of a mere executive or supporting character (service providers) cannot be involved as project partners. Compliance with this requirement will be checked during the quality assessment of project proposals which, on a case by case basis, could lead even to the exclusion of such partners.

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International organisations acting under international law can participate in projects only upon their explicit acceptance of all requirements deriving from the Treaty² and the regulations applicable in the framework of the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme, including - but not limited to - the following:

- ◆ Adherence to applicable community policies, including the respect of rules on public procurement;
- ◆ Acceptance of the national control requirements set in the framework of the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme by the Member State in which the organisation acting as partner is located;
- ◆ Acceptance of controls and audits by all those bodies entitled to carry out such controls in the framework of the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme, including the managing authority and joint secretariat, the audit authority and the European Court of Auditors as well as the relevant national authorities of the Member State in which the international organisation acting as project partner is located. Storage of all documents required for these controls must allow performing them in the geographical area covered by the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme;
- ◆ Final financial liability for all sums wrongly paid out.

A project proposal involving international organisations acting under international law in the partnership must include an ad-hoc declaration to be signed by these institutions (step 2 of the first call). For reasons of legal security additional legal information or the signature of direct bilateral agreements between the MA and these institutions may be requested prior to granting the funds.

II.1.2 Partnership requirements and location of partners

Size of the partnership

As a minimum requirement the partnership must involve:

- ◆ at least three financing partners
- ◆ from at least three countries and
- ◆ with at least two of the partners located in Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE regions.

The size of the partnership should reflect the scope of the project and remain manageable. Therefore, the recommended maximum size of a partnership should not exceed 12 partners. Larger partnerships are possible but need to be duly justified according to the specific project scope.

Geographical location of partners

As a basic principle, the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme supports cooperation between project partners located in the programme area.

Partners outside the programme area can exceptionally participate if any of the conditions below apply:

Assimilated partners:

German and/or Italian national public authorities/bodies located outside the programme area which:

- ◆ are competent in their scope of action for certain parts of the eligible area (e.g. ministries);
- ◆ carry out activities which are for the benefit of the regions in the programme area.

² Treaty for the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), available on <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:12012E/TXT>.

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EU partners outside the CENTRAL EUROPE programme area³ (20 % geographical flexibility rule):

Organisations located outside the programme area but inside the European Union can become project partners (co-financed by the ERDF) only in exceptional and duly justified cases. This means that their participation needs to bring clear added value and expertise to the implementation of a project and has to be of benefit for the CENTRAL EUROPE programme area. The ERDF allocated to a single project for such partners together with the ERDF spent outside the programme area (as provided for in chapter II.2) **cannot exceed 20 % of the total ERDF contribution to this project.**

Institutions located in EU regions outside the programme area can only act as project partners. Lead partners must compulsorily be located in the programme area or meet the requirements of “assimilated partners” as mentioned above. Participation of EU-partners in project proposals is open to all EU regions, under all four priority axes and irrespective of the legal status of the partners. Nevertheless, should the activities to be carried out by partners located in EU regions outside the programme area be considered as **state aid relevant**, the participation of these partners will finally not be allowed due to the impossibility for the programme monitoring committee to validate the result of the state aid assessment on behalf of a Member State not participating in the programme.

Please note that, in case of project approval, the effective participation of partners from EU regions outside the programme area is subject to the condition that the Member States where they are located sign an agreement with the managing authority on the acceptance of all implementing provisions included in the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme document (section V)⁴. Due to this, the reimbursement of costs occurred by such partners **may be delayed.**

Third country partners:

Participation in projects is open to institutions coming from any third country. However, partners from non-EU countries will not receive ERDF funding from the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme but could act as associated partners.

³ For provisions on the implementation of project activities in regions outside the programme area, please refer to chapter II.2.

⁴ This includes the acceptance of setting in place, in accordance with Article 23(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013, of a national control system for the validation of expenditure respecting the requirements applicable to the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme.

II. 1.3 Lead partner principle and requirements

The “lead partner principle” applies to the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme, in compliance with Article 13 of Regulation (EU) 1299/2013. This means that each partnership appoints one organisation to act as lead partner. The lead partner takes full financial and legal responsibility for the implementation of the entire project.

Lead partner organisations can be public bodies, private institutions or international organisations acting under national law. On the contrary, international organisations acting under international law are only eligible as partners and they cannot act as lead partners. The lead partner must be located in the programme area or meet the requirements of “assimilated partners” (see previous chapter II.1.2).

After approval of a project by the monitoring committee, the lead partner will sign a subsidy contract with the managing authority (City of Vienna, Austria) and kick-off the project implementation. During the implementation phase, the main task of the lead partner is the coordination of the project with sound financial and project management. In addition, the lead partner should maintain a good communication flow among the partnership and ensure an efficient exchange of information that enables the successful delivery of the project outputs. The lead partner is also responsible for communication with the programme bodies, especially the managing authority and the joint secretariat.

The responsibilities of the lead partner are defined in the subsidy contract. The lead partner has to lay down the arrangements with all other partners in a written agreement (partnership agreement). The models of subsidy contract and partnership agreement will be made available on www.interreg-central.eu indicatively when launching step 2 of the first call for proposals⁵.

ATTENTION

Private lead applicants have to comply with obligatory financial capacity requirements detailed in part D, chapter V.2 of the application manual. Since these requirements will be checked by the programme only within step 2 of the call and since the lead applicant cannot change between step 1 and step 2 of the call, proposal submitted by private lead applicants not meeting the necessary financial capacity criteria will be rejected in step 2 even if selected within step 1 of the call. Private lead applicants should therefore carefully check their ability to fulfil the applicable financial capacity criteria before submitting their application in step 1 of the call.

Before signing the subsidy contract private lead partners will be asked to provide proof that a valid financial guarantee, issued by a primary financial institution (bank, insurance), is in force (see part D chapter V.5).

II. 1.4 Associated partners

Institutions willing to be involved in the project without financially contributing to it are to be considered as associated partners. Such associated partners do not account for the fulfilment of minimum the partnership requirements and they may come also from third countries.

Expenditure incurred by these bodies might be borne by any of the financing project partners in compliance with the applicable eligibility rules.

In any case, the involvement of associated institutions must not conflict with public procurement rules. Therefore, expenditure incurred by these bodies should in principle be limited to reimbursement of travel and accommodation costs related to their participation in the project meetings.

⁵ Applicants might consider also to consult, for information purposes, the template of subsidy contract used within the CENTRAL EUROPE 2007-2013 Programme, available on www.central2013.eu/central-projects/implementing-a-project/necessary-documents/model-contracts/#c379.

II. 2. Location of activities

In line with the requirements for the geographical location of partners, and as a basic principle, the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme supports project activities taking place in the programme area.

This principle applies both to lead partners and partners located in the programme area as well as German and Italian “assimilated partners” (as defined in chapter II.1.2). For the latter, core thematic activities must be implemented in the regions of the programme area, with the exception of the necessary management activities.

All other activities implemented by the lead partners and partners of the CENTRAL EUROPE programme area in EU regions outside the programme area or in third countries - including the participation in missions, study visits and events - can be accepted only in exceptional and duly justified cases. The following requirements must be respected:

- ◆ They are for the benefit of the regions of the programme area;
- ◆ They are essential for the implementation of the project;
- ◆ They are explicitly foreseen in the application form or, if not, have been previously authorised by the MA/JS.

Costs related to such activities must be incurred by a lead partner or partner located in the programme area. Please note that provisions in this chapter do not have to be confused with those concerning institutions located in EU regions outside the programme area participating in projects under the geographical flexibility rule for partnerships. For these specific provisions are defined in chapter II.1.2.

II.3. Types of activities supported by the programme

The Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme supports project activities which put emphasis on policy support and/or practical implementation of explorative and/or pilot activities. Within a single project both types of activities (policy support and practical implementation) can be combined. However, projects can also set a specific focus (i.e. pure policy support or implementation projects).

In any case, projects should also foresee capitalisation and communication activities (i.e. making the results available and transfer them to a wider audience) in order to roll-out and mainstream the achieved results.

The types of activities are linked with the typology of outputs as applied by the programme which is further described in part D, chapter IV.2.4.2 and annex III (including examples of outputs per priority axis and programme specific objective).

Policy support related activities

Activities related to policy support should consider the development, effectiveness and coherence of policies of a certain thematic sector in the countries and regions concerned by the project. This should activate a mutual learning process among the project partners, with the aim to create new policies and/or improve existing ones leading to their concrete adoption or implementation. Respective activities could include analytical and research tasks as well as strategy and action plan development in the relevant thematic fields.

EXAMPLE

Project activities could consolidate knowledge and experience of various cities leading to the preparation and implementation of climate change mitigation plans for urban areas. This could result in cooperation agreements of concerned authorities and other stakeholders.

Implementation-oriented activities

Implementation-oriented activities should focus on the practical implementation of knowledge and jointly (transnationally) developed novel approaches/tools in a certain thematic sector. They can be physical or technical objects, but also methods, concepts or services, e.g. analytical tools, management tools, technical tools, software tools, monitoring tools, decision support tools etc. To be effective, tools have to be tailored to user needs and the respective framework conditions.

The development of tools can be followed by their practical implementation through pilot actions. A pilot action should have the following characteristics:

- ◆ Experimental or demonstration character, i.e. testing, evaluating and/or demonstrating the feasibility and effectiveness of a scheme (e.g. services, tools, methods or approaches). Therefore it covers either the testing of innovative solutions or demonstrating the application of existing solutions to a certain territory/sector.
- ◆ Limited in its scope (area, duration, scale etc.) being unprecedented in a comparable environment.
- ◆ Results and practices of pilot actions should be jointly exploited and transferred to other institutions and territories.

EXAMPLE

Project activities could address the development of business support tools for SMEs which are subsequently applied and tested in various business sectors.

Pilot actions can include pilot investments that represent small-scale interventions which contribute to the successful implementation of a pilot action thereby demonstrating the feasibility and effectiveness of a scheme (e.g. services, tools, methods or approaches) or investment.

A pilot investment must have a demonstrating/model or pilot character and show a clear transnational effect being jointly strived for and evaluated by the partnership. Such successful demonstration is supposed to pave the way for subsequent large-scale investments within the regions participating in the project and beyond.

Pilot investments can cover infrastructure and works (e.g. setting up ex-novo of a building or adapting existing infrastructure) as well as thematic equipment linked to the project activities (e.g. air quality monitoring equipment) - see chapter II.7.3 on budget line specifications.

In addition to the characteristics applicable to pilot actions (as stated above), pilot investments have to comply with the following requirements:

- ◆ Clear transnational effect and added value;
- ◆ Clear contribution to project objectives and expected results;
- ◆ Clear benefit for target groups;

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- ◆ Mutual learning of the whole partnership and transfer of experience to other stakeholders and regions, the transnational transfer of results should form part of the project;
- ◆ Durability of investment (e.g. maintenance, financing) to be ensured after project end (for 5 years following the final payment to the beneficiary);
- ◆ Ownership of investment, to be retained with the responsible partner⁶. If an investment consists of unmovable items, also the related investment site needs to be owned by and remain in the ownership of the respective partner;
- ◆ Where applicable, it should be demonstrated that necessary authorisations by competent national/regional/local authorities (building permission) are already available or can be timely obtained therefore not hampering the realisation of the investment and therefore the overall project implementation;
- ◆ Compliance with environmental policies and legislation (see chapter I.6 on horizontal principles).

EXAMPLE

A pilot investment could consist of small-scale renovations of public buildings in order to demonstrate the technical and economic feasibility of novel energy saving technologies and approaches.

Projects can include **training activities** (e.g. training seminars, study visits, peer reviews, online training courses etc.) as a supporting measure for improving the understanding, knowledge, skills, competences and access to information of targeted stakeholders. Trainings should be jointly developed at transnational level and tailored according to the needs of the specific territories and target groups.

Capitalisation activities

Projects should include activities to capitalise on the achieved results aiming at their roll out into broader policies, strategies, action plans, thereby contributing also to the preparation of large scale investments and/or leverage of funds. Capitalisation activities should also focus on the widening up of the audience/target groups of existing project results and/or the raising of ownership and awareness of relevant stakeholders.

⁶ In line with provisions of Article 71 of Regulation (EU) No. 1303/2013.

II. 4. Project size and funding

It is recommended that projects should have a total budget ranging from 1 to 5 million EUR. In exceptional cases, smaller or larger projects can be supported.

In any case, partners should ensure that the financial size of the project truly reflects the activities foreseen in the work plan and that it is based on the principles of sound financial management.

II.5. Duration

The recommended project duration is 30 to 36 months. However, if justified by the project scope and the planned activities a longer implementation period up to maximum 48 months could be acceptable.

II.6. Co-financing

The Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme is financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). According to the location of lead partners and project partners the following ERDF co-financing rates apply:

Table 4 - Co-financing rates

Member State	Maximum ERDF co-financing rate
Austria Germany Italy	80%
Croatia Czech Republic Hungary Poland Slovakia Slovenia	85%
Outside Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE programme area but inside the EU	80%
Outside the EU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No ERDF co-financing • Participation with own funds

ERDF contribution to project lead partners and partners might be reduced following the application of state aid rules. For further information in this regard please see chapter II.7.7.

The share of expenditure not covered by ERDF shall be guaranteed by each project lead partner and partner by means of national co-financing, which can be provided as follows:

- A. **Public co-financing** - public funding at national, regional or local level, obtained via specific co-financing schemes set up by the Member States or provided directly with own funds by the partners having a public status. Co-financing of international organisations also falls under this category.
- B. **Private co-financing** - the amount of own funds provided as match funding by private institutions.

The contribution of each lead partner and project partner, be it a public or private institution, must be confirmed by the lead partner or partner declaration (the latter has to be provided in step 2 of the application procedure).

II.7. Financial requirements

This chapter gives a brief outline of the main financial requirements applicants have to consider when developing their project proposals. Further information on financial matters will be given in the control and audit section of the programme implementation manual which will be made available for download on www.interreg-central.eu before launching step 2 of the call. **Applicants invited to prepare proposals within step 2 of the call are strongly advised to consult this document.**

Further guidance on how to develop a sound project budget can be found in part C, chapter VII, of this manual.

II.7.1. Hierarchy of rules on eligibility

Three levels of rules apply to the eligibility of expenditure in the framework of all Interreg programmes, including Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE :

1. **EU rules:** Due to the fact that the programme is co-financed from the ERDF, all general rules concerning eligibility of expenditure regarding the structural funds are applicable. This includes:
 - ◆ Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 (Financial regulation) providing the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union;
 - ◆ Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 (Common provisions regulation) where Articles 6 and 65 to 71 give specific provisions on applicable law as well as on eligibility of expenditure;
 - ◆ Regulation (EU) No 1301/2013 (ERDF regulation) where article 3 gives specific provisions on the eligibility of activities under the ERDF;
 - ◆ Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013 (ETC regulation) where Articles 18 to 20 give specific provisions on eligibility of expenditure applicable to programmes of the European Territorial Cooperation goal;
 - ◆ Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 481/2014 containing specific rules on eligibility of expenditure for cooperation programmes.

Please note that, in line with Article 6 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, all applicable EU and national rules, apart from eligibility rules, are on a higher hierarchical level than the rules set by the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme and they must be obeyed (e.g. public procurement law).

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2. **Programme rules:** namely additional rules on eligibility of expenditure for the co operation programme as a whole, as outlined in the control and audit section of the programme implementation manual.
3. **National (including institutional) eligibility rules:** which apply for matters not covered by eligibility rules laid down in the abovementioned EU and programme rules.

II.7.2. General eligibility requirements

As provided under chapter 7 of the Financial Regulation (Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012) the principle of sound financial management builds on the following three principles:

The principle of economy requires that the resources used by the beneficiary in the pursuit of its activities shall be made available in due time, in appropriate quantity and quality and at the best price;

The principle of efficiency concerns the best relationship between resources employed and results achieved;

The principle of effectiveness concerns the attainment of the specific objectives set and the achievement of the intended results.

As a general principle, expenditure is eligible for funding when fulfilling all of the following **general eligibility requirements**:

- ◆ It relates to the costs of implementing a project as submitted by the lead applicant and approved by the monitoring committee;
- ◆ It relates to items that did not receive support from other EU Funds as it would result in **double funding**;
- ◆ It is essential for the implementation of the project and it would not be incurred if the project is not carried out;
- ◆ It complies with the principle of real costs except for costs calculated as flat rates and lump sums;
- ◆ It complies with the principle of sound financial management (see tip box);
- ◆ It has been incurred and paid by a beneficiary for actions as defined in the latest approved application form;
- ◆ It is registered in the beneficiary's accounts through a separate accounting system or an adequate accounting code set in place specifically for the project;
- ◆ It is not in contradiction with any specific eligibility criterion applicable to the respective budget line (as described in the following chapter II.7.3);
- ◆ When applicable, the relevant public procurement rules have been observed;
- ◆ It has been validated by an authorised national controller⁷.

ATTENTION

Please note that costs which are not eligible according to the applicable eligibility rules cannot be claimed, even if included in the approved application form.

Time-wise, expenditure is eligible according to the following periods:

- A. Costs for the implementation of an approved project are eligible from its start date until its end date as set in the subsidy contract. At the earliest, costs are eligible as from the day after the submission of the full application form, provided that this day is the official start date of the project as indicated in the application form. On this basis, partners may decide at their own risk to start the implementation of the project even before the monitoring committee decision for funding.
- B. Costs for project closure (e.g. preparation of the last progress report, final report and costs for control of expenditure) are eligible, and must be paid until the deadline for submission of the final report (i.e. three months after project end).

⁷ National controller is the body or person verifying at national level that the co-financed products and services have been delivered, that the related expenditure has been paid and that it complies with the applicable EU, programme and national/internal rules. For more information on the national controllers in your country please refer to the "country-specific information" section on www.interreg-central.eu

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Please note that preparation costs (including costs for contracting) are covered by a lump sum, therefore they do not refer to expenditure actually incurred by the applicants when preparing their proposals. For further information please refer to chapter II.7.4.

With regard to **non-eligible expenditure**, provisions are given in the following chapter “Budget lines specification”. Nevertheless, the following expenditure should be considered as not eligible in all cases:

- ◆ In-kind contributions, as defined in Article 69(1) of regulation (EU) No. 1303/2013;
- ◆ Fines, financial penalties and expenditure on legal disputes and litigation;
- ◆ Costs of gifts, except those not exceeding EUR 50,00 per gift where related to project promotion, communication, publicity or information;
- ◆ Costs related to fluctuation of foreign exchange rate;
- ◆ Interest on debt;
- ◆ Purchase of land;
- ◆ Recoverable VAT except where it is non-recoverable under national VAT legislation;
- ◆ Charges for national financial transactions;
- ◆ Costs for alcoholic beverages;
- ◆ Fees between beneficiaries of a same project for services, equipment and work carried out within the project.

II.7.3. Budget lines specification

Project budgets must be structured according to the following budget lines:

1. Staff costs
2. Office and administrative expenditure
3. Travel and accommodation costs
4. External expertise and services costs
5. Equipment expenditure
6. Infrastructure and works expenditure

These budget lines apply to all work packages, excluding the management and communication work packages where budget line 6 is not applicable. Specification of investments included in the work plan (see part D, chapter IV.2.4.2) should specifically describe items foreseen under budget lines 5 and 6.

This information is intended to help partners to properly allocate costs to each budget line. More details as well as guidance on how to report these costs is provided in the control and audit section of the programme implementation manual, expected to be published when launching step 2 of the first call.

BL1. Staff costs

This budget line refers to the costs of staff employed by the beneficiary institution (lead partner or project partner) for implementing the project. Staff can either be already employed by the beneficiary or contracted specifically for the project. Staff costs can be reimbursed according to the following options:

- A. Real costs; or
- B. Flat rate up to 20 % of direct costs other than staff costs⁸.

Each beneficiary must choose one of these reimbursement options in the full application form submitted within step 2 of the call. The same reimbursement option will apply to all staff members of the beneficiary institution working on the project and it will be set for the entire project duration. **The chosen option cannot be changed during project contracting or implementation.**

For staff costs reimbursed on a real cost basis, expenditure included under this budget line is limited to:

- A. **Salary payments** fixed in an employment document (employment contract or appointment decision) or by law relating to responsibilities specified in the job description of the staff member concerned. Salary payments have to relate to activities which the beneficiary would not carry out if the project concerned was not undertaken. Payments to natural persons working for the beneficiary under a contract other than an employment/work contract may be assimilated to salary payments and such costs are eligible if:
 - ◆ the person works under the beneficiary's instructions and, unless otherwise agreed with the beneficiary, on the beneficiary's premises;
 - ◆ the result of the work carried out belongs to the beneficiary;
 - ◆ the costs are not significantly different from those for personnel performing similar tasks under an employment contract with the beneficiary.
- B. **Any other costs directly linked to salary payments** incurred and paid by the employer (such as employment taxes and social security including pensions) as covered by Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 provided that they are:
 - ◆ Fixed in an employment document or by law;
 - ◆ In accordance with the legislation referred to in the employment document and with standard practices in the country and/or institution where the individual staff member is working;
 - ◆ Not recoverable by the employer.

Unjustified ad-hoc salary increases or bonuses for project purposes are not eligible.

BL2. Office and administrative expenditure

Office and administrative expenditure covers operating and administrative expenses occurred by the beneficiary and necessary for the implementation of the project.

Eligible cost items under this budget line are (exhaustive list):

- a. Office rent;
- b. Insurance and taxes related to the buildings where the staff is located and to the equipment of the office (e.g. fire, theft insurances);

⁸ Namely costs under all budget lines except "staff costs" (BL1) and "office and administrative expenditure" (BL2).

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- c. Utilities (e.g. electricity, heating, water);
- d. Office supplies;
- e. General accounting provided inside the beneficiary organisation;
- f. Archives;
- g. Maintenance, cleaning and repairs;
- h. Security;
- i. IT systems (operating/administrative IT services of general nature, linked to the implementation of the project);
- j. Communication (e.g. telephone, fax, internet, postal services, business cards);
- k. Bank charges for opening and administering the account or accounts where the implementation of the project requires a separate account to be opened;
- l. Charges for transnational financial transactions.

Office and administrative expenditure shall be reimbursed by the programme according to a flat rate of **15 % of eligible staff costs**. **Direct costs falling under this budget line are not eligible**.

BL3. Travel and accommodation costs

Costs under this budget line refer to the expenditure on travel and accommodation of the staff of the beneficiary for missions necessary for the implementation of the project (e.g. participation in project meetings, project site visits, meetings with the programme bodies, seminars, conferences, etc.). Eligible cost items under this budget line are (exhaustive list):

- a. Travel costs (e.g. tickets, car mileage);
- b. Costs of meals;
- c. Accommodation costs;
- d. Visa costs;
- e. Daily allowances.

Any cost item listed in points a) to d) which is covered by a daily allowance shall not be reimbursed in addition to the daily allowance.

Travel and accommodation costs occurred outside the programme area are eligible only if they accomplish with requirements provided in Article 20(2) of Regulation (EU) No. 1299/2013 and Article 5 of Regulation (EU) No. 481/2014. Furthermore, travel and accommodation costs outside the programme area are eligible only if they are indicated in the approved application form or they have been authorised by the MA/JS prior to the travel. For more information on the location of project activities please refer also to chapter II.2.

Travel and accommodation costs of external experts and service providers can be reimbursed only under the external expertise and services budget line. The same applies to travel and accommodation costs occurred by institutions acting as “associated partners”.

BL4. External expertise and services costs

Costs under this budget line refer to external expertise and services provided by a public or private body or a natural person outside of the beneficiary organisation. The external experts and service providers are sub-contracted to carry out certain tasks or activities which are essential for the implementation of the project (e.g. studies and surveys, translation, promotion and communication, services related to meetings and events). External expertise and services costs are paid on the basis of contracts or written agreements and against invoices or requests for reimbursement. Eligible cost items under this budget line are (exhaustive list):

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- a. Studies or surveys (e.g. evaluations, strategies, concept notes, design plans, handbooks);
- b. Training (e.g. venue and trainers);
- c. Translations;
- d. IT systems and website development, modifications and updates (e.g. setting-up and/or update of a project IT system or website);
- e. Promotion, communication, publicity or information;
- f. Financial management;
- g. Services related to the organisation and implementation of events or meetings (including rent, catering or interpretation);
- h. Participation in events (e.g. registration fees);
- i. Legal consultancy and notarial services, technical and financial expertise, other consultancy and accountancy services;
- j. Intellectual property rights;
- k. Verification and validation of expenditure carried out by authorized national controllers;
- l. Provision of guarantees by a bank or other financial institution where required by the programme;
- m. Travel and accommodation for external experts, speakers, chairpersons of meetings and service providers;
- n. Other specific expertise and services needed for the project.

External expertise and services have to be duly specified in the full application form (step 2) by describing at least the nature and quantity of the expertise/service, the link to the relevant deliverable or output as listed in the work plan and the related budget of the concerned project partner.

Eligibility of costs for external expertise and services is subject to the full respect of EU, programme and national (including institutional) public procurement rules (please refer to chapter II.7.7 in this regard) and must comply with the basic principles of transparency, non-discrimination and equal treatment.

Costs referring to project-related tasks sub-contracted by the beneficiary to in-house bodies, as well as costs referring to cooperation between public bodies, are eligible as long as they are charged on a real costs basis - thus without any profit margin - and they comply with the applicable public procurement provisions.

Even if the programme does not set ceilings for this budget line, the share of external expertise **should not exceed 50 % of the total eligible budget** as beneficiaries of a project should be the actual implementers of the project. Higher shares are possible but must be duly justified.

BL5. Equipment expenditure

Costs under this budget line refer to equipment purchased, rented or leased by a beneficiary which is essential for the implementation of the project. This includes costs of equipment already in possession of the beneficiary organisation and used to carry out project activities. Eligible cost items under this budget line are (exhaustive list):

- a. Office equipment;
- b. IT hardware and software;
- c. Furniture and fittings;
- d. Laboratory equipment;
- e. Machines and instruments,

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- f. Tools or devices;
- g. Vehicles;
- h. Other specific equipment needed for the project.

When drafting the proposal, the above equipment items shall be categorised within the following two categories:

1. **Equipment for general (office) use** as computers, office furniture, etc. which is necessary for the implementation of the project and which is used for project purposes only. Equipment for general (office) use **shall be reimbursed as depreciable asset** in compliance with national accounting rules and internal accounting policies of the beneficiary. The full cost of such equipment is eligible **solely** in the case that the depreciation period is shorter than the time lap between the purchase of the equipment and the end of the project.
2. **Thematic equipment** directly linked to (or forming part of) the project thematic activities, which will be used for the project implementation by beneficiaries and target groups in line with the project objectives. Thematic equipment must be in line with the programme requirements for investments (as in chapter II.3) in order to be regarded as eligible. Thematic equipment **can be reimbursed in full**⁹.

All equipment items have to be duly specified in the full application form in step 2 by describing at least the nature and quantity of the equipment to be purchased, the link with the relevant deliverable or output as listed in the work plan and the related budget of the concerned project partner. During project implementation, purchase of any equipment not explicitly mentioned in the application form will have to be subject to prior approval by the MA/JS.

Eligibility of costs for equipment is subject to the full respect of EU, programme and national (including institutional) public procurement rules and must comply with the basic principles of transparency, non-discrimination and equal treatment.

Moreover, equipment items listed in the application form are only eligible:

- ◆ If they have not already been financed by other EU grants
- ◆ If they have not already been depreciated
- ◆ If they are not already included as indirect costs under the office and administration budget line

“Thematic equipment” for which the exclusive use in the project cannot be demonstrated shall be charged pro-rata on the basis of a transparent method set in place by the beneficiary for allocating the share of its use in the project. Opposite, “equipment for general (office) use” for which the exclusive use in the project cannot be demonstrated shall be considered as not eligible.

BL6. Infrastructure and works expenditure

Article 2(1) of the Directive 2014/24/EU defines a “work” as “*the outcome of building or civil engineering works taken as a whole which is sufficient in itself to fulfil an economic or technical function*”.

Expenditure for works¹⁰ refers to costs incurred by the beneficiary for the execution of an infrastructure which is essential for the implementation of the project.

Works expenditure may refer either to an object (e.g. a building) that will be set up ex-novo or to the adaptation of an already existing infrastructure. Whatever the case, these costs are only eligible if in line with the programme requirements for investments as provided for in chapter II.3.

Works expenditure shall be limited to elements listed in **annex II of the directive mentioned in the tip box.**

⁹ I.e. outside depreciation schemes if in line with national accountability rules and internal accountability policies of the beneficiary.

¹⁰ In the sense of the definition of ‘work’ provided for in Article 2(1) of the Directive 2014/24/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26.02.2014.

Part B

What projects we are looking for

Costs of feasibility studies, environmental impact assessments, architectural/engineering activities and any other expertise needed for the realisation of the infrastructure and not comprised in the aforementioned Directive shall be allocated under “Staff” or “External expertise and services” cost categories (depending whether carried out internally by the beneficiary or with the support of external suppliers respectively).

Infrastructure and works items have to be duly specified in the full application form in step 2 to allow for a detailed presentation and evaluation of costs by describing at least the nature and quantity of each item foreseen, the link with the relevant output as listed in the work plan and the related budget of the concerned partner. The implementation of infrastructure and works not explicitly mentioned in the application form has to be subject to prior approval by the competent programme bodies.

Costs for infrastructure and works outside the CENTRAL EUROPE programme area are not eligible.

Eligibility of costs for infrastructure and works is subject to the full respect of EU, programme and national (including institutional) public procurement rules. They must also comply with the basic principles of transparency, non-discrimination and equal treatment.

Furthermore, and depending on the nature of the intervention linked to the works to be carried out, the eligibility of costs for infrastructure and works is subject to the following:

- ◆ Fulfilment of all compulsory requirements set by Community and national legislation on environmental policies
- ◆ Fulfilment of all EU compulsory requirements on publicity
- ◆ Where applicable, availability of authorisations by competent national/regional/local authorities (building permission)

Infrastructure and works expenditure cannot refer to items financed by other EU grants and must not be already depreciated. In the case of works being part of a larger infrastructural investment, the part realised by the project must be clearly and univocally identifiable.

II.7.4. Preparation costs

Approved projects which successfully signed the subsidy contract with the MA are entitled to receive reimbursement of their preparation costs in the form of a lump-sum. The reimbursement of these costs will follow the principles detailed below:

- ◆ The lump sum will amount to **EUR 15.000** of total eligible expenditure per project
- ◆ The lump sum covers all costs linked to the preparation and/or contracting¹¹ of the project
- ◆ The co-financing rate of the preparation costs will be in line with the co-financing rate applicable to the partner to which the lump sum is allocated. Accordingly, the lump sum of ERDF reimbursement payable to the concerned partners will be automatically calculated by the electronic monitoring system (eMS).

In order to apply for the reimbursement of preparation costs, the preparation costs budget must be indicated in the full application form (step 2), giving information on the amount allocated to the concerned project partner(s) (for further information please see part D, chapter IV.2.5).

The partnership decides which partners will receive what share of the reimbursement of preparation costs. Even a single partner might advocate the entire lump-sum. It is strongly recommended to achieve a joint agreement within the partnership on the distribution of preparation costs reflecting the actual preparation activities carried out by the partners.

¹¹ In the project contracting phase the partnership is often requested to revise its application forms following conditions for approval set by the monitoring committee. This might also include a meeting with the MA/JS in Vienna. For further information on contracting please refer to part D, chapter V.5.

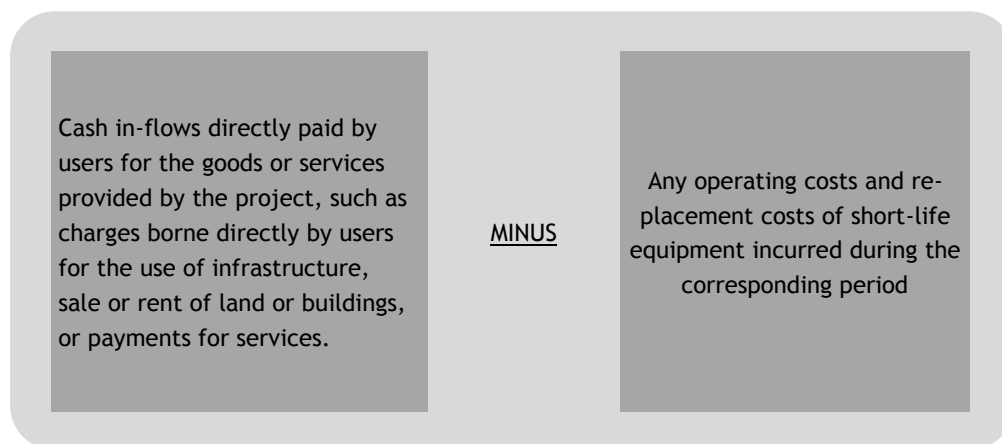
After the signature of the subsidy contract the lump-sum will be automatically transferred to the bank account of the lead partner. It is then the lead partner's responsibility to transfer the agreed share of the lump-sum to the respective project partners.

Any difference between the granted lump-sum and the real costs occurred for preparation is neither checked nor further monitored by the programme.

II.7.5. Revenues

As a general principle¹², eligible expenditure of a project (and consequently the ERDF contribution to it) shall be reduced according to the net revenue generated by the project both during its implementation as well as until three years after its completion.

Net revenues are:



Please note that operating cost-savings generated by the project shall be treated as net revenue unless they are offset by an equal reduction in operating subsidies.

In case of revenue-generating projects, applicants are to calculate the expected net revenues following the method described under Articles 15 to 19 of the Delegated Regulation (EU) No 480/2014.

Expected net revenues are to be indicated in the full application form (step 2) in order to offset the corresponding ERDF contribution. Applicants shall not indicate expected net revenues in the application form in the following cases:

- ♦ If the total budget of the project does not exceed EUR 1.000.000¹³;
- ♦ If the specific project output generating net revenue is state aid relevant (for further information on state aid please refer to chapter II.7.7).

¹² In accordance with Articles 61 and 65(8) of Regulation (EU) 1303/2013.

¹³ Please note that even if a project below EUR 1.000.000 total budget is exempted to include the forecast of expected net revenues in the application form, such project - in case of approval - must record and deduct from the ERDF contribution net revenues generated during implementation or after closure.

II.7.6. Conversion into Euro

The project budget must be developed in Euro and, in case of approval, reporting of project expenditure to the MA/JS shall be made solely in Euro.

Expenditure incurred in a currency other than the Euro shall be converted into Euro using the monthly accounting exchange rate of the European Commission in the month during which that expenditure was submitted for verification by the concerned partner to its national controller¹⁴.

II.7.7. Other financial requirements

Even if detailed information on financial requirements related to project implementation will be provided in control and audit section of the programme implementation manual, key principles explained in this chapter must be kept in mind by applicants when preparing their project proposals.

Compliance with EU policies and other rules

Public procurement

The acquisition by means of a public contract of works, supplies or services from economic operators is subject to rules on public procurement. Such rules aim at securing transparent and fair conditions for competing on the common market and shall be followed by the beneficiaries when procuring the above mentioned services, works or supplies on the market.

Rules differ depending on the kind of goods and/or services to be purchased, as well as the value of the purchase and the legal status of the awarding institution. They are set at the following levels:

1. EU rules as set by the applicable directives on the matter¹⁵
2. National rules¹⁶
3. Programme rules

It is strongly recommended to become familiar with applicable procurement rules and, if necessary, seek the advice of procurement experts early enough before launching an award procedure.

Please note that, differing from the hierarchy of rules concerning the eligibility of expenditure (see chapter II.7.1), in case of public procurement all applicable EU and national rules are on a higher hierarchical level than the rules set by the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme and they must be obeyed.

With regard specifically to **programme rules**, in order to guarantee a harmonised standard in contracting procedures across Member States and to accomplish sound financial management principle (as mentioned in chapter II.7.2), the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme requires from beneficiaries to give evidence of adequate market searches for contracting amounts comprised between **EUR 5,000,00** (excl. VAT) and the threshold set by the applicable EU or national rules. This means that in such cases, **unless stricter national or internal rules apply**, beneficiaries must **perform and document the execution of adequate market searches** (e.g. through collecting bids, using centralised e-procurement services). This is meant to provide a sound knowledge and sufficient information on the relevant market allowing for a sound comparison of offers in terms of price and/or quality and a profound assessment of the adequacy of the price to be paid.

