Project Application Guidelines

3rd Call for Proposals:

Restricted Call for Strategic Project Proposal

under Priority Axis 2 – IP 5b

COOPERATION PROGRAMME INTERREG V-A GREECE – BULGARIA 2014-2020

CCI: 2014TC16RFCB022

Version 1.0

December 2016

Table of Contents

List of Tables

Abbreviations

AA	Audit Authority
CA	Certifying Authority
CBIP	Cross Border Info Point
CP	Co-operation Programme
CP GR-BG 2014-2020	Cooperation Programme Greece-Bulgaria 2014-2020
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ETC	European Territorial Cooperation
EU	European Union
FLC	First Level Control
GoA	Group of Auditors
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
JS	Joint Secretariat
LB	Lead Beneficiary
MA	Managing Authority
MC	Monitoring Committee
MCS	Management and Control System
MEDT	Ministry of Economy, Development and Tourism
MRDPW	Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works
NGO	Non-governmental Organizations
PA	Paying Authority
PA	Priority Axis
PB	Project Beneficiary
R&D	Research and Development
SME	Small & Medium Sized Enterprises
TEN	Trans-European Network

Glossary

Amount unduly paid – Any expenditure not corresponding to delivered products or services of equal value, according to the expenditure terms of the Subsidy Contract, that has been paid by EU and national contributions provided to the beneficiary.

Audit Authority (AA) – The institution responsible for verifying the effective functioning of the management and control system of the co-operation programme. In this context, the AA shall be responsible for carrying out the functions envisaged in articles 25 of Regulation 1299/2013 and 127 of Regulation 1303/2013 and will be assisted by a Group of Auditors (GoA) comprised by a representative from each member state in the CP.

Beneficiary – means a public or private body responsible for initiating or initiating and implementing operations. The project participant, who takes the overall responsibility for the application and the implementation of the entire project, is called ***Lead Beneficiary (LB)*** and corresponds to the term "lead beneficiary" used in article 13 par.1 of Regulation 1299/2013.

Certifying Authority (CA) – National, regional or local public authority or body, designated by the Member States, for certifying statements of expenditure and applications for payment before being sent to the Commission. In this context, the CA shall carry out the functions envisaged in article 127, of Reg. 1303/2013 and article 25 of Reg. 1299/2013.

Controllers – bodies or persons responsible for verifying the legality and regularity of the expenditure declared by each beneficiary participating in the project, according to Article 23 of Reg. 1299/2013.

EU contribution - The amount of the eligible expenditure of a project that is financed by the European Union.

Financial Correction – The cancellation of the entire or part of the National and Community contribution to an operation, in the context of its co-financing by the CP, which is reciprocal to the detected irregularity.

Irregularity - means any breach of Union law, or of national law relating to its application, resulting from an act or omission by an economic operator involved in the implementation of the ESI Funds, which has or would have the effect of prejudicing the budget of the Union by charging an unjustified item of expenditure to the budget of the Union.

Monitoring Committee (MC) - The Member States set up the Monitoring Committee for every Operational Programme, in accordance to the Regulations.

The Monitoring Committee performs the duties that are defined in article 49 of Regulation 1303/2013.

Joint Secretariat (JS) – The body set up by the MA after consultation with the Member States represented in the Programme area, according to Article 23 par.2, Regulation 1299/2013, to assist the Programme bodies (MA, CA, AA) in carrying out their respective duties.

Management Information System (MIS) – The management system for recording and saving, in computerised Form, accounting records for each project under the Operational Programme.

Managing Authority (MA) – National, regional or local public authority or public or private body designated by the Member States responsible for managing and implementing the operational Programme, in accordance to the principle of sound financial management, carrying out the functions set out in Article 72 and 125 of Regulation 1303/2013 and article 23 of Regulation 1299/2013.

National Authority (NA) - The institution supporting the activity of the MA in implementing the Programme in the other(s) participating country (-ies)

National Co-financing - The non-EU contribution to the projects' budget provided either by the State budget of each participating country or provided as Own Contribution by the Project Beneficiaries.

Operational Programme (OP) – Document submitted by the Member States and adopted by the Commission, setting out a development strategy with a coherent set of priorities, to be carried out with the aid of a Fund, or, in the case of the INTERREG V-A 'Greece-Bulgaria' 2014-2020 Cooperation Programme, with the aid of the ERDF.

Operation - A project, contract, action or group of projects selected by the managing authorities of the programmes concerned, or under their responsibility, that contributes to the objectives of a priority or priorities.

Project Beneficiaries (PBs) - Beneficiaries participating in an operation as beneficiaries.

Recovery – The refunding by the beneficiary of the unduly paid amounts as a result of controls and audits.

1. Introduction

These are the Project Application Guidelines, which will serve as an essential reference document for the pre-defined bodies applying for funding under the Call for Project Proposals within the framework of the Cooperation Programme INTERREG V-A 'Greece-Bulgaria' 2014-2020 (hereinafter the Programme).

The Project Application Guidelines include information about:

1. The development of a project idea/proposal;
2. The submission procedure;
3. Project Partnership – Eligibility of Beneficiaries;
4. Project Budget – Eligibility of Expenditure;
5. Project Duration;
6. The Evaluation procedure;

It is recommended that the pre-defined applicants submitting the proposal under the Programme should examine carefully, besides the present manual, the Cooperation Programme Document, which is available on the website of the Programme www.greece-bulgaria.eu and of the Managing Authority of European Territorial Cooperation Programmes in Greece (hereinafter the Managing Authority) at www.interreg.gr.

Moreover, they may contact the Joint Secretariat (hereinafter JS) to receive support in planning their proposal in accordance to the strategic aims of the Programme.

The "Project Application Guidelines" documents are part of the Applicant's Package of this Call for proposals launched by the INTERREG V-A 'Greece-Bulgaria' 2014-2020 Cooperation Programme.

The Applicants' Package contains the following documents:

1. Call for Proposals
2. Project Application Guidelines
3. User Guide for the online submission of the project proposal
4. Application Form (template)
5. Detailed description of the project (template)
6. Partnership Declaration (template)
7. Declaration of not generating revenue (template)
8. State Aid Declaration (template)
9. Justification of budget and Guidelines (template)
10. Programme and Project Implementation Manual with Annexes

The original Applicants' Package is provided only in electronic format and can be found on the Programme's and Managing Authority's websites as mentioned above.

2. Proposal Development

2.1 Priority Axes, Investment priorities, Synergies, Indicative activities

The present call for proposals is open for one (1) of the Programme's Priority Axes as follows:

Table 1: Open Priority Axis for the 3rd Call for Proposals

Priority Axis	2. A Sustainable and Climate adaptable Cross-Border area
Thematic Objective	05 – Promoting climate change adaptation, risk prevention and management
Investment priority	5b – Promoting investment to address specific risks, ensuring disaster resilience and developing disaster management systems
Specific Objective	2.1. To improve CB cooperation on flood risk management plans at river basin level.
Targeted Interventions	o Infrastructure measures for flood protection for river Strouma/Strymon and for lake Kerkini o Infrastructure measures for flood protection for river Mesta/Nestos. o Infrastructure measures for flood protection for river Maritza/Evros/Arda o Impact assessment and floods protection co-operation o Supply of specific equipment

2.2 How to define the content

Programme requirements and project ideas have to be **aligned**. The project needs to collaborate on cross border activities that directly relate to addressing the priorities and objectives, as set out in the operational Programme.

