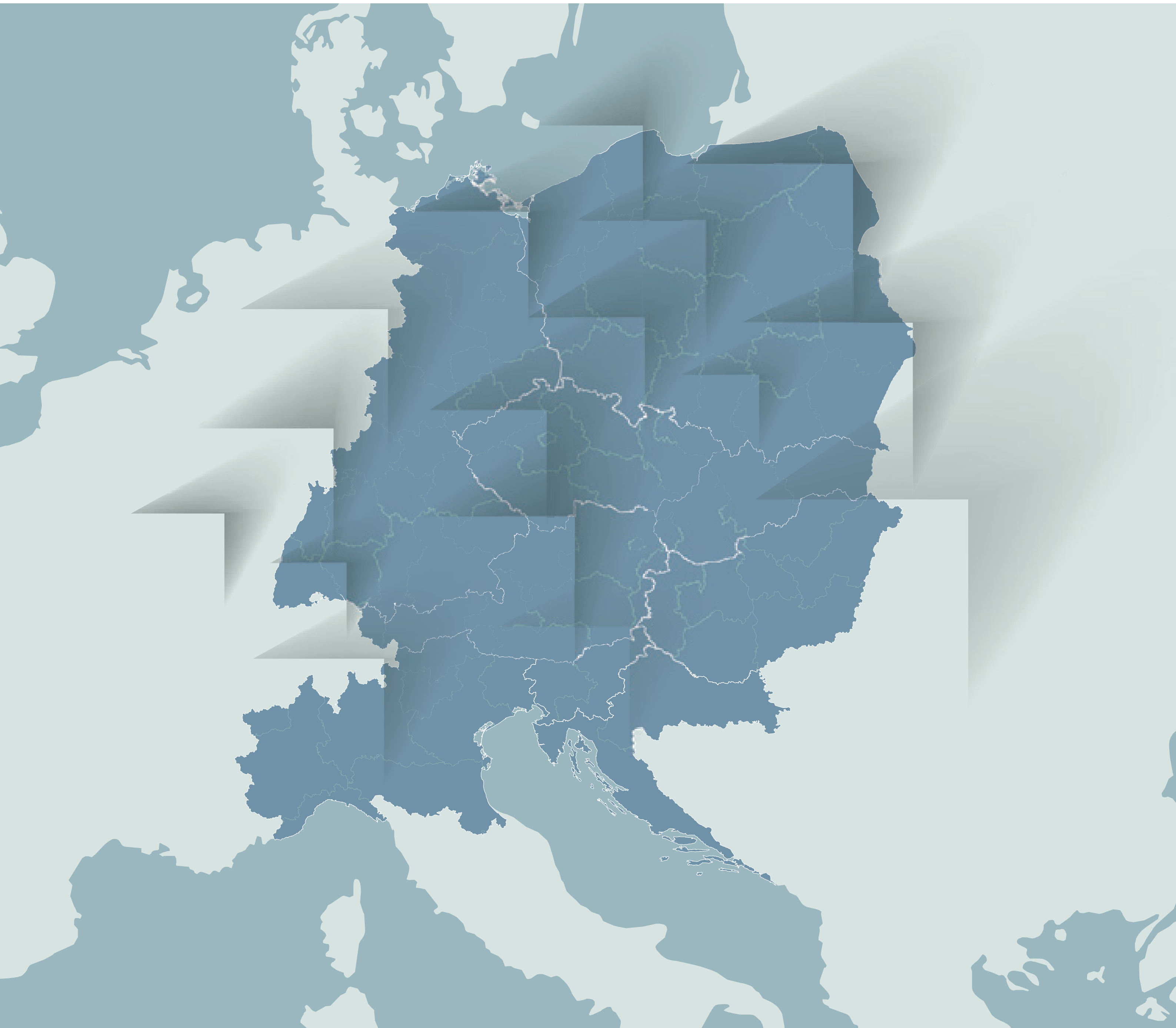
Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE

European Union
European Regional Development Fund

Guidance on online submission system (eMS)

ANNEX V

4 March 2019



A. Technical information and system requirements

The eMS is a web application which can be accessed with recent versions of most common browsers (e.g. at least Internet Explorer 11, Firefox 50, Chrome 72[1]).

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

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.