¹⁴ Please note that the Euro conversion method presented in this chapter is not in line with the method indicated in chapter 5.5 of the document “Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Cooperation Programme”, which will be updated in spring 2015 aligning its chapter 5.5. with provisions on Euro conversion as in this manual

¹⁵ More information on EU rules on public procurement can be found at the following link: http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/publicprocurement/index_en.htm

¹⁶ National rules include laws on public procurement, related delegated or implementing acts or any other generally applicable legally binding rules and decisions.

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Lead partners and project partners are recommended to carefully define their legal status and thoroughly analyse the legal terms of the mentioned Directives on public procurement with regard to their applicability.

The adequacy of costs must always be ensured and demonstrated. For contracts having a value below 5.000 Euro (excl. VAT), however, beneficiaries do not have to give evidence of a specific selection procedure conducted unless stricter national rules apply.

Public authorities and other institutions falling under the scope of application of the procurement laws¹⁷ must comply with the applicable rules on public procurement.

Institutions not falling under the scope of application of the public procurement laws (e.g. private companies for most procurement activities as defined under the “classical directive”¹⁸) are exempt from the application of public procurement laws. Notwithstanding this, such institutions **have to observe the basic principles on which the procurement norms are based and ensure the best value for money or, if appropriate, the lowest price.** Please check national rules and guidelines in this respect. The Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme has developed specific procedures to be followed by such institutions when procuring works, supplies or services. These are laid down in the control and audit section of the programme implementation manual (expected to be published when launching step 2 of the first call for proposals).

State aid

Public support granted by the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme must comply with state aid rules applicable at the point of time when the public support is granted. According to Article 107 (ex Article 87) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, state aid is defined as “*any aid granted by a Member State or through State resources in any form whatsoever which distorts or threatens to distort competition by favouring certain undertakings or the production of certain goods*”, therefore affecting trade between Member States.

In practical terms, state aid applies when **all five criteria** listed below are met:

1. The recipient of the aid is an “**undertaking**”, i.e. an entity engaged in an economic activity in the context of the proposed project. Any project partner offering good or services on a market in the context of the proposed project is an undertaking. This is the case regardless of its legal status and whether its aim is to make profit or not. An undertaking can be an SME, a large company, a public body, a charity, an NGO, an association, a university, etc.
2. The aid **comes from the State**, which is always the case for any Interreg programme.
3. The aid gives **an economic advantage** (a benefit) which an undertaking would not have obtained under normal market conditions.
4. The aid is **selectively** favouring certain undertakings or the production of certain goods.
5. The aid **distorts** or threatens to distort competition and trade within the European Union.

In the framework of the first call for proposals, **public support given by the programme to undertakings will be granted under the *de minimis* rule¹⁹**. This implies that undertakings will receive grants from the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme **only if they have not received public aid under the *de minimis* rule totalling more than EUR 200.000 within three fiscal years from the date of granting the aid.** This ceiling is reduced to EUR 100.000 in the road transport sector while other sectors as agriculture, aquaculture and fisheries have lower ceilings. Public aid considered for the applicable *de minimis* ceiling comprises all aids granted by the national, regional or local authorities, regardless of whether the resources are provided from domestic sources or are partly financed by the European Union. However, this will not affect the possibility of an undertaking to receive public support under other state aid schemes.

¹⁷ Namely “contracting authorities” within the meaning of Directive 2004/18/EC or “contracting entities” within the meaning of Directive 2004/17/EC as further amended.

¹⁸ More information on EU rules on public procurement can be found under: http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/publicprocurement/index_en.htm

¹⁹ As provided in Regulation (EU) No 1407/2013 on *de minimis* aid.

Part B

What projects we are looking for

As a consequence undertakings (i.e. not only private companies but also public authorities, NGOs etc.) carrying out state aid relevant activities in the project might receive limitations on the public contribution to their budgets.

EXAMPLE

A private company located in Austria and acting in the IT sector has applied for funding in an Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE project. The total budget of this company in the project is EUR 250.000, out of which EUR 100.000 refers to a specific project activity which will give an economic advantage to the company (production of a new IT tool which will be ready to be sold on the market). The company will co-finance its project budget through own resources.

This company also received a national grant of EUR 150.000 under the de minimis rule in the year before applying for funding through the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme.

According to the de minimis limitation of up to EUR 200.000 in three fiscal years, the aid granted by the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme will be calculated as follows:

ERDF contribution to non-state aid relevant project activities = EUR 120.000 (80 % of EUR 150.000)

ERDF contribution to state aid relevant project activities = EUR 50.000 (80 % of EUR 100.000 = EUR 80.000 minus EUR 30.000. The reduction by EUR 30.000 follows the reaching of the de minimis ceiling of EUR 200.000)

Total ERDF contribution granted by the programme to the company = EUR 170.000 (68 %).

Applications submitted within step 2 of the call will undergo a specific “state aid assessment” (as mentioned in part D, chapter V.2.e) focusing on the five criteria listed above, with particular attention to the assessment of the status of “undertaking” of project lead partners and project partners (criterion 1 above) and of the materialisation of an economic advantage for the undertaking (criterion 3 above). This assessment will be based on information included in the full application form as well as on self-declarations provided by applicants within step 2 of the first call.

Further information on state aid can be found on the European Commission’s DG Competition website (http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/overview/index_en.html) where also a comprehensive guideline on the notion of state aid²⁰ will be soon made available. Applicants may also consult relevant national authorities to obtain more specific information on rules and limitations concerning state aid.

Information and communication

Responsibilities of lead partners and project partners related to information and communication measures (including a set of instructions for project communication and branding) are laid down in Articles 115-117 and annex XII of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 as well as in Articles 4-5 of the Implementing Regulation (EU) No 821/2014. In addition to these, specific programme requirements also apply. Please note that all these rules do not only apply to promotional material but are also relevant for the organisation of meetings and events and, if foreseen by the project, the purchase of physical objects and the realisation of works.

More details as well as guidance on information and communication requirements will be provided in the control and audit section of the programme implementation manual, expected to be published when launching step 2 of the first call for proposals.

²⁰ A draft version available at the time of writing can be accessed at http://ec.europa.eu/competition/consultations/2014_state_aid_notion/draft_guidance_en.pdf

Part B

What projects we are looking for

Shared costs

The practice of splitting cost items among project partners (i.e. sharing of common costs) is not allowed in the framework of the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme. Accordingly, the budget allocated to a project partner shall fully reflect the activities actually implemented by that partner.

Applicants are strongly advised to carefully plan the budget allocation to reporting periods within step 2 of the first call for proposals (see part D, chapter IV.2.5), by realistically reflecting the actual spending capacity of the project as well as the time needed for paying out costs incurred. For further information on this please consult part C, chapter VII.

Financial performance and decommitment of funds

In order to be considered as eligible, expenditure must have been actually paid out following verification by national controllers. Financial performance of projects will be measured exclusively on the basis of paid out expenditure.

It is to be kept in mind that programmes may get funds decommitted by the European Commission²¹ in case that allocations set in the financial tables of the Cooperation programme are not translated into effective requests for payment to the European Commission within the set timeframe. Should this loss of funds result from projects lagging behind their payment targets based on the spending forecast included in the approved application form (as further explained in part D, chapter IV.2.5), the programme might have to reduce the ERDF contribution to these projects. This would occur in the framework of the mid-term review carried out by the MA/JS (as further explained in part C, chapter V).

²¹ As provided for in Article 136 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013.

Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme

Application Manual

Part C: How to develop a good project

Part C

How to develop a good project

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Annexes

I. Introduction

The preparation of a project application is a challenging process, especially in an international cooperation context. It usually starts off with a first project idea which is then further developed through the inputs of future project partners and according to programme guidance. It is therefore recommended to follow the structure of the application form in order to see which information is expected and not to miss out on any relevant topics.

The following chapters aim at helping you in preparing your application form. The “How to get started” chapter gives you practical hints for advancing from the initial project idea to a successful application. The subsequent chapters guide you through the workflow from the project idea to the application ready for submission (as illustrated in the figure below).

Figure 1 - Project development: from a project idea to the application



Achievements of CENTRAL EUROPE 2007-2013 projects are summarised in six thematic studies covering the topics of innovation, transport, environment, energy, demographic change and cultural resources. They are published on the programme website at www.central2013.eu/studies. It is strongly recommended to get familiar with achievements of past projects in your thematic field.

II. How to get started

When you have a project idea:

- ◆ First of all read carefully all parts and chapters of this manual.
- ◆ Verify whether the idea clearly contributes to the chosen programme specific objective and whether transnational cooperation brings real added value to solving/advancing the issue addressed. Consider whether other EU programmes could better fit your project idea.
- ◆ Check whether the programme requirements, such as the partnership requirements, location of partners, location of activities etc., can be fulfilled with your project idea (see also part B, chapter II).

Part C

How to develop a good project

Become a member of the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Community by registering through the programme website. Joining the community allows you to get access to:

➔ Contact details of potential lead applicants that posted their project idea

➔ Search function for potential partners according to themes and territories

➔ Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE newflash with the latest transnational news

- ◆ Have a look at past projects of CENTRAL EUROPE and other EU programmes (other territorial cooperation programmes, LIFE+, Intelligent Energy Europe, 7th Research Framework Programme, etc.). This will help you to get an idea of which types of activities have been funded within the CENTRAL EUROPE Programme and which results are already available on which further build your project. In any case, duplication of previous activities and outputs has to be avoided.
- ◆ Check-out project ideas already posted on the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE website in order to get an idea of which projects are already under preparation or search for partners in your thematic field and find potential synergies.
- ◆ Get in contact with the national contact point of your country which will give you first-hand information on the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme and support you in identifying potential partners.
- ◆ Exchange with potential partners in order to further develop the project idea and start building the partnership. Keep in mind that the project idea needs to remain sufficiently open for further development and inputs of partners (e.g. experience, competence, regional challenges and needs) in order to ensure benefits to the whole partnership, contributing to its commitment and ownership of future results. Focus your search on relevant and competent partners (for more information see also chapter IV).
- ◆ Early agree within the partnership on who will be the lead applicant. This institution will be steering the further development of the project idea and will prepare the project application. In case of approval, this institution will be responsible for the whole project implementation. Keep in mind that the lead applicant cannot change between steps 1 and 2 (see part D, chapter I in this regard). The lead applicant should be an institution having sound experience and capacity in managing EU projects. Please note that, once a project proposal is approved for funding and contracted, the lead applicant becomes the project lead partner.
- ◆ Use the opportunity of an individual consultation with the joint secretariat of the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme in order to get initial feedback on the project idea and hints you should consider when preparing the application.

When turning the project idea into a project application:

- ◆ Set a limited number of specific objectives for your project (not more than three). They must be specific and relevant for the programme and the involved regions, and ambitious while still being realistic to be reached within the timeframe of the project. Keep in mind that these objectives need to be clearly defined and that their achievement within the project duration will need to be demonstrated (for more information see also chapter III).
- ◆ Transnational activities should bring a clear advantage to all project partners. The created added value should clearly activate synergies going even beyond the project partnership: just summing up local and/or regional actions is therefore not sufficient for a project to be successful.
- ◆ Keep in mind that your project needs to be innovative. Previous achievements and already available knowledge should be used and valorised. Please see the tip box on CENTRAL EUROPE thematic studies.
- ◆ Plan the resources (human and financial) for the project carefully. Keep in mind that:

⇒ Programme working language is English

Part C

How to develop a good project

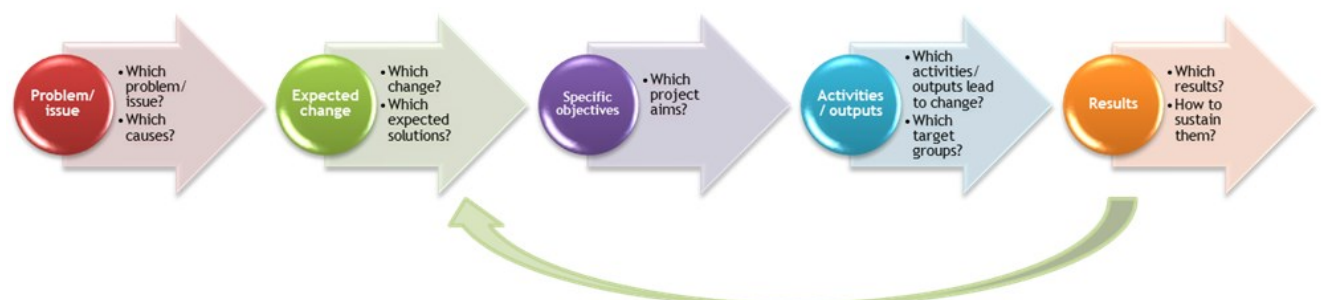
- ⇒ Enough staff should be available already at the project start date and during the entire project duration (both at the lead partner and partner institutions)
- ⇒ No pre-financing is provided. Reporting is done on a six-monthly basis and retroactive reimbursement of approved co-financing takes place some months after the end of a respective reporting period (for more information see also chapter VII)
- ◆ Plan an **effective project management structure** with clear decision making procedures. This will support a good information flow and coordination within the partnership and is the basis for smooth implementation of the project. Remember that quality control and reporting are also important parts of project management with direct influence on the quality of reports - and consequently the time for ERDF reimbursement (for more information see also chapter V).
- ◆ Design project **communication** in line with specific project objectives. Start planning communication objectives, audiences, approaches and activities already in the project development phase. When designing your communication bear in mind that communication objectives are intrinsically linked to project objectives. Ask yourself how communication can help reaching a project objective. Relevant communication often goes beyond mere publicity and dissemination (for more information see also chapter VI).
- ◆ Think about the **sustainability** and uptake of your project results. Keep in mind that transnational cooperation projects often have a seeding function: they are supposed to kick-off further developments (e.g. a larger investment) and improvements (e.g. an improved policy). The uptake of results, the deployment at a larger scale and/or the mainstreaming is a crucial success factor to be already considered during project development. Communication also plays an important role in achieving sustainability.
- ◆ Ensure **ownership of results** by foreseeing the direct involvement of concerned target groups and stakeholders.

III. Developing the project intervention logic: from problem to solution (theory of change)

The **theory of change** should be at the heart of each Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE project¹.

Projects have to develop an intervention logic taking into account the attempted change as the basis for result-orientation. The project intervention logic will have to show how a desired change will be achieved. It should thus reflect the current situation (e.g. a problem), its underlying causes and the change which the project seeks to achieve by implementing the planned activities. It also needs to indicate what has to happen in order to trigger the change. The following figure illustrates the process and includes related basic questions to be addressed.

Figure 2 - How to develop the project intervention logic



¹ The “theory of change” is defined as “the description of the sequence of events that is expected to lead to a particular desired outcome” (Davies, 2012).

Part C

How to develop a good project

Project development should start from describing the initial situation, i.e. the problem and/or issue to be addressed. Project partners should then think about what they want to achieve and define expected outcomes and results. These envisaged results have to reflect the desired change and need to be translated into specific project objectives.

After the intervention logic is set in place (starting from the initial situation and ending with the envisaged change), preconditions, activities and outputs necessary to reach the objectives and results need to be defined.

Please distinguish between following types of project objectives:

Project main objective describes the general (strategic) and long-term change which the project seeks to support for the benefit of its target group(s). Usually a project sets only one main project objective which is further broken down into:

- ➔ Project specific objectives which describe the specific and immediate effects of the project and can be realistically achieved within the project life time. Usually a project defines not more than three specific project objectives.

In order to be funded, the project's intervention logic must be coherent with the targeted specific objective of the programme (see also part B, chapter I.1 providing detailed information on the required links between the programme and the project intervention logic).

When developing the intervention logic the following questions on expected results (i.e. the change the project is aiming for) should be addressed:

- ◆ What is the issue or problem that you want to address?
- ◆ What do you see as the underlying causes of the issue or problem?
- ◆ Which change do you want to achieve? What would a solution to the issue/problem look like?
- ◆ Who would benefit?
- ◆ How can the project influence the situation? Which activities and outputs are needed?
- ◆ How can you measure the change caused by the project?

Please note that only activities directly contributing to the set objectives and expected results can be supported by the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme.

Practical steps for defining the project intervention logic in the application form are provided in part D, chapter IV.2.3.2.

IV. Setting up a relevant project partnership

Having relevant and competent partners on board is essential for both setting up and successfully implementing a transnational cooperation project.

- ◆ In the project development phase: the continuous input of all partners from the beginning ensures the commitment and the joint ownership of the project idea and the project application.
- ◆ In the project implementation phase: the active participation of all partners ensures a transnational approach which builds on existing knowledge in different regions. This enables them to tackle shared issues together and helps them to go beyond the adding up of single outputs. The contributions of all partners are necessary to reach the project objectives and expected results.

The main points to be kept in mind when setting up a sound partnership are explained below.

What is required from the lead applicant/lead partner?

The lead applicant (institution) is responsible for coordinating and driving the partnership from the project idea until the finalisation of the project application. The lead applicant formally submits the application and is thus responsible for contents and commitments expressed in the application form as well as for responsibilities arising in case of funding (for the latter please see part B, chapter II.1.3). Therefore, the lead applicant should be an institution experienced in the management of projects supported by EU funds. The commitment of the lead applicant is even more important as no change of lead applicant is allowed between steps 1 and 2 of the application procedure (see part D, chapter I).

The lead partner takes the role of the “engine” of the partnership, coordinating the work of the partners and being also the link between the project and the programme (MA/JS).

Once the project is approved for funding, the lead applicant becomes the lead partner and, therefore, the contractual counterpart of the programme (signing the subsidy contract with the managing authority). Following the lead partner principle, the lead partner is responsible for ensuring sound management and successful implementation of the entire project (for further details on the lead partner principle see also chapter V as well as part B, chapter II.1.3 on the general requirements).

As a consequence the lead applicant/lead partner institution should, at least, have the following profile (most skills are also applicable to project partners):

- ◆ Experienced in the management of EU funded projects
- ◆ Prepared to take a leading and driving role within the partnership
- ◆ Having sufficient capacity (institutional, financial and human resources) to prepare the project application and to manage the implementation of the project
- ◆ Having the thematic knowledge and expertise relevant for the project
- ◆ Being committed to the project throughout the entire project application and implementation phases

What should a partnership look like?

The quality of a project depends largely on an integrated composition of its partnership. A good partnership should pool all skills and competences of relevant institutions necessary to address the issues tackled by the project in order to achieve the set objectives.

When building a partnership, the following general aspects should be taken into account:

- ◆ Focus your partnership on institutions relevant for reaching the project results (e.g. thematically, geographically, level of governance).
- ◆ Involve as project partners only institutions whose interests are closely linked to the project objectives and planned interventions. They should also have the capacity to create strong links to target groups addressed by the project.
- ◆ Apply a result-oriented approach by involving institutions who are supposed to realise and subsequently implement the project outputs and results. Ensure that they have the required competences (e.g. involve environmental authorities if you work on the development of environmental policies).

Part C

How to develop a good project

Even if the programme does not request it, lead applicants are recommended to set up a basic agreement with project partners already in step 1 of the application process (e.g. through letters of commitment). This will help to ensure continuity, as there are only limited changes within the partnership allowed between both steps of the application phase (see part D, chapter I).

- ◆ Ensure a balanced partnership in terms of number of institutions involved per country. Distribution of project activities and responsibilities as well as related budgets should be also adequately balanced.
- ◆ Ensure that decision makers (e.g. ministries) are either directly included in the partnership or can be effectively reached by the project partners.
- ◆ Where necessary, involve expert organisations (e.g. universities, research institutions) as a source of knowledge.
- ◆ Keep the partnership size manageable (recommended maximum of 8 - 12 partners). Having a broad partnership should not be the goal when preparing a project.
- ◆ Ensure the commitment of all partners from the very beginning. In the application phase only limited partner changes are allowed between the step 1 and 2 of the call (see section part D, chapter I). In the implementation phase partner changes are to be regarded as exceptional cases, posing a risk factor to the entire project.
- ◆ Institutions from outside the programme area should only be involved in exceptional and well justified cases. Their involvement should bring a clear benefit to the programme area and add value to the partnership.

Multilevel governance

Decision making competences are often shared by actors at different governance levels. Vertical integration (i.e. involvement of institutions representing various levels of administration like national, regional and local levels) is therefore expected to help reaching the intended structural change as well as policy improvement and implementation. It is recommended to:

- ◆ Create linkages (institutional, financial or informational) between the various levels of the governance system in a country/region;
- ◆ Explore a mix of horizontal and vertical cooperation approaches for tackling the challenges in the project.

The partnership needs to be tailored to challenges, objectives and results defined by the project. Two possible approaches (among others) which have proven to be effective for building a partnership are:

- ◆ Triple and quadruple helix approach, which requires the horizontal integration of competences from various sectors (research, public and business sectors and civil society). This approach is most fitting when for example new solutions, strategies and services are developed by the private sector, supported by public authorities with expertise coming from research.
- ◆ Combined vertical and horizontal cooperation, which brings together different governance levels in a Member State or region while, at the same time, involving similar types of institutions located in different countries. This allows creating multiple cooperation layers and therefore adding value to the project and its outcomes (see also below multilevel governance).

Please note that procurement rules need to be strictly followed when selecting and sub-contracting providers of external expertise.

Complementary external expertise

Due to the nature and complexity of issues addressed by transnational projects it may not always be possible to cover all required expertise and competences within the partnership as such. In these cases external expertise could be sought to complement and bridge knowledge gaps to support the partnership in carrying out specific activities or delivering concrete services.

Please keep in mind that companies whose main scope of activities within their business profile, as well as their project role, consists of project coordination, management, communication or knowledge management or other activities that are of a mere executive or supporting character (service providers) cannot be involved as project partners. If required, such institutions should be sub-contracted (for further details see part B, chapter II.1.1).

Partner experience and capacity

Transnational cooperation projects can be challenging in terms of management and implementation, especially for newcomers. While this leads to the recommendation to choose an experienced lead partner it shall explicitly not exclude newcomers from participating in projects. However, before joining a partnership the following has to be considered:

- ◆ Staff involved in the project should be able to speak and write in English.
- ◆ Since no pre-financing is provided, partner institutions should have sufficient financial capacity to pre-finance and implement the foreseen activities, keeping in mind that the time-lapse between the payment of project costs and the ERDF reimbursement usually takes some months.
- ◆ Even though the programme does not limit the participation of a same institution in several projects, the technical, financial and administrative capacity of the partner to accomplish project tasks and responsibilities has to be ensured.
- ◆ Rules between funding programmes might differ and, even if partners are experienced in other funding programmes, the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE rules (based on rules applicable to ERDF co-funded programmes) have to be respected.

V. Developing a sound management structure

Management framework

- ◆ The partnership is governed by the lead partner principle. This means that among the partners implementing the project, one institution is appointed as lead partner acting as project interface with the programme (MA/JS). The lead partner, in addition to the responsibility of implementing its part of the thematic project activities, is also responsible for ensuring sound management (including internal communication) and successful implementation of the entire project. The lead partner is the contractual counterpart of the programme (signing the subsidy contract with the MA).
- ◆ A partnership agreement establishes the legal base between the lead partner and all project partners. It has to be drawn up at the beginning of the project and lays down all arrangements for the relations of the lead partner with the project partners, such as the responsibilities and contributions to the work plan, reporting requirements, financial provisions, etc. A programme template with the minimum requirements of a partnership agreement will be published on the programme website at the latest when launching step 2 of the call².
- ◆ At project level the management is under the responsibility of the lead partner. If the lead partner has no sufficient internal competences or capacities for project, financial or communication management, these can be partly taken over by other partners or subcontracted to external experts. However, the legal responsibility remains with the lead partner. The size of the management team set in place may vary but it has to comprise as a minimum the following functions:

Management function	Responsibilities / tasks
Project manager (PM)	In charge of the overall coordination and organisation of the project implementation. The PM acts as driving force in the partnership ensuring the achievement of the project objectives within the given time, the internal information flow and knowledge management and the quality control of deliverables and outputs. In terms of reporting he/she is in charge of the preparation of the content parts of the six-monthly progress reports and their timely submission. The PM is also responsible for regular communication with the joint secretariat of the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme.
Finance manager (FM)	Responsible for the financial reporting, internal management of ERDF funds, project budget and national co-financing. The FM should work in close contact with the PM and the project partners in order to ensure a sound financial management of the project. Furthermore he/she has to monitor expenditure and payments referring to the lead partner, including the submission of documents to its national controller. Further, the FM is preparing the financial parts of the progress reports.
Communication manager (CM)	Responsible for developing and implementing the project communication strategy. Based on information provided in the application form, the CM will have to further detail communication objectives, approaches, key messages and activities in view of specific target audiences. The CM is also responsible for coordinating all communication activities across the project and for building all partners' capacity to communicate.

² Applicants might consider also to consult, for information purposes, the template for partnership agreements used in the CENTRAL EUROPE 2007-2013 Programme, available at www.central2013.eu/central-projects/implementing-a-project/necessary-documents/model-contracts/#c379

Part C

How to develop a good project

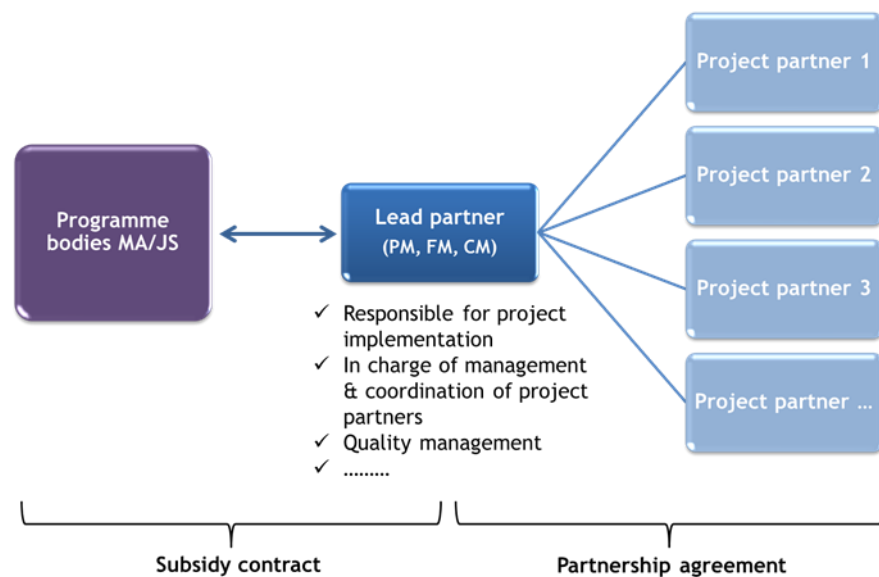
The importance (and work load) of the project management team is not to be underestimated.

The above functions should be ideally assigned to different staff members, which should work in close coordination and cooperation. The project management team is also responsible for sharing relevant information and knowledge within the partnership, thus contributing to building and/or ensuring the necessary capacity of all project partners.

At the partner level it is recommended to establish similar functions (project, finance and communication management) mirrored with a clear attribution of responsibilities within the partner's institution in order to allow a good information flow and coordination.

The following figure illustrates interrelations between the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme, the lead partner and the project partners.

Figure 3 - Project management structure



Decision making structures

Projects need to establish a clear decision making structure from the very beginning. This will allow to steer and monitor the project progress and, in case of unforeseen situations, to adjust the project implementation and/or management. Such structure usually comprises of a **project steering committee** which holds meetings at least once per reporting period, i.e. every six months. In the steering committee each partner has to be represented and should actively take part in the decision making process.

Main tasks of the project steering committee are:

- ◆ Monitoring and validation of **project contents**: This includes verifying that the project implementation is in line with activities and outputs defined in the approved application form. Furthermore it means validating the quality of main project outputs and the progress towards achieving set objectives.
- ◆ Monitoring of **project finances**: This includes monitoring the project budget, budget flexibility and project spending.
- ◆ Review of the **management performance** and of the **quality of progress reporting** towards the programme bodies.
- ◆ If applicable, decisions on required **project modifications** (e.g. content, partnership, budget, duration) to be requested for approval to the programme bodies.

In case of problems, the project steering committee has to take action. It is important that rules of procedure and decision making are established and approved at the latest in the first meeting of the steering committee.

The steering committee is usually supported by the project management team to facilitate the decision making process.

How to ensure high quality of project implementation?

Internal quality management

Proper quality management is essential for ensuring successful project implementation. Projects should thus foresee setting up quality management procedures, feedback loops and/or other structures already at the application stage.

To ensure a good implementation quality the project management team should:

- ◆ Be in regular contact with all project partners (through project management platforms, emails, phone, skype etc.) in order to have a clear overview of activities being implemented. Through this exchange it will be possible for the project manager to provide guidance and to ensure good quality of deliverables and outputs (in terms of contents, extent, timing, layout, etc.).
- ◆ Carefully plan the reporting process so that project partners provide the project management team with information in time. Foresee internal reporting templates and set up clear responsibilities as well as deadlines for getting information needed when filling in the six-monthly project progress reports.
- ◆ Regularly check the project performance, e.g. in terms of,
 - ⇒ Progress of implementation (activities, deliverables, outputs of all work packages)
 - ⇒ Finances

In addition, it is recommended that the lead partner checks the quality of information and of related supporting documents (deliverables, outputs, financial figures etc.) prepared by project partners before submitting these to the programme bodies. Such systematic quality control (“filtering”) has proven to be a very effective tool for a quick approval of progress reports and the reimbursement of related payment claims.

Project evaluation

In addition to the above quality management provisions it is strongly recommended to foresee also project evaluation as a key management tool. There is, however, no standard approach as evaluation needs to be tailored to the actual needs of the project, notably in terms of project scope, timing (e.g. mid-term, final evaluation), type of partnership, strategic/operational evaluation etc.

A multitude of different evaluation approaches exists, which in the past have proven to be effective. Within a single project also different evaluation methods can be combined. Examples are:

- ◆ Evaluation of project implementation and/or achievements by external/independent experts (e.g. achievement of project specific objectives, related to specific elements of project implementation such as output or pilot actions, project communication, impact of project results on the identified target groups and stakeholders, etc.)
- ◆ Internal/external evaluation of project management (e.g. internal feedback loops from project partners on project coordination, internal communication and information flows, etc.) and/or formalised quality review of outputs (e.g. peer reviews)
- ◆ Scientific monitoring by expert or advisory boards (e.g. involving also associated partners for thematic assessment of outputs and results).

The status quo, main findings and results of both quality management processes and evaluations should be presented to the project steering committee in order to ensure that adequate decisions on necessary follow-up measures can be taken and implemented.

Mid-term project review

Regardless of the above recommended but voluntary project evaluation, projects will have to undergo a compulsory mid-term review carried out by the programme in the framework of an ad-hoc meeting.

This review will take place at mid-term of project implementation (e.g. within a steering committee meeting). The review meeting has to be organised by the project in which representatives of the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE joint secretariat will participate. Also the national contact points of the countries where project partners are located will be informed on the mid-term review meeting.

The mid-term review will focus on following aspects:

- ◆ Analysis of content-related and financial progress of the project
- ◆ Joint reflection on management issues
- ◆ Realistic forecast and recommendations for the remaining project period
- ◆ If applicable, identification of project deviations and delays as well as necessary project modifications (finance and activity changes).

Information on the outcome of the mid-term review will be presented to the CENTRAL EUROPE monitoring committee.

ATTENTION

No activity and budget changes will be allowed before the mid-term review. Based on the outcome of the review, especially in case of low project performances, the programme reserves the right to apply reductions to the project budget.

Activities referring to quality management have to be foreseen in the application form, notably in the management work package (see part D, chapter IV.2.4.2).

VI. Setting up relevant project communication

The project approach to communication

Communication plays a strategic role in successful CENTRAL EUROPE projects. Communication helps projects to achieve the change they aim for with their thematic activities. When developing project communication objectives it is thus important to bear in mind that these objectives have to be intrinsically linked to the specific project objectives defined earlier on.

Basic questions to be asked when developing project communication are:

- ◆ **Objectives:** What can communication do in order to help reaching a specific project objective? Will it help to raise the awareness and/or to increase the knowledge of a broader audience about project activities? Or do projects have to attempt to change the attitude and/or behaviour of specific influential audiences that already know much about the project?

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- ◆ **Approaches:** How is the project going to reach a communication objective? By informing people for example through storytelling to increase their awareness? By training people and/or by providing them with reliable facts to increase their knowledge? Or by ensuring transparent and open dialogue to change their attitude and behaviour? There are many different ways.
- ◆ **Activities:** What is the project exactly going to do in view of a chosen approach? Use social media to tell stories or rather publish fact sheets, infographics or other print products? Organise a public open day or a focused training seminar? Visit city administrations in a road show and make them familiar with policy papers and/or handbooks? As with the approaches, there is no limit to suitable activities.

To facilitate the development of relevant communication for upcoming Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE projects, communication objectives in the application form have been pre-defined as:

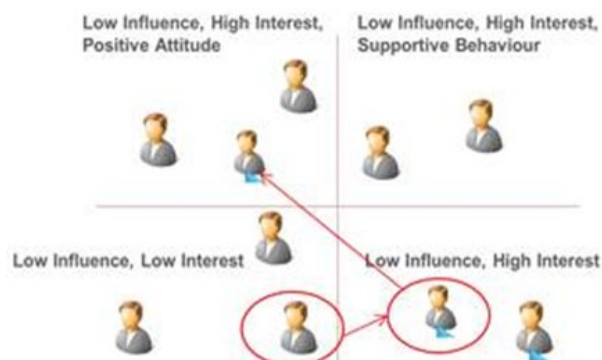
- ◆ Raising awareness
- ◆ Increasing knowledge
- ◆ Changing attitude
- ◆ Changing behaviour

...of a specific audience! To summarise in short: Communication is all about changing people's awareness, knowledge, attitude, and/or behaviour towards a specific project objective.

Therefore, when deciding on which communication objectives to choose in view of a specific project objective, projects will first have to identify their key audiences. In view of limited budgets it is important to prioritise audiences. In a second step they then have to decide, what kind of change they want to see in these people (e.g. higher awareness or changed behaviour). This can be done best by working with an "influence/interest grid" as illustrated in the examples below.

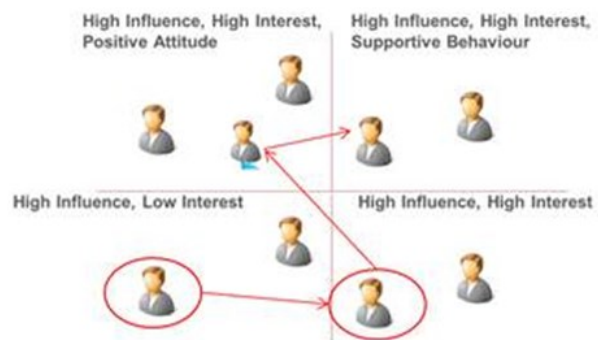
EXAMPLE 1: Communication objectives linked to audiences with "low influence":

The public (often with low influence) shall be moved from the box „low influence, low interest“ into „low influence, high interest“. This basically means that their awareness needs to be raised. However, projects may then want to change the public's attitude or even behaviour, which means 'moving them up' even higher based on having made them aware/interested.



EXAMPLE 2: Communication objectives linked to audiences with “high influence”:

Decision makers in regional authorities shall be moved from the box „high influence, low interest“ into „high influence, high interest“. For that their awareness needs to be raised first and their knowledge increased. In addition, projects might then want to change their attitude and/or behaviour based on having made them aware/interested.



Once the project communication objectives and audiences are clearly defined, it becomes important to think about how a project will achieve its objective (“Which approach?”) and through what measures (“Which activities?”).

Communication objectives related to awareness and knowledge are tactically most often related to the approach of passing on information and messages (or often described as „dissemination“) through storytelling. However, there are more communication approaches than just dissemination and storytelling.

In view of communication objectives related to attitude and behaviour, communication is most often about involving and influencing stakeholders (open and transparent dialogue, building on previous dissemination which has ideally built awareness and knowledge).

More concrete information on devising relevant communication for a project is provided in part D, chapter IV.2.4.2 related to developing in the work plan (communication work package).

Harmonised programme and project communication: Effects on project communication

In view of start-up activities, please note that the **Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme has joined the harmonised Interreg branding initiative** where several programmes decided to cooperate in order to increase awareness of European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) as a valuable objective of EU cohesion policy.

Several programmes jointly decided to harmonise their own brands as well as project brands in the programming period 2014-2020. The well-known name “Interreg” will be re-introduced to this purpose while “European Territorial Cooperation (ETC)” will remain as the legal term used in official documents/regulations.

