

Protocol

of the 6th Monitoring Committee Meeting

for the Interreg V-A Slovakia-Hungary Cooperation Programme
27th of June 2017, Budapest

Chair of the Meeting:

Zsigmond Perényi/Nikoletta Horváth

I.

Approval of the Agenda

Presentation of the purpose of the meeting

Presented by: Zsigmond Perényi

I/1) The Monitoring Committee

approves the Agenda of the 6th Monitoring Committee for the Interreg V-A Slovakia-Hungary Cooperation Programme 27th of June 2017 in Košice with no conditions.

II.

Current status of SKHU/1601 Call for Proposals assessment

Discussion and decision on projects submitted in Priority Axis 1 and Priority Axis 2

Presented by: Csilla Veres/Zsigmond Perényi

II/1) The Monitoring Committee

acknowledges the summary of the formal and eligibility evaluation of Priority Axis 1 and Priority Axis 2 as it is texted in the document *Summary-of-PA1_and_PA2_assessment_b1-05.doc*¹.

Based on the proposals of the MC members, the following measures are recommended to be taken into account in the assessment process of project applications in the future calls for proposals which are going to be forwarded to the MC for approval:

Managing Authority:

- Introduction of quality assessment criteria to be evaluated by regions – already introduced in PA3 (Call for TAPE, see also agenda point V.).

¹ The result of the Complaint Board meeting held on 26th of June 2017 was incorporated into the document.

- The calculation of summarised score for the project proposal in case of three quality assessments is proposed be changed from the average of the two scores that are closest to each other to average of all three scores assigned to the project proposal.
- Quality assessment process is to be improved and modified before launching next calls for proposals. During the development of the improvements in the quality assessment process technical meetings will be organized with possibility of participation of each MC member interested.

National Authority:

- Project applications planned to be assigned to quality assessors based on drawing method.
- Panel of experts is proposed to be introduced as a final step of the quality assessment. After the quality assessment of project applications is finished by quality assessors, panel of experts is to be organized. Panel consists of representatives of MA, NA, JS (and possibly MC members – securing the transparency and the impartiality of MC members) and quality assessors. The aim of panel of experts is presentation of the result of assessment by quality assessors and formulating final recommendation based on professional debate among the participants about the project applications.

Bratislava county:

- To involve the county experts in the quality assessment.
- In case of third quality assessment it is proposed to count the average of scores from all three scores assigned to the project proposal.
- To increase the difference between scores assigned to the project proposal by quality assessors as bases for the third assessment from 15 to 20.

Košice county:

- Panel of experts is proposed to be introduced as a final step of the quality assessment.
- To involve the county experts in the quality assessment (e.g. from the point of view of the regional relevance and the contribution to the needs of the counties, identification of territorial needs).

European Commission

- During evaluation and selection of project applications transparency and the impartiality of MC members must be secured.

II/2) The Monitoring Committee

suspended the decision on the agenda point concerning the Ranking list of project proposals submitted in the 1st Call for proposals for the Priority Axis 1 and Priority Axis 2 as it is texted in the documents:

Project-overview+ranking-list_SKHU-1601_SO11_v1-01.xls

Project-overview+ranking-list_SKHU-1601_PA2_v1-01.xls

The agenda point II/2 is suspended until the next Monitoring Committee plenary session to be organized in July 2017. Based on the request of the MC members the Audit Authority will be requested by the MA to provide official written standpoint of Rule 2, point 1) letter I) of the Rules of procedures of the Monitoring Committee: *“Regarding selection of projects/operations the MC: I) is responsible for selection of submitted project applications according to the approved criteria for selecting the operations and taking the recommendations complied by the Joint Secretariat (hereinafter referred to as the JS) into account;”* and statement *“The ranking list shall be the basis for the debate and decision of the MA on the funding of project proposal”* listed in Chapter 3.6 Scoring of project proposals of the Assessment Manual (page 15). The AA will be requested to provide the official written standpoint towards the legitimacy and rightfulness on the selection process proposed and discussed during the plenary session as follows:

1. following the same rules and the same approach as the members of the Monitoring Committee maintained when selecting the projects in priority axis 4 was proposed by the management bodies saying that based on the assessment manual and rules of procedure, the Monitoring Committee has the right to approve, approve with condition, reject projects or put them on reserve list but the scores in ranking table shall be the basis also in terms of order.
2. another interpretation was raised by the members saying that they do not see explicitly written that they do not have the right to select any projects reaching the 65 scores and the ranking list in only the guidance for their discussion and selection.

