

Interreg Knowledge Fair 5-7 March 2024, Riga (Latvia)

Call for proposals and assessment: Perspectives and road ahead

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| Interact | 07.03.2024

Interact



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Welcome to the Interreg Knowledge Fair

This is the **second edition** of the Interreg Knowledge Fair, it is still a new approach for us.

The **Conference Support** stand in the Exhibition Room is a one-stop shop for your questions.

At the end of this session, you are asked to rate the **session experience**.

At the end of the event, you will be asked your **overall feedback**.





Aim of the session

Explore features of non-standard calls like targeted and capitalisation calls, Small Project Fund (SPF), Operations of Strategic Importance (OSI) and strategic projects.

Discuss the potential role of AI in supporting the process.

Outline

01

**Intro and
setting the
scene**

02

**Programmes
approaches:
panel
discussion**

03

**Group work-
talking walls**

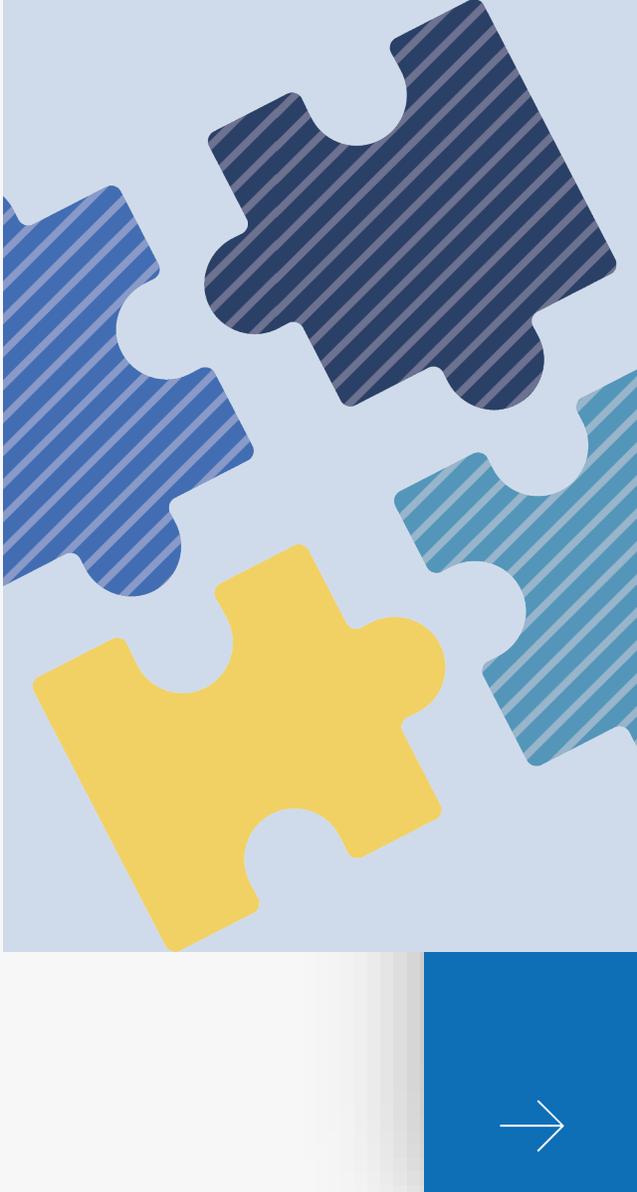
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**Potential
role of AI

Plenary
discussion**

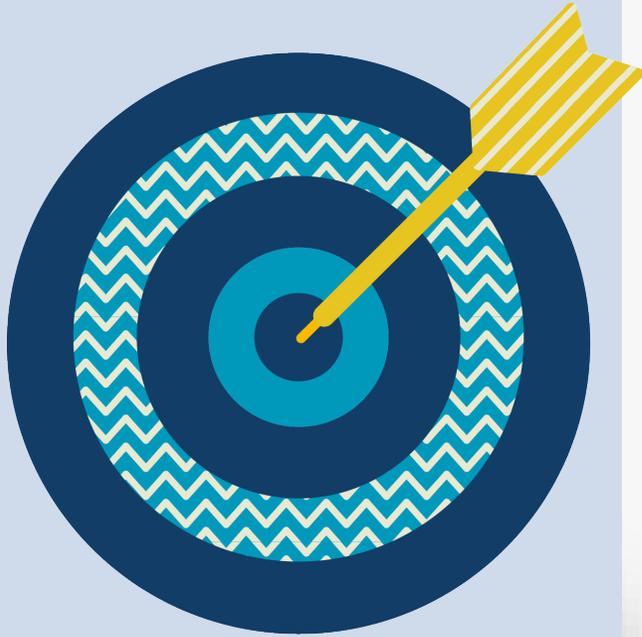
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Outlook



Targeted calls

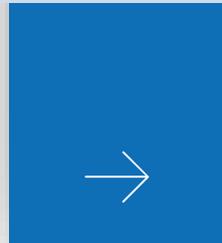
- **Specific SOs/priorities**
- **Beneficiaries**
- **Type of actions**
- **Territories**
- **Budget**



Capitalisation calls

- Enhance the impact and strengthen projects outputs from previous programming periods;
- Transfer and re-use of previous projects outputs towards new partners;
- Boost coordination between Interreg programmes and other EU funded programmes





Small Project Fund (SPF)

Article 2(10) of the CPR '(...) *an operation in an Interreg programme aimed at the selection and implementation of projects, including people-to-people actions, of limited financial volume*'.



