



INTERREG IVB

PROJECT HANDBOOK GUIDANCE NOTES

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1 PRESENTATION OF THE NWE PROGRAMME

INTERREG IVB NWE is a financial instrument of the European Union's Cohesion Policy focusing on the North West Europe area. Its purpose is to meet the European Territorial Cooperation Objective by means of funding transnational projects.

Bringing European governance together

The North West Europe (NWE) Programme, also known as "INTERREG IVB NWE", supports organisations of all layers of governance who wish to work together. The NWE area consists of 8 countries: Belgium, France, Germany, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, UK and Switzerland. The aim is to find innovative options to make the best use of available territorial assets to address common challenges.

Transnational cooperation is about looking beyond local issues and national or regional borders, meeting people, exchanging experiences, sharing knowledge, developing a new culture, and achieving better results together rather than alone. The "raison d'être" of the Programme is to bring Europe together to create a more cohesive EU society!

INTERREG: an instrument to make the area more competitive and sustainable

The IVB Programme is a follow up of the INTERREG IIIB NWE Programme (2000-2006), under which 99 transnational cooperation projects were approved to a total of €330 million ERDF (European Regional Development Fund). But IVB is a follow-up with the clear ambition to build and capitalise on the IIIB experience and to progress from there. In practice this means more investments, even stronger partnerships and even more concrete results than before.

The goal of the IVB Programme is to make the NWE area more competitive, environmentally friendly and cohesive. IVB aims to capitalise on this ambition by improving employment opportunities, enhancing the environmental qualities, improving accessibility through intelligent transport solutions and ensuring that our cities and rural areas are attractive and sustainable. All of that needs to be done by using the existing territorial assets as much as possible, thus delivering the maximum result with the highest leverage.

These themes for cooperation are translated into four Programme Priorities which are explained in detail in the **Operational Programme**, the reference document for NWE:

- 1 - Capitalising on innovation
- 2 - Managing resources and risks
- 3 - Improving connectivity
- 4 - Strengthening communities

Between 2007 and 2013, the Programme will allocate more than €355 million ERDF to the most innovative and ambitious projects. Calls for Proposals will be launched every year, twice in the first years of implementation.

INTERREG: an opportunity for your region

The INTERREG NWE Programme (2007-2013) involves benefits both for the cooperation area as a whole as well as for the individual regions within it. Engaging in territorial cooperation would allow project promoters to develop investments and pilot construction schemes; help them to implement EU complex directives and adapt them to their local context; reduce costs, increase efficiency and avoid duplication; secure financial leverage and attract investment; let project promoters influence the policy development agenda; allow them to achieve fast results and short-term impacts; strengthen their regional networks and institutions; and help them to develop new economic strategies for their regions.

Further information:

1. A comprehensive description of the Programme strategy and Priorities as well as a socio-economic analysis of the NWE region are included in the INTERREG IVB North West Europe 2007-2013 Operational Programme. This document is available at www.nweurope.eu
2. A detailed account of the INTERREG opportunities for project promoters and past examples of them can be found in the INTERREG IIIB North-West Europe Programme retrospective 2002-2008 'Opportunities for Territorial Change'. This document is available at www.nweurope.eu
3. Contact the Secretariat and Programme Contact Points at www.nweurope.eu/index.php?act=contact&type=0
4. For further details on INTERREG or other European Programmes, visit the INFOREGIO website on http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/index_en.htm

2 THE PROGRAMME PRIORITIES

General considerations

Projects funded under our Programme should have a clear focus on the implementation of joint transnational actions. This action-oriented approach implies that key stakeholders in the field are included in the joint transnational partnership, and other relevant actors are involved in the proposed project activities. Preference will be given to cross-sectoral projects addressing obstacles in legislative, political or economic systems and lack of integration of institutional and governance structures, which are focused on improved and better integrated responses. Of course all projects should take in account all relevant EU policies. For example, 'sustainability' is laid down in the EU Treaty and should therefore be taken into account by all projects.

This Programme is delivered through four priorities of particular relevance to North West Europe. They respond to the opportunities and challenges identified in the SWOT analysis included in the INTERREG IVB NWE Operational Programme, and they have been defined to facilitate the identification of the main focus for actions of approved projects. For practical purposes each project will be approved under a single priority, yet they are explicitly encouraged to make appropriate connections between objectives of different priorities and wherever appropriate to respond to more than one Programme priority.

Priority specific considerations for project promoters

Priority 1 – Capitalising on innovation

Projects under Priority 1 will adopt new approaches through transnational cooperation in order to strengthen the economic competitiveness of NWE in response to the Lisbon agenda for growth and jobs. In order to set up a project, targeted innovation stakeholders need to be included in the joint transnational partnership. The Programme will not support research and development or academic networking which is not linked to actions or demonstration projects. Project activities should be clearly linked to territorial development, and not solely focus on networking within the specific scientific/business sector, for which the interregional cooperation strand (INTERREG IVC) is more appropriate.

In developing projects under the theme of innovation, it is essential to consider other European Programmes and initiatives, such as the Regional Competitiveness and Employment Programmes, the Research Framework Programme, the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme, the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme, the INTERREG IVC Programme on interregional cooperation as well as the JEREMIE Programme (Joint European Resources for Micro and Medium Enterprises). The coordination of initiatives and activities at national and regional level is encouraged. Transnational cooperation projects funded by the NWE Programme should, where appropriate, refer to activities under these Programmes and provide synergies through, for instance, transnational knowledge transfer.

Priority 2 – Managing resources and risks

The sustainable management of natural resources and risks is of utmost importance for the NWE area and calls for a broad range of activities aimed at minimising and preventing the

pollution of land, water and air. In the case of coastal, marine and river flooding, preference will be given to projects which tangibly transfer knowledge and develop innovative responses across the whole of NWE area. Projects limited to data collection and management, or local/regional activities and flood defence investments that are not relevant to the wider transnational cooperation area will not be supported. Sectoral strategic actions on the use and management of natural resources which do not enhance the economic development of NWE or contribute to the Programme's wider territorial development objectives are not supported.

In developing projects under this Priority, synergies and complementarities should be exploited with relevant EU strategies and initiatives, such as the Rural Development Guidelines, the Sixth Environmental Action Programme and its Thematic Strategies, the EU Climate Change Programme and the Green Paper on Energy (see Operational Programme for further details). Activities in the area of marine environmental policy and legislation, and in the area of maritime safety (e.g. the IIIB cross-Programme initiative 'Maritime Safety Umbrella Operation') should be given due attention when preparing projects under this Priority. In addition, while the implementation of EU environmental Directives as such is ineligible for funding under this Programme, there is potential to investigate transnational aspects of the legislative frameworks in order to achieve better integration and harmonisation across the territory. Furthermore, projects under this Priority should consider other European Programmes, such as LIFE+, the Intelligent Energy Europe Programme, Trans-European Energy Networks (TEN-Es), the EU Emissions Trading Scheme and Rural Development Programmes under the Common Agriculture Policy (CAP) as only those projects which have a significant transnational and territorial dimension can be funded by the NWE Programme.

Priority 3 – Improving connectivity

The focus of this Priority is on joint transnational solutions in the field of Transport and ICT which help to overcome the barriers to both the diffusion of innovation and knowledge and to the optimisation of traffic flows. The Programme will not support research or purely application-oriented tools in logistics without achieving better spatial integration, increased capacity in multimodal transport corridors, and interoperability of transnational, national and regional networks. Future projects should pay attention to the harmonisation of regional innovation, transport and spatial strategic actions; the better integration of transport and territorial development, especially across national borders; and the strengthening of political and institutional frameworks for enhancing the quality and performance of infrastructure and services across the transnational NWE area.

In developing projects under the theme of accessibility and connectivity, it is essential to consider other European Programmes and initiatives, such as the TEN-T Priority axes in NWE, the Marco Polo II Programme, the CIVITAS initiative, the NAIADES Action Programme, and the QuickStart Programme in the field of Transport. In the field of ICT, synergies should be explored with the ICT Policy Support Programme, eContentPlus, and IDABC (European eGovernment services).

Priority 4 – Strengthening communities

This Priority aims at actions and model solutions for adapting policies to achieve a better balance in the settlement structure and avoid further polarisation trends. By bringing together key actors through transnational cooperation, the governance of cities, towns and rural areas can be improved, thereby increasing the capacity of public institutions to respond to issues of common concern. The Priority excludes support of purely local/regional actions and the restoration and regeneration of local sites. For projects on urban networking and urban-rural partnerships, projects which concentrate on local actions with no transnational synergy effects, and which do not provide wider territorial development benefits for the transnational area, will not be supported.

In developing projects under this Priority, it is important to consider other European Programmes and initiatives, such as URBACT, the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment (6th Environmental Action Programme), and measures of the Regional Competitiveness and Employment Programmes.

Further information:

1. A comprehensive description of the Programme strategy and Priorities as well as a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis of the North West Europe region are included in the INTERREG IVB NWE Operational Programme. This document is available at www.nweurope.eu

3 HOW TO GET STARTED

Before getting started, project promoters are encouraged to read the sections (pages 58-77) in the NWE Operational Programme describing the objectives and possible actions for each Programme Priority. This will help you establish whether your organisation's aspirations fit with the objectives of the Programme. The INTERREG IVB Operational Programme is available on our website: www.nweurope.eu

Develop a transnational project idea and a sound and successful project

99 transnational projects were approved by the IIIB Programme and information on these is available for those who would like to emulate their success. Although the Programme's Priorities have evolved, a few common principles apply to all projects wishing to apply for funding under the new NWE Programme.

Start Online!

- Download and read the reference and guidance documents from the NWE website www.nweurope.eu
- Make sure your project idea is compatible with the North West Europe Programme (eligible area, thematic Priorities, level of cooperation required)
- Look at the list of project ideas on the website: it will give you some useful examples of ideas and potential partners (themes and partnerships under construction)
- Regularly check the NWE website to check deadlines for up-coming calls
- Get in touch with the Contact Point in your country and discuss your idea to see whether it is compatible with the Programme's Objectives. The Contact Point will help you to identify potential partners and will help develop your project idea with his/her colleagues in NWE: <http://www.nweurope.eu/index.php?act=contact&type=1>. At this stage we advise that all contacts are done via email or telephone.

Once you have a project idea...

- Define your expected results and how you want to achieve them and identify what you want to communicate about your project at an early stage.
- Don't simply compile a series of local investments and then try and squeeze them into a transnational project. Instead, go backwards: start with a challenge that is transnational by nature and show how your proposed actions and investments can address it effectively.
- Demonstrate why you need transnational cooperation to achieve better results.
- Develop innovative projects which might create long term alliances and test ideas for future roll-out.
- Be aware that approved co-financing is paid half yearly – and retroactively.
- Be aware that the official working language is English!

Read and complete the project idea pro-forma on the website to promote your idea and find local and transnational partners

When developing the partnership...

- Be flexible with your initial idea – your partners must also “own” the project and share the goal from the beginning.
- Discuss at an early stage who can take on the role of the Lead Partner.
- Get to know your partners’ roles, and understand their decision making processes and timetables.
- Allow for time: It usually takes at least 6 months - often longer - to develop a sound project and a strong partnership.
- Get to know the issues your organisation should address before getting involved.
- Assess your institutional capacities: Is your organisation efficient enough in terms of internal management procedures to engage in a European project?
- Assess the need for resources: How much time and what resources (financial + staff) can be mobilised for the project?
- Assess your general skills: What skills are going to prove essential (language, technical...)? Are these available internally?
- Assess your gains: What will European cooperation bring to your organisation?
- Assess your commitment: Are your immediate stakeholders (your organisation, your local partners and decision-makers) fully supportive and committed to your project?
- Invest in team-building at the beginning of the project.

What kind of projects are we looking for?

Ambitious approaches...

- Projects that include new & innovative ideas and that demonstrate clear added-value compared to previous projects.
- Projects that are building on the lessons and results of IIB (where relevant) without repetition. Please try to capitalise on existing results as much as possible!
- Projects that involve partners with a wide transnational impact (versus cross-border) and that mobilise strong partnerships with possibly national involvement (bottom-up and top-down initiative), private involvement and public-private partnerships (known as “PPP”) and newcomers in general (businesses, SMEs, Chambers of commerce).
- Projects that offer truly joint approaches and solutions.

... but focused actions...

- When preparing your action plan, try to target fewer issues but with a greater strategic impact. Simplicity and focus are fundamental to developing a sound project application. This point cannot be stressed enough - please take note.

... and concrete results!

- The Programme is looking for projects that will have a lasting impact: delivering structural change, preparing major projects with tangible and measurable results.
- Action-oriented results will be highly encouraged: studies will be eligible only if they precede concrete actions or investments.

Finally, the criteria above represent the benchmark for a good project. Given the very specific requirements of a transnational project, all project promoters are urged to maintain sight of the Programme's general objectives at all times.

Once your project has a structure and clear objectives, and you have identified several partners in the NWE area, you can arrange a meeting with the Secretariat. Please bear in mind that these initial meetings should be attended in principle by representatives of the Lead Partner organisation and consultants that are foreseen to be involved in the project.
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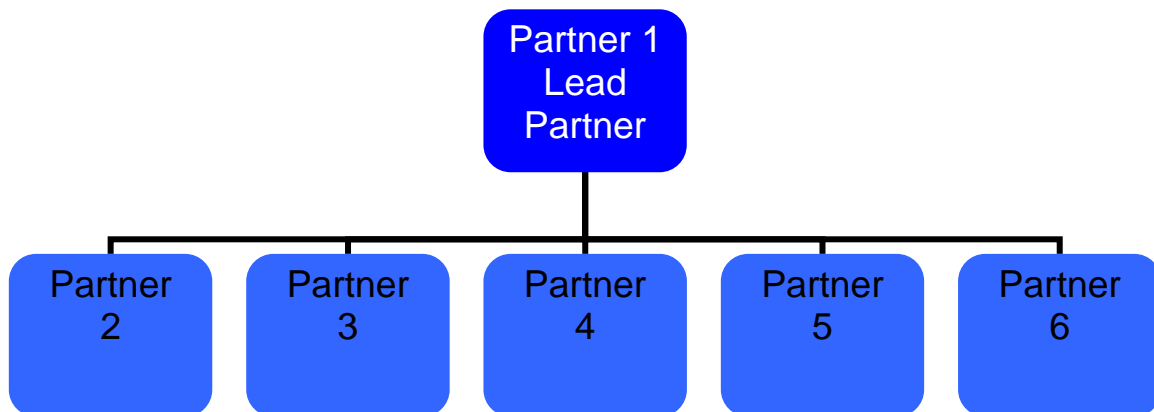
Further information:

www.nweurope.eu

4 PARTNERSHIP

Basic principles

All projects consist of a partnership in which a Lead Partner is ultimately responsible for managing the project on behalf of the project's partners. All partners involved with the implementation of a project sign a Partnership Agreement.



In more detail

Partnership

A project requires a consistent bidding partnership. This means that all partners should have the capacity and knowledge in the subject area to participate fully and deliver specific outputs. The willingness of project partners to engage in the partnership needs to be expressed by a complete set of Letters of Support by the deadline for submission. Partners may already wish to make a statement on their financial contribution; however it is not binding at this stage. A Partnership Agreement must be signed by all partners and submitted to the Secretariat by the project's first payment claim, at the latest. No payment can be made to the project prior to the reception of a copy of the signed Partnership Agreement. The Partnership Agreement legalises the responsibilities and rights of all partners in order to ensure a smooth working mechanism. It also guarantees each partner's contribution as match-funding in Euros.

The minimum requirement for a transnational partnership is cooperation between two partners from at least 2 different countries with at least one of them from the NWE area.

There is no set size for an ideal partnership. The size will depend on the theme to be tackled and the coordination and management capacities of the Lead Partner and coordinator.

Too small a partnership might weaken the interest of transnational working and jeopardise the sound implementation of; too large a partnership can pose significant organisational, communication and coordination problems. However, it is important that the partnership be consistent in light of the requirements for tangible results and implementation, involving key actors in specific fields as much as possible.

Partners

Participating partners can be national, regional and local authorities including sector departments and related public agencies, transnational bodies, universities, research and development agencies, and non-profit organisations. Under certain conditions, private profit making organisations can participate.

Lead Partner

The Lead Partner is responsible for the submission of the Application Form and for the implementation of the entire project in the event of approval.

They are responsible for the sound management of the project, ensures the delivery of outputs and organises the required audits and control activities. They establish legal connections between project partners in order to define their mutual cooperation. Only partners located in the NWE area are entitled to take on the role of Lead Partner. In detail, the Lead partner:

- acts as contact person for the Joint Technical Secretariat (JTS) in Lille
- signs the Subsidy Contract
- is responsible for the financial management and the ERDF funds
- submits the Progress Reports and the Payment Claims

Sub-partners

In the INTERREG IVB NWE Programme, sub-partners are considered the exception rather than the rule. The Programme's general principle is to work with full partners only. In all cases, sub-partners must not be used to simplify the structure of the partnership.

In general, sub-partners are small in size, have specific expertise and should work in close cooperation with one particular partner. Their involvement in the project is often limited in time and content. Nevertheless, sub-partners can be regarded as an integrated part of a project as they are directly involved in the implementation of the project but they are not part of the formal partnership as described in the project Application Form and in the Subsidy Contract.

If sub-partners are involved in a project, they must be identified and clearly listed in the Application Form and in the Partnership Agreement. The Programme Secretariat will subsequently confirm the list of sub-partners in writing to the Lead Partner. Only sub-partners reported on and confirmed by the Secretariat are eligible as sub-partners. It is strongly advised that a convention exists between the full partner and their sub-partner.

Sub-partners are attached to one full partner and are legally responsible for the content of their input to the project. The full partner acts as guarantor of their financial contribution to the project. The full partner submits the sub-partner expenditure together with his. Like full partners, sub-partners must keep a complete audit trail of all documents of probative value (in contrast to external experts or consultants, sub-partners can include staff costs). The first level controller of the full partner must control the expenditure of the sub-partner. When deemed necessary, he should also include on the spot checks.

Swiss Partners

Swiss organisations can participate in NWE projects but are not entitled to ERDF funding. They can receive funding from the Swiss federal government to co-finance their share in the project budget, and in some cases, may be expected to account for their entire share of the project budget. Swiss partners have to contact their Contact Point before the submission of the project application in order to discuss the possibilities of co-financing. Swiss organisations can only be project partners; they cannot act as Lead Partner of a NWE project.

Partners from outside the NWE area

In exceptional cases, it is possible to include project partners from outside the NWE area but it has to be demonstrated that without their participation the project partnership would be unable to achieve its objectives. Including a partner from outside the NWE area must bring a clear benefit to the project. In duly justified cases, partners located outside the NWE area may receive ERDF-funding. However, in order to pay the ERDF share to a partner from outside NWE area, its country has to sign an Agreement with the Managing Authority.

Private partners

Private partners can participate in the NWE Programme, but only non profit making private partners can be Lead Partners. In this case, the Lead Partner's solvency must be demonstrated by a bank guarantee¹ or by any other properly documented evidence. The participation of private profit making partners is governed by EU and national competition rules. These rules prevent public funding from being used by a private sector organisation to gain an unfair advantage over its competitors.

Therefore, organisations which from a legal perspective constitute private profit making organisations, can participate in projects under the North West Europe Programme as public similar partner (Article 2 of the General Regulation), if:

- they constitute a legal body
- they act as a non-profit making organisation in the context of the project and operate in line with the principle of real costs (public tender and publicity rules must be adhered to)
- they provide facilities or services or intellectual property for the common good, freely available to others as part of the project and its outcomes
- their participation and receipt of grant aid would not seriously distort competition in its region or market

Observers

Under certain conditions, other bodies may take on a role of observer or have an advisory capacity in the project. Such bodies may or may not contribute financially to the project. . The participation of these bodies does not entail any financial obligation to the Lead Partner and should be regulated by means of internal contracts. They are not considered as 'formal' partners and should not be listed as such in the Application Form. Their travel and accommodation expenditure are eligible provided they are included in the project payment claim by a formal partner. In all cases, this must be clearly laid down in the approved Application Form.

Partnership Agreement

It is very important that sound agreements are made between the Lead Partner and other partners since the Lead Partner represents legitimately the partners and is ultimately responsible for the management of the project. Such contracts are an important base for successful cooperation between all partners and form a solid foundation for general and financial management.

It is necessary to include the following elements in such agreements as well as any other issues that concern the partnership:

- Defining the joint aims and responsibilities of the partners and their mutual obligations
- Funding
- Distribution of resources
- Financial liability
- Duration of the project
- Disputes and penalties
- General and Financial Management structure
- Reporting obligations and related deadlines to be met
- Working languages.

A template of a Partnership Agreement is available on line (www.nweurope.eu) and at the Programme Secretariat.

¹ A bank guarantee is a written contract stating that in the event of the partner having to return part of the grant received, and being unable or unwilling to do so, the bank will act as a guarantor and pay its client's debt to the Programme.

Further Reading:

INTERACT: "Good practice INTERREG III Partnership Agreement" (www.interact-eu.net)

5 ELIGIBILITY AND SELECTION CRITERIA

OVERALL SELECTION PROCEDURE

The role of the Programme Steering Committee (PSC) is to approve or reject project proposals by assessing their merits against the Selection Criteria, on the basis of the assessment made by the Secretariat.

The Eligibility and Selection Criteria will form the basis of the decision-making process for all projects.

- The first step will consist of examining the eligibility of projects. There are 16 Eligibility Criteria. Ineligible projects will not be assessed further.
- The second step will consist of ranking the eligible projects by assessing them against the relevant Selection Criteria. There are 14 such Criteria.

Following the assessment of the Secretariat, the Programme Steering Committee (PSC) will make a final decision on the approval of funding. On the basis of this decision, the Lead Partner will receive an official letter of notification stating the outcome of the PSC. The decision is normally taken 2 months after the closure of each call.