As a consequence, **all project logos will be aligned with the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE programme logo**. This shared branding will offer direct benefits including an increased recognisability on the ground, helping projects to reach shared objectives from attracting relevant stakeholders in the regions to capitalising on thematic results in a more cost-efficient, effective and visible way.

Part C

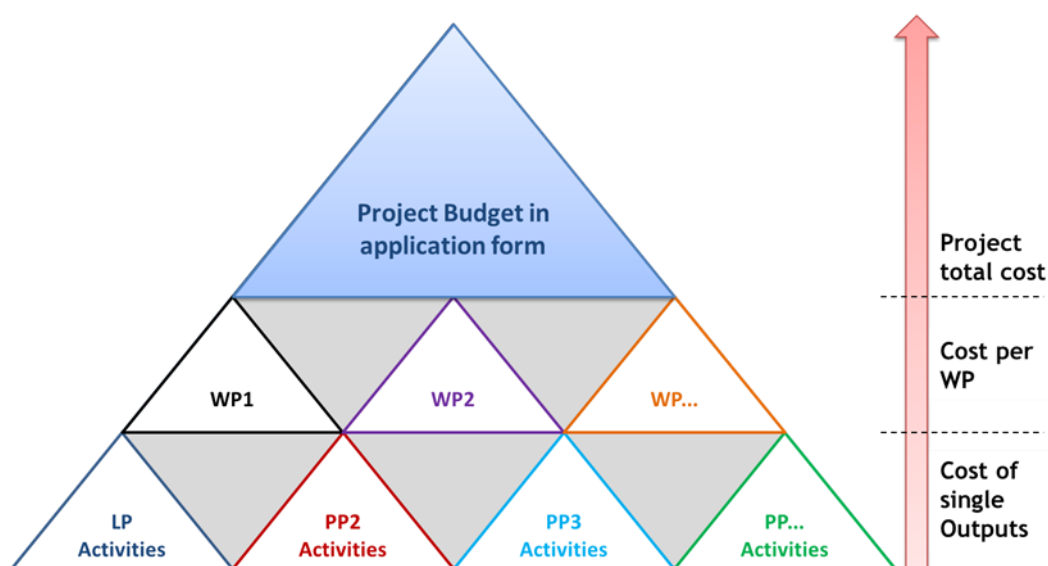
How to develop

In line with wider EU cohesion policy goals for the current programming period, an aligned branding will also contribute to better spending and simplification. **Projects will be provided with their logo and with design templates** for publications (event invitations, project leaflets, etc.) and promotional materials, which can be easily adapted and implemented. However: specific logos could still be foreseen as an output of the communication work package for activities and products that are expected to sustain beyond the project duration. Please consult with the JS on this.

Similar to the approach in project branding, **project websites will be integrated and hosted on the programme website** as micro sites - with features according to needs expressed by projects and reachable at www.interreg-central.eu/projectacronym. Thus, for creating and maintaining the standard project website there will be no fixed costs since these services will be offered by the programme for free. However, as with logos above, specific websites can still be introduced by projects as an output of the communication work package for specific activities and products that are expected to sustain beyond the project duration or that deserve a more specific platform than the programme website (e.g. awareness campaigns, online IT tools, etc.). Social media platforms can also be handled in a flexible way by the projects. Please consult with the JS on this.

VII. Designing a sound project budget

The budget of the project must be drafted following the real cost principle³, fully accomplishing the principles of adequacy of costs and sound financial management (i.e. economy, efficiency and effectiveness) as explained in part B chapter II.7.2). Accordingly, the project budget shall reflect the work plan, i.e. activities, deliverables and outputs planned by each project partner in order to achieve the intended results.



Tools used by applicants when designing the project budget must therefore allow to plan, **at the level of each partner**, the budget allocated to budget lines, work packages, reporting periods. A non-binding example of such tool (a MS-excel sheet developed by the programme) that could be used by applicants when designing their project budgets is available for download at www.interreg-central.eu/cal⁴.

³ Except for preparation costs as well as when simplified cost options are used for calculating costs under staff and office and administration budget lines. For further information please refer to Part B, chapters II.7.3 and II.7.4.

⁴ The use of this tool is under the sole responsibility of the applicants and programme bodies do not bear any responsibility for possible non-functioning or misuse of this tool.

Part C

How to develop

In view of the allocation of budget to reporting periods, the following elements are to be taken into consideration:

- ◆ The reporting periods run on a six-monthly basis as from the project start date
- ◆ The budget allocated to each reporting period should be an estimation of the actual payments to be done in the respective reporting period. Therefore, the budget only partly reflects the activities taking place in a certain period. Indeed, if an activity is carried out close to the end of a reporting period, the related payment may take place in the following period and the costs should therefore be budgeted only in the following reporting period.

Spending forecasts will be subject to analysis during the assessment of applications in step 2. In particular an artificial distribution of total costs (e.g. evenly throughout the project duration and therefore not reflecting actual payments) will be evaluated negatively due to its negative effect on the decommitment calculations on programme level.

A first draft budget, prepared with the involvement of all partners, should already be made when developing the light application form within step 1 of the call, even if in step 1 only an indicative budget per project partner has to be included in the light application form. This is very important because only limited budget flexibility is allowed between step 1 and 2 of the call, i.e. **an application where the total budget is increased by more than 20 % will become non-eligible for funding** (for further details please refer to part D, chapter I).

Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme

Application Manual

Part D: How to apply with us

(amended version of 18 February 2015: section IV.2.5, page D32 correction of preparation costs)

Part D

How to apply with us

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Part B	What projects we are looking for
Part C	How to develop a good project
Part D	How to apply with us

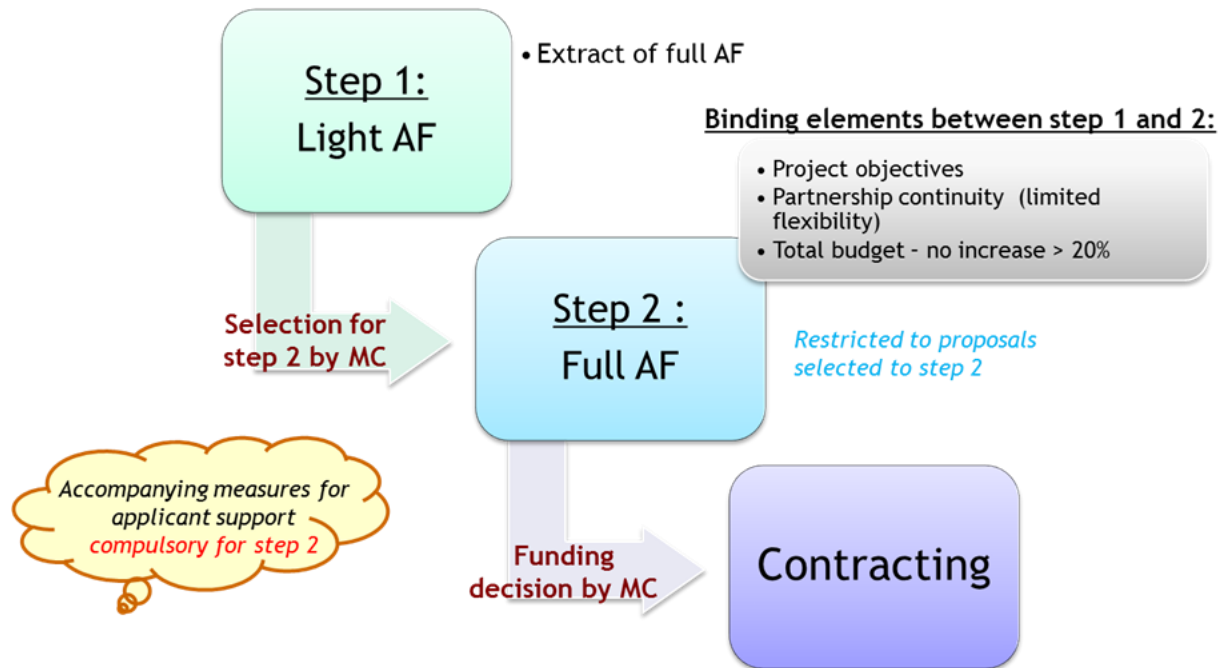
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I. Application procedure

The application procedure for the first call for proposals is organised in two steps:

Figure 1: 2-step application procedure



Step 1 – submission of the light application form

In the first step applicants have to submit a light application form (AF), which will provide an outline of the proposed project. The light application form goes beyond a mere expression of interest, which means that applicants have to present already in this step a comprehensive picture of the strategic project characteristics.

It is recommended to make use of individual consultations offered by the joint secretariat already during the step 1 (see part E of the manual).

The light AF is an extract of the full application form leaving out details on the work plan and budget. Its submission is to be accompanied by a scanned signed lead applicant declaration.

ATTENTION

Applicants have to be aware, already during the preparation of the light application form, that continuity of main contents must be ensured between the two steps as the main principles of the light application form are binding and cannot be changed in step 2 (as listed below).

Following the assessment of the step 1 applications, only applications selected according to quality requirements will be invited to submit a full proposal in the step 2.

Step 2 – submission of the full application form

For the development of the full application form the following binding elements between step 1 and step 2 are to be considered:

- ◆ Project (main and specific) objectives cannot be changed
- ◆ Partnership continuity:
 - ⇒ Changes of lead applicants are not allowed following closure of step 1
 - ⇒ Changes of partners are limited following closure of step 1:
 - Partnerships of 3-5 project partners (based on step 1 application)-> max 1 partner change allowed
 - Partnerships of 6-10 project partners (based on step 1 application) -> max 2 partner changes allowed
 - For partnerships of more than 10 project partners (based on step 1) -> max 3 partner changes allowed
- ◆ Limited flexibility of budget changes: increases of more than 20 % (in relation to the total budget as indicated in step 1) are not allowed.

A partner change is understood as the withdrawal of a project partner followed either by the replacement through a new partner or without replacement. Legal successions of institutions are not regarded as partner changes.

The extension of the partnership by adding project partners is possible without limitations (however budget limitations as indicated above should be kept in mind).

The submission of the full application form has to be accompanied by scanned supporting documents, notably declarations by the lead applicant and all project partners as well as other documents, if applicable (see details in chapter IV.2.6). Original (hard copy) documents are only to be provided during the contracting phase by projects selected for funding.

In order to support applicants in the preparation of the full application form in step 2, the joint secretariat will offer individual consultations and organise a lead applicant training. It is strongly recommended that applicants make use of both supporting measures (for more details see part E of the manual).

The participation in at least one supporting measure (either consultation or training) during step 2 is mandatory.

The structure and contents of the light and full application form are explained further in chapter IV which also provides detailed guidance on how to complete the application form.

II. Application package

The application package for the first call can be downloaded from the programme website (www.interreg-central.eu/call) and consists of the following documents:

- ♦ Call announcement for the first call;
- ♦ Application manual organised in five parts and seven annexes;
- ♦ Offline template of light application form (step 1) and full application form (step 2);

Only complete applications submitted within the call deadline and containing all required annexes will be considered as eligible.

In both steps of the call the project proposal (including required annexes) has to be **submitted by the lead applicant** solely through the online submission system (see chapter III). **Respective deadlines** are given in the call announcement (for step 1) and in the invitation letter (for step 2).

The required accompanying documents are considered as annex to the application form (see chapter IV.2.6) and have to be uploaded as scanned documents (signed by the legal representative of the respective institution) in the online submission system (see administrative requirements - chapter V).

III. Online submission system

In both steps applicants have to complete and submit the respective application forms electronically via the electronic monitoring system of the programme (eMS) which can be accessed under the following link <https://ems.interreg-central.eu/>.

In addition to guidance provided in this manual, the online application form also contains basic explanations of the various sections of the application form.

III.1. Technical information and system requirements

The eMS is a web application which can be accessed with recent versions of most common browsers (e.g. Internet Explorer 11, Firefox 35, Chrome 39)¹.

The functionality of the system follows the common standards of web applications for entering and submitting form data.

¹ When working with Internet Explorer it has to be ensured that the option “display intranet sites in compatibility view” is de-selected in the compatibility view settings of the browser (to access Internet Explorer preferences for compatibility view you can press Alt + T + B).

ATTENTION

Remember to SAVE

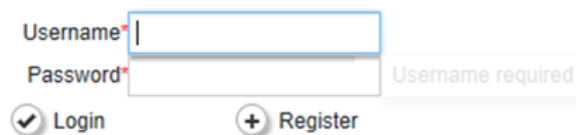
The following important aspects have to be remembered when filling in the application form:

- ◆ *The eMS does not provide any warning or request of confirmation before leaving a section of the application form or before logging out. Always remember to save the data before leaving a section in the application form (Save button on upper left corner), otherwise data will be lost!*
- ◆ *When filling in longer sections, please remember to regularly save data, in order to avoid losing data in case of interruptions of the internet connection or other technical issues.*
- ◆ *Do not use the “Enter” key in the forms as it may lead to unexpected results. Always use the commands provided by the eMS interface.*

III.2. Registration

To use the online submission system, the **lead applicant must register** and create a set of credentials.

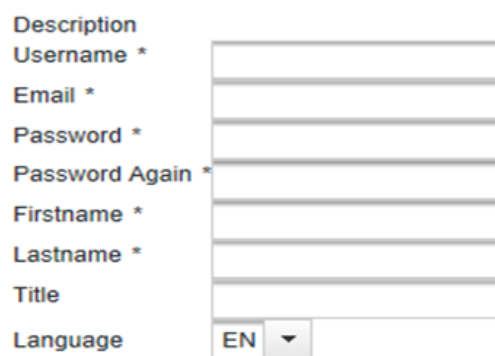
To register, go to <https://ems.interreg-central.eu/> and click on “Register”. The person registering should be preferably the contact person of the lead applicant institution. Please note that automatically generated emails (e.g. on successful submission) will be sent to this email address only.



A login and registration interface. It features two input fields: 'Username*' and 'Password*'. To the right of the 'Password*' field is a grey box with the text 'Username required'. Below the input fields are two buttons: a 'Login' button with a checkmark icon and a 'Register' button with a plus icon.

In the registration form, fill in the following information:

Registration



A registration form with the following fields: 'Description', 'Username *', 'Email *', 'Password *', 'Password Again *', 'Firstname *', 'Lastname *', 'Title', and 'Language'. The 'Language' field has a dropdown menu currently showing 'EN'.

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The person creating the application must re-present (or be delegated by) the lead applicant institution who can then give user rights to other registered users and, after completing the filling in of the application form, will finally submit it to the programme bodies.

- ◆ Username: will be used to log in and submit the applications. It can be freely chosen by the lead applicant's contact person.
- ◆ Email: the email address of the applicant.
- ◆ Password: password used to access the system (in case the password is forgotten, please contact the helpdesk during office hours to get a new password).
- ◆ First name / Last name / Title: Personal information of the lead applicant's contact person.
- ◆ Language: English is pre-defined language, programme's official language). It cannot be changed.

A confirmation email will be sent to the email address provided. Follow the instructions in the message to confirm the registration.

Only after confirmation, the lead applicant will be able to log in to the online submission system and create a new application.

III.3. Filling in and submitting the application form

The lead applicant can give editing rights to some sections of the application form to other users (namely the project partners). These have to be registered in the system before and provide the lead applicant with their username.

The lead applicant can then add new users in the "User Management" section (see screenshot of project menu below). Users can be granted either read-only rights ("add for reading"), or edit and add data rights ("add for modification").

Project menu:

The screenshot shows the 'Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE' application form interface. At the top, there is a 'show more' button and a 'Welcome' message. Below this is a horizontal navigation bar with tabs: 'A - Project overview' (active), 'B - Partner', 'C - Project Description', 'D - Workplan', 'E/F - Partner budget', and 'G - Attachments'. On the left side, there is a sidebar with a 'SAVE' button and a list of actions: 'Submit Saved Project', 'Save As Pdf File', 'User Management', 'Attachment Upload', 'Exit', 'Help', and 'Delete Project'. The main content area is titled 'User Project Mapping' and contains two columns: 'New User' and 'Assigned User'. Below these columns are two input fields. At the bottom, there are three buttons: '+ Add For Reading', '+ Add For Modification', and '- Remove'.

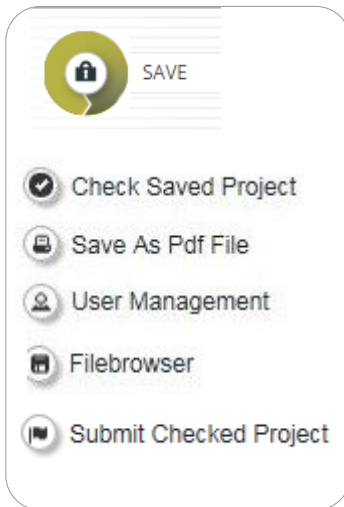
The user accounts created to draft and submit the application will be available until the end of step 2 of the call.

In case the project is selected for funding, a new set of credentials will be created for every project partner.

To a certain extent, it is possible for different users to **work in parallel (at the same time)** on the same application form. When working in parallel, users have to make sure though that they are not working in the same section or sub-section (in case that the section is divided).

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Please note that only the user who initially created the application form (i.e. the lead applicant) can submit the application form (both for step 1 and 2 of the call). The application form which has been successfully submitted is final and cannot be changed anymore (it will only appear in read-only mode in the system).

Please note that you can create a [pdf file](#) of the application form at any time of its development by pressing the “Save As Pdf File” button (see also screenshot of project menu above). You will find the created pdf file(s) in the general menu in the section “Filebrowser” (the saving of the pdf document in the filebrowser might take several minutes).

Automatic checks of the application form

Once the application form is at an advanced stage, but well before its final submission, it is recommended to perform the automatic checks on the correctness of data entered into the application form.

This check is done by pressing the “Check Saved Project” button in the menu on the left. The system then performs several automatic checks of the formal requirements (e.g. completeness of information, minimum number of partners, etc.). If all automatic checks are successfully passed, the message “Success” will be displayed. In case of automatic checks showing deficiencies, the system indicates these in an error message on top of the page and the partnership can amend the application form accordingly.

Submission of the application form

Before the final submission of the application form it is recommended to save the final version of the application form as pdf file.

When submitting the final application form by pressing the “Submit Saved Project” button, the system performs once more the same automatic checks described above. Only if all automatic checks are successfully passed, the application form will be officially submitted. In case of automatic checks showing deficiencies, the system indicates these in an error message and the partnership can amend the application form accordingly.

III.4. Helpdesk and technical support

The eMS has a built-in help function which provides both online help and instructions for every section of the application form. For more information you can refer to the FAQs published on the website of the programme.

For any IT related problems you might experience with the online submission system, please contact the helpdesk at helpdesk@interreg-central.eu or contact the joint secretariat under +43 1 89 08 088-2405 during office hours.

IV. Drafting of application form

The application form has to be completed in **English** as this is the working language of the programme.

In the following chapters the structure and content of the application form is presented. Please note that only some sections are required to be filled in step 1 of the application procedure. Details on the two-step application procedure are provided in chapter I.

IV.1. Structure of the application form - overview

The application form is structured in seven sections and several sub-sections out of which only some have to be filled in in step 1 of the call, as presented below:

Light application form (Step 1)		Full application form (Step 2)	
Section	Headers (Sub-sections)	Section	Headers (Sub-sections)
A	Project overview	A	Project overview
	A.1 Project identification		A.1 Project identification
	A.2 Project summary		A.2 Project summary
	Indicative project budget (total per partner - table only in step 1)		A.3 Project budget summary - breakdown per partner
B	Project partners	B	A.4 List of project outputs
			Project partners
C	Project description	C	B.1 Lead partner/project partners
			B.2 Associated partners (if applicable)
			Project description
			C.1 Project relevance
D	Work plan	D	C.2 Project focus
			C.3 Project context
			C.4 Horizontal principles and additional indicators
			Work plan (including timeline)
E/F	Project budget	E/F	D.1 Work package description
			D.2 Target groups
G	Annexes	G	D.3 Periods
			D.4 Activities outside the programme area
			Project budget
			E Partner budget
			F Project budget overview
			Annexes
			Lead applicant declaration
			Partner declarations
			Supporting documents for private lead appli- cants (if applicable)

Please note that in the online application form some fields in various (sub-) sections will be automatically filled in (grey cells) by the system by transferring data inserted in other sections of the application form or which are automatically calculated.

IV.2. Contents of the application form (light and full)

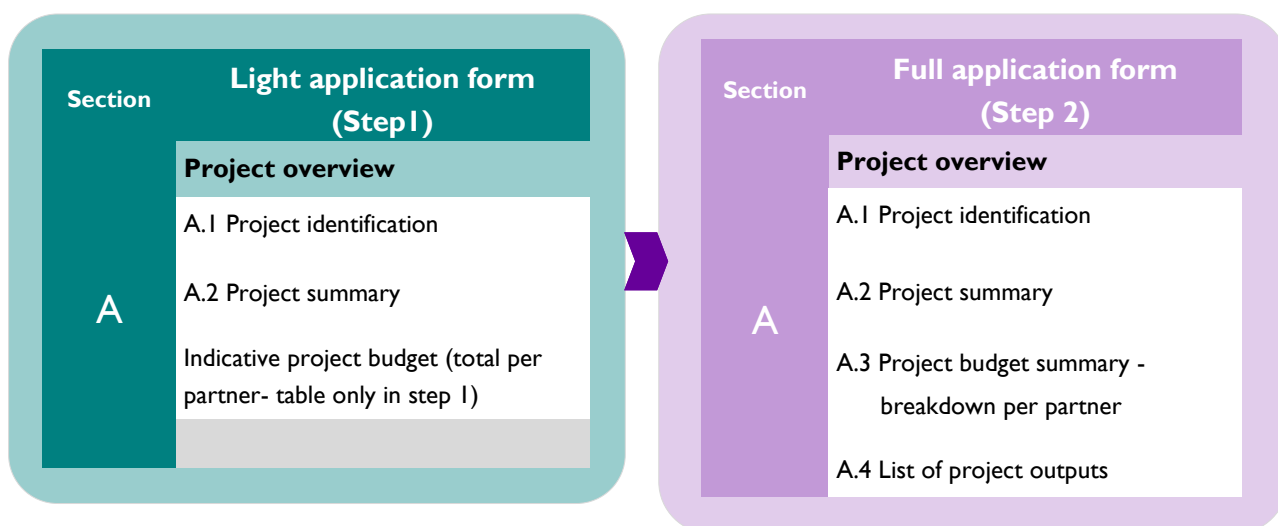
In the application form all essential information about the project must be presented.

The application form will be the basis for the quality assessment and subsequently the project selection (step 1: pre-selection, step 2: funding decision) by the programme monitoring committee (see chapter V).

In case the project will be selected for funding, the approved full application form will become part of the subsidy contract and will be used as a tool for monitoring the project implementation.

In the following chapters the main contents required for each section of the application form are presented. At the beginning of each section it is highlighted which information has to be filled in in step 1 (light AF) and which additional information is to be complemented during step 2 of the application process (full AF). In this respect, further explanations are given within each of the sections and sub-sections.

IV.2.1. Section A – Project overview



It is recommended to check whether the intended acronym already exists in order to avoid duplication of names with other projects/initiatives. Moreover, special attention should be paid to the existing copyrights for the selected acronym linked to brands, products, trademarks, etc .

Section A contains general information about the project.

The sub-section A.1 includes the project identification, such as project title, acronym, number, duration and selection of programme priority axis and specific objective. **When defining the project duration in eMS, please ensure that the project starts on the first day of the starting month and ends with the last day of the closing month.**

In sub-section A.2 a brief summary description of the project shall be written in the style of a press release capturing the main features of the project.

ATTENTION

- ◆ *The application form can only target one priority axis and one programme specific objective of the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme (contributions to other priorities and specific objectives are however possible).*
- ◆ *Please keep the project title and acronym short and straightforward since, if selected for funding, this will be the official name of the project during the whole implementation period.*

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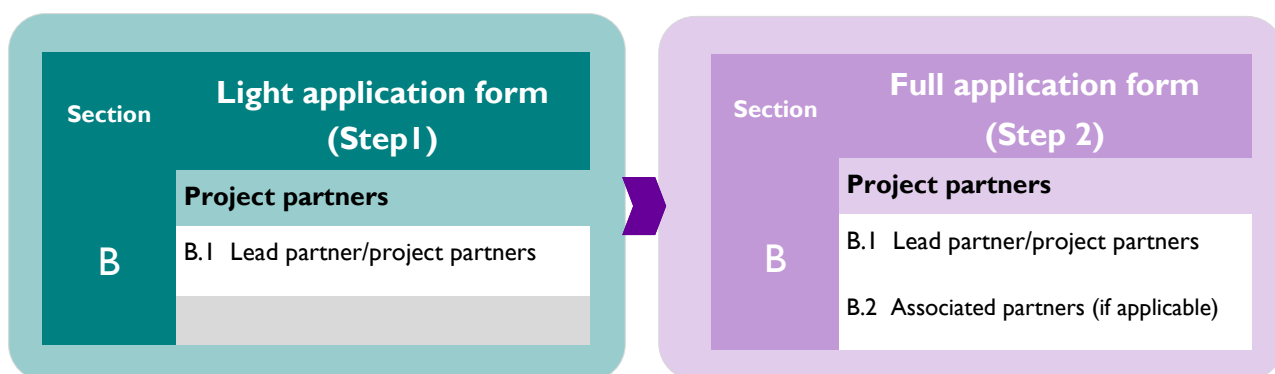
An overview table on the indicative project budget (total per partner) is also displayed in this section, automatically filled in with data entered in the budget section of the application form (see section E/F Budget).

Step 2:

In the full AF a more detailed budget table is displayed summarising the budget information as filled in in the budget section E of the full application form.

In addition, at the end of the summary section an overview table is automatically generated listing the project outputs quantification as defined in the work plan linking them to the programme specific output indicators.

IV.2.2. Section B – Project partners



This section contains information on the partnership (lead partner, project partners). Please also note that information provided in this section will support the assessment of state aid relevance of project activities carried out in step 2 of the call. For further information on state aid please refer to part B, chapter II.7.7)

An economic activity is defined as “offering goods or services on a given market”. It has to be kept in mind that not only profit-making companies perform economic activities and that very often public bodies or non-profit organisations do also perform economic activities. For example, research organisations (including public universities and private research institutes) can carry out both economic and non-economic activities. Non-economic activities of research organisations include their primary activities such as public education and independent research and development. Economic activities of research organisations include, for example, contract research or renting of laboratory facilities for a fee.

a. Competences

In this section information is to be provided with regard to specific competences of each organisation participating in the project regarding the following aspects:

- ◆ Description of the main field(s) of interest of the organisation in its daily business.
- ◆ Information on economic activities carried out by the organisation in its daily business, specifying which type of activities in which market.
- ◆ Information on the organisation’s thematic competences and experiences relevant for the project.

b. Role in the project

In this section information is to be provided with regard to the role of each organisation participating in the project regarding the following aspects:

- ◆ Description of the role and responsibility in the project (e.g. work package leader, responsible for implementation of a specific pilot action or pilot investment etc.)
- ◆ Description of the benefit which the organisation will gain from participating in the project (e.g. new knowledge and data, practical experience with new methods etc.)

- ◆ Information on economic activities performed by the organisation within the project or as a consequence of its implementation. This might include for example selling of the new products developed within the project following the knowledge acquired and/or the availability of a project output (e.g. a feasibility study).

c. EU/international projects experience

In this section information about the previous experience of each organisation in EU/ international projects (e.g. Interreg, EU Research Framework Programme/HORIZON 2020, Intelligent Energy Europe, LIFE etc.), if any, is to be provided regarding the following aspects:

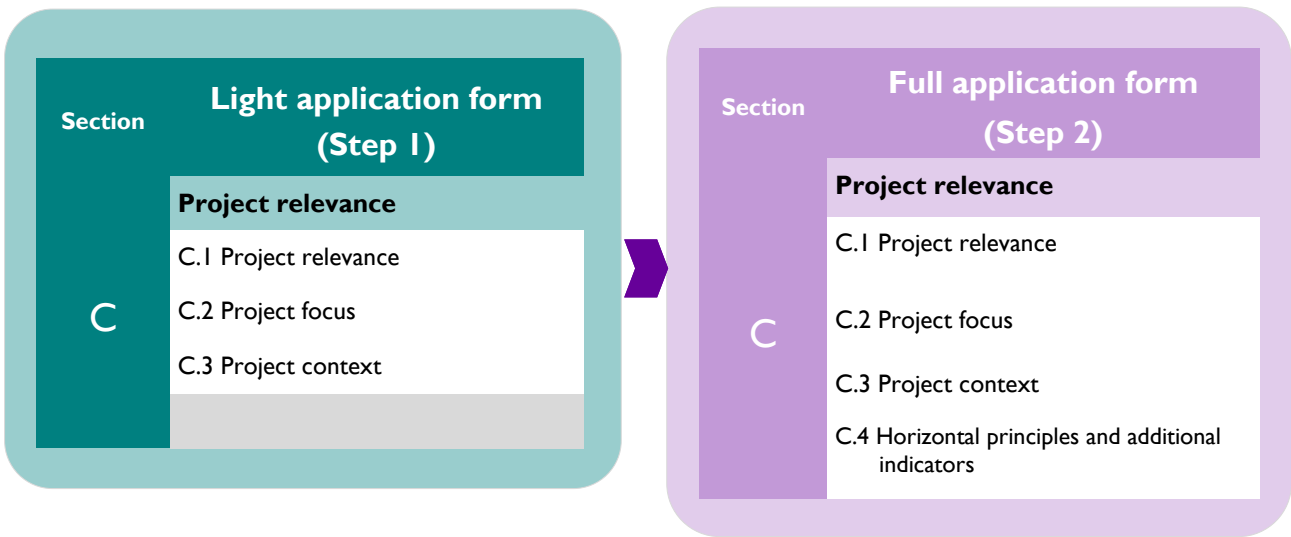
- ◆ Experience in management/coordination of previous EU/international projects
- ◆ Participation and role in previous EU/international projects

Step 2:

In the full AF, if applicable, also associated partners can be listed (see part B chapter II.1.4). Information provided in step 1 can be further updated and adapted in the full application form to be submitted in step 2.

The partner information is summarised into the partner list which is automatically generated by the online system.

IV.2.3. Section C – Project description



In section C of the application form applicants have to provide information on how well the project contributes to the objectives of the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme.

In particular, this section includes the description of the key characteristics and strategic elements of the project, notably information on its relevance, focus and context.

In order to answer these questions, it is important that applicants read part B, chapter I of the application manual to be able to understand the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE key principles which are a pre-condition for a project to be funded by the programme.

IV.2.3.1. Project relevance (C.1)

In relation to the project relevance applicants have to provide information on the following project characteristics:

Territorial challenges

The applicants should explain the relevance of the project in **relation to the territorial challenges and/or common assets of the regions participating** in the programme. This should reflect the initial situation (i.e. before project implementation) and clearly describe why the project is considered as necessary for the involved regions/countries.

Project approach and innovativeness

The description should highlight the project's approach for addressing common challenges and/or assets identified by the partnership. It should describe how the project will be structured and the methods that will be applied. In addition, please describe to which extent new or innovative solutions (e.g. process, goal and content oriented innovation) will be developed and/or implemented. In this respect, it should be highlighted how the planned solutions and expected results go beyond the state of the art in the sector and/or the participating regions.

Transnational cooperation

The applicant should demonstrate the need for transnational cooperation, i.e. why the project objectives cannot be reached acting only on a national/regional/local level, as well as the added value for the project partners and target groups gained through the transnational cooperation.

More detailed information on the required transnational and territorial dimension of projects to be supported can be found in part B, chapter I.2.

Step 2:

In the full AF the partnership should specify the level of **intensity of cooperation** according to the following cooperation criteria:

- ◆ **Joint development (compulsory)** - i.e. partners have to be involved integrating their ideas, priorities and actions in the project development process.
- ◆ **Joint implementation (compulsory)** - i.e. project activities must be carried out by the partners in a cooperative way ensuring clear content-based links and be coordinated by the lead partner.
- ◆ **Joint staffing** - i.e. the project should not duplicate functions within the partnership. In particular, project management functions should be carried out at project level.
- ◆ **Joint financing (compulsory)** - i.e. the joint project budget shall be organised according to the activities carried out by each project partner. The lead partner is responsible for the administration and reporting towards the programme bodies as well as the distribution of the funds to the partners.

IV.2.3.2 Project focus (C.2)

The sub-section “project focus” presents the intervention logic of the project which is composed of the following elements:

- ◆ Project main objective
- ◆ Expected project results
- ◆ Project specific objectives

In this sub-section the applicant has to define the project objectives (main objective and specific objectives) as well as the expected project results.

Detailed guidance for setting up the project intervention logic is provided below. Please refer also to part B chapter I.1 where the required linkage between the programme and project intervention logic is explained as well as to part C, chapter III describing the principles of the project intervention logic).

Step 2:

In the full AF, the planned main project outputs forming part of the project intervention logic (see also explanations below on how to build the project intervention logic) have to be defined within the respective work packages (see section D of the application form on the work plan).

How to build the project intervention logic?

The most important step in developing the project proposal right from the beginning, is to clearly define the intervention logic, notably the project objective(s) and expected results. These should be as specific as possible and clearly expressing what kind of changes the project intends to bring about in relation to the initial situation.

The project intervention logic has to be coherent and shall provide the necessary information on how the project contributes to the selected programme priority axis, in particular in relation to the targeted programme specific objective and its expected result.

The project intervention logic should be built according to the process displayed in figure 2, while definitions of the main terms used for the intervention logic are provided in table 1.

Figure 2: Building the project intervention logic

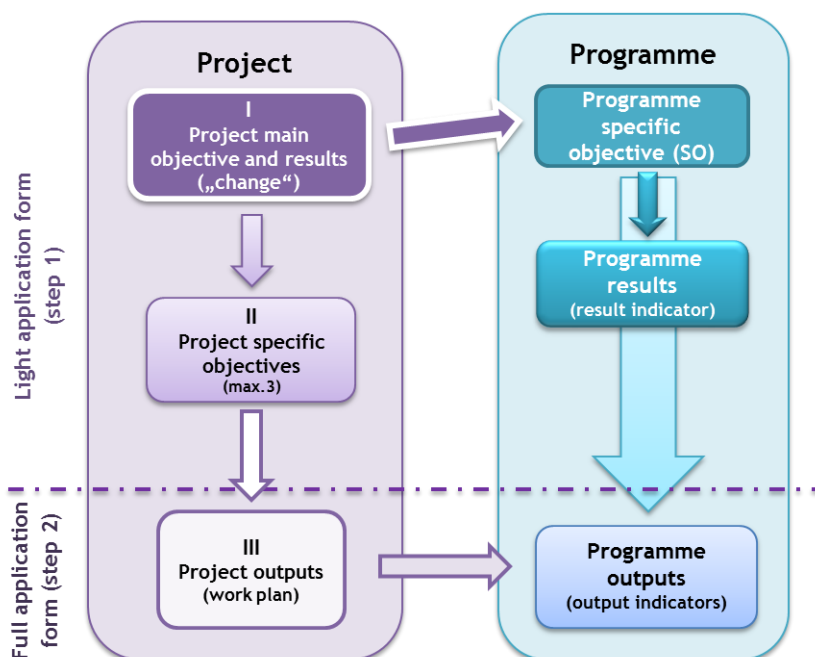


Table 1 - Project intervention logic glossary

Term	Definition
Project main objective	Provides the overall context for what the project aims to achieve. It describes the <u>long-term objective</u> the project seeks to support and relates to the strategic aspects of the project. It has to be in line with a programme specific objective and result.
Project specific objective	Describes the <u>immediate objective</u> sought by the project, which can be realistically <u>achieved within the project lifetime</u> through the development of the project outputs. It should be verifiable at the end of a project whether the specific objective was achieved or not. Each project specific objective has to clearly contribute to the project main objective.
Project result	Describes the <u>advantage</u> of carrying out the project and the <u>change</u> compared to the initial situation. Results are derived from the outputs achieved by the project. They have to be coherent with project objectives and contribute to the programme results.
Project output	Is the outcome <u>obtained following the implementation of project activities paid with project funds</u> (i.e. strategy/action plan, tool, pilot action, training etc.). Each output should be captured by a programme output indicator and should directly contribute to the achievement of the project result.

