



Good Practice INTERREG III Application Pack

A TOOL for better use of the European
Regional Development Fund





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INTERACT hopes this tool will contribute to “Sharing INTERREG experiences” and encourage other Community Initiative programmes to share their skills and knowledge with INTERREG stakeholders through INTERACT.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Preface

In the report, the author explains the approach and framework of the analysis, the findings of Good Practice encountered during the analysis and tentative conclusions and recommendations related to the assessment carried out.

Annex 1 presents an overview of the contents of a Good Practice application form in a Word format. Generally, each heading represents a field that has to be filled in. Each field should be accompanied with guidance on the specific field.

Annex 2 presents the same Good Practice application form, but in HTML format. This HTML format has been developed by the author in a web-based version for you to play with and value whether this option could be valid for your programme. To try this, just log in at <http://applicationform.proquestor.nl:8080/forms/home.do> and insert the Username and Password given in Annex 2. If you would like to implement this web-based tool in your programme, please contact INTERACT Point Tool Box at ip.tb@interact-eu.net.

Annex 3 presents the list of INTERREG III programmes analysed during the study.

The report has therefore the following structure:

- Chapter 2: Approach and Framework of the study.
- Chapter 3: Findings.
- Chapter 4: Conclusions and Recommendations.
- Annex 1: Good Practice Application Form in Word format.
- Annex 2: Good Practice Application Form in HTML format.
- Annex 3: List of INTERREG III programmes analysed.

1.2 The terms of reference and objectives of the study

The purpose of the study is to present a complete and easy-to-implement overview of what an application pack for INTERREG programmes should contain. Furthermore, an optimised application template is presented. The target is therefore twofold:

1. To identify those INTERREG programmes that present elaborated and worked through application templates and to gather those Good Practice examples into a proposed template.
2. To list all documents that should ideally be included in an application pack, such as application guidelines and programme manuals, and to point out identified Good Practices documents.

Final products are:

1. An optimised application template presented in Word format in Annex 1.
2. An optimised application template presented in HTML format in Annex 2. This is a web-based tool that could eventually be implemented by INTERREG programmes. The software has been developed by a private software company.
3. A list of documents that should be included in an application pack presented in clause 4.3.

Approach and Framework of the study

2. Approach and Framework of the study

2.1 Introduction

The figure below shows the different steps that have been taken in the process of executing the study:

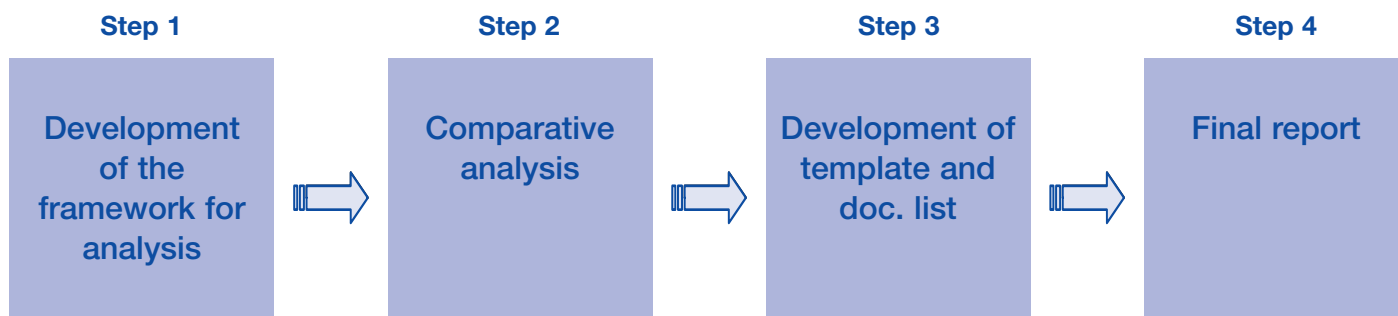


Figure 1: Framework of the study

In the following sections a short explanation of the activities that have been carried out in the different steps of the analysis is given.

➡ **Step 1: Develop the framework for analysis**

In close cooperation with INTERACT Point Tool Box the author has developed a framework for the evaluation and analysis of the application packs. This framework is based on the author's practical experience with programme management and project development, and includes clarity of manuals, completeness, user-friendliness, etc. These criteria will be discussed in more detail in clause 2.2.

➡ **Step 2: Comparative analysis**

Since there are 13 INTERREG IIIB programmes, 1 IIIC programme (divided into 4 zones) and 64 INTERREG IIIA programmes, the total number of programmes to be covered is 78 out of which, a selection of 44 programmes has been reviewed for the study. This selection consists of all INTERREG B and C programmes (except Reunion Islands) and a sample of INTERREG IIIA programmes. How the selection was made and which INTERREG IIIA programmes have been included in the analysis and will be discussed more thoroughly in clause 2.3.

From the selected programmes the author has checked all available and relevant documentation in the Programme Document Library on the INTERACT Website in order to

find 'best practice' examples of documents (other than the actual application form and guidelines).

Furthermore, the author has executed a more in depth analysis of the available application forms and guidelines for applicants. Both documents, in each of the selected programmes, have been assessed against the criteria that will be discussed in clause 2.2. In this way, the author has identified programmes that present Good Practice examples of application forms and guidance for applicants. The author uses this information, at a later stage to propose an application template and a list of documents/information that should be included in an application pack.

DISCLAIMER: Please note that the author recognises the fact that the analysis could possibly be made from various points of view: that of the applicant, the Programme Secretariat during the application process, and the Programme Secretariat during the process of monitoring approved projects.

The focus the author had in this analysis was the point of view of the applicant. However, in the recommendations, the author takes the other points of view into account. In addition, one should realise that the assessment of the documents on the various criteria has an unavoidably subjective element, since different people may assess the application packs differently. The author feels, however,

that a good analysis, based on extensive experience in the field of the study, has been conducted.