There are four possible outcomes:

1. Approved projects

In this case, a project is deemed satisfactory for approval and will subsequently receive funding.

2. Conditionally approved projects

In this case, approval is subject to a series of conditions which are outlined in the notification letter. Once such conditions are fulfilled, funding will be administered.

3. Referred back projects

Applicants are advised to submit an improved version during subsequent Calls for Proposals.

4. Rejected projects

Projects that are rejected do not score sufficiently high against the selection criteria to merit the approval of the Steering Committee. The project proposal has shortcomings and should not, under any circumstances, be resubmitted in a similar form. The proposal should be modified (in case of resubmission) according to the recommendations and remarks that will be clearly formulated in the notification letter (areas for improvement).

Project promoters can be encouraged to redevelop some parts of the Application Form, to explore other sources of EU funding or rethink their project from scratch. This will depend on the scoring of the project.

Such a decision does not prevent a project proposal from being submitted at a later Call for Proposals.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Eligibility Criteria are “minimum requirements”, each of which has to be met for a project to be declared eligible*. The answer to any eligibility criterion is either yes or no.

The Eligibility Criteria are listed below. For some of them, additional explanation is given.

1.	Lead Partner is an organisation within the eligible area.
2.	Lead Partner is a public or a public-similar organisation.
3.	The project is transnational: projects involve co-operating partners from at least two different countries (one of which from the NWE area). If the project entails investments in infrastructure, the project may exceptionally be implemented in a single Member State, provided that a significant impact in other countries can be demonstrated.
4.	Each partner will contribute to project funding.
5.	Each partner will be active in the development and implementation of the joint action plan.
6.	The scope of the project renders it ineligible under cross-border Programmes as mapped by the European Commission. The project scope should be wide enough to deliver a comprehensive contribution to the issues addressed in the Operational Programme.
7.	The project addresses at least one of the objectives within the Priorities defined in the Operational Programme.
8.	The project tackles the territorial challenges of NWE.
9.	The following types of projects will be supported: action projects, small-scale investments, and feasibility or supporting studies where these can be linked to concrete actions. Study projects without concrete actions will not be supported. “Small-scale investment”: in the context of the Programme, this can relate either to investments contributing to more sustainable transportation systems, investments in the sectors of ICT applications and services or investments made to protect water resources and improve water quality. These are only examples: other types of investments are eligible. See also Guidance Note no.13 regarding the eligibility of costs. It is clear however that the project cannot involve the construction of any large-scale heavy infrastructure. No study project will be eligible: the Programme will promote feasibility studies but only when linked to concrete implementation strategies.

10.	The project does not receive any other Community grant and there is no double-financing of expenditure with other Community or national schemes and with other programming periods.
11.	The solvency of public bodies is assumed. For bodies under private law, a bank guarantee, though preferable, is not essential provided that any other properly documented evidence of solvency is given. This document should be submitted in case of approval (during the negotiation period).
12.	The Lead Partner confirmed that the mutual financial and legal responsibilities of the project partners have been defined in a Partnership Agreement.
13.	All sections of the Application Form have been properly and accurately filled in, signed and submitted on time. An original copy of the Application Form, signed by a qualified representative of the Lead Partner, must be sent to the Secretariat.
14.	The project will be completed by 30 September 2015.
15.	The willingness for project partners to engage in the partnership has been fully demonstrated by a complete set of Letters of Support (by the deadline of submission). At the submission stage, when you will submit your Application Form to the Secretariat, you will need to fill in a template called "Letter of Support" for each partner. A standard text will be provided in each of the four NWE languages. The Letter of Support is the only document of the Application which can be submitted in one of the four NWE languages without the need for an English translation. It must be signed by a person entitled to make commitments on behalf of the organisation.
16.	The project does not contravene EU legislation (in particular the rules applying to the eligibility of expenditure of Structural Fund support, to competition policy, to State aid, to environmental impact assessment and to equal opportunities).
17.	The project proposal has not been submitted more than 3 times (not including the project proposals that were declared ineligible). A project is considered resubmitting when 80% of the partnership and the budget are the same. This eligibility criteria will be effective as of Call 8 on (spring 2011)

* For minor omissions, the Secretariat will grant 5 working days after the deadline for submission to the projects to resubmit missing elements. This concerns exclusively: missing signature on the Application Form, minor excel errors (which do not include removal of protection), missing letters of support, missing draft partnership agreement or incorrect project end date.

Note on Eligibility Criterion 6:

Please check the following website for the mapping of the cross-border Programme areas:

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/atlas2007/eu/crossborder/index_en.htm

SELECTION CRITERIA

Project quality will be scored against individual Selection Criteria 1 to 14 (listed below). The resulting scores will then be determined for each of the “aggregated criteria” I to VII.

Please note, given the importance of transnational cooperation and value for money to a successful project, criterion no.1 and no.14 carry more weight than the other selection criteria.

I - Capacity, quality and intensity of cooperation

1. The project involves a high level of transnational cooperation.

Projects addressing issues of significant transnational relevance and importance for the NWE area will be given Priority. Projects should deal with issues which by nature cannot satisfactorily be tackled at local, regional or national level without transnational cooperation. Due attention will be paid to the level of involvement of every partner in the joint action plan of the project as well as to the extent to which real common benefits can be expected for the partnership as a whole.

Projects will not be considered transnational if they consist of a mere exchange of experience, or a series of seminars/events, or the joint production of a working document (guide of good practice), drawing up of a joint strategy without implementation.

II – Deliverables and consistency between aim and action plan

2. The project will deliver tangible outputs going beyond for instance studies, benchmarking, seminars and workshops

Tangible results through actions, pilot investment, business cases or scenario developments etc. should guarantee concrete and on the field interventions. They should be measurable. The following examples are considered as tangible outputs:

- incubator pilots
- business plans/ financial models
- feasibility studies and tests that lead a project to a pre-investment stage
- scenarios for priority investments, along a freight transport corridor for example
- jointly designed trainings, connected to implementing new processes on the ground and where information is going to improve the knowledge of the partners involved
- transnational quality labels or marketing strategies e.g. establishing an eco-building standard based on the full life cycle of materials
- transferable working models e.g. to harmonise data systems for monitoring soil and air quality.

3. The action plan is consistent with the intended objectives

Play down aims is the most common advice to projects who often address several objectives and Priorities of the Programme. Often projects announce too ambitious aims which are not matched by the action plan (where ERDF is actually spent).

Finding a niche, a competitive advantage that the partners may have (area of expertise, geographical situation) is going to help the partnership position their aims and objectives. Project Idea meetings and advice by the Secretariat and the Contact Points network can help partners in that view.

Focus in aims and outputs can also help a project to be consistent and coherent. Any project should identify the Priority (and related objectives) which address best their issues. Very often projects are characterised by a large range of objectives and outputs which have no apparent link, the so-called “shopping list” phenomenon. Such lack of focus results in a low overall score as it weakens the outputs of a project.

III – General approach

4. The project adopts an innovative approach to tackle the territorial challenges of NWE.

INTERREG fosters innovative approaches and experimentations. Priority will be given to projects that develop and implement creative methods, techniques and ideas in the areas defined in the Operational Programme and dare question existing approaches when appropriate.

5. The project will promote cross-sector integration.

Cross-sector integration is a critical dimension of modern economic development strategies. Priority will be given to project applications that pay due attention to all sector policies and interests relevant to their action plan while promoting an integrated approach in line with the sustainability requirement. This also means that a real involvement of the civil society and authorities at all relevant tiers of government will be favoured.

6. The bidding partnership is consistent, i.e. it brings together the relevant partners with the capacity to deliver and make use of project results.

Make sure you take the relevant and competent partners on board! Projects are encouraged to have a good sample of organizations/institutions. For example for transport projects: operators, companies, infrastructure managers, local/regional/authorities etc. should be considered.

Partnerships are advised to have a “vertical approach”. Only relevant partners that have a strong role in the project and the capacity to deliver results should be encouraged. Each partner has to bring a significant contribution to the project (not just a logistic contribution for example) and the activities should be distributed in a balanced manner. In an ideal partnership the need to cooperate should be so high, that if one partner would withdraw, the whole project would collapse.

IV - Overall quality: competitiveness, sustainability and cohesion

7. The project is sustainable: it strengthens the economic competitiveness of NWE in response to the Lisbon agenda for growth and jobs AND the project increases the environmental quality of NWE in response to the Gothenburg agenda.

The EU's Lisbon-Gothenburg Strategy to develop the knowledge economy whilst achieving sustainable development is since 2000 the core goal for the EU. Transnational cooperation actions in NWE will have, whenever possible, to respond to the challenges linked to economic inequalities, reflecting the Lisbon objectives (growth, competitiveness and employment).

The high density of people and activities in NWE has generated considerable pressure on the natural environment. Transnational cooperation actions in NWE which will clearly impact positively on the environment and that will ensure sustainability will be highly encouraged.

8. The project reduces territorial disparities of NWE by the promotion of transnational actions that will enhance economic potential of local and regional assets.

Disparities in regional and urban development, especially economic development, are a distinctive feature of NWE. Activities that aim at reducing regional development constraints and disparities will be favoured, with an accentuated emphasis on employment and social cohesion issues.

V - Capitalisation, leverage effect and communication strategy

9. The project takes into account earlier EU-funded Programmes. It represents a significant added-value compared to already approved projects.

The INTERREG IIIB NWE Programme and other EU-funded Programmes have generated significant experience on issues addressed in the current INTERREG IVB NWE Programme. Preference will be given to projects that complement such developments (rather than duplicate them) and explore new grounds on the way paved by earlier Programmes, if possible.

10. The project provides good prospect for long-lasting activity and leverage for extra investment.

Whenever this proves possible, projects should ideally lay the ground for long-lasting activities or investments. In this approach, the project is just regarded as a seedbed and the ERDF support as a fertiliser of more ambitious and increasingly self-sufficient activities, possibly carried out by other bodies than the initial project promoters (the so-called 'leverage effect'). Projects in line with this approach will be given Priority.

11. The project has an effective communication strategy. The results and experience acquired by the project will be transferable and clearly communicated.

The experience and knowledge gained from a project should be transferable. An important consideration in assessing a project will therefore be the quality and effectiveness of its communication strategy, including the size and diversity of the relevant target audience.

An effective communication strategy should clearly connect the communication objectives with the objectives of the project. i.e. the communication should contribute to the goals of the project. It should include the following elements: communication objectives (SMART: specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-based); public (the target audience should be clearly defined); messages; channels and evaluation (of outputs and outcomes).

VI – Management and market price

12. The project financial and management structure is sound and presents good prospect for a quick start and efficient running.

To secure a quick start and efficient running of the project, applicants need to agree at an early stage on appropriate solutions to management issues, which are particularly complex in the case of a wide transnational partnership. A consistent and reliable co-ordination and management structure has to be set up, including a comprehensive audit trail in line with the financial regulations. The higher the quality of this management structure, the better the project Application Form will be assessed.

13. The individual elements of the project budget breakdown are reasonable compared to their market price.

VII - Value for money

14. The project budget represents good value for money as it is proportionate to the expected outputs and results.

The budget of a project should be proportionate to the expected results. Due attention will be paid to the size of the budget in order to determine if the project as a whole is worth the amount it claims.

6 DEVELOPING THE PROJECT STRUCTURE

Developing a good project structure is essential to the success of a transnational project - think about the different organisations involved that need to understand what you are doing and, perhaps more importantly, how you are doing it! This notion of collective understanding is crucial when it comes to monitoring and evaluating your results. This note is a guide for developing a clear structure that links your aims and objectives to well defined work packages.

What are aims and objectives?

When describing your project, you need to distinguish between your aim(s) and objectives. The aim of a project is its overall purpose or intention. It is described in general terms. In contrast, objectives are generated by breaking down an overall aim into specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time bounded (SMART) parts. They need to be described in more detail.

For example, an aim of a project might be to reduce the environmental footprint of harbours. Related objectives to achieve this aim might be the enforcement of waste management methods or the reduction of energy consumption of the harbour infrastructure by 25%.

What are work packages?

In line with the distinction between a project's aim and objectives, a project should be broken down into SMART work packages (WPs). A work package can thus be defined as one of the building blocks of a project's structure. It is a collection of actions and related outputs, following a common objective.

The objective of reducing the energy consumption of the harbour infrastructure by 25% might be achieved by different actions on the ground such as investments in new infrastructure or the development of schemes to reduce the energy consumption of existing infrastructure.

In the Application Form, each work package should contain an objective, a timeframe, a brief description of its geographic scope, its budget, the partners contributing, the actions and outputs planned, as well as their expected impacts and contribution towards achieving the overall aim of the project.

The total number of work packages is restricted to a maximum of six work packages. Depending on your work breakdown structure, your work packages can run subsequently or in parallel to one another. Please bear in mind that each WP is like a mini-project. We advise project promoters to organise work packages thematically; following such a structure (instead of a chronological order) helps anchor the project to transnational cooperation.

Project management and communication are understood as cross-cutting tasks. That is to say, the activities associated with such tasks are necessary to all parts of the Application Form and as such, an extra section is provided. The budget for activities not related to a specific work package but to the overall management and communication of the project (also preparation costs), need to be accounted separately – a specific column is provide in the Application Form.

Further information:

If you need further information or technical advice on project idea development and project content, please contact the Project Development Unit of the Secretariat or the Contact Point.

7 TRANSNATIONALITY

The 'raison d'être' of INTERREG IVB is transnational cooperation.

In order to receive funding, any project in INTERREG IVB NWE has to be transnational by nature, in terms of the topic it addresses, the partnership and the way the project operates and is managed.

This means:

- The problems identified cannot be solved efficiently by individual States or regions acting alone; solutions can only be found by organisations in different Member States working together.
- The project tackles a theme or subject relevant for the whole of North West Europe, and the actions delivered will have an NWE-wide relevance.
- In order to be eligible a project must include partners from at least two countries in the NWE area. However to be selected projects must involve partners from enough Member States to demonstrate the project's relevance to the whole Programme area (or a representative enough part of it). In practice most projects involve partners from three or more Member States.
- All partners actively participate in and benefit from the project. Each partner has a specific role to play and this role is clearly identified in the development phase. There is no 'passive' partner, each brings different strengths essential to the project, which are combined to achieve the collective project results.
- All project partners plan, design, invest, act and communicate together, so that transnational cooperation is reflected in all stages of the project from development to closure.

Transnationality is the first and most important selection criterion for project applications. Applicants are strongly advised to study the Operational Programme to understand the topics of most relevance to the Programme area, and to consider the geographical range and diversity of the area, from the North of Scotland and Ireland to the Alps, and from the tip of Brittany to the Czech/German border.

Transnational issues & examples

A transnational issue cannot, by definition, be tackled satisfactorily at local, regional or national level without transnational cooperation. Some examples:

- It is widely acknowledged that **environmental pollution** is a transboundary phenomenon and has to be tackled through international action. Fighting air pollution and improving air quality depends very much on integrated measures taken at a large scale.

- Similarly, regions across NWE share a common problem of chemical compounds and particulates in **waste water** which cannot be broken down through current water treatment processes. Concerted action to change the behaviour of polluters and product users can provide a cost-effective solution at source.
- Sharing **research facilities** across different countries can also overcome barriers of cost and access which prevent small businesses innovating.
- Seeking shared responses to NWE's **changing demographic patterns** is a challenge common to all NWE regions, so sustainable and balanced patterns of development across NWE are required to ensure that communities can thrive in the future.
- Planning **transport infrastructure developments** or new **freight systems** through several countries also requires transnational or cross-border responses.

Transnationality & Innovation

Other more obvious transnational issues have already been the subject of a number of IIIB and IVB approved projects, such as joint tourism initiatives, flood management in river basins, best practice in landscape and public space management. Project results should always be transferable to parts of NWE well beyond the regions directly involved in the project. Therefore new projects on themes which have been tackled before will not be preferred unless they show an exceptional level of innovation to solve an aspect of the topic which has not been dealt with before. The Programme website carries comprehensive information on all projects approved under the current INTERREG IVB and the earlier INTERREG IIIB Programme, and applicants are strongly advised to check these and contact the project managers if relevant, before developing their project ideas, to make sure that their plans are not similar.

How does a project cooperate in a transnational way?

Transnational cooperation starts at the conception of a project. Partners coming together to form a project are drawn together in view of shared concerns. They should be jointly setting the foundation of their common goals and develop a clear common vision before developing their action plan. All partners are hence encouraged to be actively involved in the preparation and design of the project. They should collectively define joint activities for future cooperation and implement a joint management structure and even have mutual resources (i.e. finances and human resources). Investments and outputs should be anchored to transnational cooperation and embedded in a common strategy.

During the planning stage, partners are advised to pay attention to the level of involvement of every partner in the joint action plan of the project as well as to the extent to which real common benefits can be expected for the partnership as a whole.

Activities such as frequent partner meetings, exchanges of information, feedback before and after project implementation, not least informal dialogue among the partners, are considered instrumental to good communication for a successful project. Please do not underestimate the cultural and linguistic implications of transnational cooperation; they may appear as obstacles at first but such opportunities for transferring knowledge and understanding across North West Europe are invaluable.

Transnational activities

The action plan should produce common benefits to all partners, such as time or cost savings, more effective services, access to facilities or expertise not available locally. Results should be useable by other regions across all or most of NWE and endure beyond the project lifetime. Outputs could include common products or strategies if implemented on a full scale during

the project, such as a voucher scheme for access to high-tech innovation testing labs for example.

While designing your project, please bear in mind the following questions:

1. Does this investment/action really necessitate transnational cooperation? Is the expertise not already available?
2. Will this transnational investment/action save the other project partners time & costs?
3. Will the knowledge gained from such an investment be transferable to all partners and will it be used beyond the lifetime of the project and the partnership?

A mere exchange of experience, or a series of seminars/events, or the joint production of a working document (guide of good practice, conception of a joint strategy) **without joint implementation** are not sufficiently concrete to be supported.

What is a “transnational investment”?

A transnational investment in one country should have a clear impact in others. An example would be an investment in air quality improvement. Innovative pilot actions of common benefit to the partnership as test cases for all partners can also be considered, if they involve joint design, implementation, evaluation and use of the final output by several or all partners. The Programme is well aware that the joint planning of investments is not always possible, but there must always be a proven joint benefit and use of the outcomes including knowledge. Examples of small-scale transnational investments include:

- Investments in the capacity of transport corridors to reduce bottlenecks and facilitate the flow of passengers and freight or modal shifts to sustainable forms of transport.
- Similarly, the promotion of shipping along European coasts can contribute to limiting traffic concentration on the most saturated land routes.
- Extending the reach of local transport networks to overcome disadvantages faced by areas peripheral to regional centres.
- Managing coastal resources to deal with the impact of climate change.
- Developing and making better use of green infrastructure.
- Renovating older and historic buildings in sustainable ways, piloting modern energy efficiency measures without detracting from heritage features, using advisors from other partners’ regions.
- Green management of industrial estates, and waste reduction in key transnational sectors such as food.

Investments can be transnational but what about other outputs?

Projects without investments can also demonstrate a high level of transnationality, if the proposed actions lead to concrete results for the common benefit of all partners. Examples of such outputs include:

- Defining transnational quality labels or marketing strategies e.g. establishing an eco-building standard based on the full life cycle of materials and setting up training to the same standards across member states.
- Carrying out feasibility studies and tests that lead a project to a pre-investment stage.

- Setting up a common strategy including scenarios for priority investments, along a freight transport corridor for example.
- Exchanging officials, trainees, professionals.
- Setting up transnational thematic forums, virtual universities, SME networks e.g. design, conception and implementation of a training Programme to facilitate knowledge transfer between SMEs and academia for instance.
- Development of transferable working models e.g. to harmonise data systems for monitoring soil and air quality.

Most projects will involve several of these types of outputs. The Programme expects transnational investments to complement soft outputs where possible, to increase the value and wide applicability of what the Programme funds. Outputs should always be measurable and clearly linked to project objectives and results.

But bear in mind....

Projects are not considered transnational when they consist of a selection of local projects or actions which are linked by the need for ERDF funding or through a vague thematic relationship. For example, a series of individual pilots/investments, for which there is only an ex-post exchange of experience among partners, or a series of seminars/events, or only the production of a working document (guide of good practice) are not considered as transnational cooperation with no joint implementation or cross-fertilisation. A common vision, objectives and areas for action shared by all partners is a pre-requisite.

Other common reasons why project do not succeed when their transnationality is assessed include:

- The problem is too vague or not relevant to the Operational Programme.
- The partnership is not fully representative of the types of region affected by the topic/issue.
- NWE-wide impact is not thought through.
- Actions do not logically follow from the objectives.
- Joint design is not evident in the application.
- The investments proposed are not innovative and are only designed to bridge local funding gaps
- All partners have identical budgets.

As poor design and planning at the start fundamentally weakens the project, applicants should consider the transnational dimension of each stage of their project:

- The topic
- Partnership
- Development and preparation phase
- Actions and co-operation methods and approach
- Investments
- Outputs and results
- Communications and mainstreaming

Further information:

IVB Operational Programme, chapter 4.2 Quality requirements for future projects, section 'Transnationality', p. 81 available at www.nweurope.eu
Applicants' Guidance, Note 5: Eligibility and Selection Criteria.

8 INNOVATION

One of the selection criteria for projects of the INTERREG IVB NWE is the adoption of innovative approaches to tackle territorial challenges in the North-West Europe. As this applies to projects of all Programme priorities, innovation appears as a transversal requirement. In addition to that, the Programme opens up opportunities to projects that address innovation thematically (Priority 1) by contributing to the development of the NWE knowledge-based economy and by capitalising on the capacity for innovation in North-West Europe.

How is innovation understood?

Innovation is about positive and sustainable changes in thinking, in products, in processes and in services. It is typically understood as the successful introduction of something new and useful, for example introducing new methods, techniques, or practices or new/altered products and services. It is invention that gets out to the world.