I) Setting of project main objective and results

- ◆ Define the project main objective which outlines the “strategic” focus of the project and its expected results. Results should indicate the changes the project will achieve following its implementation (“theory of change”).
- ◆ Select a programme specific objective to which the project contributes within the chosen priority axis. It has to be ensured that the project main objective is fully consistent with the selected specific objective.
- ◆ Explain the linkage between the envisaged project results and the programme result referring to the chosen specific objective. The explanation should give evidence of how and to which extent the project will contribute to the programme result indicator linked to the chosen specific objective. Please note that the contribution to the result indicator shall relate *not only to project partners, but also to the target groups of the project considering also the transferability of project results to other territories facing similar challenges*.

Define the project main and specific objectives very carefully, since they cannot be changed in step 2 of the call.

II) Defining project specific objectives

- ◆ The project should define up to three specific objectives describing what the project aims to achieve within its lifetime. Project specific objectives should be as concrete as possible and directly address the problems/challenges as described within the sub-section C.1 of the application form: Project relevance. When setting the project specific objectives, it has to be considered that the partnership should have the necessary capacity to directly influence their achievement. The reaching of objectives has to be verifiable during project implementation.
- ◆ Each of the set project specific objectives has to clearly contribute to the project main objective and the expected project results. This will ensure the internal coherence of the project intervention logic.

Step 2:

III) Defining project outputs

Project outputs have to be defined in the work plan (see also section D of the application form as well as explanations in chapter IV.2.4) and can be characterised as follows:

- ◆ Outputs are the direct outcomes of the project and have to directly contribute to the achievement of the project objectives and results.
- ◆ Project outputs should follow the typology of outputs (see chapter IV.2.4 related to the description of thematic work packages) as applied by the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme (i.e. strategies/action plans, tools, pilot actions, trainings) and be captured by programme output indicators. Detailed explanations on the output typology and the respective output indicators including examples of outputs per priority axis and specific objectives are explained in a dedicated guidance document (annex III).

At the end of the summary section in the full application form is an automatically generated overview table listing the project outputs quantification as defined in the work plan and linking them to the programme specific output indicators.

Sustainability and transferability of outputs and results

Project sustainability refers to continuation or follow-up of the activities implemented within the project including valorisation of the results and outcomes.

In the light application form (step 1) applicants have to provide general information on the sustainability and transferability of the foreseen outputs and results at project level.

Applicants have to explain how sustainability is anchored in the project design to make the project viable in the longer term.

In particular, the applicant should explain how sustainability will be secured after completion of the project which may include aspects of follow-up activities, ownership etc. (see also explanations provided in part B chapter I.4).

A distinction between the following three dimensions of sustainability can be made:

- ◆ **Financial sustainability** financing of follow up activities and investments, leverage of funds, resources for covering future operating and maintenance costs, etc.
- ◆ **Institutional sustainability** "ownership" of project outputs - which structures will allow, and how, the results of the project to continue to be in place after the project end?
- ◆ **Political sustainability** what structural impact will the project have? - e.g. will it lead to improved policies, legislation, plans, codes of conduct, methods, etc.?

Transferability is the potential to apply the project outputs or results in other regions or different contexts. The knowledge created in the project should be easily applicable, transferable and possible to use in other organisations/regions/countries outside of the defined partnership. Such transfer of knowledge, outputs and results should allow for efficiently addressing existing disparities between regions.

Step 2:

Please note that in the full application form (step 2) more detailed information on sustainability and transferability is required at work package level which has to be specified for the main project outputs within the thematic work packages (section D.1 work package description of the application form - see chapter IV.2.4).

IV.2.3.3. Project context (C.3)

In this section the applicant should describe how the project contributes to the relevant existing policy framework (at EU, national, regional levels) within the thematic scope of the project and for each of the regions participating in the project:

- ♦ the EU policy framework given by the Europe 2020 strategy, EU sectoral policies for the thematic scope of the project, European Territorial Agenda etc.
- ♦ national, regional or local policies (referring only to the relevant governance level applicable for the project scope and territories)

Step 2:

If applicable, in the full application form (step 2) also possible contributions of the project to the following **macro-regional strategies**² covering the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE programme area should be described:

- ♦ EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR)
- ♦ EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR)
- ♦ EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR)
- ♦ EU Strategy for the Alpine Region (EUSALP)³

Please remember that the programme prepared comprehensive thematic studies summarising the results of the CENTRAL EUROPE 2007-2013 projects (listed in part A, chapter V and available on the programme website). This will help in building a project based on available knowledge and existing achievements.

The description should clearly specify the linkage with the respective macro-regional strategy and explain how the project will contribute to the objectives of the macro-regional strategy.

Further, **synergies** with other national or European projects and initiatives (past, on-going or planned) should be described. It should be highlighted if the project builds on past efforts taking advantage of existing knowledge in order to avoid duplication of efforts.

In particular, it should be indicated if the application is linked to any other proposal currently under preparation within other EU funds, also specifying the concerned EU programmes (e.g. other Interreg programmes, Horizon 2020, COSME, LIFE, national or regional programmes supported by ERDF, ESF, Cohesion Fund, EAFRD, EMF, etc.).

In addition, it should be explained how the project **builds on available knowledge**. Applicants should describe relevant experiences or lessons-learned from previous projects and how gained knowledge will be used. If applicable, linkages to previous CENTRAL EUROPE 2007-2013 and other EU projects should be highlighted. For further information please see also part C chapter II.

² http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/index.cfm/en/policy/cooperation/macro-regional-strategies/

³ Please note that EUSALP is currently under preparation.

IV.2.3.4. Horizontal principles and additional indicators (C.4)

This entire section C.4 is only applicable for the full application form (step 2).

Horizontal principles

Applicants have to indicate how the project will contribute to the following horizontal principles of the programme, by characterising the type of possible effects:

- ◆ Environment
- ◆ Sustainable development
- ◆ Equal opportunities and non-discrimination
- ◆ Gender equality

In the application form a self-assessment on the respect of the above principles has to be performed. In case of possible negative effects, adequate mitigation measures have to be designed already in the application stage in order to avoid occurrence of such negative effects. For example, if a project foresees the promotion of river and sea transport, specific attention should be placed on the ecological status of the water body and its hydro morphology.

For more detailed information on horizontal principles please refer to part B chapter I.6.

Additional indicators

The programme has defined the following thematic result indicators which aim at capturing the result and implementation-oriented project effects:

- ◆ Number of institutions adopting new and/or improved strategies and action plans
- ◆ Number of institutions applying new and/or improved tools and services
- ◆ Amount of funds leveraged based on project achievements
- ◆ Number of jobs created (FTE) based on project achievements
- ◆ Number of trained persons

Applicants have to choose from the thematic result indicators listed above those of relevance for the project considering its scope and the planned achievements. Applicants have also to quantify the respective targets. Please note that in case the project will be funded, the respective progress for the chosen indicators will have to be reported during project implementation.

In addition, projects have to report on the following communication result indicators which aim at capturing the project's communication effects:

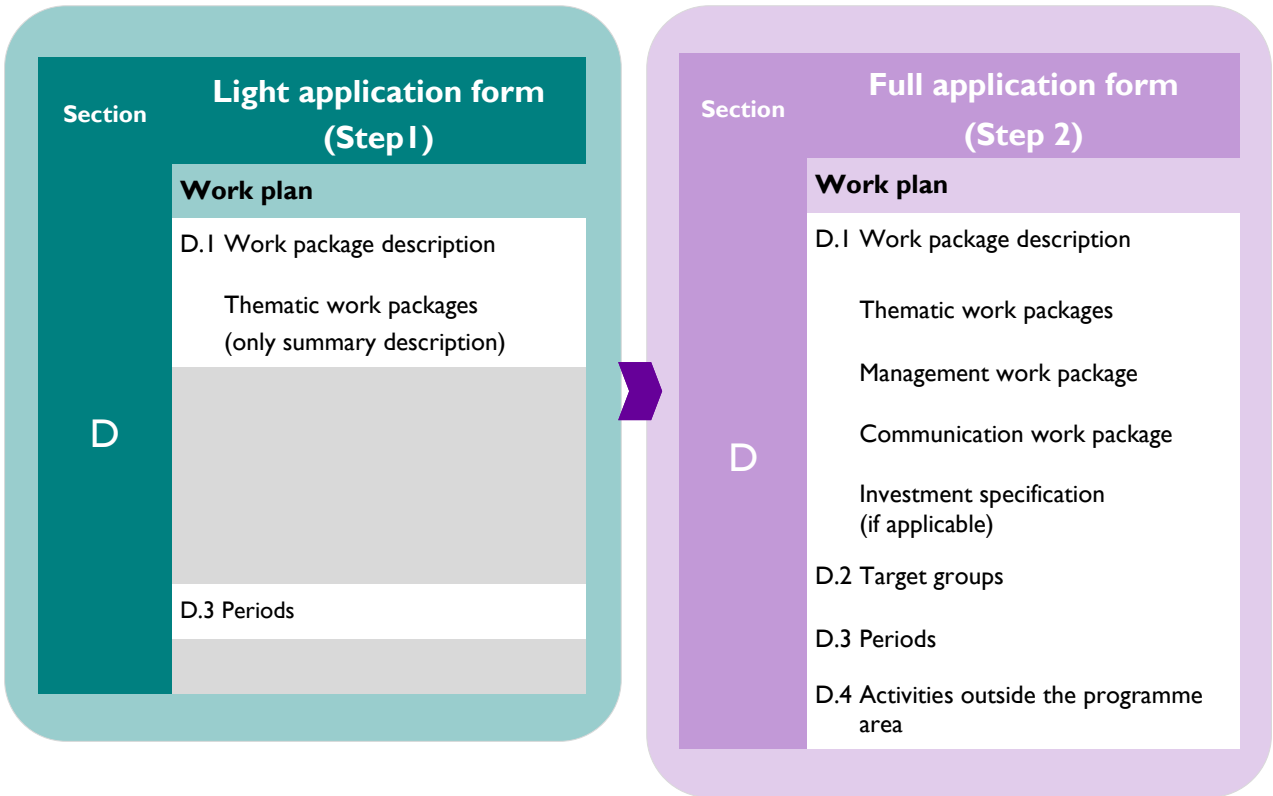
- ◆ Visits to the project website
- ◆ Participants at project events
- ◆ Event participants satisfied with information provided
- ◆ Joint communication activities implemented with external stakeholders

In the application form targets for all communication result indicators have to be set, their progress will have to be reported during project implementation.

Additional guidance on the above mentioned indicators and their definitions in order to ensure a common understanding of their scope and meaning is provided in annex III of the manual.

IV.2.4. Section D – Work plan

IV.2.4.1. Introduction to the work plan



The project work plan describes the activities which will be performed by the project in order to deliver the outputs necessary for achieving the project specific objectives. The work plan is composed of a set of work packages, part of them to be defined by the applicants.

The programme foresees three different types of work packages and a specification of investments (see table below).

In the light application form (step 1) only basic information on the thematic work packages (see chapter IV.2.4.2) has to be provided. Content-related activities linked to the achievement of the project objectives and results should be described.

Work package descriptions dedicated to management and communication as well as investment specifications are only to be provided in step 2 of the call.

Table 2 - Types of work packages (WP)

WP type	Mandatory	Content	Light AF/Full AF
Thematic	YES	Content-related activities linked to the achievement of the project objectives and results WP title to be defined by the partnership reflecting the intended result of the WP. <i>From one to max. four thematic work packages per project</i>	Light application form (step 1): only summary description needed
Management	YES	Project management and coordination activities <i>One management WP per project</i>	Only applicable for the full application form (step 2)
Communication	YES	Communication, knowledge management and dissemination activities linked to the project specific objectives <i>One communication WP per project</i>	Only applicable for the full application form (step 2)
Investment specification	Only for investments above EUR 15.000	Applicable only if the project foresees investment(s). <i>Each investment is to be described by a separate investment specification. Such specification is to be filled-in only if the total value of the concerned investment <u>exceeds EUR 15.000 of total costs</u></i> Investment title is to be defined by the partnership reflecting its focus.	Only applicable for the full application form (step 2)

At the beginning of the work plan section, a **work package overview** list is displayed which is automatically filled-in according to information included in the subsequent work packages description .

Step 2:

In the full application form also the overall project time line in a Gantt chart is displayed. The chart is automatically generated on the basis of information inserted in the work plan and it visualises the timing of all work packages and project outputs and deliverables.

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In general, a work package is characterised by the following:

- ◆ Work package objective
- ◆ Clear roles and responsibilities of project partners
- ◆ Composed by a number of activities (recommended range of not more than 4-6 activities per work package)
- ◆ Must produce at least one output (only applicable to thematic work packages)
- ◆ Defined by a start and end date
- ◆ Logical linkage with other work packages

The following figure illustrates the relationship between project activities, outputs and deliverables (applicable to thematic work packages).

Figure 3:
Relationship between project activities, outputs and deliverables (applicable to thematic work packages)

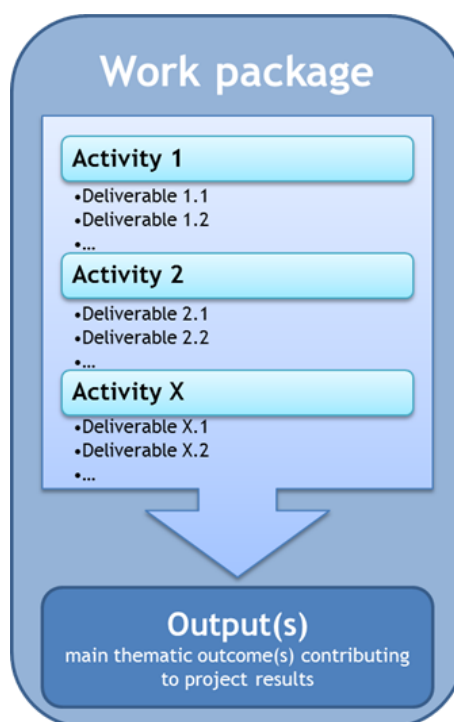


Table 3 - Definitions of outputs, activities and deliverables

Term	Definition
Project outputs	Are the outcomes obtained following the implementation of project activities paid with project funds (i.e. strategy/action plan, tool, pilot action, training etc.). Each output should be captured by a programme output indicator and should directly contribute to the achievement of the project result. Each thematic work package must foresee at least one output. See also further explanations on output types below.
Project activities	Each work package is divided into activities (ideally not more than 4-6 activities per work package). Activities have to lead to the development of one or more project outputs. For each activity the start and the end month as well as the indicative cost must be specified.
Project deliverables	Each activity should include one or more deliverables (e.g. analysis report, feasibility study etc.) that contribute to the achievement of project outputs. All small steps of a single activity, such as stakeholder meeting documentations, working groups etc., do not need to be listed as separate deliverables, but should be aggregated into one deliverable, e.g. a qualitative report describing the stakeholder involvement.

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In addition, a document summarising the main outcome (e.g. strategy document, documentation of pilot action etc.) has to be provided also for each output.

EXAMPLE

The output of a thematic work package will be action plans for the reduction of air pollution in functional urban areas for four cities.

In order to achieve this output, several activities with the following deliverables are foreseen, such as:

Activity 1: *Analysis of the current air quality situation and collection of best practices*

⇒ *Deliverable 1.1 : Study on air quality for the participating four cities*

Activity 2: *Analysis of air quality policy framework*

⇒ *Deliverable 2.1: Transnational report on policy framework*

Activity 3: *Stakeholder involvement*

⇒ *Deliverable 3.1: Concept on how to involve relevant stakeholders in the four cities*

⇒ *Deliverable 3.2: Summary report on stakeholder involvement*

Activity 4: *Elaboration of transnational action plan*

⇒ *Deliverable 4.1: Transnational action plan concept*

Activity 5: *Adaptation of the transnational action plan to the local context*

⇒ *Deliverable 5.1: Action plan for city A*

⇒ *Deliverable 5.2: Action plan for city B*

⇒ *Deliverable 5.3: Action plan for city C*

⇒ *Deliverable 5.4: Action plan for city D*

Output: Four action plans developed *for four central European cities (to be documented as one report summarising the work package activities and their outcomes related to the action plan development)*

Output indicator: *“Number of strategies and action plans for the improvement of environmental quality in functional urban areas developed and/or implemented”*

Indicator quantification/target: *4*

IV.2.4.2. Work package description (D.1)

Work package type: Thematic work package

Thematic work packages describe the **core “thematic” activities** carried out within the project and the related outputs. Thematic work packages must be limited to a **maximum of four**.

The work package title should reflect the strategic transnational focus and the intended results of the work package rather than the planned activities.

In the light application form (step 1) only a summary of the thematic work packages is required. This should include:

- ◆ The main objective(s) of the work package and a summary description of its contents (including activities and foreseen outputs);
- ◆ A summary description of how partners will be involved;
- ◆ An indicative budget for the work package (in percent of the total project budget);

- ◆ If applicable, information whether one or more investments linked to the respective thematic work package is/are foreseen (please note that no separate investment specification is required in step 1).

The guidance below shows how to set up a work package for the full application form (step 2). Applicants are strongly recommended to make themselves familiar with this already during step 1 of the call.

Step 2:

In the full application form the basic work package description of the light application form has to be further elaborated by describing also the planned activities as well as the outputs and deliverables foreseen which will contribute to reaching the project objectives and results. If required, changes to the preliminary work package structure as defined in the light application form (step 1) are possible. It is to be kept in mind, however, that the project objectives cannot be changed between step 1 and 2.

Types of outputs

The Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme has pre-defined four categories of project outputs which put emphasis on policy support and implementation-oriented approaches (please see part B chapter II.3 for further information on this):

- ◆ Strategy and action plan development and/or implementation
- ◆ Tool development and/or implementation
- ◆ Pilot actions
- ◆ Trainings

For each programme specific objective a set of programme output indicators has been defined following the typology of outputs as indicated above. In order to provide project applicants with practical guidance and a common understanding of the definition of output indicators, more detailed information is provided in annex III (types of outputs and programme specific output indicators).

For each project output and deliverable, besides a brief description, also its quantification and planned delivery date have to be provided.

Each thematic work package must have at least one output.

In order to ensure a transparent work plan structure and to focus the activities within one work package, it is recommended to avoid foreseeing too many different output types (strategies, tools etc.) within a single work package. However, a work package can contain several outputs of the same type (e.g. 7 pilot actions in 7 different regions participating in a project).

Attention should be paid to how outputs can be used by the **target groups** addressed, as well as to their durability and transferability in order to achieve the intended results.

In this context the main targets groups for the work package outputs have to be chosen from a list of pre-defined target groups (see annex IV classification of target groups). It should be also described how those target groups and other stakeholders will be involved in the development of the foreseen outputs.

Whereas in the light application form (step 1) applicants have to provide general information on the **durability and transferability** of the foreseen outputs and results at project level - see chapter IV.2.3.2 (section C.2 of the application form), in the full application form (step 2) information on sustainability and transferability is required for the main project outputs at work package level.

Work package: management

The work package management is to be filled-in only in the full application form (step 2).

In order to successfully reach its objectives, the project has to set up a sound coordination and management structure (see also part C chapter V).

The project management has not only to ensure the implementation of the tasks described in the application form according to the foreseen timeline but, amongst others, also to:

- ◆ safeguard a clear division of tasks and effective involvement of the partners, efficient operational management and a sound information flow within the partnership
- ◆ set up a dedicated financial management system which includes the validation of expenditure by authorised national controllers
- ◆ set up tools monitoring the project performance, quality management and evaluations or reviews.

In addition, internal communication within the partnership forms part of the management work package.

The following four pre-defined and compulsory activities have to be foreseen within the management work package:

Table 4: Work package management - pre-defined activities

Pre-defined management activities	
Activity 1	Start-up activities (e.g. signature of the partnership agreement, kick off meeting, setting up of management structures, etc.)
Activity 2	Day to day project management, coordination (tools and procedures, incl. coordination meetings, monitoring of progress of activities and preparation of reports, quality management) and internal communication
Activity 3	Steering and monitoring of the project implementation (structure and procedures, meeting of the decision making bodies / steering committee / advisory board, appraisal of project progress and management such as evaluation and reviews)
Activity 4	Financial management (incl. monitoring of incurred expenditure, transfer of funds and cash flow management), preparation of necessary documentation in view of the validation of expenditure and of controls/audits

For each of the pre-defined activities the respective deliverables have to be defined. Please keep in mind that within the management work package no outputs are to be foreseen. Project outputs relate only to thematic achievements and are therefore only to be included in the thematic work packages.

Work package: communication

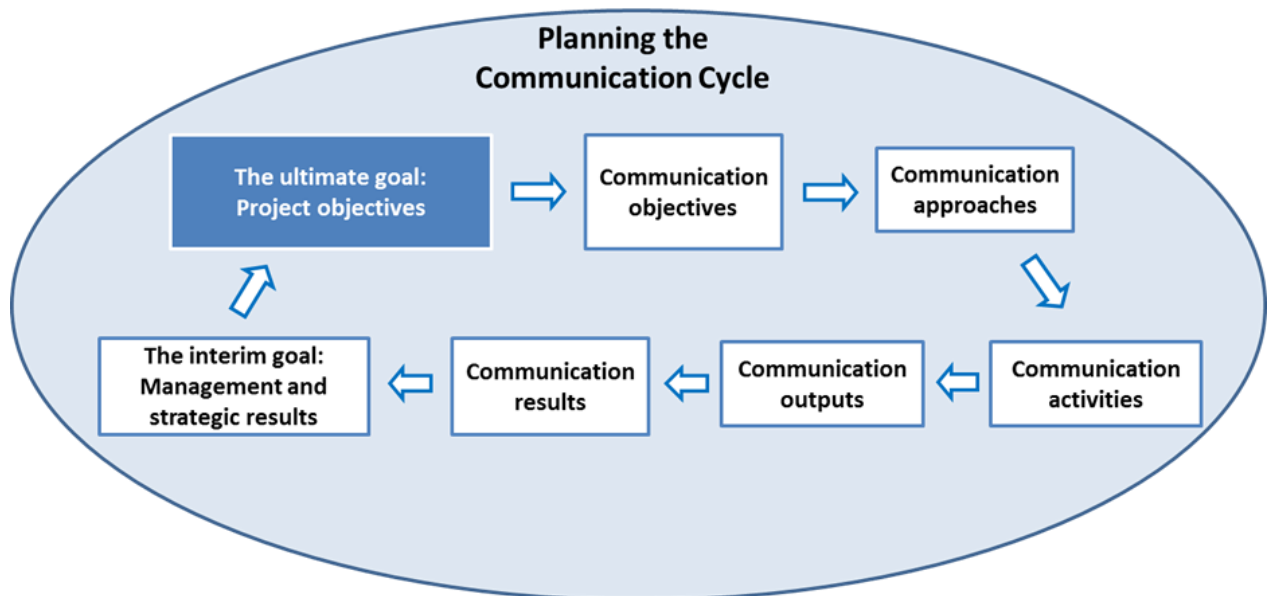
The work package communication is to be filled-in only in the full application form (step 2).

Communication is a horizontal project task which is not limited to one project partner. The capacity to communicate has to be built among all project partners and all partners need to be involved in communication activities. The coordination of all communication planning and implementation lies with the leader of this work package in close cooperation with the lead partner.

Communication plays a strategic role in successful CENTRAL EUROPE projects. Communication helps projects to achieve the change they aim for with their thematic activities. When developing project communication objectives it is thus important to bear in mind that these objectives have to be intrinsically linked to the specific project objectives defined earlier on.

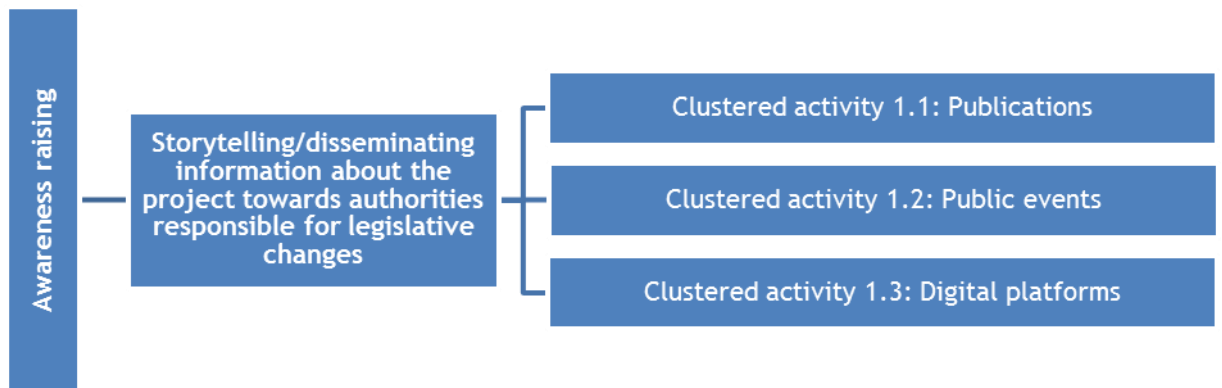
Objectives, approaches and activities: How to plan communication?

Starting point for relevant project communication is to choose **communication objectives** linked to specific project objectives. In a second step, **communication approaches** (i.e. the methodology) need to be defined, which outline how a communication objective will be reached; **communication activities** have then to be linked to these approaches and to target specific audiences with specific messages.



In the application form projects have to define how communication will contribute to reaching specific project objectives. It is expected to define approaches how projects want to reach these communication objectives in view of specific project target audience(s) (see annex IV for types of target groups). Based on these approaches, communication activities finally have to be planned and implemented. An example of how they build on each other is provided below:

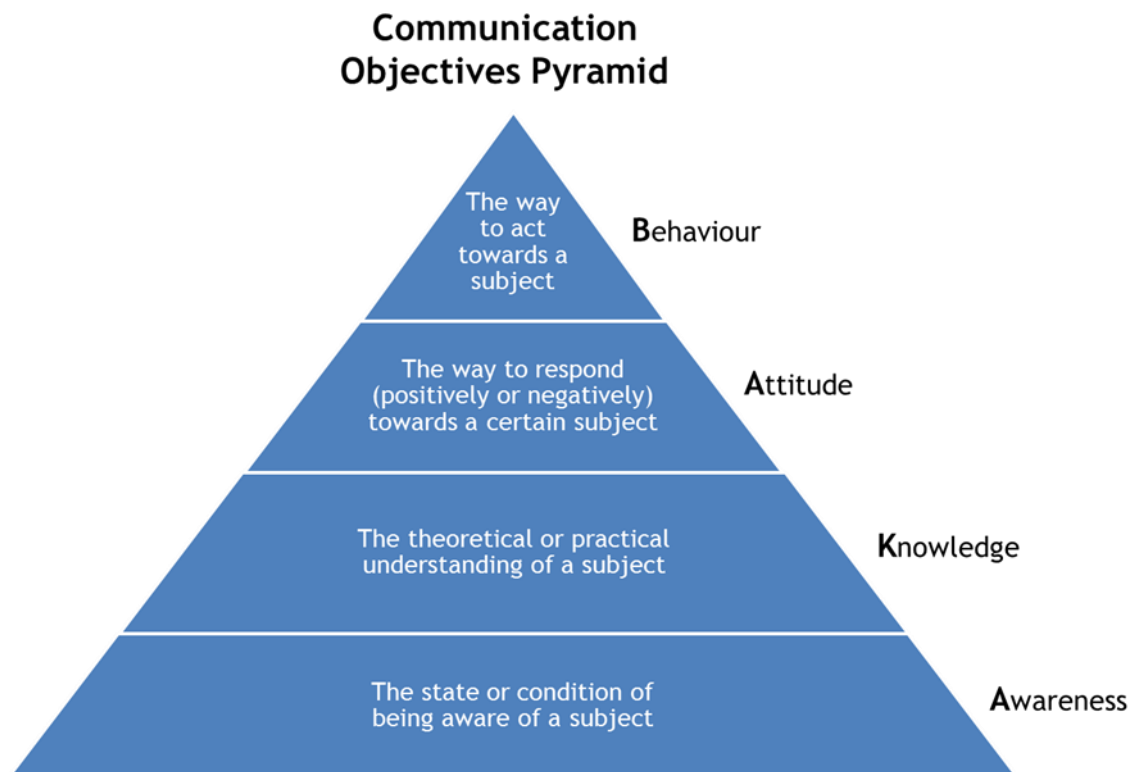
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Communication objectives, approaches and activities are described below.

Communication objectives: What can communications do to reach a specific project objective? The first step is to determine what a project would like to achieve by communicating. To facilitate the choice of communication objectives for the projects, the programme has pre-defined four basic objectives:

- ◆ Raise awareness
- ◆ Increase knowledge
- ◆ Influence attitude
- ◆ Change behaviour



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For each specific project objective one or more of the above communication objectives (building on each other as pictured in the pyramid) might be chosen. For each communication objective the approach has to be further specified in the next step.

Communication approaches: How can communication objectives be reached in view of a specific audience? Which channels and tactics are to be used for reaching which audience? Defining the methodological approach requires a closer look at your audiences' habits, environments, attitudes, etc. The aim is to identify the best ways of how to get messages across to them. Does the project want to cooperate closely with them or rather build up public pressure? Should the audience hear or rather feel the message (appealing to the mind or the heart)?

The project should shortly describe what kind of approach it plans to follow to reach the chosen objective.

EXAMPLE

Projects could first use large-scale dissemination and story-telling to raise overall awareness and, after that, concentrate on rather focused training targeted at specific audiences to improve their knowledge. Other possible approaches could include visualisation for building basic knowledge and then, based on that, open and transparent dialogue for changing attitudes. Building up public pressure for changing attitudes or behaviour might also be an approach of choice for some projects.

Communication activities: With which concrete tools and activities can an approach be implemented best? Activities and tools come at the very end of the planning process. The project should think creatively about specific kinds of events, digital measures or any other communication activity that helps you to implement the approach you defined.

To facilitate the choice of communication activities for the projects, the programme has pre-defined clusters of basic activities from which the projects have to choose in a first step:

- ◆ **Start-up activities** include the preparation of a communication strategy at the project kick-off phase. The programme will provide a template of the communication strategy which could be adopted by the projects. Furthermore basic communication tools including the project website as well as office materials (event materials, etc.) will have to be implemented according to a binding project design manual provided by the programme. The development of individual project websites or project corporate identities will not be necessary (see explanation further below). Content maintenance (i.e. regular updates) of the project website has to be ensured.
- ◆ **Media relations** include all kind of activities leading to the publication of information about the project in print and digital news media, such as media releases and conferences, journalist on-site visits, editorial office visits, etc. As a general principle, the programme does not recommend paying for any publication of information in news media. If this is foreseen by a project, it has to be duly justified and pre-agreed with the MA/JS.
- ◆ **Publications** include any kind of print and digital product, such as leaflets, brochures, books and studies, which carry information about the project and its outputs.
- ◆ **Public events** include any kind of conference, campaign, road show or other larger-scale event activity, which communicate the project and its outputs to wider audiences.
- ◆ **Targeted events** include any kind of seminar, workshop, meeting, or other smaller-scale event activity, which communicate the project (or even part of it) and relevant outputs to targeted audiences.
- ◆ **Digital activities** include any kind of social media and multimedia activity (e.g. videos, animations etc.) beyond the project website hosted by the programme website (see start-up activity).
- ◆ **Promotional materials** should be limited to mainly office and event materials. A list of authorised promotional materials will be provided to projects⁴, while additional materials not included in this list shall be previously authorised by the MA/JS and shall be clearly linked to awareness-raising on the project's overall objective.

⁴ This list is expected to be made available when launching step 2 of the first call.

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For the activity clusters above an indicative budget as well as start and end dates will have to be provided in the communication work package.

The activity clusters will also have to be broken down into more specific deliverables. For example the cluster “Publications” could be broken down into “Studies”, “Leaflets”, “Infographics” or other fitting deliverables. It is important to quantify these specific deliverables and to briefly describe them. Please indicate also to which communication objective a specific deliverable will contribute.

Investment specification (if applicable)

The investment specification is to be filled-in only in the full application form (step 2).

Whereas in the light application form (step 1) pilot investments (if applicable) had to be briefly described under the thematic work package to which the investment is linked, with in the full application form (step 2) **a separate investment specification for each investment exceeding EUR 15.000 total cost** has to be provided. Investments below EUR 15.000 total costs should be only described in the thematic work package and linked to a deliverable.

Irrespective of whether a separate investment specification is required, a specification at the level of each cost item composing the investment is to be provided under section E “Partner budget” of the application form with regard to **only** two following budget lines:

- ◆ Items referring to budget line 5 “Thematic equipment” (e.g. air quality monitoring equipment); and/or
- ◆ Items referring to budget line 6 “Infrastructure and works” (e.g. setting up ex-novo of a building or the adaptation of an existing infrastructure).

All other costs concerning an investment, but belonging to other budget lines, should be included under the thematic work package to which the investment is linked (see below).

For further information on the above mentioned budget lines, please refer to part B chapter II.7.3 on budget line specifications.

Guidance on the requirements for a pilot investment to be financed by the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme is provided in part B chapter II.3 describing the types of activities supported by the programme.

Within the investment specification the realisation of the investment is to be defined as output. All activities and deliverables linked to the investment (e.g. feasibility study, preparatory analysis etc.) have to be included solely in the thematic work package to which the pilot investment is linked to and not under the investment specification. Therefore related costs (such as staff costs, external expertise etc.) have to be included under the respective thematic work package.

EXAMPLE: Investment - Energy management for a public school

The goal of the investment is setting up an energy monitoring system in a public school for improving its energy management. The building is owned by the project partner in charge of the investment. The investment consists of:

- *Works such as the installation of electrical wiring and fittings estimated at EUR 12.000 total cost.*
- *Thematic equipment such as smart meters, computer and monitoring software estimated at EUR 9.000 total cost.*

The total investment costs (composed of thematic equipment and works) amount to EUR 21.000, therefore the investment specification in the full application form has to be provided for this investment.

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Investments for which an investment specification has to be provided (i.e. exceeding EUR 15.000 total costs) should be linked to a pilot action carried out within a thematic work package.

The investment specification shall include the following information:

- ◆ Investment title
- ◆ Start and end date of investment implementation
- ◆ Technical description of the investment
- ◆ Justification (relevance, transnational added value, transferability etc.)
- ◆ Investment location (NUTS3)
- ◆ Risks associated with the investment (including potential negative effects on the environment and mitigation measures)
- ◆ Investment preparation (e.g. requirements and permissions), if applicable
- ◆ Investment ownership and durability
- ◆ Target groups of the investment

The target value should only reflect an active involvement of target groups, e.g. participation in trainings, interviews, workshops, local stakeholder groups, advisory boards, testing of tools, implementation of pilot actions etc.

IV.2.4.3. Target groups (D.2)

This section is to be filled-in only in the full application form (step 2).

This section provides an aggregation of the target groups which have been specified within the thematic work packages for the outputs obtained in these.

A list of the target groups which were chosen within the thematic work packages is automatically displayed. Those target groups should be further specified at the level of the entire project, including also an estimation of the target value set for targeting each group.

In this respect please refer also to annex IV which provides a classification of types of target groups.

IV.2.4.4. Periods (D.3)

Out of technical reasons, in order to be able to fill-in section E/F “Budget” you have to firstly open section D.3 “Periods” (see screenshot below).

Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE
CE15 Show More
Welcome

A - Project overview > B - Partner > C - Project Description > **D - Workplan** > E/F - Partner budget > G - Annexes > Attachments J T S > Documents

Define Periods

Project periods have been automatically defined.

SAVE

Save As Pdf File
Attachment Upload
Exit
Help
Copy Project
Logout

EN

eMS electronic monitoring system
2_0_10

Following this step, the eMS will automatically generate the project reporting periods according to the project start and end date as entered in section A. Please note that no data have to be entered in this section.

IV.2.4.5. Activities outside the programme area (D.4)

This section is to be filled-in only in the full application form (step 2).