In the registration form, fill in the following information:

- 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 lead applicant.
- Password: password used to access the system (in case the password is forgotten, it can be reset. An automatic email with the necessary instructions will be sent to the email address provided during the registration process).
- 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.

Upon registering and accessing the system, **the user agrees to the terms of service and privacy policy for the use of eMS**. The respective documents containing detailed information can be downloaded from the login page of the eMS.

A confirmation email will automatically be sent to the email address provided. Please 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.

The person creating the application must represent (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 (see below).

[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).

B. Filling in and submitting the application form

Please keep in mind the following important aspects when filling in the application form:

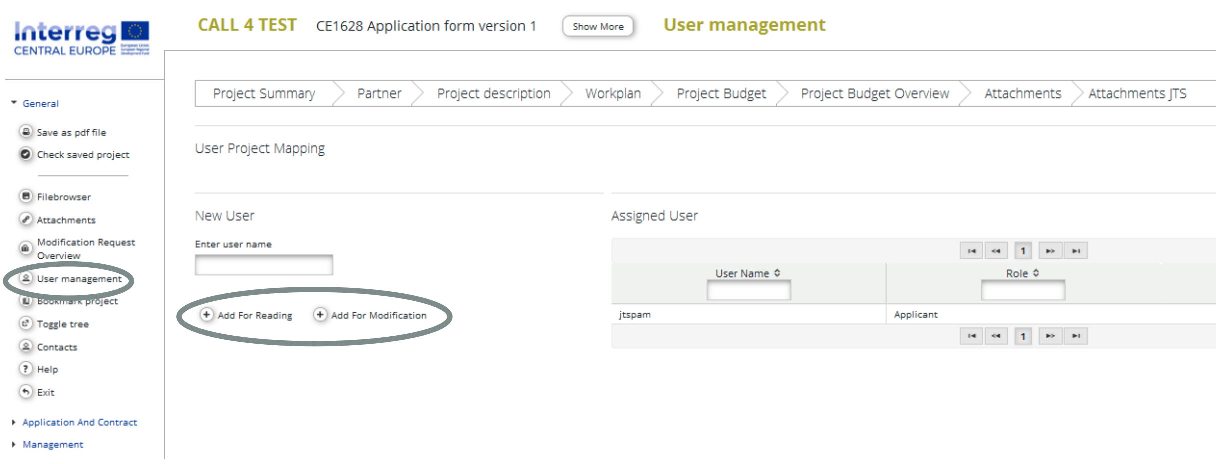
- The eMS does not provide any warning or request of confirmation before leaving a section of the application form or before logging out. Always remember to save the data before leaving a section in the application form (save button SAVE at the upper left corner or at the end of the page Save), otherwise 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.
- The generation of pdf-files might take some time. Please wait until the pdf-file appears in the filebrowser. Activating the pdf generation again might slow down the system.

Editing rights to other users

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 user accounts created to draft and submit the application will be available until the deadline 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).

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

Please note that the creation of a pdf might require some time and consequently the pdf of the application form will appear in the filebrowser only after a certain time. Please wait until the pdf is available and do not press the “save as pdf file” button repeatedly, since this might slow down the ems.

Define Periods (section D.3 of the application form)

Out of technical reasons, in order to be able to fill-in section E “Partner budget” you have to first open section D.3 “Periods” and press the button Recreate Periods (see screenshot below) The project periods are then automatically created by the system based on the project start and end dates in section A “Project summary”. When modifying the start and/or end date of the project at a later stage, the button Recreate Periods needs to be re-activated in order to adapt the project periods accordingly. Before starting filling-in section E “Project budget” make sure that the project periods have been updated. **Please note that no data have to be entered in this section.**

Whenever changing the start and/or end date of the project in section A “Project summary”, please remember to update the project periods in section D “Work plan/D.3 Periods”. Please note that modifications of project dates and periods have an impact on section E “Project budget” (financial data are inserted per period and are lost when deleting a period!) as well as on section D “Work plan” and budgets per period.

Project budget and overview (Section E and Section F of the application form)

Partner budget (Section E.1)

The partner table is partly pre-filled by the system with data on project partners entered under section B “Partner”.

The starting point for the project budget is section E “Project budget”. The budget of each partner is broken down per budget line, work package and reporting period.