Innovation is conceived in a variety of contexts, including in relation to technology, commerce, social systems, economic development, and policy construction. In economic terms, it aims to increase the value of a product or process (often driven by consumer demand). Whereas in the organisational context, innovation is linked to performance and growth through improvements in efficiency, productivity, quality, competitive positioning, market share etc.

The strategy for innovation needs to engage diverse actors. This is because the innovation process involves not only the business sector but also public authorities at different levels. At the regional level, the capacity to innovate requires close collaboration between different agents, public, private, research centres, citizens and varied stakeholders.

Within the NWE Programme, innovation does not necessary mean technological solutions as such, but a partnership's collaboration providing added value in order to generate a positive impact on the state-of-knowledge on the issue in question or how it is typically addressed.

Why now?

Innovation is currently at the heart of policy goals at national and EU level alike. The EU Cohesion Policy for the period 2007-2013, the Lisbon-Gothenburg Strategy and the Territorial Agenda of the EU are all promoting a balanced and sustainable development of the territory, making Europe and its regions more attractive places to invest and work, improving knowledge and innovation for growth, and creating more and better jobs.

What does the Programme require?

As mentioned before, all projects regardless of their thematic focus need to demonstrate that they adopt an innovative approach to tackle the territorial challenges of NWE. An innovative approach may be the result of capitalising on previously acquired technical knowledge or on previously-funded activities. It may also be testing new approaches which have proven successful elsewhere. Such fresh thinking can be reflected in the proposed action plan and in the project design and implementation.

In practice, one way to demonstrate an innovative approach is to include experimental piloting of new approaches with a view to their future mainstreaming or their introduction to a particular policy agenda. The involvement of specific stakeholders, use of different techniques or examination of the issue from an unconventional but useful perspective may provide the necessary degree of creativity. The form of transnational cooperation and interaction presents much scope in developing an innovative approach. Investment projects are not necessarily innovative by definition. They need to follow or be embedded in an innovative approach and must not simply reflect general practise.

Overall, it is important to explain why the project breaks new ground, why tackling the particular issue is original, and how the approach itself is inventive, throughout each phase: planning and design, implementation and construction, promotion and publicity etc.

What about projects focusing on Priority 1:

In addition to the above, projects falling under Priority 1 need to address innovation thematically by developing the NWE knowledge-based economy and by capitalising on our capacity for innovation.

A particularly high potential for innovation is offered by the horizontal coordination of actors outside the normal value-added chains. Attention should therefore be given to the integration of different economic sectors, technologies and services. One of the most important challenges, in this respect, is the development of effective and internationally competitive innovation systems within the regions, particularly in rural areas. The possibility to innovate often arises at interfaces where different perspectives and opinions are exchanged. For NWE, one of the core interfaces for growth could be the interconnection of technological sectors with creative industries.

The specific focus of this Priority will be on three main issues:

- (a) To promote greater entrepreneurship and facilitate the translation of innovation and knowledge into products, processes and services;
- (b) To develop new and strengthen existing growth clusters and SME networks; and
- (c) To strengthen the institutional and territorial framework for innovation and the transfer of knowledge in NWE through transnational cooperation.

For regional and local authorities pursuing the Lisbon-Gothenburg objectives, it is an important task to establish structures and services directed to those active in the field of technological and economic innovation. Improvements in the governance of 'knowledge networks' in transnational areas and across national borders are crucial if the full potential of 'knowledge regions' or 'knowledge networks' is to be extracted. It is important that the appropriate institutional and financial framework is in place for actors to engage in innovation and knowledge transfer which will support sustainable economic growth in NWE.

Please note the Programme will neither support research and development activities which are not linked to actions or demonstration projects nor purely academic networking. Project activities should be clearly linked to territorial development and not be merely focused on networking within the specific scientific/business sector, for which the interregional cooperation strand might be more appropriate.

Further information:

IVB Operational Programme – chapter 4.1 Priority 1: Developing the NWE knowledge-based economy by capitalising on our capacity for innovation, p. 60-65 and chapter 4.2 Quality requirements for future projects, section 'Tangible and innovative results', p. 85 available at www.nweurope.eu

9 STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Strategic Initiatives are a novel approach to project development in a number of fields in which transnational cooperation is particularly important. This combines a targeted top-down perspective with the bottom-up involvement of key actors.

Strategic Initiatives can be defined as a process to address specific issues identified as having strategic importance for the Programme.

Five topics were originally identified by the Programme Committees as possible fields of intervention for the Strategic Initiatives:

1. Transport and logistics chains;
2. Production and consumption of energy from renewable sources;
3. Developing Capacity for innovation and knowledge based economy;
4. Challenges posed by demographic change and immigration;
5. Adaptation to the expected spatial impacts of climate change.

The Programme bodies, with the help of relevant experts and stakeholders, have refined these topics and flagged up their most strategic dimensions (for further information on the precise fields of action see the Terms of Reference of the specific S.I. Calls for Proposals).

The general aim of the Strategic Initiatives is to promote a coordinated and integrated approach in areas of relevance to the wider Programme territory, by reflecting the distinctive character of the NWE cooperation area. The emphasis is not on creating new co-financing instruments and procedures but on ensuring more complementarities between projects which contribute to a collective objective. More specific details on S.I. aims can be found in the NWE Operational Programme (Chapter 5)

What types of Strategic Initiatives can project promoters apply for?

Strategic Initiatives have developed into three distinct but complimentary approaches:

1) Bottom-up approach

The initiative comes from the project partnership. Project promoters can decide to apply to become part of a Strategic Initiative if they deem that their project proposal meets the S.I. requirements (see next section), both from a thematic and a qualitative point of view.

Strategic Initiatives Calls are open in parallel with the regular Programme Calls for proposals. specific Terms of References for Strategic Initiatives are made available on the NWE website. If a project bid applying under a Strategic Initiative is not deemed as qualifying for Strategic Initiatives, it will not be refused simply on these grounds. Instead, the Programme will treat it as a regular project application.

2) Top-down approach

The initiative comes from the Programme. In this case, a number of topics have been selected for proactive project development. The Programme has invited a group of relevant stakeholders interested in developing the proposed topics and turn them into concrete project proposals. Two topics remain still open for submitting project proposals:

- North West Europe “Energy Agency” - NWE network of centres.
- Economic cluster development across North West Europe.

More information can be found in the specific Terms of References for Strategic Initiatives.

3) Cluster development approach (for NWE approved projects only)

The initiative is shared between the Programme and already approved projects. In order to create extra added value, the NWE Programme promotes the creation of strategically-relevant clusters of regular approved projects.

This approach recognises that, although regular projects may not display individually a solid strategic character, by working together in a cluster they may have a collective strategic impact on the NWE territory.

To become a “Strategic Cluster” the projects involved need to appoint a Cluster Leader and to define together a Joint Action Plan (JAP). Once the JAP has been discussed with the NWE Secretariat, the cluster can submit an application to the Programme Steering Committee for approval. The Cluster Development initiative is regulated by dedicated Terms of References and Calls for Proposals.

So far the Programme has identified three clusters of approved projects on the following topics:

- Innovative approaches to urban, inter-urban and rural public passenger transport
- Innovative approaches to sustainable energy promotion and management
- Adaptation to the expected spatial impacts of climate change

What characterises a Strategic Initiative?

Strategic Initiatives will not be individual operations but rather groups of projects. S.I. projects will be approved under one of the four Priorities of the Programme. Nevertheless, they will need to demonstrate their strategic dimension by presenting high standards of performance with regard to the following attributes:

1. RELEVANCE TO THE IDENTIFIED STRATEGIC TOPIC:

The project's focus, objectives, proposed activities and intended effects properly correspond to the strategic focus, objectives and activities identified by the Programme and specified in the relevant Terms of Reference for the targeted call.

2. TRANSNATIONALITY:

The project provides a joint strategy, programme or concept with relevance for the whole of NWE area or large contiguous parts of it.

3. STRATEGIC IMPACT:

The project is very likely to produce important effects within and beyond lifetime of INTERREG funding. Such effects must include (but not be limited to):

- a) wielding a clearly demonstrable influence on local, regional or national policies;
- b) attracting follow-up activities and/or investments.

4. INTEGRATION:

The project displays a good vertical representation of players and stakeholders, including different political and administrative levels.

5. ORIGINALITY AND INNOVATIVENESS:

The project represents a very good chance for shaping political and scientific discussions in its field of intervention. This is demonstrated through the involvement of high level political or scientific representatives within the partnership. The project builds on the results of previous projects while distinguishing itself from other cooperation projects in terms of newness of topic, broad scope of the partnership and strong impact sought.

These are general frameworks which may be refined and further detailed in the future.

What are the benefits of participating in a Strategic Initiative?

Projects approved under a Strategic Initiative will enjoy a number of distinctive advantages:

1. Strategic Initiative projects will receive an additional ERDF grant of 1% of their total budget (no additional match funding required) in order to facilitate the cooperation with other project members of the strategic cluster.
2. Projects participating in a Strategic Initiative will enjoy a high profile; they will benefit from wider exposure in the Programme's activities and events and they will be central to the Programme communication.
3. The programme will promote and possibly facilitate access of Strategic Initiative's projects to the European Commission. If deemed appropriate and valuable to the project implementation, the Programme can also help to provide specific, high-level expert advice (.

With regards to management criteria, the Programme (through its Joint Technical Secretariat) will provide, if necessary, extra support to further improve the quality of project management.

Further information:

Please contact the Project Development Unit of the Secretariat if you would like to receive further information.

10 PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Basic principles

1. In each project, a Lead Partner is appointed and agreed upon within the partnership. The partnership is governed by the Lead Partner Principle. The Lead Partner carries full financial responsibility vis-à-vis the Programme authorities for the entire operation including all partners and is ultimately responsible for the proper reporting of progress to the Joint Technical Secretariat.
2. A 'Partnership Agreement' must be drawn up with the partners laying down their obligations for the lifetime of the project (see Guidance Note no.4 "Partnership"). For example, each partner must assume responsibility in the event of any irregularity in the expenditure which it has declared (art. 20.2.a Regulation (EC) no.1080/2006). A signed copy of the Partnership Agreement must be delivered to the Secretariat before any ERDF payment can be made.
3. Project management is handled by the Lead Partner. The size of the project management team can vary depending on the size of the project, but should consist of a designated Project Manager and/or Coordinator (both are usually from the Lead Partner organisation), and a Financial Manager. A Communication Manager for the project may also be appointed. The Project Management team is the interface between the project and the Secretariat.

In More Detail

While the Lead Partner assumes overall responsibility for the project, the project management team is responsible for ensuring sound management of the project. At project level, it is responsible for the management of funds, the budget, project activities in general and communication of the project's results.

The Project Manager will keep a close eye on the advancement of project activities and general management issues; the Financial Manager will keep watch over the project finances, oversee the budget and make sure that all partners are carrying out the necessary eligibility checks and controls.

General management tasks

- Monitor the project implementation
- Ensure the delivery of outputs
- Make sure all partners carrying out activities in line with the budget and submitting eligible costs
- Coordinate and submit the six-monthly Progress Reports and the Payment Claims to the Secretariat, including compiling and analysing the individual partners' reports (financial and content-related)
- Inform the Secretariat about potential project changes on behalf of the partnership (partner drop-out, Budget Line Modification, Application Form revision, implementation plan revision, end date extension, etc.) through an official Request for Changes

Financial management

- Organise the required audits and control activities and facilitate the auditing to all relevant National authorities.
- Ensure sound financial management and monitoring of ERDF funds (on a whole and at partner level)
- Set up a proper audit trail
- Verify that the expenditure presented by the partners has been validated by the relevant controllers
- Transfer the ERDF payment to the partners participating in the project

Communication

- Communication on behalf of the project and compliance with publicity regulations

The Project Manager is also responsible for regular communication with the Secretariat. All project related issues, including questions about the Progress Report and Payment Claim, will go through the project management team who will then pass on the information to the project partners. Contact details of the management team should be indicated in the approved Application Form.

A sound project management team should also be set up at partner level in order to ensure good communication to the Lead Partner and within the partnership as a whole.

At project closure, the project management team is responsible, among other things, for final reports, claims and audits, sustainability of results and publicity of project achievements.

Some tips for successful project management:

- Do not underestimate costs and time associated with the Lead Partner role including resources required for the project management team
- Be familiar with EU Regulations and the Operational Programme
- Make contact with the controller at the beginning of the project to establish ground rules and set audit checks thus avoiding future complications
- Ensure that your partners know what is expected from them
- Prepare your Partnership Agreement at an early stage
- Ensure project management systems are in place at the start of the project including financial, monitoring and reporting systems
- Maintain accurate and complete project reports through the whole lifetime of the project
- Keep project records on paper file and include copies of all significant e-mails
- Be patient with partners whose first language is not the project's working language
- Share the Secretariat's feedback on your reporting with partners
- Have frequent communication – emails and phones are fine, but face-to-face meetings are essential to build up trust

Further Reading:

Council Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006, particularly articles 17 and 20

Facts

All projects supported by the IVB NWE Programme must comply with Information and publicity requirements set in Articles 8 and 9 of Commission Regulation (EC) N°1828/2006 slightly amended in 2009 by Regulation (EC) N°846/2009.

At an early stage in the project idea development phase, project partners need to prepare and budget for a Communication Plan. It is required in the Application Form to be later submitted under section 4, and also in the form of indicators (section 6).

Later, once the project is approved and running, communication will be implemented and the requirements in terms of information, publicity, and reporting will have to be applied. Project partners must make their accomplishments visible to demonstrate the impact of their results and to show that their project deserves recognition for improving regional development in Europe.

In detail**1- Developing a Communication Strategy**

A Communication plan is a strategic document which will give the project a clear direction in communicating and publicising its actions. Each work package requires detailed input in terms of Communication. You will be expected to communicate strong and specific messages shared by all partners on why your project is important to Europe. This is why you need to have a carefully constructed communication strategy which follows your project's objectives along the way, and which makes sure the right people know about it at the right time.

The first step is about knowing WHO you are (name and identity) and WHAT you are trying to achieve (a complete list of objectives). All partners need to rally around this fundamental statement. The reason WHY you are doing it may not be common to all partners at all times; it is perfectly reasonable. However diverse your messages may be, the collective aim of the project should be manifest at all times. This will ensure that specific publics receive specific messages whilst maintaining sight of the project's ultimate aim.

1.1 The messages

A message is "what my audience needs to know about my project", or "my project is worthwhile because..." In other words, you need to think of what your objectives are, who is instrumental in achieving these objectives, and how he/she can be convinced to support your objectives.

Each message should be tailor-made so that it reaches a specific public. When you address a match-funding organisation, your message should emphasise value for money in relation to project results. Remember that you are trying to maintain financial support for your project. When communicating with the European Union, your message should be geared according to EU requirements and needs. In this case, a project can enhance the visibility and tangibility of Cohesion policy at local level, facilitating a positive image of the EU.

In contrast, a member of a local community who is directly affected by a project's outputs should receive a reassurance and engagement-oriented message.

Bear in mind that a strong message is always accompanied by evidence. For example, if you have a general public brochure which says that you have the support of the EU for your "very innovative project", you will have to demonstrate HOW you are innovative. Thus, your message should, in most cases, consist of evidence that is measurable. This will make your results credible and your message more compelling.

A sound Communication message is essential: it should encapsulate the essence of your project, refine its objectives and make the added value of your project manifest.

1.2 The right audience

It is important to think of all the people who should support or be aware of your project. It is equally accepted to have a ranking of these audiences, and to concentrate on some more than others at certain points in time.

Your project partners are also a key audience. Make sure that all your partners are as convinced as you are so that they can promote the project effectively. Let's not forget that the Lead Partner is responsible for communicating at all times all project information it might receive from the Secretariat to the rest of his partnership.

1.3 The most adapted tools

Behind every tool should be a strong justification, every tool should support an objective, and should convincingly deliver at least one message.

Think about each audience: who they are, the kind of information they want, the newspapers they read, the available time that they have, who they know, what they know... will they have time to read a 100 page report? Are they technophobic? These questions will help you get the right tools for the right audience and the right messages, so that your project doesn't waste any time or money developing tools which are not adapted.

1.4 The person in charge of Communication

It is essential that – during the preparation phase- you plan efficient resources (material and human) for the implementation of Communication of your project.

Whether the Project Coordinator or the Finance Manager, there should be a person appointed to be a reliable point of contact and information for the other partners, the Secretariat and anyone else who wants information about the project. This person is also responsible for coordinating the different communication actions within the partnership, collecting information, photos, talking to the press etc.

1.5 The budget

Obviously Communication has a cost so you will need to think about the kind of actions and publicity you need and want for your project, and budget accordingly. Seeking external help to draw up a detailed communication strategy or to organise an event can be a worthwhile investment which needs to be anticipated.

2- Implementing a Communication Strategy

You are expected to implement the Communication plan and the various actions described in the communication section of each work package. Whether you have produced information materials, organised an event, or communicated to the general public, stakeholders, etc.

Also as a beneficiary of European funds you are asked to obey specific requirements in terms of information and publicity set by the European Commission (see Guidance Note 16). The use of the Programme logo must be used in parallel with the EU logo for any project communication material, project activity or result in order to ensure transparency and visibility of the Programme. See www.nweurope.eu under Communication / Logos.

At all stages, it is vital to include the Secretariat in your communications strategy. If the Secretariat is impressed with your project, it will use it as an example at international conferences, in publications etc.

3- Reporting

All through its lifetime your project will be monitored and your Communication actions will be assessed every 6 months in the form of indicators in the Progress Report, and should be integrated at an early stage in your communications plan. .

Along the Progress Reports you will attach copies of all the communication tools (publications; pictures; videos; etc.).

Further Information:

To get further advice on publicity requirements read Guidance Note 16 or contact the Communication Unit at the Secretariat.

Developing a project

A partnership that is in the process of developing an INTERREG IVB NWE project application is advised to contact the Secretariat or the Contact Point at an early stage. They will be able to assist in developing a high quality project. Once the details of the project idea have been clarified and all organisations have expressed their commitment to the project, an Application Form can be completed (further advice on project development is available in Guidance Note no.3 "How to get started").

Call for Proposals

Calls for Proposals will be held throughout the Programme's lifetime, twice during the first years of Programme implementation. Each of the calls and related documents will be announced on the Programme's website.

By default, all Priorities of the Programme will be open. However, depending on the specific demand for certain topics or the availability of funding (especially later in the Programme's lifetime) restrictions might become necessary. These will be announced on the Programme's website.

Content of a project application

Prior to the opening of a call, the Application Form will be provided for download on the Programme's website. It consists of one MS-EXCEL file. Ten sections need to be completed:

- 1 – Project summary
- 2 – Project Objectives and Implementation
- 3 – Project Management
- 4 – Communication Strategy
- 5 – Detailed Investment sheet
- 6 – Project Partnership
- 7 – Budget details
- 8 – Detailed Annual Budget Breakdown
- 9 – Monitoring Success
- 10 – Confirmation, certification, signature

Guidance to complete the form is given throughout the document.

The submission of the Application Form in English is a minimum requirement. However, the summary section of the Application Form must be provided in all Programme languages that are relevant to the partnership.

Submission of a project application

The Lead Partner submits the project Application to the Secretariat in English on behalf of the partnership. Each project must submit one paper copy (not bound, laminated or ringed for practical reasons of internal handling; double sided printing is encouraged) and one electronic copy (on CD-ROM) of the completed Application Form by the date and time specified in the Call for Proposals. The Application Form must be accompanied by a signed Letter of Support

for each partner and (at least) a draft Partnership Agreement (see also Guidance Note no.4 and no.5). Templates for the Letter of Support and the Partnership Agreement are available for download in all four Programme languages.

Upon receipt of the Application, the Secretariat notifies the Lead Partner of its reception and of the attributed project number. Additional annexes, other than those requested and authorised in the Application Form, will not be accepted or taken into account during the assessment.

Assessment & Approvals

[Assessment of project applications](#)

For each project, the assessment team is made up of Secretariat staff who have neither advised the applicants nor previously monitored the project partnership. All submitted Applications will be treated equally. Technical assistance from a consultancy may be sought to back up the assessment of the Secretariat.

First, the eligibility of all projects will be checked by the Secretariat according to the Eligibility Criteria (see Guidance Note no.5). The project will be declared ineligible if any one Eligibility Criterion is not met. In this case, the Application will be excluded from further assessment and not presented to the Programme Steering Committee.

For each eligible Application received, the Secretariat consults the National Authorities involved to ensure that the project does not conflict with national policy or legislation, especially with requirements regarding its environmental impacts.

As a second stage, the Secretariat assesses eligible project Applications according to the Selection Criteria (see Guidance Note no.5). A global assessment will be made for each project and a ranking of all submitted Applications will be established within each call.

The Secretariat will draft a specific report for each Application Form, containing a brief note setting out its main findings and recommendations, supported by a standard assessment form. The reports on all project Applications will be circulated among the members of the Steering Committee before the meeting. The final decision on each project Application will be made by the Steering Committee.

[Transparency](#)

Depending on the judgment, three types of decision may be made:

1. The project is approved, conditionally or not. Should conditions be imposed, they will refer to slight amendments indicated in the Steering Committee decision.
2. The project is referred back to the applicants. Applicants are advised to submit an improved version during subsequent Calls for Proposals.
3. The project is rejected. This means that the project idea as such is not deemed suitable under the objectives of the INTERREG IVB North West Europe Programme.

The Steering Committee will duly justify its decision and the Lead Partner will be officially notified by the Secretariat. In the Letter of Notification to the Lead Partner, the shortcomings of the Applications will be clearly stated with supporting arguments referring to the Eligibility and Selection Criteria. Recommendations for improvements will be listed. The Lead Partner is responsible for circulating any information received to his various project partners.