Step 3: Development of template and document lists

In step 3, the author has proposed a template for an application form together with a list of documents that should be included in an application pack and Good Practices resulting from the analysis. This proposed template fulfils the criteria identified in step 1 as much as possible and makes use of the Good Practices identified in the analysed application forms. The template is based upon as many useful elements of existing application packs as possible, although it may have been necessary to add some new elements in order to put all these pieces together in a logic way.

Step 4: Final report

The final report includes all findings of the study from step 1 to 3 in terms of the methodology applied, problems encountered, and a list of documents that the application pack should contain. Furthermore, the author presents a table of contents (components) that a Good Practice application form should comprise.

2.2 Criteria for assessment

The author has carried out the study for both main components of the application pack (application form + guidelines) separately. In table 1 (see page 9), the criteria for assessment have been summarised. The blank fields (-) in the table indicate that this specific criterion is not relevant for that specific document.

Please note that the 'completeness' criterion was not used for the analysis of the actual project application forms. At the time of the analysis, it was not clear which components a complete application form should comprise. The definition of a complete application form is the **outcome** of this study.

On the other hand, the 'user friendliness' and 'balanced

coverage of contents and finance' criteria were not used for the analysis of the application guidelines. The reason for this is that these criteria have already been covered by the other criteria (balanced coverage between contents and finance is already covered by completeness and user-friendliness is already covered by clarity and presentation). Moreover, user-friendliness is typically a criterion that applies to technical documents, such as application forms, whereas a guideline is just a document that will be read, rather than filled in.

2.3 Selected programmes

As mentioned previously, the author has analysed the application packs of all INTERREG IIIB programmes (except for Reunion Islands, for which not enough information was available), the application pack of IIIC (which is considered to be one programme) and a sample of application packs of INTERREG IIIA programmes.

In order to ensure a coherent balance of INTERREG IIIA programmes, the programme selection was driven by the following criteria:

- The geographical coverage throughout the European Union.
- Working language of the programme (Swedish, Finish, and other Scandinavian programmes are not included).
- Programmes that work well generally.
- Programmes involving other funds than ERDF (and non-member countries).
- Programmes for which INTERACT Point Tool Box already had the necessary information available.

The total number of programmes covered is: 12 INTERREG IIIB + 1 INTERREG IIIC + 31 INTERREG IIIA = 44 programmes. The list of INTERREG III programmes analysed is found in Annex 3.

	Application guidelines	Application form
Completeness	This criterion is only relevant for the application guidelines. It relates to the extent to which all necessary information is available for project promoters at the time of the call. The minimum information needed is the guidance on how the application form should be completed and information about the programmes objectives and procedures. Furthermore, the author is of the opinion that the guidelines should also state information regarding the eligibility of costs and the application selection procedures.	–
Presentation	This criterion refers to the overall external presentation of the document. Basically, does the document look good and attractive?	This criterion refers to the overall presentation of the document. It refers to the extent to which the document looks good, is accessible and ‘is just waiting’ to be completed.
Clarity	This criterion reflects the extent to which the information within the guidelines is easy to read and easy to understand. Moreover, is there a clear link with the application form?	This criterion reflects the extent to which it is clear which information and how much information is needed in each section of the application form.
User-friendliness	–	This is a criterion which is only used for the analysis of the application form itself. The author has checked whether the application form is self-explanatory, flexible, comprehensive and easy to use.
Balanced coverage of contents and finance	–	This criterion is relevant for the analysis of the application form only. It assesses whether information of both contents and finance are covered in a balanced way. Furthermore, there should also be a clear link between contents and finance.

Table 1: Criteria for assessment

Findings

3. Findings

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the findings arising from the analysis of the application packs are discussed. The author has applied the set criteria on both the application form and the guidelines. Detailed findings are available in a separate Excel file.

During the assessment of the documents (see criteria in clause 2.2), the author has identified Good Practice documents, which are described later on in this chapter. The author has also noticed that the application forms are based upon various types of documents (Word, Excel, or a combination of both). In clause 3.2, the author presents a short overview of the different types of documents used and the advantages and disadvantages of the different applications.

In clause 3.3, the author identifies which programmes represent Good Practices regarding application forms and presents an overview of identified Good Practice elements of the various application forms. In clause 3.4, the author presents the findings related to the assessment of the guidelines and the identified Good Practices. Finally, clause 3.5 lists the Good Practice documents that the author considers useful and feels should be included in an optimum application pack.

3.2 Different types of documents (Word, Excel or combination of both)

In the process of analysing the application packs, the author found that different types of application formats are being used for the application of INTERREG projects. Most INTERREG programmes have developed formats by using MS Office applications. However, one of the most attractive application forms (INTERREG IIIA (FI/SE/NO/RU) North) was developed in Filemaker Pro. The author considers this as Good Practice, since this is an automated form which integrates all elements of the application into a computer programme. The author cannot assess whether this document also scores highly on the other assessment criteria, since the document is only available in Swedish.

The type of document, e.g. Word, Excel, or combination of both, plays an important role in terms of flexibility, user-friendliness, presentation, etc.

In table 2 (see page 12), the author points out the advantages and disadvantages for each of the various solutions.

Based on table 2 (see page 12), the author can conclude that most INTERREG application forms in the selection (24 + 16) have to be (at least partially) completed in MS Word. 'Flexibility' and 'text editing' options are the main advantages of Word-based application forms. On the other hand, it is difficult to link contents and finance in such templates and there is a high risk of 'too much' information.

The author only found three application forms that have to be fully completed (both part A and B) in MS Excel. These Excel-based application forms have relatively high rankings, with regard to balanced coverage between contents and finance. These forms also showed a clear link between project activities and finance. A great disadvantage with the Excel-based application forms was that they are not flexible and it is not possible to edit text or to add any additional tables and figures. These forms therefore had a relatively low ranking on the 'user-friendliness' criterion.

Only one programme combined the best of both worlds into an HTML-based application form. Please note that Annex 2 presents an application form in HTML format. This web-based form is available to readers.