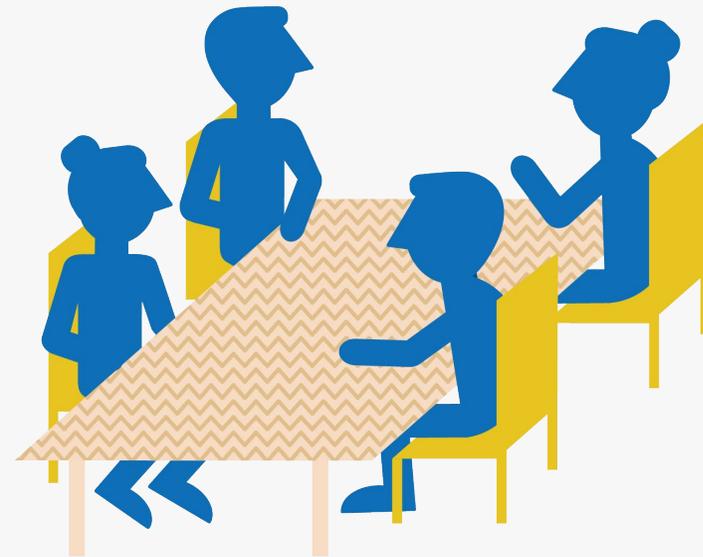
Operations of Strategic Importance (OSI)

A **new** feature introduced by the regulatory framework for the 2021-2027 programming period/

*(...) an operation which provides a **significant contribution** to the achievement of the objectives of a programme and which is subject to particular monitoring and communication measures, as defined in Article 2(5) CPR.*



Panel discussion



Our speakers

Interreg Central Europe

Monika Schönerklee-Grasser

Interreg Northern Periphery and Arctic

Christopher Parker

Interreg Italy-Croatia

Francesca Bonesso, Hrvoje Grancarić

**Interreg IPA Croatia-Bosnia and
Herzegovina-Montenegro**

Dragan Đurišić

Interreg Poland-Saxony

Krzysztof Kolanowski

Panel discussion

Monika Schönerklee-Grasser, Interreg Central Europe



Targeted calls



Interreg Knowledge Fair
Riga | 8 March 2024

Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE | Joint Secretariat
Monika Schönerkle-Grasser



Timeline of calls

Our calls for proposals are open invitations to submit project ideas to our funding programme.

We will launch a series of calls between 2021 and 2027 and the timeline below shows the progress we are making. In 2022, we already selected 53 new projects following our first call for proposals. In January 2024, we selected further 47 new cooperation projects bringing the total number of funded projects to 100.

Standard (open) calls

First call

Closed in 2022

Second call

Closed in 2023

100 classic projects approved

Third call

Planned to open in October 2024 for small-scale projects

Call for small places

Fourth call

Under development

Capitalisation call
Joint valorisation of TNC and CBC solutions



Main pillars for designing targeted calls



Knowledge-driven choices

Analysis of territorial challenges and needs including stakeholder involvement (e.g. gap analysis, evaluation recommendations, studies, consultations)



Co-creation approach

Active participation of MC delegations in call design

CALL FOR SMALL PLACES (small-scale projects)

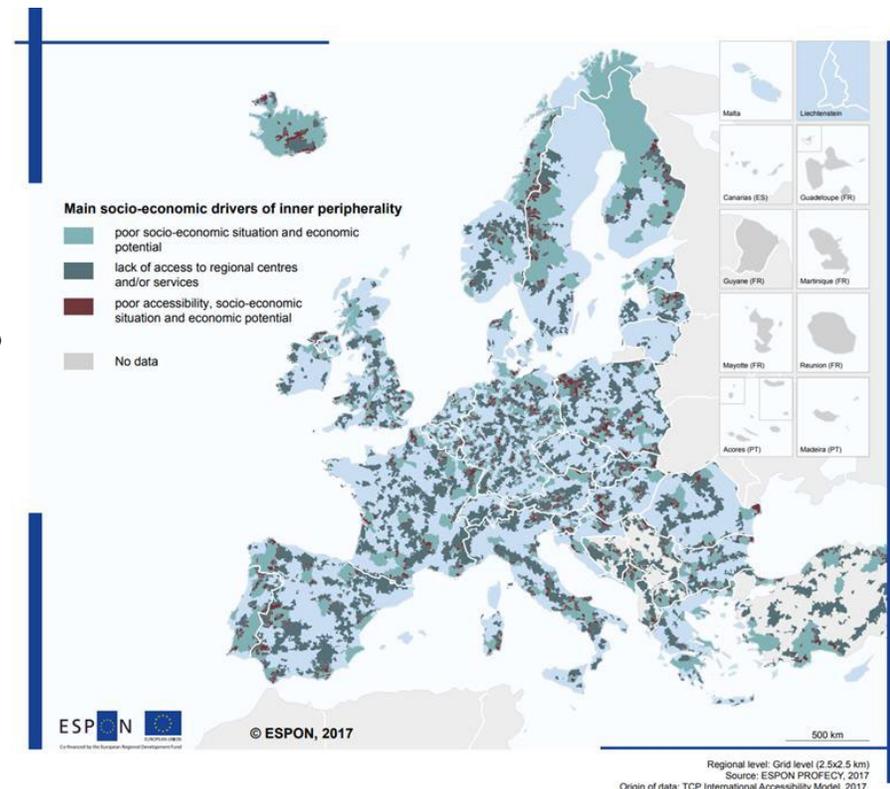
AIM: *To test innovative approaches for making peripheral and rural areas more attractive places to work and live in*

- Different scope than classic projects
- Addressing the specific territorial challenges of small places, such as demographic change, lack of public services of general interest, limited accessibility and skilled work force
- Applying qualitative criteria for peripherality (ESPON)

 Tangible, place-based results at local level, with clear benefits for local communities



Co-design workshop with MC in mid March 2024 - thematic focus, project features etc.



*Launch in October 2024
(preview in June)*

CAPITALISATION CALL

VISION: *To tackle disparities and border effects in the central Europe functional area through the joint valorisation of existing TNC and CBC solutions, thus enforcing synergies on the ground*

