

## GUIDANCE NOTES

This document is aimed at assisting the applicants before finalizing their Application form and Final Application form in order to self evaluate if their project focuses on the described aspects so that they can meet better the quality criteria.

### Quality assessment sub-questions under the 1<sup>st</sup> step of the selection procedure

#### Section A: Strategic relevance

**Total points: 15**

**Criterion a.1.** Does the project contribute to achieving general and specific objectives of the concerned Strategic Theme in the Programme area?

Points 5

- Is the strategic project clearly in line with the relevant Strategic Theme?
- Are the compulsory specific objectives and additional specific objectives, those not foreseen in the ToR, (if present) well developed?
- Does the strategic project demonstrate how it will contribute to the achievement of the general and specific objectives of the Strategic Theme?
- Will the strategic project proposal provide a significant and sustainable contribution to solving the problems/needs identified in the relevant Strategic Theme?
- Are the target groups relevant to the Strategic Theme identified?

**Criterion a.2.** Is the project in compliance with the relevant EU policies and horizontal issues?

Points 5

- Are the project objectives and results coherent with Lisbon and Gothenburg Strategies and will contribute to their implementation?
- Is the project coherent and compatible with the horizontal issues (e.g. equal opportunity and non discrimination, sustainable development, other as: integration, human resource development, innovation, information and communication technology, etc)?
- Is the project in accordance with the EU sector policies (such as regulations, directives, etc) ?
- Is the project in accordance with the EUROPE 2020 STRATEGY?
- Does the project contribute to the implementation of relevant EU policies?

**Criterion a.3.** Are the project objectives coherent with the national and sub-national policies of the territories participating in the project?

Points 5

- Is the project coherent with the relevant national policies of each of the Countries involved in the partnership?
- Is the project coherent with the relevant sub-national (regional and local) programming documents and regulations of the involved territories clearly described?
- Does the strategic project proposal provide significant and sustainable contribution to the implementation of national policies?
- Does the strategic project proposal provide significant and sustainable contribution to the implementation of sub-national policies?
- Is it possible to identify the synergy between project objectives and sub-and/or national policies of the involved

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Countries ?

**Section B: Cross-border character of the intervention**

**Points: 10**

**Criterion b.1.** How many Adriatic Countries are present in the project?

Points:5

- 6 Countries: 0 points
- 7 Countries: 3 points
- 8 Countries: 5 points

**Criterion b.2** Does the project have a positive and long-lasting impact on the whole Programme area?

Points:5

- Are the existing problems common to all territories involved in the project?
- Will the project contribute to overcoming the obstacles caused by the borders in the Programme area?
- Will the project produce tangible effects in the long-run on all the territories involved in the Project?
- Will the project have significant consequences in terms of public interest?
- Will the project contribute positively to improving the pre-existing conditions compared to the situation where the actions would not be carried out?

**Section C: Quality of the proposed partnership**

**Points: 25**

**Criterion c.1.** Does the Lead Beneficiary have experience in cross-border or other international project management and sufficient capacities to ensure the good functioning of the project and coordination of a cross-border partnership?

Points 5

- Does the Lead Beneficiary have the technical capacities to ensure a sound management of a cross-border project and of a real joint partnership?
- Does the Lead Beneficiary have already project management experience in previous and/or current cross-border or international projects?
- Does the Lead Beneficiary have territorial and institutional competence in the matters addressed in the project?
- Does the Lead Beneficiary have the capacities and the experience to ensure the sustainability of the project results?
- Is the Lead Beneficiary really in charge of the project coordination and responsible for administrative and financial management of the project?

**Criterion c.2.** Is the partnership able to disclose results and impacts in the whole Programme area?

Points 5

- Is the partnership able to disseminate the project outputs in the whole Programme area?
- Is it likely that partners are able to implement the communication activities in the whole Programme area?
- Is the partnership able to ensure the usability of project results in the whole Programme area?
- Are the project results relevant and transferable to the whole Programme area?
- Does the project seek to reinforce local ownership of project benefits, introduce project practises and results in everyday practice or further strengthen the institutional framework of the project?

**Criterion c.3.** Does the partnership have competence in relation to the Strategic Theme concerned and the capacity to propose, set up and implement policies and strategies for the territories addressed?