During the discussion it was also raised that e.g. in Interreg V-A Austria-Hungary Programme the assessment manual sets that the Monitoring Committee members can “cherry-pick” from the list.

According to the mandate of the Monitoring Committee the Managing Authority suspended the decision until the official standpoint is issued by the Audit Authority.

Additional comments of the MC members:

Komárom-Esztergom county:

- Although the ranking list is not reflecting in all cases the region’s preferences but the evaluation process was in line with the procedure set in the Assessment Manual, the Applicant’s Manual and relevant guiding documents. The ranking list is the base for decision but projects on the ranking list can be approved or rejected depending on the professional viewpoint of the MC.

National Authority:

- Based on the ranking list the projects with the highest scores are proposed to be approved.

European Commission

- The assessment procedure was conducted in accordance with the predefined evaluation procedure set in the Assessment Manual and in other ruling documents.
- MC members have access to the application package and can deliver their opinion on the procedures before launching the call for proposals. Evaluation rules are prohibited to be modified retroactively because it harms the principle of transparency and jeopardise the overall audit of the programme.

III.

Presentation about ESIF Open Data Platform

Presented by: Zsolt Szokolai

III/1) The Monitoring Committee

acknowledges the presentation about ESIF Open Data Platform with no conditions.

IV.

Discussion on and approval of the Annual Implementation Report of the Interreg V-A Slovakia-Hungary Cooperation Programme

Presented by: Nikoletta Horváth

IV/1) The Monitoring Committee

approves the Annual Implementation Report

as texted in the document *AIR_2016_v1-13.doc* with the following remarks:

- MA expected that the upcoming Calls for proposals (excluding the Call for TAPE and second round of Call for SPF Umbrella project proposals and second round of Call for the B-light Scheme Project Proposals) will be launched via IMIS.

V.

Discussion on and approval of the Application Package of the Call for Proposals of Promoting sustainable and quality employment and supporting labour mobility (Priority Axis 3)

Presented by: Nikoletta Horváth

V/1) The Monitoring Committee

acknowledges the Application Package of the Call for Proposals of Promoting sustainable and quality employment and supporting labour mobility (Priority Axis 3)

as it is texted in the documents

Call-for-proposal_SKHU-1703_b2-38.doc

Applicants-Manual_SKHU-1703_b1-23.doc

Application-form_SKHU-1703-p1_b2-40.doc

Application-form_SKHU-1703-p2_b1-21.xls

Quality-AG_SKHU-1703_v1-11.xls

Guide-for-quality-assessment_SKHU-1703_b1-07.doc

with the following recommendations and remarks:

Košice county:

- To examine the possibility of allowing other state aid options (e.g. regional aid) besides the de minimis for micro enterprises.
- To examine the possibility for measuring the number of created working places by enterprises per grant received by enterprises not grant received by the whole TAPE.
- To specify a “length of existence” eligibility condition for enterprises (if any).
- To increase the scores of quality evaluation criteria “Target area is in less developed region”, “Territorial needs reflect on the results of the analyses and the identified endogenous potential” and “Other employment initiatives are integrated into the TAPE on strategic level”.
- To involve the county experts in the quality assessment.

Bratislava county:

- To involve the county experts in the quality assessment.

Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg county:

- Regional scoring: proposal for the scoring regional strategy 0-10 and the MA should develop the description of each score.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary:

- Less developed region should be supported with higher scores.

Managing Authority:

- The Call for TAPE from continuously open will be changed to the closed one with one final date for submission of TAPE proposals. Based on the results further decisions can be made (e.g. possible reallocation from PA3 to other programme priorities).
- The quality assessment criteria to be evaluated by county experts and scores to be awarded will be examined by MA, NA, JS and updated evaluation grid will be forwarded to the MC for approval at the upcoming MC.
- The separation of tasks is needed concerning the counties when regional experts are involved in the quality assessment in order to avoid conflicts of interest. The proposal for minimum criteria and impartiality of the regional experts will be included in the next call for assessors to be involved in the quality assessment of TAPES.