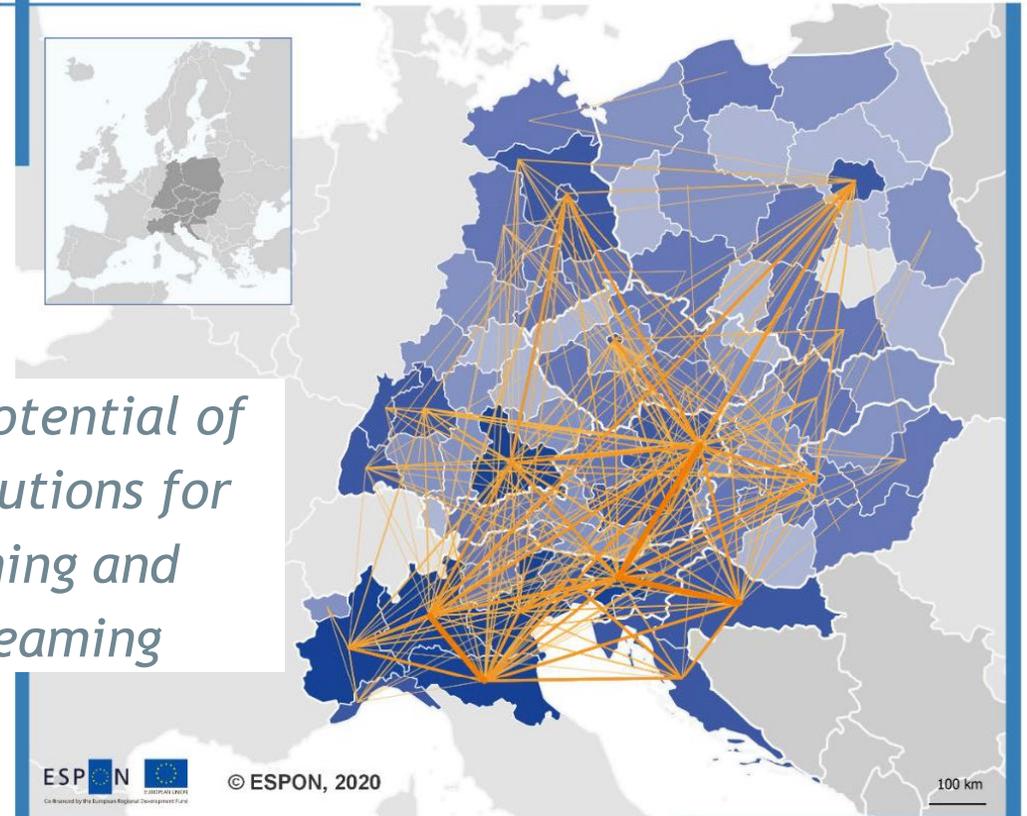
Building on the successful experience of the CE 2014-2020 4th call (“capitalization through coordination” - focus on Horizon)

Analysis phase - collection of evidence and stakeholder needs

- External study on valorisation potentials
- Consultation of national, regional, local and CBC stakeholders in autumn 2024 (“CE stakeholder forum”)

Launch in October 2025

Partnerships in Central Europe - Environmental Hazards



Untapped potential of existing solutions for upstreaming and downstreaming

Panel discussion

Christopher Parker, Interreg Northern Periphery and Arctic

INTERACT knowledge Fair

National Library of Latvia Riga, Latvia
5th - 7th March, 2024

“Call for proposals and assessment: Perspectives and road ahead”

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Topics

- Calls for proposals
- ToR
- Preparatory project
- Main project
- Project selection and Assessment
- Road-a-head

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Calls for proposals

- Terms of Reference (ToR)
- Consultation with regionals and stakeholders
- Internal review
- Call project types
- Call specific objectives
- MC approval

