

Interreg



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Greece – Italy

Project Selection Methodology of Operations of Strategic Importance

Cross-Border-Cooperation Programme
Interreg VI-A 'Greece-Italy 2021-2027'
CCI 2021TC16RFCB019

Adopted by the Monitoring Committee on 17/12/2024, Version 1.0

1. Scope

The present methodology is applied for the evaluation, selection and approval of the project proposals (projects for funding) submitted under the calls for project proposals of Strategic Importance within the the Interreg VI-A Greece– Italy 2021-2027 Programme.

2. Institutional Framework

1. Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24th of June 2021, "definition of the common provisions for the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund+, the Cohesion Fund, the Just Transition Fund and the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund, and fiscal rules for these Funds and for the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, the Internal Security Fund and the Instrument for the Financial Support of Border Management and Visa Policy".
2. Regulation (EU) 2021/1059 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24th of June 2021, "on the specific provisions governing the 'European Territorial Cooperation' (Interreg) objective, which is supported by the European Regional Development Fund and the external financing mechanisms".
3. Delegated Regulation (EU) no. Commission Regulation 240/2014 of 7th of January 2014 on the European code of conduct for partnership under the European Structural and Investment Funds.
4. Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/74 setting out the list of Interreg programmes and indicating the global amount of the total support from the European Regional Development Fund and from each external financing instrument of the Union for each programme and the list of the amounts transferred between strands under the European territorial cooperation goal for the period 2021 to 2027.
5. Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/75 setting out the list of Interreg programme areas to receive support from the European Regional Development Fund and external financing instruments of the Union, broken down by strand and Interreg programme under the European territorial cooperation goal.
6. Law 4914/2022 "Management, control and implementation of development interventions for the Programming Period 2021-2027, establishment of a Public Company "National Register of Startup Companies S.A." and other provisions" (Government Gazette 61/A/21.3.2022).
7. The Cross Border Cooperation Programme (Interreg VI-A) "Greece – Italy 2021-2027 ", as approved with the number C(2022)6578/08-9-2022 European Commission Implementing Decision for the approval of the support of the Cooperation Programme "Interreg VI-A Greece – Italy 2021-2027" from the European Regional Development Fund within the framework of the objective of European Territorial Cooperation (Interreg) in Greece and in Italy.

3. Description

The evaluation of the Projects of Strategic Importance is conducted as follows:

Within a timeframe specified by each call for proposals, the potential Lead Partners submit their proposals (Application Form with all necessary, as specified in the Call, documents attached) exclusively electronically via the Monitoring Information System (MIS).

After the successful submission of the proposal, the beneficiary is respectively informed through the MIS. All proposals [Application Form with all necessary documents attached] are archived/kept on the MIS.

Since Stage A'/Concept Note submission is not applicable in the case of Strategic/Targeted Projects the evaluation of the proposals begins directly with Stage B and more specifically:

3.2.1 Stage B. Evaluation of Proposals

The evaluation of proposals is completed in 2 consecutive and distinct stages and more specifically:

- a) Phase B1': Administrative & Project Eligibility Assessment

b) Phase B2a': Quality Assessment

c) Phase B2b': Beneficiaries Eligibility Check & State Aid Compliance for Project Proposals which have been positively evaluated in phases B1 and B2a.

During the evaluation the MA/JS may request at any stage of the evaluation the submission of additional data and clarifications.

Additional data are those which, while foreseen in the Call, were not submitted due to an omission (or a set of permitted errors) by the potential beneficiary and have been issued before the submission of the proposal. *Clarifications* are items requested by the evaluator(s), in order to clarify the submitted information and better understand the content of the proposal.

The potential beneficiary should send the requested additional data within a specific deadline set by the MA.

The non-submission of the requested clarifications by the beneficiary is not an exclusive reason for rejecting the proposal but, depending on the nature of the clarification, it may be taken into consideration during the evaluation of the proposal (e.g. in the grading of criteria related to completeness and clarity of the content of the proposal).

Communication with the beneficiary on the above matters (additional data, clarifications) is carried out through the MIS.

It is noted that during the selection and approval of projects, the principles and rights of the Charter of Fundamental Rights are taken into account, in accordance with what is mentioned in the "*Instructions for the evaluation of proposals*", paying particular attention to the relevant rights/principles of the Charter: protection of personal data, entrepreneurial freedom, property, equality before the law, non-discrimination, equality between men and women, inclusion of people with disabilities, family and professional life, environmental protection, access to services of economic interest, consumer protection, good administration, access to documents.