Steps to follow:

1. The project needs to strongly demonstrate its strategic cross border focus and show the true spirit of collaboration and according to Art.12 par 4 in Reg.1299/2013 *"Beneficiaries shall cooperate in the development and implementation of operations. In addition, they shall cooperate in the staffing or the financing of operations, or in both"*. In addition, keep in mind that the aim of cross border cooperation is to integrate areas divided by national borders that face common problems that require common solutions.
2. The project should take into account one or more horizontal issues of the Programme: sustainable development, equal opportunities and non-discrimination, equality between men and women.
3. If the project proposal includes infrastructure, it should take into account the Member state's risk assessments made in compliance with EU Civil protection legislation (Decision 1313/2013/EC on the Union civil protection mechanism) for the evaluation of the project's vulnerability to disaster risks, including longer-term expected effects from climate change.

4. The project proposal should meet the requirements of the General Regulation (Regulation (EU) 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down common provisions on the ERDF, the ESF, the Cohesion Fund, the EAFRD and the, article 7 concerning the implementation of the principles of non-discrimination and accessibility to persons with disabilities.
5. The project proposal should comply with Article 65, par.6 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 stating: “Operations shall not be selected for support by the ESI Funds where they have been physically completed or fully implemented before the application for funding under the Programme is submitted by the beneficiary to the managing authority, irrespective of whether all related payments have been made by the beneficiary”. A project proposal can include activities that have started before the signature of the Subsidy Contract.
6. The project should complement and not duplicate other projects being carried out in the Programme area. Follow on projects financed from past INTERREG Programmes is not enough. Projects need to show how they build on past experiences by bringing in something new.
7. The project has to be realistic rather than attractive. Set the objectives as concrete, as quantifiable and as realistic as they could be.
8. Map out how objectives could be realized through a detailed action plan. The more precisely the goals are formulated the more effectively the project runs.
9. Demonstrate common added value. Results can also be of relevance to the wider cooperation area and can potentially be transferred to other parts of the region.
10. Have a regular contact with Programme management structures – Managing Authority and/or Joint Secretariat for clarifications on Programme priorities/objectives/activities.

***Attention*!**

All beneficiaries need to elaborate more the content of each deliverable and be more precise about the actions that will take place (e.g. material to be produced, content of the studies, etc.) in the Justification of the Budget.

If necessary, the beneficiaries are free to submit any additional supporting descriptions, pictures, studies, or other material for better defining the content and scope of the deliverables, as well as the budget justifications (e.g. offers, pricelists etc.).

3. Submission procedure

In order to submit a project proposal, applicants must refer to the Applicant's Package and to all relevant documents. The project proposal should be submitted according to the Project Application Guidelines and the Call for Proposals.

The Project Proposal must be submitted electronically to the Programme's Managing Authority/ Joint Secretariat (JS) via MIS.

A Project Proposal consists of the digital version of the following documents that have to be uploaded into the MIS of the programme:

A. Electronic submission of the project proposal into the MIS of the programme, including the "Project Detailed Description" that should be uploaded as a separate document in PDF format, stamped and signed by the Legal Representative of the Lead Beneficiary.

To facilitate applicants' familiarity with the electronic environment of the MIS, a model for the application form is attached, although it is not demanded to fill it in and submit it in paper version.

The beneficiaries are strongly advised to fill in the template of the Application Form prior to inserting the relevant data onto the respective fields in the MIS.

B. The digital version of the following documents that have to be uploaded into the MIS of the programme:

1. The "Partnership Declaration" (standard form provided), stamped and signed by all the participating beneficiaries, uploaded in PDF format.

2. Annex 1: "Strategic Scope of the Project and Sustainability", stamped and signed by the Legal Representative of the Lead Beneficiary, uploaded in PDF format.

3. The "Declaration of not generating revenues" (standard form provided) completed, stamped and signed by each beneficiary separately, uploaded in PDF format. In case of revenue generating project, a cost - benefit analysis should be attached, using the "Guide to Cost-benefit Analysis of Investment Projects - Economic appraisal tool for Cohesion Policy 2014-2020" at http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/studies/pdf/cba_guide.pdf.

4. The "State aid declaration" (standard form provided) completed, stamped and signed by each beneficiary separately, uploaded in PDF format.

5. Decision of the designated body or similar decision by the Legal Representative of each Project Beneficiary, according to the respective national legislation, stating its agreement for submitting the particular project proposal, signed and stamped, uploaded in PDF format.

6. The "Justification of Budget Costs" (standard form provided), completed for the total project budget, uploaded in Excel format.

7. The relevant Bills of Quantities and Costs (BoQ) to the foreseen infrastructure activities by the beneficiaries, which must be stamped and signed by the Legal Representative, uploaded in PDF format.

The JS may also request additional documentation for clarification of the above issues, during the evaluation procedure.

All the required documents of the proposal must be electronically submitted at the latest until the …/…/2016, 23:59 local time (Eastern European standard time). In case the proposal is submitted after the above date and time it will not be considered as eligible.

4. Project Partnership - Eligibility of Beneficiaries

4.1 General principles

A project should include at least one Beneficiary from each country (Greece and Bulgaria) and according to Art.12 par 4 in Reg.1299/2013 *“Beneficiaries shall cooperate in the development and implementation of operations. In addition, they shall cooperate in the staffing or the financing of operations, or in both”*.

All applicants shall be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the project with their Beneficiaries, not acting as an intermediary.

In order to be considered for funding, all beneficiaries should ensure that they are entitled to public co-financing. The managerial adequacy of Beneficiaries will be examined through the Project Selection Criteria.

Specifically for the present call, the eligible beneficiaries are as follows:

Table 2: Eligible Beneficiaries for the 3rd Call for Proposals

Priority Axis/Investment Priority	Beneficiaries
**Priority Axis 2: A sustainable and climate adaptable cross border area / ** 5b – promoting investment to address specific risks, ensuring disaster resilience and developing disaster management systems	o District Administration of Blagoevgrad o District Administration of Haskovo o District Administration of Kardjali o District Administration of Smolyan o Region of Central Macedonia o Region of Eastern Macedonia – Thrace o Decentralized administration of Macedonia - Thrace

For the Project proposal, **a Lead Beneficiary** shall be designated, with the capacity to start the implementation of the project as quickly as possible, to maintain and further specify in detail the strategic, holistic and interdisciplinary, synthetic and synergy creating, character of the intervention, to exploit the immediate results of the intervention [in a way that this can (a) act as a demonstration project for future mainstreaming, (b) acquire a wider sectoral scope or territorial coverage], and to concentrate all available managerial, financing and know-how resources and focus them on the project.

4.2 Beneficiaries

4.2.1 The Lead beneficiary

The Lead Beneficiary shall:

(a) lay down the arrangements with other beneficiaries in an agreement comprising provisions that, inter alia, guarantee the sound financial management of the funds allocated to the operation, including the arrangements for recovering amounts unduly paid;

(b) assume responsibility for ensuring implementation of the entire operation;

(c) ensure that expenditures presented by all beneficiaries have been incurred in implementing the operation and correspond to the activities agreed between all the beneficiaries, and are in accordance with the document provided by the managing authority pursuant to Article 12(5) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013;

(d) ensure that the expenditures presented by other beneficiaries have been verified by a controller or controllers where this verification is not carried out by the managing authority pursuant to Article 23(3) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013.

If not otherwise specified in the arrangements laid down in accordance to point (a) of paragraph 2 the lead beneficiary shall ensure that the other beneficiaries receive the total amount of the contribution from the funds as quickly as possible and in full. No amount shall be deducted or withheld and no specific charge or other charge with equivalent effect shall be levied that would reduce that amount for the other beneficiaries.