Points 5

- Do ALL Beneficiaries have technical capacities (the human resources, equipments) to implement their project activities in a cross-border cooperation?
- Do ALL Beneficiaries have expertise in the field of action of the project proposal, gained also from the previous and/or current experience of cross-border cooperation projects and/or in international cooperation?
- Are ALL Beneficiaries the right players according to their institutional, administrative and technical competences in the Strategic Theme concerned and according to the project objectives and expected results?
- Is the proposed partnership able to set up and implement the policies and strategies for the territories addressed?
- Does the partnership have territorial and institutional competence in the matters addressed in the project?

**Criterion c.4.** Does the partnership have capacity of target groups and stakeholders mobilization and of awareness raising and spreading of achievements in the territories, participating in the project?

Points 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Has the partnership identified the relevant target groups and stakeholders?</li> <li>- Has the partnership capacity to address those policy makers and other stakeholders that are not involved as project partners but are essential for the institutional sustainability of the results?</li> <li>- Does the partnership have capacity of managing dissemination and awareness raising initiatives/campaigns within the field of competence of a partner?</li> <li>- Does the partnership have resources and skills for spreading the project results beyond the partnership, and own communication tools and/or structured media contacts?</li> <li>- Are relevant EU institutions addressed in the project?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Criteria c.5.</b> Is the partnership harmonious, well balanced and complementary in terms of representativeness, competences and active involvement in the project activities per Country regarding the Strategic Theme concerned?</p>
Points 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Is the partnership balanced, as regards the activities per Country and not overly dominated by one partner or partners from one Country?</li> <li>- Is the number of partners balanced per Country involved in the project?</li> <li>- Do partners per each Country participating in the project have complementary territorial and institutional competences?</li> <li>- Is the partnership balanced per Countries participating in the project with regard to the ability to set up and implement the policies and strategies?</li> <li>- Does/Do one or more of the partners provide ONLY services of project coordination, management and communication as its/their main scope of activities in the project?</li> </ul>
<b>Section D: Quality of intervention and value for money</b>
<b>Points 25</b>
<p><b>Criterion d.1.</b> Does the project contribute to the achievement of the Strategic Theme objectives through achievable actions?</p>
Points 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Are the foreseen activities comprehensive?</li> <li>- Are the outputs and results concrete, realistic (achievable) and quantifiable?</li> <li>- Does the project clearly demonstrate how it will contribute to the objectives of the Strategic Theme?</li> <li>- Will the expected outputs and results lead to the achievement of general and specific objectives of the Strategic Theme?</li> <li>- Do expected results of the project provide a significant and sustainable contribution to solving the problem identified in the project proposal and relevant Strategic Theme?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Criterion d.2.</b> Are the activities clear, realistic and appropriate to achieve the objectives of the Strategic Theme?</p>
Points 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Are the activities resulting from specific needs and opportunities?</li> <li>- Are the proposed methodology and the planned activities relevant and consistent to the Strategic Theme?</li> <li>- Are the identified activities most suitable for the achievement of the objectives of Strategic Theme?</li> <li>- Is there a logical link between the main foreseen activities of the work packages?</li> <li>- Is it feasible that the activities will be completed in the proposed time?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Criterion d.3.</b> Does the project foresee during its life-time concrete actions to ensure sustainability of its results after the Programme Contribution funding ends?</p>
Points 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Are these activities clearly defined and is their realization realistic?</li> <li>- Does the project ensure the financial sustainability (financing follow up activities, sources of resources for covering all future operating and maintenance costs, etc.)?</li> <li>- Does the project ensure the institutional sustainability (which structures will allow, and how the results of the project will be carried on after the end of the action? Address issues about the local "ownership" of project outputs)?</li> <li>- Does the project ensure the political sustainability (what structural impact will the project have?- e.g. will it lead to improved legislation, codes of conduct, methods, etc.)?</li> <li>- Is the visibility of the results evident in all the territories, involved in the project after the end of the project ?</li> </ul>