Negotiations

Possible conditions of a project approval must be met and the Application should be amended accordingly within 2 months of the Secretariat sending a letter to the Lead Partner confirming the Steering Committee's decision. Conditionally approved projects which do not meet this deadline will be required to resubmit their Application during a subsequent Call for Proposals. The Subsidy Contract may be issued as soon as the necessary conditions are fulfilled, without any further discussion by the Committee.

Meetings with the Joint Technical Secretariat

During the project development phase, the Secretariat receives numerous requests to advise project promoters before, during and after the Calls for Proposals period.

Given the intensive nature of the project assessment procedure, projects that are "conditionally approved", "referred back" and "newcomers" to the Programme will be given Priority when seeking advice from the Secretariat; the Secretariat needs to actively support projects which the Steering Committee deems to have the potential necessary to develop into suitable projects in time for the subsequent call.

With regard to rejected projects, the Secretariat believes that the short period of time between two consecutive calls does not allow for a thorough redevelopment process.

After formal approval

The Subsidy Contract

As soon as all conditions are met, the Secretariat will issue a Subsidy Contract on behalf of the Managing Authority. The Lead Partner is responsible for circulating the information contained in the Subsidy Contract to his project partners.

The Subsidy Contract is the legal basis for the commitment of funds to the project and sets out all the conditions on which the ERDF contribution is committed to the Lead Partner, including the indicative Grant Rate and the overall maximum amount of the ERDF grant. It underlines the Lead Partner's responsibility for the whole project expenditure.

Start of the project

The start date of the project is the date the first expenditure for the project was incurred, including the preparation phase of the project. The earliest possible start date of the project is one year before the closure of the call (see Guidance Note no.13 for further information on preparation costs).

A dedicated Project Development Officer and Finance Officer within the Secretariat will be appointed for each approved project. They will be responsible for following up the

implementation of the project throughout its lifetime (assessment of Progress Reports and Payment Claims).

[Lead Partner Information Seminar](#)

Information seminars are organised by the Secretariat after the formal approval phase. The objective is to provide Lead Partners with practical information and assistance related to project management in three fields: financial requirements, reporting and monitoring procedures and project communication strategy requirements.

13 ELIGIBLE COSTS

Expenditure actually paid out is the basis for assessing the eligibility of expenditure under the INTERREG IVB NWE Programme.

To be eligible all costs must:

- relate to the purpose of the action
- be part of the approved Application Form
- be incurred within the dates specified in the Subsidy Contract
- be reasonable, justified, consistent with the usual internal rules of the partner
- be supported by receipts, invoices or accounting documents of equivalent probative value.
- respect public procurement rules

Public procurement rules differ between Member States; all partners should be aware of all rules that apply in their Member State (see Guidance Note no.15).

In addition to these key principles, a number of more detailed eligibility rules apply.

Keep in mind that the maximum grant rate per partner is 50%. Eligible costs are subject to all applicable national or regional eligibility rules dealing with ERDF funding.

In more detail

Cost categories

Partner staff

Key principles:

- *Only for staff members of the partner organisations*
- *Only the real cost is eligible based on the payslip (any overtime paid to members of staff must appear in the payslip)*
- *Overheads can under no circumstances be included under this budget line*

Staff costs are the costs of the actual time worked by the persons directly carrying out the work under the project and directly employed by the partners.

All staff costs must be based on real costs, supported by proper documentation (payslips and timesheets) and calculated on the following basis:

- Remuneration costs charged should be taken from payroll accounts and should be the total gross remuneration plus the employer's portion of social charges. Remuneration costs must be calculated individually for each employee and must be based on the monthly payslip.
- Working time must be recorded (eg. timesheets) throughout the duration of the action. The records should be certified at least once a month. Estimates of hours/days worked are not acceptable.

Example

Barbara is employed by partner 2. Based on the pay slip, her total monthly cost, including gross remuneration and employer's share of social charges, amounts to EUR 4,753.

Case A

On average, Barbara worked 55% of her time for the project (supported by timesheets) in January. For that month, the partner is allowed to claim: $\text{EUR } 4,753 \times 55\% = \text{EUR } 2,614.15$

Case B

Barbara is going on holiday in August. On average during the year, she worked 45% of her time on the project.

As paid holidays are eligible, and if we assume that her total monthly cost remains EUR 4,753, the partner is allowed to claim for that month: $\text{EUR } 4,753 \times 45\% = \text{EUR } 2,138.85$

Case C

Barbara is going on maternity leave for 3 months starting in September. On average during the year, she worked 45% of her time on the project. Her full salary is guaranteed during her maternity leave: the first month is covered 100% by her employer, the second month the social security system takes over 40% and the third month 100% is paid by the social security system.

The partner is allowed to claim:

- In September: $\text{EUR } 4,753 \times 45\% = \text{EUR } 2,138.85$
- In October: $\text{EUR } (4,753 - (40\% \times 4,753)) \times 45\% = \text{EUR } 1,283.31$
- In November: **EUR 0**

Hourly rates are not in conformity with the calculation method described above. It is difficult to check that no more than 100% of the staff member cost is charged to the project when hourly rates are applied. Therefore, they should not be used to calculate staff costs in the context of the project.

Overhead costs cannot be added to staff costs and should be included under "Administration costs".

Overtime is eligible as long as it is paid to the persons working extra hours. If it is not paid, or if it is compensated for with days off, it is not eligible.

Unpaid voluntary work is eligible, and should be included under "Partner staff" as contribution in kind, provided that their value can be determined based on the amount of time spent and on a standard rate. It can only be claimed if it has been foreseen in the approved Application Form.

External Experts and Consultants

Key principles:

- *Max 800€/day (excl. VAT)*
- *Public procurement rules must be respected when hiring external experts*
- *No consultant fees are allowed between partners*
- *All additional costs related to external experts (e.g. expert. travel expenses) should be claimed under the same budget line as the main external expert invoice.*
- *Costs for audit and communication should be claimed under the Audit or Communication budget line; it is possible to claim external costs (e.g. a feasibility study) under Investments, if it was foreseen as such in the Application Form.*

Costs for work done by independent consultants or experts (i.e. sub-contractor) are only eligible if the work is essential to the project and the costs are reasonable. Costs must be paid on the basis of contracts and against invoices to external service providers who are sub-contracted to carry out certain tasks of the project (e.g. studies and surveys, translation,

management or audit of the project if sub-contracted, etc.). Travel and accommodation expenses for external experts should be recorded under the external experts budget line. The recommended maximum rate for a senior consultant is €800 per day (excluding VAT). Costs above this amount must be discussed with the JTS. .

It is the Partner's responsibility to ensure that public procurement rules are respected in selecting a company or individual to provide external expertise and that contracts are awarded at normal market prices.

An external consultant is not part of the project partnership. Partners cannot charge a consultant rate to other project partners for services or work carried out during project implementation. All external experts costs must be included in the external expert budget line. External expertise related to specific actions such as website development or communications should be recorded under the "Publicity" budget line as well as for all audit related costs which should be recorded under "Audit/First level control" budget line.

External expertise related to the implementation of an investment can be claimed under the investment budget line. It can consist of feasibility studies, notary fees, construction costs, training fees, specialised interventions (hydrology study, soil de-pollution, mine-clearing operation, etc) and so on.

Travel and Accommodation

Key principles

- *Only for staff from partner organisations*
- *Only economy class or equivalent expenditure*
- *See the maximum amounts for daily subsistence per Member State (where the travel takes place)*
- *Travel outside the NWE area possible with prior approval by JTS*
- *Provide detailed expenses in the verification of expenditure sheets (destination, transport mode, number of hotel nights,...). This information will otherwise be requested by the JTS and will significantly delay payment.*

Travel costs and related subsistence allowances for staff taking part in the project may be charged to the project provided they comply with the participant's established internal rules and usual practice and comply with the national thresholds below. **Expenses for individuals other than staff should be included under the appropriate budget line (external expert, audit, communication).** All tickets, invoices and receipts must be kept by partners so that their eligibility can be checked and audited. Costs must be directly related to, and essential for, the effective delivery of the project and cover economy class travel on public transport. Additional costs for business or first class travel are not eligible.

Travel outside the eligible NWE area is only eligible if prior approval has been given by the JTS. See "other rules" below for more information.

Recommendations for maximum daily subsistence allowances are based on the Commission subsistence allowances paid to experts on assignments requiring an overnight stay. The recommendations given for each Member State are maximum figures in line with EC per diem rates and include breakfast, two main meals and local transportation.

Daily subsistence allowances where an overnight stay is not required are not eligible. In this case, it is expected that only meal costs will be charged to the project. The maximum daily subsistence allowance and hotel rate are cumulative and may be claimed as follows:

Country	Maximum daily subsistence allowance	Maximum daily rate for hotel
Austria	95	130
Belgium	92	140
Cyprus	93	145
Czech Republic	75	155
Denmark	120	150
Estonia	71	110
Finland	104	140
France	95	150
Germany	93	115
Greece	82	140
Hungary	72	150
Ireland	104	150
Italy	95	135
Latvia	66	145
Lithuania	68	115
Luxembourg	92	145
Malta	90	115
Netherlands	93	170
Poland	72	145
Portugal	84	120
Sweden	97	160
Slovakia	80	125
Slovenia	70	110
Spain	87	125
United Kingdom	101	175

(Reference: Council Regulation No 337/2007 of 27 March 2007 amending Article 13 of Annex VII of the Staff regulations of the EC)

Meetings and Seminars

Costs related to the organisation of meetings and events (renting of premises and equipment, meals, etc), participation in meetings and seminars related specifically to the project are eligible under this budget line. Related travel costs and external expert costs must not be budgeted under this budget line (external expert, audit, communication).

Publicity

Expenditure with the main aim of promoting the project should be part of this cost category. This includes website, promotional material and printed publications. National rules on public procurement must be respected when selecting a company or individual who will carry out the assignment. Expenditure linked to producing physical project outputs (investments, leaflets, books, t-shirts,...) is only eligible if these outputs comply with the publicity requirements (see Guidance Note no.16).

Equipment

Key principles:

- *Depreciation*
- *Pro-rata claiming:*

- Time
- Use

Durable equipment (computers, laboratory equipment, machine-tool, measures instruments, etc.) charged to the project must be essential for the delivery of the project and used for that purpose.

Depreciation should be made in accordance with the internal accounting rules of the partners and those rules generally accepted for items of the same kind. Only the portion of the equipment's depreciation corresponding to the duration of the project and the rate of actual use for the purpose of the project may be taken into account. Once the eligible amount is determined, it must be claimed in full at once upon purchase of the equipment.

Goods purchased before the start of the project can be claimed at a depreciated rate as long as they have not previously been financed by any other source (i.e. national or EU funded Programmes).

The total value of the equipment may be charged, if the equipment is used 100% for the project over the entire project lifetime and the length of the depreciation period to be applied (subject to the type of asset).

Second-hand equipment is also eligible with a depreciated value. All equipment expenditure is subject to public procurement rules.

Example:

- A project lasting 2 years purchases a new computer: EUR 2,000
- The depreciation period is 4 years
- Therefore, the pro rata rate based on the amount of time that the computer is actually used for the project must be applied (50%).
- Only the time that the computer is actually used for the project, and not its total value, may be included in the budget. If the computer is used only for the project, the project may claim EUR 1000; if the computer is used half of the time for the project, then EUR 500 is the amount to be claimed.

Investment

Key principles:

- *Mainly in small infrastructures, construction works and physical objects not falling under the equipment budget line*
- *Purchase of land limited to 10% of the total cost of the operation*
- *Description must be very detailed in the Application Form*

Investments can be made in small infrastructures (i.e. physical works and utilities of public interest) but also refer to any physical object purchased by the project having a direct link to the project outputs. Investments will be financed only if they are crucial for the achievement of the project's objectives and if they benefit the partnership and the involved territories.

The purchase of land is eligible if it does not exceed **10%** of the total eligible costs for the investment concerned.

All investments must be fully described in the approved Application Form. Additional documents pertaining to the investment may be required such as feasibility studies, environmental impact assessment, planning permission, or the tender procedure. In case of land and real estate purchase, the Programme may require a document explaining the direct

link between the purchase and the objectives of the co-financed project, or a certificate from an independent qualified expert confirming that the purchase price does not exceed the market value. In case of building works, documents specifying the ownership of land and/or buildings where the works will be carried out may be required. All investments are subject to on the spot checks by the first level controller.

Be aware of the fine line between equipment purchased as part of an investment and that which should be included under the equipment budget line. All investment expenditure is subject to public procurement rules.

Example:

- **The project purchases a computer for the daily running of the project. This is considered equipment.**
- **The project purchases a computer as part of an information booth at one of its climate change sites. This is considered investment.**

Audit/First Level Control

All costs for project first level control are eligible costs.

Depending on the Member State, the system will either be centralised or decentralised (see Guidance Note 19 "First Level Control" for more information) and will have an impact on the cost charged to the project:

- costs of a decentralised system will be borne directly by the project
- costs of a centralised system will in most cases be borne directly by the Member State of the partner

Please take this information into account when drafting the budget. No audit costs should be budgeted for partners where the costs are borne by the Member State.

Administration costs

Administration costs can include cost items such as (non-exhaustive list):

- office rent, maintenance and furniture
- electricity, heating, water
- insurances
- telephone, fax, internet
- stationary

Costs for bookkeeping, secretarial pool, management related costs cannot be claimed as administration (indirect) costs. Such costs must be directly claimed under the staff costs budget line.

FOR PROJECTS APPROVED PRIOR TO APRIL 2011 ONLY (project code number ending in A-G)

Under the NWE Programme, administration costs are limited to a maximum 10% of the total eligible budget at project level and 20% of the staff costs at partner level.

Administration costs can be direct or indirect costs:

- direct costs can be identified as belonging directly to the project
- indirect costs (=overheads) are costs which cannot be directly allocated to a specific project. They are eligible provided that they are allocated to the project on a pro rata basis according to a duly justified, fair and equitable method (in

accordance with generally accepted accounting principles). This method should be clearly described and should be made available for site visits (see Guidance Note no.22)

Administration costs are eligible provided that they are based on real – actually paid – costs which relate to the implementation of the project. No lump sums or arbitrary keys are allowed.

When claiming administration costs, partners have 2 options:

1. Direct costs: partners claim directly, cost item per cost item. Paid invoices are the underlying proof of expenditure.
2. Indirect costs or overheads: partners must use the calculation of the total overheads of their organisation and a distribution key related to the partner staff involved in the project. As mentioned before, this must be properly documented and periodically reviewed.

As an annex to the first claim, all partners must submit a clear calculation of the overheads and pro rata rates showing the actual paid overheads of a project.

Example of the calculation of indirect administration costs (=overheads):

A partner wants to include project related overheads in the payment claim.

The partner's organisation incurred the following expenditure:

Rent	82,400
Insurance	23,554
Postage & Telephones	13,000
Light, Heat & Water	16,795
Maintenance	10,000
Stationary	12,500
Total	158,249

The office consists of 28 people (full time equivalent). 7 of them work on the project. Based on their timesheets, it corresponds to 4.7 full time equivalents.

The costs that can be included as overheads in this example are:

Total overheads: EUR 158,249

Pro rata basis: $4.7 / 28 = 16.79\%$

The overheads that can be included in the Payment Claim (provided they don't exceed 20% of the partner staff claimed):

$16.79\% \times \text{EUR } 158,249 = \text{EUR } 26,563.23$

FOR PROJECTS APPROVED FROM APRIL 2011 ON (project code number ending in H -Z)

Flatrate

In order to simplify the reporting of administration costs, a flat rate has been introduced for projects to be approved under the 8th call¹. This will simplify the reporting and the first level control of administration costs as no supporting evidence is required to back up the reported administration cost amount.

- A flat rate is applied for administration costs; the fixed rate is automatically applied to the project partner's actual staff costs.
- The flat rate is the same for partners from all Member States.
- The flat rate for administration cost is set at 11% of the partner staff budget.
- The eligible amount will be adjusted to the actual staff cost expenditure. This means that if a project has budgeted EUR 100,000 in staff costs but they will only spend EUR 90,000, the flat rate of 11% will be applied to the EUR 90,000.
- The administration costs do not need to be backed up by supporting evidence during first level control and audits.

Revenue

The Lead Partner must keep separate accounts for the project so that all expenditure (costs) and all revenue (receipts) can be posted and audited, and detailed summary reports drawn up. All revenue generated from sales, rentals, subscriptions, fees or other equivalent sources must be reported and must be deducted from the eligible costs. A separate budget line for revenue is included in the Application Form and the payment claim.

According to Article 55 of EU regulation No 1083/2006, in the case of revenue-generating projects (= operation involving an investment in infrastructure the use of which is subject to charges borne directly by users, or any operation involving the sale or rent of land or buildings or any provision of services against payment), the current value of the net revenue from the investment must be estimated over a specific reference period. Where it is not possible to estimate the revenue in advance, the revenue generated within 5 years following project closure must be reported (see Guidance Note no. 24 "Project Closure" for further detail).

These provisions shall apply only to projects exceeding a total cost of EUR 1,000,000 (according to EU Regulation 1341/2008 amending Article 55 of EU Regulation No 1083/2006).

Other rules

Preparation Costs

Costs related to project development and the Application Form processes are eligible. The activities financed should show a direct, demonstrable connection to the development of the project. They may include: staff, external experts (consultant), travel and subsistence, meetings, publicity. "Preparation costs" is not a specific budget line (as it was under the INTERREG IIIB Programme) but is assimilated to a work package.

Preparations costs should ideally be claimed only in the first Payment Claim of the project, When this is not possible, preparation costs can be claimed in a subsequent claim but must be claimed for all partners at once. In all cases, they must be clearly distinguished from implementation costs, by providing a separate set of verification sheets.

¹ In compliance with Article 7(4) of Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006 as amended by Regulation (EC) No 397/2009 and subject to the positive outcome of the EC's ex-ante assessment of the proposed method.

Preparation costs are eligible only for projects approved by the Programme Steering Committee. Preparation costs include expenditure incurred between the project start date and the date the project was approved by the Programme Steering Committee. The earliest project start date may be one year prior to the closure date of the call at which the project is approved. The preparation costs are subject to a ceiling of €100,000 total eligible cost (maximum €50,000 ERDF).

Coordination Costs

Costs related to coordination and the management of the project must be recorded under the partner who will incur the expenditure. Partners can contribute financially to the coordination costs but this should not be part of the budget and it should not appear the Payment Claims. Any arrangements should be foreseen in the Partnership Agreement. "Coordination costs" is not a specific budget line, but is assimilated to a work package. A special column for coordination costs is included in the Application Form.

Eligibility Period

- Start date:

All costs are eligible one year prior to the closure of the call for proposals at which the project is approved, as long as the actions are not completed before that date. The start date on the Application Form is the start date for eligibility of project expenditure.

- End date:

The end date indicated in the Application Form is the date by which the final report should be submitted to the Secretariat. Any expenditure (including costs linked to the project closure) incurred, invoiced or paid after the official project end date is ineligible. The ultimate end date for all project expenditure is 30 September 2015.

In-kind contributions

They consist of the provision of land or real estate, equipment or raw materials, research or professional work or unpaid voluntary work provided free of charge to the partners. Staff paid by the partner organisation is not contribution in kind.

All contributions should be costed using either an accepted market value for materials or goods, or notional salary for individual's time. The replacement value of volunteer work should be calculated according to indicative hourly/daily rates of remuneration for equivalent work. In the case of the provision of land or real estate, the value shall be certified by an independent qualified appraiser or duly authorised official body.

In-kind contributions can only be included in Payment Claims if they were included in the approved Application Form attached to the Subsidy Contract.

Specific national rules may apply.

Expenditure outside eligible area and outside the EU territory

For partners from the NWE area, any expenditure incurred outside the eligible area (for example, costs of a meeting or conference held outside the area) must be justified in full and a clear need for the expenditure to be incurred outside the area must be demonstrated. **Projects must get formal approval from the Secretariat before incurring expenditure outside of the NWE area.**

For information on partners outside the NWE area, see Guidance Note 4 “Partnership”.

Ineligible costs (non-exhaustive list)

- VAT unless it is genuinely and definitively borne by the partner
- Fines, financial penalties and expenditure on legal disputes
- Interest on debt
- Decommissioning of nuclear power stations
- Housing²
- Exchange rate loss (or gain)
- National banking charges

Further Information:

General Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 – articles 55 and 56

Regulation 539/2010 amending General Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006

ERDF Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006 - articles 7 and 13

Implementation Regulation (EC) No 1828/2006 - articles 48

Regulation 846/2009 amending Regulation 1828/2006

² Exceptionally, investments improving the energy efficiency in social housing may be considered in accordance with the modified Article 7 of the ERDF Regulation 1080/2006

Monitoring at Programme level

Monitoring the Programme is a legal requirement to ensure an effective deployment of the Structural Funds. The Monitoring Committee and the Managing Authority hold joint responsibility for carrying it out. Through progress assessments the monitoring ensures the quality and effectiveness of implementation towards the Programme's Objectives. This helps to identify and assess both potential problems and success. The progress made regarding the implementation of the Programme is reported to the European Commission once a year.

Monitoring at project level

Part of the responsibility for monitoring is passed on to our projects through the submission of regular Progress Reports and Payment Claims (see Note 17). This ensures a regular tracking of the progress made. Monitoring at project level is crucial for delivering high quality results because it highlights needs for improvement regarding the design or the implementation of a project.

Monitoring is a task that needs to be carried out throughout the lifetime of your project. It must be planned as an integral part of your day-to-day management. From the first stages of project development, you should think about the way you are going to monitor your activities. Inputs, outputs, results and impacts should be regularly and systematically reviewed not only in financial terms but also for content.

Indicators

Definition: What is an indicator?

An indicator can be defined as the measurement of an objective to be met, a resource mobilised, an effect obtained, a gauge of quality or a context variable. An indicator should be made up by a definition, a value and a measurement unit.