4.2.2 The beneficiaries

All Beneficiaries participate in designing and implementing the project by carrying out the activities assigned to them in the approved application. The expenses generated are eligible in the same way as those incurred by the Lead Beneficiary. They must therefore, satisfy the same eligibility criteria as the ones applicable for the Lead Beneficiary.

Indicatively, the Beneficiaries’ responsibilities entail that they:

1. Ensure the implementation of the project activities under their responsibility according to the project plan and the contract signed with the Lead Beneficiary;
2. Cooperate with the other project beneficiaries in the implementation of the project, the reporting and the monitoring, as deemed necessary. Key project conclusions, changes to project strategy and other important decisions should be made jointly;
3. Prepare and submit to the Lead Beneficiary financial and progress reports, including all supporting documentation, to be used for the verification of expenses per each of the reporting periods established for the project, and ensure full cooperation and assistance, for the timely and accurate performance of verification;
4. Assume responsibility in the event of any irregularity in the expenditure they have declared, and repay the Lead Beneficiary the amounts unduly received.

The specifics pertaining to the cooperation between the lead beneficiary and the beneficiaries are defined in the Partnership Declaration (at the stage of the submission of the project proposal) and, in detail, in the Partnership Agreement (at the stage of implementation when a project is approved for funding)[1], signed by all parties involved in the partnership.

4.3 State Aid

What is State Aid?

[1]For more details on the Partnership Declaration, please see Applicant’s Package. For more details on the Partnership Agreement, please see Annex II. Partnership Agreement

According to Article 107 (ex. Article 87) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), State aid is defined as any aid granted by a Member State or through State resources in any form whatsoever which distorts or threatens to distort competition by favoring certain undertakings or the production of certain goods.

Based on this definition, it can be concluded that there is State aid only if ALL the following 5 points (cumulative criteria) are fulfilled:

1) The measure must confer a benefit or advantage on the recipient which it would not otherwise have received (which is always the case for any ETC Programme);

2) It must be granted by a Member State or through State resources (which is always the case for any ETC Programme);

3) It must selectively favor certain undertakings or the production of certain goods;

4) It must distort or threaten to distort competition;

5) It must affect trade between Member States.

The following table summarily depicts the points that have to be fulfilled.

State Aid Yes/No

The measure must confer a benefit or advantage on the recipient which it would not otherwise have received

Yes/no

It must be granted by a Member State or through State resources

Yes/no

It must selectively favor certain undertakings or the production of certain goo

Yes/no

It must distort or threaten to distort competition

Yes/no

It must affect trade between Member States

Yes/no

Who is concerned by State Aid?

An undertaking is an entity engaged in an economic activity in the context of the proposed project. It is not the legal status (public or private) but the nature of the activities that the applicant intends to implement that determines whether the State aid has to be respected or not.

An undertaking is an entity engaged in an economic activity in the context of the proposed project. Any project partner offering goods and services in the market in the context of the proposed project is thus an undertaking, regardless of its legal status, the way it is financed and whether its aim is to make profit or not.

Even if an entity provides the goods or services free of charge or is financed entirely by the state, it can be subject of the State aid rules. State aid rules apply thus to both public and private partners.

This concept of undertaking is very wide and may include SMEs, large companies, public bodies, NGOs, associations, universities, etc.

Activities carried out within the framework of statutory tasks normally performed by public authorities do not fall within the concept of an undertaking, in view of their non-business purposes and procedures, but in some cases, however, local public or administrative bodies may be considered to be similar to undertakings.

In the evaluation of the existence of a potential State aid issue, the nature of the beneficiary is therefore not relevant since, as said, even a not-profit organisation can be engaged in economic activities. In consequence**, the main element to take into account is the nature of the activities that the partner institution and the project intend to implement through the public funding**.

The main element to be assessed for state aid is the nature of the activities that the beneficiary and the project intend to implement through the public funding.

The MA/JS, in consultation with NA, will perform checks on development of state aid activities from the projects' beneficiaries. In cases of state aid activities, the Managing Authority will ensure full compliance with the De Minimis Regulation Requirements and decrease the funding accordingly, acting in compliance with the application of de minimis Regulation.

The public aid considered for the applicable de minimis ceiling comprises all aids granted by the national, regional or local authorities, regardless of whether the resources are provided from domestic sources or are partly financed by the European Union.

How to deal with State Aid

In the case of the Cooperation Programme Interreg V-A "Greece-Bulgaria 2014-2020", State aid relevant activities are financed only if they are in compliance with the de minimis Regulation.

De minimis rule

In cases for which a potential State aid issue was identified, partners apply the de minimis rule.

To benefit from the de minimis rule, aid has to satisfy all the requirements of the De Minimis Aid Regulation, including the following criteria:

- In the de minimis Regulation it has been clarified in article 3(2) that the total amount of de minimis aid granted per Member State to a single undertaking shall not exceed EUR 200 000 over a period of three fiscal years.
- The ceiling applies per Member State. Granting country of the de minimis aid will be considered the country in which the beneficiary is located.
- The ceiling will apply to the total of all public assistance considered to be de minimis aid.
- The ceiling applies to aid of all kinds, irrespective of the form it takes or the objective pursued.
- The regulation only applies to "transparent" forms of aid, which means aid for which it is possible to determine in advance the gross grant equivalent without needing to undertake a risk assessment.

The decision on whether to apply the de minimis Regulation is to be made by the applicants themselves, taking into account the information included below. Project partners should consider carefully the implications before opting for the de minimis funding.

More information can be found at:

http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/modernisation/notice_aid_en.html

The INTERACT programme has also summarised a list of questions and answers on this topic:

http://admin.interacteu.net/downloads/9263/Questions_Answers_ETC_and_State_Aid_April_2015.pdf

Applicants may also consult the relevant national authorities to obtain more specific information on rules and limitations concerning State aid.

Each applicant should fill in the State Aid declaration that is attached to the Call for proposals and in case the project is approved for funding then the beneficiary receiving funds under the de minimis rule can be asked to fill in a more detailed “de minimis declaration” provided by the Member State where it is located, in order to enable the national system of each Member State to monitor the accumulation of the de minimis aid received per beneficiary.

5. Project Budget - Eligibility of expenditure

5.1 Project Budget size for the 3rd Call forProposals

The Strategic Project Proposal must have both a leverage effect on the Programme and the ability to produce worthwhile output and results; therefore, it has to be provided with the corresponding appropriate financial means. The project budget is set up to the budget of the related investment priority: "**5b – promoting investment to address specific risks, ensuring disaster resilience and developing disaster management systems"**. Thus, the total budget available for the present call is **11.500.000,00 €** (of which **9.775.000,00 €** ERDF and **1.725.000,00 €** National co-Financing).

5.2 General Eligibility Criteria

The Regulations defining the eligibility rules of the expenditures are the following:

- Regulation 1299/2013 (European Territorial Cooperation) as in force
- Regulation 1301/2013 (European Development Fund) as in force
- Regulation 1303/2013 (Common Provisions) as in force
- Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 481/2014 of 4 March 2014 supplementing Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council with regard to specific rules on eligibility of expenditure for cooperation programmes

All applicants are strongly recommended to consult these documents before submitting the proposal and start preparing the project.