Type of forms	Advantages	Disadvantages	Number of recorded programmes
Part A and B integrated in MS Word	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ability to add figures, tables etc. – Flexible format – Text editing options – Compatibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Risk of too much (irrelevant) information. – Not possible to add formulas (only simple ones) 	24
Part A and B integrated in Excel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Lower risk of too much information (restricted text fields) – Ability to add formulas – Compatibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Not flexible – No text editing options 	3
Part A in Word and Part B in Excel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ability to add figures, tables, etc. – Flexible format – Text editing options – Ability to add formulas to the budgeting tables – Compatibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Difficult to link content and finance – Not user-friendly to have the application prepared in two different forms 	16
Part A & B integrated in a specially designed programme or other (web-based) solution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A combination of the advantages above – Possibility for web-based solutions – Ability to integrate help functions for each of the sections that have to be filled in – Ability to link project applications and periodic reports in one programme database 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Must be developed separately – If the form is developed with software other than MS Office it might be a problem for organisations to work with it (not compatible) 	1

Key: Part A = Content; Part B = Finance

Table 2: Advantages and disadvantages of Word and Excel-based application forms

3.3 Good Practice application forms

3.3.1 Findings application forms

As already mentioned in chapter two, the analysis of application forms can be approached from different points of view. During its analysis, the author has tried to find a good balance between both points of view, the project applicant and the Programme Secretariat.

The application forms have been assessed on the basis of the following criteria: Presentation; Clarity; User-friendliness; and Balanced coverage of Contents and Finance (for more information regarding the criteria please also see clause 2.2). The Good Practice documents (i.e. those that

complied well with the assessment criteria) have been selected during the process of analysis and registered in a separate file.

‘Type of document’ is not a criterion as such, but is an important factor to estimate the flexibility and user-friendliness of a document. It also says something about the balanced coverage between contents and finance. Word-based application forms are often flexible and user-friendly but are not suitable for linking contents and finance. Excel-based application forms, on the other hand, are often rigid, but present good possibilities for the integration of both contents and finance. Please refer to clause 3.2 for more information on this issue.

Best application form	Strand	Programme Area	Type of document
1 - 3	INTERREG IIIB	Baltic Sea Region	.xls (A+B integrated)
	INTERREG IIIB	Archimed	Part A = doc Part B = xls
	INTERREG IIIB	North Sea	.doc (A+B integrated)
4	INTERREG IIIB	Madeira-Azores-Canary Islands (MAC)	.doc (A=B integrated)
5	INTERREG IIIB	Alpine Space	.xls (A+B integrated)
8	IIIC	INTERREG IIIC	.xls (A+B integrated)
9	IIIA	(BE/DE/NL) Euregio Meuse – Rhine	.doc (A+B integrated)

In general, the author can conclude that the application forms of most INTERREG IIIB and IIIC programmes are well elaborated and completed. Most INTERREG IIIA application forms, on the other hand, are basic and not attractive.

Table 3: Good Practice application forms

The Baltic Sea Region (INTERREG IIIB), for example, complied well with the clarity and balanced coverage of contents and finance criteria. Furthermore, it was clear which information was needed in each section of the application form, since there are good instructions available in the margin of the document (Good Practice example). However, this application form was less user-friendly than most Word-based application forms, since Excel-based formats do not allow for text editing or adding additional tables and figures. Overall, the application form of the Baltic Sea Region is a Good Practice application form.

Most application forms of INTERREG III programmes comply to a much lesser extent with the criteria that are being used for the analysis of the application forms. The presentation of most INTERREG IIIA application forms is generally basic and not attractive. The explanation of what information is needed in each section of the application form is limited and there is often no balanced coverage of contents and finance. However, the application form of the INTERREG IIIA Euregio Meuse - Rhine Programme is one of the exceptions and complied (relatively) well with the criteria.

3.3.2 Concrete examples of Good Practices within the application forms

Within the application forms, the author has identified several Good Practices. Please see table 5 for a list of Good Practices documents, that could be relevant for an optimum application form.

Good Practices	Short explanation	Programme
Link between work packages, milestones and project finance	Some application forms presented a clear link between work packages, milestones and project Finance. ADDED VALUE: The application format sets the basis for a sound (financial) management of the project. Furthermore, it creates more concrete insight into what activities will be undertaken and how much these activities would cost. The INTERREG IIIB CADSES Programme even showed a breakdown per deliverable within each work package, so that an even more detailed insight in the relation between contents and finance is achieved.	– INTERREG IIIB Baltic Sea Region – IIIC programme – INTERREG IIIB Alpine Space – INTERREG IIIB CADSES
Link to EU policy documents	Within the INTERREG IIIB Baltic Sea Region application form, a separate section is dedicated to the link to EU policy documents such as the ESDP. ADDED VALUE: It helps to put the project into a European context.	– INTERREG IIIB Baltic Sea Region
Guidance in the margin of the application form	In one of the application forms, guidance on what information is needed in every section of the form was given in the margin of the document. ADDED VALUE: This has great advantages since project applicants do not have to check the guidance manual all the time.	– INTERREG IIIB Baltic Sea Region – INTERREG IIIB Madeira-Azores-Canary Islands (MAC)
Well elaborated section regarding additionality, complementarity and synergy	One of the application forms had an elaborated section on additionality, complementarity and synergy. ADDED VALUE: This provides for a good insight into the added value of the project compared with other already approved operations within the programme/EU.	– INTERREG IIIA (IE/UK) Ireland - Wales
Application form put together in File Maker Pro	One application form was drawn up in application other than MS Office. The form was put together in File Maker Pro and looks appealing. ADDED VALUE: The document is user-friendly and the budget seems to be well integrated in the application form.	– INTERREG IIIA (FI/SE/NO/RU) North
VAT – position form	Declaration that an organisation can or cannot recover VAT. ADDED VALUE: Non-standardised informative measure.	– INTERREG IIIA (DE/FR/CH) Upper Rhine Centre-South
State aid declaration (in relation to ‘de minimus’ regulation)	Has to be filled in by every private organisation that receives co-funding in the project.	– INTERREG IIIA (DE/FR/CH) Upper Rhine Centre-South

Table 4: Good Practices within the application forms

Note: Most of the above mentioned Good Practice documents are available in the Programme Document Library in the Management Support section on the INTERACT Website, www.interact-eu.net.