In case activities are foreseen to be carried out outside the programme area (EU or third countries), those activities should be described and justified providing information on the following:

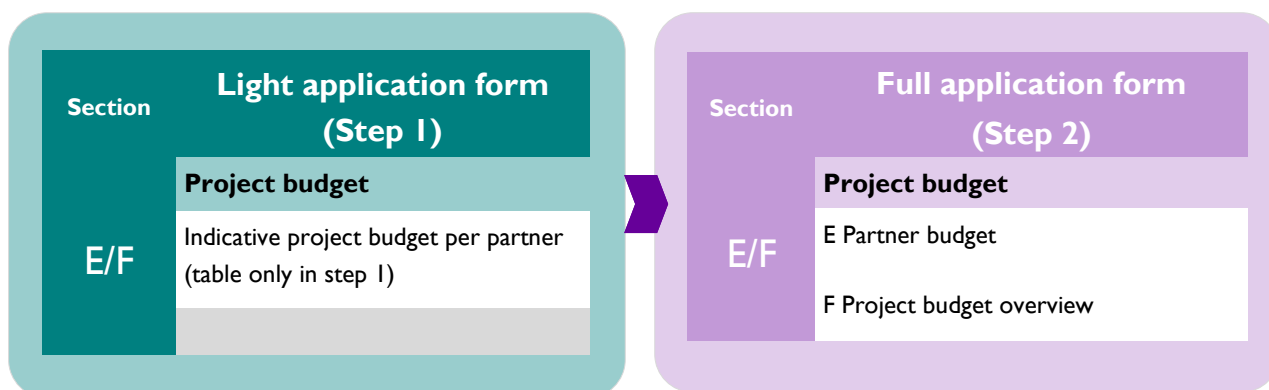
- ◆ What are the benefits for the regions of the programme area?
- ◆ Why are those activities essential for the implementation of the project?

The indicative ERDF allocated to such activities within the project shall also be indicated under this section.

Please also note that activities to be carried out outside the programme area which are not specified in this section of the application form will have to be previously authorised by the MA/JS in order to be considered as eligible.

For further information on the location of project activities please refer to part B chapter II.2.

IV.2.5. Section E/F – Project budget



Please note that the budget per partner can be filled in only after having defined at least one thematic work package in section D as well as after the creation of reporting periods in the eMS following the opening of section D.3 “Periods” (as explained in chapter IV.2.4.4).

In the light application form (step 1) only an indicative total budget for each project partner has to be inserted.

Applicants have to include, under the section E/F of the light application form, the provisional total budget allocated to each partner.

The partner table is partly pre-filled by the system with data on project partners entered under section B. As also explained in part C chapter VII, please remember that information to be included in the light application form (step 1) should be based on a first draft of the project budget already shared and agreed between all partners. This is of outmost importance due to the fact that only limited budget flexibility is allowed between step 1 and 2 of the call. **An application where the total budget is increased by more than 20 % becomes non-eligible for funding** (for further details please refer to chapter I).

Step 2:

The starting point for the project budget is section E “Partner budget”. The budget of each partner is broken down per budget line, work package and reporting period. For further information on how to design a sound budget please see part C chapter VII.

In order to fill-in the budget section applicants first have to fill-in the following sections of the application form:

- ◆ Section B “Project partners” (at least the partner organisation data):
- ◆ Section D “Work plan” (at least project work packages and reporting periods must be defined)

Steps to be undertaken when defining the budget in section E of the full application form are the following:

- a. To enter the budget of the partner click on the “Define Budget” button in section E “Partner budget”, and select the partner for which you want to enter the budget;
- b. At first, it is important to choose whether the concerned partner organisation will charge staff costs to the project according to real costs or a flat rate. Please note that, after the submission of the application form, **the partner will not have the possibility to change this choice anymore**. For further information please refer to part B chapter II.7.3.

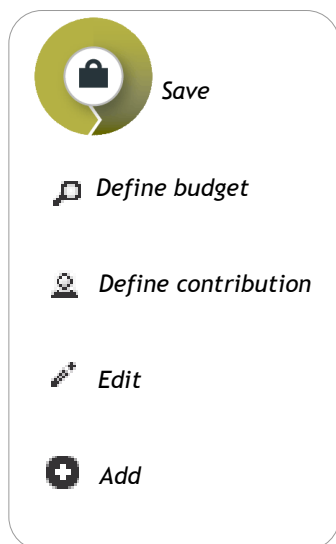
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c. At this point three tables will be displayed on the screen:

- ⇒ The first table displaying budget lines and work packages;
- ⇒ The second table displaying budget lines and reporting periods;
- ⇒ The third table displaying reporting periods and work packages.

The applicant can enter the partner budget only in the first table “Budget lines and work packages”. The other two tables will be automatically updated once budget data are entered.



d. From the table “Budget lines and work packages”, the applicant has to click the “Edit Button” corresponding to the budget line and work package to be filled in. A pop-up window will open where the applicant has to enter the total amount allocated to each reporting period for the chosen budget line and work package. The following specifications apply to the different budget lines as well as to preparation costs and revenues:

- ⇒ For budget line 1 “Staff costs”: one aggregated amount is to be included for the entire work package and reporting period. Partner institutions choosing the flat rate option for the reimbursement of staff costs cannot enter data, since the budget allocated to this budget line is automatically calculated;
- ⇒ For budget line 2 “Office and administrative expenditure”: data cannot be entered since the budget allocated to this budget line is automatically calculated.
- ⇒ For budget line 3 “Travel and accommodation costs”: one aggregated amount is to be included for the entire work package and reporting period.
- ⇒ For budget line 4 “External expertise and services costs”, budget line 5 “Equipment expenditure” and budget line 6 “Infrastructure and works expenditure”: a breakdown of the budget line at the level of each item included under this budget line is to be created by clicking on the “Add Button”. A pop-up window will appear in which the applicant has to specify for each concerned item to be purchased the number of the deliverable as listed in section D of the application form as well as the nature and quantity of the item. In the case of equipment items, information is to be included also on the equipment type (i.e. “equipment for general office use” or “thematic equipment” - please see part B, chapter II.7.3). The budget allocated to the single cost item has then to be entered at the corresponding work package and reporting period following the procedure described above.
- ⇒ The lump sum for preparation costs must be allocated to the concerned partner(s) by creating a new line under budget line 4 “External expertise and services costs” following the same procedure as described above. In this new line it must be specified that it refers to the lump sum for preparation costs and the amount allocated to the partner must be entered under work package 0 and period 0. Please remember that the total amount allocated to a project for preparation costs cannot exceed EUR 15.000. For further information on preparation costs please see part B chapter II.7.4.
- ⇒ In case that the project proposal is expected to generate revenues (as specified under part B chapter II.7.5), the expected net revenues must be included in the relevant category available in the budget table. One aggregated amount is to be included for the entire work package and reporting period.

When entering data, please remember to regularly save by clicking the “Save Button” at the bottom of the pop-up window. If you close the window without saving your data will be lost!

e. Once the partner budget is inserted, information on national co-financing type and source is to be included by clicking the “Define Contribution Button” available in the partner list of section E “Partner budget”. Under this section two tables are available. The first one presents the overall co-financing of the partner according to the applicable co-financing rate (automatically filled-in by the system), while the second one refers to the partner co-financing sources and is to be filled in by the applicant. In the table on partner co-financing sources, the system by default includes the partners’ own resources as co-financing source.

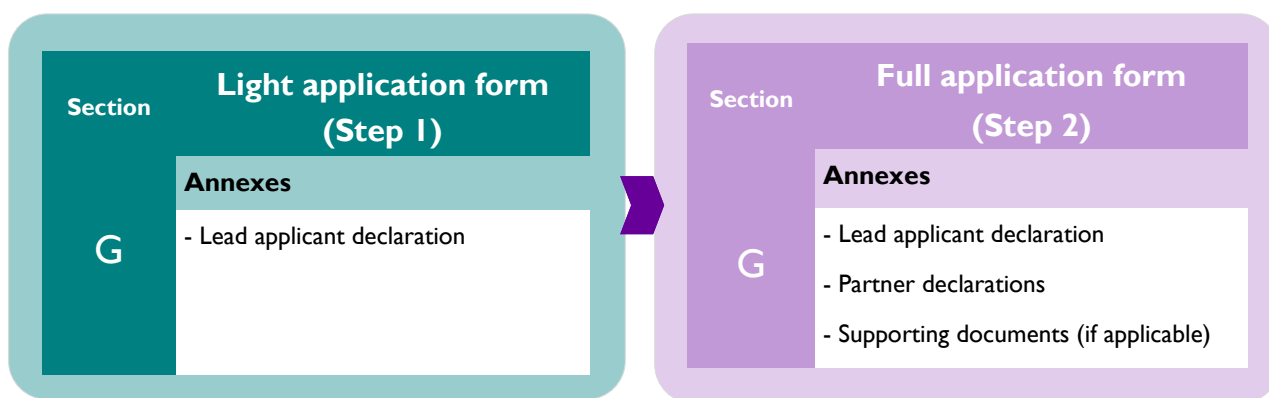
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To add other co-financing sources the applicant has to click on the “Add Button” and fill-in information on the type of source, the legal status and the amount. Please check carefully the consistency of the total amount of co-financing manually entered in the second table with the amount automatically calculated in the first table!

When entering data, please remember to regularly save by clicking the “Save Button” on top of the main menu (left side of the screen). If you leave a section without saving your data will be lost!

The overall project budget coming from data entered at partner level can be seen in section F “Project budget overview” of the application form. Each budget table available under section F can also be exported as an Excel file.

IV.2.6. Section G – Annexes



The template of **lead applicant declaration for step 1** is provided as annex V.

The declaration has to be filled in in all its parts and signed by the legal representative (or delegated person) of the lead applicant and has to be uploaded in the eMS as a scanned document. In case of signature by a delegated person, the signed declaration must be accompanied by a document confirming the validity of such delegation.

ATTENTION

Please note that in case of missing signature of the lead applicant declaration, the application becomes non-eligible.

Step 2:

The content of the **lead applicant declaration for step 2** is more extensive than that of the declaration for step 1. They are differentiated according to the type of institution applying as lead applicant.

In addition, within step 2 each partner has to provide a **partner declaration** differentiated according to the type of institution applying as project partner.

The templates of lead applicant and partner declarations are provided as annex V.

Declarations have to be filled in in all their parts and signed by the legal representatives (or delegated persons) of the concerned institutions (lead applicant or partners) and have to be uploaded in the system as scanned documents. In case of signature by delegated persons, each affected declaration must be accompanied by a document confirming the validity of such delegation.

ATTENTION

Please note that in case of missing signature of the lead applicant declaration, the application becomes non-eligible.

Further supporting documents of administrative and financial nature have to be provided as annex to the full application form in case of private lead applicants. They consist of the following:

- a. The filled-in "Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE simplified financial statement" (provided as annex VII) in which the private lead applicant is asked to transcribe - under its responsibility - the official financial data of the latest available financial documents. The simplified financial statement table must be completely filled in and uploaded as an Excel file.
- b. The most recent balance sheet and profit and loss account, to be uploaded as a scanned pdf file, printable in A4 paper format. If the lead applicant does not yet have a balance sheet and profit and loss account, because the organisation has only recently been created, it must provide a management/business plan (for at least 12 months in the future) with the financial data prepared in accordance with the standard required under national legislation.
- c. An audit report issued by an approved external auditor certifying the accounts for the last financial year. This document is to be delivered by a professionally qualified auditor who is independent from the applicant's organisation and who is listed in Member States official auditors registers. The audit document must be uploaded as a scanned .pdf file, printable in A4 paper format. In the case of a newly created organisation, the auditor's certificate provided must be based on a management/business plan where the financial data are presented in accordance with relevant national provisions.

ATTENTION

Please note that for both step 1 and step 2 only scanned versions of the signed documents have to be provided. Signed hard-copies of the application form and its annexes are to be provided only when an application is recommended for funding (i.e. during the contracting phase).

V. Project assessment and contracting

The assessment of received applications follows a standardised procedure safeguarding the principles of transparency and equal treatment as described below.

V.1 Assessment procedure - step 1

A. Formal/administrative compliance check

Formal/administrative requirements to be observed when submitting the light application form (step 1) are:

- ◆ Submission of the proposal before the deadline set in the call announcement;
- ◆ Submission of the application form completed in all its parts and in English language ;
- ◆ Respect of the minimum partnership requirements (i.e. at least three financing partners from at least three countries, being at least two of the partners located in CENTRAL EUROPE regions);
- ◆ Respect of the lead applicant requirements (i.e. lead applicants cannot be located in regions outside the programme area, with the exception of assimilated partners; international organisations acting under international law cannot be lead applicants);
- ◆ Submission of signed lead applicant declarations filled-in in the template provided by the programme without any modification, as further explained in chapter IV.2.6.

Proposals **failing in any of the above requirements will be regarded as non-eligible and will not be further processed.**

Since all application forms are submitted online via the online submission system, most of the above formal/administrative requirements will be automatically checked by the system during the submission of the application in order to help applicants avoiding mistakes. However, the check of the compliance of each proposal with the above requirements, including the correctness of the submitted annexes, will be carried out during the quality assessment of the proposal.

In case of applications bearing mistakes of formal/administrative nature other than the ones listed above, lead applicants will have the possibility to heal such mistakes. Lead applicants will be asked by the MA/JS to provide corrected documents, through eMS upload, within **5 working days** from the date of written request from the MA/JS. **In case that lead applicants fail to upload the corrected documents on eMS within the given timeframe, the project proposal shall be regarded as non-eligible and shall not be further processed.**

The result of the administrative compliance check will be communicated to the lead applicant following the decision of the programme monitoring committee on the matter.

B. Quality assessment

The quality assessment of the light application forms focuses on the relevance and partnership of the application. Out of the full set of assessment criteria, as described in the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Cooperation Programme document (under section 2 “Guiding principles for selection of operations”), within step 1 only the **strategic assessment criteria** are applied.

The figure below gives an overview on the quality assessment criteria applied to proposals submitted within step 1 of the call.

Figure 4: Quality assessment criteria (step 1)



The assessment grid is structured according to the concerned assessment criteria and sub-criteria which are appraised using the following scale:

5 “excellent”	The application fulfils the given criterion to an excellent level and the provided information is sufficient, clear and coherent for assessing the criterion.
4 “good”	The application fulfils well the given criterion; however the provided information includes minor shortcomings.
3 “adequate”	The application fulfils the given criterion to a sufficient level however some aspects of the given criterion have not been met fully or not explained in full clarity or detail.
2 “poor”	The application has serious shortcomings in fulfilling the given criterion and/or the provided information is of low quality.
1 “insufficient”	The application does not fulfil the given criterion/or information required is missing.

The quality assessment of step 1 will be performed according to the strategic criteria “relevance” and “partnership”, by applying the following guiding questions under each criterion:

Strategic assessment criteria - step 1	
1. Relevance	
1.1	How relevant is the project proposal in relation to the targeted programme specific objective and the expected result? How well are common and territorial challenges and needs of the programme area in relation to the targeted programme specific objective addressed?
1.2	Are the specific project objectives and expected results clearly defined and consistent?
1.3	Is the importance and added value of the transnational cooperation approach to the topic addressed clearly demonstrated?
2. Partnership	
2.1	Does the lead applicant have sufficient experience and capacity to manage a transnational cooperation project?
2.2	Does the partnership include sufficient competences and expertise to implement the planned activities and to achieve the planned results?
2.3	Does the partnership composition reflect the transnational cooperation approach?

The decision on projects to be invited to step 2 of the call will be made by the monitoring committee of the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme on the basis of results of the assessment described above.

The number of applications invited to step 2 will ensure an adequate competition in step 2. Accordingly, pre-selection for step 2 can by no means be considered already as a selection of the project to be funded.

V.2 Assessment procedure - step 2

A. Formal/administrative compliance check

Formal/administrative requirements to be observed when submitting the full application form (step 2 of the call) are:

- ◆ Submission of the proposal before the deadline set in the invitation;
- ◆ Submission of the application form completed in all its parts and in English language ;
- ◆ Respect of the compulsory continuity requirements between step 1 and 2 of the call (i.e. project focus, partnership and budget, as presented in chapter I);
- ◆ Submission of the lead applicant and all partner declarations signed and filled in in the template provided by the programme without any modification, as further explained in chapter IV.2.6.
- ◆ In case of private lead applicant, availability of all other supporting documents as listed in chapter IV.2.6.

Proposals failing in any of the above requirements will be regarded as non-eligible and will not be further processed.

Similar to applications submitted within step 1 of the call, the online submission system will automatically check the respect of most of the above formal/administrative requirements in order to help applicants avoid mistakes. However, the check of the compliance of each proposal with the above requirements, including the correctness of the submitted annexes, will be carried out during the quality assessment of the proposal.

In case of applications bearing mistakes of formal/administrative nature other than the ones listed above, lead applicants will have the possibility to heal such mistakes. Lead applicants will be asked by the MA/JS to provide corrected documents, through eMS upload, within 5 working days from the date of written healing request from the MA/JS. In case that lead applicants fail to upload the corrected documents on eMS within the given timeframe, the project proposal shall be regarded as non-eligible and shall not be further processed.

The result of the administrative compliance check will be communicated to the lead applicant following decision of the monitoring committee on the matter.

B. Financial capacity check for private lead applicants

On the basis of the information contained in the documents submitted by private lead applicants (as listed in chapter IV.2.6), a financial capacity check is performed when assessing project proposals submitted in step 2 of the call. The check is aimed at assessing whether "the applicant has stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain his activity throughout the project implementation period and to participate in its funding⁵. As a general principle, the financial capacity check will have to demonstrate that the private lead applicant:

- ◆ Has sufficient liquidity - is able to cover its short-term commitments;
- ◆ Is financially autonomous;
- ◆ Is solvent - capable of covering its medium and long-term commitments;
- ◆ Is profitable - generates profits, or at least with self-financing capacity.

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A project proposal shall be regarded as **non-eligible** and shall not be further processed in case that the private lead applicant falls in one of the following situations:

- ◆ The auditor's report or auditor-certified balance sheet and profit and loss account provided with the project proposal has not given an "unqualified opinion" about the private lead applicant's financial viability;
- ◆ On the basis of the financial viability test (see here below), it is concluded that:
 - ⇒ The private lead applicant does not have the financial capacity to cover its share of co-financing within the proposed project period; and/or
 - ⇒ The private lead applicant does not have the capacity to manage the financial amounts provided for in the budget within the proposed project period.

The **financial viability** test of the private lead applicant is carried out as follows:

For private commercial organisations, at least criteria No. 1 and 2 of the following four criteria must be respected:	
1.	The ratio "total grant requested divided by the number of project years" / "shareholders' equity" is lower than 1
2.	The ratio "current assets" / "current liabilities" is higher than 1
3.	The ratio "total debts" / "total assets" is lower than 0.8
4.	There is a positive operational profit
For private non-commercial organisations, at least two of the following three criteria must be respected:	
1.	The ratio "total grant requested divided by the number of project years" / "subsidies" is lower than 1
2.	The ratio "current assets" / "current liabilities" is higher than 1
3.	The ratio "total debts" / "total assets" is lower than 0.8

The Interreg CENTRAL EU-ROPE Programme provides a complimentary tool for calculating the ratios of the financial viability test (available for download on www.interreg-central/call). Please note that the use of this tool is under the sole responsibility of the applicants and programme bodies do not bear any responsibility for possible non-functioning or misuse of this tool.

Please note that **the programme does not perform the financial capacity check within step 1 of the call**. Moreover, as mentioned under chapter I it is not possible to change lead applicant between step 1 and step 2 of the call. When checked in step 2 of the call, the entire proposal will be rejected when the private lead applicant does not meet the necessary financial capacity criteria. This considered, **the programme strongly recommends private lead applicants to check their ability to fulfil the financial capacity criteria mentioned in this chapter already when applying in step 1.**

C. Legal status check

Checks on the correctness of the legal status as declared by the applicants will be carried out by competent national authorities of the concerned Member States. Such authorities might require additional documents in order to confirm the legal status declared by the applicants. Information on this will be published on the programme website under “country specific information” pages.

D. Analysis of state aid relevance

The analysis is aimed at checking the state aid relevance of activities planned to be carried out by undertakings within the project proposal.

The state aid analysis of proposals will be performed during the quality assessment of full applications submitted within step 2 of the call, on the basis of information included in the application form. During the state aid analysis, the MA/JS might approach lead applicants and/or partners in order to collect further information necessary for a proper assessment of state aid relevance of the proposal.

The result of the state aid assessment performed within step 2 of the call will be validated by the programme monitoring committee.

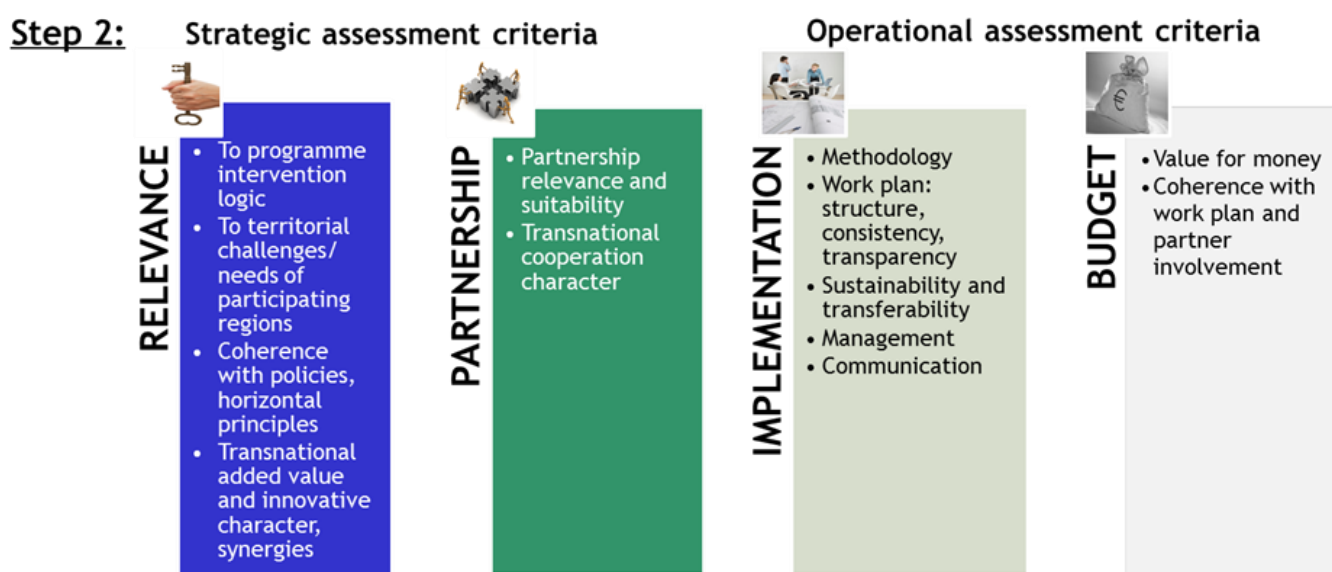
For further information on the approach followed by the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme with regard to state aid please refer to part B chapter II.7.7.

E. Quality assessment

Applications passing the checks described in the above points a) -and, where applicable, b) will enter into the quality assessment phase of step 2.

In step 2 the **full set of strategic and operational assessment criteria**, described under section 2 “Guiding principles for selection of operations” of the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Cooperation Programme document, will be applied. The following illustration provides an overview on the four assessment criteria.

Figure 5: Quality assessment criteria (step 2)



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The quality assessment will be performed applying the following guiding questions under each criterion. For the appraisal of criteria the same scale ranging from 1 to 5, as described for step 1, will be used.

Strategic assessment criteria - step 2	
1. Relevance	
1.1	How relevant is the project proposal in relation to the targeted programme specific objective and the expected result? How well are common and territorial challenges and needs of the programme area in relation to the targeted programme specific objective addressed?
1.2	Are the specific project objectives, expected results and outputs clearly defined and consistent?
1.3	Is the importance and added value of the transnational cooperation approach to the topic addressed clearly demonstrated?
1.4	How relevant is the project in relation to territorial challenges and needs of the participating regions?
1.5	How relevant is the project to the existing policy framework (at EU, national, regional levels) applicable for the thematic scope of the project? Are eventual contributions to macro-regional strategies clearly specified? How well does the project integrate horizontal principles (i.e. sustainable development, environment, equality)?
1.6	How far does the project go beyond existing practice in the sector and/or participating regions? If applicable, does it build on available knowledge and make use of synergies with other projects or initiatives?
2. Partnership	
2.1	Does the lead applicant have sufficient experience and capacity to manage a transnational cooperation project?
2.2	Is the partnership suitable and does it include sufficient competences/expertise to implement the planned activities and to achieve the expected results? In case of partners outside the programme area, is the added value of their participation duly justified?
2.3	Does the partnership composition reflect the transnational cooperation approach? Are all partners actively involved to jointly implement the foreseen activities and have a defined role?
Operational assessment criteria	
3. Implementation	
3.1	Is the planned approach/methodology suitable to obtain the intended outputs and results? In case of investments foreseen, are they clearly linked to reaching the project objectives and do they have a clear transnational character?
3.2	Are the work plan and timing of activities, deliverables and outputs realistic, consistent and transparent? Are activities, deliverables and outputs in a logical time-sequence? Is the overall project duration realistic to achieve the foreseen outputs?
3.3	How well does the project demonstrate the sustainability and transferability of outputs and results? To which extent are target groups (and other stakeholders) involved in the development of the outputs?
3.4	Does the management structure show sufficient potential to secure sound financial management and content wise management of the project?
3.5	Do communication objectives help reaching specific project objectives and bring about the change the project aims for with its thematic activities? Are defined communication approaches fitting these communication objectives in view of specific project target audiences? Are chosen activities and concrete tools best fitting the defined communication approaches?
4. Budget	
4.1	Does the total budget demonstrate value for money?
4.2	Is there coherence between project design and budget?
4.3	Are the financial contributions of the partners balanced and do they reflect partner responsibilities?

The quality assessment of applications submitted in step 2 of the call is based on the full application form containing much more comprehensive information than in step 1 and will cover more aspects. Furthermore, in the full application form some information could have changed compared to the light application form submitted in step 1. Therefore a completely new assessment also of the strategic criteria is carried out. This assessment is independent from the one performed in step 1, therefore the result of the assessment of strategic criteria performed in step 2 might differ from the result of step 1.

Decision on projects to be funded will be made by the monitoring committee of the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme on the basis of the results of the assessment described above.

V.3. Communication to lead applicants and resolution of complaints

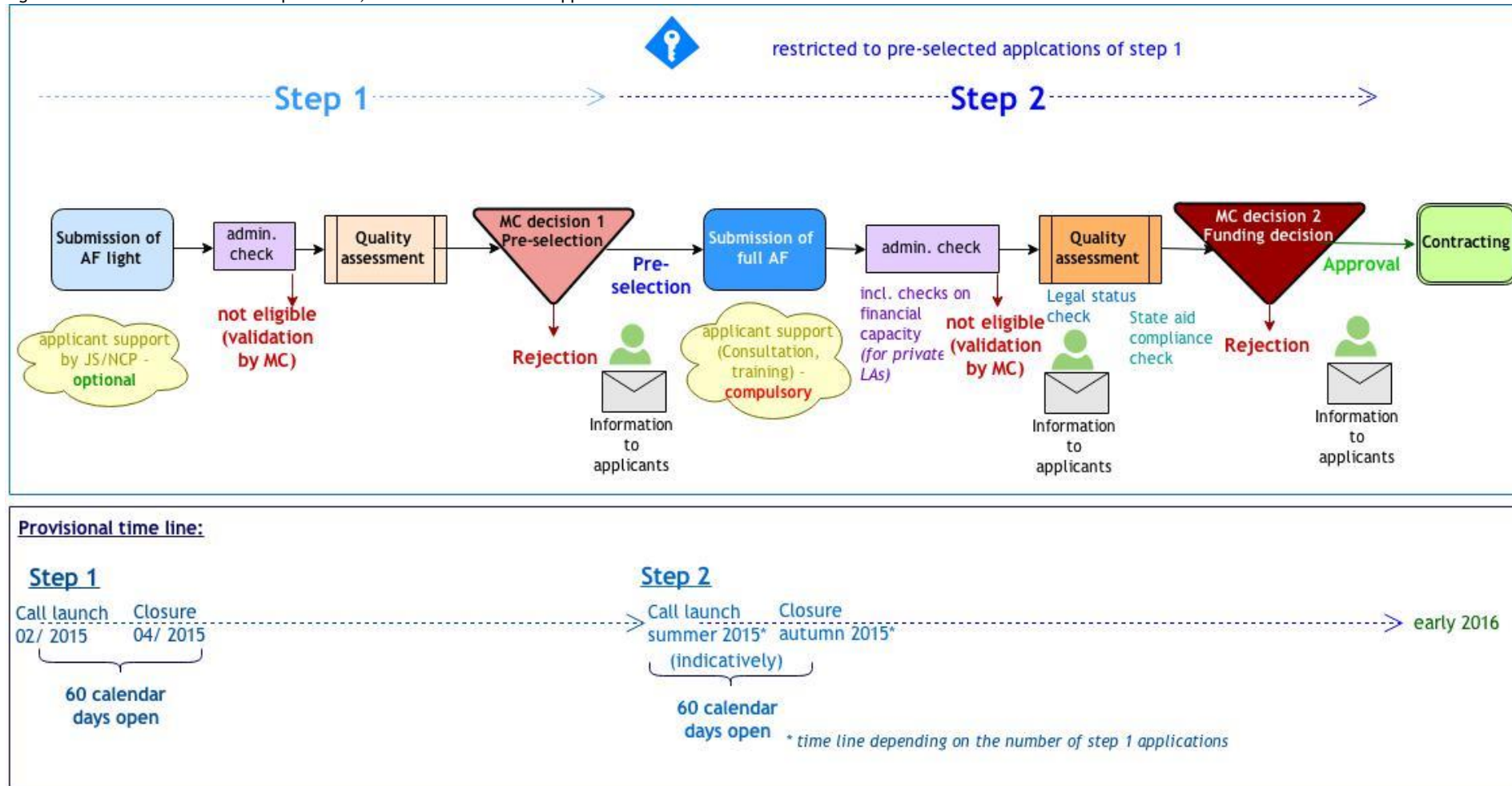
After the finalisation of each step of the call, the lead applicants will be notified in writing about the outcome of the respective step, notably the respective monitoring committee decision. In case of non-eligible or not-approved applications, information to lead applicants will include details on the reason for non-eligibility or non-approval.

In case that questions in relation to the assessment or selection procedure remain unsettled, the MA/JS will try to provide further clarifications through communication as may be deemed appropriate in that particular case. If reasons for complaints apply, a formal complaint can be filed by the lead applicant.

Further details on the procedure for complaints will be provided at the latest when communicating to lead applicants the result of step 1 of the call.

V.4. Application and assessment overview

Figure 1 - Assessment and selection procedure, communication to lead applicants



V.5. Contracting

Should the project proposal be selected for funding by the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE monitoring committee, it may have to fulfil conditions for approval before entering into contracting. In such case this will result in revisions of the submitted application form, to be carried out in the “contracting” phase. During this phase the lead applicant, in close exchange with the joint secretariat, has to make the necessary adaptations to the application form and to gather all relevant hardcopy documents within a given deadline.

ATTENTION

Please note that costs occurred by the partnership within the contracting phase are to be considered as covered by the lump-sum for preparation costs, paid to projects that successfully signed the subsidy contract with the MA (for further information please refer to part B chapter II.7.4). This considered, such costs cannot be claimed under project implementation costs.

If all conditions and requirements are fulfilled, a subsidy contract between the managing authority of the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme and the lead partner will be concluded. The subsidy contract shall determine the rights and responsibilities of the lead partner, the reference to the project implementation, terms of funding, requirements for reporting and financial controls, etc.

A model of the subsidy contract will be available on the programme’s website indicatively at the time of launching step 2 of the call⁶.

In case of approval of a project having a private body as lead partner, the lead partner will additionally be asked, before the signature of the subsidy contract, to provide proof that a valid financial guarantee, issued by a primary financial institution (bank, insurance), is in force.

The financial guarantee shall be issued for:

- ◆ The amount of the lead partner’s eligible budget (ERDF + national co-financing);
- ◆ It shall last at least until project closure - i.e. about one year after the submission of the final report.

Costs of the financial guarantee are eligible.

⁶ Applicants might consider also to consult, for information purposes, the template of subsidy contract used within the CENTRAL EUROPE 2007-2013 Programme, available on <http://www.central2013.eu/central-projects/implementing-a-project/necessary-documents/model-contracts/#c379>.

Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme

Application Manual

Part E: What support we offer

Part E

What support we offer

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I. Introduction to support offered by the programme

Providing accurate and comprehensive information, guidance and advice to applicants are key aspects for improving the quality of project applications. The Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme therefore offers support in preparing project applications on the national and the transnational level during both steps of the application process.

Most of the programme support measures will be offered optionally. Only in step 2 of the call, when filling in the full application form, at least a **formal consultation** with the joint secretariat or the **participation in the transnational lead applicant training** will become mandatory. **Without attending either of this, an application cannot be submitted.**

II. Support in preparing the application form

In addition to the comprehensive application manual, support will be offered through following tools and measures.

Please make yourself familiar with information in the application manual and other relevant documents before starting to prepare the application. For further information on relevant documents please refer to part A, chapter V.

Programme website

The programme website www.interreg-central.eu is the one-stop-shop for finding thorough information related to the call. It offers answers to frequently asked questions, all relevant call documents and tools as well as a timeline, news and information on events.

The country-specific section of the programme website provides additional information on national contacts as well as on possible obligations for applicants.

CENTRAL EUROPE Community

The CENTRAL EUROPE Community is an online platform for exchange on project ideas and to facilitate transnational partner search. It is accessible through the programme website and can be joined free-of-charge. Registered members get access to each other's contact details. They can also post new project ideas in a database or search for partners.

Through joining the programme's LinkedIn groups, potential applicants are offered an additional platform for posting and/or exchanging on project ideas as well as searching for partners.

Helpdesk

The helpdesk provides basic information on the call procedure and can be reached by phone at +43(0)18908088-2403 or per e-mail at helpdesk@interreg-central.eu.

In addition, for any questions or problems related to the electronic monitoring system (eMS) applicants can contact the eMS technical support on +43(0)18908088-2405 or send an email to helpdesk@interreg-central.eu. See also part D chapter III.3.

Transnational information event

The transnational information event provides basic information on the call to a transnational audience. It also serves as a platform for an early exchange on project ideas and partnerships.

The transnational information event on the first call for proposals already took place in Vienna on 1/2 July 2014. Thorough documentation of the event is available on the programme website at www.interreg-central.eu.

National information event

National information events are organised by national contact points in step 1 of the call to provide applicants with basic programme as well as call- and country-specific information. It is recommended to participate in the national event before joining the transnational lead applicant training (see below). For updates on national information events please check www.interreg-central.eu.

General guidance on national level

National contact points function as the first point of contact for applicants seeking individual guidance. In their guidance national contact points assist applicants during project idea development also providing general feedback especially related to national requirements. They also help identifying potential synergies between project ideas.

Transnational lead applicant training

A support measure that kicks in at an advanced stage of application development is the transnational lead applicant training. The focus of this training is a step-by-step guidance on how to fill in the relevant sections of the application form. The training is a mix of theoretical plenary information and practical workshop exercises. Back-to-back with the training, applicants will also have the opportunity to present and discuss their project ideas in the frame of individual consultation with the joint secretariat.

Step 1

The transnational lead applicant training on the light application form will take place in **Vienna on 10 March 2015**. Participation will be limited to potential lead applicants and/or experts representing them. The training will be webstreamed and consultations with the joint secretariat will be offered on the day of the event as well as on 11 March 2015, upon **prior scheduling** through the helpdesk (see below).

Step 2

The transnational lead applicant training on the full application form is expected to take place shortly after the launch of step 2 of the call. Participation will be limited to lead applicants and/or experts representing them. Back-to-back with the training, consultations with the joint secretariat will be offered.

For registration and updates on the transnational lead applicant trainings please check www.interreg-central.eu.

Individual consultations with joint secretariat

Step 1

Individual consultations on the project idea and partnership are offered by the joint secretariat when filling in the light application form. For this consultation project ideas should be already at a more mature phase of preparation. Such consultation is voluntary. The consultation request by the lead applicant shall be accompanied by a preliminary concept based on the project idea template (available in the CENTRAL EUROPE Community). Not more than one individual consultation per project idea will be offered and it will last a maximum of 30 minutes.

Step 2

Individual consultations on all aspects of an application (content, financial and communication issues) are offered by the joint secretariat when filling in the full application form. Consultations are recommended as a follow-up to participation in the transnational lead applicant training for step 2. If - in step 2 - a project cannot participate in the lead applicant training, an individual consultation becomes mandatory before submitting the full application form.