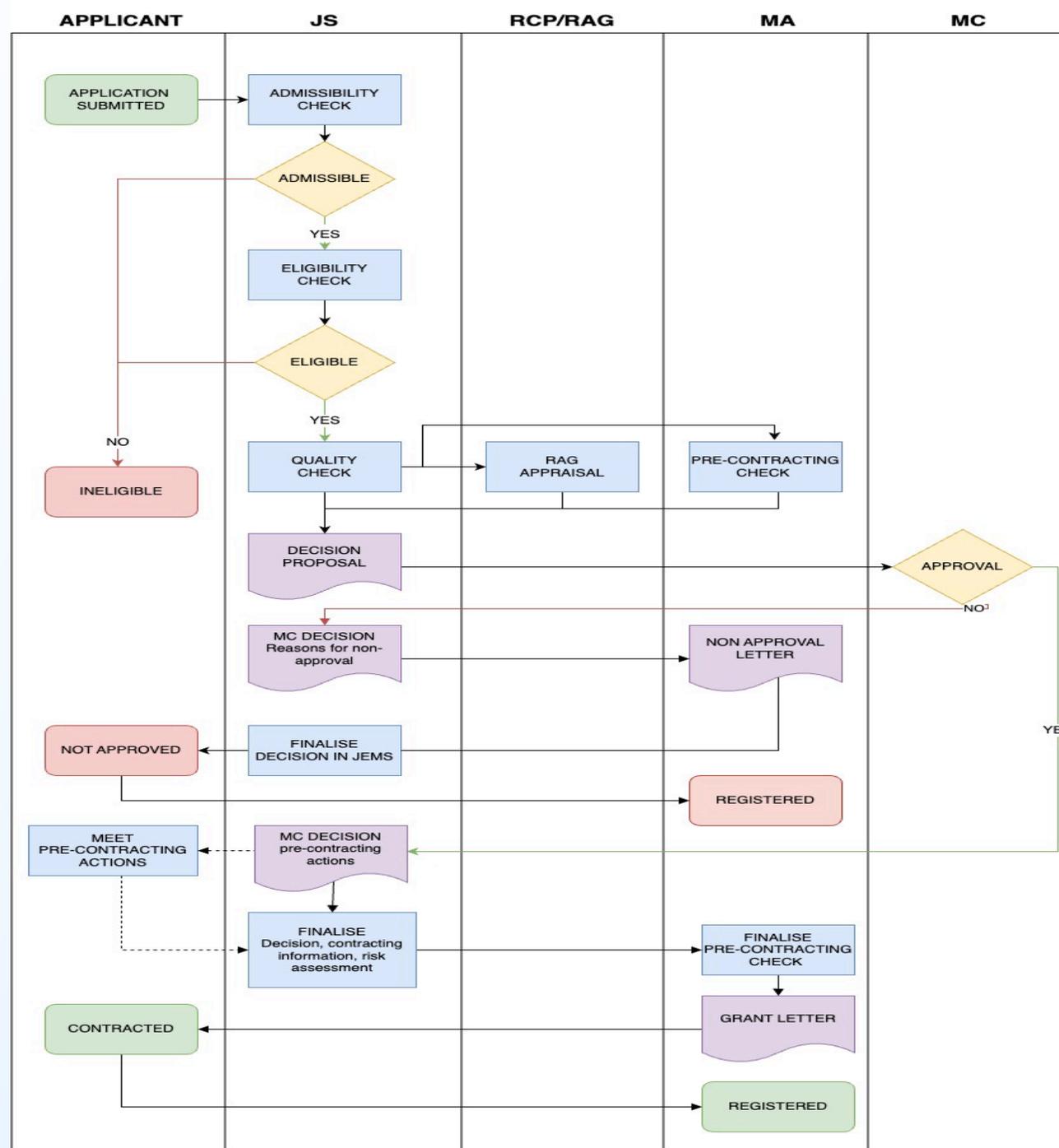
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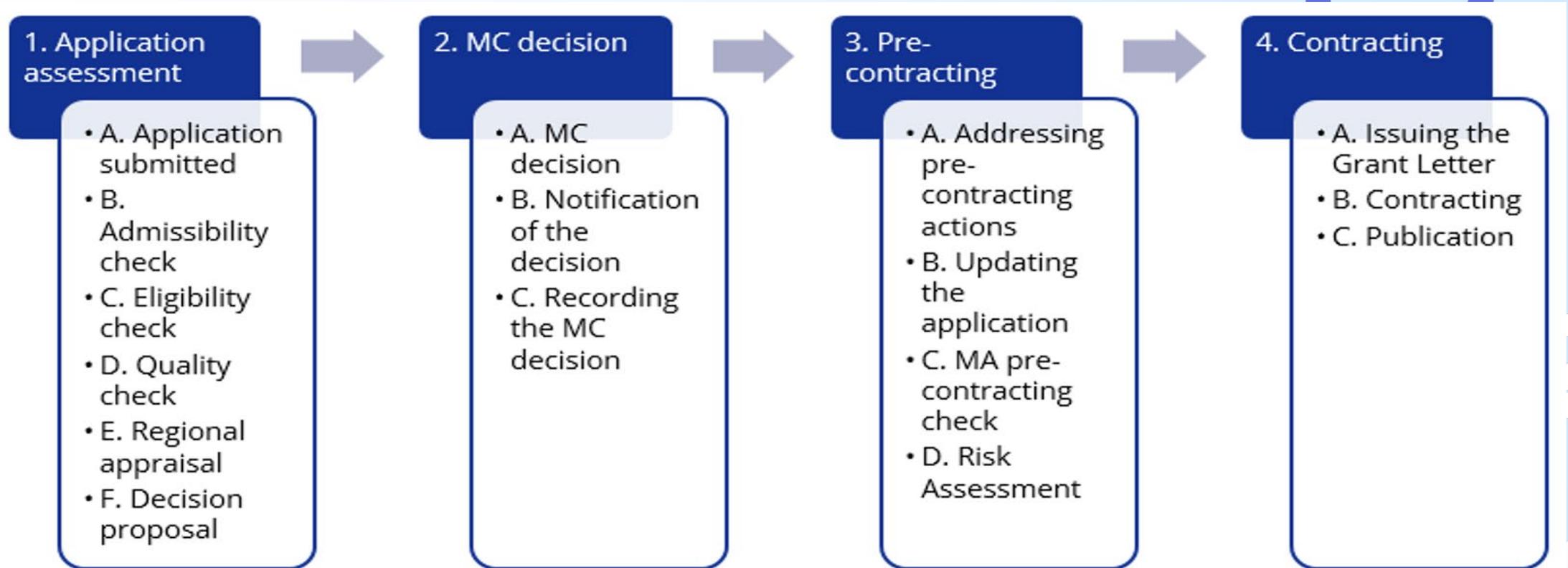
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Decision Flow chart



Project Selection Procedure



Road-a-head

What to expect

- Arctic Cooperation coordinated Clustering call 2024 - 2025

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Thank You!

Christopher Parker
Programme Manager
Interreg NPA 2021 - 2027



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Panel discussion

Francesca Bonesso, Hrvoje Grancarić, Interreg Italy-Croatia



Interreg Knowledge Fair

Operation of Strategic Importance (OSI): Overview

7th March 2024

National Library of Latvia, Riga

APPENDIX 3 INTERREG VI A IT-HR PROGRAMME

[...]

The foreseen **categories** of **OSIs** are the following:

- 1) **SMEs Facility.** The aim of this instrument is to target specific domains of the Blue Economy with a high potential in terms of growth, innovation and reinforcement of skills based on CB business cooperation between SMEs/start-ups by minimizing the bureaucratic burden upon them.
- 2) Operation(s) of Strategic Importance that could be funded in relation to the topics proposed in the **EUSAIR flagship themes** mentioned for each SO (excluding SO 1.1, 1.4 and ISO1) and, possibly, coordinated with other Interreg Programmes of the Adriatic-Ionian area, in the framework of the embedding process.

[...]



Expected projects and indicative breakdown of financial resources

SO	OSI themes	Projects	ERDF
SO 1.1	1.1.1 SMEs-Research Cooperation for innovation	1	5.000.000
	1.1.2 Access to innovation & research for SMEs	1	
SO 1.2	1.2.1 SMEs cooperation & capacity-building for innovation	1	2.500.000
SO 2.1	2.1.1 Mitigation of climate change risks, through monitoring & planning	1	5.500.000
SO 2.2	2.2.1 Biodiversity protection, through innovative monitoring & management solutions	1	4.000.000
SO 3.1	3.1.1 Cross-Border Green and Smart port concept	1	5.300.000
SO 4.1	4.1.1 Tourism diversification & delocalisation, valorising cultural & natural heritage	1	4.700.000
	Total	7	27.000.000