Strand	Programme Area
IIIB	Baltic Sea Region
IIIB	North Sea
IIIB	Alpine Space
IIIB	North West Europe (NWE)
IIIB	Madeira-Azores-Canary Islands (MAC)
IIIA	(BE/FR/LU) Wallonie - Lorraine - Luxembourg
IIIC	INTERREG IIIC

In general, the author can conclude that the guidelines for applicants of most INTERREG IIIB and IIIC programmes are well elaborated and completed. Most INTERREG IIIA programmes, on the other hand, only give some basic information on how to fill in the form.

Table 5: Good Practice application guidelines

3.4 Good Practice guidelines for applicants

3.4.1 Findings guidelines

The application guidelines of the selected programmes have been assessed and analysed according to the following criteria: Completeness, Presentation, and Clarity (for more information regarding the criteria please also see clause 2.2). The Good Practice documents that meet the assessment criteria are registered in a separate file.

In table 5, the author concludes that most INTERREG IIIB and IIIC programmes have well elaborated and qualitatively good application guidelines. In table 5, the author lists the seven best programme guidelines.

In general, the quality of application guidelines of INTERREG IIIA programmes is much lower than most INTERREG IIIB and IIIC programmes. Most INTERREG IIIA programme application guidelines only give basic information on how to fill in the application form and do not contain any other background information that could be relevant for a sound project application.

In the authors opinion, good application guidelines should contain clear instructions on how to fill in the form, but also other information that could be relevant for a project application (e.g. information about eligibility of costs, application procedures, and the programme objectives and procedures).

3.4.2 Concrete examples of Good Practices within the application guidelines

Within the application guidelines, the author has identified several Good Practices. Please see table 6 on the following page for a list of Good Practice documents that could be relevant for optimum application guidelines.

Good Practices	Short explanation	Programme
Links to relevant websites regarding European policies and other EU funded programmes have been added to the manual	A number of important links to relevant websites regarding European policies and other EU funded programmes have been added to the manual. ADDED VALUE: Helps programme participants to become familiar with EU information.	INTERREG IIIB Alpine Space
Separate practical guide on how to fill in the application form	Apart from the application manual, a compact practical guide on how to fill in the application form is provided in the application pack. ADDED VALUE: Non-standardised informative measure. It helps project applicants to understand each section of the application form.	INTERREG IIIB Baltic Sea Region
List of examples of indicators (output, result and impact indicators)	Many project applicants experience difficulties formulating concrete indicators. Therefore a list of examples of indicators has been included in the application manual. ADDED VALUE: Non-standardised informative measure.	INTERREG IIIC programme
List of eligibility, selection and priority criteria used for the analysis	In order to be considered for funding from the INTERREG programme, each operation has to fulfil certain criteria. Therefore a list of eligibility and selection criteria has been included in the application manual. ADDED VALUE: Helps project applicants to get a better understanding of key issues and adds to the transparency of the programme.	INTERREG IIIC programme
Sources of information section	A section that explains what information can be obtained, and from what source of information (National Contact Point, JTS or Internet Site). ADDED VALUE: Non-standardised informative measure.	INTERREG IIIA (DE/FR/CH) Upper Rhine Centre-South
FAQ - section	A Frequently Asked Questions section providing brief information on some of the key terms and procedures used in the programme. ADDED VALUE: Non-standardised informative measure.	INTERREG IIIB Atlantic Area INTERREG IIIA (DE/FR/CH) Upper Rhine Centre-South

Table 6: Concrete examples of Good Practices within the application guidelines

Note: Many of the above mentioned Good Practices are often also available separately in the application packs.

3.5 Other Good Practice documents available in the Programme Document Library on the INTERACT Website

As already mentioned in Step 2 of chapter 2 the author has checked all available and relevant documentation in the

Programme Document Library on the INTERACT Website, in order to find Good Practice examples of documents (other than the actual application form and guidelines) that would be useful in an optimum application pack. Please see table 7 for examples of Good Practice documents that could be relevant for an optimum application pack.

Document	Short explanation	Programme
Checklist for application	In order to make sure that project applicants submit a complete application in time, some INTERREG programmes provide a separate checklist for applicants. Sometimes this checklist is integrated in the application form. ADDED VALUE: Non-standardised measure. It helps to ensure accuracy in the documents and information enclosed.	– INTERREG IIIB Western Mediterranean (MEDOCC)
Partner contract template	It is important that sound agreements are made between the Lead Partner and other partners, since the Lead Partner is ultimately responsible for the management of the project. Such contracts are an important base for a successful cooperation between all partners and form a solid foundation for general project and financial management. ADDED VALUE: It helps to clarify rights and obligations of each project partner. Please refer to the tool <i>Recommendations for the implementation of INTERREG III Subsidy Contracts</i> issued by INTERACT Point Tool Box, available in the Management Support section on www.interact-eu.net .	– INTERREG IIIB Western Mediterranean (MEDOCC) – INTERREG IIIB North West Europe (NWE) – INTERREG IIIA (IT/FR) Italy-France (ALCOTRA) – INTERREG IIIA (FR/ES) France - Spain + several other programmes
Co-financing statement/Letter of Intent	Statement that partner agrees to a certain amount of match funding to the project budget and that any project expenditure related to the project will not be funded by any other EU programme. ADDED VALUE: Provides reassurance in the participation of private entities and the optimum use of public funds.	– INTERREG IIIB North West Europe (NWE) – INTERREG IIIB ARCHIMED + several other programmes
Map programme area	In order to visualise the programme area, many INTERREG programmes provide a map showing the boundaries of the respective programming area. ADDED VALUE: Good Practice as visual information measure.	– INTERREG IIIA (NL/DE) – EUREGIO - Euregio Rhine-Waal - euregio - rhine-meuse - north + many other INTERREG IIIA programmes