Two sets of indicators have been developed for monitoring purposes at Programme and project level. On the one hand, quantitative indicators for the project must be provided by you in the Application Form. These will be followed up in the Progress Reports where you will not only have to report on the activities you have carried out, but also on what you have achieved so far in relation to your aim and objectives. On the other hand, qualitative indicators also have to be provided in the Progress Reports.

All indicators collected at project level are aggregated annually at Programme level as part of the general Programme monitoring. This monitoring process does not only deliver outputs, results and impacts of a Programme but influences the knowledge, working methods, social competences, etc., of the project partners.

The function of such indicators is to provide systematic, objective and accurate data, which will subsequently be evaluated by the Secretariat, on changes/improvements in the behaviour, capacity or performance of projects/beneficiaries.

Obtaining reliable and comparable data makes particularly important the adoption of a common interpretation and the careful filling of the tables of indicators. For any doubt on the interpretation of the indicators, please contact the Secretariat.

Quantitative indicators

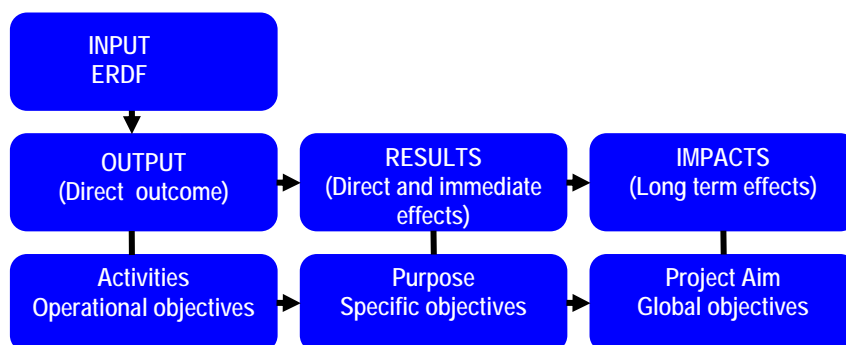
In the Application Form, in Progress Reports and in the final Progress Report, projects are requested to assess their progress in quantitative terms by means of providing reasonable target and attained values. Two sets of quantitative indicators have been developed: general indicators, which apply to all projects, and Priority specific indicators.

Among the priority specific indicators, a further distinction is made between output and result indicators. The difference between those is presented below.

- Output indicators relate to activity. They refer to the direct outcomes of the project and are measured in physical units (e.g. number of actions or schemes/solutions/applications implemented).
- Result indicators relate to the direct and immediate effect of those outcomes. They provide information on changes to, for example, the behaviour, capacity or performance of beneficiaries. Such indicators are of a physical nature (e.g. number of enterprises or jobs created, number of institutions and organizations with improved innovation capacity, etc.).

The diagram below, on which this distinction is based, illustrates the nature of output and result indicators.

Diagram: Logical framework
[Source: based on EC 2006, p.9]



Qualitative indicators

In every second Progress Report and in the final Progress Report, projects are requested to assess their progress in qualitative terms by means of providing an indicative value and a description which links the indicators to project activities. The score of the qualitative indicators will be estimated in a scale of 1 (low) to 5 (high). (Example: Level of cooperation and partnership building, Involvement of private sector, Building on results of previous projects etc.).

Lead Partners are encouraged to discuss with their partners the scores and comments for these indicators, in order to provide the views of the whole partnership. The table below provides an indicative description of the scores for each qualitative indicator.

Level of cooperation and partnership building (experience/knowledge transfer, trust, confidence, learning)

- | | |
|---|--|
| 5 | The partners have a strong inter-active cooperation and the level of knowledge transfer is high. The input by other partners is essential to develop outputs and gives true added value to the partnership. Frequent meetings and email/phone/face-to-face contacts among all partners are common standard. It is expected that the partners will continue to cooperate beyond the project lifetime in another project or in other ways. |
| 3 | The partnership works fluently and there is a significant level of cooperation and knowledge transfer. Yet, communication and trust/confidence still hinder the cohesion of the partnership; the development of joint outputs requires extra coordination support by the project management or Lead Partner. |
| 1 | Significant cooperation problems exist (cultural or language differences, lack of trust, separate agendas). Email/phone/face-to-face contacts are few. Actions are implemented separately and the envisaged joint actions are not smoothly achieved. |

Project clustering activities (synergies with other projects, networks development, institutional linkages)

- | | |
|---|--|
| 5 | The project has achieved a high level of cooperation with other projects (also from other programmes), including the establishment of institutional links or networks. These linkages are expected to develop into new projects or activities. Joint actions/outputs are being developed, such as declarations or investments. |
| 3 | The project is aware of the activities of other related projects and occasionally establishes contacts with them, e.g. on events or meetings. This includes information exchange and the presentation of results. Consistent linkages and joint activities have not been initiated. |
| 1 | The project has not developed linkages/contacts with other projects and an establishment of linkages is not envisaged. |

New ways of doing, thinking, working / new technologies

- | | |
|---|--|
| 5 | The project implementation stimulates innovative and new working practices, methods or technologies which significantly have a positive impact on the performance of organisations / institutions / regions. |
| 3 | The project implementation uses existing practices, methods or technologies but redesigns them in a modern approach to achieve more efficiency and positive impacts. |
| 1 | The project implementation reproduces existing practices, methods or technologies and does not develop significant innovative solutions. |

Involvement of civil society, community, ethnic, rural/urban groups

- | | |
|---|---|
| 5 | Civil society and social groups are an essential part during the whole project lifetime and their participation clearly defines the outputs of the project. In addition to regular information exchange, these stakeholders are actively involved when giving feedback to the main outputs. |
| 3 | Civil society and social groups are regularly informed about the project and considered necessary for implementation. They participate on project meetings or conferences to give an input to the project; yet, they do not play a leading role in project implementation. |
| 1 | Civil society and social groups do not participate in project implementation and are not being informed about the project as well. |

Involvement of private sector

- | | |
|---|--|
| 5 | The private sector is an essential part during the whole project lifetime and its participation clearly defines the outputs of the project. Apart from regular information exchange, these stakeholders are actively |
|---|--|

involved when giving feedback to the main outputs.

- 3 The private sector is regularly informed about the project and considered necessary for implementation. Relevant actors participate on project meetings or conferences to give an input to the project; yet, they do not play a leading role in project implementation and are not part of the partnership.
- 1 The private sector does not participate in project implementation and is not being informed about the project as well.

Building on results of previous projects

- 5 The project develops a significant contribution to its topic by clearly complementing previous project results. Without the previous results the project could not have been implemented in the same quality.
- 3 The project does acknowledge and take into account the results of previous projects but does not exploit them fully. The project could be implemented without the previous results.
- 1 The project does not build on nor take into account the results of previous projects.

Further Reading:

INTERACT (2006): Study on Indicators for Monitoring Transnational and Interregional Cooperation Programmes

European Commission (EC) (2006): The New Programming Period 2007-2013. Indicative Guidelines on Evaluation Methods: Monitoring and Evaluation Indicators, Working Document No. 2

Background

During the implementation of a project, most project partnerships buy products and services when hiring consultants, renting conference facilities, setting up websites, using external auditors, etc. as part of the day-to-day project life. It is also quite common for infrastructure projects to subcontract construction work to a contractor. Whenever purchases are made, contracts are awarded and external suppliers are involved in a project, public tendering rules must be observed, including EC Public Procurement laws and relevant national regulations. These rules are intended to ensure transparent and fair competition within the common market.

In more detail

The Lead Partner is responsible for compliance with the public procurement procedures for the entire partnership. The Lead Partner’s Financial Manager has to ensure the rightful Application of **EU** and **national rules** as this will be checked by an independent auditor when the project submits its Payment Claim and Progress Report. As procurement rules also apply to the private sector, Lead Partners must also be aware of any rules which could apply to some of their private partners. It is, therefore, strongly advised to address this issue in the Partnership Agreement (cf. Guidance Note no.4 on Partnership), and to carefully save all documentation regarding any procurement procedures as they constitute part of the audit trail and have to be included in the audit (cf. Guidance Note no.19 on First Level Control).

- European Community rules on procurement apply to contracts that are financed or partially financed by Structural Funds grants. Bids for contracts must be assessed on an objective basis and, when needed, contract awards should be published in the Official Journal of the European Communities (OJEC). Structural Funds grants will be reclaimed if it is subsequently found that procurement rules have not been observed.

EU Directives apply to contracts to the following types of contracts:

- Works
- Services
- Supply Contracts

Thresholds differ depending on the field of operation. Furthermore, threshold for a full European tender differ depending on the category:

	1 January 2008	1 January 2010
Service and supply contracts according to Article 7a) of Directive 2004/18/EC	€133,000.00	€125,000.00
Service and supply contracts according to Article 7b) of Directive 2004/18/EC	€206,000.00	€193,000.00
Works according to Article 7c) of Directive 2004/18/EC	€5,150,000.00	€4,845,000.00

- For contracts valued less than the above mentioned thresholds, other procedures may apply according to national legislation. National rules have to be closely consulted as they may vary from country to country and decisions may be made on a case-by-case basis.

Please be aware that legal standards applied at national level may be more demanding than the requirements defined by the EU Directives. Procurement rules are complex; if there are any doubts about the application of procurement rules, project promoters should seek advice from a legal advisor. **National rules vary from one Member State to another so Lead Partners should make sure that all Partners apply rules valid in their Member State.** For more information on Public Procurement, please refer to the Audit Guidelines.

Further Information:

For National Tendering Regulations please consult the following websites:

Germany: <http://www.bmwi.de/BMWi/Navigation/Wirtschaft/Wirtschaftspolitik/oeffentliche-auftraege.html>

France: <http://djo.journal-officiel.gouv.fr/MarchesPublics/>

Ireland: <http://www.fpp.ie/>; <http://www.procurement.ie/>

Luxembourg: <http://www.mtp.etat.lu/>

United Kingdom: <http://www.ogc.gov.uk/procurement.asp>

Belgium : <http://www.belgium.be/fr/>

The Netherlands: <http://www.minez.nl/content.jsp?objectid=140472>

Relevant EU regulations:

- Directive 2004/17/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 31 March 2004 coordinating the procurement procedures of entities operating in the water, energy, transport and postal services sectors
- Directive 2004/18/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 31 March 2004 on the coordination of procedures for the award of public works contracts, public supply contracts and public service contracts
- Commission Directive 2005/51/EC of 7 September 2005 amending Annex XX to Directive 2004/17/EC and Annex VIII to Directive 2004/18/EC of the European Parliament and the Council on public procurement (Text with EEA relevance)
- Directive 2005/75/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 November 2005 correcting Directive 2004/18/EC on the coordination of procedures for the award of public works contracts, public supply contracts and public service contracts
- Commission Regulation (EC) No 1564/2005 of 7 September 2005 establishing standard forms for the publication of notices in the framework of public procurement procedures pursuant to Directives 2004/17/EC and 2004/18/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council
- The thresholds enter into force from 1st January 2008 until 31 December 2009 are laid out in Regulation (EC) 1422/2007 of 4 December 2007.

- The thresholds from 1 January 2010 are laid out in Regulation 1177/2009 of 30 November 2009

Background

State aid rules are laid down at European Union level in the framework of its competition policy. They restrict the possibilities of Member States to confer any kind of aid to any given organisation which is engaged in economic activity.

In the INTERREG IVB NWE Programme, funds granted to a project partner may constitute State aid. When this is the case, these monies must comply with the European Commission's State aid rules. If you believe that your project may contain State aid, it is essential that you contact the JTS or other Programme authorities at an early stage in project development.

In more detail

General rule

The European Union defines state aid very broadly as covering any measure involving a transfer of state resources which (threatens to) distorts competition by favouring certain undertakings (see definition in point 3 below) as so far as it affects trade between Member States.

This broad definition induces 5 cumulative criteria:

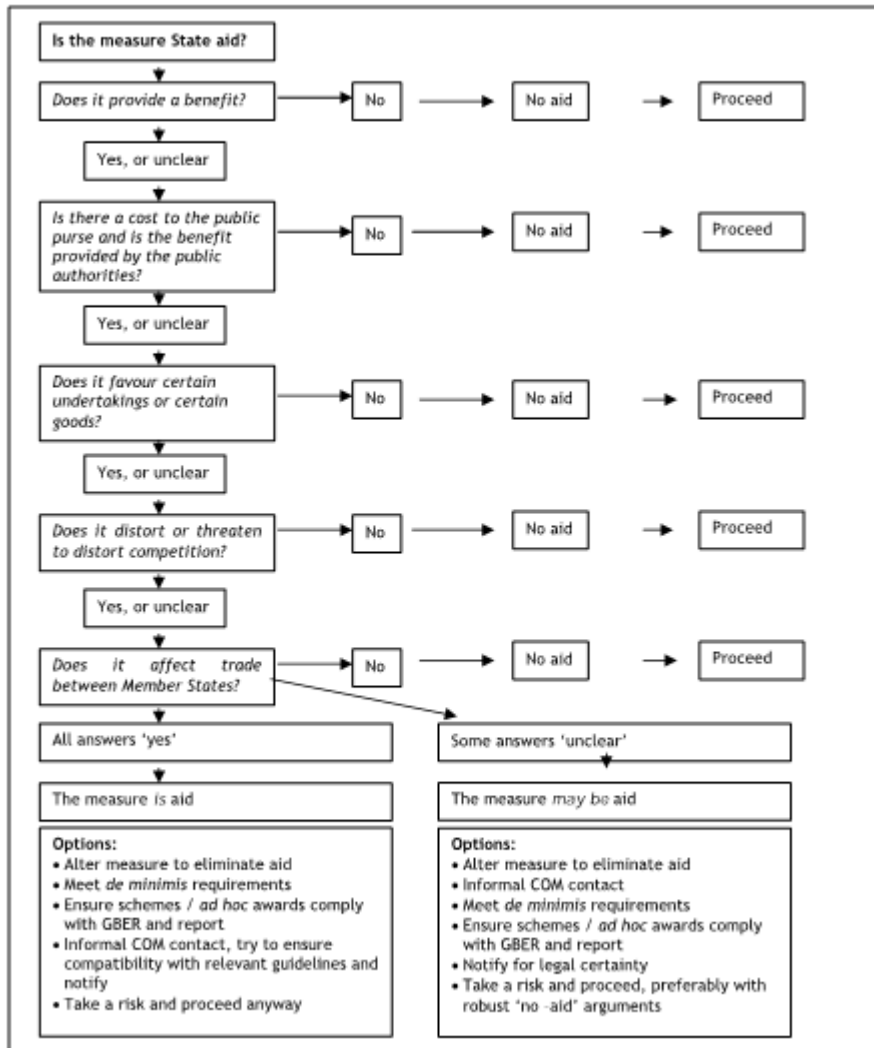
- 1) the measure must confer a benefit or advantage on the recipient which it would not otherwise have received (in this context, the ERDF grant)
- 2) it must be granted by the State / through state resources (which is the case in this context)
- 3) it must selectively favour certain undertakings or the production of certain goods: by 'undertaking' is meant any entity engaged in economic activity (= offering goods and services on the market), regardless of its legal status, ownership and the way it is financed. Even if an entity provides the goods or services free of charge or is financed entirely by the state, it can be subject of the State Aid rules. State Aid rules apply thus to both public and private partners.

Non-economic activities include those that are from exclusive competence of the State (i.e. issuing of passport), the social nature of the activity (i.e. education) and the terms on which the goods and services are supplied (i.e. health care).

- 4) it must distort or threaten to distort competition: this criterion is widely seen as redundant with the previous one because if a measure favours an undertaking, it is seen as possibly threatening to distort competition.
- 5) it must affect trade between Member States: here again, the interpretation is very broad as it suffices that the goods or services are *subject* to trade (without the aid beneficiary being exporting at all) for this criterion to be met. Moreover, there is no minimum threshold and thus the cases where trade between Member States is not affected are very few.

The so-called "Balancing Test" can be applied to check whether the aid is considered State Aid or not. In order for a measure to be considered State Aid, the answer must be "yes" to all 5 points:

Figure 6: Determining the presence of State aid and next steps



Source: EPRC research.

Example:

A IVB NWE project proposes to design and conceptualise an intelligent transport system for containers to be used in commercial ports. The Lead Partner will detain the ownership and property rights for a tool that will later be commercially exploited.

If a Member State does decide to grant State Aid, the Commission must be notified through a strict procedure laid out in Council Regulation (EC) 659/1999 (amended by Commission Regulation (EC) No 794/2004 of 21 April 2004). However, certain aid measures are exempt from notification, such as de minimis aid or the General Block Exemption Regulation (see below).

Exceptions

To the general rule explained above, there are exceptions that are either enshrined in the Treaty (= compatible state aid) or in Commission regulations (i.e. de minimis and general block exemption regulation).

1. Compatible state aid

Article 87 (2) and (3) of the EU Treaty provide that some cases shall be compatible with the common market (the only case relevant under Structural funds could be aid having a social character, granted to individual consumers without discrimination to the origin of the products) and that some cases may be considered to be compatible with it:

- (a) aid to promote the economic development of areas where the standard of living is abnormally low or where there is serious underemployment (see map in annex 1)
- (b) aid to promote the execution of an important project of common European interest or to remedy a serious disturbance in the economy of a Member State;
- (c) aid to facilitate the development of certain economic activities or of certain economic areas, where such aid does not adversely affect trading conditions to an extent contrary to the common interest (see regional maps in annex 2);
- (d) aid to promote culture and heritage conservation where such aid does not affect trading conditions and competition in the Community to an extent that is contrary to the common interest;
- (e) such other categories of aid as may be specified by decision of the Council acting by a qualified majority on a proposal from the Commission.

Provision (c) is the most relevant exception under Structural funds and is the basis for authorised aid for a number of objectives including regional development, support to SMEs, R&D, innovation and environmental protection. The terms on which such aid can be granted is laid down under the General Block Exemption Regulation (see below). The criteria used for the assessment of regional aid are brought together in the "Guidelines on national regional aid for 2007-2013"³ (which is summarized in the Factsheet 4 of the Commission's Community law on State aid Vademecum of 30 September 2008).

The vast and evolving interpretation of those derogations have been recast in the State Aid Action Plan (SAAP)⁴.

2. De minimis rule

The 'de minimis rule' is a threshold of aid below which Article 87(1) of the Treaty does not apply. It is enshrined in a Commission regulation⁵ and applies to all sectors except agriculture and fisheries, coal, aid for the acquisition of vehicles by road transport undertakings, aid for export and aid for firms in difficulties.

Aid is considered "de minimis" if it is below 200,000 EUR cumulative over three fiscal years per undertaking and if it meets the criteria set in the abovementioned Commission regulation.

3. General Block Exemption

³ Guidelines on National Regional Aid for 2007-2013 (Official Journal C 54, 4.3.2006, p.13)

⁴ European Commission (2005) State Aid Action Plan – Less and better targeted state aid: a roadmap for state aid reform, COM(2005) 107 final, Brussels, 7 June 2005.

As part of an administrative simplification, the Commission adopted the General Block Exemption Regulation⁶ (GBER) which came into force in August 2008 and allows any Member State to not notify a number of state aid measures to the Commission. It consolidates and harmonises the rules previously existing in five separate Regulations (e.g. training aid, aid to SMEs and environmental aid), and enlarges the categories of state aid covered by the exemption.

The application of the GBER is currently under discussion within the context of the INTERREG IVB NWE Programme.

For specific information on the GBER, please contact the Joint Technical Secretariat, your National Contact Point or the body in charge of State Aid issues in the concerned Member State.

Further Information:

A complete list of contact details for the body responsible for State Aid issues in your Member State can be found on the DG Competition website. Below is the list for the NWE Member States:

Belgium:

Brussels : [Federal Public Service Economy, SMEs, self-employed and Energy](http://www.mineco.fgov.be/)
<http://www.mineco.fgov.be/>

Flanders: Departement Economie, Wetenschap en Innovatie (EWI) <http://www.ewi-vlaanderen.be/>

Wallonia : Ministere de la region Wallone <http://economie.wallonie.be/>

France: Direction générale de la concurrence, de la consommation et de la répression des fraudes <http://www.dgccrf.bercy.gouv.fr/>

Germany : Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology
<http://www.bmwi.de/English/Navigation/root.html>

Ireland : Department of Enterprise, Trade and Innovation. <http://www.deti.ie>

Luxembourg: [Ministry of Economics and External Trade](http://www.eco.public.lu/attributions/dg1/index.html)
<http://www.eco.public.lu/attributions/dg1/index.html>

Netherlands : [Ministry of Economic Affairs](http://www.ez.nl/index.jsp) <http://www.ez.nl/index.jsp>

United Kingdom : Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform
<http://www.berr.gov.uk/>

NB the Scottish Government provides very comprehensive information on State Aid issues in general as well as issues specific to Scotland: <http://www.stateaidscotland.gov.uk/>

⁶ Commission Regulation (EC) No 800/2008 of 6 August 2008.

Relevant EU regulations:

- The latest applicable state aid provisions are available under:
http://ec.europa.eu/comm/competition/state_aid/overview/index_en.cfm
- Commission Regulation (EC) No 1998/2006 on the application of Articles 87 and 88 of the Treaty to de minimis aid
- The new General block exemption regulation is available under:
http://ec.europa.eu/comm/competition/state_aid/reform/reform.cfm
- The European Commission's 'Community law on State aid Vademecum' of 30 September 2008 can be found under:
http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/studies_reports/vademecum_onrules_09_2008_en.pdf
- Interesting studies and reports on State aid applications can be found under:
http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/studies_reports/studies_reports.html#handbook

REGULATION (EU) No 539/2010 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL
of 16 June 2010

17 PUBLICITY REQUIREMENTS

Background information

As stated in Guidance Note 11, the Programme requires that you communicate effectively to all beneficiaries on your project.