Phase B1': Administrative & Project Eligibility Assessment

During the electronic submission of the proposal, the system (MIS) carries out an initial check of the administrative compliance and eligibility of the proposal, with data such as the date of submission of the proposal, the adequate completion of the Application Form etc., in order to allow or not the submission of the proposal.

The administrative compliance, eligibility and horizontal policies compliance of the proposal are then examined in terms of the criteria of Stage B1' based on the relevant *List of Criteria*.

Projects will be checked for their administrative compliance, eligibility criteria and compliance to horizontal policies, in order to ensure that they fulfil the administrative, eligibility and horizontal policies requirements of the Programme.

- Administrative compliance: It confirms that a proposal has been submitted within the deadline set; the Application Form has the official format specified by the MA, is complete and meets all the requirements set in the Call; all the required documents to be submitted along with the Application Form are properly completed, signed, stamped and attached to the Application Form;
- Eligibility criteria: These criteria examine whether the proposal fulfils the eligibility requirements under this Call. These requirements are, for instance, the structure of the cross-border partnership, the general compatibility with objectives and principles, the duration of the project, etc.
- Horizontal policies compliance: These criteria examine whether the proposal fulfils the horizontal policies requirements. Such requirements are for instance, compliance with the legislation of public contracts, sustainable development, fundamental rights e.t.c

The administrative compliance, eligibility and horizontal policies compliance of the proposal is carried out by the Joint Secretariats in collaboration with Unit A' of the Managing Authority.

For all criteria of Phase B1, the assessment must be positive 'YES' or 'N/A'. Otherwise, the MA/JS communicates, via MIS, to the potential beneficiaries the necessary corrective measures to be taken so that the proposal meets the criteria of Phase B1.

Phase B2a': Quality Assessment

The Projects that qualify for Phase B2 will be subject to Quality Assessment based on a scoring system using core selection criteria. These entail evaluating the nature of the proposed project, its relevance with and contribution to the achievement of the Specific Objectives, its viability, sustainability and expected results in the eligible territory, the cross border cooperation and capitalization, the quality of the cross- border partnership, as well as the maturity, the added value of the project, the structure of the budget e.t.c.

The core selection criteria in Phase B2a are divided into:

- Project Quality (Content related criteria) (relevance of the proposal, quality of the results, impact and sustainability, innovation, cross border cooperation and capitalization) and
- Implementation related criteria (quality of the partnership, quality of the methodological approach, Project maturity, budget and finance criteria).

The evaluation of the proposals is performed by two (2) Assessors from the MA/JS and the evaluation procedure is under the control and responsibility of Unit A of the MA.

The selection criteria will be taken into account by the evaluators to assess the projects. The purpose of the core selection criteria is to assess the quality of the eligible project proposals. The maximum total score that a project may obtain is 100 points. A minimum threshold of 30/50 points is set as “admissible score” for the content-related criteria and a minimum threshold of 30/50 points is set as “admissible score” to the Implementation-related criteria.

In case, a project proposal obtains score less than the admissible, the MA/JS communicates, via MIS, to the potential beneficiaries the necessary corrective measures to be taken so that the proposal meets the criteria of Phase B2a.

The final results of the evaluation are checked and finalized by Unit A' of the Managing Authority and submitted for approval to the Monitoring Committee after the completion of Phase B2b.

➤ **For those proposals, whose evaluation is positive after the completion of stages B1 and B2, stage B3 follows:**

Phase B2b': Beneficiaries Eligibility Assessment & State Aid Compliance

The Beneficiaries submit the necessary supporting documents as requested by the MA, in order to check their eligibility. State -aid assessment will be also carried out in this Stage.

The relevant check is carried out by the Joint Secretariat.

The results of the evaluation (Phases B1, B2a, B2b) are communicated to the National Authorities of both counties, before submitted for approval to the Monitoring Committee. After MC's approval the results are communicated by the Managing Authority to the Lead Partner of each partnership, via MIS or e-mail.

In response to the above decision, complaints can be raised by potential Lead Partners, which may be submitted within 7 working days from the next day after the communication of the Monitoring Committee's Decision.

Complaints are examined by the Joint Complaints Committee, based on its rules of procedure approved by the Monitoring Committee. The conclusion of the Complaint Panel, in the event of acceptance and differentiation from the result of the initial evaluation is validated by the Monitoring Committee.

After the completion of the above procedure, a technical meeting is held between MA/JS and the partnership scheme, where the financial scope of each project is finalized, if required, and the subsidy contract is signed.