Document	Short explanation	Programme
Fact sheets/ data sheets	<p>Some INTERREG programmes have short and clear fact sheets/data sheets available, providing detailed information on some of the key terms and procedures used in the programme.</p> <p>ADDED VALUE: Non-standardised informative measure. It provides for a quick and prompt understanding of key issues and dissemination of programme information.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – INTERREG IIIB North Sea – INTERREG IIIB Northern Periphery
Additional requirement for investment projects	<p>For one programme, an additional checklist had to be completed in order to make sure that all environmental and building permissions are in place. From personal experience, the author knows that many investment projects often experience delay due to environmental and building permission issues.</p> <p>ADDED VALUE: The main advantage of such a checklist is that it can help to identify if a project can start working on the investment scheme immediately without the risk of delay.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – INTERREG IIIB North West Europe (NWE)
Brochure accepted projects	<p>Some programmes have brochures available which provide brief information about previously accepted projects.</p> <p>ADDED VALUE: Provides for a quick and prompt view of the themes being addressed by the programme and the parties involved. It helps to disseminate programme information.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – INTERREG IIIA (FI/RU) Euregio Karelia – INTERREG IIIA (DK/DE) Sonderjylland - Schleswig

Table 7: Other Good Practice documents available in the Programme Document Library on the INTERACT Website

Note: Many of the above mentioned Good Practices are often also integrated into the application guidelines. The content and quality of these documents has not been assessed.

Conclusions and Recommendations

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1 Introduction

As already mentioned earlier in chapter 2, “Approach and Framework of the study”, the author realises that the analysis could be made from various points of view: The point of view of the applicant, the Joint Technical Secretariat during the application process and the Joint Technical Secretariat during the process of monitoring approved projects.

During the analysis, the author has checked the application packs mainly from the project applicants perspective. However, in the recommendations, the author certainly takes into account the perspectives of the other parties concerned.

One should realise, however, that the assessment of the documents on the various criteria has an unavoidably subjective element. Nonetheless, the author feels that a good analysis, based on extensive experience in the field of the study, has been conducted. Based on findings, the author concludes the following.

4.2 Main conclusions

The main conclusions that follow from the analysis are:

- The quality of application packs of most INTERREG IIIB and C programmes is of a much higher level than most INTERREG IIIA programmes.
- Most application guidelines of INTERREG IIIB and C programmes are well elaborated, complete, and contain all relevant information regarding eligibility of costs, project selection procedures, and programme objectives. Most application guidelines of INTERREG IIIA programmes, on the other hand are basic and only contain limited information on how to complete the application form.
- Application forms drawn up in MS Office applications have their restrictions. Excel-based application forms are often rigid but present good possibilities for the integration of both contents and finance. Word-based application forms, on the other hand, are flexible and user-friendly, but not effective for calculating budgets.

- Only three programme application forms (which are Excel-based) present good coverage of both contents and finance. In these documents, contents and finance have been fully integrated and there is a clear link between work packages, milestones, and the project budget. In most other programmes, the link between contents and finance is difficult to make.

4.3 Recommendations

Based on this analysis and the Good Practice findings (see chapter 3), the author has developed a template that, in the author’s opinion, reflects Good Practice in application forms. This template is presented in Annex 1 in Word format and Annex 2 in HTML format. In addition, the author has identified a list of documents that should ideally be included in an application pack.

As per the application form, the best solution, in the author’s opinion, is an HTML-based application form (or other solution, like the above mentioned File Maker Pro.), which combines the advantages of the different types of application form (Word, Excel or combination of both). Application forms in HTML allow text editing and the adding of tables and figures. It is also much easier to integrate the project’s activities (contents) and finance, and to add formulas to the budgeting tables. Another great advantage is the ability to create help functions and links to other relevant sources of information (thus forming a link between the application guidelines and the application form).

Furthermore, the advantages at programme level are numerous. An application form in HTML can be inter-linked with a project database. This makes it possible to draw up periodic reports of programme commitment at the push of a button (without the risk of errors). Also, the periodic project progress reports can be linked to the database in order to calculate the periodic realisation at programme level. Linking the project application and the periodic progress reports (that should correspond with the application form template) could be (partly) automated. Monitoring of individual projects could thus be supported by technological measures.

Please refer to Annex 1 for the template of contents of a Good Practice application form that is based on examples from the programmes that best comply with the criteria and the Good Practices identified. The author recommends using this template for the development of an HTML-based application form and guidance. Please note that a sample of the HTML version proposed by the author can be found in Annex 2.

As per the list of items to be included in an application pack, a complete and comprehensive list should at least comprise the following documents:

1. Application forms
2. Application guidelines
3. Checklist for application
4. Fact sheets/data sheets
5. Partner contract template
6. Co-financing statement
7. Additional statement for investment projects
8. Accepted projects brochure

Good Practice Application Form in Word format

Annex 1: Good Practice Application Form in Word format

I Introduction

- a) Partnership: Overview of partners involved, key partner data.
- b) Summary of the project.

II Motivation to start the project

- c) Background information, context of the project and opportunities that the project wants to take, or problems it wants to solve (problem analysis and /or description of chances).
- d) Contribution of the project to the programmes objectives (explanation of link to programme priority and measure).
- e) Contribution of the project to the partners' objectives, logic of the partnership in relation to the project.
- f) Additionality, complementarity, and synergy of the project (the added value of the project compared to other EU funded projects and Initiatives, in particular within the programme).

III Project objectives and project approach

- g) Description of the objectives of the project.
- h) Logical framework of the project (scheme explaining inputs, outputs (products, deliverables), outcome and impact, defining objectives on various levels, from concrete outputs to longer term effects in the field, together with indicators where appropriate and possible).
- i) Project approach (with what methods and techniques will the project address the problems / opportunities, global route to achievement of the project objectives).
- j) Added value of the cross-border, transnational, interregional cooperation in this project (what is the added value of this aspect in order to achieve the objectives, solve the problems, and/or capture the opportunities).
- k) Map of the area targeted by the project, location

of partners and activities, showing the geographical scope of long-term effects (results and impacts).