<u>Other Legal Framework documents the general rules of eligibility are the following:</u>

- ➢ Greek national legislation, as in force
- ➢ Bulgarian national legislation, as in force

As a general rule, ERDF costs shall be eligible for funding if:

- ➢ they have been incurred and paid out within the time frame in which expenditure can take place. Under no circumstances can the final date of eligibility of expenditure exceed the 31st of December 2023
- ➢ they are directly related to the project either for the development or implementation of the project and they are planned in the approved project budget;
- ➢ they follow the "real cost" principle; costs which have been actually incurred and paid by the project beneficiaries and they can be supported by original invoices or other accounting documents of equivalent probative value;
- ➢ they have been incurred in the programme area of the INTERREG V-A "Greece – Bulgaria 2014-2020" or outside the programme area according to the provisions of chapter 5.7;
- ➢ they are in line with national and EU rules;
- ➢ they are in compliance with the principles of efficiency, economy and expediency of all actions. Especially the cost/benefit ratio has to be ensured.

5.3 Period of eligibility of expenditure

The starting date for eligible expenditure is **1/1/2014**. The closing date of the eligibility period of the expenditure should be the end date of the subsidy contract in force. Under no circumstances the final date of eligibility of expenditure can exceed the **31st of December 2023.**

5.4 Project Budget Lines

The project expenditures under the Programme are divided into six budget lines. These categories are:

A. Staff;

B. Office and administration;

C. Travel and accommodation;

D. External expertise and services;

E. Equipment;

F. Infrastructure and Works.

For each budget line, a description of the expenditure that falls under the Budget Line is provided. More concrete guidance about the verification process and the audit trail to verify these expenditures (necessary documents, invoices etc.) for each budget line will be provided in the **Guidance on Management Verification document when available.**

5.4.1 Staff

Staff costs consist of costs for staff members employed by the Beneficiary organisations, as listed in the application form and who are working full time or part time on the implementation of the project.

For the 3rd **Call for Proposals**, Staff costs are calculated on a **real cost basis**.

Attention!
Staff costs do not cover the expenses of external staff; external staff should be budgeted under the "External Expertise and services" budget line.

5.4.2 Office and administrative (O&A)

They cover operating and administrative expenses of the beneficiary organisations that support delivery of project activities. According to Regulation 481/2014 the office and administration expenditure shall be limited to the following elements:

a) office rent
b) insurance and taxes related to the buildings where the staff is located and to the equipment of the office (e.g. fire, theft insurances)
c) utilities (e.g. electricity, heating, water)
d) office supplies
e) general accounting provided inside the beneficiary organisation
f) archives
g) maintenance, cleaning and repairs

h) security

i) IT systems

j) communication (e.g. telephone, fax, internet, postal services, business cards)

k) bank charges for opening and administering the account or accounts where the implementation of an operation requires a separate account to be opened

l) charges for transnational financial transactions

For the **3rd Call for Proposals**, Office and administrative (O&A) costs are calculated either:

i. on a **real cost basis** or,
ii. on a flat rate basis calculated at a maximum 15% of the total staff costs of the beneficiary.

Each project beneficiary can select either of the two calculation bases, irrespectively of the calculation method selected by the other beneficiaries in the partnership.

Attention!

The office and administrative costs for each Beneficiary cannot exceed **4%** of the total Beneficiary's Budget, regardless of the calculation option selected.

5.4.3 Travel and Accommodation

This budget category includes all the expenses for each of the project's beneficiary for the travel and accommodation costs of the personnel involved in the project with the condition that they are directly related to the activities of the project. Travel and Accommodation costs involve:

(a) travel costs (e.g. tickets, travel and car insurance, fuel, car mileage, toll, and parking fees)

(b) the costs of meals

(c) accommodation costs up to national rules

(d) daily allowances up to national rules

Attention!

Travel and accommodation expenses related to individuals other than staff directly employed by the beneficiaries of the project (members of the stakeholder groups but also consultants, experts), have to be included in the **"External expertise and services costs"**

5.4.4 External Expertise and services

Costs paid on the basis of contracts and against invoices to external service providers, who are sub-contracted to carry out certain tasks of the project.

Pursuant to the Regulation (EU) No 481/2014 Article 6, expenditure on external expertise and service are limited to the following services and expertise provided by an organisation other than the project Beneficiary:

- studies or surveys (e.g. evaluations, strategies, concept notes, design plans, handbooks);
- training;
- translations;
- IT systems and website development, modifications and updates;
- promotion, communication, publicity or information linked to a project or to a cooperation programme as such;
- financial management;
- services related to the organisation and implementation of events or meetings (including rent, catering or interpretation);
- participation in events (e.g. registration fees);
- legal consultancy and notary services, technical and financial expertise, other consultancy and accountancy services;
- intellectual property rights (see also section 7.4.10);
- the provision of guarantees by a bank or other financial institution where required by Union or national law or in a programming document adopted by the monitoring committee;
- travel and accommodation for external experts, speakers, chairpersons of meetings and service providers;
- other specific expertise and services needed for operations, including supervision.

These costs must correspond to current market prices and must be adequately justified.

The elaboration of designs and master plans under the external expertise and services related to the direct infrastructure activities of the project can start before launching the Call and be implemented and paid until the end of the project implementation.

5.4.5 Equipment

Expenditure for the financing of equipment purchased, rented or leased by the beneficiary of the operation other than those covered by Article 4 shall be limited to the following:

a) office equipment;
b) IT hardware and software;
c) furniture and fittings;
d) machines and instruments,
e) tools or devices;
f) other specific equipment needed for operations.

In principle, costs for the purchasing of equipment with the condition that:

- Equipment is necessary for the project implementation and is foreseen in the approved Application Form.
- Suppliers should be selected according to the rules of the relevant National Public Procurement Law of the respective country.

There should be an analytical description of the technical specifications and costing (Justification of the Budget)

5.4.6 Infrastructure and Works

Expenditure for Infrastructure and Works are eligible with the condition that the cross-border impact of the investment is demonstrated and the activity is approved in the Application Form. The contractors of investments should be selected according to the rules of the National Public Procurement Law in force. The contractor cannot be a Beneficiary in the project. The description of the works expenditure should be accompanied by Bill of Quantities and Cost, submitted together with the Justification of the budget.

5.5 Special Categories of costs and budget limits for the 3rd Call

5.5.1 Preparation Costs

Costs within the budget lines ***"staff costs, travel and accommodation costs and external expertise and services"***, which have been incurred for the preparation of the project, are eligible for funding in accordance to the following conditions:

- If the services were invoiced or activities were implemented according to the national legislations, as of 1st of January 2014. **The related payments should have been actually made after 1st of January 2014 and/or during the implementation of the project;**
- If they show direct connection to the approved project and are included in the Application Form;
- If they do not exceed the amount **of 50.000 € and will be reviewed upon project evaluation.**

The following preparation costs are eligible:

- external expertise costs and/ or staff costs for the preparation of the application documents;
- joint meetings for the preparation of the project;
- travelling expenses directly related to joint meetings;
- travelling expenses directly related the Call's publicity events;
- cost analysis and preparatory research reports for the project activities;
- external expertise costs for the preparation of studies.

Attention!
Office and administration expenditure are not eligible under preparation costs

5.5.2 Management Costs

Management Deliverables and thus the management costs should be included **only in WP1** of the Application form and concern the cost related to the technical and administrative activities to be implemented for the efficient management and coordination of the project.

Attention!