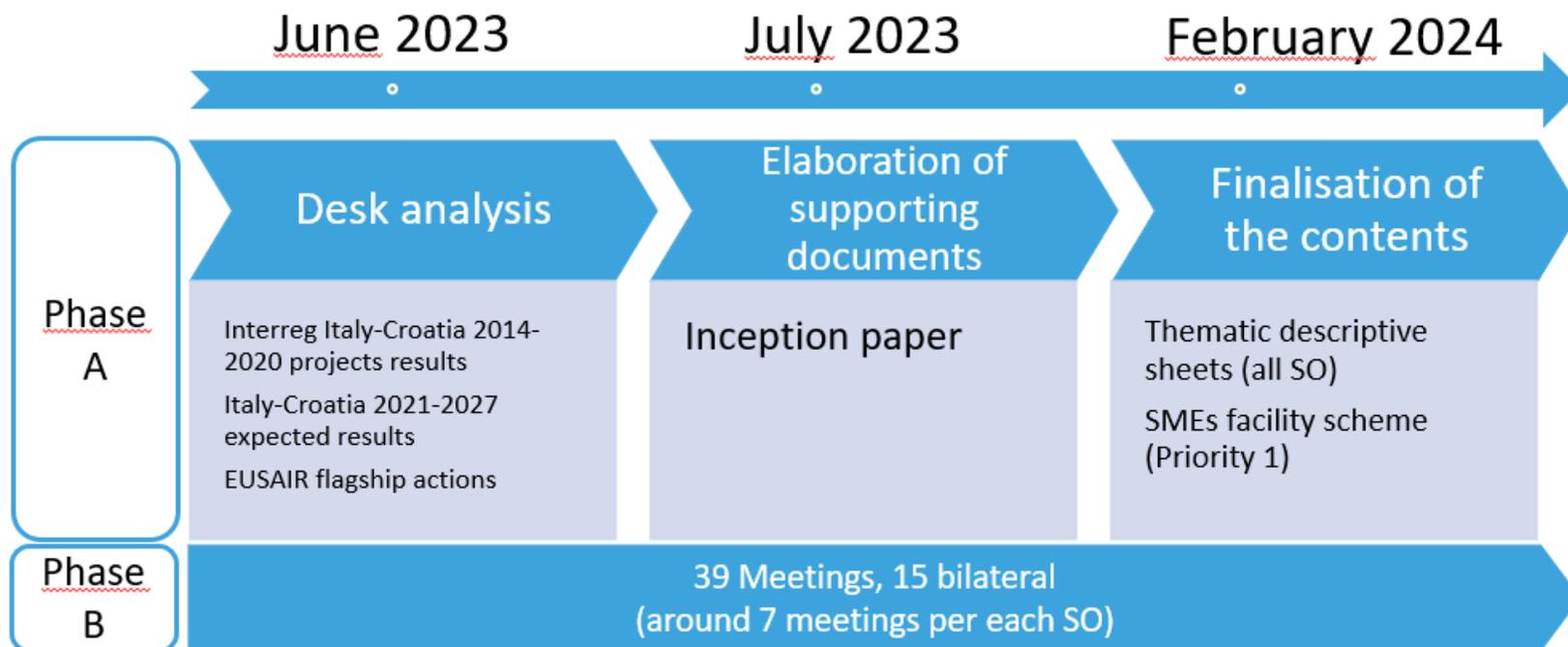
OSI WORK PLAN & GENERAL ASSUMPTIONS

- Identification of the **OSI WG**: few members (1 or 2 per Country) **per each SO**, involving **EUSAIR TSG Pillar's representatives** and **5 external experts**
- Similarly to what was done with the Strategic Call for Proposals 2014-20, the WG has defined the Terms of Reference (**thematic descriptions**)
- **Thematic descriptions** include, among others: theme description, objectives, macro-activities, output indicators, expected outputs, partners to be involved, cross-border dimension
- Using of a **top-down approach**





THE PROCESS



ASSESSING THE PROCESS

 ADVANTAGES		 CHALLENGES 	
1	Overall <u>guidance</u> on the <u>process</u>	Time-consuming with varied contributions	1
2	<u>Enhanced thematic relevance</u>	Complex internal decision-making	2
3	Diverse perspectives with expert guidance (applicant's)	Different territorial specificities	3
4	<u>Identification of unforeseen challenges</u> with <u>external guidance</u>	Heterogeneous WG composition	4





KEY FACTORS FOR SUCCESSFUL PROCESS

01

Clear
objectives
and purposes
of the process

02

Appropriate
participants
selection

03

Careful
management of
the
participatory
process

04

Clear
communication

05

Effective
facilitation

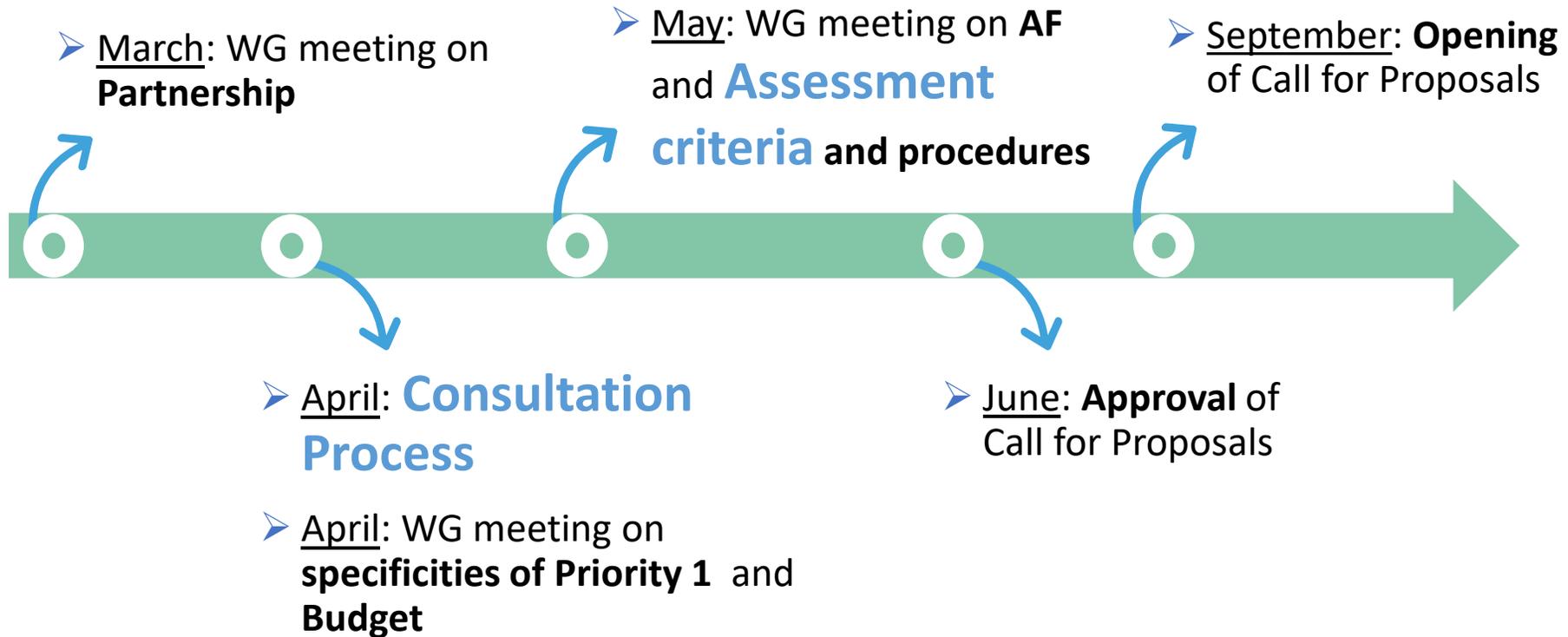
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Sense of
ownership
over the
process