IV Project implementation and planning

- l) Phase 1: Project development and submission of bid.
- m) Phase 2-n: Project implementation in various work packages.
- n) Phase n+1: Project closure.
- o) Description of the various work packages with accompanying budget, partners, role of the various partners in each particular work package, and outputs (products); for work packages comprising an investment it should be clear what the status of the investment is (permits, work preparation, legal affairs). This scheme shows the relationship between the various work packages and deliverables (outputs, products) within each work package and the partners.

	Partner 1	Partner 2	Partner 3	Partner 4
WP1 D1	X			X
WP1 D2	X		X	X
WP2 D1		X	X	X
WP2 D2	X	X	X	

(WP = Work package, D1 = Deliverable 1 etc.)

- p) Time schedule (Gantt chart) showing the (management) phases in time and the various work packages over time.
- q) Methods to ensure lasting effects of the project (for instance, influence on national and EU policies, follow-up activities after completion of the project, continuation of activities/networks without EU funding after completion of the project).

V Project management

- r) Description of project management and financial

management structure and approach, including quality management and approach to controlling eligibility of costs.

- s) Separate budget for work package project management (both at partner and Lead Partner level).
- t) Risk analysis and risk management/contingency plans (this includes risks relating to the achievement of the project objectives and risks related to the eligibility of costs).
- u) Communication plan (objectives of communication, communication strategy for both internal and

external communication), role of communication in project implementation, target groups, communication instruments for both internal and external communication).

Annexes:

- I Project budget (overview of the overall budget, comprised of the various work packages).

At least the following schemes should be made visible:

	WP1 D1	WP1 D2	Total WP1	WP2 D1 (etc.)
Staff				
External experts				
Equipment (etc.)				
Total				

	WP1	WP2	WP3	Total
Partner 1				
Partner 2				
Partner 3 (etc.)				
Total				

	Year n	Year n+1	Year n+2	Total
WP1				
WP2				
WP3				
Total				

In this way, the costs for each deliverable (first table) are known (WP1 D1, WP1 D2 etc.). How much each partner does in each work package in terms of finance (second table) is also known. Finally, the spending profile over time is shown in the third table also showing the spending profile of the project as a whole. Obviously, the totals of the various tables should correspond with each other (for instance, the total of each work package should be the same in all tables). The author also suggests creating a budgeting tool in Excel, which can produce these tables from detailed financial input using pivot tables. For each cost item, the author therefore needs the following data:

- Deliverable
- Budget line
- Partner number
- Work package
- Timeframe (for instance, six month periods)

The author suggests budgeting the costs for each deliverable (product oriented budgeting instead of activity related budgeting). When an Excel tool has been developed for this purpose, it is simple to create the tables shown above (it could also be integrated into an HTML-based application form, please see the description of the web-based version, in Annex 2).

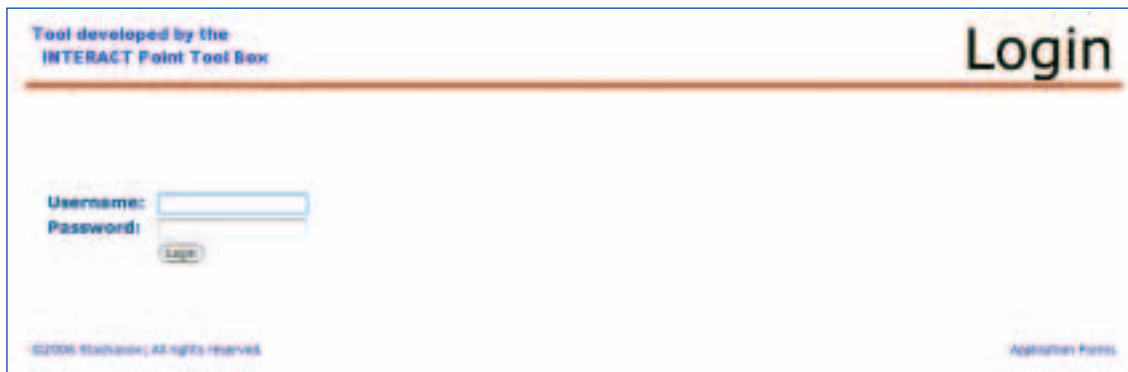
- II Partner contract (draft). The author suggests supplying a standard or model contract that can be used and modified according to individual needs. Please refer to the tool *Good Practice INTERREG III Partnership Agreement* issued by INTERACT Point Tool Box, available in the Management Support section on www.interact-eu.net.
- III Document on the VAT position of the partners. VAT is always a difficult issue. Therefore, the author suggests adding a document that gives information about the VAT position of each individual partner. In addition, an 'irrecoverable VAT' budget line should also be included. In which case, it is easy to check whether a partner correctly claims irrecoverable VAT.
- IV Document on state aid (in the case of private partners) and bank guarantee (in the case of private partners in order to be sure that the partner is financially able to implement the project).
- V Co-financing statements (Letters of Intent)

Good Practice Application Form in HTML format

Annex 2: Good Practice Application Form in HTML format

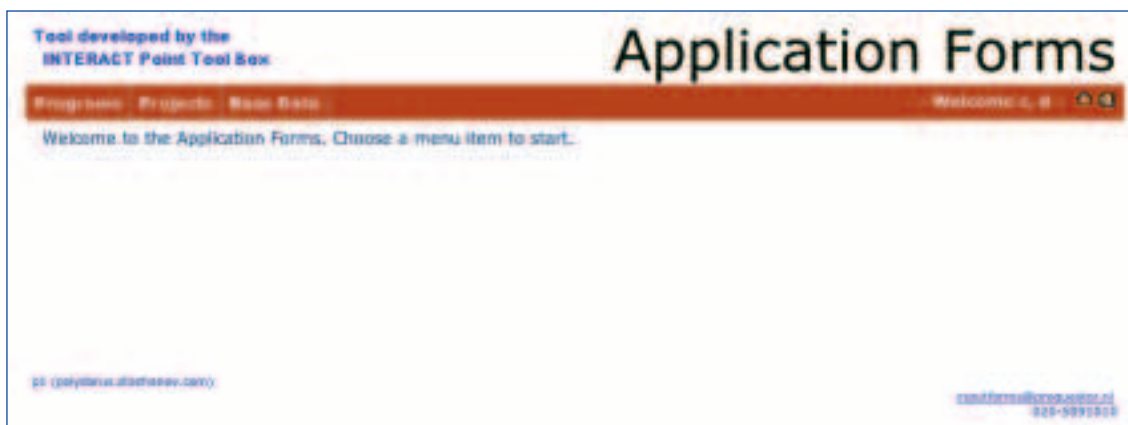
The information below will allow you to log in to the web-based tool:

Website: <http://applicationform.proquestor.nl:8080/forms/home.do>

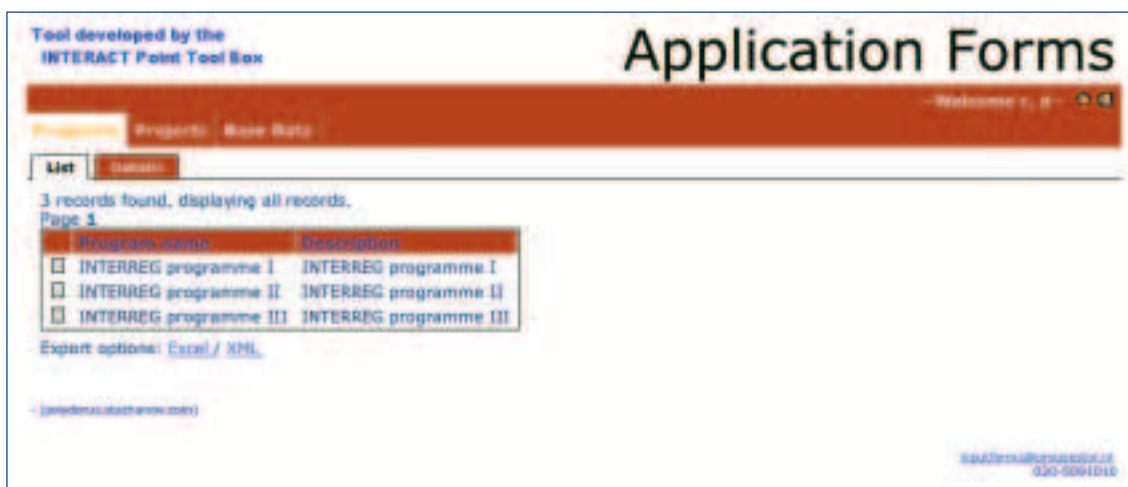


Login name: hfFirst

Password: stachanov



Once you are logged in, please click on “Programs” in the top menu. A list of example of programmes will be displayed.



Select the programme that the project applicant is applying to (in this test version any of the three programmes will work). Once a programme is selected, the following view will be displayed:

Tool developed by the
INTERACT Point Tool Box

Application Forms

Programme: **Projects** | **Basic Data** | - Welcome c. d. -

List | **Details**

[Edit](#)

Program name: INTERREG programme III
Description: INTERREG programme III
Applicant: a, b

(politeus.stachenov.com) contact@interact.eu 020-5991010

In the chosen programme, proceed to submit a project application by clicking on “Projects” in the top menu.

Tool developed by the
INTERACT Point Tool Box

Application Forms

Programme: **Projects** | **Basic Data** | - Welcome c. d. -

New | **List** | **Details** | **Forms**

Program name:
 Applicant:

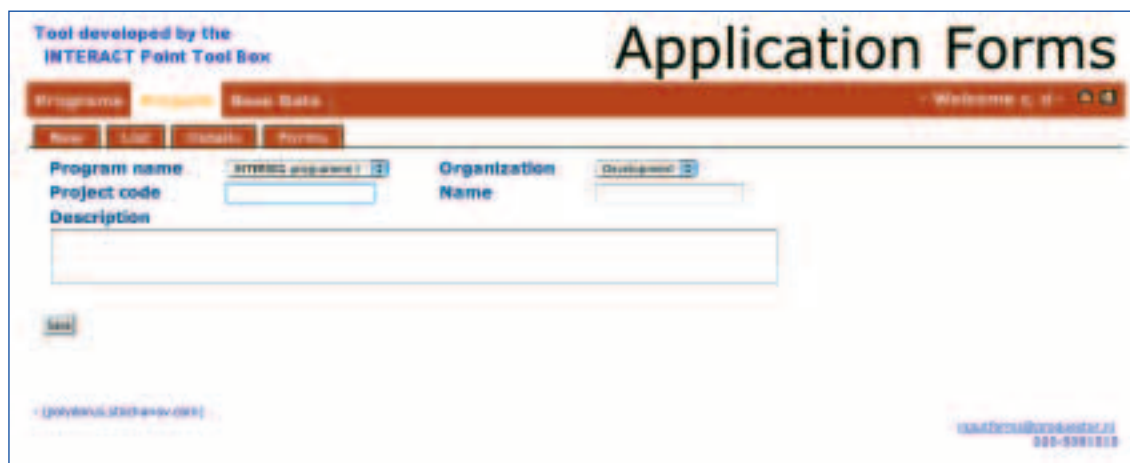
One record found.
Page 1

<input type="checkbox"/>	Project code	Program name	Name	Organization
<input type="checkbox"/>	Project A	INTERREG programme I	Project A HF	