The management costs of each project Beneficiary (Work Package 1) should not exceed 5% of the total Beneficiary's budget. The following WP1 costs (if applicable) are not calculated in the 5% limit:

- **Deliverable 1.X.1 "Preparation Activities" (where X is the number of the Beneficiary)**
- **External audit costs**

5.6 Financing activities located outside the Programme area

In principle, all activities of a project should take place within the eligible Programme area. If a project plans to finance activities or events outside the eligible Programme area, this is possible in the context of cooperation Programmes and in duly justified cases, provided that Article 20 of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013 is respected and the total amount allocated to activities located outside the Programme area shall **not exceed 20% of the support from the ERDF at Programme level.** The 20% threshold of ERDF at Programme level will be brought down to the project level. If activities (including travel and accommodation) and/ or events are planned outside the Programme area, the following conditions need to be satisfied:

a. the activity and/ or event are for the benefit of the Programme area;

b. the activity and/ or event are essential for the implementation of the project;

c. the implementation and/ or the relevance of the activity and/ or the event have been approved by the Programme beforehand.

Attention!

All activities implemented outside the Programme area should be described in a single dedicated WP in the Application form.

All project activities outside the Programme area cannot exceed 20% of the support from the ERDF of the project and must be implemented within the two participating member-states of the Programme.

5.7 Budget limit tables for the 3rd Call for Proposals

The following table provides the summary of the budget limits for the 3rd Call for Proposal that the Applicants need to take into consideration. **The project not respecting the budget limits will be deemed as ineligible.**

Detailed information about the eligibility of expenditure per country will be available in the Programme Eligibility Rules and the Guidance on Management Verification.

Table 3: Budget limit table for the 3rd Call for Proposals

	Project budget level limit	Beneficiary budget level limit
Preparation Costs (D1.X.1)	**Maximum 50.000€**	
WP1: Management costs		**Maximum 5%** of the total Beneficiary's budget without including preparation activities and Audit Costs.
WP6: Activities outside of the eligible area	**Maximum 20%** of the total project budget.	

6. Project Duration - Eligible Duration of Projects

Projects have to be concluded in a period of maximum **three years** after the signing of the Subsidy Contract.

7. How to fill in the online Application Form and upload the necessary documents

7.1 Introduction-General Information

The present chapter aims at providing the Lead Beneficiaries with all the information needed in order to fill in the online Application Form and upload all the necessary documents requested by the present Call for proposals.

A **User Guide for completing the electronic Application Form** is attached as an annex, providing all the necessary information for the electronic submission, therefore applicants are strongly advised to carefully read and follow these instructions.

How to fill in the Detailed Description

The detailed description is a separate, obligatory document that is filled in in an excel file and it is uploaded in a PDF format with official stamp and signature by the Legal Representative of the Lead Beneficiary.

This section provides a detailed description of the project idea, specific problems of the target groups to be addressed and objectives, its structure (activities, deliverables etc.), the role of beneficiaries, the management of the project etc. This section is divided into eight sub-sections:

B1 – Project Identification,

B2 – Methodological Approach,

B3 – Management,

B4 - Information and publicity,

B5 - Maturity of the project,

B6 - Sustainability of results,

B7 - Cross-border cooperation & Added value and

B8 - Compatibility with EU and national policies.

B1. PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

This section describes how the project idea was developed and what are its objectives and expected results. This section contains the following fields:

B.1.1 Background and history of the project (problems/ challenges to be addressed/ target groups)

In this section the Applicant needs to describe:

- How the project idea and the partnership were developed
- What are the common Cross-border problems and challenges that will be tackled by the project? Please describe the relevance of your project for the programme area in terms of common challenges and/or joint assets addressed.
- What is the project's approach in addressing these common challenges and/or joint assets and what is new about the approach that the project takes? Please describe new solutions that will be developed during the project and/or existing solutions that will be adopted and implemented during the project lifetime and in what way the approach goes beyond existing practice in the sector/programme area/participating countries.

- Which are the main target groups? Please describe who is benefiting (e.g. beneficiaries, regions, end-users etc.) from the project and in what way.

In this section please provide a brief description on how the project idea and partnership were developed, if the partnership has relevance with the achievement of project objectives and results, and how the beneficiaries were involved in developing the project proposal. In addition please describe the reasons for which the proposed project is necessary, as well as the specific problem(s) of target groups, and/or opportunities not currently meet that the project will address and challenges that will face. In this section the applicants must describe the target groups and provide clear evidence that there is a sufficient demand for the proposed project to be implemented. This will demonstrate that the project idea is based on the understanding of what the real benefits for the local population and the real impact on the area are. The applicants may refer to the Programme SWOT analysis and Objectives, as well as to the relevant chapters of the Manual, in order to better describe the project's background. The maximum number of characters allowed in this field is 4500.

B.1.2 Objectives of the Project:

In this section the Applicant must describe the overall objective of the project and how it is linked to the specific objectives of the Programme – SO 2.1 "To improve CB cooperation on flood risk management plans at river basin level" under PA 2 "A Sustainable and Climate adaptable Cross-Border area". Please describe also the overall objective and sub-objectives of the project. The maximum number of characters allowed in this field is 2000.

B.1.3 Expected outputs of the project (tangible and visible outputs or products relating to project activities)

In this section the Applicant must describe the project's main outputs that will be delivered based on the activities carried out in the project. A short explanation needs to be provided on the defined specific objectives and their link with the project main outputs. The project main outputs and its contribution to Programme's specific objectives need to be provided.

It must be noted that the outputs are tangible and visible results or products relating to the project activities and objectives. **Expected project outputs are the means to achieve the Project's (as well as the Programme's) objectives.** These results should include the description of the output indicators that will be described and quantified in Section F – Output Indicators. Examples include: networks set up between cities, studies, databases etc.

The outputs described here should also be logically connected (be either a logical combination or be identical with) the basic project deliverables listed in Section C of the Application Form, in a way that it gets obvious to the reader what are the expected outputs through which the project meets its objectives. The maximum number of characters allowed in this field is 2000.

B.1.4 Expected results (direct and immediate effects resulting from the project)

In this section the Lead Applicant must describe which the project results are. Their contribution and link (if applicable) to the result indicators of the Programme under PA 2, SO 2.1. as provided in the Cooperation Programme Document must be described**. T**he direct and immediate effects resulting from the project must also be clearly stated, highlighting the importance of the project for the cross border area. Additionally, the applicant may describe the innovative character of the expected results or clarify the added-value of the results compared to the achievements of previous experience (in case of a project follow-up). The maximum number of characters allowed in this field is 2000.

Note: The project should have identifiable and measurable targets, so that its progress can be monitored and evaluated in a way that ongoing consistency with the objectives of the Programme may be achieved. In case of failure in meeting the objectives, financing may be suspended; therefore targets presented should be specific, measurable, achievable and time based. A clear link between planned outputs, results and objectives to achieve must be demonstrated.

B.2 METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

This section provides an analytical overview of the project's implementation methodology (activities, their combination and sequence, responsibilities etc.). The methodology must clearly show a common and team-oriented manner of work between beneficiaries. This section contains the following fields:

B.2.1 Project methodology / Roles - Tasks of Beneficiaries

In this section the Applicant must:

- Describe the project approach and provide summary description of all work packages of the project and identify activities' interlinks (sequence, combination, interrelation between activities-deliverables). The methodology must include information about the project implementation stages and how these will contribute towards the attainment of the targets sought; identification of the tools proposed and their suitability towards the attainment of the proposed targets etc. This field

- Include an explanation of how beneficiaries will be involved in the project (who will do what) and the division of roles and tasks among the beneficiaries (e.g. beneficiaries' responsibilities for administrative and / or financial tasks, participation in the implementation of activities and deliverables, degree of involvement given the competences and strengths of each beneficiary etc.).

The description should not exceed 5000 characters.