- Regional experts will be appointed based on the location of the projects included in TAPES.
- According to the standpoint of the EC the counties have to point out and the programme shall publish the regional documents serving as guidance for regional experts involved in the quality assessment and also the applicants regarding the territorial needs in order to provide equal treatment and transparency.
- The number of created working places by enterprises per received grants for TAPE will be examined and proposal presented to MC at next plenary session. Applicant's manual shall be modified accordingly.
- Based on the previous discussions and recommendations raised by the counties, the following steps were already proposed to be introduced in the quality assessment of TAPE:
 - The difference of scores awarded by two quality assessors towards project proposal as bases for necessity of third assessment was raised from 15 to 20.
 - Total score awarded to project proposal in case of third assessment is counted as average from scores given by all three assessors not only from the two closest ones.

EC:

- Documents serving as the basis for the quality assessment performed by county assessors shall be transparently published within the application package in order the Applicants have the possibility to learn these documents they shall be in line with. Also the justification coming from the county experts regarding the relevant parts shall refer to these documents.

Due to the number and character of the recommendations raised by the MC members, it is proposed to include this Agenda point for discussion at the next MC plenary session.

V/2) The Monitoring Committee

acknowledges the Communication plan of the Call for Proposals of Promoting sustainable and quality employment and supporting labour mobility (Priority Axis 3)

as it is texted in the document *TAPE_communication campaign_v1-01.doc* with the following conditions:

- Bratislava county: Information Points will participate on the Information days².

V/3) The Monitoring Committee

acknowledges the Result of express of interest of Promoting sustainable and quality

² The comments are incorporated into the document (TAPE_communication campaign_v1-02).

employment and supporting labour mobility (Priority Axis 3)

as it is texted in the document *Result_of_express-of-interest.pdf* with no conditions.

VI.**Discussion on and approval of the modification of the Assessment Manual of the programme, introduction of the assessment of projects under Promoting sustainable and quality employment and supporting labour mobility (Priority Axis 3)**

Presented by: Nikoletta Horváth

VI/1 The Monitoring Committee

acknowledges the Assessment Manual of the Interreg V-A SK-HU programme as it is texted in the document *Assessment-Manual_Interreg-V-A-SKHU_v2-04.doc* with the relevant conditions stated under Agenda point V.

Due to the number and character of the recommendations raised by the MC members, it is proposed to include this Agenda point for discussion at the next MC plenary session.

VII.**Discussion on and approval of the revised strategies for implementation of Small Project Fund submitted in the 1st round of Call for SPF Umbrella Projects (SKHU/1701)**

Presented by: Nikoletta Horváth

VII/1 The Monitoring Committee

approves the revised strategies for implementation of Small Project Fund submitted in the 1st round of Call for SPF Umbrella Projects as it is texted in the documents:

SKHU/1701/1.1/001:

ETA1_Annex 1 - modified version of the Strategy for implementation of Small Project Fund.pdf

ETA1_Annex 2 - modified Application Form (5,13).pdf

ETA1_Annex 3 - Budget justification.pdf

ETA1_Annex 4 - answer to the conditions and recommendations.pdf

SKHU/1701/1.1/002:

WETA1_Evaluation_Annex 1.doc

WETA1_Evaluation_Annex 2.doc

WETA1_Evaluation_Annex 3.doc

WETA1_Strategy_revizia_FINAL.pdf

SKHU/1701/4.1/003:

ETA4_Annex 1 - modified version of the Strategy for implementation of Small Project Fund.pdf

ETA4_Annex 2 - modified Application Form (5,13).pdf

ETA4_Annex 3 - Budget justification.pdf

ETA4_Annex 4 - answer to the conditions and recommendations.pdf

SKHU/1701/4.1/004:

WETA4_Evaluation_Annex 1.doc
WETA4_Evaluation_Annex 2.doc
WETA4_Evaluation_Annex 3.doc
WETA4_Strategy_Revizia_FINAL_01.pdf

with reflections towards the revised strategies and conditions as texted in the documents distributed with the protocol from the 6th Monitoring Committee plenary session:

SKHU/1701/1.1/001:

ETA1_fulfillment-of-conditions_Annex1
ETA1_fulfillment-of-conditions_Annex2
ETA1_fulfillment-of-conditions_Annex3

SKHU/1701/1.1/002:

WETA1_fulfillment-of-conditions_Annex1
WETA1_fulfillment-of-conditions_Annex2
WETA1_fulfillment-of-conditions_Annex3

SKHU/1701/4.1/003:

ETA4_fulfillment-of-conditions_Annex1
ETA4_fulfillment-of-conditions_Annex2
ETA4_fulfillment-of-conditions_Annex3

SKHU/1701/4.1/004:

WETA4_fulfillment-of-conditions_Annex1
WETA4_fulfillment-of-conditions_Annex2
WETA4_fulfillment-of-conditions_Annex3

summarized in the document *SPF_Summary-of-fulfillment-of-conditions_v1-03* presented on the spot at the plenary session and with the following additional conditions:

- The name of the decision making body of the SPF is Monitoring Subcommittee. The Umbrella Projects must reflect this term in all relevant documents to have a unified approach and common understanding.

EC:

- The Umbrella Project holders must follow the concept note issued by the EC when developing the ruling documents.
- Simplified costs options for the small beneficiaries are obligatory elements to be introduced in SPF.

Bratislava county:

- Monitoring Subcommittee must have the right to approve the Call for small projects proposals.

- Regions must be involved in the quality assessment process of the small project applications.

VIII.

Discussion on and approval of the Call for Proposals and evaluation grids of the 2nd round of Call for Small Project Fund Umbrella Projects (SKHU/1704)

Presented by: Nikoletta Horváth

VIII/1 The Monitoring Committee

approves the Call for Proposals and evaluation grids of the 2nd round of Call for Small Project Fund Umbrella Projects (SKHU/1704) as it is texted in the documents:

Call-for-Proposals_SKHU-1704_b1-08.doc³

Annex_I_SPF_Letter-of-consent_b1-00.doc

Annex_II_SPF_Declaration-on-identical-versions_b1-00.doc

Annex_III-IV_SPF_AEG_SKHU-1704_b1-02.xls

Annex_V_SPF_QG_SKHU-1704_b1-04.xls

with the following conditions:

Košice county:

- The Call for small projects proposals can be opened by the SPF LBs after the decision of the MC on approval of umbrella projects is made and the MA issued the Declaration on Commitment.
- The cases for the veto right of the MA is proposed to be specified in the Call.

³ The listed comments are incorporated into the document (Call-for-Proposals_SKHU-1704_b1-11).

EC:

- General guiding principles (listed in the “guiding principles for the selection of small projects” section shall be reconsidered and more emphasizes has to be given to basic guiding rules listed under “Further principles” in the Call for Proposals.

VIII/2 The Monitoring Committee

acknowledges the Summary of Small Project Fund assessment as it is texted in the document *Summary-of-SPF-assessment_v1-00.doc* with no conditions.

IX.

Information on N+3 calculation and fulfilment of performance framework according to current status.

Information on current status of categories under the code of dimensions.

Presented by: Nikoletta Horváth

IX/1) The information on N+3 calculation and fulfilment of performance framework according to current status as texted in the document *Calculator-of-N+3_targets_SKHU_v1-01.xls* can not be approved as EGESIF guidance is under development.

IX/2) The information on current status of categories under the code of dimensions as texted in the document *Performance-framework_2017_v1-05.doc* is not relevant as the agenda point 2 is suspended and postponed until the next MC plenary session.

X.

Any other business

X/1) The Monitoring Committee

acknowledges the information provided by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary **regarding the current status of planned road infrastructure development** in the programme area as follows:

- The planned road infrastructure development are listed in the government resolution 1007/2016 (I. 18.) on cross-border road infrastructure development between 2014-2020⁴;
- Projects with TEN-T relevance will be submitted in autumn 2017 to PA2 CfP.

⁴ 1007/2016. (I. 18.) Korm. határozat a 2014-2020. évek közötti határ menti közúti infrastruktúra-fejlesztésekről.