Under the "European Territorial Cooperation" objective of Regional Policy, the communication requirements for project partners will ensure that the actions of the EU are given more visibility in each member state and in each region.

Obligations

The EU regulations impose a number of publicity obligations on "beneficiaries" of structural funds. The term "beneficiary" applies to all partners, and all who are aided by the ERDF.

Wherever you mention the European Union or ERDF, the NWE Programme should also be mentioned, either literally and/or by the logo.

1. The beneficiary shall be responsible for informing the public about the assistance obtained from the Funds.
2. Where a project receives ERDF funding, the beneficiary shall ensure that those taking part in the operation have been informed of that funding.

The beneficiary shall provide clear notice to the effect that the project being implemented has been selected under an operational Programme co-financed by the ERDF.

This means that all communication must make clear reference to the EU, to the ERDF and to the NWE Programme. Depending on the project budget you will be asked to put up a billboard and a permanent plaque in line with the specifications in article 8 and 9 of EC Regulation N° 1828/2006

NB: The European Union has been known to cut the funding of projects which did not comply with publicity requirements! (cf. Athens Airport 2005)

Further Information:

Legislation: communicating on Structural Funds 2007-2013:

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/country/commu/leg_en.htm#0713

Implementing Regulation (EC) N° 1828/2006 amended in 2009 with Commission Regulation (EC) N° 846/2009 of 1 September 2009: www.nweurope.eu/Communication/logos

Graphic elements of the EU: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/graph/graph_en.htm

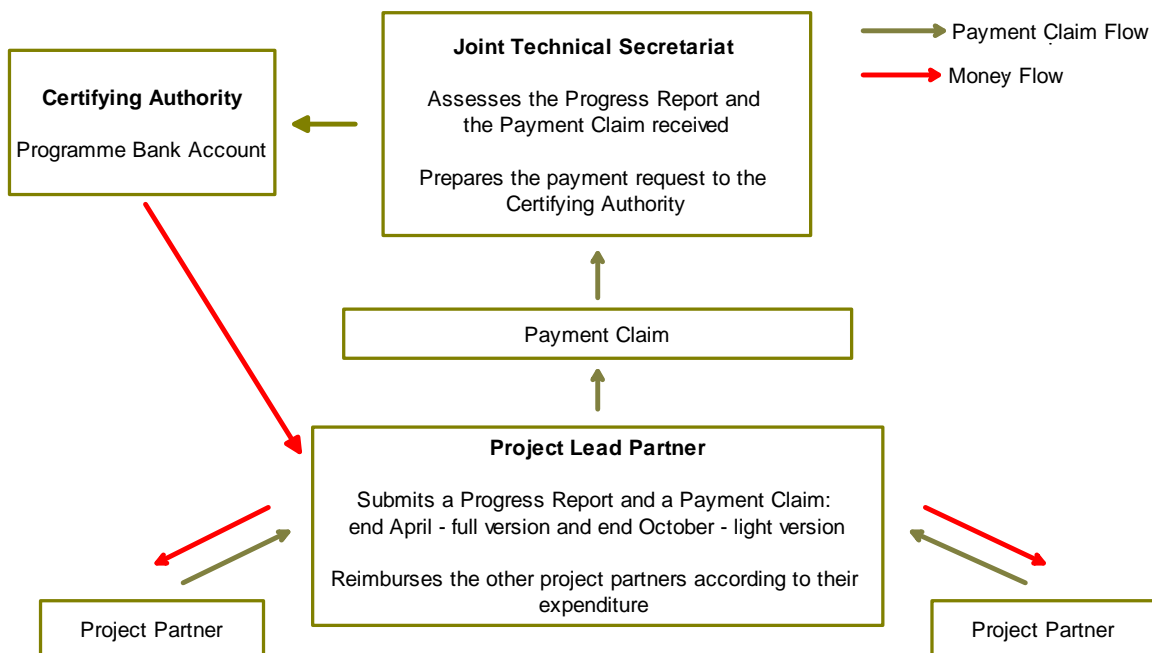
18 REPORTING PROCEDURE

As stipulated in the Subsidy Contract, projects must submit Progress Reports and Payment Claims to the Secretariat twice a year during the lifetime of the project: at the end of April and the end of October. These documents form the basis of the monitoring and assessment of a project's progress. They allow the Secretariat to monitor expenditure and to ensure that regular payments are made to the project. Furthermore, they provide the occasion to foresee potential problems and delays in the implementation process.

It is up to the partnership to agree on an internal reporting procedure and to set internal deadlines to ensure that the documents reach the Secretariat on time, i.e by the above deadlines. For each reporting period, original signed documents must be submitted.

Once received by the Secretariat, the Finance Unit will assess the Payment Claim while the Project Development Unit assesses the Progress Report. The Secretariat may ask the responsible persons within the project for further clarification and/or additional information. Once these two documents have been deemed satisfactory, the corresponding amount of ERDF funding will be paid to the Lead Partner by the Certifying Authority. Electronic templates will be provided to each project upon formal approval.

In more detail



Progress Report: Twice a year - two different levels of reporting

Progress Reports provide a description of project activities and the outcomes achieved. The approved Application Form provides the reference against which these outcomes are monitored both in terms of the Action Plan and the Implementation Schedule. Progress Reports allow the Secretariat to monitor a project's progress in six monthly periods.

Lead Partners are advised to use these reports as efficient communication tools: be concise and to the point while reflecting on the overall progress of the project. The main text of the reports should summarise the implementation of the actions and their outcome(s) as snapshots of the reporting periods. A brief, relevant and informative description is better than a profuse and detailed account of activities without a clear relation to the project and its action plan. In this respect, the reporting should focus on the implementation of the project itself, rather than on each partner's activities. This is not only because the project is important as a whole and transnational cooperation is at its core, but also because otherwise an effective monitoring of project implementation cannot be done. Lead Partners are therefore encouraged to ensure the informative quality and consistency of the reports.

The level of reporting differs between the April (long version) and October report (short version).

The information provided in the long version of the Progress Report should cover a full year of project implementation (i.e. 2 Payment Claims period), while the information in the short version of the Progress Report should cover only the latest six months of implementation and be in line with the simultaneously submitted Payment Claim.

Accompanying the long version of the Progress Report, Lead Partners should send relevant supporting material such as copies of studies and reports, press articles etc. These should be listed in the report next to the relevant actions and copies should be included in electronic format when possible. In each of these reports the Lead Partner must indicate the focus of the following 12-month phase by giving an overview of the planned actions.

Different templates are provided to the Lead Partner with clear guidance given at the Lead Partner Information seminar on how to fill them in. The long version of the Progress Report features the "Progress Report" and the "Indicators" worksheets, as well as one sheet per "Work Package" and per "Investment" to be filled in. The short version of the Progress Report features the "Progress Report" and the "Qualitative Indicators" worksheet to be filled in.

Payment Claim

Together with the Progress Report, an audited Payment Claim must be submitted at the end of April and the end of October each year to request an instalment of ERDF funding. The Payment Claim relates closely to the Progress Report and shows the expenditure incurred (expenditure actually paid by the Lead Partner and the partners supported by receipts and invoices or accounting documents of equivalent probative value) during the reporting period.

Project budget is monitored at both project and partner level. Under certain conditions, partners may claim more than the budget allocated to them in the Approved Application form (ie partnership must agree, costs must be eligible, budget lines must be respected, actions are part of the approved action plan, etc.). However, only a maximum of the approved budget indicated in the Application Form will be paid to a project.

The Payment Claim includes:

- a detailed breakdown per partner and per budget line of the expenditure for the previous six month period,
- verification sheets to support all expenditure, detailing all eligible expenditure included in the Payment Claim,
- a forecast for the coming six months to allow the Secretariat to monitor the implementation of the project from a budgetary point of view.

Each Payment Claim also includes a controller's statement attesting that:

- all substantive checks have been performed,
- expenditure claimed is eligible,
- the relevant expenditure has actually been incurred, has not been claimed previously, is supported by appropriate justifying documents,
- the amount claimed is a true and fair view of the project's accounts,
- all expenditure is entirely related to the project (i.e. the Application Form).

Projects should refer to Guidance Note no.19 on First Level controls for more information

When the project management has received the partner claims, they must be compiled and approved by the Lead Partner. The Lead Partner should make sure that individual partner Payment Claims are eligible.

Assessment by the Secretariat will begin when the complete report is received on a "first come first served" basis. If there are questions about either the Payment Claim or the Progress Report during the assessment of either document, the Secretariat will contact the Project's Manager and/or Financial Manager for clarification or additional information.

After the completion of the assessment of the Progress Report and Payment Claim, and if these documents are deemed satisfactory, the Certifying Authority will make a final check before making the payment. All payments will be made to the Lead Partner in Euro and deposited into the bank account indicated on the approved Application Form. An assessment report, including an updated spending profile and assessment of project implementation and spending will be sent to the Lead Partner of each project. This information should be communicated to all project partners by the Lead Partner. Keep in mind that payments always cover the last six month period.

It is the Lead Partner's responsibility to transfer ERDF to partners as soon as possible. These arrangements should be made clear in the Partnership Agreement.

Project reports feed into the INTERREG reporting system at Programme level and are combined to provide a vital source of information for the Managing Authority and the European Commission on how well a Programme is performing. Information reported by projects in Progress Reports and Payment Claims will be used in the Annual Report to the European Commission. They are also used in Programme evaluations to provide further

feedback on what the Programme has achieved lessons to be learned from experience, future Priorities, etc.

Failing to fulfil reporting obligations

Failing to fulfil reporting obligations may result to:

- The request of additional information and proofs as well as a thorough inspection of the project.
- Partly suspension of ERDF payments.
- The right from the MA to terminate the agreement if no payment claim has been made within six months

References:

Progress Report template

Payment Claim template

Verification of Expenditure Sheets

19 EXCHANGE RATE

Background

All project follow-up and financial reporting should be in Euros. The Secretariat will pay all claims in Euros. The Secretariat will monitor the project expenditure in Euros and strongly advises the Lead Partners to do the same.

In more detail

Two situations can occur:

- A partner from the Euro zone incurs expenditure outside the Euro zone. In that case, the related costs have been converted in Euro into the partner's bookkeeping system; the related amount in Euro must be claimed and the exchange rate policy explained hereunder is not relevant.
- A partner from outside the Euro zone incurs expenditure outside the Euro zone. In this case, the expenditure will need to be converted in Euros before it can be claimed. In this case the exchange rate policy of the project is relevant.

The issue of currency for partners outside the Euro zone must be decided upon before the start of the project. This point should be dealt with in the Partnership Agreement at the start of the project (see Guidance Note no.4) and will need to be mentioned in the Application Form.

To convert their expenses to Euros, projects must choose one of three options:

- **Option 1** partners convert their expenses from their national currency into Euros using the monthly exchange rate of the month the invoice was paid.
- **Option 2** partners convert their expenses from their national currency into Euros using the monthly exchange rate of the month the partner's claim was submitted to the Lead Partner.
- **Option 3** partners send their figures to the Lead Partner in their national currency which the Lead Partner will convert into Euros to fill in the Payment Claim Forms. In this case, the Lead Partner must use the monthly exchange rate of the month the Payment Claim is submitted to the Secretariat.

Once an option is selected, it will remain in place until the end of the project and will apply to all partners.

The monthly exchange rate to be used is the one published every month by the European Commission on the InforEuro website: <http://ec.europa.eu/budget/inforeuro/index.cfm>. The exchange rate to be used must have 6 decimal points.

Verification of expenditure sheets must include a specific column showing converted figures, for all invoices. Numbers rounded to two decimal points should be used.

The funds will be disbursed in Euros (EUR; €) only and transferred to an account indicated by the Lead Partner. Any exchange rate risk will be borne by the Lead Partner.

Further information:

Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006, article 81

Regulation 846/2009 amending Regulation 1828/2006

The Basic Facts

'First Level Controls' are the checks (audits) of project expenditure to be made during project implementation each time before submitting a payment claim.

It entails the following checks:

- verification of the delivery of the products and services co-financed (as described in the approved Application Form);
- verification of the soundness of the expenditure declared;
- verification of the compliance of such expenditure with Programme, Community and national rules.

The First Level Control covers 100% of all project spending declared. It is different from the 'Second Level Control' which is an additional check of expenditure organised by the Programme and only looks at a sample of operations (see Guidance Note no.22 on Other Controls).

In More Detail

In the regulations establishing the new programming period (2007-2013) it is up to each Member State to set up a First Level Control system and to designate the controllers responsible for verifying the legality and regularity of the expenditure declared by each beneficiary established on its territory.

In contrast to the INTERREG IIIB First Level Control system, the procedure for the First Level Control of the INTERREG IVB Programme will vary from one Member State to another. Each partner should refer to the control system of the Member State where it is implemented, regardless of the Member State of the Lead Partner.

The Lead Partner is, however, accountable to the NWE Secretariat for all costs incurred by themselves and the other project partners. Therefore, they are responsible for having administration, management and the internal or external control systems of the project in place. Those systems have to be described in the Application Form and the Partnership Agreement between partners must also outline the responsibilities of each partner in that matter. The Lead Partner's controller will have to certify the composite project payment claim, ensure that each partner's expenses relate to the activities as agreed in the Application Form and verify that each partner's expenses have been validated by the approved controller.

Two systems are possible, depending on the Member State: (1) the centralised control at national/regional level through a public administrative body or (2) the decentralised control through an internal or external controller proposed by the project partner and approved at national/regional level.

1. The centralised control system

In a centralised system, a national/regional central public body will control all Payment Claims of all partners of the same nationality (or region), regardless of the nationality of the Lead Partner. Partners from Member States/regions with a centralised system

will be required to have their Payment Claims controlled by their national/regional public body before sending it to the Lead Partner for consolidation.

In this case, the costs of the control will normally be borne by the Member State/region.

On the practical side, partners of approved projects established in a Member State/region with a centralised control system will be contacted by the central national/regional control body who will inform them of their First Level Control procedures (name and coordinates of the controller(s), timeframe and deadlines, necessary documents...)

A contact person is mentioned for each Member State/region in the description of the national/regional systems below in case partners need more information.

2. The decentralised control system

In a decentralised system, the controller is proposed by each partner to a central national/regional approbation body. (The controller can be internal or external, private or public as long as (s)he is qualified and from a unit independent of operation's activities and finances). To this end, each Member State has developed its own qualification requirements and its own form or list of accepted First Level Controller to ensure that these qualifications are met. However common requirements are that of independence of the project and the programme management and the compliance with the 3 months delay for the control of the overall payment claim.

After the choice of the controller is confirmed by the central national/regional approbation body, the controller can assume the role of independent project controller.

In this case, the cost of the control will normally be charged to the project but will be eligible to claim in the regular intermediate payment claims.

When proposing a controller, the partner will be responsible for respecting the Programme's requirement to submit Payment Claims at specific periods of the year. The responsible central national/regional approbation body might carry out a limited number of quality checks to verify the functioning of the system.

In this system, the central national/regional approbation body will contact partners of approved projects established on their territory to inform them of their First Level Control procedures. In general, the partner will have to fill in a form - provided by the national/regional body - detailing the choice of the controller and his/her qualifications.

Upon receipt, the central national/regional approbation body will assess the information provided and will send an approbation certificate that confirms the controller to the partner if all criteria's are fulfilled. It is only after receiving this certificate that the controller can start as a first level controller within the framework of the project, and the first expenditure can be reported and certified.

A contact person is mentioned for each Member State/region in the description of the national/regional systems below in case partners would need more information.

Please find below an explanatory chart of the information flow, depending on the control system in place as well as an example of a First Level Controller approbation certificate to be issued by the Member State/regional approbation body in decentralised systems.

Description of the national/regional systems

This information is only a summary of the main features of each national/regional First Level Control system. Please refer to the information that will be provided by the national/regional bodies for the detailed procedure.

1. Germany

System chosen	Decentralised control system
Central regional approbation authority	Ministry of Finance Baden-Wuerttemberg - European Financial Control - Finanzministerium Baden-Württemberg - EU-Finanzkontrolle - Neues Schloss, Schlossplatz 4 D-70173 Stuttgart
Contact person	Christian Debach christian.debach@fm.bwl.de +49 (0) 711 6670 502 Kerstin Hinderhofer Kerstin.Hinderhofer@fm.bwl.de +49 (0) 711 6670 510
Controller's qualifications	The beneficiary will propose an independent public or private controller, who is then authorised at national level. Qualified controllers in the public sector are all public bodies authorised to carry out independent financial audits and controls, e. g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rechnungsprüfungsämter (offices for auditing and accounting control), • so-called Unabhängige Stellen (Independent Bodies), • unabhängige interne Prüfstellen (independent internal departments for audit and controls).

	<p>Qualified controllers in the private sector are all members of professions officially approved for dealing with audit and controls. A person is a member of his/her profession, if he/she meets the requirements set up by the proper professional association. (e.g. Federal Chamber of tax consultants) A profession is officially approved for dealing with audit and controls by its proper professional association.</p> <p>Tax practitioners as defined in section 3 of the Tax Consultancy Services Act (Steuerberatungsgesetz) can also be proposed as controller.</p> <p>Qualified controllers include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Steuerberater and Steuerberatungsgesellschaften (tax consultants or consultancy firms) ▪ Steuerbevollmächtigte (tax agents) ▪ Wirtschaftsprüfer and Wirtschaftsprüfungsgesellschaften (chartered certified accountants or accountancy firms) ▪ vereidigte Buchprüfer and Buchprüfungsgesellschaften (sworn accountants or accountancy firms)
Costs	The costs will be borne by the partner

2. UK

System chosen	Decentralised control system
Central regional approbation authority	<p>COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT</p> <p>European Policy and Programmes Division Zone 1/A3</p> <p>Eland House - Bressenden Place</p> <p>LondonSW1E 5DU</p>
Contact person	<p>Arni Narainarni.narain@communities.gsi.gov.uk</p> <p>+44 303 44 42706</p>
Controller's qualifications	<p>The beneficiary will propose an independent controller, who is then authorised at national level – on the basis of a list of approved professional bodies (see below) - before the first expenditure is reported and certified. The controller can be internal as well as external as long as s/he is qualified and from a unit independent of the operation's project and activities, using the definition given in section 27 of the Companies Act 1989. In order to be appointed/approved a controller will also have to declare his/her ability to deliver the work within the requested timeframe (2 months after receipt of the documents). Except for the Comptroller and Auditor General or the National Audit office and except for accountants employed by or under contract to the Audit Commission; the controller shall hold a</p>

	<p>current practising certificate or equivalent issued by one of the bodies listed below, or issued by any other body recognised by the Secretary of state for the purposes of Part II of the Companies Act 1989 (eligibility for appointment as company auditors)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) The institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (2) The Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland (3) The Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (4) The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (5) The Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland (6) The Association of Authorised Public Accountants (7) The Association of International Accountants <p>A guidance document on the First Level Control will be issued by the UK approbation body.</p>
Costs	Costs will be borne by the partner

3. France

System chosen	Decentralized control system
Central regional approbation authority	Région Nord Pas-de-Calais Direction Europe et Contrat de Projets Siège de Région 151 Avenue du Président Hoover F-59555 Lille Cedex Tel +33 (0)3 28 82 70 77 / + 33 (0)3 28 82 70 55
Contact person	infocpn@nordpasdecals.fr +33 (0)3 28 82 70 59 or +33 (0)3 28 82 70 78
Controller's qualifications	The controller must be an independent internal or external auditor that must be proposed by the partner to the central regional approbation body. In case of an external controller, the partner may have to launch a tender procedure, in which case the French approbation body will propose a terms of reference model. The controller :

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ must have a degree in one or several following fields : accountancy, finance, law, audit; ▪ must demonstrate its independency towards the project partners through a chart organization, legal provisions or any other document; ▪ experience in similar controls, experience in European matters would be strongly recommended; ▪ knowledge of European Structural Funds regulations is required; ▪ a good command of English language will be appreciated. The reports have to be written in English, which is the working language of the NWE Programme.
Costs	Costs will be borne by the partner

4. Ireland

System chosen	Centralized control system
Central regional approbation authority	Southern & Eastern Regional Assembly Assembly House O'Connell Street, Waterford Tel + 353 51 860700
Contact person	Michael BUCKLEY mbuckley@seregassembly.ie +353 51 86 07 00
Controller's qualifications	The control will be carried out by civil servant(s) of the Southern & Eastern Regional Assembly. Irish partners will be required to submit copies of documents to the Irish first level controller. The Irish controller will carry out the control work within two months of the receipt of documents.
Costs	Costs will be borne by the partner

5. The Netherlands

System chosen	Decentralized control system
Central regional approbation authority	Ministerie van Infrastructuur en Milieu (voorheen VROM) Directie Internationale Zaken Rijnstraat 8 PO Box 30945 2500 GX The Hague The Netherlands

Contact person	Xander STORMS Xander.storms@minvrom.nl +31 70 339 3769
Controller's qualifications	<p>The controller must be an independent internal or external auditor that must be proposed by the partner to the central national approbation body.</p> <p>With the request of the partner for designation of the controller, a description of the management and control system for the project must be annexed. The proposed controller must assess and approve this system.</p> <p>The controller must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ have a good knowledge and experience with control activities; ▪ have a good knowledge and experience with relevant EU-regulations; ▪ have independency; ▪ be able to validate a payment claim within 2 months (the beneficiary should make an agreement with the controller to ensure that) <p>In case the beneficiary is a non-public organisation with a ERDF budget of more than € 500.000, the final payment claim will need to be certified by an external certified controller. This external certified controller must also take note of the description of the management and control system. The interim payment claims may in that case be certified by another controller. In such a case, a beneficiary may propose 2 controllers.</p>
Costs	Costs will be borne by the partner

6. Belgium

Flanders

System chosen	Decentralized control system
Central regional approbation authority	<p>Agentschap Ondernemen - Enterprise Flanders Afdeling Europa Economie EFRO - Division Europe Economy - ERDF Koning Albert II-laan 35 bus 12 1030 Brussel Tel.: +32 (0)2 553 38 64 Fax:+32 (0)2 502 47 02 economie.europa@vlaanderen.be</p>
Contact person	<p>David GRZEGORZEWSKI david.grzegorzewski@agentschapondernemen.be +32 (0)2 553 39 96</p>
Controller's qualifications	The controller must be an independent internal or

	<p>external auditor that must be proposed by the partner to the central regional approbation body.</p> <p>A 1st level controller should have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ knowledge and experience of financial control and verification in general; ▪ knowledge of all ERDF and Programme requirements regarding controls and eligibility. <p>A guidance document on the first Level Control will be issued by the Flemish Approbation body (not yet available)</p>
Costs	Costs will be borne by the partner

Brussels region

System chosen	Decentralized control system
Central regional approbation authority	<p>Ministry of the Brussels-Capital Region Secrétariat Général Direction des Relations extérieures 20 Boulevard du Jardin Botanique 1000 Brussels Tel +32 (0)2 800 37 55 / +32 (0)2 800 38 20</p>
Contact person	<p>Luc VANDERSMISSEN lvandersmissen@mrbc.irisnet.be +32 (0)2 800 37 55</p>
Controller's qualifications	<p>The controller must be an independent internal or external auditor that must be proposed by the partner to the central regional approbation body.</p> <p>This regional approbation body will send the form – to be filled in by the partner and his proposed controller – to the partner officially by post. At the same time, it will ask for an appointment with the partner and his controller to clarify any issue.</p> <p>The Region will particularly insist on questions regarding professional competences, skills and experience in EU funds rules as well as language knowledge.</p> <p>The controller must have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ an accountant or economic degree; ▪ a minimum of three years experience in audit matters as well as an experience in controlling projects either co-financed by the EU or international projects; ▪ knowledge of the Programme's requirements and EU regulatory framework for structural funds; ▪ knowledge of English is required.