B.2.3 Location of Activities:

Please provide a description of the area targeted by the project, the location of beneficiaries and activities as well as the geographical scope of the longer term effects (outputs and results). The maximum number of characters allowed is 2000.

B.3 MANAGEMENT

This section provides information on how the project will be administered and financially managed, in order to meet the requirements set. This section contains the following fields:

B.3.1. Lead Beneficiary and Beneficiaries' Competence (Experience, Structure, Personnel, Resources, etc.):

Please describe the Experience, Structure, Personnel, Resources, Institutional role etc. of the participating beneficiaries that indicate their relevance in the proposed project. The Applicant needs to define:

- Which are the organisation's competences related opt the project activities?
  Which is the institutional and financial capacity?
- Which are the experiences relevant for the project?
- Which is the organisation's capacity to directly or indirectly influence local/ regional/ national policies?
- What are the reasons for the selection of Lead Beneficiary?

Given that this field should not exceed 4000 characters, the Applicant can attach to the Application Form documents providing additional elements to that description, for example a diagram of the Beneficiary's structure etc.

B.3.2 Project management and coordination (structures, decision making procedures, internal communication, etc.)

Please describe how the management on the strategic and operational level will be carried out in the project, specifically:

- Structure, responsibilities and procedures for the day-to-day management and co-ordination

- Communication within the partnership

- Reporting and evaluation procedures

- Risk and quality management

This field should not exceed 2000 characters.

B.4 INFORMATION AND PUBLICITY

B.4.1 Information and Publicity Strategy

Please describe: i. The basic structure of the Project's Communication Plan (timetable, milestones etc.), ii. The information and publicity measures to be carried out (website, events, publicity material etc.), iii. The means of communication to be used to disseminate the Project's outputs, results and achievements (social media, brochures, promotional material etc.) and iv. How the anticipated project results are going to be promoted at a national and/or at a regional level. The rules regarding the publicity and communication can be found in the Project Beneficiaries Guidebook entitled Information and Publicity (Annex). This field should not exceed 3000 characters.

B.5 MATURITY OF THE PROJECT

B.5.1 Preparatory and administrative activities undertaken

Describe the maturity of the project in terms of completion of the administrative procedures that allow the implementation of the project i.e. licenses, designs, permits, land acquisition, tenders documents, etc. This is information should be provided for all project activities (services, equipment, infrastructure). This field should not exceed 3000 characters.

B.6 SUSTAINABILITY OF RESULTS

B.6.1 Sustainability, durability and transferability of main outputs delivered in the project

Please describe how the project main outputs will be further used once the project has been finalised. Please describe concrete measures (including e.g. institutional structures, financial sources etc.) taken during and after project implementation to ensure the durability of the project main outputs. If relevant, please explain who will be responsible and/or the owner of the output.

In addition, you need to explain how the project will ensure that the project's outputs are applicable and replicable by other organisations/regions/countries outside of the current partnership. Please describe to what extent it will be possible to transfer the outputs to other organisations/regions/countries outside of the current partnership." This field is limited to 3000 characters.

B.7 CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION & ADDED VALUE

B.7.1 Cross Border cooperation

Please describe how the cross border cooperation is demonstrated in order to achieve the project's objectives and results. Please explain why the project objectives cannot be efficiently reached acting only on a national/regional/local level and/or describe what benefits the project beneficiaries/target groups/project area/programme area gain in taking a cross border approach." This field is limited to 2000 characters.

B.7.2 Intensity of Cross-Border Cooperation

According to Art.12 from 1299/2013 par.4 "Beneficiaries shall cooperate in the development and implementation of operations. In addition, they shall cooperate in the staffing or the financing of operations, or in both. **Please mark with an "X"** the ways the partnership cooperates and describe how this is achieved.

B7.3. Capitalization:

Please describe in which way does the project capitalize previous cooperation and experience (if applicable), especially in the Programme area.

- Capitalization of beneficiaries' know-how experience
- Capitalization of beneficiaries' experience in Cross border Cooperation activities
- Capitalization of previous cooperation among current beneficiaries
- Capitalization of previous relevant projects

This field is limited to 1000 characters

B.8 COMPATIBILITY WITH EU AND NATIONAL POLICIES

B.8.1 Consistency of the project with EU horizontal policies:

Please state (by the appropriate selection) if the theme tackled by the proposed project will address directly or indirectly each of the EU horizontal policies (Equal opportunities, Sustainable Development, Equality between men and women. Select only one option per principle and provide the justification. **Please mark with an "X" accordingly and justify your selection.**

B.8.2 Contribution to other EU (incl. Macro-regional strategies), National, Regional and Local policies:

Please describe the project's contribution or achieved synergies and complementarities with relevant EU/regional/national strategies, instruments and policies; in particular, those concerning the project or programme area. If a project requires own contribution for its implementation, this can be described in this section as part of the local, regional, or National policies. This field is limited to 2000 characters.

B.3.1 Other

Please include here any additional project related information not mentioned in the above fields. This field is limited to 3000 characters.

Programme and Project specific Indicators

Table 4: Priority Axis Output and Result Indicators

Priority Axis 2: A sustainable and climate adaptable cross border area		
Code	**Output Indicator**	**Unit of Measurement**
CO20	Population benefiting from flood protection measures	Persons
Code	**Result Indicator**	**Unit of Measurement**
R0203	Number of international river basin districts with jointly coordinated flood risks management plans in compliance with Directive 2007/60 EC	Number

8. Evaluation Procedure

Project beneficiaries prepare a proposal in cooperation with the Lead beneficiary, who submits it to the Joint Secretariat (JS). After submission, the project proposal will be subjected to a two-phase evaluation procedure (1st phase “Administrative and technical requirements” and 2nd phase “Quality assessment“) carried out by the Joint Secretariat and based on the selection criteria described below.

<u>1st phase</u>: Administrative and technical requirements

The project will be checked for its **administrative compliance** and **eligibility criteria**, in order to ensure that it fulfills the administrative and eligibility requirements of the Programme. The project must fulfill the requirements of the Programme, in order to be subjected to quality assessment.

- **Administrative compliance:** It confirms that the proposal has been submitted within the deadline set; the Application Form has the official format specified by the Managing Authority, is complete and meets all the requirements set in the respective Call; all the required documents to be submitted along with the Application Form are properly filled in, signed, stamped and attached to the Application Form;
- **Eligibility criteria:** These criteria examine whether the proposal fulfils the requirements for being eligible for funding by the Programme. These requirements are, for instance, the structure of the cross-border partnership, the general compatibility with the Programme objectives and principles, the co-financing requested, the duration of the project etc.

<u>2nd phase</u>: Quality assessment of the projects

During this phase, the proposal is reviewed using **core selection criteria.** These entail examination of the nature of the proposed project, its relevance with and contribution to the achievement of the specific objectives of the Programme, its viability, sustainability and results in the eligible territory, the cross border cooperation and capitalization, the quality of the cross-border partnership, as well as the monitoring and management methodology proposed, information and publicity actions and planning of the budget.

The Core selection criteria are divided into:

- **Project Quality (Content related criteria)** (relevance of the proposal, quality of the results, impact and sustainability, cross border cooperation and capitalization) and
- **Implementation related criteria** (quality of the partnership, quality of the methodological approach, budget and finance).

The project proposal will receive for each sub criterion included in the core selection criteria a “yes” and “no” answer and comments by two evaluators. In order to be funded the project should fulfill all the conditions mentioned in the evaluation sheet.

In case the proposal does not fulfill some criteria the proposal will be returned for modification and/or additional clarification and a deadline for its re-submission will be set.