<b>Criterion d.4.</b> Does the project represent a capitalization of previous experiences in different Programmes?		<b>Points 5</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Does the project proposal take into consideration the capitalization of the results of previous territorial cooperation programmes?</li> <li>- Does the project take into consideration the results of the innovative projects implemented in the relevant field of expertise?</li> <li>- Does the capitalization clearly describe the necessity for the new operations?</li> <li>-Is there evidence that the project will avoid duplication of existing work (activities and outcomes)?</li> <li>- Is the benefit gained from the capitalization clearly identifiable?</li> </ul>		
<b>Criterion d.5.</b> Is the budget rationally distributed among partners according to the role assigned to each of them?		<b>Points 5</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Are the partners' budgets in line with their role in the project activities and outcomes?</li> <li>- Is the total budget reasonable to the foreseen activities?</li> <li>- Is the budget reasonable compared to the number of partners involved?</li> <li>- it is likely that the planned budget will be spent during the project duration</li> <li>- Is the foreseen budget balanced among partners and Countries participating in the project and not overly dominated by one partner/ or several partners from one Country?</li> </ul>		
<b>Total score</b>		<b>75</b>

<b>Quality assessment sub-questions under the 2<sup>nd</sup> step of the selection procedure</b>	
<b>Section A Consistency with the Programme Strategy</b>	
<b>Points 20</b>	
<b>Criterion a.1.</b> Does the project contribute to achieving general and specific objectives of the concerned Strategic theme in the Programme area?	<b>Points 6</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Is the background information given (problems, needs, challenges, etc) clearly identified?</li> <li>- Are the compulsory specific objectives and additional specific objectives, those not foreseen in the ToR, (if present ) well developed?</li> <li>- Does the strategic project demonstrate how it will contribute to the achievement of the general and specific objectives of the Strategic Theme?</li> <li>- Will the strategic project proposal provide a significant and sustainable contribution to solving the problems/needs identified in the relevant Strategic Theme?</li> <li>- Is it possible to achieve (time and resources, external factors) the objectives within the project lifetime?</li> <li>- How well are the target groups relevant to the Strategic Theme defined?</li> </ul>	
<b>Criterion a.2.</b> Is the project in compliance with the relevant EU policies and the horizontal issues of the Programme and with the relevant EU rules (regulations, directives, etc.)?	<b>Points 4</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Is the project in line with the Lisbon and Gothenburg Strategies and is it clearly described how the project will contribute to these strategies?</li> <li>- Is the project coherent and compatible with the horizontal issues (e.g. equal opportunity and non discrimination, sustainable development, other as: integration, human resource development, innovation, information and communication technology...)?</li> <li>- Are the activities and results in accordance with the EU sector policies (such as regulations, directives, etc)?</li> <li>- Are the activities and results in accordance with the EUROPE 2020 STRATEGY?</li> </ul>	
<b>Criterion a.3.</b> Is the project coherent with the national policies of the Countries participating in the operation?	<b>Points 4</b>

- Is the project coherent with the relevant national policies of each of the Countries involved in the partnership also identifying relevant programming documents and regulations in the theme tackled?
- Does the project proposal provide significant and sustainable contribution to these national policies?
- Is the synergy of the project objectives with the national policies of the involved countries clearly described?
- Have the key target groups of the national public policies of the involved countries been taken into account in the project development and implementation? Will the project outcomes positively affect them?

**Criterion a.4.** Is the project coherent with the sub-national public policies relevant for the involved territories?  
Points 6

- Is the situation on the local/regional level well described?
- Is the project coherent with the relevant sub-national (regional or local) programming documents and regulations of the involved territories?
- Is the synergy of the project objectives with the sub-national (regional or local) public policies of the involved countries clearly evident?
- Does the project proposal provide significant and sustainable contribution to these sub-national (regional or local) public policies?
- Have the key target groups of the sub-national public policies of the involved countries been taken into account in the project development and implementation? Will the project outcomes positively affect them?
- Is the project complementary to the sub-national (regional or local) public policies of the involved territories, in the sense that the public intervention will add to what would otherwise be done?

***Section B: Cross-border character of the intervention***

***Points 17***

**Criterion b.1.** How many Adriatic Countries are present in the project?  
Points 5

- 6 Countries: 0 points
- 7 Countries: 3 points
- 8 Countries: 5 points

**Criterion b.2.** Are all compulsory specific objectives fully achieved in all countries, participating in the project?  
Points 6

- Is it likely that the compulsory objectives can be achieved through proposed methodology and planned activities?
- Are the impacts resulting from the compulsory objectives clearly described for all countries, participating in the project?
- Will it be possible to measure whether the compulsory specific objectives have been fully achieved in all countries, participating in the project?
- Is the proposed indicators system relevant to the compulsory objectives?
- Is it clearly evident that all territories involve in the project will benefit from the project?
- Is it likely that at least two compulsory objectives will be attained during the project life?