NEXT STEPS

2024





CONSULTATION PROCESS

To comply with the EU desire to **communicate** as much as possible the results of our work, the consultation process helps to inform citizens about the **achievements** of the European Regional Policy.

The meeting aims to:

- Raise awareness of the benefits that **Cohesion Policy** brings locally;
- Engage **citizens** to stimulate a debate about Cohesion Policy;
- Show the **role and** involving various groups of **young people**;
- See if the ITEMS addressed by the TOR meet the **territorial needs**.

WHEN? 04th April 2024

WHERE? Online, at a **cross-border level**



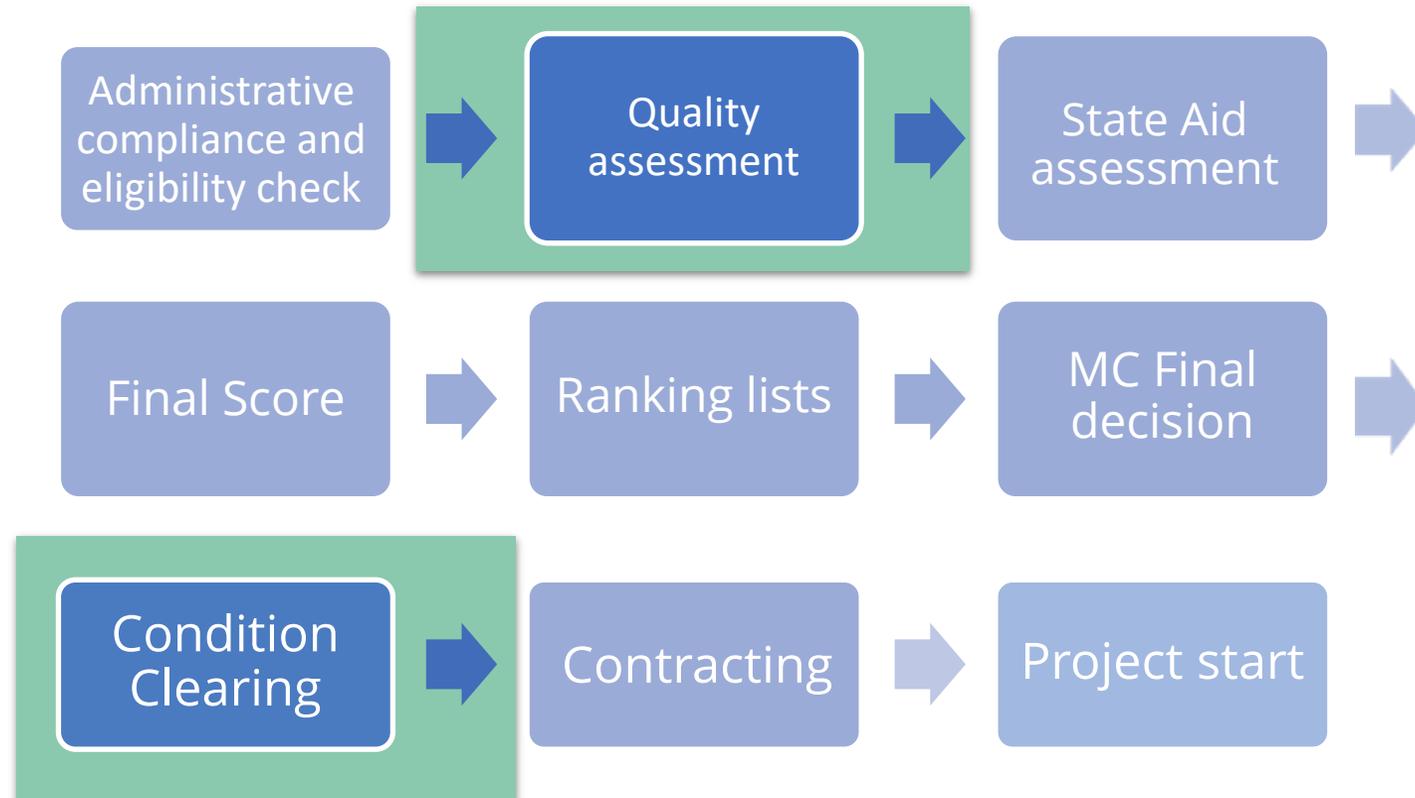
Consultation Process: **proposed method**

- **1 webinar** addressed to **all target groups** (citizens, specific stakeholders, youth, other Programmes of the Area, EUSAIR representatives);
- **Specific survey** dedicated to EUSAIR beneficiaries and stakeholders to send before the event;
- **Instant surveys** to collect feedbacks and comments of the participants;
- Investigate **operational aspects** to be considered for the OSI implementation

- **AD HOC COMMUNICATION STRATEGY**: use website and social media to **engage** the audience, **livestream** the event, and **ask for feedback** is vital!