As a result of the assessment, a potential revision of the budget could be proposed by the evaluators. In such cases additional justification will be requested from the relevant beneficiaries and the final project value will be subject to approval by the Monitoring Committee of the Programme.

State Aid compliance will be examined using the State Aid Assessment Sheet introduced by the relevant competent authority, (Annex 7).

During the process of evaluation a list of permitted errors could be created that will be considered and approved by the Monitoring Committee of the Programme.

The different sets of criteria are presented below:

Evaluation Criteria for the 3rd Call for Proposals: Restricted Call for Strategic Project Proposal under Priority Axis 2

Investment Priority 5b

CRITERIA FOR ADMINISTRATIVE AND TECHNICAL COMPLIANCE

1. Administrative compliance (YES/NO)		**Comments**
a) Is the Project Proposal submitted within the deadline set	YES☐ NO☐	
b) Is the Project Proposal submitted in the required formats: • Digital version of the Application Form via MIS • Project Detailed Description document uploaded as a separate document in PDF format, stamped and signed by the Legal Representative of the Lead Beneficiary	YES☐ NO☐ YES☐ NO☐	
c) Are the digital versions of the requested documents uploaded in the MIS: a. the Partnership Declaration signed and stamped by all the participating beneficiaries, in PDF format b. Annex 1 “Strategic Scope of the Project and Sustainability”, signed and stamped by the Legal Representative of the Lead Beneficiary, in PDF format c. Declarations of not generating revenues presented in the requested format, completed, signed and stamped by the Legal Representative of each beneficiary separately, in PDF format or, in case of revenue generating project, a cost-benefit analysis, signed and stamped by the beneficiary concerned, in PDF format d. State Aid declarations presented in the requested format, completed, signed and stamped	YES☐ NO☐ YES☐ NO☐ YES☐ NO☐ YES☐ NO☐	

by the Legal Representative of each beneficiary separately, in PDF format e. Decisions of the designated body or similar decision by the Legal Representative of each Project Beneficiary according to the respective national legislation, signed and stamped, in PDF format f. the Justification of Budget Costs presented in the requested format, completed for the total project budget, in Excel format g. Bills of Quantities and Costs to the foreseen infrastructure activities, signed and stamped by the Legal Representative of the relevant Project Beneficiary, in PDF format	YES☐ NO☐ YES☐ NO☐ YES☐ NO☐ N/A☐ *N/A= Not Applicable*	
2. Eligibility criteria (YES/ NO)		**Comments**
a) Does the project proposal include the Beneficiaries pre-defined in the Programme under PA 2, IP 5b	YES☐ NO☐	
b) Does the project activities correspond to the pre-defined ones under PA 2 in the programme	YES☐ NO☐	
c) Do the project beneficiaries cooperate[2] in: Development of the operation (mandatory) YES☐ NO☐ Implementation of the operation (mandatory) YES☐ NO☐ Staffing of the operation YES☐ NO☐	YES☐ NO☐	

[2] According to Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on specific provisions for the support from the European Regional Development Fund to the European territorial cooperation goal, Article 12, paragraph 4: "Beneficiaries shall cooperate in the development and implementation of operations. In addition, they shall cooperate in the staffing or the financing of operations, or in both."

or/and Financing of the operation YES☐ NO☐		
e) Are the project budget and costs in line with the limits set in the Call for proposals	YES☐ NO☐	
f) Is the duration of the project in line with the time frame set out in the Call for proposals	YES☐ NO☐	
g) Does the project comply with Article 65, par.6 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 stating: "Operations shall not be selected for support by the ESI Funds where they have been physically completed or fully implemented before the application for funding under the Programme is submitted by the beneficiary to the managing authority, irrespective of whether all related payments have been made by the beneficiary."	YES☐ NO☐	

Assessor 1	Name	
	Signature	
Assessor 2	Name	
	Signature	

2nd PHASE – QUALITY ASSESSMENT

PROJECT QUALITY (Content related criteria)					
Criteria	**Sub-criteria**	**Analysis**	**Reference to the AF**	**Score**	**Comments**
General Relevance of the proposal	a) Is the project proposal consistent with the horizontal principles of the Programme: - sustainable development - equal opportunities and non-discrimination (including provision of accessibility for persons with disabilities) - - equality between men and women	YES☐ NO☐	B.8.1		
	b) Does the proposal demonstrate its ability to promote synergies with EU/regional/national strategies and synergies to other Programmes?	YES☐ NO☐	Annex 1, B.8.2		
	c) Does the project contribute to the achievement of the specific objective 3 of the investment priority 5b To improve CB cooperation on flood risk management plans at river basin level?	YES☐ NO☐	Annex 1, B.1.2		
Specific Relevance of the proposal	a) Does the project contributes to the fulfilment of Directive 2007/60/EC, Article 8, par.2 for jointly coordinated flood risks management plans and/or to Directive 2000/60/EC – Water policy concerning jointly coordination in flood issues of international rivers?	YES☐ NO☐	B.8.2, Annex 1		
	b) Is the project a joint intervention providing identical level of service on both sides of the border?	YES☐ NO☐	B.2.1 and B.7.1		
	c) Does the project include adaptation/mitigation of pilot actions for specific risks with positive mitigation effects?	YES☐ NO☐	B.2.1		
	d) Is the project raising awareness and capacity building of the responsible authorities and local population for better	YES☐ NO☐	B.8.2 and		

	preparedness in risk response actions?		B.9.1		
Quality of results – efficiency and effectiveness	a) Are the results specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound?	YES☐ NO☐	B.1.4		
	b) Do the project results and main outputs clearly link to Programme priority and its indicators?	YES☐ NO☐	B.1.4, B.1.3, Section F		
	c) Do the project results provide added value to the Programme area?	YES☐ NO☐	Annex 1, B.1.1, B.7.1		
Impact and Sustainability	a) Is the proposal likely to have impact on growth and development in the cross border region?	YES☐ NO☐	Annex1, B.2.3, B.1.4		
	b) Does the proposal produce significant and long-term changes and/or improvements?	YES☐ NO☐	Annex1, B.6, B4		
	c) Is the financial sustainability of the project clearly demonstrated?	YES☐ NO☐	Annex1, B.6		
	d) Will there be joint "ownership" of the results of the project with permanent cooperation opportunities between the partners?	YES☐ NO☐	Annex1, B.6		
Cross Border Co-operation and Capitalization	a) Does the project address common cross border challenges and opportunities in the Programme area?	YES☐ NO☐	B.1.1, B.7.1, B.7.2		
	b) In which way does the project capitalize previous cooperation and experience, especially in the Programme area? - Capitalization of partners' know-how experience - Capitalization of partners' experience in Cross border Cooperation activities - Capitalization of previous cooperation among current beneficiaries - Capitalization of previous relevant projects	YES☐ NO☐	B.7.3		

Implementation-related criteria					
Criteria	**Sub-criteria**	**Analysis**	**Reference to the AF**	**Score**	**Comments**
Quality of the partnership (appropriate synthesis and organizational arrangements)	a) Does the Lead Beneficiary demonstrate the capacity to coordinate, manage, control and monitor the overall implementation of the project?	YES☐ NO☐	B.3		
	b) Is the administrative capacity of the beneficiaries sufficient to implement successfully the project activities undertaken?	YES☐ NO☐	B.3		
	c) Are the specific roles (actions and responsibilities) clearly and appropriately distributed among the Lead Beneficiary and the other beneficiaries?	YES☐ NO☐	B.2.1		
Quality of the methodological approach	a) Is the relation between the activities-outputs-results-objectives ensured?	YES☐ NO☐	B.1, B.2		
	b) Does the project contain objectively realistic and relevant indicators measuring the expected results?	YES☐ NO☐	B.1.4, Section F		
	c) Is the project mature in terms of completion of administrative procedures that allow the implementation of the activities (licenses, designs, permits, land	YES☐ NO☐	B.5, Documentation for Infrastructure		