**Criterion b.3.** To what extent does the proposal ensure that projects are jointly developed, jointly implemented, jointly financed and that it has joint staffing?

Points 6

- Is it clearly described that the project has been jointly designed by the partners? (joint development)
- Will the activities be carried out by partners and not just run in parallel in respect of partners' tasks and responsibilities? (joint implementation)
- Are links between what is happening in each territory, involved in the project, clearly made (interlinked) and the project activities really and efficiently shared (joint implementation)?
- Does the project not duplicate functions on the understanding that each partner has a defined role and

allocated staff? (joint staffing)

- Is the joint management structure (one joint project manager, one joint financial manager, etc.) responsible for the implementation of the activities clearly described? (joint staffing)

- Is the project budget realistically allocated among partners according to the foreseen activities? (joint financing)

### **Section C: Quality of the proposed partnership**

#### **Points 25**

**Criterion c.1.** Does the Lead Beneficiary have experience in cross-border or other international project management and sufficient capacities to ensure the good functioning of the project and coordination of a cross-border partnership?

Points 5

- Does the Lead Beneficiary have the technical capacities to ensure a sound management of a cross-border project and of a real joint partnership?

- Does the Lead Beneficiary have already project management experience in previous and/or current cross border and international projects?

- Does the Lead Beneficiary have territorial and institutional competence in the matters addressed in the project?

- Does the Lead Beneficiary have the capacities and the experience to ensure the sustainability of the project results?

- Is the Lead Beneficiary really in charge of the project coordination and responsible for administrative and financial management of the project?

**Criterion c.2.** Is the partnership able to disclose results and impacts in the whole Programme area?

Points 5

- Is the partnership able to disseminate the project outputs in the whole Programme area?

- Is it likely that partners are able to implement the communication activities in the whole Programme area?

- Is the partnership able to ensure the usability of project results in the whole Programme area?

- Are the project results relevant and transferable to the whole Programme area?

- Does the project seek to reinforce local ownership of project benefits, introduce project practises and results in everyday practice or further strengthen the institutional framework of the project?

**Criterion c.3.** Does the partnership have competence in relation to the Strategic Theme concerned and the capacity to propose, set up and implement policies and strategies for the territories addressed?

Points 5

- Do ALL Beneficiaries have technical capacities (the human resources, equipments, budget) to ensure good implementation of a cross-border project?

- Do ALL Beneficiaries have competences in the field of action of the project proposal, gained from the previous and/or current experience of cross-border cooperation projects and/or in international cooperation?

- Does the partnership have territorial and institutional competence in the matters addressed in the project?

- Are ALL Beneficiaries the right players according to the their institutional, administrative and technical competences in the Strategic Theme concerned and according to the project objectives and expected results?

- Is the proposed partnership able to set up and implement the policies and strategies for the territories addressed?

**Criterion c.4.** Does the partnership have capacity of target groups and stakeholders mobilization and of awareness raising and spreading of achievements in the territories, participating in the project?

Points 5

- Are target groups' and stakeholders' needs well defined in the project?

- Has the partnership capacity to address those policy makers and other stakeholders that are not involved as project partners but are essential for the institutional sustainability of results?

- Does the partnership have capacity of managing dissemination and awareness raising initiatives/campaigns within the field of competence of a partner?

- Does the partnership have resources and skills for spreading the project results beyond the partnership, and own communication tools and/or structured media contacts?

- Are relevant EU institutions addressed in the project?

**Criterion c.5.** Is the partnership harmonious, well balanced and complementary in terms of representativeness, competences and active involvement in the project activities per Country regarding the Strategic Theme concerned?

Points 5

- Is the partnership balanced, as regards the activities per Country and not overly dominated by one partner or partners from one Country?
- Is the number of partners balanced per Country participating in the project?
- Do partners per each Country participating in the project have complementary territorial and institutional competences?
- Is the partnership balanced per Countries participating in the project with regard to the ability to set up and implement the policies and strategies?
- Does/Do one or more of the partners provide ONLY services of project coordination, management and communication as its/their main scope of activities in the project?