This consultation aims at providing technical advice focussing on the work plan and budget and will last a maximum of one hour covering all content, financial and communication issues. Not more than one individual consultation will be granted to the same project proposal and it will last a maximum of one hour (indicatively 30 minutes for content plus communication issues and 30 minutes for financial issues).

ATTENTION

Consultations in both steps will not be based on the application form as such and cannot be regarded as a pre-assessment.

Consultation requests

Individual consultations can take the shape of physical meetings in the offices of the joint secretariat, take place back-to-back with the lead applicant trainings or be organised as phone and/or video meetings.

Consultations with the joint secretariat will start with the launch of the call. It is recommended to avoid requesting consultations at the very last moment before the closure of the call in order to allow sufficient time for further elaborating the application (and also considering limited resources at the joint secretariat).

Slots for consultations have to be requested via email through the helpdesk, which can be reached at helpdesk@interreg-central.eu.

Consultations are limited in time but for questions of a more general nature the helpdesk can be addressed at any time.

Building on the above support at application stage, approved projects will also be offered continuous support through dedicated training for (lead) partners throughout project implementation. Lead partners will be briefed at project start and yearly trainings are foreseen for project, finance and communication managers.

Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme

Application Manual

Annexes

Annexes

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Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme

Application manual - Annex I:

Programme specific objectives

Priority axis 1 - *Cooperating on innovation to make CENTRAL EUROPE more competitive*

SO 1.1	To improve sustainable linkages among actors of the innovation systems for strengthening regional innovation capacity in central Europe
Challenges	<p>Central Europe faces crucial disparities concerning regional innovation. “Islands of innovation”, located around agglomerations or in western intermediate areas, have been established with well performing innovation systems characterised by strong links between its actors. However, several, mostly rural and peripheral regions/areas are characterised by a low level of R&D and weak linkages resulting in insufficient technology transfer and problems to access R&D-results and financing of innovation, especially for SMEs. This challenge is even intensified by the recent financial and economic crisis which requires structural changes. The dynamism of regions and their connections through networks are opportunities in the frame of the globalisation process (Territorial Agenda 2020).</p> <p>Since innovation and technology development are the result of a complex set of relationships among actors in the innovation system, stronger links within and between regions as well as a critical mass of innovative actors are required (e.g. in a triple or quadruple helix context) for improving innovation capacity. This shall notably further enhance knowledge and technology transfer between key players of the innovation systems and will consequently contribute to innovation-driven growth at regional level and reduce disparities.</p> <p>In this context, an innovation system is to be understood as “<i>the network of institutions in the public and private sectors whose activities and interactions initiate, import, modify and diffuse new technologies</i>” (cf. Freeman, 1987). Actors of the innovation system include stakeholders from the research and business sectors, policy makers and public authorities.</p>
Expected results	<p>Transnational cooperation will help to strengthen regional innovation capacities, thereby contributing to regional smart specialisation strategies, through better and more sustainable linkages among actors of the innovation systems.</p> <p>This shall be achieved through transnational and internationalised regional networks and clusters fostering technology transfer and the development and implementation of new services supporting innovation in businesses. Increased cooperation between actors of the innovation systems, especially between business and research, will improve access to research results for enterprises, notably SMEs, thus stimulating further investment in innovation. Furthermore, the link between research and public administration will be strengthened (e.g. by setting up specific mechanisms and promoting public procurement of innovation) which could positively contribute to both economic and social innovation transfer.</p> <p>The main result envisaged can be summarised as: “<i>Increased and more sustainable linkages of actors in the innovation systems achieved through transnational cooperation strengthening the innovation capacity within central European regions</i>”.</p>

SO 1.1	To improve sustainable linkages among actors of the innovation systems for strengthening regional innovation capacity in central Europe
Supported actions	<p>The supported actions will contribute to strengthening the regional innovation capacity of central Europe through connecting different actors of the innovation systems within and across different regions and sectors.</p> <p>The supported actions shall make use of transnational cooperation for knowledge transfer and the implementation of pilot and demonstration actions for creating better linkages among actors in the innovation systems as precondition for innovation. Transnational and internationalised regional networks and clusters fostering technology transfer can contribute to improving the regional innovation capacity, developing joint internationalisation strategies, engaging in cross-sector approaches and specialising in new industrial niches along the dynamic value chains. Enhanced knowledge transfers between research institutions, businesses (in particular SMEs), the education sector as well as the public sector will enable better access to research results for enterprises and consequently stimulate further investment in the application of innovation, enhancing the competitiveness of regions. If relevant, actions should identify and make use of synergies with the Enterprise Europe Network (EEN). The establishment of links with financing institutions will ease the access of enterprises to the financing of innovation. Due to the role of the public sector in stimulating innovation processes on the respective territories (e.g. through reduction of administrative barriers, innovation procurement etc.) its close cooperation with the private and the research sector is essential.</p> <p>All the supported actions have to clearly contribute to improving linkages among actors in the innovation systems, thereby strengthening the innovation capacity within the central European regions.</p> <p>Examples of actions supported within SO 1.1 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Establishing and further strengthening transnational innovation networks and clusters, also supporting their internationalisation – Enhancing the transfer of R&D-results from research institutions to the business sector (in particular SMEs) leading to new services and products – Building transnational links for improving existing and developing new services which support innovation in businesses – Strengthening links between the public sector, finance institutions as well as the business sector (in particular SMEs) to design and test new structures and services that facilitate the access to financing of innovation – Increasing cooperation between research, the public and private sectors to stimulate innovation and entrepreneurship (e.g. reduction of administrative barriers of innovation, public procurement of innovative products and services, social innovation, etc.)

SO 1.2	To improve skills and entrepreneurial competences for advancing economic and social innovation in central European regions
Challenges	<p>Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are the major employers in central Europe. In many regions, especially peripheral ones, SMEs face a shortage of skilled labour force in relation to requirements posed by technological progress and economic innovation. Furthermore, demographic change is affecting the labour market throughout central Europe. This is particularly evident in regions with shrinking populations and related brain drain effects (peripheral and rural areas) thus deteriorating their competitiveness (Territorial Agenda 2020). Peripheral regions/areas are to be understood as marginalised or badly accessible territories offering poor job opportunities and suffering from out-migration.</p> <p>The ratio “number of SMEs/1,000 inhabitants” is strongly diverging within central Europe. This reflects disparities in the regional attitude to entrepreneurship (ÖIR et al, 2012), understood as the “mind-set and process to create and develop economic activity by blending risk-taking, creativity and/or innovation with sound management, within a new or an existing organisation”.</p> <p>In order to mitigate these disparities there is the need for improving technological competences and management skills of employees of the public and private sector, especially in SMEs as well as entrepreneurs. This should be done through integration into wider local and regional strategies (cf. European Commission, 2012j).</p>
Expected results	<p>By stimulating mutual exchange and learning, transnational cooperation will help to increase skills of employees and entrepreneurs for applying novel technologies and methods. This will enable enterprises (especially SMEs) to develop and implement innovative products, services and/or processes contributing to the respective regional smart specialisation strategies. Innovative learning systems, jointly developed at transnational level, can contribute to the targeted improvement of skills thus increasing regional competitiveness especially in regions facing social challenges.</p> <p>Joint approaches developed transnationally will further support entrepreneurship by building technological and managerial competences as well as promoting entrepreneurial mind sets and initiatives. Next to merely economically driven innovation the improvement of skills and the fostering of entrepreneurship should contribute to advancing social innovation. Social innovations are to be understood as new ideas (products, services and models) that simultaneously meet social needs (more effectively than alternatives) and create new social relationships or collaborations (cf. Murray et. al, 2010).</p> <p>This will allow for meeting social needs and will further improve the capacities of regions to manage new challenges such as those deriving from demographic and climate change, migration and brain drain.</p> <p><u>The main result envisaged</u> can be summarised as: “Improved capacities of the public and private sector for skills development of employees and entrepreneurial competences achieved through transnational cooperation driving economic and social innovation in central European regions”.</p>

SO 1.2	To improve skills and entrepreneurial competences for advancing economic and social innovation in central European regions
Supported actions	<p>The supported actions will contribute to advancing economic and social innovation in central Europe, where there is a favourable innovation climate in several regions while at the same time many peripheral regions/areas are lagging behind and/or are facing (social) challenges in terms of missing or not sufficiently qualified labour force.</p> <p>The supported actions shall target at transnational level the improvement of knowledge and skills of employees and entrepreneurs (especially in SMEs) fostering the development and implementation of innovative products, services or processes for advancing economic and social innovation contributing to smart specialisation strategies of the respective regions. Furthermore, actions are expected to build a stronger culture of entrepreneurship and to enhance entrepreneurial mind sets, skills and attitudes. Innovative methods of learning can contribute to strengthening competences in the application of innovative technologies, methods and management. Beyond merely economically driven innovation, actions should also contribute to advancing social innovation thereby considering specific challenges deriving from climate change and demographic change such as brain drain, shrinking regions as well as linked to social segregation. In the area of health innovative actions such as defined in the frame of the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing could be supported. Furthermore, attention should be given to sustainable development principles (such as eco-innovation, low-carbon measures, etc.).</p> <p>All supported actions have to clearly contribute to improved skills and competences of employees and entrepreneurs driving economic and social innovation in central European regions.</p> <p>Examples of actions supported within SO 1.2 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Increasing skills of employees in the business sector (particularly SMEs) regarding novel technologies (e.g. eco-innovation, low-carbon technologies, ICT, key enabling technologies, etc.), innovative products, services or processes and social innovation contributing to regional smart specialisation strategies – Developing and implementing strategies and tools to improve creativity and entrepreneurial mind-sets building on different business cultures and on all levels of education – Developing and implementing strategies and tools for improving technological and managerial competences for entrepreneurship for economic and social innovation (e.g. healthcare and social inclusion of minorities, disabled persons, elderly, etc.) – Adapting, developing, and testing innovative learning systems for increasing skills and entrepreneurial competences considering demographic change challenges (e.g. ageing society, youth unemployment, shrinking regions facing skills shortages, etc.)

Priority axis 1	
Main target groups	Individuals and/or organisations positively affected by the activities and results of an operation, though not necessarily being directly involved in the operation, are: enterprises (with a specific focus on SMEs) and their employees, entrepreneurs, cluster organisations, the public sector, intermediaries, private and public research institutions, R&D facilities, centres of R&D excellence. Additionally all public and private actors dealing with social and economic innovation as well as all population groups which are affected by the issue
Beneficiaries ¹	All legal personalities that can contribute to increasing economic and social innovation and entrepreneurial capacity. They comprise amongst others: local, regional and national public authorities, regional development agencies, chambers of commerce, enterprises (including SMEs), cluster organisations, universities, associations, technology transfer institutions, research institutions, centres of R&D excellence, NGOs, innovation agencies, business incubators, cluster management bodies, financing institutions, education and training organisations as well as social partners and labour-market institutions.
Specific territories targeted	The supported actions can be implemented throughout the whole programme cooperation area: Emphasis shall be put on regions having deficiencies in their innovation system (e.g. peripheral and structurally weak regions/areas, regions facing industrial decline etc.) or having a shortage of skills and entrepreneurship (e.g. shrinking regions) for which their connection to and learning from more advanced regions will be targeted. Simultaneously, regions with a higher innovation performance will be further strengthened through internationalisation opening up for new development opportunities, intensifying of the entrepreneurial attitude and improving technological and managerial skills. Actions will thereby need to consider the specific territorial characteristics of the respective targeted areas.

¹ project partners benefitting from programme funds and implementing activities within the project

Priority axis 2 - *Cooperating on low-carbon strategies in CENTRAL EUROPE*

SO 2.1	To develop and implement solutions for increasing energy efficiency and renewable energy usage in public infrastructures
Challenges	<p>Most central European regions show high energy consumption and a low degree of energy efficiency of buildings and infrastructure which are the main contributors to greenhouse gas emissions. The efficient use of energy can make an important contribution to achieving a low-carbon economy and combating climate change. It will also contribute to decreasing central Europe`s energy import dependence and will in many cases imply positive effects on air quality.</p> <p>Increasing energy efficiency and renewable energy usage in public infrastructure (i.e. infrastructure owned by the public and/or for public use, including public buildings) is a priority given the large potential for fossil fuel energy savings as well as for spreading approaches to other sectors thus having a multiplying effect.</p> <p>Despite some central European regions being quite advanced in terms of energy saving technologies, there is the need for increasing the overall capacity of the public sector for implementing measures to reduce CO₂ emissions of public infrastructure. In particular, public infrastructure owners and operators often lack the necessary expertise (i.e. methods and technologies) for reducing energy consumption and/or replacing the consumption of fossil fuels with renewable energy sources.</p>
Expected results	<p>Transnational cooperation will help to reduce know-how disparities and increase capacities of the public sector and related entities for improving the energy efficiency of public infrastructures and ultimately reducing their energy consumption and CO₂ emissions. This shall be achieved through strengthening competences as well as developing and implementing strategies, management approaches and financing schemes which will serve as seedbed for achieving higher energy efficiency. This will consequently leverage further investment such as the renovation of public buildings and the upgrading of the energy efficiency level of public infrastructure. Furthermore the usage of renewable energy in public infrastructures will be fostered through identifying potentials, testing innovative solutions and preparing follow-up investments.</p> <p>The <u>main result</u> envisaged can be summarised as: <i>“Improved capacities of the public sector and related entities for increased energy efficiency and renewable energy use in public infrastructures in central Europe achieved through transnational cooperation”</i>.</p>

SO 2.1	To develop and implement solutions for increasing energy efficiency and renewable energy usage in public infrastructures
Supported actions	<p>The supported actions shall contribute to strengthening capacities of the public sector for improving energy efficiency and increasing the use of renewable energy in public infrastructure including buildings. In the programme context, improving capacities is understood primarily as creating an enabling environment through improving the policy, legal and institutional frameworks as well as through developing human resources and strengthening managerial systems.</p> <p>Actions shall be based on transnational cooperation in order to build competences, accomplish strategies and management approaches for improving energy efficiency in public infrastructures. Further, actions shall be linked to testing and implementing solutions in terms of novel energy saving technologies as well as to increasing renewable energy shares in consumption. Innovative energy services, incentives and financing schemes will contribute to facilitating the implementation of energy efficiency measures. These actions will contribute to leveraging further investments such as the upgrading of the energy efficiency level of public infrastructure and the increased usage of renewable energy. All supported actions have to clearly contribute to improving capacities for increased energy efficiency and renewable energy use in public infrastructures and buildings, thereby reducing the carbon footprint.</p> <p>Examples of actions supported within SO 2.1 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Developing, testing and implementing policies, strategies and solutions to improve the energy efficiency in public infrastructures including buildings as well as to increase the use of renewable energies – Developing and testing innovative management approaches to increase regional capacities for improving the energy performance in public infrastructure including buildings (e.g. energy managers) – Developing and implementing solutions for the application of novel energy saving technologies that will increase the energy efficiency in public infrastructures including buildings – Harmonising concepts, standards and certification systems at transnational level to improve the energy performance in public infrastructure including buildings – Strengthening the capacity of the public sector to develop and implement innovative energy services, incentives and financing schemes (e.g. energy performance contracting, PPP models, etc.)

SO 2.2	To improve territorially based low-carbon energy planning strategies and policies supporting climate change mitigation
Challenges	<p>Central Europe has significant potentials with regard to renewable resources. However, the degree of exploitation of those resources varies largely: while the use of renewable energy is still low in several central European regions, some others show higher rates of exploitation. Despite the fact that in some regions considerable experience about renewable energy production already exists, the development and implementation of local and regional energy strategies and action plans is still at a low level. Energy challenges are thereby threatening regional competitiveness (cf. Territorial Agenda 2020).</p> <p>Consequently, there is the need to improve capacities for territorially-based energy planning in central Europe. Enhanced cooperation will enable coordinated local and regional approaches to formulating and planning low-carbon energy strategies, which is key to the uptake of renewable energy measures.</p>
Expected results	<p>Transnational cooperation shall help building new knowledge as well as exchanging existing knowledge and experiences between and within regions concerning the planning, financing and implementing of concrete actions to deliver sustainable energy measures. It aims to improve the capacity of the public sector and related entities, as a key starting point for mobilising investment for low-carbon measures at territorial level. Transnational cooperation will thereby contribute to triggering activities especially in regions with a lower usage of their renewable energy potentials. Furthermore, it will support the linking of approaches between the demand and supply sides, taking into account the quality and capacity of energy distribution grids. This shall be achieved through strengthening the knowledge and planning capacity of the public sector and related entities that facilitate the transition towards 'Sustainable Energy Regions'. The programme will support them in the development and implementation of innovative local and regional energy planning strategies leading to an enhanced use of endogenous renewable energy potentials in a balanced way and to a reduction of CO₂ emissions. This will in many cases also imply positive effects on air quality.</p> <p>The main result envisaged can be summarised as: <i>“Improved capacities of the public sector and related entities for territorially based low-carbon energy planning and policies in central European regions achieved through transnational cooperation”</i>.</p>

SO 2.2	To improve territorially based low-carbon energy planning strategies and policies supporting climate change mitigation
Supported actions	<p>The supported actions shall contribute to strengthening capacities of the public sector and related entities dealing with territorial energy planning targeting the reduction of CO₂ emissions. In the programme context, improving capacities is understood primarily as creating an enabling environment through improving policy, legal and institutional frameworks as well as through developing human resources and strengthening managerial systems. Transnational cooperation can bring added value through facilitating the exchange between territories further strengthening regions with highly advanced planning capacities and improving capacities of those lagging behind. Further, it will contribute to bringing together various stakeholders in energy planning in order to coordinate approaches.</p> <p>This will enable them to develop integrated local and/or regional strategies and plans for a better use of endogenous renewable energy potentials and for improving regional energy performances. Actions supported shall combine demand and supply sides and focus on strategies, policies, tools and new solutions for the exploitation of renewable energy resources as well as for increased energy efficiency.</p> <p>The implementation of pilot actions and exchanges of good practices will stimulate and trigger investment towards low-carbon development. Coordinated strategies for improved interconnections of energy networks will enable a better integration of renewable energy sources into the existing distribution networks and consequently open the opportunity for an increased production and use of renewable energy.</p> <p>All the supported actions will clearly contribute to the improvement of capacity of the public sector and related entities for an increased and balanced use of endogenous renewable energy potentials and for an enhanced energy performance in central European regions. Moreover, they will contribute to the improvement of territorially based energy planning strategies and policies supporting climate change mitigation. It is to be emphasized that the programme will not support actions and/or pilot investments having a negative effect on the environment (e.g. hydropower plants affecting the ecological status of water bodies, emissions of biomass installations etc.).</p> <p>Examples of actions supported within SO 2.2 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Developing and implementing integrated territorial strategies and plans to increase the use of endogenous renewable energy potentials and to improve regional energy performance – Designing and testing concepts and tools for the exploitation of endogenous renewable energy resources – Developing and implementing territorial strategies to improve the energy management in both the public and the private sector (especially in SMEs) – Developing demand-focused strategies and policies to reduce energy consumption (e.g. smart metering, distribution of smart consumer applications, etc.) – Developing and testing solutions for improved interconnections and coordination of energy networks targeting the integration and use of renewable energy sources

SO 2.3	To improve capacities for mobility planning in functional urban areas to lower CO ₂ emissions
Challenges	<p>In central Europe, as in the rest of Europe, transport is the second largest energy consuming sector and the fastest growing in terms of energy use. Its strong reliance on fossil fuels means high greenhouse gas emissions driving climate change as well as lowering air quality (e.g. nitric oxides emissions, particular matter and ozone). Due to the existing urbanisation tendencies these developments challenge especially central Europe's cities, where transport demand is constantly increasing and negative externalities are most evident.</p> <p>For addressing these issues and achieving the overall goal of reducing CO₂ emissions there is a need to improve the energy efficiency of urban transport. However, due to the importance of interactions between cities and their hinterlands (e.g. commuters) urban mobility challenges are to be considered at the level of functional urban areas (FUA). According to the OECD, European Commission and Eurostat (OECD, 2012), a functional urban area is defined, as a functional economic unit characterised by densely inhabited "urban cores" and "hinterlands", whose labour market is highly integrated with the cores.</p> <p>A high potential for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution lies within the public transport sector. However, capacities of the public sector and related entities for low-carbon mobility planning at the level of FUAs are unevenly spread across central Europe and need to be improved through better governance and integrated approaches to planning. This calls for a closer vertical and horizontal coordination and integration of mobility planning and solutions between urban cores and their hinterlands.</p>
Expected results	<p>Transnational cooperation can help increasing planning capacities of the public sector and related entities for low-carbon mobility by bringing together fore-riders with territories lagging behind, thus enhancing low-carbon mobility in central European functional urban areas and reducing air pollution, thereby contributing to the objectives of the EU Clean Air Policy Package (2013). This will allow for the development and implementation of integrated mobility concepts, the setting up of coordinated management structures and the deployment of innovative technologies. The promotion of innovative low-carbon mobility solutions at transnational level will support authorities in their efforts towards the goal of sustainable mobility.</p> <p>The main result envisaged can be summarised as: <i>"Improved capacities of the public sector and related entities for low-carbon mobility planning in central Europe's functional urban areas achieved through transnational cooperation"</i>.</p>

SO 2.3	To improve capacities for mobility planning in functional urban areas to lower CO ₂ emissions
Supported actions	<p>The supported actions shall contribute to strengthening capacities of the public sector and related entities dealing with mobility planning in functional urban areas targeting the reduction of CO₂ emissions. In the programme context, improving capacities is understood primarily as creating an enabling environment through improving policy, legal and institutional frameworks as well as through developing human resources and strengthening managerial systems. Transnational cooperation can bring added value through facilitating the exchange between territories further strengthening regions with highly advanced planning capacities and improving capacities of those lagging behind. Further, it will contribute to bringing together various stakeholders in mobility planning in order to coordinate approaches fostering the reduction of CO₂ emissions in functional urban areas.</p> <p>This will be achieved by the exchange of knowledge and the development of integrated mobility concepts and action plans considering interactions between “urban cores” and their “hinterlands”. In this respect also the setting up of governance systems facilitating this integration will be supported. Furthermore, actions are linked to fostering smart low-carbon mobility in functional urban areas through new services and products such as multimodal services. Practical tools and concepts (including financing models) can assist the policy level in their efforts towards the goal of sustainable mobility. Those approaches should consider governance aspects including horizontal and vertical coordination of stakeholders and policies at the level of functional urban areas.</p> <p>The supported actions are clearly contributing to the improvement of capacities of the public sector and related entities for mobility planning and consequently to the reduction of CO₂ emissions in functional urban areas.</p> <p>Examples of actions supported within SO 2.3 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Developing and implementing integrated mobility concepts, action plans and services for reducing CO₂ emissions – Setting up and/or adapting governance systems as a basis for integrated low-carbon mobility in functional urban areas – Developing and testing concepts and strategies (including innovative financing and investment models) to facilitate the introduction of novel low-carbon technologies in the public transport sector in functional urban areas – Developing and implementing services and products fostering smart low-carbon mobility in functional urban areas (e.g. multimodal services, etc.)

Priority axis 2

Main target groups	Individuals and/or organisations positively affected by the activities and results of operations, though not necessarily being directly involved in the operation, with different approaches to stimulate the uptake of solutions for improved energy efficiency, renewable energy use as well as low-carbon mobility. They include both public and private actors, such as energy and public transport operators, policy makers and planners, energy distributors, infrastructure providers and other local and regional energy actors as well as enterprises including SMEs. Target groups include all population groups which are benefitting from an improved regional and local energy performance as well as users of improved low-carbon public transport systems in functional urban areas which are affected by the issue.
Beneficiaries ²	All legal personalities that can contribute to improved energy and low-carbon mobility planning. They comprise among others local, regional and national public authorities, regional development agencies, energy operators, energy management institutions, enterprises including SMEs, public transport operators, associations, innovation agencies, NGOs, financing institutions, education and training organisations as well as universities and research institutes.
Specific territories targeted	The supported actions can be implemented throughout the cooperation area. Emphasis will be put on territories having deficiencies in low-carbon energy planning as well as in functional urban areas with high CO ₂ emissions resulting from the transport sector, for which an exchange and learning from more advanced regions will be most beneficial. Simultaneously, territories which already show an advanced status of low-carbon energy planning and public transport will be further strengthened as consequence of improving their implementation capacities (e.g. novel low-carbon technologies, investment preparation etc.). All actions will thereby need to consider the specific territorial characteristics of the respective targeted areas.

² project partners benefitting from programme funds and implementing activities within the project

Priority axis 3 - *Cooperating on natural and cultural resources for sustainable growth in CENTRAL EUROPE*

SO 3.1	To improve integrated environmental management capacities for the protection and sustainable use of natural heritage and resources
Challenges	<p>Central Europe has a very rich natural heritage including important eco-systems and abundant biodiversity. This heritage and related natural resources are highly valuable and need to be preserved, protected and if necessary ecologically restored. At the same time natural heritage is an important location factor and the use of its assets can serve as a driver for economic development. As a consequence, natural heritage and resources (including water, soil, fauna and flora) are subject to numerous pressures and usage conflicts, e.g. between environmental protection and industry, agriculture, transport, urbanisation or tourism. Further pressure arises from the increasing risk of natural hazards linked to the effects of climate change. The loss of biodiversity, the vulnerability of natural heritage and landscapes as well as the effects of climate change have a strong impact at territorial level (cf. Territorial Agenda 2020).</p> <p>The complexity of these challenges requires integrated approaches based on sustainable long-term strategic visions linking different policies, sectors and administrative levels. Integrated environmental management thereby means a comprehensive approach to natural resource planning and management that encompasses ecological, social, and economic objectives (such as river basin management plans, air quality etc.). It considers interrelations among different elements and incorporates concepts of carrying capacity, resilience and sustainability. The capacities for such integrated environmental approaches are, however, not yet sufficiently established in the public sector and in related entities dealing with the protection and sustainable use of natural resources. This is notably shown by the large number of usage conflicts and pressures on natural heritage and resources in many central European regions.</p>
Expected results	<p>Transnational cooperation will allow for improving the capacities of those actors by supporting the development and implementation of integrated environmental strategies and tools as well as the joint testing of pilot solutions. This will facilitate a larger uptake of the integrated environmental concept into the public and private sector such as the application of innovative technologies and introducing resource efficient solutions.</p> <p>The main result envisaged can be summarised as: <i>“Improved integrated environmental management capacities of the public sector and related entities for the protection and sustainable use of natural heritage and resources in central Europe achieved through transnational cooperation”</i>.</p>

SO 3.1	To improve integrated environmental management capacities for the protection and sustainable use of natural heritage and resources
Supported actions	<p>The supported actions shall increase capacities of the public sector and related entities to preserve, manage and use natural heritage and resources (including water, soil, fauna and flora). The application of an integrated approach is a key factor to ensure sustainable development and to avoid usage conflicts. In the programme context, improving capacities is understood primarily as creating an enabling environment by improving policy, legal and institutional frameworks as well as through developing human resources and strengthening managerial systems.</p> <p>Transnational cooperation will add value by building new knowledge and by fostering the exchange of knowledge and experience among regions, in particular addressing stakeholders dealing with the protection and management of natural heritage and resources. Transnational coordination can also be essential for ensuring coherent and effective solutions and policies. This includes the capitalising on location factors as the high-value of eco-systems in an integrated and sustainable way, promoting a sustainable regional development. Furthermore, the focus on integrated environmental management approaches and strategies shall contribute to reducing current and avoiding future usage conflicts as well as to ecological restoration of degraded ecosystems (e.g. river basin management, air quality etc.). Resource efficiency is thereby another key aspect to be considered as a guiding principle. In order to facilitate its application, both in the public and private sectors, innovative tools and technologies shall be developed and tested. Joint and harmonised tools and concepts will be applied for risk prevention and management (considering natural risks and risks linked to human activities) responding also to challenges of negative climate change impacts in order to allow for effective and coherent solutions.</p> <p>All the supported actions have to clearly contribute to improving integrated environmental management capacities and to fostering the protection and sustainable use of natural heritage and resources in central Europe.</p> <p>Examples of actions supported within specific objective 3.1 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Developing and implementing integrated strategies and tools for the sustainable management of protected or environmentally highly valuable areas (e.g. biodiversity, landscapes, eco-systems, etc.) – Developing and implementing integrated strategies and tools to sustainably use natural resources for regional development, thus avoiding potential use conflicts (e.g. with tourism, transport, industry, agriculture, energy, etc.) – Developing and testing the application of innovative technologies and tools that facilitate effective integrated environmental management (e.g. remediation technologies, monitoring tools etc.) – Developing and testing applications to improve the efficient management of natural resources in public institutions and enterprises (e.g. reduction of natural resource consumption, closed loop systems) – Harmonising environmental management concepts and tools on the transnational level for risk prevention and management (e.g. flood risk management plans) and to reduce negative climate change impacts on the environment and human life (e.g. adaptation measures)

SO 3.2	To improve capacities for the sustainable use of cultural heritage and resources
Challenges	<p>Central Europe has a great diversity of cultural heritage and resources in terms of historical sites, documentary heritage (e.g. archives and library collections), artefacts, traditions, cultural landscapes as well as traditional skills and knowledge. This heritage and its related resources represent important location factors, strongly contributing to the attractiveness of central Europe's territory. The protection and valorisation of cultural heritage and resources represent a powerful potential for economic growth (including cultural and creative industries), generating value and thereby directly benefiting citizens.</p> <p>The cultural richness is, however, often not well valorised or even threatened, and related potentials are not sufficiently used due to a lack of funding and investment, insufficient management and preservation skills as well as a lack of coordination. Furthermore, external pressures due to usage conflicts, unsustainable approaches (e.g. mass tourism) and also linked to climate change are negatively impacting central Europe's cultural heritage with adverse effects on the competitiveness of regions (cf. Territorial Agenda 2020).</p> <p>There is thus the need for facilitating a good balance between the preservation of cultural heritage and sustainable long-term socio-economic development of regions in order to strengthen their attractiveness and competitiveness. Emphasis needs to be given to managing conflicting usage interests and to capitalising the potential of cultural heritage assets for economic, social and cultural activities.</p>
Expected results	<p>Transnational cooperation will help improving capacities of the public and private sector dealing with the protection and sustainable use of cultural heritage and resources by supporting integrated approaches. This will allow for coordinating the preservation and management of cultural heritage and resources with sustainable growth. The development and implementation of strategies and policies for valorising cultural heritage and exploiting potentials of cultural and creative industries will trigger economic opportunities and employment at regional level.</p> <p>The main result envisaged can be summarised as: <i>“Improved capacities of the public and private sector for the sustainable use of cultural heritage and resources in central Europe achieved through transnational cooperation”</i>.</p>

SO 3.2	To improve capacities for the sustainable use of cultural heritage and resources
Supported actions	<p>The supported actions shall build on transnational cooperation and target the improvement of capacities of the public and private sector working in the field of cultural heritage in order to accomplish a more sustainable use and valorisation of those assets. The application of an integrated approach is a key factor to ensure sustainable development and to avoid usage conflicts. In the programme context, improving capacities is understood primarily as creating an enabling environment by improving policy, legal and institutional frameworks as well as through developing human resources and strengthening managerial systems.</p> <p>Transnational cooperation will add value by building new knowledge and by fostering the exchange of knowledge and experience among regions, in particular addressing stakeholders dealing with the protection and management of cultural heritage and resources as well as their management and valorisation. Transnational coordination can also be essential for ensuring coherent and effective solutions and policies.</p> <p>Actions are linked to setting up concepts, strategies and coordinated approaches aiming at an improved protection, management and sustainable use of cultural heritage and resources. Investment shall be prepared and business plans elaborated increasing the awareness on the value of cultural resources and fostering cultural and creative entrepreneurship, including creative industries. Overall, this improved capacity shall allow for better protection of cultural heritage and related resources going hand in hand with an enhanced exploitation of existing potentials (e.g. in the growing sectors of cultural tourism, cultural and creative industries etc.), thus supporting sustainable economic development and employment.</p> <p>All supported actions have to clearly contribute to improving capacities for the sustainable use of cultural heritage and resources, thereby fostering their preservation as well as their economic valorisation.</p> <p>Examples of actions supported within specific objective 3.2 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Developing and implementing strategies and policies for valorising cultural heritage and resources and/or the potentials of cultural and creative industries – Developing and implementing integrated territorial development strategies and concepts that build on cultural heritage to foster sustainable economic growth and employment (e.g. in the tourism sector) – Developing and testing innovative management tools for the preservation and sustainable use of cultural heritage and resources (e.g. ICT applications) – Establishing and strengthening transnational cooperation among relevant actors to foster the sustainable use and the promotion of cultural heritage sites in central Europe

SO 3.3	To improve environmental management of functional urban areas to make them more liveable places
Challenges	<p>Central Europe includes many regions in which urbanisation processes cause land use conflicts and generate urban environmental challenges. Although scale and intensity of problems vary, a common set of issues can be identified, including increased soil sealing, poor air and water quality, high levels of ambient noise, generation of large volumes of waste and waste water, vulnerability to climate change, as well as urban sprawl with its social implications. Due to these developments the quality of life (and health) of citizens varies strongly in different central Europe cities (cf. Mercer, 2013). They also have an impact on the environment and economic performance of cities.</p> <p>These challenges call for integrated environmental management of urban areas, which considers environmental impacts of all activities within the entire functional area of a city (cf. European Commission, 2006a). Therefore, integrated environmental management is addressing functional urban areas based on functional characteristics going beyond administrative boundaries of cities. According to the OECD, European Commission and Eurostat (cf. OECD, 2012), a functional urban area is a functional economic unit characterised by densely inhabited “urban cores” and “hinterlands” whose labour market is highly integrated with the cores.</p> <p>Capacities of the public sector and related entities for integrated environmental management ensuring compliance with environmental policies, engaging with the relevant stakeholders and integrating environmental considerations into economic decisions are, however, not yet sufficiently established in many central European cities. This calls for a closer vertical and horizontal coordination and integration of environmental management measures considering urban cores and their hinterlands.</p>
Expected results	<p>Transnational cooperation will help to increase those capacities by supporting the development and implementation of integrated environmental management to improve the environmental performance (such as air quality, water management, flood risks etc.) of functional urban areas. Enhanced governance will contribute to better planning, management and decision making thereby reducing usage conflicts and negative externalities on the environment. The development and implementation of strategies and tools as well as the joint testing of pilot applications (e.g. for site rehabilitation) will trigger investments for improving the quality of the urban environment.</p> <p>The main result envisaged can be summarised as: <i>“Improved integrated environmental management capacities of the public sector and related entities in central Europe’s functional urban areas achieved through transnational cooperation for making them more liveable places”</i>.</p>

SO 3.3	To improve environmental management of functional urban areas to make them more liveable places
Supported actions	<p>The supported actions will contribute to improving capacities of the public sector and related entities within the urban context for enhancing integrated environmental management in functional urban areas. In the programme context, improving capacities is understood primarily as creating an enabling environment by improving policy, legal and institutional frameworks as well as through developing human resources and strengthening managerial systems.</p> <p>The supported actions shall build on transnational cooperation in order to connect different actors within and across different functional urban areas. The aim is to build knowledge and competences and to accomplish strategies and integrated management systems that are able to tackle urban environmental problems (such as climate change, water management, flood risk management etc.) and deal with natural and man-made risks related to both core areas and their hinterlands. Integrated approaches shall include cross-sectoral and multi-governance aspects considering also social implications. The development and testing of innovative solutions and tools (including financing models) as well as pilot actions may further support the implementation of measures and investments for improving the quality of the urban environment and consequently the quality of life for urban residents.</p> <p>All the supported actions will clearly contribute to improving environmental management capacities in the public sector and related entities in central Europe's functional urban areas, thereby making them more liveable places.</p> <p>Examples of joint actions supported within specific objective 3.3 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Developing and implementing strategies and tools (including innovative financing and investment models) to manage and improve environmental quality (air, water, waste, soil, climate) as well as to tackle natural and man-made risks in functional urban areas – Strengthening the capacity for environmental planning and management (e.g. participatory planning mechanisms and decision-making processes) at the level of functional urban areas – Developing and implementing integrated strategies, policies and tools to reduce land-use conflicts in functional urban areas (e.g. urban sprawl, shrinkage and fragmentation also in the view of social implications) – Developing and implementing integrated strategies and pilot applications for the rehabilitation and reactivation of brownfield sites – Developing concepts and implementing environmental pilot applications to support the development towards smart cities (e.g. ICT applications, environmental technologies)