Implementation-related criteria					
Criteria	**Sub-criteria**	**Analysis**	**Reference to the AF**	**Score**	**Comments**
	acquisition etc.)?		Projects		
	d) Is the methodology for management of the project clearly defined and efficient? In particular, is the proposed approach for internal project monitoring & assessment satisfactory?	YES☐ NO☐	B.2.1, B.3.2		
	e) Are the Information and Publicity measures for external communication of project's outputs and results appropriate and efficient?	YES☐ NO☐	B.4		
Budget and finance	a) Is the proposed budget reasonable, realistic and justified?	YES☐ NO☐	B.1.4, Section D, Justification of the Budget Document		
	b) Is the budget logically planned and distributed among the partners and the activities?	YES☐ NO☐	B.2.1, B.2.2, Section D, Justification of Budget Document		

Evaluation Summary	Overview graph
Project Content Quality: **Project Implementation Quality:**	

Assessor 1	Name	
	Signature	
Assessor 2	Name	
	Signature	
JS Coordinator	Name	
	Signature	

COMPATIBILITY CHECK SHEET OF THE PROJECT WITH THE STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OF THE OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME			
OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME	INTERREG V-A Greece–Bulgaria 2014-2020 Cooperation Programme		
PRIORITY AXIS	Priority Axis 2: A Sustainable and Climate Adaptable Cross-Border Area		
INVESTMENT PRIORITY	(5b) Promoting investment to address specific risks, ensuring disaster resilience and developing disaster management systems		
CALL CODE			
FINAL BENEFICIARY			
PROJECT TITLE			
ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES (The Directive 2001/42/EK determines the environmental issues for which the environmental consequences have to be appraised)	EXPECTED CONSEQUENCES ACCORDING TO THE S.E.A. OF THE OP GREECE-BULGARIA for the Priority Axis 2[3]	ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE PROPOSED ACT	COMMENTS
Biodiversity, Fauna and Flora	+		
Human health and population	0 to +		
Soil	+		
Water	+		

[3] Type of effects: Positive (+), Neutral (0) or Negative (-)

<table>
<tr><th colspan="4">COMPATIBILITY CHECK SHEET OF THE PROJECT WITH THE STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OF THE OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME</th></tr>
<tr><td>OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME</td><td colspan="3">INTERREG V-A Greece–Bulgaria 2014-2020 Cooperation Programme</td></tr>
<tr><td>PRIORITY AXIS</td><td colspan="3">Priority Axis 2: A Sustainable and Climate Adaptable Cross-Border Area</td></tr>
<tr><td>INVESTMENT PRIORITY</td><td colspan="3">(5b) Promoting investment to address specific risks, ensuring disaster resilience and developing disaster management systems</td></tr>
<tr><td>CALL CODE</td><td colspan="3"></td></tr>
<tr><td>FINAL BENEFICIARY</td><td colspan="3"></td></tr>
<tr><td>PROJECT TITLE</td><td colspan="3"></td></tr>
<tr><td>ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES (The Directive 2001/42/EK determines the environmental issues for which the environmental consequences have to be appraised)</td><td>EXPECTED CONSEQUENCES ACCORDING TO THE S.E.A. OF THE OP GREECE-BULGARIA for the Priority Axis 2[3]</td><td>ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE PROPOSED ACT</td><td>COMMENTS</td></tr>
<tr><td>Air</td><td>- to +</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Climatic factors</td><td>- to +</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Material assets</td><td>0 to +</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Biodiversity, Fauna and Flora</td><td>0 to +</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Human health and population</td><td>- to +</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
</table>

COMPATIBILITY CHECK SHEET OF THE PROJECT WITH THE STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OF THE OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME			
OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME	INTERREG V-A Greece–Bulgaria 2014-2020 Cooperation Programme		
PRIORITY AXIS	Priority Axis 2: A Sustainable and Climate Adaptable Cross-Border Area		
INVESTMENT PRIORITY	(5b) Promoting investment to address specific risks, ensuring disaster resilience and developing disaster management systems		
CALL CODE			
FINAL BENEFICIARY			
PROJECT TITLE			
ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES (The Directive 2001/42/EK determines the environmental issues for which the environmental consequences have to be appraised)	EXPECTED CONSEQUENCES ACCORDING TO THE S.E.A. OF THE OP GREECE-BULGARIA for the Priority Axis 2[3]	ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE PROPOSED ACT	COMMENTS
Conclusions			
Remarks			
Conditions that have to be met if the proposal is financed.			

Scoring

The above mentioned criteria will be taken into account by the evaluators to assess the project. The purpose of the **Core selection criteria** is to assess the quality of the project proposal. Quality criteria are closely linked to the nature and objectives of the INTERREG V-A Greece–Bulgaria 2014-2020 Cooperation Programme.

The Joint Secretariat carries out the evaluation of the proposal, based on these selection criteria, approved by the Monitoring Committee.

The final assessment of the project proposal will be defined in the following way:

- o Both assessors will make their evaluations independently. Upon completion of the evaluation procedure by both assessors, a common evaluation sheet will be compiled incorporating the comments of the 2 assessors.
- o In case of contradictory remarks made by the two assessors, a third evaluation will take place. This will be executed by the JS Coordinator.

Upon completion of the evaluation procedure the final evaluation sheet of the project will be compiled.

The Managing Authority ensures that the evaluation procedure is carried out in accordance to the requirements of the 3rd Call for Proposals: Restricted Call for Strategic Project Proposal under Priority Axis 3 and the approved selection criteria.

Then the JS, with the consent of the Managing Authority, submits to the Monitoring Committee:

1) The fiche of the submitted project proposal, summarizing the most important information about the project proposal

2) The evaluation forms of the 1st and 2nd phase checks

3) Evaluation Report

According to the results obtained in the evaluation procedure the project is presented to the members of the Monitoring Committee which can decide either the project to be accepted or be further discussed (acceptable under conditions, such as provision of further necessary documents, licenses, permits, etc).

To be proposed for financing by the Programme, the project must meet all the below mentioned requirements:

i. obtain only positive answers ("yes") on any of the sub criteria included in the core selection criteria
ii. fulfill all the requirements set in the evaluation sheet of the project
iii. be in line with all the requirements of the budget available for the investment priority as stated in the Call for proposals,

The Monitoring Committee decides if the project will be funded by the Programme. The Lead beneficiary of the submitted project proposal will be informed in writing on the results obtained on the performance of the 1st and 2nd phase checks after the completion of the decision procedure of the Monitoring Committee.

If a proposal is accepted under conditions, the Managing Authority will have to check that these conditions are taken into account before the Subsidy Contract is signed.

Any complaints submitted on the evaluation will be treated according to the procedure described in the chapter 5.3.o of the Programme document.

Annexes:

Applicant's Package consisting of the following documents:

1. ***Call for Proposals***
2. ***Project Application Guidelines***
3. ***Application Form***
4. ***Detailed Description***
5. ***Partnership Declaration***
6. ***Declaration of not generating revenues***
7. ***State Aid Declaration***
8. ***State Aid Assessment Sheet***
9. ***Justification of Budget and Guidelines***
10. ***Programme and Project Implementation Manual***
11. ***User Guide for electronic submission***