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

- Section A “Project summary” (at least project start and end dates)

- Section B "Partner" (at least the partner organisation data, NUTS and co-financing rate[2])
- Section D "Work plan" (at least one project work package and reporting periods (D.3) must be defined correctly)

Please note that modifications of project start and end dates and periods after the insertion of budget data might have an impact on section E "Partner budget". Financial data are inserted per period and are lost when deleting a period!

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

a. To enter the budget of the partner click on the "define budget" button Define Budget in the partner list of section E "Partner budget", and select the partner for which you want to enter the budget

b. At first, it is important to select the flat rate option in order to choose whether the concerned partner organisation will charge staff costs to the project according to real costs or a flat rate.

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.

   Preferably the applicant enters the partner budget in the first table "Budget lines and work packages". The other two tables will be automatically updated once budget data are entered. The system allows to access and amend the budget also from the other two budget tables.

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,

[2] When filling in the budget please make sure that the co-financing rate applicable to the partners, as defined in chapter 4.6 of the application manual, is correctly selected.

information is to be included also on the equipment type (i.e. "equipment for general office use" or "thematic equipment"). 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.

Here below three examples of how budget line specifications should be filled in:

BL4 External expertise and services costs

- D.T2.1.3 External expertise for the preparation of the strategy for the development of clean fuel policy;
- D.T2.3.2 External expert for the preparation of the joint action plan;
- D.T4.2.3 Policy Advisory Group Meeting, 1-day event with approximately 40 participants (venue, catering, handouts, translation etc.)

BL5 Equipment

- D.M.2.2 purchase of 1 laptop with software for technical and administrative project management (for general office use);
- D.T.2.2.1 Thematic equipment for the pilot and investment implementation 4 smart devices for thermal energy.

BL6 Infrastructure and works

- D.T.2.2.1 Works for smart devices installation on a railway station

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- 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 "Preparation" 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 chapter 4.6 of the application manual.
- In case that the project proposal is expected to generate revenues (as specified under chapter 4.6 of the application manual), 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 Save 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 button Define Contribution available in the partner list of section E "Partner budget". Under this section two tables are available. The first one presents the overall programme co-financing and the partner contribution 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 partner's own resources as first co-financing source, in line with information on legal status which is automatically transferred from section B. To add other co-financing sources the applicant has to click on the add button and fill-in information on the source of co-financing, the legal status (i.e. private, public, automatic public) 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!

Automatic public co-financing refers to specific co-financing schemes set up by some Member States (e.g. the "Rotation Fund" for public authorities in Italy). Total public expenditure is to be understood as the ERDF co-financing plus all public contributions and automatic public contributions. In case the partner budget is changed, please remember to update the information in the partner contribution section.

When entering data, please remember to regularly save by clicking the save button SAVE on top of the main menu (left side of the screen) or the save button Save at the end of the page. 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 sections E.3 "Project breakdown budget" and in section F "Project budget overview" of the application form. Each budget table available under sections E.3 and F can also be exported as an Excel file.

Activities outside the programme area (Section E.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 in Section E.3 of the application form. The following information is to be provided:

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

Activities described in this section may also include planned missions and/or events outside the programme area.

The indicative ERDF allocated to such activities within the project shall also be indicated under this section. Activities and budget of EU partners coming from outside the programme area is **not to be included here**.

Please 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.

Project budget overview

Section F of the application form provides various predefined project budget overview tables which are automatically filled in by the system based on information inserted in Section E of the application form. These overview tables are exportable to an Excel file and no data is to be entered in this section.

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 Check Saved Project in the menu. 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 the automatic checks show any deficiencies, the system indicates these in an error message on top of the page and the applicants should 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**. The “Submit Saved Project” button Submit Saved Project only appears in the menu once the automatic checks resulted in no Error messages.

When submitting the final application form by pressing the “submit saved project” button), the system performs once more the same automatic checks as described above. Only if all automatic checks are successfully passed, the application form will be officially submitted.

Upon the final submission of the AF, an email is sent automatically to the email address of the user of the lead applicant institution, confirming the successful submission.

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

C. 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. Online help function can be accessed via the "Help" button in the menu Help and "?" buttons next to the textboxes. For additional information you can refer to the FAQs published on the website of the programme (http://www.interreg-central.eu/apply).

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 08 088-2403 during office hours.