**Section D: Quality of intervention**

**Points 25**

**Criterion d.1.** Are the activities, the work plan and the timetable clear, realistic and appropriate to achieve the expected results and the objectives of the project?

Points 9

- Is there a clear and factual description of the work plan and related activities?
- Are the proposed methodology and the planned activities relevant and consistent to the Strategic Theme?
- Are all the activities within the work packages needed and not overlapping?
- Are the identified activities most suitable for the achievement of the objectives of the Strategic Theme?
- Is there a logical link between the foreseen activities, the work packages and the project's objectives?
- Are the technical work packages logically inter-related?
- Are outputs and results concrete, realistic (achievable) and quantifiable?
- Do the project's results provide a significant and sustainable contribution to solving the problem identified?
- Is it feasible that the project will complete its activities in the proposed time?

**Criterion d.2** Are tasks, activities and results clearly and appropriately distributed among the Beneficiaries according to their territorial and institutional competences?

Points 6

- Is the relevance of the chosen partnership in relation to their territorial and institutional competences clearly described?
- Is the real benefit of each partner and territory involved in the project from the planned activities clear?
- Is the partnership balanced as regards the tasks, the activities and not overly dominated by one partner or partners from one Country?
- Do the territorial and institutional competences of the partners correspond with the descriptions of their main activities in the project?
- Is there an appropriate balance of partners with respect to the levels of institutional competences (national, regional and local), sectors, territory?
- Are the objectives, outputs, results and activities really shared among Beneficiaries?

**Criterion d.3.** Is the project added value clearly identifiable in relation to the specific problems the project is addressed to?

Points 3

- Is the project an addition to projects already implemented in the programme area?
- Do the project results represent new solutions that go beyond the existing practice present in the participating countries?
- How significant is the impact of the results on the Programme area?

**Criterion d.4.** Does the project establish an organized and operational management system, able to ensure the

adequate coordination of the partnership, the monitoring and evaluation of the activities progress, and the communication and publicity of the operation?

Points 3

- Are management structures, the procedure for decision making and monitoring well described and in line with the project size, duration and needs? Are they clear, transparent and fair?
- Does the project management system include regular meetings among project partners, clear responsibilities for each partner involved and a transparent internal communication system?
- Are the communication activities in line with project theme, objectives and expected results?

**Criterion d.5.** Do the project activities and results have the concrete and realistic possibility to have a follow up after the end of the Programme contribution?

Points 4

- Are the activities regarding the follow up of the project after its closure clearly defined?
- Is the realization of those activities realistic?
- Do the partners have institutional and technical competences for the continuation of these activities after the project's closure?
- Is it likely if these activities will be financed after the project closure?

**Section E: Budget of the project**

**Points 13**

**Criterion e.1.** Does the project budget represent value for money?

Points 7

- Is the total budget reasonable compared to the foreseen activities and the number of partners involved?
- Are the partners' budgets coherent to their role in the project activities?
- Are the financial resources planned to produce the outputs (goods, services, etc.) in proportion to the benefit obtained from them (cost/benefit)?
- Are all costs envisaged necessary for the realization of project activities and achievement of project objectives?
- Is budget allocated to each project partner and territories involved in the project justified and correctly quantified in relation to the tasks and financial capacities of each of them?
- Are the spending forecasts realistic and correctly timed for the project duration?
- Are costs clearly and realistically quantified? Is budget for the cross-border investments and equipments (if present) reasonable? Is the need for cross-border investments and equipments (if present) properly justified?

**Criterion e.2.** Are the estimated expenditures rationally quantified for the full and satisfactory implementation of the foreseen activities?

Points 6

- Is there a clear link between project work plan and cost-effective use of resources?
- Are costs categories well balanced relating to the size and the financial capacities of each partner?
- Are there any excessive costs within budget lines and if so are they justified in the Application form (e.g. external expertise is lower than staff costs, travel costs are in line with proposed activities, etc.)?
- Are the partners' budgets allocated for WP1 management appropriate in relation to the other WPs and reasonable according to the foreseen activities (e.g. WP management max 20 % total cost; content WPs should have the major budget allocations, etc). If not, is it justified in the Application Form?
- Are the costs proportional to the duration of the project?
- Is the level of details provided sufficient to demonstrate the correspondence of the budget to the activities?

<b>Total score</b>	<b>100</b>
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