STEPS IN THE SELECTION PROCESS





QUALITY ASSESSMENT - BEFORE THE ASSESSMENT

- Good quality of call documents = **clear selection criteria**
- **Info days & Consultation** with potential applicants
- **Tailor made** selection criteria / quality assessment grid **for OSI**
- JS assessment coordination meetings = **harmonization** of assessment approach
- **Very detailed guidelines** for PMs per sub-criteria

ECA: detect „shopping list project”

INTERACT: „how to detect a good quality project. Sometimes very well written projects are not the best ones”

QUALITY ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR OSI

STANDARD CRITERIA

*fine tuned for OSI

1. STRATEGIC CRITERIA

Programme objectives
Output & result indicators
Strategic partnership
Cross-border dimension
Horizontal principles
Cross-cutting issues
DNSH

2. OPERATIONAL CRITERIA

Workplan structure / Viability of
implementation / Value for money
Communication

ONLY FOR OSI

3. OSI CRITERIA PER SO

Compliance with OSI SO intervention logic:
Objectives, Macroactivities, Outputs
EUSAIR Relevance



POINTS + WEIGHT = WEIGHTED SCORE

The Quality Assessment – THE METHODOLOGY

- **Minimum quality threshold**
60% of max score per Strategic, Operational and OSI criteria
- **Assessment in-house / 4-eye principle**
 - At least one PM with specialization in sector (PM sectoral experience; professional background; education)



CONDITION CLEARING - based on quality assesement

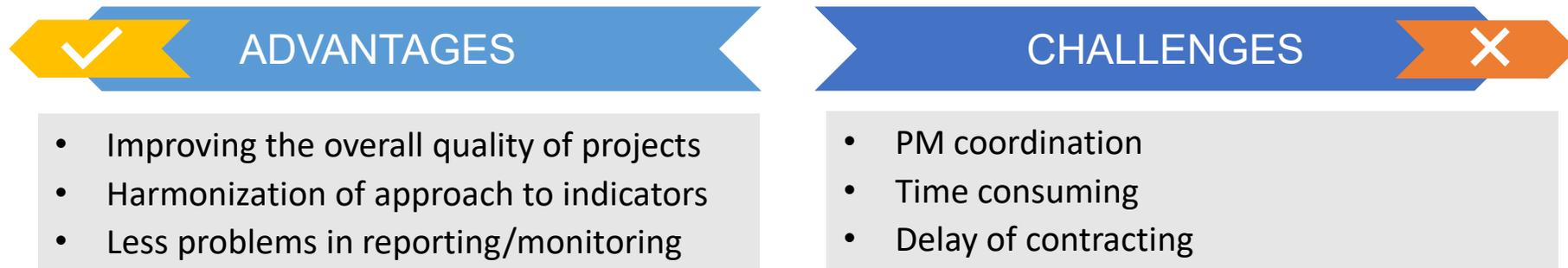
→ Technical

- Quality of workplan (activities, deliverables);
- Focus on output & result indicators

→ Legal and Administrative (investments, DNSH, environmental indicators, etc)

→ Financial („budget clearing”)

→ State Aid





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Panel discussion

Dragan Đurišić, Interreg IPA Croatia-Bosnia and Herzegovina-
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IPA Croatia – Bosnia and
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Interreg Knowledge Fair 2024
Riga, Latvia 5 - 7 March 2024

Interreg VI-A IPA CBC Croatia - Bosnia and Herzegovina - Montenegro
Small Project Fund (SPF)

EmBRACE
Enhancing SMEs sustainaBle gRowth And CompEtitiveness

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EU 117,685,699.00 EUR

<https://interreg-hr-ba-me.eu/>





Priority Axis 1: Smart investments in research, innovation and competitive entrepreneurship

Specific objective: RSO1.3. Enhancing sustainable growth and competitiveness of SMEs and job creation in SMEs, including by productive investments

- **16 February 2024 Monitoring Committee approved the “Small-project fund” (SPF) project**
- **SPF beneficiary: Croatian Agency for Small Business, Innovation and Investments (HAMAG BICRO),**
- **Duration in months: 60 (February 2024 till February 2029)**
- **Total SPF budget 10 million EUR, 8.7 million EUR for projects for final recipients micro and small enterprises**
- **Project aims to offer support and enhance the competitiveness of micro and small enterprises in the Programme area.**



Support will be given to micro and small enterprises (MSEs) for:

- **development and adaptation of business models, products, services and processes, fostering development of local MSEs with strong focus on introducing product or process innovation;**
- **developing pilot actions and new business solutions;**
- **enhancing MSEs cross-border business cooperation**

SPF indicators:

Output Indicator	Target 2029	Result Indicator	Target 2029
RCO 01 - Enterprises supported (of which: micro and small)	120	RCR 03 – Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) introducing product or process innovation	40
RCO 02 - Enterprises supported by grants	120		
RCO 84 - Pilot actions developed jointly and implemented in projects	12	RCR 104 - Solutions taken up or up-scaled by organizations	4
RCO 116 - Jointly developed solutions	8		



what needs to be done:

- upgrading and adapting the web platform,
- guidelines for applicants, application forms, evaluation manual, checklists, call for applicants, etc.
- Selection Committee (SC) appointment;
- planned 3 calls;

Planned support for final recipients per small project up to 200.000 EUR, different (lower) thresholds may be applied for each call (depending on interest of SMS, committed and available funds per call);

- duration of Small Projects is 6-12 months;
- SMEs cost claim - 85% EU funds, 15% own funds;
- simplified cost option:

Option 1	
Cost category	Form of reimbursement
Staff costs	20 % flat rate of direct costs (real costs)
Office and administrative costs	15 % flat rate of staff costs
Travel and accommodation costs	15% flat rate of staff costs
External expertise and services costs	Real costs
Equipment costs	Real costs
Costs of infrastructure and works (max. 10% of total budget)	Real costs



- **Projects up to EUR 100.000**
using Lump sum (draft budget method) will be paid after each of 3 milestones and proven results
- **Projects up to EUR 200.000**
using SCO1 Flat rate will be paid after approved report (on 3-month basis) based on proven results and costs
- **Review and ranking of project applications**
SFP beneficiary HAMAG-BICRO will carry out the selection process and propose a list and Small Project Applications for the signing of the contract and implementation
- **Selection of Small Project applications and approval by the Selection Committee (SC)**
The role of the Selection Committee - members of SC from all three Participating Countries (two voting members from each participating country, as well as non-voting members/observers from JS, MA and NAs)



challenges ahead for call definition

- Eligibility of applicants, final recipients micro and small enterprises in order to avoid companies established solely for the purpose of obtaining a grant :
 - be established (branches?) under the national law in the respective participating country and Programme area
 - applicants must be registered at least 12 (or longer?) months prior to the deadline for the submission of Applications
 - Verification of financial capacity of applicants: must have an annual income for the last closed financial year in amount at least equal to amount of grant requested (grant size of specific partner, not total project)
- Partnership requirements:
 - the number of partners in the application (2-4), bilateral or trilateral partnership with applicants from all 3 participating countries
- Size of the grant, allocation for 1st CfP, etc.
- Number of applications and contracts per applicant, only in one application and one contracted project per call?