Priority axis 3

Main target groups	<p>Individuals and/or organisations positively affected by the activities and results of operations, though not necessarily being directly involved in the operation. They include both the public and private sector, such as policy makers and planners and organisations dealing with the protection, management and valorisation of natural and/or cultural heritage and resources, owners and users of natural and/or cultural heritage sites as well as other organisations influencing the development of functional urban areas. Target groups include all population groups which are benefitting from the improved management of natural and cultural heritage and resources as well as improved urban environmental management.</p>
Beneficiaries ³	<p>All legal personalities that can contribute to an improved management and sustainable use of natural and cultural heritage and resources and to improved environmental management of functional urban areas. They comprise among others local, regional and national public authorities, regional development agencies, enterprises (in particular SMEs within the cultural and creative industry as well as the environmental sector), environmental facilities and infrastructure operators and owners, associations, regional innovation agencies, special interest groups, NGOs, financing institutions, education and training organisations as well as universities and research institutes.</p>
Specific territories targeted	<p>The supported actions can be implemented throughout the cooperation area. Emphasis will thereby be put on regions with high value natural and cultural heritage sites or resources to be protected or valorised or with areas facing significant pressures and usage conflicts as well as on functional urban areas having deficiencies in integrated environmental management for which an exchange and learning from more advanced regions will be most beneficial. Simultaneously, territories which already show an advanced status of integrated environment and/or cultural management will be further strengthened as a consequence of improving their implementation capacities (e.g. improved international connection of sites, novel technologies, novel rehabilitation methods, smart city approaches, investment preparation etc.). All actions will thereby need to consider the specific territorial characteristics of the respective targeted areas.</p>

³ project partners benefitting from programme funds and implementing activities within the project

Priority axis 4 - *Cooperating on transport to better connect* **CENTRAL EUROPE**

SO 4.1	To improve planning and coordination of regional passenger transport systems for better connections to national and European transport networks
Challenges	<p>The central Europe area shows weak local, regional and transnational accessibility especially outside of agglomerations and in its eastern parts. Transport systems mostly lack integration between modes of transport. Many peripheral regions, characterised by a low accessibility and few major centres of urbanisation, are facing a low quality of public transport and are not sufficiently linked to TEN-T corridors and transport nodes. Indeed, while some regions have well developed mobility planning systems, in others relevant knowledge and capacity is missing.</p> <p>With respect to the development and implementation of integrated passenger transport systems and multimodality, central European regions show large disparities and transnational coordination is lacking.</p>
Expected results	<p>Transnational cooperation aims to reduce existing disparities of knowledge as well as to increase the planning and implementation capacity in the field of integrated passenger transport systems where better regional and transnational coordination between stakeholders is considered a key factor. Transnational cooperation can strengthen connections to TEN-T corridors and to primary, secondary and tertiary transport nodes of the TEN-T network (as defined according to “The New Trans-European Transport Network Policy Planning and implementation issues”, SEC (2011) 101 final), in particular for peripheral regions. A specific focus will be put on public transport at regional level as the sustainability of those connections is considered to be an underlying principle. Strategies, tools and pilot applications will contribute to setting up improved connections to the TEN-T network and transport nodes. Furthermore, within the transnational context the development of coordinated concepts for smart regional mobility and services is foreseen, fostering improved service standards and interoperability. Particular attention will be put on mobility services in the public interest.</p> <p>The main result envisaged can be summarised as: <i>“Improved and coordinated planning capacities of the public sector and related entities for regional passenger transport systems in central Europe linked to national and European transport networks achieved through transnational cooperation”</i>.</p>

SO 4.1	To improve planning and coordination of regional passenger transport systems for better connections to national and European transport networks
Supported actions	<p>The supported actions shall build on transnational cooperation in order to accomplish improved capacities of the public sector and related entities for coordinated planning of regional passenger transport systems within and between central Europe regions. Actions will particularly target the needs of peripheral regions with respect to linkages to the TEN-T network and transport nodes.</p> <p>In the programme context, improving capacities is understood primarily as creating an enabling environment by improving policy, legal and institutional frameworks as well as through developing human resources and strengthening managerial systems. This will be achieved by creating knowledge or exchanging on existing knowledge, developing and implementing strategies, tools and pilot applications for improving regional transport, which are expected to trigger investments in the field. Considering the principle of sustainable development, emphasis shall be put on public transport at regional level and resilience of transport systems. Actions linked to the development of coordinated concepts for smart regional mobility and services (also considering mobility services in the public interest) will foster improved service standards and interoperability.</p> <p>All the supported actions have to clearly contribute to improving the planning and coordination of regional passenger transport systems in central Europe, thus strengthening the link to national and European transport networks. Multimodal transfer points will be also promoted and developed to streamline the movement of people and to make the passenger transport more sustainable (environmentally-friendly) contributing also to climate change mitigation. It is to be emphasized that the programme will not support actions and/or pilot investments having a negative effect on the environment (e.g. in case of inland navigation the requirements of the EU Water Framework Directive have to be respected).</p> <p>Examples of actions supported within specific objective 4.1 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Developing and implementing strategies (including innovative financing and investment models) to link sustainable passenger transport in particular in peripheral areas to the TEN-T network as well as to the primary, secondary and tertiary transport nodes – Developing and implementing coordinated strategies, tools and pilot applications to improve regional public transport systems for passengers in particular across borders (e.g. commuter connections, interoperability, etc.) – Developing concepts and testing pilot applications for smart regional mobility (e.g. multimodal ticketing, ICT tools, routes on demand, etc.) – Developing coordinated concepts, standards and tools for improved mobility services in the public interest (e.g. for disadvantaged groups, for shrinking regions, etc.)

SO 4.2	To improve coordination among freight transport stakeholders for increasing multimodal environmentally-friendly freight solutions
Challenges	<p>The economic development of industrialised areas is closely linked to efficient multimodal exchange of goods at interregional and international level. The central Europe area shows regional disparities in multimodal accessibility which constrains the competitiveness of several regions. Beside the need for optimisation of individual modes of transport (i.e. making them more environmentally-friendly, safe and energy efficient), their combination in multi-modal freight transport chains is required for a sustainable transport system. There is a lack of shared standards and procedures and, more generally, of a harmonised framework. Deficiencies in terms of coordination among freight transport stakeholders can be observed, which represents a barrier to more streamlined, flexible and sustainable multimodal freight transport.</p>
Expected results	<p>Transnational cooperation aims to improve coordination among existing services, provided by different modes of transport, creating intermodal systems of existing transport facilities, overcoming discontinuity across borders and the lack of infrastructure. Coordinated strategies, concepts and management tools will contribute to improving the multimodality of environmentally-friendly freight transport (e.g. rail, river or sea transport). Multi-modal platforms will be promoted and developed as a potential for consolidating and optimising freight flows. This will enhance the efficiency, reliability and quality of greener freight transport modes and services, thus contributing also to trade facilitation. Such a coordinated approach will pave the way for designing future infrastructure in a sustainable manner and a more effective transportation of goods to and across central European regions.</p> <p>The main result envisaged can be summarised as: <i>“Improved coordination among freight transport stakeholders for increasing multimodal environmentally-friendly freight solutions in central Europe achieved through transnational cooperation”</i>.</p>

SO 4.2	To improve coordination among freight transport stakeholders for increasing multimodal environmentally-friendly freight solutions
Supported actions	<p>The supported actions shall build on transnational cooperation in order to improve coordination and cooperation between freight transport actors as well as enhance capacities in multimodal logistics management. This will be achieved through the development and implementation of coordinated strategies, concepts and tools also in terms of harmonised standards and procedures for strengthening multimodality and the environmental sustainability of freight transport. Actions are further contributing to the improvement and testing of freight transport services and logistics planning, including pilot applications which are supposed to trigger investments in the field. If relevant, actions should link to the TEN-T core network corridor and the rail freight corridor initiatives in order to create positive synergies.</p> <p>All supported actions will clearly contribute to improving coordination among freight transport stakeholders, thereby increasing multimodal environmentally-friendly freight solutions which are also further fostering climate change mitigation in central Europe.</p> <p>Examples of actions supported within specific objective 4.2 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Developing and implementing coordinated strategies (including innovative financing and investment models) for strengthening the multimodality of environmentally-friendly freight transport systems (e.g. rail, river, or sea transport) – Developing and implementing coordination and collaboration mechanisms between multimodal freight transport actors – Developing and implementing coordinated concepts, management tools and services aimed at increasing the share of environmentally friendly logistics through optimised freight transport chains (e.g. multimodal transnational freight transport flows) – Developing and testing coordinated strategies and concepts for “greening” the last mile of freight transport (e.g. logistics planning)

Priority axis 4	
Main target groups	Individuals and/or organisations positively affected by the activities and results of operations, though not necessarily being directly involved in the operation. They include public and private actors, such as institutions responsible for planning and managing regional transport networks, public transport operators, providers and operators of freight transport and logistics services, commercial customers of freight transport systems, institutions planning and managing freight transport, infrastructure providers and other local or regional (freight) transport actors, additionally all population groups which can benefit from improved regional passenger transport services (e.g. commuters, tourists, etc.) and freight transport.
Beneficiaries ⁴	All legal personalities that can contribute to improved regional passenger and freight transport. They comprise among others local, regional and national public authorities, regional development agencies, enterprises, public transport operators including operators of multimodal logistics hub, infrastructure providers, regional transport associations, regional innovation agencies, NGOs, financing institutions, education and training organisations as well as universities and research institutes.
Specific territories targeted	The supported actions can be implemented throughout the cooperation area. Emphasis will be put on peripheral areas showing weak links to TEN-T corridors and transport nodes and areas showing deficiencies in terms of multimodal accessibility for freight transport, which can profit from the exchange with - and learn from - more advanced regions. Simultaneously, regions which already show an advanced degree of connectivity to the TEN-T network and/or an advanced status of multimodal freight transport will be further strengthened as consequence of improving their implementation capacities (e.g. ICT tools, smart regional mobility services, logistic concepts, investment preparation, etc.). All actions will thereby need to consider the specific territorial characteristics of the respective targeted areas.

⁴ project partners benefitting from programme funds and implementing activities within the project



Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme

Application manual - Annex II:

Programme intervention logic

Priority 1:
Cooperating on innovation to make CENTRAL EUROPE more competitive

Investment priority 1b: promoting business investment in innovation and research, and developing links and synergies between enterprises, R&D centres and higher education, in particular product and service development, technology transfer, social innovation, eco-innovation and public service applications ...

Specific objective 1.1

To improve sustainable linkages among actors of the innovation systems for strengthening regional innovation capacity in central Europe

Expected result

Increased and more sustainable linkages of actors in the innovation systems strengthening the innovation capacity within central European regions

Result indicator 1.1

Status of linkages among actors of the innovation systems achieved through transnational cooperation in central European regions

Examples of actions:

- Establishing and further strengthening transnational innovation networks and clusters, also supporting their internationalisation
- Enhancing the transfer of R&D-results from research institutions to the business sector (in particular SMEs) leading to new services and products
- Building transnational links for improving existing and developing new services which support innovation in businesses
- Strengthening links between the public sector, finance institutions as well as the business sector (in particular SMEs) to design and test new structures and services that facilitate the access to financing of innovation
- Increasing cooperation between research, the public and private sectors to stimulate innovation and entrepreneurship (e.g. reduction of administrative barriers of innovation, public procurement of innovative products and services, social innovation, etc.)

Specific objective 1.2

To improve skills and entrepreneurial competences advancing economic and social innovation in central European regions

Expected result

Improved skills and competences of employees and entrepreneurs driving economic and social innovation in central European regions

Result indicator 1.2

Status of capacities of the public and private sector for skills development of employees and entrepreneurial competences achieved through transnational cooperation driving economic and social innovation in central European regions

Examples of actions:

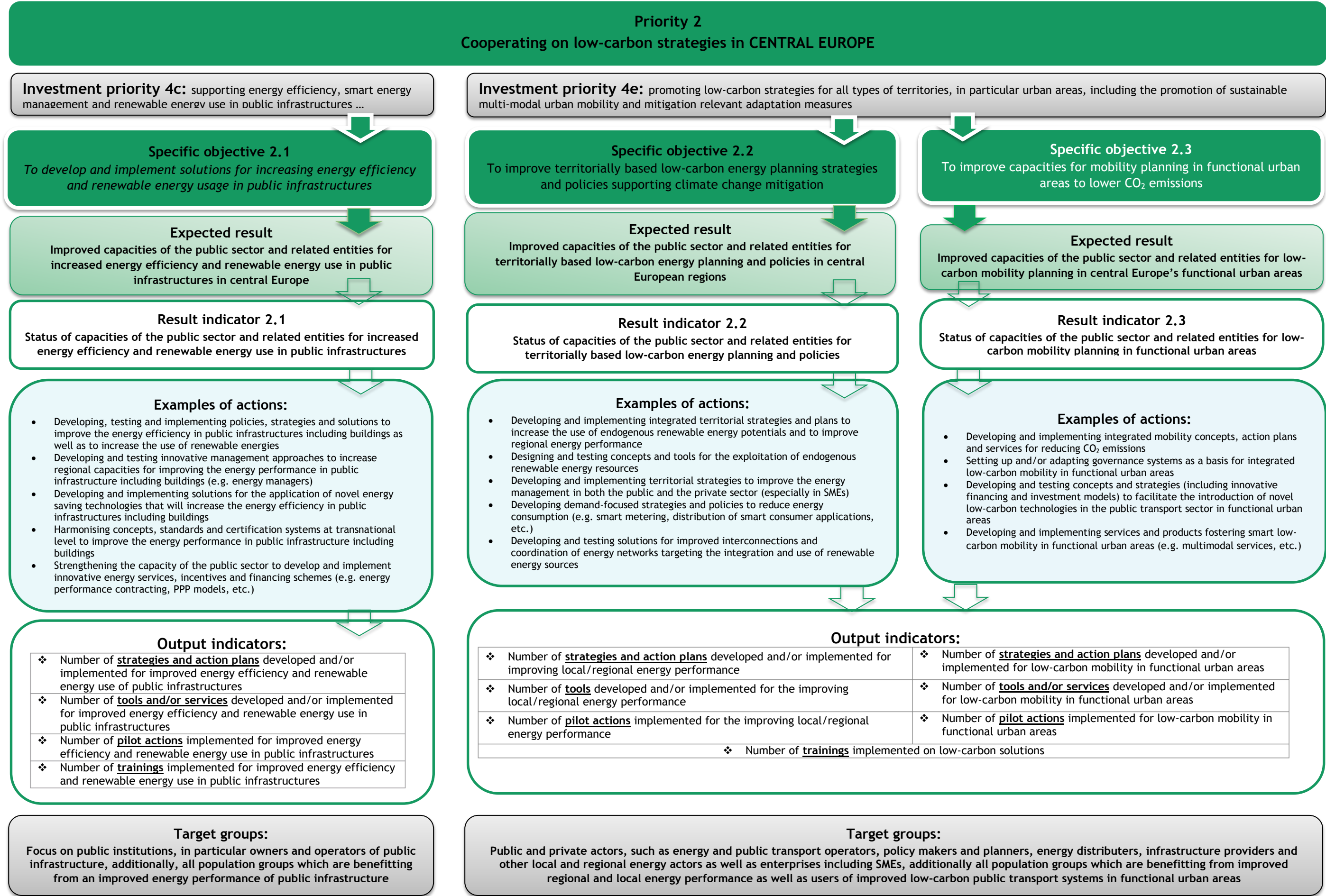
- Increasing skills of employees in the business sector (particularly SMEs) regarding novel technologies (e.g. eco-innovation, low-carbon technologies, ICT, key enabling technologies, etc.), innovative products, services or processes and social innovation contributing to regional smart specialisation strategies
- Developing and implementing strategies and tools to improve creativity and entrepreneurial mind-sets building on different business cultures and on all levels of education
- Developing and implementing strategies and tools for improving technological and managerial competences for entrepreneurship for economic and social innovation (e.g. healthcare and social inclusion of minorities, disabled persons, elderly etc.)
- Adapting, developing, and testing innovative learning systems for increasing skills and entrepreneurial competences considering demographic change challenges (e.g. ageing society, youth unemployment, shrinking regions facing skills shortages etc.)

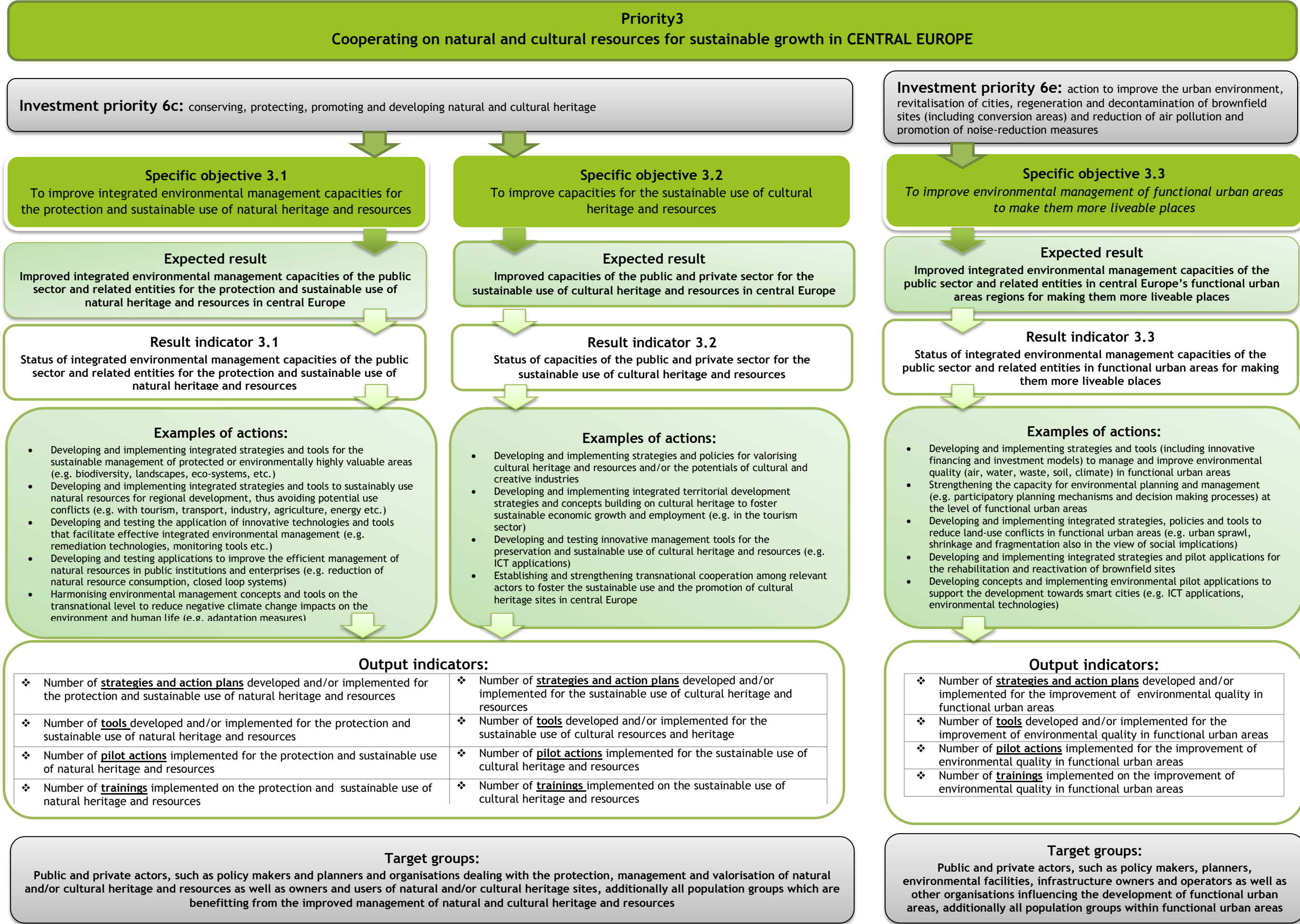
Output indicators:

❖ Number of strategies and action plans developed and/or implemented for strengthening linkages within the innovation systems	❖ Number of strategies and action plans developed and/or implemented for improvement of skills and competences of employees and entrepreneurs
❖ Number of tools and services developed and/or implemented for strengthening linkages within the innovation systems	❖ Number of tools developed and/or implemented for improving skills and competences of employees and entrepreneurs
❖ Number of innovation networks established	❖ Number of pilot actions implemented for improving of skills and competences of employees and entrepreneurs
❖ Number of pilot actions implemented for strengthening linkages within the innovation systems	❖ Number of trainings implemented for improving innovation capacity and mind sets

Target groups:

Enterprises (with a specific focus on SMEs) and their employees, entrepreneurs, cluster organisations, the public sector, intermediaries as well as private and public research institutions, R&D facilities, centres of R&D excellence; public and private actors dealing with social and economic innovation as well as all population groups which are affected by the issue





Priority 4:
Cooperating on transport to better connect CENTRAL EUROPE

Investment priority 7b: enhancing regional mobility through connecting secondary and tertiary nodes to TEN-T infrastructure, including multimodal nodes

Specific objective 4.1

To improve planning and coordination of regional passenger transport systems for better connections to national and European transport networks

Expected result

Improved and coordinated planning capacities of the public sector and related entities for regional passenger transport systems in central Europe linked to national and European transport networks

Result indicator 4.1

Status of coordinated planning capacities of the public sector and related entities for regional passenger transport systems linked to national and European transport networks

Examples of actions:

- Developing and implementing strategies (including innovative financing and investment models) to link sustainable passenger transport in particular in peripheral areas to the TEN-T network as well as to the primary, secondary and tertiary transport nodes
- Developing and implementing coordinated strategies, tools and pilot applications to improve regional public transport systems for passengers in particular across borders (e.g. commuter connections, interoperability, etc.)
- Developing concepts and testing pilot applications for smart regional mobility (e.g. multimodal ticketing, ICT tools, routes on demand, etc.)
- Developing coordinated concepts, standards and tools for improved mobility services in the public interest (e.g. for disadvantaged groups, for shrinking regions, etc.)

Output indicators:

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ❖ | Number of strategies and action plans developed and/or implemented for the improvement of regional passenger transport |
| ❖ | Number of tools and/or services developed and/or implemented for the improvement of regional passenger transport |
| ❖ | Number of pilot actions implemented for the improvement of regional passenger transport |
| ❖ | Number of trainings implemented on the improvement of regional passenger transport |

Target groups:

Public and private sector, such as institutions responsible for planning and managing regional transport networks, public transport operators, infrastructure providers and other local or regional transport actors, additionally all population groups which can benefit from improved regional passenger transport services (e.g. commuters, tourists, etc.)

Investment priority 7c: developing and improving environment-friendly (including low-noise) and low-carbon transport systems including inland waterways and maritime transport, ports, multimodal links and airport infrastructure, in order to promote sustainable regional and local mobility

Specific objective 4.2

To improve coordination among freight transport stakeholders for increasing multimodal environmentally-friendly freight solutions

Expected result

Improved coordination among freight transport stakeholders for increasing multimodal environmentally-friendly freight solutions in central Europe

Result indicator 4.2

Status of coordination among freight transport stakeholders for increasing multimodal environmentally-friendly freight solutions

Examples of actions:

- Developing and implementing coordinated strategies (including innovative financing and investment models) for strengthening the multimodality of environmentally-friendly freight transport systems (e.g. rail, river, or sea transport)
- Developing and implementing coordination and collaboration mechanisms between multimodal freight transport actors
- Developing and implementing coordinated concepts, management tools and services aimed at increasing the share of environmentally friendly logistics through optimised freight transport chains (e.g. multimodal transnational freight transport flows)
- Developing and testing coordinated strategies and concepts for “greening” the last mile of freight transport (e.g. logistics planning)

Output indicators:

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ❖ | Number of strategies and action plans developed and/or implemented for multimodal environmentally-friendly freight transport |
| ❖ | Number of tools and services developed and/or implemented for multimodal environmentally-friendly freight transport |
| ❖ | Number of pilot actions implemented for multimodal environmentally-friendly freight transport |
| ❖ | Number of trainings implemented on multimodal environmentally-friendly freight transport |

Target groups:

Public and private sector, such as providers and operators of freight transport and logistics services, commercial customers of freight transport systems, institutions planning and managing freight transport, infrastructure providers and other local or regional freight transport actors

Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme

Application manual - Annex III:

Typology of outputs and indicators

TYPES OF OUTPUTS AND PROGRAMME SPECIFIC OUTPUT INDICATORS

In order to allow an aggregation of outputs at programme level, the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme has developed a typology for project outputs. Emphasis is put on outputs linked to “policy learning” and “implementation-oriented” approaches. This typology, which is based on the experiences of the CENTRAL EUROPE 2007-2013 programme and has been slightly adapted and simplified, differentiates between the following four types of project outputs:

- Strategy and action plan development (and/or implementation)
- Transnational tool development (and/or implementation)
- Pilot action
- Training

These project outputs are monitored through programme-specific output indicators which follow the general structure of the typology of outputs. The indicators being based on the output types as indicated above are further tailored and linked to the thematic focus and scope of each priority axis and specific objective covering the main actions as expressed in the intervention logic.

In order to ensure a common understanding the table below explains the scope and meaning of the four output types.

Type of outputs	
Strategy/ action plan	<p>A strategy should be jointly defined on the basis of problems which are relevant for the participating regions. It should provide a common vision and set objectives and priorities in a mid- to long-term perspective. The formulation of a transnational and/or regional strategy should be carried out with involvement of relevant stakeholders (targeting the policy level) and aim at its subsequent implementation.</p> <p>An action plan should break down the strategy goals and objectives into specific tasks. It should include the sequence of steps to be taken, or activities that must be performed, for a strategy to succeed. Therefore it should include a time line, the financial resources and a definition of the responsible actors.</p> <p>This type of output can relate either to the development of new or further improvement, revision and/or update of existing strategies/action plans as well as their subsequent implementation.</p> <p>Each developed strategy/action plan, whether implemented or not, should be only counted once under the respective output indicator. Project management-related strategies such as e.g. the project communication strategy should not be considered under this output indicator.</p>

Tools	<p>A tool is to be understood as a means for accomplishing a specific task or purpose. Tools should be jointly developed at transnational level and innovative; they can be physical or technical objects, but also methods, concepts or services. They comprise amongst others of analytical tools, management tools, technical tools, software tools, monitoring tools, decision support tools etc.</p> <p>To be effective, a tool must be tailored to user needs and the respective framework conditions and has to be comprehensive and durable.</p> <p>This type of output relates either to the joint development of new or further improvement and/or adaptation of existing durable tools as well as their subsequent operational implementation.</p> <p>Each developed tool, whether implemented or not, should be only counted once under the respective output indicator. Project management-related tools such as standard project websites, internal communication platforms and templates should not be considered under this output indicator.</p>
Pilot actions	<p>A pilot action is to be understood as a practical implementation of novel schemes (e.g. services, tools, methods or approaches). An experimental nature is central to a pilot action (or pilot investments, if relevant) which aims at testing, evaluating and/or demonstrating the feasibility and effectiveness of a scheme. Therefore it covers either the testing of innovative solutions or demonstrating the application of existing solutions to a certain territory/sector.</p> <p>The results and practices of pilot actions should be exploited on and transferred to other institutions and territories.</p> <p>A pilot action is limited in its scope (area, duration, scale etc.) and must be unprecedented in a comparable environment.</p>
Training	<p>Training is to be understood as providing persons with the understanding, knowledge, skills, competences and access to information required in particular occupations. Training may encompass any kind of education (general, specialised or vocational, formal or non-formal, etc.).</p> <p>Training measures should be jointly developed at transnational level and tailored according to the needs of the specific territories, target groups and stakeholders addressed by the operation.</p> <p>Implemented training measures such as training seminars, study visits, peer reviews, online training courses, etc. are to be counted under the respective output indicator. Internal project management related trainings such as on reporting requirements, finances etc. should not be considered under this output indicator.</p>

In accordance with the described typology, the following tables present the set of **programme-specific output indicators** for each of the priorities and specific objectives providing explanations¹ and examples.

¹ Specific terminology used is also described in the CP annex 02 Glossary.

PRIORITY AXIS 1: Cooperating on innovation to make CENTRAL EUROPE more competitive

Specific objective 1.1: To improve sustainable linkages among actors of the innovation systems for strengthening regional innovation capacity in central Europe

Priority 1	ID	Output indicator name	Explanation	Examples of outputs
	1b.1	Number of <u>strategies and action plans</u> for strengthening linkages within the innovation systems developed and/or implemented	See general explanation on strategy/action plan above. The developed and/or implemented strategies and action plans should target the strengthening of linkages within the innovation system to be understood as building and consolidating connections and cooperation between actors in the innovation system, notably research and business sector (e.g. laboratories, universities, companies, suppliers, customers etc.), policy makers and public authorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategies for innovation networks Internationalisation strategy of clusters Technology transfer action plan from research to business ...
	1b.3	Number of <u>tools</u> and services for strengthening linkages within the innovation systems developed and/or implemented	See general explanation on tools above. Tools and services developed and/or implemented should aim at improving linkages among actors in the innovation systems including enhanced knowledge transfers between research institutions and businesses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Innovation voucher schemes Matchmaking instruments Cooperation models and financing schemes Collective open innovation platforms ...
	1b.5	Number of <u>innovation networks</u> established	In order to measure project contributions to the creation of innovation networks being particularly relevant for the specific objective 1.1, in this exceptional case this additional indicator complements the typology of outputs. Innovation network are forms of coordinated and stable cooperation relations between enterprises and other players (e.g. training and research institutions, political players, etc.) that serve the exchange of information, knowledge and resources. The aim of the established networks is to join efforts for yielding innovative products, processes and services and gain competition advantage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional or transnational business clusters Technology sector networks Networks of entrepreneurs Networks of business innovation service providers ...
	1b.6	Number of <u>pilot actions</u> for strengthening linkages within the innovation systems implemented	See general explanation on Pilot actions above. The implementation of pilot actions should aim at testing and demonstrating the feasibility of novel solutions for improving linkages among actors in the innovation systems as precondition for innovation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pilot advisory service for innovation support in businesses Pilot actions on technology transfer Pilot applications related to product, process, service innovation in business ...
	1b.8	Number of <u>trainings</u> for improving innovation capacity and mind sets implemented	See general explanation on training above. Implemented training measures should target relevant actors of the innovation system (public and private sector) aiming at improved competences and skills and enhanced knowledge transfers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training on internationalisation of clusters Training on technology transfer Training on innovation support ...

Specific objective 1.2: To improve skills and entrepreneurial competences for advancing economic and social innovation in central European regions

Priority 1	ID	Output indicator name	Explanation	Examples of outputs
	1b.2	Number of <u>strategies and action plans</u> for improvement of skills and competences of employees and entrepreneurs developed and/or implemented	See general explanation on strategy/action plan above. The developed and/or implemented strategies and action plans should target the improvement of knowledge and skills of employees and entrepreneurs focussing on the development and implementation of innovative products, services or processes for advancing economic and social innovation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategies to improve creativity and entrepreneurship mind sets Strategies for improving technological and management competences Strategies on enhanced entrepreneurship for social innovation Action plan for competence development on eco-innovation ...
	1b.4	Number of <u>tools</u> for improvement of skills and competences of employees and entrepreneurs developed and/or implemented	See general explanation on Tools above. Tools developed and/or implemented should focus on the improvement of knowledge and skills of employees and entrepreneurs for the development and implementation of innovative products, services or processes and building a stronger culture of entrepreneurship.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Innovative learning systems for skills and entrepreneurial competence development Curricula development Tools measuring economic and social innovation capacity ...
	1b.7	Number of <u>pilot actions</u> for improvement of skills and competences of employees and entrepreneurs implemented	See general explanation on Pilot actions above. Implemented pilot actions should aim at testing and demonstrating the feasibility of novel solutions the improvement of knowledge and skills of employees and entrepreneurs contributing to advancing economic and social innovation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pilot investment on training facility for entrepreneurs Pilot application and promotion of novel technologies Pilot services for competence development of employees ...
	1b.8	Number of <u>trainings</u> for improving innovation capacity and mind sets implemented	See general explanation on training above. Implemented training measures should target relevant actors of the innovation system (public and private sector) aiming at improved competences and skills and enhanced knowledge transfers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Entrepreneurship training Training on eco-innovation technologies Social innovation training ...

PRIORITY AXIS 2: Cooperating on low carbon strategies in CENTRAL EUROPE

Specific objective 2.1: To develop and implement solutions for increasing energy efficiency and renewable energy usage in public infrastructures

Priority 2	ID	Output indicator name	Explanation	Examples of outputs
	4c.1	Number of <u>strategies and action plans</u> for improved energy efficiency and renewable energy use of public infrastructures developed and/or implemented	See general explanation on strategy/ action plan above. The developed and/or implemented strategies and action plans should target the reduction of energy used and an increased renewable energy share in consumption of public infrastructures including buildings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy for improving energy efficiency of public historic buildings • Strategy for energy relevant restoration of public building stock • Strategy for energy efficient municipal facilities management • ...
	4c.2	Number of <u>tools</u> and/or services for improved energy efficiency and renewable energy use of public infrastructures developed and/or implemented	See general explanation on Tools above. Tools and services developed and/or implemented should focus on the improvement of energy efficiency and renewable energy use of public infrastructure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Software for optimising energy consumption • Energy standards and certification systems • Energy services and financing schemes • Database of novel energy saving technologies applied in public buildings • ...
	4c.3	Number of <u>pilot actions</u> for improved energy efficiency and renewable energy use of public infrastructures implemented	See general explanation on Pilot actions above. The implementation of pilot actions should aim at testing and demonstrating the feasibility of novel solutions for energy efficiency and renewable energy use in public infrastructure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot retrofitting of public buildings achieving higher energy efficiency • Pilot application of innovative energy technologies • Pilot testing of harmonised building energy performance certification method • ...
	4c.4	Number of <u>trainings</u> for improved energy efficiency and renewable energy use of public infrastructures implemented	See general explanation on training above. Implemented trainings shall target relevant actors enabling them to develop and implement solutions for improved energy efficiency and renewable energy use of public infrastructures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training for energy managers of public infrastructures • Training on energy efficient restoration of public buildings • Training on innovative methods for financing energy efficient measures in public buildings (EPC, ESCOs) • ...

Specific objective 2.2: To improve territorially based energy planning strategies and policies supporting climate change mitigation

Priority 2	ID	Output indicator name	Explanation	Examples of outputs
	4e.1	Number of <u>strategies and action plans</u> for the improvement of local/regional energy performance developed and/or implemented	See general explanation on strategy/action plan above. The developed and/or implemented strategies and action plans should focus on energy planning at the territorial level considering the specific local/regional patterns of energy needs and resources with the aim to increase the use of endogenous renewable energy potentials and improve regional energy performance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable regional energy action plans • Strategy for increased use of endogenous regional energy potentials • Strategy for better integration of energy produced from renewable energy sources into existing distribution networks • ...
	4e.3	Number of <u>tools</u> for the improvement of local/regional energy performance developed and/or implemented	See general explanation on Tools above. Tools developed and/or implemented should focus on the improvement of the energy performance in both the public and the private sector and the exploitation of endogenous renewable energy resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Software model for regional energy planning • Energy management concepts • Handbook for municipality staff to introduce low carbon procurement into applied practise • ...
	4e.5	Number of <u>pilot actions</u> for the improvement of local/regional energy performance implemented	See general explanation on Pilot actions above. The implementation of pilot actions should aim at testing and demonstrating the feasibility of novel solutions for exploitation of renewable energy resources as well as for improved local/regional energy performance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot application for the exploitation of renewable energy resources • Pilot implementation of demand and supply side solutions • Pilot scheme implementation fostering behavioural changes of energy consumption in households • ...
	4e.7	Number of <u>trainings</u> on low carbon solutions implemented	See general explanation on training above. Implemented training measures should target relevant stakeholders enabling them to develop and implement solutions for the improvement of local/regional energy performance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training on integrated local and/or regional energy strategies • Training on monitoring and control of energy consumption • Training targeting the skills for better onsite renewable energy potential utilisation • ...