	<p>If it is a company, the Region will verify its experience with the same requirements as mentioned above.</p> <p>An official document will define the controllers' obligations and will ensure that the work is correctly done and will be signed by both the project partner and the controller.</p>
Costs	Costs will be borne by the partner

Wallonia

System chosen	Centralised control system
Central regional control authority	<p>Région Wallone DRI Département Ressources logistiques – service comptabilité Place Saintelette, 2 1080 Bruxelles Tel +32 (0)2 421 82 11 / +32 (0)2 421 84 81</p>
Contact person	<p>Jean-Pierre ROBBEETS jp.robbeets@wbi.be +32 (0)2 421 82 11</p> <p>Carmelo SCIFO c.scifo@wbi.be +32 (0)2 421 86 23</p>
Controller's qualifications	<p>The control will be carried out by one full time civil servant of the Walloon Region (DRI).</p> <p>This controls will be based on :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ payment claim together with receipts and payments ▪ activity and financial report (as provided by the program) ▪ at the end of the control, a control report will established (as provided by the program) <p>Additionally the civil servant will realize controls on the spot; this kind of control will be defined by a sample established accordingly to the international rules.</p> <p>For the period 2007-2013, the Walloon Region has published an official note on eligible expenditures : "Gouvernement wallon, décision du 27 juin 2007 ; Programmation 2007-2013 des fonds structurels.</p> <p>Cellule de contrôle de premier niveau sur pièces pour les objectifs « convergence », « compétitivité régionale et emploi » et « coopération territoriale - volet A » cofinancés par le FEDER. Répartition des tâches avec les administrations fonctionnelles et éligibilité des</p>

	dépenses.” (GW VIII/2007/27.06/Doc. 5662/E.DR)
Costs	Costs of the First Level Control will be borne by the Walloon region.

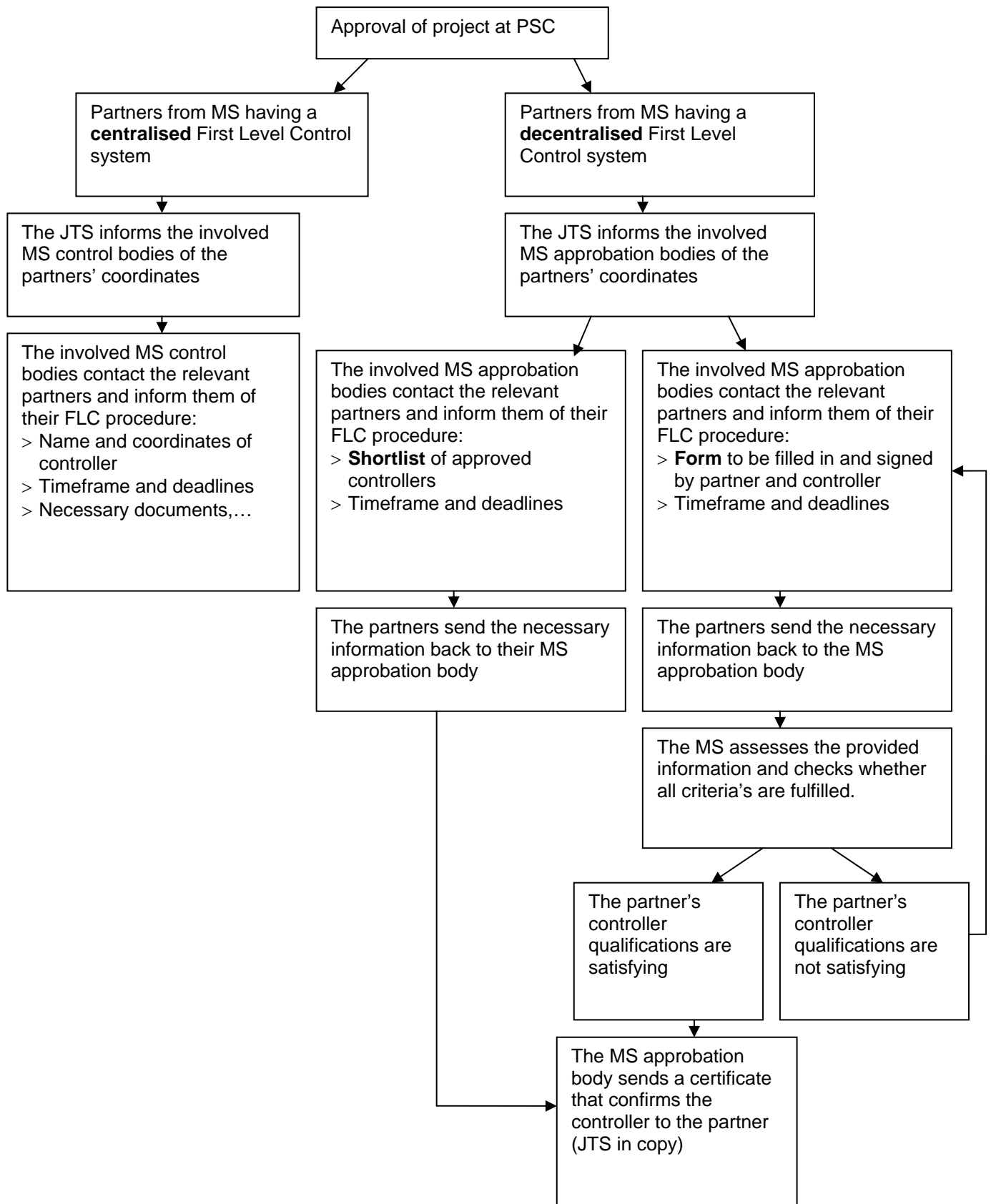
7. Luxembourg

System chosen	Centralised control system
Central regional control authority	Ministère des Finances Direction du Contrôle financier (DCF) 3, rue de la Congrégation L-1352 Luxembourg Tel +352-2478-4652 / +352 26202694
Contact person	Marc Fiedler marc.fiedler@dcf.etat.lu
Controller’s qualifications	The controls will be carried out by persons employed (or contracted) by the Ministry of Finance
Costs	Costs of the First Level Control will be borne by the Luxembourg state.

8. Switzerland

System chosen	Centralised control system
Central regional approbation authority	Staatssekretariat für Wirtschaft SECO Direktion für Standortförderung Ressort Regional- und Raumordnungspolitik Effingerstrasse 27 3003 Bern Tel +41 31 324 48 31 / +41 31 322 27 68
Contact person	Therese MOSER WENGER therese.moser@seco.admin.ch +41 31 324 48 31
Controller’s qualifications	The controls will be carried out by Mrs. Therese MOSER WENGER who is a civil servant employed by the Staatssekretariat für Wirtschaft SECO
Costs	Costs for the First Level Control will be borne by the state of Switzerland.

Information flow chart



Example of First Level Controller Approbation Certificate

[To be printed on the official headed paper of the relevant Member State Approbation body]

Based on our review of the information provided by the project partner *[partner number and name]* of the NWE project *[project number and acronym]* and his proposed controller, we acknowledge the following person to act as First Level Controller:

Name	
Job Title	
Division/Unit/Department	
Organisation	
Address	
Telephone number	
Fax number	
Email	

The information provided gives reasonable assurance about the controller's

- independence from the project's activities and finances and
- qualification to carry out the verifications mentioned above.

We herewith remind the project partner and his/her controller

- to bear in mind that, according to article 16 of regulation EC 1080/2006, the first level control of the overall project payment claim cannot exceed a period of three months
- to ensure that the partner control work will be carried out within **[two]** months
- to use the NWE IVB programme reporting and control documents without any alterations to report the expenditure, to document the checks and to confirm the eligible expenditure in the framework of the Programme and national rules
- that all partners need to send a copy of this certificate to the Lead Partner
- that in case of a change in the first level controller, a new request for approbation must be filled in and submitted to the approbation body. The new controller will not be authorized to act as the partner's first level controller until the certificate is delivered.
- that the person mentioned in this certificate will be the only person authorized to sign the partner's payment claim

[Place, date and stamp]	[Signature]
	[Name of the person in charge of approving the First Level Controller as stated in the Agreement]

Further Information:

NWE Control and Audit Guidelines

21 SPENDING TARGET

As laid out in section 8 of the Operational Programme, in line with Article 93.1 of the General Regulation, committed funds not actually paid to final beneficiaries by 31 December of the second year after the year of initial commitment (N+2) will be automatically decommitted by the European Commission and lost to the Programme.

As a result, the Secretariat has strict controls in order to manage the spending of the overall Programme budget. The consequences at project level are:

- Project partners must sign a Joint Convention before the Subsidy Contract is issued
- Project implementation is expected to start immediately after the signature of the Subsidy Contract
- All project applications must include a detailed annual budget breakdown with information on cash flow management
- Projects must report twice a year on their expenditure and the progress of their implementation through the submission of Payment Claims and Progress Reports (see Guidance Note no.17).

Project annual budgets are laid out in section 7 of the Application Form. Once a project is approved, the approved spending target will also be found in paragraph 8.11 of the Subsidy Contract. Paragraph 8.12 of the Subsidy Contract states that *Payments not requested in time and in full or do not comply with procedures set out in the Programme Guidance Notes may be lost.*

Paragraph 3.2 of the Subsidy Contract stipulates that *No deviation from the annual forecast of expenditure and detailed budget breakdown as set out in the approved Application Form is allowed, unless duly justified and approved by the JTS/IMA in accordance with the procedure and conditions approved by the Programme Monitoring Committee. Article 8 (10-11-12) details the consequences of non compliance with this provision.*

Projects are allowed to spend more than their target set out in the Subsidy Contract. However, only the maximum grant amount mentioned in the Subsidy Contract will be paid to approved projects.

Projects should keep in mind that although there are annual targets, the spending targets are cumulative throughout the lifetime of the project. If a Lead Partner finds that they cannot adhere to the approved spending target, the Secretariat must be informed immediately of the expected variation so possible solutions can be discussed before it is too late. Any project not adhering to the spending target takes the risk of losing (part of) their budget.

Further information:

Operational Programme – section 8
General Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 - article 93

The original Application contains a detailed description of the project and its budget.. During the lifetime of a project, partners may wish to amend the partnership, to change the budget line split, to modify the envisaged project implementation or the project end date. These changes are **allowed 3 times in total**, and only upon formal request and approval by the Secretariat or the Programme's Steering Committee – depending on the significance of the changes. The approval must be sought for **before any expenditure related to the modification is submitted to the Secretariat. Please note that** the final such request should be submitted **no later than 6 months before the end date** of the project.

Projects wishing to make one of the above mentioned changes have to ask the Secretariat for an official **"Request for Changes"** template. The project has to specify in these documents the nature of the requested changes (Partnership, Budget/Finances, Actions/Investments, End date extension or other), detail the consequences and the reasons of these changes. After receiving an answer from the Secretariat or the Programme's Steering Committee, the project may be asked to revise its Application Form, depending on the significance of the changes. If changes concerning the overall project budget and ERDF grant rate are approved, a new adapted Subsidy Contract will be issued by the Managing Authority / Secretariat.

The Secretariat should be notified of minor changes as soon as possible by official letter from the Lead Partner. This would be, for example, a change of bank account, a new contact person, a change of address, etc.

In more detail

[Partnership](#)

Section 6 of the approved Application Form details the partnership. If the partnership is modified (e.g. by inviting a new partner to join or if an existing partner drops out, or if a different partner becomes Lead Partner), the Lead Partner must submit the proposal and duly justify it to the Secretariat using the request for changes form. The project will receive a formal answer from the Secretariat.

[Budget/Finances](#)

Section 7 of the approved Application Form details the overall project budget and gives an overview of how much the project should spend on each budget line. In some cases it may be necessary to change the breakdown between budget lines of the approved budget.

Yearly spending targets cannot be modified at any point during the lifetime of the project.

Budget Line Modifications (BLM)

Minor changes to the individual budget lines are not monitored by the Secretariat: projects are allowed to overspend by a maximum of 20% of the individual budget lines at project level. Increases of more than 20% on individual budget lines must be submitted and duly justified to the Secretariat using the request for changes form. The project will receive formal approval from the Secretariat if appropriate. Lead Partners are advised to contact the Secretariat before making any budget line changes.

Other financial changes

Any other change to the Project's budget should be sent to the Secretariat using the request for changes form. Two examples are: a reduction of grant rate at partner level or a decrease in the overall budget.

Activities / Output

Sections 2 and 3 of the approved Application Form detail the project content and management structure. They also contain a clear description of the project, indicates expected results, outputs and impacts, as well as concrete deliverables of the project. A specific implementation plan needs to be set up which lays down expected results to be achieved by each action. Twice a year, projects need to report on the state of progress of the implementation plan. In some cases during the course of the project lifetime, projects may notice that they cannot successfully implement all actions of the approved Application Form and / or that they wish to implement other or additional actions. Reasons for this may be the drop-out of a partner, unexpected results preventing the project from further advancing in the direction originally planned, unforeseen administrative delays, etc. The Lead Partner must inform the Secretariat about those changes and use the request for changes form. Depending on their significance, approval might be given by the Secretariat or the Programme's Steering Committee.

End date extension

A project may wish to extend the end date of the project if actions cannot be implemented within the approved timeframe as mentioned in the Application Form. In such cases, the Lead Partner should send a formal request through the request for changes form, confirming that the end date extension does not include additional actions and does not result in budget modifications.

23 OTHER CONTROLS

Besides the First Level Control at project level (see Guidance Note no.19), projects may be subject to other controls performed by different bodies linked to the Programme.

In More Detail

Site visits

Site visits are on-the-spot checks conducted by the Secretariat. They answer the obligation laid down in article 60 of Regulation 1080/2006 to “verify that the co-financed products and services are delivered and that the expenditure declared by the beneficiaries for operations has actually been incurred and complies with Community and national rules”. The Secretariat aims to visit all project Lead Partners at least once during the project’s lifetime for an in-depth meeting at the Lead Partner’s premises. The aims of such visits are:

- to learn from the partnership’s experience (best practice),
- to assist the project in solving specific issues it may face (e.g. compliance with spending target),
- to verify the management and control systems put in place
- to verify the audit trail and
- to see some of the project deliverables.

In most cases, a Project Development Officer and a Finance Officer will attend these visits. On the project side, it should be attended by the Project Manager (and/or Project Coordinator), the Project Finance Manager and the partner’s first level controller. On the day of the meeting, all project documents, in particular those relating to the audit trail, should be made available.

Considering the diverse topics to be addressed, the visit lasts approximately one day.

Second level control

Second level controls are sample checks organised by the Programme at Member State level. They are carried out on a sample of operations selected by a random statistical sampling method. This will be done every twelve-month from 1st January 2010 onwards. The audits will be performed by an external audit firm under the supervision of the NWE Audit Authority and the NWE Group of Auditors. This Group shall comprise a representative of each Member State participating in the NWE Programme.

Certifying Authority’s quality controls

The Certifying Authority of the NWE Programme (Caisse des Dépôts et Consignations) might also perform checks, on demand.

European Commission and Member State Checks

The Commission, in cooperation with the concerned Member State, might perform on-the-spot and sample checks of projects financed by Structural Funds, including the European

Regional Development Fund, and on management and control systems with a minimum of one working day's notice.

Further Information:

Site visits: Article 60 of Regulation 1083/2006 and Article 13 of Commission Regulation (EC)

1828/2006 Second level control: Article 16 of Commission Regulation (EC) 1828/2006

Certifying Authority's quality controls: Article 61 of Council Regulation (EC) 1083/2006

European Commission and Member State checks: Article 72 of Regulation (EC) 1083/2006

Regulation 846/2009 amending Regulation 1828/2006

Note 24 is not available yet.

Structural funds co-finance projects which improve regional cooperation according to, inter alia, predefined eligibility and competition rules. The European Commission has therefore set rules pertaining to project closure, in particular the specific requirements regarding ownership modifications, revenue generating projects and record keeping after completion of projects. These specific requirements are aimed at guaranteeing transparency and durability of the initially approved objectives of the funded projects.

In more detail

[Revenue-generating projects](#)

A revenue-generating project means any project having actions that are subject to charges borne directly by users, any operation involving the sale or rent of land or buildings or any other provision of services against payment.

All revenue generated in the framework of the project during its lifetime has to be deducted (see Guidance Note no.13 on “Eligible Costs”) from the project budget. If a project foresees any revenue after the end of the Project, it should be mentioned in the Application Form in section 5.1.

Revenue generated after the end of the project should be estimated over a reference period agreed with the Programme authorities and deducted from the expenditure declared. If it is objectively not possible to estimate the revenue in advance, the revenue generated within 5 years of the completion of the Project should be deducted from the expenditure declared.

The European Commission issued guidance on this topic in 2008.

Those provisions shall apply only to projects exceeding a total cost of EUR 1,000,000 (according to EU Regulation 1341/2008 amending Article 55 of EU Regulation No 1083/2006).

[Durability of Operation](#)

Projects may only retain ERDF contribution if an investment and the project’s concrete outputs do not undergo a substantial modification within 5 years after the completion of its actions that:

- affects its nature or its implementation conditions
- gives an undue advantage to a firm or a public body
- changes in the nature of the ownership
- cessation of productive activity

Filing records

The Lead Partner is responsible for retaining all Payment Claims and Progress Reports submitted during the lifetime of the Project. Further documentation such as invoices, letters, agreements, explanations, correspondence, time sheets, payslips, etc. is important to ensure a proper audit trail. The Lead Partner is responsible for storing all relevant documentation for all partners and all sub-partners. It is strongly advised to address this issue in the Partnership Agreement (cf. Guidance Note no. 4 "Partnership") and that you consult with the designated First Level Controller. It is essential that all documents and accounting records be kept available for a period of five years following the closure of the Programme. As payments might be made even three years after the official programming period's end date in 2015, all documents must be retained until 31st December 2021. Projects that cannot provide sufficient documentation risk losing their ERDF grant.

The Lead Partner and all project partners must ensure that all accounting documents related to the Project are available and filed separately, even if this leads to a dual treatment of accounts. The Lead Partner should also keep copies of all project related invoices for all partners. The accounting documents that should be kept for financial controls and audit purposes at least through 2021 are:

- approved Application Form
- Subsidy Contract, Partnership Agreement
- relevant project correspondence (financial and contractual)
- Progress Reports
- details on budget by partner, list of declared expenditure by partner
- partners controllers' confirmations (and checklists/control reports)
- bank account statements proving the reception and the transfer of EU funds
- invoices
- bank account statements / proof of payment for each invoice
- method used by all partners outside the EURO-zone for converting national currency into EUR
- staff costs: calculation of hourly rates, information on actual annual working hours, labour contracts, payroll documents and time records of personnel working for the project
- list of subcontracts and copies of all contracts with external experts and/or service providers
- calculation of administrative costs, proof and records of costs included in overheads
- documents relating to public procurement, information and publicity
- public procurement notes, terms of reference, offers/quotes, order forms, contracts
- proof of delivery of services and goods: studies, brochures, newsletters, minutes of meetings, translated letters, participant lists, travel tickets, etc.),
- record of assets, physical availability of equipment purchased in the context of the project.

End date for the eligibility of expenditure:

The end date indicated in the Approved Application Form is the date by which the final report must be submitted to the Secretariat. Any expenditure (including costs linked to project closure) incurred, invoiced or paid after the official project end date is ineligible. In all cases, all projects must be finished by 30 September 2015 at the latest.