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IPA Croatia – Bosnia and
Herzegovina – Montenegro

Thank you for attention!

Joint Secretariat Branch Office in Montenegro

Project Manager, Dragan Đurišić

Podgorica, Montenegro

Email: durisic@interreg-hr-ba-me.eu

Panel discussion

Krzysztof Kolanowski, Interreg Poland-Saxony

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Kofinanziert von
der EUROPÄISCHEN UNION

Polen – Sachsen

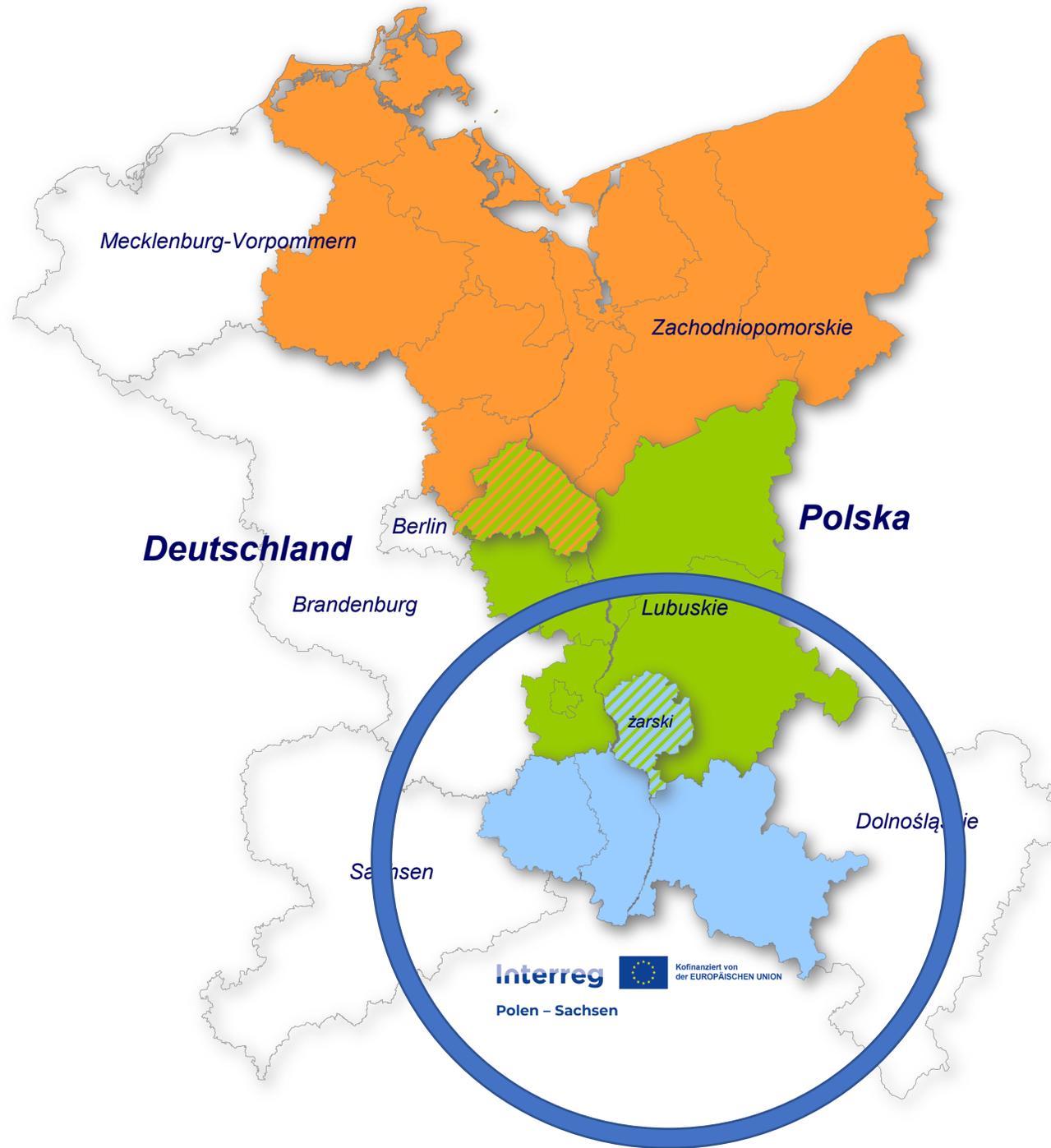


CENTRUM PROJEKTÓW EUROPEJSKICH

PROGRAM WSPÓŁPRACY INTERREG POLSKA-SAKSONIA 2021-2027

KOOPERATIONSPROGRAMM INTERREG POLEN-SACHSEN 2021-2027

INTERREG CO-OPERATION PROGRAMME POLAND-SAXONY 2021-2027





— granice administracyjne
 Verwaltungsgrenzen
 rzeki i wody
 Flüsse und Gewässer
 — autostrady
 Autobahnen
 — drogi ekspresowe
 Schnellstraßen
 — drogi w budowie
 Straßen im Bau
 — drogi inne
 sonstige Straßen

ludność w miejscowościach [w tys.]:
 Bevölkerung in Ortschaften [in Tsd.]:

■	> 50
■	25 – 50
●	10 – 25
●	5 – 10
●	< 5

0 10 20 30 40 km



Dziękujemy! Vielen Dank! Thank you! Paldies!



The potential role of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

A game-changer in supporting the process of call preparation and assessment or a threat to fairness?



Programme considerations

Helena Järviste, Interreg Estonia - Latvia

Floor is open for discussion



Thank you for being here!

Your opinion matters to us.

Please take a few minutes to provide us with feedback to help us improve our services.

Log into the **Whova app** and tell us what you think in the **session Q&A, from 1 (bad) to 5 (amazing)**
Please check which session you are in!

You can also talk to us at the Conference Support stand in the networking area.



Cooperation works

All materials will be available on:

[Interact / Events / Interreg Knowledge Fair \(5-7 March 2024\)](#)