Specific objective 2.3: To improve capacities for mobility planning in functional urban areas to lower CO₂ emissions

Priority 2	ID	Output indicator name	Explanation	Examples of outputs
	4e.2	Number of <u>strategies and action plans</u> for low-carbon mobility in functional urban areas developed and/or implemented	<p>See general explanation on strategy/action plan above.</p> <p>The developed and/or implemented strategies and action plans should focus on mobility planning fostering the reduction of CO₂ emissions in functional urban areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategies for introduction of novel low-carbon technologies in public transport in functional urban areas Action plan on integrated low carbon mobility in functional urban areas Strategies for improving public transport offers in functional urban areas aiming at reducing CO₂ emissions Action plans for implementation of smart low carbon mobility services in functional urban areas
	4e.4	Number of <u>tools</u> and/or services for low-carbon mobility in functional urban areas developed and/or implemented	<p>See general explanation on Tools above.</p> <p>Tools and services developed and/or implemented should aim at fostering smart low-carbon mobility and the reduction of CO₂ emissions in functional urban areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governance and financing model for integrated low-carbon mobility in functional urban areas New economic instruments and incentives to implement low carbon mobility Multi-modal services for smart low carbon mobility ...
	4e.6	Number of <u>pilot actions</u> for low carbon mobility in functional urban areas implemented	<p>See general explanation on Pilot actions above.</p> <p>The implementation of pilot actions should aim at testing and demonstrating the feasibility of novel solutions for low carbon mobility in functional urban areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pilot application of novel low-carbon technologies in public transport in functional urban areas Pilot implementation of innovative services for smart low carbon mobility Pilot application of multimodal low carbon services ...
	4e.7	Number of <u>trainings</u> on low carbon solutions implemented	<p>See general explanation on training above.</p> <p>Implemented training measures should target relevant stakeholders enabling them to develop and implement solutions for the improvement of low carbon mobility in functional urban areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training on low carbon mobility planning in functional urban areas Training on novel and integrated low carbon public transport offers Training on smart low carbon mobility services in functional urban areas

PRIORITY AXIS 3: Cooperating on natural and cultural resources for sustainable growth in CENTRAL EUROPE

Specific objective 3.1: To improve integrated environmental management capacities for the protection and sustainable use of natural heritage and resources

ID	Output indicator name	Explanation	Examples of outputs
Priority 3	6c.1 Number of <u>strategies and action plans</u> for protection and sustainable use of natural resources and heritage developed and/or implemented	<p>See general explanation on Strategy/action plan above.</p> <p>The developed and/or implemented strategies and action plans should focus on integrated environmental management which is to be understood as a comprehensive approach to natural resource planning and management aiming at the protection and sustainable use of natural heritage and/or resources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategies for the sustainable management of protected high value ecosystems Strategies for the protection of central Europe's natural heritage Strategies for the sustainable use of natural resources and avoidance of usage conflicts Action plans on adaptation to negative effects of climate change ...
	6c.3 Number of <u>tools</u> for protection and sustainable use of natural resources and heritage developed and/or implemented	<p>See general explanation on Tools above.</p> <p>Tools developed and/or implemented should aim at integrated approaches for the protection and sustainable use of natural heritage and resources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring and assessment tools for the protection of biodiversity Software tools for integrated environmental planning Decision support tools for sustainable use of natural resources ...
	6c.5 Number of <u>pilot actions</u> for protection and sustainable use of natural resources and heritage implemented	<p>See general explanation on Pilot actions above.</p> <p>The implementation of pilot actions should aim at testing and demonstrating the feasibility of novel solutions for the protection and sustainable use of natural resources and heritage.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pilot implementation of natural heritage protection schemes Pilot application of novel monitoring systems Pilot testing of remediation technologies Pilot application of integrated management approach for increased resource efficiency in public institutions ...
	6c.7 Number of <u>trainings</u> on protection and sustainable use of natural resources and heritage implemented	<p>See general explanation on training above.</p> <p>Implemented training measures should target relevant stakeholders enabling them to develop and implement solutions for the protection and sustainable use of natural resources and heritage.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training on the application of novel environmental monitoring systems Training on innovative remediation technologies Training on integrated planning tools for sustainable use of natural resources ...

Specific objective 3.2: To improve capacities for the sustainable use of cultural heritage and resources

Priority 3	ID	Output indicator name	Explanation	Examples of outputs
	6c.2	Number of <u>strategies and action plans</u> for protection and sustainable use of cultural heritage and resources developed and/or implemented	<p>See general explanation on Strategy/action plan above.</p> <p>The developed and/or implemented strategies and action plans should focus on an improved protection, management and sustainable use of the cultural heritage and resources as well as their valorisation (including cultural and creative industries).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategies for the valorisation of cultural heritage sites Strategies supporting the creative industries sector Regional development strategies building on cultural heritage assets Investment strategies for valorisation of cultural resources ...
	6c.4	Number of <u>tools</u> for protection and sustainable use of cultural resources and heritage developed and/or implemented	<p>See general explanation on Tools above.</p> <p>Tools developed and/or implemented should target the protection, sustainable use and valorisation of cultural heritage and resources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ICT tools for increasing the visibility and attractiveness of heritage sites Management tools fostering the sustainability and efficiency of cultural sites valorisation Handbook on creative districts development ...
	6c.6	Number of <u>pilot actions</u> for protection and sustainable use of cultural resources and heritage implemented	<p>See general explanation on Pilot actions above.</p> <p>The implementation of pilot actions should aim at testing and demonstrating the feasibility of novel solutions for the protection and sustainable use of cultural resources and heritage.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pilot implementation of innovative management models for historic sites Pilot implementation of accessibility measures to industrial heritage sites Pilot implementation of innovative services for the valorisation of traditional knowledge ...
	6c.8	Number of <u>trainings</u> on protection and sustainable use of cultural resources and heritage implemented	<p>See general explanation on training above.</p> <p>Implemented training measures should target relevant stakeholders enabling them to develop and implement solutions for the protection and sustainable use of cultural resources and heritage.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training on management concepts for efficient historic site preservation and valorisation Training on good practices for sustainable use of cultural heritage Training seminar on services for creative industries development ...

Specific objective 3.3: To improve environmental management of functional urban areas to make them more liveable places

Priority 3	ID	Output indicator name	Explanation	Examples of outputs
	6e.1	Number of <u>strategies and action plans</u> for the improvement of environmental quality in functional urban areas developed and/or implemented	See general explanation on Strategy/action plan above. The developed and/or implemented strategies and action plans should focus on integrated approaches for improving the environmental quality of functional urban areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy for rehabilitation of urban brownfield sites • Action plan for the reduction of air pollution in urban areas • Investment strategy for improved urban waste management • ...
	6e.2	Number of <u>tools</u> for the improvement of environmental quality in functional urban areas developed and/or implemented	See general explanation on Tools above. Tools developed and/or implemented should aim at integrated approaches for the improvement of environmental quality in functional urban areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tools for reducing land-use conflicts in functional urban areas • Integrated environmental planning tools • Investment and financing models for improving the urban environment • ...
	6e.3	Number of <u>pilot actions</u> for the improvement of environmental quality in functional urban areas implemented	See general explanation on Pilot actions above. The implementation of pilot actions should aim at testing and demonstrating the feasibility of novel solutions for the improvement of environmental quality in functional urban areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot action on improvement of urban air quality • Pilot implementation of concepts for participatory processes in urban environmental planning and decision making • Pilot rehabilitation of contaminated sites in the urban context • ...
	6e.4	Number of <u>trainings</u> on the improvement of the environmental quality in functional urban areas implemented	See general explanation on training above. Implemented training measures should target relevant stakeholders enabling them to develop and implement solutions for the improvement of the environmental quality in functional urban areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training on rehabilitation methods and technologies • Training on the usage of innovative methods for monitoring of environmental quality (water, air, soil etc.) • Training seminar on integrated environmental management approaches for functional urban areas • ...

PRIORITY AXIS 4: Cooperating on transport to better connect CENTRAL EUROPE

Specific objective 4.1: To improve planning and coordination of regional passenger transport systems for better connections to national and European transport networks

Priority 4	ID	Output indicator name	Explanation	Examples of outputs
	7b.1	Number of <u>strategies and action plans</u> for the improvement of regional passenger transport developed and/or implemented	See general explanation on Strategy/action plan above. The developed and/or implemented strategies and action plans should focus on the improvement of regional passenger transport allowing a better connection to national and European transport networks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional mobility strategy linked to TEN-T network Public transport strategy in peripheral regions Action plans for improved interoperability of transport system ...
	7b.2	Number of <u>tools</u> and/or services for the improvement of regional passenger transport developed and/or implemented	See general explanation on Tools above. Tools developed and/or implemented should aim at improving the regional passenger transport allowing a better connection to national and European transport networks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Real time public transport user information systems Financing and investment models for improving mobility in peripheral regions Planning tools for improved interoperability of public transport systems within and between regions ...
	7b.3	Number of <u>pilot actions</u> for the improvement of regional passenger transport implemented	See general explanation on Pilot actions above. The implementation of pilot actions should aim at testing and demonstrating the feasibility of novel solutions for the improvement of regional passenger transport allowing a better connection to national and European transport networks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pilot implementation of on demand public transport schemes Pilot implementation of cross-border multi-modal ticketing Pilot implementation of improved public transport connections to transport hubs ...
	7b.4	Number of <u>trainings</u> on the improvement of regional passenger transport implemented	See general explanation on Training above. Implemented training measures should target relevant stakeholders enabling them to develop and implement solutions for the improvement of regional passenger transport allowing a better connection to national and European transport networks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training on ICT tools for multimodal transport Training for mobility advisers in shrinking regions Training on sustainable cross border commuter services ...

Specific objective 4.2: To improve coordination among freight transport stakeholders for increasing multimodal environment-friendly freight solutions

Priority 4	ID	Output indicator name	Explanation	Examples of outputs
	7c.1	Number of <u>strategies and action plans</u> for multimodal environmentally friendly freight transport developed and/or implemented	<p>See general explanation on Strategy/action plan above.</p> <p>The developed and/or implemented strategies and action plans should focus on the increase of multimodal environmentally friendly freight transport.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinated strategy on river freight transport systems Strategy for cooperation between multimodal freight transport terminals Action plan for improved coordination of multimodal terminals Action plan for logistic cooperation along green transport corridors ...
	7c.2	Number of <u>tools</u> and services for multimodal environmentally friendly freight transport developed and/or implemented	<p>See general explanation on Tools above.</p> <p>Tools developed and/or implemented should aim at supporting multimodal environmentally friendly freight transport.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management tools for logistic cooperation Financing and investment models for multimodal freight transport Logistic planning software for the greening of the last mile of transport Cooperation e-platform for multimodal freight transport across borders ...
	7c.3	Number of <u>pilot actions</u> for multimodal environmentally friendly freight transport	<p>See general explanation on Pilot actions above.</p> <p>The implementation of pilot actions should aim at testing and demonstrating the feasibility of novel solutions for the increase of multimodal environmentally friendly freight transport.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pilot implementation of environmentally friendly last mile freight transport approach Pilot application of IT services to “green” logistic providers Pilot application of harmonised freight transport standards ...
	7c.4	Number of <u>trainings</u> on multimodal environmentally friendly freight transport implemented	<p>See general explanation on Training above.</p> <p>Implemented training measures should target relevant stakeholders enabling them to develop and implement solutions for multimodal environmentally friendly freight transport.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training on the use of IT software for multimodal logistic planning Training on coordination requirements for corridor based green freight transport Training on harmonised quality standards for multimodal freight transport ...

ADDITIONAL INDICATORS

The programme has defined a set of additional indicators to capture the result- and implementation-oriented effects of projects:

- Thematic result indicators
- Communication result indicators

These additional indicators are applicable for each programme priority and specific objective.

As for the thematic result indicators the project has to select those indicators being relevant in terms of its scope and planned achievements and to quantify the respective targets.

Within the application form targets for all communication result indicators have to be set.

The progress will have to be reported during project implementation.

The following tables provide an overview on those additional indicators and their definitions in order to ensure a common understanding of their scope and meaning.

Thematic result indicators

Indicator	Measurement unit	Definition
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of institutions adopting new and/or improved strategies and action plans 	Institutions	<p>To be understood as the number of institutions (inside or outside of the partnership) having adopted a strategy or an action plan developed and/or improved in the frame of the funded project.</p> <p>This adoption/endorsement should be made by a competent decision making body and be formalised as well as verifiable (e.g. a declaration of intent, local/regional council or assembly decision). Only institutions where the adoption was made within the project life time should be considered under this indicator.</p> <p>This indicator is directly linked to the respective output indicator “Number of strategies and action plans developed and/or implemented” as defined for each specific objective.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of institutions applying new and/or improved tools and services 	Institutions	<p>To be understood as the number of institutions (inside or outside of the partnership) applying within their own organisations or in their fields of activities tools and services which were developed and/or improved in the frame of the funded project.</p> <p>The application can range from a test operation to a full scale deployment of the respective tool or service and should be verifiable.</p> <p>Only institutions which apply the developed tools/ services or which made the decision on the future application of those tools/services within the project life time should be considered under this indicator.</p> <p>This indicator is directly linked to the respective output indicator “Number of tools and services developed and/or implemented” as defined for each specific objective.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amount of funds leveraged based on project achievements 	EUR	<p>To be understood as direct project effects in terms of leverage of funds (i.e. project achievements leading to higher follow up investments) in the concerned field during or after the end of the project (within a time horizon of 5 years after project end). This can be e.g. the attraction of public or private funds, the generation of follow-up projects funded at local/regional/national/EU level, investment preparation with a mid-term perspective (up to 5 years for its realisation) such as up-scaling of pilots and demonstration activities, etc.</p> <p>Therefore this indicator could be linked to any type of project output relevant under the specific objective.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of jobs created (FTE) based on project achievements 	FTE	<p>To be understood as new and durable jobs created during or after the end of the project (up to 5 years) as a direct effect of the project achievements with a clear perspective to remain after the end of funding.</p> <p>The number of jobs created should be counted in full time equivalents (FTE), i.e. in case of part-time jobs those should be reported as FTE percentage.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of trained persons 	Persons	<p>To be understood as the number of persons having participated and having completed a training session or cycle within the project duration. Double counting of the same person should be avoided (e.g. if the same person has participated in several trainings).</p> <p>This indicator is directly linked to the respective output indicator “Number of trainings implemented” as defined for each specific objective.</p>

Communication result indicators

Indicator	Measurement unit	Definition
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unique visits to the project website (<i>digital reach</i>) 	Number of stakeholders reached	<p>To be understood as the number of unique visits to start page of the project microsite, hosted on the programme website. The figure to be provided is a monthly average to be reached across the reporting period.</p> <p>High traffic to the project microsite is understood as the result of successful communication aiming at raising awareness.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants at project events (<i>physical reach</i>) 	Number of stakeholders reached	<p>To be understood as the number of participants to project events (public and targeted) as well as to sessions hosted by the project in the frame of other events.</p> <p>High attendance to the project events is understood as the result of successful communication aiming at raising awareness.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Event participants satisfied with information provided (<i>satisfaction with information</i>) 	Percentage of stakeholders satisfied	<p>To be understood as the percentage of visitors that declare themselves satisfied with information provided at public and targeted project events. The feedback should be collected after the event on a scale from 1 (not satisfied) to 5 (very satisfied). Only feedback of 4 or 5 shall be considered as “satisfied” with information provided.</p> <p>High satisfaction with information provided is understood as the result of successful communication at project events aiming at providing information.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint communication activities implemented with external stakeholders (<i>external cooperation</i>) 	Number of joint communication activities	<p>To be understood as the number of joint communication activities - reaching from joint publications to joint events and joint digital platforms - that were implemented by the project with external stakeholders.</p> <p>A high level of cooperation with external stakeholders is understood as the result of successful communication aiming at influencing attitude and/or changing behaviour.</p>

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Application manual - Annex IV:

Types of partners and target groups

Classification of types of partners and target groups

No	Main categories	Examples	Sub-categories	Measurement unit
1	Local public authority	municipality, etc.		[number of organisations]
2	Regional public authority	regional council, etc.		[number of organisations]
3	National public authority	ministry, etc.		[number of organisations]
4	Sectoral agency	local or regional development agency, environmental agency, energy agency, employment agency, etc.		[number of organisations]
5	Infrastructure and (public) service provider	public transport, utility company (water supply, electricity supply, sewage, gas, waste collection, etc.), airport, port, railway, etc.		[number of organisations]
6	Interest groups including NGOs	trade union, foundation, charity, voluntary association, club, etc.		[number of organisations]
7	Higher education and research	university faculty, college, research institution, RTD facility, research cluster, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public research institutions Private research institutions Universities 	[number of organisations]
8	Education/training centre and school	primary, secondary, pre-school, vocational training, etc.		[number of organisations]
9	Large enterprises ¹			[number of enterprises]
10	SME ²		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Micro enterprises Small enterprises Medium enterprises 	[number of enterprises]
11	Business support organisation	chamber of commerce, chamber of trade and crafts, business incubator or innovation centre, business clusters, etc.		[number of organisations]
12	EGTC			[number of organisations]
13	International organisation, EEIG		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> International organisation under national law International organisation under international law 	[number of organisations]
14	General public ³			
15	Other ⁴			

¹ An enterprise is considered any entity engaged in an economic activity, irrespective of its legal form. This includes, in particular, self-employed persons and family businesses engaged in craft or other activities, and partnerships or associations regularly engaged in an economic activity. Regulation (EU) 651/2014, Annex I.

² SME: enterprises which employ fewer than 250 persons and which have an annual turnover < EUR 50 million, and/or an annual balance sheet total < EUR 43 million. Micro-enterprise: employs fewer than 10 persons and annual turnover and/or annual balance sheet total < EUR 2 million. Small enterprise: employs fewer than 50 persons and annual turnover and/or annual balance sheet < EUR 10 million. (Regulation (EU) 651/2014, Annex I)

³ Relevant only for target groups

⁴ Relevant only for target groups

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Application manual - Annex V:

Template of lead applicant declaration Step 1

Project title

Project acronym

Index No.

The undersigned, representing the (official name of the lead applicant organisation in English as listed in the AF) , hereby certifies that:

- I am legally authorised to sign this statement on behalf of my organisation;
- All information concerning the participation of my organisation in the project proposal is correct to the best of my knowledge;
- The organisation I represent has the adequate legal capacity to participate in the call for proposals and especially to submit legally relevant documents;
- The organisation I represent has the financial and administrative capacity to implement the project proposal;
- The organisation I represent is not in any of the situations referred to in art. 106(1) and 107 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012;
- The project proposal, as described in the application form light, is unique in its objective, approach and activities to the best of my knowledge;
- The information in the application form light is accurate and true to the best of my knowledge;
- The project proposal, or any part of it, has not received support from other EU-funded programmes;
- The project proposal is in line with the relevant EU and national legislation and policies of all countries involved.
- In case of pre-selection of the project proposal to step 2 of the call, the organisation I represent and the project partners listed in the “light” application form are committed to develop the “full” application form to be submitted within step 2 of the call;
- In case of pre-selection of the project proposal to step 2 of the call, the managing authority has the right to publish the name and address of my organisation and the main contents of the project proposal (title, project focus, planned budget).

Place/date:

Signature and official stamp of the lead applicant:

Name(s) and status of signatory:

Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme

Application manual - Annex VI:

Glossary

Glossary

Beneficiaries

Beneficiary means a public or private body responsible for initiating or both initiating and implementing operations (according to Article 2(10) of the CPR benefitting from programme funds).

Capacities

Capacities are to be understood as the combination of all the strengths, attributes and resources available within a community, society or organization that can be used to achieve agreed goals (UNISDR, 2009: Terminology). They comprise the enabling policy, legal and institutional environment including human resources development and the respective managerial systems. Capacities may include infrastructure and physical means, institutions, societal coping abilities, as well as human knowledge, skills and collective attributes such as social relationships, leadership and management.

Coordination

Coordination is the synchronization and integration of activities, responsibilities, and command and control structures to ensure that resources are used most efficiently in pursuit of the specified objectives.

Creative industries

Are those industries which use culture as an input and have a cultural dimension, although their outputs are mainly functional. They include architecture and design, which integrate creative elements into wider processes, as well as subsectors such as graphic design, fashion design or advertising (Working group of EU Member States experts (open method of coordination) on cultural and creative industries, 2012: Policy Handbook).

Cultural heritage and resources

Cultural heritage is composed of tangible heritage including buildings and historic places, monuments, etc.¹ and intangible cultural heritage which refers to practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills etc. (UNESCO 2003: Convention for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage).

Cultural resources comprise both elements, the tangible and intangible cultural heritage, encompassing current culture, including progressive, innovative and urban culture. These resources can be valorised among others in cultural and creative industries.

Cultural industries

Are those industries producing and distributing goods or services which at the time they are developed are considered to have a specific attribute, use or purpose which embodies or conveys cultural expressions, irrespective of the commercial value they may have. Besides the traditional arts sectors (performing arts, visual arts, cultural heritage - including the public sector), they include film, DVD and video, television and radio, video games, new media, music, books and press (Working group of EU Member States experts (open method of coordination) on cultural and creative industries, 2012: Policy Handbook).

¹ UNESCO: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/cairo/culture/tangible-cultural-heritage/>

Energy efficiency

Energy efficiency improvements refer to a reduction in the energy used for a given service (heating, lighting, etc.) or level of activity. The reduction in the energy consumption is usually associated with technological changes, but not always since it can also result from better organisation and management or improved economic conditions in the sector ("non-technical factors") (World Energy Council, 2008: Energy Efficiency Policies around the World: Review and Evaluation).

Energy planning

Energy planning at the territorial level provides a framework linked to policies and economic development which considers the specific local/regional patterns of energy needs and resources serving as a tool to mitigate climate change and enhancing sustainability.

Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship is to be understood as the mind set and process to create and develop economic activity by blending risk-taking, creativity and/or innovation with sound management, within a new or an existing organisation (European Commission, 2003: Green Paper Entrepreneurship in Europe).

Environmental protection

Any activity that maintains the balance of the environment by preventing contamination and the deterioration of the natural resources, including activities such as: a) changes in the characteristics of goods and services, and changes in consumption patterns; b) changes in production techniques; c) waste treatment or disposal in separate environmental protection facilities; d) recycling; e) prevention of landscape degradation (IUCN, 2011: Definitions).

European transport network

European transport networks are to be understood in the sense of the Trans-European transport network (TEN-T) consisting of infrastructure for railways, inland waterways, roads, maritime and air transport, thereby ensuring the smooth functioning of the internal market and strengthening economic and social cohesion (Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013: Union guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network). It is developed through a dual-layer approach, consisting of a comprehensive network which constitutes the basic layer and a core network. The core network consists of the strategically most important parts and constitutes the backbone of the multi-modal mobility network. It concentrates on those components of TEN-T with the highest European added value: cross border missing links, key bottlenecks and multi-modal nodes.

Functional urban areas

The OECD, in cooperation with the European Commission and Eurostat, has developed a harmonised definition of functional urban areas which overcomes previous limitations linked to administrative definitions (OECD, 2012: Redefining Urban: A New Way to Measure Metropolitan Areas). According to this definition a functional urban area is a functional economic unit characterised by densely inhabited "urban cores" and "hinterlands" whose labour market is highly integrated with the cores. This definition originating from labour market and commuting considerations provides a spatial delimitation beyond administrative borders which is relevant for a multitude of thematic fields, such as for example transport (e.g. commuting, transport flows etc.), economic development (e.g. labour market, strategic positioning, etc.), environment (e.g. air/water quality, soil sealing, urban sprawl, etc.), social (e.g. health care, social housing etc.).

Governance

Governance refers to sustaining coordination and coherence among a wide variety of actors with different purposes and objectives (Pierre, 2000). Such actors may include political actors and institutions, interest groups, civil society, non-governmental and transnational organizations.

Innovation

Innovation is the implementation of a new or significantly improved product (good or service), or process, a new marketing method, or a new organisational method in business practices, workplace organisation or external relations (OECD, Oslo Manual, 2005: Guidelines for collecting and interpreting innovation data).

Innovation systems and actors

An innovation system is to be understood as “*the network of institutions in the public and private sectors whose activities and interactions initiate, import, modify and diffuse new technologies* (Freeman, 1987)”. The actors of the innovation system include stakeholders from the research and business sector, policy makers and public authorities.

Integrated environmental management

Integrated environmental management means a comprehensive approach to natural resource planning and management that encompasses ecological, social, and economic objectives. It considers the interrelationships among different elements and incorporates concepts of carrying capacity, resilience and sustainability.

Linkages

The innovative activities of a firm partly depend on the variety and structure of its links to sources of information, knowledge, technologies, practices, and human and financial resources. Each linkage connects the innovating firm to other actors in the innovation system: government laboratories, universities, policy departments, regulators, competitors, suppliers, and customers (UNESCO, 2009: Measuring innovation). It is of crucial importance to build strong links among all elements operating in innovation systems. Countries that top the innovation index have improved linkages among innovation actors, most notably in science and higher education and in the public, private and not-for-profit sectors.

Macro-regional strategy

A macro-regional strategy means an integrated framework endorsed by the European Council, which may be supported by the ESI Funds among others, to address common challenges faced by a defined geographical area relating to Member States and third countries located in the same geographical area which thereby benefit from strengthened cooperation contributing to achievement of economic, social and territorial cohesion (according to Article 2(31) of the CPR).

Mobility planning

Low carbon mobility planning is to be understood as a set of interrelated measures designed to satisfy the mobility needs of people and businesses. They are the result of an integrated planning approach and address low carbon forms of transport.

Multimodal transport

Multimodal transport is understood as the carriage of goods by at least two different modes of transport. Intermodal transport is therefore a particular type of multimodal transport (in

accordance with the European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT) definition). Thereby environmentally friendly transport solutions are those allowing a significant reduction of emissions of CO₂, NO_x and particulate matter as well as of noise.

Natural heritage and resources

As natural heritage are considered natural features, geological and physiographical formations (including habitats) and natural sites or precisely delineated natural areas. (UNESCO, 1972: Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage).

Natural resources are produced by nature, commonly subdivided into non - renewable resources, such as minerals and fossil fuels, and renewable natural resources that propagate or sustain life and are naturally self-renewing when properly managed, including plants and animals, as well as soil and water (IUCN, 2011: Definitions).

Peripheral region/area

A peripheral region/area is to be understood as a marginalised or badly accessible territory. It has the opposite characteristics of a core region. A peripheral region has mostly rural characteristics with only few major centres of urbanisation. Most people work in primary activities, while job opportunities and wage levels tend to be lower than in core regions. Consequently those regions often suffer from out-migration.

Pilot action

A pilot action is to be understood as a practical implementation of novel schemes (e.g. services, tools, methods or approaches). An experimental nature is central to a pilot action (or pilot investments, if relevant) which aims at testing, evaluating and/or demonstrating the feasibility and effectiveness of a scheme. Therefore it covers either the testing of innovative solutions or demonstrating the application of existing solutions to a certain territory/sector. The results and practices of pilot actions should be exploited on and transferred to other institutions and territories. A pilot action is limited in its scope (area, duration, scale etc.) and must be unprecedented in a comparable environment.

Project activities

Each work package is divided into activities (ideally not more than 4-6 activities per work package). Activities have to lead to the development of one or more project outputs. For each activity the start and the end month as well as the indicative cost must be specified.

Project deliverables

Each activity should include one or more deliverables (e.g. analysis report, feasibility study etc.) that contribute to the achievement of project outputs. All small steps of a single activity, such as stakeholder meeting documentations, working groups etc., do not need to be listed as separate deliverables, but should be aggregated into one deliverable, e.g. a qualitative report describing the stakeholder involvement.

Project main objective

Provides the overall context for what the project aims to achieve. It describes the long-term objective the project seeks to support and relates to the strategic aspects of the project. It has to be in line with a programme specific objective and result.

Project output

Is the outcome obtained following the implementation of project activities paid with project funds (i.e. strategy/action plan, tool, pilot action, training etc.). Each output should be captured by a programme output indicator and should directly contribute to the achievement of the project result. Each thematic work package must foresee at least one output. See also further explanations on output types below.

Project result

Describes the advantage of carrying out the project and characterising the change compared to the initial situation. Results are derived from the outputs achieved by the project. They have to be coherent with project objectives and contribute to the programme results.

Project specific objective

Describes the immediate objective sought by the project, which can be realistically achieved within the project life time through the development of the project outputs. It should be verifiable at the conclusion of a project whether the specific objective was achieved or not. Each project specific objective has to clearly contribute to the project main objective.

Public infrastructure

Public infrastructure comprises infrastructure that is owned by the public and/or is for public use, including public buildings.

Regional actors

Regional actors are all main stakeholders operating at regional level in a specific thematic field independently from their legal status, thus comprising the public as well as the private sector. These sectors include different types of entities such as public administrations, infrastructure providers and operators, interest groups, NGOs, research centres, education facilities, enterprises including SMEs etc.

Regional passenger transport system

A regional passenger transport system can be defined as the combination of vehicles, infrastructure, and operations that enable the movements or satisfy the travel demand of people within a defined region.

Renewable energy sources

Renewable energy sources are a diverse group of technologies that capture their energy from existing flows of energy, from on-going natural processes, such as sunshine, wind, flowing water, biological processes, and geothermal heat flows.

Smart specialisation strategy

Smart specialisation strategy means the national or regional innovation strategies which set priorities in order to build competitive advantage by developing and matching research and innovation own strengths to business needs in order to address emerging opportunities and market developments in a coherent manner, while avoiding duplication and fragmentation of efforts; a smart specialisation strategy may take the form of, or be included in, a national or regional research and innovation (R&I) strategic policy framework (according to Article 2(3) of the CPR).

Social innovation

Social innovations are new ideas (products, services and models) that simultaneously meet social needs (more effectively than alternatives) and create new social relationships or collaborations (Murray et. al, 2010: Open Book of Social Innovation). Fields of activity are among others work integration, social services, education and research, culture and recreation, health etc.

Strategy/action plan

A strategy should be jointly defined on the basis of problems which are relevant for the participating regions. It should provide a common vision and set objectives and priorities in a mid-to long-term perspective. The formulation of a transnational and/or regional strategy should be carried out with involvement of relevant stakeholders (targeting the policy level) and aim at its subsequent implementation. An action plan should break down the strategy goals and objectives into specific tasks. It should include the sequence of steps to be taken, or activities that must be performed, for a strategy to succeed. Therefore it should include a time line, the financial resources and a definition of the responsible actors.

Sustainable development

Sustainable development means using natural resources in a way that avoids irreversible damage to ecosystem structure and function, the loss of irreplaceable features or a reduction in ecosystem resilience. Environmental interests must be considered alongside social and economic interests, so as to prevent the irreplaceable loss of natural features, function or processes and to ensure a long-term and dependable flow of benefits from the exploitation of renewable resources. Delivering such sustainable development will involve significant measures to recover ecosystem structure and function, where the flow of benefits is already reduced or impaired, or where ecosystem resilience is at risk (IUCN, 2011: Definitions).

Sustainable use

A usage respecting the principles of sustainability, notably the use of the biosphere by present generations while maintaining its potential yield (benefit) for future generations; and/or the non-declining trends of economic growth and development that might be impaired by natural resource depletion and environmental degradation (OECD, 2003: glossary).

Target groups

The target groups concern those individuals and/or organisations directly positively affected by the activities and results of operations. Not necessarily receiving a financial grant and even not directly involved in the operation, the target groups may exploit project outcomes for their own benefits.

Tool

A tool is to be understood as a means for accomplishing a specific task or purpose. Tools should be jointly developed at transnational level and innovative; they can be physical or technical objects, but also methods, concepts or services. They comprise amongst others of analytical tools, management tools, technical tools, software tools, monitoring tools, decision support tools etc. To be effective, a tool must be tailored to user needs and the respective framework conditions and has to be comprehensive and durable.

Training

Training is to be understood as providing persons with the understanding, knowledge, skills, competences and access to information required in particular occupations. Training may encompass any kind of education (general, specialised or vocational, formal or non-formal, etc.).

Training measures should be jointly developed at transnational level and tailored according to the needs of the specific territories, target groups and stakeholders addressed by the operation.

Transnational

Transnational is understood as the integration of the following principles:

- to ensure joint project development, management, financing and implementation;
- to address topics of shared interest and common benefit;
- to develop transferable results which can be applied by various actors and territories.

Vulnerability

A set of conditions and processes resulting from physical, social, economic and environmental factors, indicating the susceptibility of a community to the impact of hazards (IUCN, 2011: Definitions).

Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme

Application manual - Annex VII:

Simplified financial statement

Simplified Financial Statement

1.	Lead Applicant name	
2.	Project acronym	
3.	Proposal number	
4.	project duration (months)	
5.	ERDF request (EUR)	
6.	Closing date of the last financial period (dd/mm/yyyy)	
7.	Duration of the last financial period in months	

8.	Exchange rate at the closing date of the last financial period	1,00000
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Balance sheet		Currency	EUR
		EUR	
9.	Net fixed assets		0,00
10.	Current assets (maturity less than one year)		0,00
11.	Cash and cash equivalents		0,00
Total assets		0,00	0,00
12.	Capital including reserves		0,00
13.	Provisions		0,00
14.	Long term debt (maturity above one year)		0,00
15.	Current liabilities (maturity less than one year)		0,00
Total liabilities and capital including reserves		0,00	0,00
Profit and loss account		EUR	EUR
16.	Total revenues		0,00
17.	Personnel costs		0,00
18.	Other operating costs		0,00
Operating profit		0,00	0,00
19.	Net financial income/charges		0,00
20.	Net extraordinary items		0,00
21.	Taxes on profit		0,00
Profit/loss for the period		0,00	0,00

Instructions for filling-in the Simplified Financial Statement (SFS)

Who should submit the SFS?

The "Simplified financial statement" in Excel shall be filled-in and submitted by the private lead applicant. Figures to be included in the SFS shall refer to latest available balance sheet and profit and loss account which have been audited and approved by the organisation's stakeholders and/or delivered to the relevant tax authorities.

Please refer to the application manual part D, chapter V.2 (point b) to determine whether your organisation fulfils the criteria.

Instructions for filling-in the SFS

Only cells with yellow-coloured background are to be completed. Totals are computed automatically. If the number is zero, put zero or leave the cell empty.

Lead applicant name: official name of the lead applicant organisation (in English language) as in the application form.

Project acronym: the acronym used for the proposal.

Proposal number: Number assigned by the electronic Monitoring System (eMS) to the project proposal

Project duration: duration in months of the project proposal, as indicated in the application form

ERDF request: ERDF amount requested by the lead applicant, as indicated in the application form.

Closing date of the last financial period: the closing date for the last financial period where the financial statements have been audited and approved and/or delivered to the tax authorities.

Duration of the last financial period: duration in months of the last financial period to which the financial statements refers to.

Exchange rate: exchange rate at the closing date of the last financial period. If you use EUR please indicate 1. If you use another currency (only central Europe Member States) please indicate the exchange rate from info EURO (<http://ec.europa.eu/budget/infoeuro>) of the month of closing of the last financial period.

Currency: currency in which the financial information is submitted. Select from the drop down list. By default the currency is set in EUR.

Net fixed assets: are the capitalised assets after deduction of accumulated depreciation and amortization. They typically include buildings, equipment and/or participations in affiliates.

Current assets: are all other assets with a maturity of less than a year, with the exception of cash and cash equivalents provided on a separate line. Typically, it is accounts receivable, inventory and/or prepaid expenses.

Capital including reserves: is the total of capital, retained earnings, net income for the period and any other reserves.

Provisions: usually relate to costs for pension liabilities or legal risks. Most of the time the exact amount and/or beneficiary is not known.

Long term debt: is the portion of liabilities with a maturity of more than a year.

Current liabilities are debts with a maturity of less than a year, including the part of financial debt which is due in less than a year and related accrued interest or short term bank overdrafts.

Balance: please check that total assets and total liabilities and shareholders' equity are identical amounts.

Total revenues: revenues generated by the operating activities (e.g. sales, grants received, etc.).

Personnel costs: indicate the total cost for staff employed, i.e. salaries and wages plus related social benefits.

Other operating costs: remaining costs incurred in the operating activities.

Net financial income/charges: financial income generated (e.g. interest income, etc.) under the deduction of financial expenses (e.g. interest paid, etc.).

Net extraordinary items: profit or loss generated by extraordinary items. These must be classified as such under your organisation's accounting policy and your national authority's generally accepted accounting principles.

Taxes on profit: taxes levied on the net income generated by your organisation.