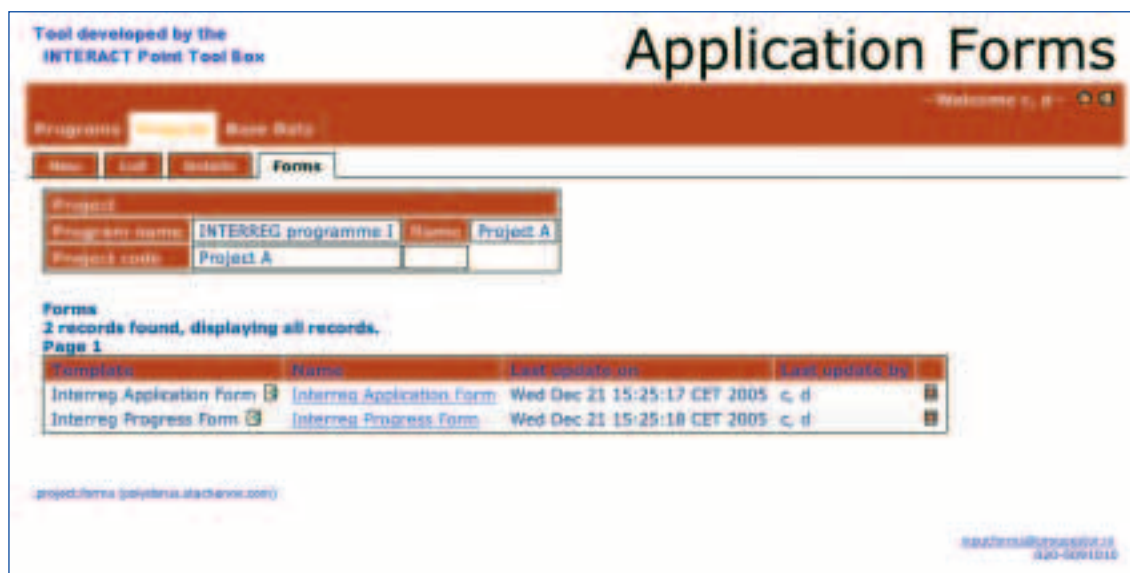
Export options: [Excel](#) / [XML](#)

(politeus.stachenov.com) contact@interact.eu 020-5991010

The list of existing projects will appear. In this section a new project can be submitted by clicking on “New” on the top sub-menu. Enter the project name and description.



Once the project has been identified, click on “Forms” in the top sub-menu and find the INTERREG Application Form for submitting the project.



This web-based tool is also valid to process INTERREG project reports. INTERREG programmes may use this type of software to build their databases for programme implementation and monitoring. Click on “INTERREG Application Form” and create a new application form by giving the project details and filling in the information requested.

This application form will appear on the screen:

Tool developed by the INTERACT Point Tool Box

Application Forms

- Welcome to... -

Programme **INTERREG** Basic Data

Home List Forms **Forms**

Project		
Programme name	INTERREG programme I	Name Project A
Project code	Project A	

Interreg Application Form Save Print

Introduction (Partnership: overview of partners involved, key partner data)

Name of partner organisation	<input type="text"/>
Legal status	<input type="text"/>
Contact person	<input type="text"/>
Address	<input type="text"/>
Country	<input type="text"/>
Telephone	<input type="text"/>
Name of partner organisation	<input type="text"/>
Legal status	<input type="text"/>
Contact person	<input type="text"/>
Address	<input type="text"/>
Country	<input type="text"/>
Telephone	<input type="text"/>
Description	<input type="text"/>

Motivation to start the project

Background information	<input type="text"/>
Context of the project	<input type="text"/>
Opportunities / Problems	<input type="text"/>
Contribution of the project to the programmes objectives	<input type="text"/>
Contribution of the project to the partners' objectives, logic of the partnership in relation to the project	<input type="text"/>
Additionally, complementarity and synergy of the project	<input type="text"/>

Notations to start the project	
Description of the objectives of the project	
Logical framework of the project	
Project approach	
Added value of the cross-border, transnational, interregional co-operation in this project	
Explanation of the geographical scope	

Project implementation and planning	
Phase 1: project development and submission of bid	
Phase 2 to n: project implementation in various work packages	
Phase n+1: project closure	
Description of the various work packages	
Time schedule	
Methods to ensure lasting effects of the project	

Project Management	
Description of project management and financial management structure and approach	
Risk analysis and risk management / contingency plan	
Communication plan	

Submitting Application Form Save

project@pufim.gwyddon.gov.uk

awthorpe@provincer.ie
005-581816

List of INTERREG III programmes analysed

Annex 3: List of INTERREG III programmes analysed

INTERREG IIIA programmes

(FI/SE)	Skargarden
(FI/SE)	Kvarken – Mittskandia
(AT/SI)	Austria – Slovenia
(AT/HU)	Austria – Hungary
(DE/PL)	Saxony – Lower Silesia
(DE/CZ)	Saxony – Czech Republic
(NL/DE)	EUREGIO – Euregio Rhine-Waal – euregio rhine-meuse-north
(IT/FR)	Italy – France (ALCOTRA)
(IT/FR)	Italy – France (Islands)
(IT/SI)	Italy – Slovenia
(IE/UK)	Ireland – Northern Ireland
(DE/FR/CH)	Upper Rhine Centre-South
(DK/DE)	Fyn – K.E.R.N.
(DE/LU/BE)	Germany – Luxembourg – German Speaking Community of Belgium/Walloon Region
(DE/FR)	Saarland-Mosel (Lorraine) – Western Palatinate
(ES/MA)	Spain – Morocco
(ES/PT)	Spain – Portugal
(EL/BG)	Greece – Bulgaria
(BE/DE/NL)	Euregio Meuse-Rhine
(FI/RU)	Euregio Karelia
(FR/ES)	France – Spain
(FR/CH)	France – Switzerland
(FI/SE/NO/RU)	North
(FI/EE)	Southern Finland – Estonia
(BE/NL)	Flanders – Netherlands
(BE/FR/LU)	Wallonia – Lorraine – Luxembourg
(FR/BE)	France – Wallonia – Flanders
(FR/UK)	Franco – British Programme
(IT/HR/BA/CS/AL)	Adriatic New Neighbourhood Programme
(SE/DK)	Oresund Region
(PL/SL)	Poland – Slovakia
(DK/DE)	Storstrom – Ostholstein – Lubeck

INTERREG IIIB programmes

South West Europe (SUDOE)
Western Mediterranean (MEDOCC)
Madeira-Azores-Canary Islands (MAC)
Baltic Sea Region
Northern Periphery
North Sea
Alpine Space
Atlantic Area
North West Europe (NWE)
CADSES
Caribbean Area
Archimed

INTERREG IIIC

IIIC programme (zones North, East, South and West)
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