References:

Revenue-generating projects: article 55 of Council Regulation (EC) 1083/2006

Article 1 of Council Regulation (EC) 1341/2008

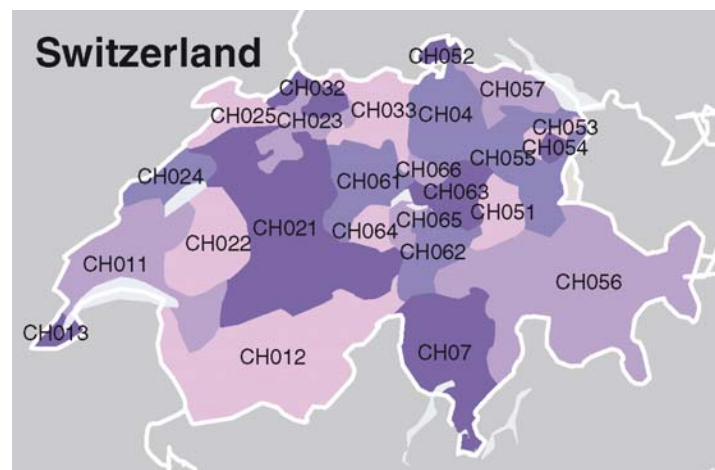
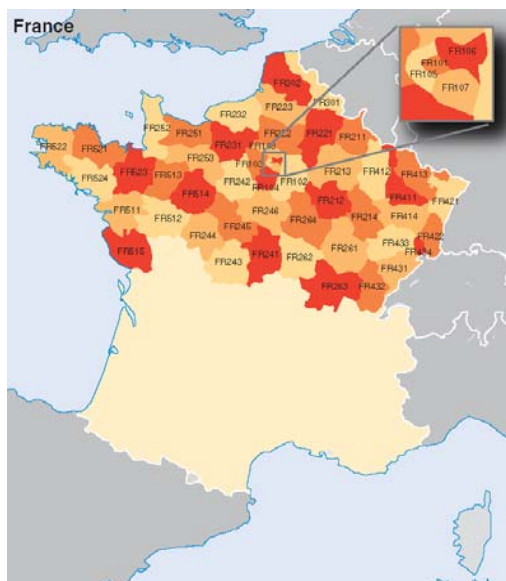
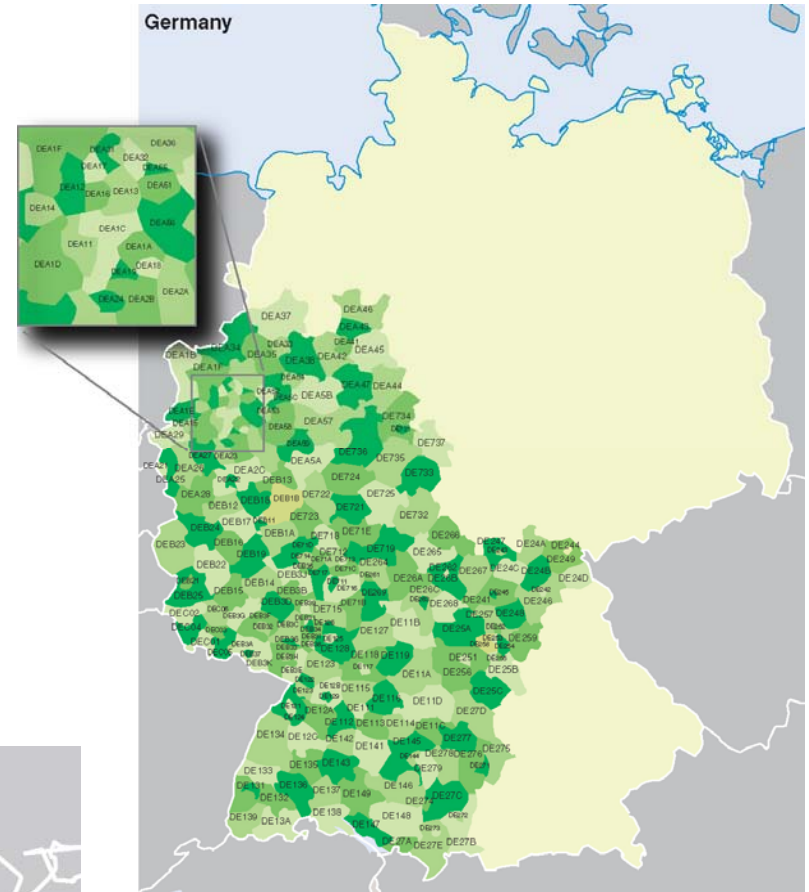
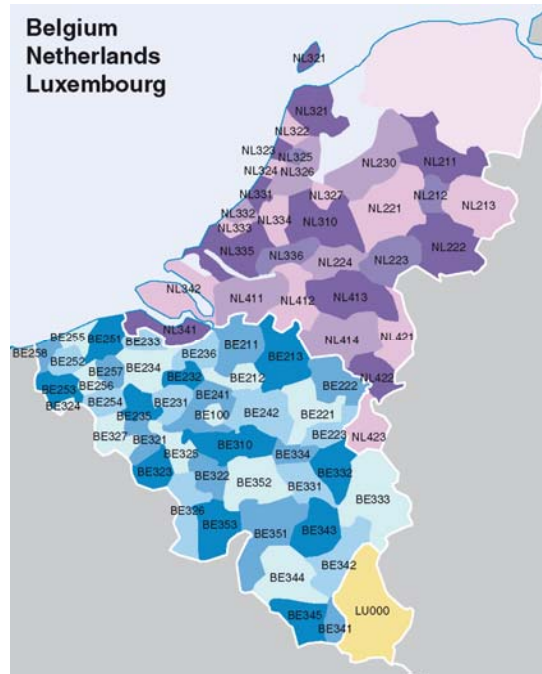
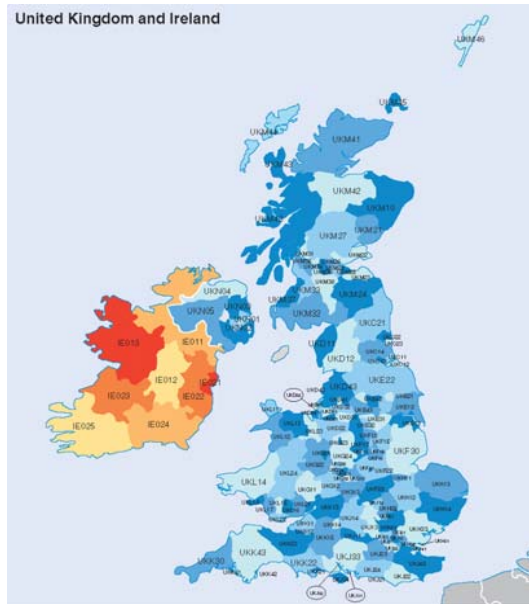
Council Regulation (EC) 1341/2008 amending article 55 of the above

Durability of Operation: article 57 of Council Regulation (EC) 1083/2006

Filing records: article 90 of Council Regulation 1083/2006 and article 19 of Commission Regulation (EC) 1828/2006

Regulation 846/2009 amending Regulation 1828/2006

26 NUTS III CODES FOR NORTH WEST EUROPEAN REGIONS



Further Information:

For a full list of NUTS III codes please see Operational Programme. You can also choose your region under http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/ramon/nuts/maps_searchpage_en.cfm, Version September 2007

27 KEY WORDS

The Programme has listed key words to ease the search for and clustering of projects. In the Application Form you will be asked to select from the list below one or several key words which best describe your project.

List of key words

A

accessibility

B

biodiversity

C

carbon footprint

climate change

clusters

coastal / maritime issues

commuting / travel

connectivity

cultural heritage

D

demographic change / migration

E

eco-innovation / green technologies

economic development / growth

education / institutional learning

energy management

entrepreneur(ship), start-ups, businesses

environmental policy / legislation

G

governance

greenhouse gas emissions

I

ICT (Information and Communication Technologies)

innovation

interoperability / intermodality

K

knowledge transfer

L

labour market

landscape protection / management

logistics / freight transport

M

marketing

modal shift

N

natural heritage

natural resource management

networks for innovation

P

passenger transport

pollution (air, water, soil...)

polycentric development

products / processes / services

public services

R

R & D (Research and development)

regeneration/ revitalisation

regional identity

risk management / prevention

road and rail (incl. HST)

rural development

S

seas and ports, waterways

small scale infrastructure

SME (small and medium sized enterprises)

sustainability

T

technology transfer

territorial development

tourism

U

urban / peri-urban development

urban environment

urban-rural partnership

W

waste management

28 GLOSSARY

ENGLISH	le la l'	Français	der die das	DEUTSCH		DUTCH
Accessibility	l'	accessibilité	die	Erreichbarkeit / Anbindung	de	Toegankelijkheid
Action	l'	action	die	Aktion[1] / Handlung / Tätigkeit	de	Actie
Action Plan	le	plan d'action	der	Aktionsplan	het	Actieplan
Activity Indicator	l'	indicateur d'activité	der	Aktivitätsindikator	de	Activiteitenindicator
Applicants Workshop	l'	atelier de travail pour les candidats				
Application Form	le	Dossier de candidature	das	Antragsformular	het	Aanvraagformulier
Second Level control	le	Contrôle de 2ème niveau		Stichprobenprüfung	de	Controle van het tweede niveau
Audit	l'	audit	die	Rechnungsprüfung / Projekt-Audit	de	Audit
Audit Trail	la	piste d'audit	die	Buchführung	de	Audit trail
Auditor's declaration	la	déclaration d'audit final	der	Prüfbericht	de	Verklaring van de auditeur
benchmarking	le	Benchmarking	das	Benchmarking	de	Benchmarking
Best practice (Guide)	le	guide de bonnes pratiques		'Best Practice' handbuch	de	Best practices (gids)
Breakdown of expenditure	la	ventilation des dépenses	der	Finanzierungsplan	de	Uitsplitsing van uitgaven
Budget line	la	ligne budgétaire	die	Budgetlinie / Etatposten	de	Begrotingslijn
Budget Line Modification (BLM)	la	modification de ligne budgétaire	die	Veränderung der Budgetlinien	de	Aanpassing van de begrotingslijn
Call for Proposals	l'	appel à candidatures	die	Ausschreibung	de	Oproep tot het indienen van voorstellen
Centralised/Decentralised control	le	Contrôle centralisé : décentralisé				
Certified Expenditure	les	dépenses certifiées	die	geprüfte Ausgabe	de	Gecontroleerde uitgave
Certificate of Service provided	le	certificat de service presté/fait	die	Bescheinigung erbrachter Dienstleistung	het	Certificaat van Dienstverlening

CICC	la	Commission Interministérielle de Coordination des Contrôles des Actions Cofinancées par les Fonds Structurels Européens		n/a		n/a
Claimed expenditure	les	dépenses réclamées	die	Eingereichte Aufwendung	de	Gerechvaardigde uitgaven
Closure of the project	la	clôture du projet	der	Abschluss des Projektes	de	Afsluiting van het project
Communication strategy / plan	La/le	Stratégie/plan de communication	die	Kommunikationsstrategie	de	Communicatiestrategie
Conditionally approved		approuvé sous réserve des conditions		Bedingt bewilligt		Voorwaardelijk goedgekeurd
Contact Point	le	point de contact	die / der	Kontaktstelle / Kontaktpunkt / auch: Ansprechpartner	het	Contactpunt
Contribution in kind	la	contribution en nature	die	Sachleistung	de	Bijdrage in natura
Cooperation	la	coopération	die	Zusammenarbeit / aber: Kooperationsprojekte/ -verfahren usw.	de	Samenwerking
Coordination	la	coordination	die	Koordinierung	de	Coördinatie
Court of Auditors	la	Cour des comptes	das	Rechnungshof	het	Rekenhof
Deadline for submission	la	date limite de dépôt du dossier de candidature	der	Einsendeschluss	de	uiterste datum/deadline voor de inschrijving
Detailed investment sheet	la	feuille des investissements détaillés	die	Detaillierte Beschreibung der Investition	de	Gedetailleerde beschrijving van de investering
Eligible/ineligible		éligible / inéligible		förderfähig / nicht förderfähig		Subsidiabel / niet-subsidiabel
Eligibility Criteria	le	critère(s) d'éligibilité	das	Förderfähigkeitskriterium	de	Subsidiabiliteitscriteria
Eligible expenditure	la (les)	dépense(s) éligible(s)	die	Förderfähige Ausgabe	de	Subsidiabele uitgave
ERDF	le	FEDER	der	EFRE	het	EFRO
ERDF Grant rate	le	taux de participation FEDER	die	Kofinancierung Rate	de	Cofinancieringscoëfficiënt/ participatiegraad

European Court of Auditors	la	Cour des Comptes Européenne		Europäischer Rechnungshof	het	Europees Rekenhof
European Regional Development Fund	le	Fonds Européen de Développement Régional	der	Europäischer Fonds für regionale Entwicklung	het	Europees Fonds voor Ruimtelijke Ontwikkeling
European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP)		Schéma de Développement de l'Espace Communautaire (SDEC)		Europäisches Raumentwicklungskonzept (EUREK)	het	Europese Ruimtelijk Ontwikkelingsperspectief (EROP)
Exceptional procedure	la	procédure exceptionnelle	das	Ausnahmeverfahren	de	uitzonderlijke
Exchange of experience	l'	échange d'expérience	der	Erfahrungsaustausch / Austausch von Erfahrungen	de	Uitwisseling van ervaringen
External coordinator	le	coordinateur externe	der	Externer Koordinator	de	Externe coördinator
Feasibility study	l'	étude de faisabilité	die	Machbarkeitsstudie	de	Haalbaarheidsstudie
Finance Unit	l'	Unité Finance	die	Finanzabteilung	de	Financiële afdeling
Financial plan	le	plan de financement	der	Finanzplan	het	Financiële plan
Financial table	la	maquette financière	die	Finanztabelle	de	Financiële tabel
First level control	le	contrôle de premier niveau				
General costs	les	frais généraux	die	Allgemeine Kosten	de	Algemene kosten
Grant	la	subvention		Zuschuss	de	Subsidie
Grant rate	le	taux de co-financement	die	Förderrate	het	Subsidiepercentage/ cofinancieringsniveau
Group of Auditors	Le	Groupe des Auditeurs				
Guidance Notes to Project Promoters	les	Notes d'Orientation à l'attention des porteurs de projet				
Implementation	la	réalisation, mise en oeuvre	die	Ausführung, Durchführung / Umsetzung	de	Implementatie
Incurred (expenditure)	la	(dépense) encourue		entstandene Ausgaben	de	Opgelopen (uitgaven)
Indicator	l'	indicateur	der	Indikator	de	Indicator

Infrastructure Innovative/innovation	l' de	infrastructure innovateur, innovant / innovation	die die	Infrastruktur Innovation	de de	Infrastructuur Innovatief / innovatie
Intermediate (payment) claim	la	demande (de payment) intermédiaire		Zwischenzahlungsabruf	het	tussentijdse verzoek (tot uitbetaling)
Investment	l'	investissement	die	Investition	de	Investering
Irrecoverable VAT	la	TVA non récupérable	die	nicht rückerstattbare MwSt	de	Niet terugvorderbare BTW
Joint Bank Account	le	compte (bancaire) commun	das	Gemeinsames Bankkonto	de	Gemeenschappelijke bankrekening
Joint Convention	la	convention commune	die	Gemeinsame Vereinbarung	de	Gezamenlijke overeenkomst
Joint Technical Secretariat JTS	le	Secrétariat Technique Conjoint (STC) / JTS	das	Gemeinsames Technisches Sekretariat / NWE- Sekretariat	het	Gemeenschappelijk Technisch Secretariaat
Lead Partner	le	(partenaire) Chef de File	der	Hauptpartner / federführender Partner	de	Hoofdpartner
Letter of Support	la	lettre de Soutien				
Management structure	la	structure de gestion	die	Managementstruktur	de	Beheersstructuur
Managing Authority	l'	Autorité de Gestion	die	Verwaltungsbehörde	de	Beheersautoriteit/Beleidsautoriteit
Match funding	la/le	contrepartie financière / co-financement	die	Kofinanzierung	de	Cofinanciering
Meetings, conferences, seminars	les	réunions, conférences, séminaires		Sitzungen / Besprechungen, Konferenzen, Seminare	de	Vergaderingen / conferenties / seminaries
Member States	les	Etats Membres		Mitgliedstaaten	de	Lidstaten
Monitoring Committee	le	Comité de Suivi / PMC	der	Begleitausschuss	het	Comité van Toezicht
N+2 rule	la	règle du dégagement d'office				
National authority	l'	autorité nationale	die	Nationale Behörde	de	Nationale autoriteit
Non-eligible expenditure	la (les)	dépense(s) inéligible(s)		Nicht förderfähige Ausgaben	de	Niet-subsidiabele uitgaven
North-West Europe	l'	ENO (Europe du Nord- Ouest)		Nordwesteuropa		Noordwest-Europa
Objectives/aims	les	objectifs		Ziele		Doelstellingen / doelen

Organisational Framework	le	cadre (la structure) de l'organisation	der	Organisatorischer Rahmen	het	Organisatorische kader
Overheads (costs)	les	frais généraux	die	Allgemeinkosten	de	Algemene kosten
Partner Search Event	l'	évènement de recherche de partenaire	die	Partnersuchbörse	de	Evenement om partners te zoeken
Partnership	le	partenariat	die	Partnerschaft	het	Partnership
Payment Claim form	la	demande de paiement	der	Zahlungsabruf	het	Formulier voor eis van betaling
Payment request	l'	ordre de paiement	die	Zahlungsanweisung		Verzoek om betaling
Pilot project	le	projet pilote	das	Pilotprojekt	het	Pilot-project
Programme Monitoring System (PMS)	le	Système de Suivi du Programme				
Preparation costs	les	coûts de préparation	die	Vorbereitungskosten	de	Vorbereidingskosten
Private enterprise	l'	entreprise privée	das	Privates Unternehmen	de	Particuliere onderneming
Procurement procedure	la	procédure de passation des marchés	das	Ausschreibungsverfahren	de	procedure voor het plaatsen van opdrachten
Pro-forma	la / le	formule, formulaire	das	Formular	het	Formulier
Programme Management bodies	les	organe(s) de gestion du Programme	die	Programm Management Gremien		
Project Description	la	description du projet	die	Projektbeschreibung	de	Projectbeschrijving
Project Development Unit	l'	Unité Développement de projets	die	Abteilung Projektentwicklung	de	Projectontwikkelingsafdeling
Project Fair	la	bourse aux projets	die	Projektbörse	de	Projectbeurs
Project Idea	l'	idée de projet	die	Projektidee	het	Projectidee
Project Number	le	numéro de projet	die	Projektnummer	het	Projectnummer
Project Partner	la	partenaire de projet	der	Projektpartner	de	Projectpartner
Project Promoter	le	porteur de projet	der	andere Projektbeteiligte	de	Projectpromotor
Public authority	l'	autorité publique	die	öffentliche Behörde / Stelle / Instanz	de	Overheidsinstantie
Receipt of application	la	réception de candidature		Eingang des Antrags	de	Ontvangst van een aanvraag
Recommendation	la	recommandation	die	Empfehlung	de	Aanbeveling
Referred back		retourné à l'opérateur		Zurückverweisen		Teruggestuurd naar de operator

Results	les	résultats	das	Resultate	de	Resultaten
Selection Criteria	les	critères de sélection	das	Auswahlkriterium	de	Selectiecriteria
Site visit	la	Visite sur site				
Small-scale infrastructure	l'	infrastructure à petite échelle	die	leichte Infrastruktur	de	Kleinschalige infrastructuur
SME small and medium sized enterprise	les	PME (petites et moyennes entreprises)	das	Kleine und mittlere Unternehmen (KMUs)	de	KMO's (kleine- en middelgrote ondernemingen)
Soft Actions	les	actions / mesures douces		sanfte Aktionen	de	Zachte acties
Solvency/ solvent	la	solvabilité	die	Solvenz, Bonität, Zahlungsfähigkeit	de	Solvabiliteit / solvabel
Spatial planning	l'	aménagement du territoire	die	Raumplanung	de	Ruimtelijke ordening
Spatial Vision	la	vision spatiale	das	Räumliches Leitbild	de	Ruimtelijke Visie
Staff costs	les	frais de personnel	die	Personalkosten	de	Personeelskosten
Steering Committee	le	Comité de Pilotage	der	Lenkungsausschuss	het	Stuurcomité
Study	l'	étude	die	Studie / Studienprojekte	de	Studie
Strategic Initiatives	les	Initiatives Stratégiques				
Structural Funds	les	Fonds Structurels				
Subsidy Contract	le	Contrat de Subvention				
Supporting documents	les	pièces à l'appui, documents annexés	die	Anlagen	de	Documenten ter ondersteuning
Sustainable development	le	développement durable (viable, tenable)	die	nachhaltige Entwicklung	de	Duurzame ontwikkeling
SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)		SWOT (Forces, Faiblesses, Opportunités, Menaces)				
Tangible results	les	résultats tangibles		Konkrete Ergebnisse, greifbare Ergebnisse	de	Concrete resultaten
Target group	le	groupe cible	die	Zielgruppe	de	Doelgroep
Technical Assistance	l'	assistance technique	die	Technische Assistenz	de	Technische bijstand
Territorial impact	l'	impact territorial	die	räumliche Auswirkungen	het	Ruimtelijk effect

Total committed expenditure	la	dépense totale engagée	die	gesamten getätigten Ausgaben	de	Totale gecomitteerde uitgaven
Transfer of knowledge	le	transfert de connaissance	der	Wissenstransfer	de	Kennisoverdracht
Transnational/transnationality		transnational / transnationalité	die	transnational, Transnationalität	de	Transnationaal / transnationaliteit
Travel and accommodation	le	déplacement et logement	die	Reise und Unterkunft	de en het	Reis en verblijf
Underspent		dépensé moins que prévu		zu wenig ausgegeben / Budget wurde unterschritten		Te weinig uitgegeven
Urban regeneration	la	régénération urbaine	die	städtische Erneuerung	de	Stedelijke vernieuwing
VAT	la	TVA		MwSt	de	BTW
Verification of expenditure sheets	les	feuilles de vérification des dépenses	die	Beleglisten	de	bladen ter verificatie van de uitgaven
Water management	la	gestion de l'eau	das	Wassermanagement	het	Waterbeheer

29 NWE CONTACT LIST

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